

JEROME'S DATES FOR GAIUS LUCILIUS, SATYRARUM SCRIPTOR*

The *Chronicle* of Jerome states that Gaius Lucilius was born in 148 B.C. and died in 103 B.C. in his forty-sixth year.¹ The *Oxford Classical Dictionary*³ (1996) says that Gaius Lucilius was probably born in 180 B.C. and died in 102/1 B.C.²

The *OCD* entry, made without reference to the long-standing controversy surrounding the birth-date of the Roman satirist, exemplifies the conviction with which scholarship spanning the last hundred years has dismissed the testimony of Jerome. Commentators such as Sellar, Cichorius, Kappelmacher, Helm, Warmington, Krenkel, Knoche, Hellegouarc'h, Coffey, and Gruen,³ have rejected the date of 148 B.C. and postulated the 'real' birth-date of Gaius Lucilius. None accepts the testimony of Jerome because none can believe that Lucilius was a mere fourteen years old when he served as an *equus* in the Numantine War in 134 B.C. (Vell. Pat. 2.9.4); and none can believe that one described as *senex* by Horace could have been a mere forty-five years old when he died (*Satire* 2.1.32–4).⁴

Explanations for Jerome's alleged error have been sought to overcome the perceived obstacles to his dating.⁵ These are:

* I wish to record my gratitude to Lea Beness, Richard Burgess, and Tom Hillard for their generous and significant contributions to this paper. Ms Frances Muecke and Professor Ernst Badian offered constructive criticism in its earlier stages. It should not be assumed that any of the above share the views expressed in it.

¹ *Lucilius poeta nascitur* (p. 143e H). *Gaius Lucilius satyrrarum scriptor Neapoli moritur ac publico funere effertur anno aetatis XLVI* (p. 148e H). This means, of course, that Lucilius was forty-five when he died, not forty-six, as most scholars read it. R. W. Burgess reminds me that scholars far too frequently make the error of translating (e.g.) *XXX aetatis anno* (in his thirtieth year) as 'thirty years old'. Scholars who adjust Jerome's death date for Lucilius to 102 B.C. to match the 'XLVI' (and there are many) have clearly made this very common error.

² *OCD*² (1970), on the other hand, says that the date of birth is unknown but he died an old man in 102/1 B.C. Both the second and third editions of the *OCD* have not taken into account that Jerome's dates for Lucilius are consular dates: there is no need for '102/1'.

³ W. Y. Sellar, *The Roman Poets of the Republic* (Oxford, 1889), 229. C. Cichorius, *Untersuchungen zu Lucilius* (Berlin, 1908), 7–14; A. Kappelmacher, *RE* 13.2 (1927), 1617–18; Rudolf Helm, *Hieronymus' Zusätze in Eusebius' Chronik und ihr Wert für die Literaturgeschichte* (Leipzig, 1929), 24–5; E. H. Warmington, *Remains of Old Latin*, vol. 3 (Loeb Classical Library, 1961), ix; W. Krenkel, *ANRW* 1.2 (1972), 1240–59; U. Knoche, *Roman Satire*, trans. E. S. Ramage (Indiana, 1975), 33; J. Hellegouarc'h, *Velleius Paterculus: Histoire Romaine*, tome II, livre II (Paris, 1982), 154; M. Coffey, *Roman Satire* (Bristol, 1989²), 35; E. Gruen, *Culture and National Identity in Republican Rome* (Ithaca, 1992), 274–6 at 275: 'Jerome provides ostensible exactitude—only to create insuperable difficulty'.

⁴ An exception to this list of unbelievers is J. Christes, *ANRW*, 1.2 (1972), 1185–95, who defends Jerome's date of 148 but without scrutiny of the sources. Nothing stands against 103 B.C. as the date of death for Lucilius.

⁵ These external obstacles are all that prevent scholars from accepting Jerome's chronology. There is nothing in the content of Lucilius' satires to contradict it. It is generally accepted by critics that Books 26–30 were the earliest written (Coffey [n. 3], 40), and as they address events or personalities prominent in 131 B.C. or later, we know that they were written after Lucilius returned from the Numantine War. In the first book (i.e. Book 26), a friend urges Lucilius to commemorate Scipio's victory in the Numantine War: *hunc laborem sumas, laudem qui tibi ac fructum ferat: I percrepa pugnam Populi, facta Corneli cane* (620–2, M = 713, 714, 691, W). In the same book he parodies the concept of mandatory marriages (678–9, 686, M = 644–5, 646, W), a concept which Q. Metellus Macedonicus, as *censor* 131 B.C., urged on the Romans in his speech *de*

1. that Jerome, in copying the words of Suetonius referring to the death and funeral of Lucilius, inadvertently substituted the numeral XLVI for LXVI, which would put his birth in 168 B.C.;
2. that Jerome must have confused the Roman consuls of the year 148 B.C. (Sp. Postumius Albinus, C. Calpurnius Piso) with those of 180 B.C. (A. Postumius Albinus, C. Calpurnius Piso), and that 180 was therefore his real birth-date.

It has become orthodoxy in current scholarship that Jerome made one or other of these errors in the process of transmitting the evidence of an earlier source.

It is true that Jerome made many errors when making additions to Eusebius' *Chronicle*.⁶ It is also true that, in following the *De viris illustribus* of Suetonius, which dated authors' births and deaths by consular dates, Jerome sometimes got things right, or almost right.⁷ It is my view that Jerome could also have got the dates of Lucilius accurately from Suetonius, or at worst been out by one year (149–103 B.C.),⁸ because the objections enshrined in current orthodoxy are not compelling enough to reject his testimony. To demonstrate the point I shall first study the feasibility of Lucilius' serving as a fourteen-year-old *equus* in the Numantine War, then attempt to explain

prole augenda (Gellius 1.6.2) *liberorum creandorum causa*. As Lucilius was apparently writing before the death of Scipio in 129 B.C. (Cicero, *de fin.* 1.7; Horace, *Sat.* 2. 1. 66), the satirist was seventeen or eighteen when he began his compositions. By the reckoning of the *OCD* ³ entry, however, Lucilius would have been fifty years old when he began his literary career.

⁶ See Helm (n. 3), 1ff. Jerome's chronology has often been deemed unreliable (e.g. for Plautus, Lucretius, and Catullus) or dubious (Livy and Varro): see R. Syme, *Sallust* (California and Cambridge, 1964), 13–14. Roland Jeffreys, 'The date of Messalla's death' *CQ* 34 (1985), 140–8, has defended Jerome's death date for Messalla Corvinus (A.D. 12) against Helm, Syme, and others by taking into account the independent testimony of Frontinus. However, he rejects Jerome's birth-date for him (59 B.C.) on the grounds that Messalla would have been too young to have prosecuted Aufidia in 44 B.C. or to have played a leading role at Philippi. Jeffreys believes that Messalla was more likely to have been born around 65–4 B.C. The problem is, however, that Jerome knew that Messalla was seventy-one years old when he died (*anno aetatis LXXII*), which tallies with the dates he provides. As R. W. Burgess informs me, Jerome does not make up such figures. The mystery remains.

⁷ For example, his dates for Persius coincide with the evidence of Suetonius (A.D. 34–62), as does his date for the birth of Vergil (70 B.C.) and the birth of Horace (65 B.C.). He is one year late for the death of Terence (in 159 B.C.), one year late for the death of Vergil (in 19 B.C.), and one year early for the death of Horace (in 8 B.C.). Suetonius' *Vita* of Ennius is not extant, but the biographer probably recorded his birth- and death-dates (in 239 and 169 B.C. according to Cicero, *Brutus* 72 and 78), because Jerome does too: one year out for both. Suetonius does not know the birth date of Terence, nor any date of Tibullus. Neither does Jerome, who does not mention Tibullus at all. R. W. Burgess draws my attention to the fact that Jerome's dates, if consular, are rarely more than a year out. He also points out that where Jerome is dreadfully wrong (e.g. Plautus), we are often not in a position to know what his source said. We cannot be sure, in other words, whether it is the source, or Jerome, who is out. We assume too often that Suetonius was always right when it could be he who was sometimes making the errors. This, and the question of Jerome's relative dates derived from Suetonius (and his other sources), are addressed in his forthcoming publication on Jerome's *Chronicle*.

⁸ Helm (n. 3), 26 noticed that, where other authors' full names are supplied in the *Chronicle* at their date of birth (e.g. Horatius Flaccus, Quintus Ennius, Gaius Valerius Catullus, Vergilius Maro), and whose single, familiar names only are supplied at the date of death (Horatius, Ennius etc.), the opposite is true in the case of Lucilius (see n. 1). Based upon this observation, he suggested that Jerome found Lucilius' death-date and his age at death in Suetonius, made the entry, then counted backwards to 148 B.C. and entered the poet's birth on that date in his *Chronicle*. If Helm's suggestion is in fact the case, then Jerome, counting back forty-five years from 103 B.C., could be out by one year. If Lucilius died in his forty-sixth year, before his birthday in 103 B.C., he could have been born in 149 B.C.

why his under-age status is not mentioned by Velleius Paterculus. I shall then try to show that Horace's use of the term *senex* in his *Satire* 2.1 precludes it from being exploited as a biographical detail about Lucilius. The conclusion to be drawn is that the hypothetical birth-dates for Lucilius provided by a century of modern scholarship should be abandoned, because the lifespan for the satirist provided by Jerome is historically credible.

Tubero (*ap. Aulus Gellius* 10.28), Livy (25.5.8, 27.11.15), and Plutarch (*C. Grac.* 5.1) all concur that seventeen was stipulated as the minimum age for military service in the Roman Republic.⁹ Perhaps seventeen was specified because that was the age by which all males were expected to have reached puberty.¹⁰ Polybius (6.19.4) does not mention a minimum age, but he does say that a minimum of ten years military service had to be completed (before the age of forty-six) for anyone to be eligible for political office.¹¹ If the minimum age for military service was seventeen, then that for the quaestorship was fixed at twenty-seven.

Was there any exception to this regulation? Did boys under the age of seventeen ever enlist for military service?

The fourteen-year-old son of Tarquinius Priscus, who killed an enemy in a war with the Sabines, is chronologically the earliest we hear of. His story, provided by Macrobius (*Sat.* 1.6.8–10), serves as the *aition* for the *toga praetexta* and the distinctive *bullae* of childhood awarded to the under-age warrior for his achievement in battle, and which later became standard *insignia pueritiae*.¹² It is true, of course, that this young hero must have fought his battle at a time when the Roman people were organized on a two-generational principle, before there was a law defining the minimum age at which a male was deemed fit to join the military.¹³ His under-age status in that context, therefore, is an anachronism. The importance of Priscus' boy is that tradition preserved his youthful heroism as the precedent for under-age service in later times. We do not know exactly when the minimum age was introduced. Pliny's statement that M. Manlius Capitolinus (cos. 392 B.C.) had twice captured enemy spoils before he was seventeen years old (*NH* 7.103), might be an indicator that it had been introduced by the early fourth century B.C.

Livy says that, in the wake of the spectacular Roman losses at Trasimene (217 B.C.) and Cannae (216 B.C.), a levy was proclaimed, that men from the age of seventeen were recruited—as indeed were some even below that age, not yet out of their childhood togas (22.57.9). Livy then implies that recruitment of under-age soldiers at this time was in fact not unprecedented, for he proceeds to draw attention to what was the strange nature of this particular levy: the recruitment and arming of slaves, rendered necessary by the pressure of circumstances and the shortage of free citizens (22.57.11).

⁹ Gellius (citing the late *Republican History* of Tubero) provides the distinction between *pueritia*, *iuventa*, and *senecta* which reflected an official assessment of a male's fitness for military service. Men between the ages of seventeen and forty-five inclusive (*iuniores*) were deemed eligible. Below or above that age they were too young or too old.

¹⁰ We read in Censorinus (7.3) that puberty occurs after fourteen years in some, but by the seventeenth year in all youths: . . . *post quartum decimum annum nonnullos, sed omnes intra septimum decimum annum*. Cf. Ovid *Met.* 3.352 where Narcissus, in his sixteenth year, seemed either boy or man: *poterat puer iuvenisque videri*. Livy (21.46.7) says that the young Scipio was, at the age of seventeen, *tum primum pubescens*.

¹¹ Livy 27. 11. 15 confirms the minimum of ten years service.

¹² R. E. A. Palmer, 'Bullae insignia ingenuitatis', *AJAH* 14 (1989), 1–69 at 20–1. T. R. S. Broughton, 'M. Aemilius Lepidus: his youthful career', in R. I. Curtis (ed.), *Studia Pompeiana et Classica in Honor of W. F. Jashemski*, vol. 2 (New Rochelle, 1989), 13–23 at 15.

¹³ See Ovid, *Fasti* 6.83–8, 5.59–79; Macrobius, *Sat.* 1.12.16.

Valerius Maximus, too, attaches significance to this levy. The recruitment of slaves brought with it a shame on Rome which for him seems to exceed that which attached to the enlistment of under-age soldiers.¹⁴

The recruitment of slaves and the under-aged at this time was evidently not having the desired effect. Livy (25.5.7) says that in 212 B.C. the consuls were (still) having difficulty in raising enough recruits for the army, as the number of military-age men (*iuniores*) was inadequate for the new City legions as well as for bringing the old legions up to strength. Commissioners were thus sent to scour the country districts to enlist anyone fit to bear arms, even though not yet of military age. An extra incentive was offered to entice them: a decree was passed which allowed those who took the military oath before the age of seventeen to count such earlier service just as if they had been enlisted at seventeen or over (25.5.8).

We have the name of one individual, an *eques*, who was recruited while still under-age during the second Punic War. Aemilius Lepidus (possibly the consul of 187 B.C.) had his heroism as a fifteen-year-old recorded on silver denarii struck by a descendant, M. Aemilius Lepidus, in 61 B.C.¹⁵ The reverse type depicts an equestrian statue, the rider garbed in the *toga praetexta* with a *bullae* hanging from his neck; the legend reads *an[norum] XV pr[ogressus] (or pr[ae]textatus) h[ostem] o[ccidit] c[ivem] s[ervavit]*,¹⁶ Valerius Maximus (3.1.1) supplies the same information: *Aemilius Lepidus puer etiam tum progressus in aciem hostem interemit, civem servavit. cuius tam memorabilis operis index est in Capitolio statua bullata et incincta praetexta senatus consulto posita.* Valerius continues with the details of how the Senate paid tribute to the *pueritia* of Lepidus, which, unconcerned by that which struck terror into the hearts of *iuvenes*, was already so mature in courage and virtue. Echoes of the precedent set by the son of Priscus are clearly in evidence here.¹⁷

The above evidence shows that: (i) in cases of emergency, the minimum age regulation was waived; (ii) before the Second Punic War, whenever that regulation had been waived, service before the age of seventeen had not been included in the ten years obligatory service. Was this new directive for time of crisis rescinded after the Second Punic War? Although we might expect it to have been, especially with the carrying of the *lex Villia annalis* in 180 B.C., the evidence shows that it was not. In 123/122 B.C. a law prohibiting the conscripting of boys under the age of seventeen years was proposed by Gaius Gracchus and ratified.¹⁸ This is important evidence, as Roman law was reactive, that is, it responded to existing problems and abuses. In other words, this law would not have been proposed and ratified if no one under the age of seventeen was enrolling for military service.

¹⁴ Valerius Maximus (7.6.1) relates that, at the time of the Second Punic War when the armed youth of Rome was exhausted following several calamitous wars, slaves were recruited. *Quanta violentia est casus acerbi!* he laments. He says that the disaster at Cannae so confounded the City that spoils taken from enemies and dedicated to the gods were taken down from the temples for the service of the Wars, boys still in their childhood togas were inducted, and 6,000 condemned criminals were also conscripted out of necessity.

¹⁵ It is because of the generally accepted identification of M. Aemilius Lepidus (cos. 187, cens. 175, pont. max. 180–152) that the incident has been dated to the period of the Hannibalic war, as the date of the incident itself is unrecorded. See M. H. Crawford, *Roman Republican Coinage* (Cambridge, 1974), 443–4; R. J. Evans and M. Kleijwegt, *ZPE* 92 (1992), 192; M. Harlan, *Roman Republican Moneyers and their Coins 63 B.C.–49 B.C.* (London, 1995), 28–30; Palmer (n. 12), 21–3.

¹⁶ Crawford (n. 15), no. 419.

¹⁷ Broughton (n. 12), 21, n. 17 calculated that, like Lepidus, Scipio Africanus and T. Quinctius Flaminius probably began their military service while under-age also: at fourteen (in 221 B.C.) and at fifteen (in 213 B.C.) respectively.

¹⁸ Plutarch, *C. Gracchus* 5.

Indeed, before the enactment of that law, we hear of two high-profile individuals who did serve while under-age. The first is Tiberius Gracchus. According to Plutarch (*C. Gracchus* 1.2), Tiberius was not yet thirty when he was killed in the mid-summer of 133 B.C. His thirtieth birthday would then have fallen after July 133 or before July 132. He was therefore born between July 163 and July 162. He went to Carthage with Scipio Aemilianus in 147. This means that he was sixteen or even fifteen when he began his military service. He entered office as quaestor in 137, at the age of twenty-six or twenty-five. This shows that his military service before the age of seventeen was included in the qualifying ten years before his first public office.¹⁹ The decree passed in 212 B.C. was thus still in effect. The second individual is Gaius Gracchus. As Plutarch (*T. Grac.* 3.1; *C. Grac.* 1.2) says he was nine years younger than his brother, he was born either in 154 or 153. He completed twelve years military service before he assumed office as quaestor in 126 (*C. Grac.* 2.5) at the age of twenty-eight or twenty-seven. He must therefore have been sixteen or fifteen when he began his military service, just as his brother had been.²⁰

The careers of the Gracchi demonstrate that boys below the regulation age of seventeen were indeed being enlisted in the citizen militia in the mid-second century, as they had been during the Second Punic War. Perhaps this is why Polybius does not mention a minimum age for military service in his discussion of the Roman army in Book 6. At any rate it is against this background that Gaius' law of 123/22 prohibiting under-age recruitment makes sense.²¹

Now we come to Lucilius. The Numantine War of 134 B.C. in which Lucilius fought was waged more than ten years before the ratification of Gaius' law. Furthermore, the singular circumstances surrounding the recruitment of Scipio's army which waged that war rendered any theoretical official age restrictions particularly inapplicable. The census statistics for 136 B.C. showed a severe manpower shortage among those with the requisite property qualification for army recruitment.²² Although special legislation was passed to allow Scipio to be elected to a second consulship to deal with the Numantine War,²³ the Senate refused him funds and permission to levy fresh troops on the ground that Italy would be stripped of men.²⁴ But Scipio was allowed to take volunteer contingents sent by cities and kings out of regard for their personal friendship with him, and to enrol a bodyguard of 500 clients and friends.²⁵ In all he managed to raise 4,000 troops.

Scipio's army of volunteers was thus a private army. These volunteers were enlisted not for their eligibility to be called up whenever necessary in the subsequent ten years

¹⁹ See A. E. Astin, 'The Lex Annalis before Sulla', *Collection Latomus* 17 (1958), 49–64 at 60–1 and G. V. Sumner, *The Orators in Cicero's Brutus: Prosopography and Chronology* (Toronto, 1973), 58 (R57); Broughton (n. 12), 22, n. 34.

²⁰ Astin (n. 19), 61, n. 2. Sumner (n. 19), 70 (R78), says Gaius' service must have counted 'as beginning at the age of 15'. He also points out that not all of Gaius' military service can have been actual service, 'if he spent any time at all on his duties as a land commissioner'.

²¹ Gaius' prohibition of the conscription of those under seventeen was thus not merely reasserting 'the existing state of the law', as proposed by J. W. Rich, 'The supposed manpower shortage of the later second century B.C.', *Historia* 32 (1983), 319. Rich does not find the enlistment of under-age *assidui* plausible, yet the evidence speaks against him.

²² A. E. Astin, *Scipio Aemilianus* (Oxford, 1967), 171; P. Brunt, *Italian Manpower* (Oxford, 1971), 407, n. 2; E. Badian, *ANRW* 1.1.685, n. 48.

²³ Appian, *Iber.* 84; Livy, *Per.* 56.

²⁴ Plutarch, *Mor.* 201A = *Apophth.* *Sc. Min.* 15. Appian, *Iber.* 84 says it was because many wars were being waged at the time, and because there were plenty of soldiers in Spain.

²⁵ Appian, *Iber.* 84; cf. 89; Livy, *Per.* 56;

to defend the *res publica*, but for a specific campaign. At the conclusion of that campaign, they were not on the citizen-roll for military call-up. If under-age boys from propertied families were being recruited by the army of the State for ten years or more military service, and if Scipio had had the fifteen- or sixteen-year-old Tiberius Gracchus with him at Carthage, then we may be sure that under-age volunteers from similar backgrounds were welcomed by that same general for his private army and *cohors amicorum* raised for the Numantine War.²⁶ Finally, is it difficult to imagine how the call to arms by the conqueror of Carthage would not prove irresistible to an adventurous fourteen-year-old, whose wealthy family could provide him with a horse?²⁷ There is every possibility that Lucilius served as a fourteen-year-old *equus* in the Numantine War of 134 B.C. Jerome's date of 148 B.C. for the year of his birth is therefore historically feasible.

Yet Velleius Paterculus says (2.9.4): *celebre et Lucilii nomen fuit, qui sub P. Africano Numantino bello eques militaverat*. To the detractors of Jerome, the most notable feature of this brief notice is that Velleius, as an ex-soldier, does not mention the fact that Lucilius was under-age (*puer*) when he served in the war under Africanus in 134 B.C. However, if 2.9.4 is considered as a whole, it is the fact that the historian does not mention Lucilius' age at all which is the salient feature. Immediately subsequent to his reference to Lucilius, Velleius says that at the same time (in the Numantine War), Jugurtha and Marius were *iuvenes adhuc* serving under the same Africanus.²⁸ It was then, he says, that they received in the same camp the military training which they were later destined to employ in opposing camps (i.e. in the latter part of the Jugurthine War in 107–105 B.C.). Velleius then proceeds to relate that, at this time (107–105 B.C.), Sisenna, author of the *Histories*, was *iuvenis*; his works *Civil Wars* and *Wars of Sulla* were published several years later, when he was *senior*.²⁹

²⁶ Scipio could distribute only seven denarii each to his men (Pliny, *N.H.* 33.141), so the wealth of his volunteer recruits was no doubt far more important as a criterion of acceptance than their age.

²⁷ Lucilius was apparently of senatorial stock for it seems he was uncle of Lucilia who was *stirpis senatoriae* and who became mother of Pompeius Magnus (Vell. Pat. 2.29.2). For further references, see Gruen (n. 3), 277, n. 24.

²⁸ Cf. Plutarch, *Marius* 3.2 where we are told that Marius first served as a soldier in the war against the Celtiberians, when Scipio Africanus besieged Numantia. But Marius was twenty-three—not young for a new army recruit seeing action for the first time. E. Badian, 'Marius and the nobles', *DJ* 25 (1963–4), 141–154, at 144, n. 6 notes that 'Plutarch, rather interestingly, calls Marius a "youth" (*meirakion*) at this stage—clearly judging from the fact that he was doing his first military service.' Sallust, too (*Jug.* 63.3: *ubi primum aetas militiae patiens fuit, stipendiis faciundis*) calls Marius a youth when he entered the army.

²⁹ Velleius' record of the lifespan of Sisenna poses some problems. Cicero, *Brutus* 228 says that he was younger than Sulpicius (b. 124 B.C.) and older than Hortensius (b. 114 B.C.). J. C. Silverberg, 'A Commentary to the Roman History of Velleius Paterculus (Book II 1–28)', unpubl. diss. (Harvard, 1967), 127 says we can limit his birth date to some time before 118 because he must have been at least forty in 78 to hold the office of *praetor urbanus* (following H. Peter, *Hist. Rom. Rel.* 1.2 [1914]). Sumner (n. 19), 24, makes a similar deduction based on minimum age. Hellegouarc'h (n. 3), 155 assigns his birth 'aux environs de 120 avant J.-C.' Yet we must take Sisenna's birth-date back to 122 B.C. if he is to be regarded as *iuvenis* (seventeen or older) by the end of the Jugurthine War in 105 B.C. This is not impossible, of course. If Silverberg and Sumner have deduced his age correctly, however, then he was only eleven–thirteen years old, and would not qualify for the category of *iuvenis* at this time. Even Hellegouarc'h's date of 120 B.C. does not fit. As he himself says (p. 155): 'Il faut entendre *tum et post aliquot annos* dans un sens assez large, car Sisenna . . . n'aurait eu qu'une quinzaine d'années à la fin de la guerre contre Jugurtha et il y a une vingtaine d'années entre cet événement et la fin des guerres syllaniennes (88–82 avant J.-C).' Sisenna died in 67 B.C. This poses no problem, for whether he was born as early as 123 or as late

Age classification thus figures strongly in Velleius' depiction of Jugurtha, Marius, and Sisenna. So why not Lucilius? Why is he not presented by Velleius in the same manner as Sisenna: that he was *puer* when he served in the War, but that his *Satires* were published later, when he was *iuuenis*? All that can be said in this regard is that evidence *ex silentio* cannot be considered as particularly telling in Velleius Paterculus. We need only note some of the anomalies in his work to make the point.

Chapter 9 of his second book is a self-contained digression on Roman cultural history, providing a catalogue of orators and literary figures arranged internally with regard to genre and chronology. It covers a period roughly from the fall of Carthage to the end of the Social Wars. The chapter can be divided into three parts: oratory (1 and 2), drama (tragedy and comedy 3 and 4), and history (5 and 6). In this literary line-up, two figures do not fit the categories: Lucilius who wrote Satire, and Pomponius who wrote Atellan Farce.

Velleius makes some curious omissions. While informing us (erroneously) that Pomponius was noteworthy for inventing a new kind of composition,³⁰ he does not say what it was. While informing us that Lucilius' name was celebrated, he neither tells us that Satire was his literary genre, nor that he was credited with inventing this new kind of composition.³¹ These omissions, conspicuous in a literary inventory, contrast with the detail he supplies about the dramatists Afranius, Pacuvius, and Accius, and especially the historian Sisenna. The solitary detail he does supply about Lucilius—that he fought as an *equus* in the Numantine War—bears no discernible relationship to the considerable contribution he made to Roman literature, nor indeed to the overall cultural theme of the digression.

The inclusion of this anomalous detail might be for one or two reasons. First, as the wars in Spain (of which the *bellum Numantinum* was the second part) marked a significant historical trend in Velleius' view—that is, the decline of Rome from the recent destruction of Carthage (2.1) until its arrest in the principate of Augustus (2.90)³²—the Numantine War, starring Scipio Aemilianus, conqueror of Carthage and a pivotal character in Velleius' moral thesis (2.1, 2.4.2, etc.), was at the forefront of his mind. The knowledge of Lucilius' participation in it simply prompted the ex-soldier to insert this incongruous snippet.

Or was it just a clumsy way of introducing Marius and Jugurtha, who made no contribution to Rome's cultural history whatsoever?³³ What are their names doing in a literary inventory? Is mention of them here simply a means of introducing the two whose careers are elaborated upon at 2.11 onwards?³⁴ Velleius does not just leave out

as 115 B.C., he was still more than forty-five or forty-six years in 67 (minimum forty-eight, maximum fifty-six), so did indeed make the *senior* category. But we must agree with Hellegouarc'h that Velleius is very free with his linking of temporal phrases.

³⁰ Atellan Farce was known as early as the mid fourth century B.C. (Livy 7.2.11–12); Silverberg (n. 29), 132; Hellegouarc'h (n. 3), 155.

³¹ According to both Horace (*Sat.* 1.10.43, 2.1.62–8) and Quintilian (10.1.93), Lucilius was *inventor* of a genre untouched by the Greeks.

³² For example, at 2.1.3 Velleius describes the Numantine War as *gravius* than that against Viriathus, which itself was *triste et contumeliosum*. As Silverberg (n. 29), 13 points out, the idea of 'disgrace' is the dominant theme throughout Velleius' narration of Rome's wars in Spain in this chapter. The same theme is also dominant at 2.90.3 where Velleius, looking back from the Principate of Augustus, returns to the subject of the Spanish Wars and refers to the *terror Numantini belli*.

³³ Velleius later describes Marius as *hirtus atque horridus* (2.11.1). And Plutarch (*Marius* 2.2) was disgusted (naturally) with his deliberate ignorance of Greek literature and learning.

³⁴ Silverberg suggests (n. 29), 127 that it is an allusion which Velleius cannot resist making, as

details pertaining to one character that he supplies in another; he leaves out important names altogether; for example, his first literary digression at 1.17 omits the name of Plautus under writers of comedy, and his third at 2.36.2 omits the name of Horace among great poets in the age of Augustus. Velleius nowhere mentions that the Gracchi were under-age when they began their military service either. The somewhat erratic nature of Velleius' process of selection, then, must eliminate his silence about Lucilius' age as evidence that the satirist was not under-age in the Numantine War.

What then of Horace's representation of Lucilius as *senex* if the satirist did die, as Jerome says, in his forty-sixth year? First it must be said that the concept *senex/senecta* can project multiple meanings in life and literature and is not restricted to signifying the fact of being old in the sense of longevity or physical decrepitude. It may be a matter of personal psychological decision or interpretation on the part of the individual, according to how he views himself in particular circumstances. Jerome, for example, described himself as *senex* at the age of forty.³⁵ In a creative work *senex* can be employed as a literary construct for a variety of purposes. It can convey the meaning 'of old' in the sense of poetic ancestor, as in Virgil, *Eclogue* 6.70, Horace, *Satire* 1.10.67 and Persius 1.124. It can be used as ironic, poetic exaggeration, as where Horace poses as prematurely old in verse which he wrote as a young man (e.g. *Epodes* 17.21; *Ode* 1.31.19). It can be understood as a military classification signifying a soldier-veteran status which was traditionally understood as beginning at the age of forty-six.³⁶ Horace's familiarity with this classification is evident at *Satire* 1.1.29–32, where he identifies the retired soldier and sailor as *senes*. Livy, referring to Hannibal, lowered that threshold to forty-five years when it served a rhetorical technique for antithetical contrast.³⁷

In *Satire* 2.1, Horace uses *senex* in a way which conveys not one but several of the above meanings. Referring to Lucilius, he says (30–4):

ille velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim
credebat libris, neque si male cesserat, usquam
decurrans alio, neque bene; quo fit, ut omnis
votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella
vita senis.

These lines depict Lucilius as a poet who lived in the past, suggesting *senex* in the sense of poetic ancestor. The idea of an *omnis vita senis* painted on a *votiva tabella* furthermore conjures up the image of *senex* in the sense of (poetic) war-veteran who

it brings to mind two future historical personages, Jugurtha and Marius, whose early military experience was to have an impact on later Roman politics and whose dealings with one another in the Jugurthine War form the content of 2.11 (see also Gruen [n. 3], 276, n. 20). Silverberg also suggests that Velleius wishes to demonstrate the strange workings of fortune; cf. his similar interest in another example of former colleagues-in-arms turned adversaries in 2.12.1 (Marius and Sulla).

³⁵ For a list of 'young' *senes*, ranging in age from forty to fifty-six, see A. Cameron, *Callimachus and his Critics* (Princeton, 1995), 177–9.

³⁶ See n. 9. *Senecta* at forty-six is corroborated by Polybius 6.19.2; Cicero, *De sen.* 60; Varro *ap. Censorinus* 14.3; Dion. Hal. 4.16.3; Livy 43.14.6.

³⁷ Livy says that as *puer* Hannibal was a soldier, as *iuvenis* an imperator, and as *senex* (at age forty-five) a victor (30.28.4). At 30.30.10 he has the forty-five-year-old Carthaginian tell Scipio that he was now (in 202 B.C.) a *senex* returning to the homeland he had left as (a nine-year-old) *puer*.

had weathered many storms in his literary career.³⁸ This idea is reinforced when Horace subsequently has himself addressed as *puer* (line 60), which shows that he also intended *senex* to be one part of an antithetical contrast to establish a generational gap between himself and Lucilius. The *senex/puer* opposition, familiar as military age classifications, can also be read as integral to the warrior metaphor (literature being the weapon employed to defend freedom of speech) which pervades the poem: Horace is the young literary warrior of the present (e.g. lines 39–56), Lucilius the veteran of the past whom Horace has chosen to emulate (*sequor hunc* line 34). Lucilius as *senex* also provides both counterbalance and contrast to Horace's older contemporary, the jurist Trebatius, whose seniority and 'civilian' status is evoked by *pater* (line 13) and *docte Trebati* (line 78), which in turn provide a foil to the youthful verbal warrior, Horace.

Horace deliberately adopts the persona of a young man in this *Satire* to emphasize, for dramatic purposes, the generational gap between himself, Lucilius, and Trebatius, and the temporal and experiential separation between himself and his prolific, free-speaking, literary predecessor. These overlapping contrasts are just a few of many which serve as tactics of a complex artistic strategy: to defend the validity of satire as a poetic genre.³⁹

Yet Horace was about thirty-five and a mature poet when he wrote this, the last of his *Satires*,⁴⁰ so his casting of himself as *puer* is rhetorical exaggeration. So too, then, could be his casting of Lucilius as *senex*.⁴¹ Because the dynamics within the *pater senex puer* triangle perform such an important programmatic function in Horace's poetic design, this poem can no more be used as evidence of Lucilius' physical age when he died than it can be for Trebatius' physical role as *pater*, or Horace's physical *pueritia* when he wrote it. Horace's *Lucilius senex*, however, is as legitimate in rhetorical terms as Livy's forty-five-year-old *Hannibal senex* (see n. 37). It is no argument, then, against Jerome's statement that Lucilius died *anno aetatis XLVI*.

Gaius Lucilius could have served as a fourteen-year-old *equus* in the Numantine War of 134 B.C. The failure of Velleius Paterculus to mention his under-age status is no evidence against it. Horace's rhetorical *Lucilius senex* cannot be used as evidence that the satirist died at an age greater than forty-five years. The Chronicler's dates of 148–103 B.C. still stand until real evidence to the contrary is found.

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³⁸ Cf. Cicero, *De nat. deor.* 3.89; Horace, *Ode* 1.5.13–16; *Ars Poetica* 20–1. For further examples of tablets hung in temples to commemorate an escape from danger, see Nisbet and Hubbard, *Commentary on Horace's Odes I* (Oxford, 1970), 78 on 1.5.14.

³⁹ It is difficult to justify this statement without a more detailed reading of this poem. However, there is not the space for such a reading here.

⁴⁰ This *Satire*, although positioned at the beginning of the second book, is commonly accepted as being the last composed: E. Fraenkel, *Horace* (Oxford, 1957), 147; N. Rudd, *The 'Satires' of Horace: a Study* (Cambridge, 1966), 131; F. Muecke, *Horace Satires II* (Warminster, 1993), 100.

⁴¹ Fraenkel (n. 40), 151–2 notices the incongruity between the portrait of Lucilius in this satire and that in Horace's earlier satires.