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PERSIUS ON HIS PREDECESSORS: A RE-EXAMINATION

In his first satire, which is programmatic, Persius defends his intention to write satire despite his imaginary interlocutor's warning of the perils of that genre,[1] and he appeals to the examples of Lucilius and Horace and their *libertas*:[2]

> secuit Lucilius urbem,
> te Lupe, te Muci, et genuinum fregit in illis.
> omne uafer uitium ridenti Flaccus amico
> tangit et admissus circum praecordia ludit,
> callidus excusso populum suspendere naso.[3] (1.114 18)

Lucilius ripped into Rome—you, Lupus, you, Mucius—and broke a molar on them. While his friend is laughing, the rascal Horace touches every fault in him and, once he's got in, he frolics around his heart, clever at dangling the public from his cleaned out nose. (trans. Braund, Loeb)

All the later satirists refer to their predecessors by name,[4] especially to Lucilius, the *inuentor* of Roman satire, according to Horace.[5] This practice not only serves as a means of paying tribute to the creator of the particular literary genre, which Quintilian proudly named Roman,[6] but also as a pretext for the poet to converse with the literary tradition that preceded him and to promote his own contribution to the genre's evolution. Within this framework, one finds that aspects of Lucilius' programme are commented upon by his successors, who, while never failing to recognize his contribution and claim to follow his example, in fact do not adopt their predecessor's practices, both in terms of the satire's direction[7] and its style. An explicit

[1] 1.107 10. This warning is a standard subject in Roman satire; cf. Lucil. 713 14 W = 620 1 M; Hor. *Sat.* 2.1.60 2; Juv. 1.160 70.

[2] Cf. J. C. Bramble, *Persius and the Programmatic Satire; A Study in Form and Imagery* (Cambridge, 1974), 131 and 135. For this means of self justification, which also is a topos in Roman satire, see R. A. Harvey, *A Commentary on Persius* (Leiden, 1981), 49 on 1.114 18, who cites Hor. *Sat.* 2.1.62 74 and Juv. 1.153 4; cf. also E. J. Kenney, 'The First Satire of Juvenal', *PCPhS* 8 (1962), 29 40, at 36, where both the warning of the perils of the satiric genre and the appeal to Lucilius are presented as parts of the pattern of apology used by the satirists in their programmatic satires. On this pattern of apology, see also J. G. Griffith, 'The ending of Juvenal's First Satire and Lucilius, Book XXX', *Hermes* 98 (1970), 56 72.

[3] All citations from Persius and *Vita Persi* follow the OCT edition of W. V. Clausen, *A. Persi Flacci et D. Iuni Iuuenalis Saturae* (Oxford, 1992^2). All citations from Horace follow the Teubner edition of D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Q. Horati Flacci Opera* (Stuttgart, 1991^2).

[4] Apart from Persius (1.114 18), the same practice is observed in both Horace (*Sat.* 1.4, 1.10, 2.1) and Juvenal (1.1).

[5] Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.48.

[6] Quint. 10.1.93: *Satura quidem tota nostra est.*

[7] See e.g. H. C. Fredricksmeyer, 'An observation on the Programmatic Satires of Juvenal, Horace and Persius', *Latomus* 49 (1990), 792 800, at 792 n. 3, who states that from fragments of Lucilius and relevant comments by Horace (*Sat.* 1.4.1 6, 1.10.3 5, 2.1.61 70), Persius (1.114 15), and Juvenal (1.165 7) it appears that 'Lucilian satire was distinguished by at least three characteristics: 1. *ad hominem* attacks, 2. against socially prominent individuals, 3. who were alive at the time'. Of his successors, however, despite their theoretical declarations, no one follows Lucilius' example in practice. Horace avoids attacking living persons of importance, Persius departs towards more philosophical views, and Juvenal, according to his statement, attacks only those who are deceased.

criticism of the *inuentor* of the genre is to be found in Horace, who accuses Lucilius[8] of coarseness and abuse, muddiness and prolixity, eagerness for publicity, rough language and versification, rhetorical and poetic style, and frequent use of Greek words.

Horace's precedent might make it possible to contemplate the possibility that Persius' brief reference is not so limited in its scope that it expresses only respect, acknowledgment, and praise for his predecessors,[9] or the promise of following their example, as scholars often claim.[10] Though his comments are not so broad and extended as Horace's, Persius does not fail to present elements of criticism aimed both at Lucilius and Horace,[11] and thus he converses with them, defining his own place within the evolution of the literary genre.

It is well known that Lucilius' work is one of Persius' direct models in form and thought.[12] The *Vita Persi* informs us that Persius started to compose satires after reading the tenth book of Lucilius,[13] while the *Scholia* attribute the first, or second, line of Persius' first satire to Lucilius' first book.[14] Moreover, only a few lines before Persius refers to his predecessors by name, he uses the phrase *sonat hic de nare canina/littera* (1.109–10), which points directly to Lucilius and the latter's

[8] On Horace's attitude towards Lucilius, see esp. N. Rudd, *The Satires of Horace* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, and Bristol, 1982[2]), 86 131; R. Scodel, 'Horace, Lucilius, and Callimachean polemic', *HSPh* 91 (1987), 199 215.

[9] Persius' respect for the previous exponents of Roman verse satire is evident even in his diction, which consists of many strong words (*secuit*, *fregit*, *tangit*, *excusso*). It is worth noting that Persius, in general, employs strong, sharp words to describe the kind of poetry and attitudes that he admires while, in contrast, he describes his contemporary poetry and its lack of virility with neuter indefinites and words connoting softness and effeminacy; see C. S. Dessen, *The* Satires *of Persius; Iunctura Callidus Acri* (London, 1996[2]), 34 5, where rel evant examples are given.

[10] See e.g. E. Paratore, *Biografia e poetica di Persio* (Florence, 1968), 161 2, where it is stated that in lines 1.116 18 Persius shows his 'massimo rispetto' for Horace and presents 'una ottima caratterizzazione' of the Horatian satire; Bramble (n. 2), 131 and 135, who explains the lines as an indication of Persius' duty to the principle of satiric *libertas*; W. T. Wehrle, *The Satiric Voice: Program, Form and Meaning in Persius and Juvenal* (Hildesheim, Zürich, and New York, 1992), 29, who adds that 'further, the appeal to these earlier satirists serves to vali date P.'s own *apologia*'; J. G. F. Powell, 'Persius' First Satire: a re examination', in T. Woodman and J. Powell (edd.), *Author and Audience in Latin Literature* (Cambridge, 1992), 150 72 and 248 51, at 169, who believes that 'The epigrammatic descriptions of Persius' two satiric predecessors ... have a definite rhetorical purpose, which is to lead up to the climax "*me muttire nefas*?"'.

[11] Cf. M. Coffey, *Roman Satire* (Bristol, 1989[2], repr. 1991), 112, who succinctly notes that the description of Lucilius and Horace in lines 1.114 18 is a masterly example of friendly car icature. In W. S. Merwin and W. S. Anderson, *The Satires of Persius* (Bloomington, 1961), 18 24, 27 it is stated that in his famous lines Persius reviews the approaches of his predecessors and then deliberately places himself with them. However, Anderson admits (22) that the way Persius chooses to render the image of Horace is curious and marks (27) some differences between Persius and Horace.

[12] See e.g. E. Gaar, 'Persius und Lucilius', *WS* 31 (1909), 244 → G. C. Fiske, 'Lucilius and Persius', *TAPhA* 40 (1909), 121 50; id., 'Lucilius, the *Ars Poetica* of Horace, and Persius', *HSPh* 24 (1913), 1 36; G. Faranda, 'Caratteristiche dello stile e del linguaggio poetico di Persio', *RIL* 88 (1955), 512 38, at 533 7.

[13] *Vita Persi* 51 3: *sed mox ut a schola magistrisque deuertit, lecto Lucili libro decimo uehementer saturas componere instituit. cuius libri principium imitatus est.*

[14] *Scholia* (ed. Jahn) *ad* 1.2: *hunc uersum de Lucilii primo transtulit.* However, this attribu tion has been the cause of many a discussion; see e.g. J. E. G. Zetzel, 'Lucilius, Lucretius, and Persius 1.1', *CPh* 72 (1977), 40 2; W. Kissel, *Aules Persius Flaccus: Satiren* (Heidelberg, 1990), 109 12 on 1.1; more recently, J. D. Sosin, 'Lucretius, Seneca and Persius 1. 1 2', *TAPhA* 129 (1999), 281 99, where the relevant bibliography is included.

well-known metaphor in which he likens the satirist to a dog,[15] preparing the ground for the description that follows.

The main elements of Lucilius that Persius is highlighting at this point are the *libertas* and the fierceness of his criticism. In particular, he notes that Lucilius attacked by name certain contemporaries who were eminent members of Roman society, causing harm to himself. The choice of the phrase *secuit Lucilius urbem* aims at demonstrating his violence and, though it invokes similar Horatian thought, again in relation to Lucilius (Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.3–4: *at idem, quod sale multo/urbem defricuit, charta laudatur eadem*; cf. also *Sat.* 2.1.69: *primores populi arripuit populumque tributim*), it lacks Horace's elegance. The meaning *secuit* is much stronger[16] than the Horatian *defricuit*, while Horace's comment on the 'plenty of wit' (*sale multo*), with which Lucilius scourged the city, is thoroughly suppressed.

The sense of violence apparent in the phrase *secuit Lucilius urbem* reaches a climax in the phrase *genuinum fregit in illis*,[17] by which Lucilius' conflict is depicted as so fierce[18] that it leads to his breaking his back tooth on his opponents.[19] The historical reality, however, of which in all likelihood Persius was aware, does not confirm this. Lucilius, enjoying the support of his eminent protector Scipio Aemilianus, managed to remain unpunished for insulting those around him.[20] Furthermore, it is a known fact that when he died in Naples he was sent off with full honours.[21] So in the phrase *genuinum fregit in illis*, which is usually interpreted as a rhetorical hyperbole,[22] along with the intensity and passion of the conflict, perhaps we should also examine other poetic expediencies. According to Freudenburg, the term *genuinus* is chosen to imply both genuine and inborn criticism,[23] a term which at the same time encapsulates the sense of the native.[24] If Freudenburg is correct in making this association, then one could suggest that a possible hint at the sense of the native is in accordance with the belief in the Roman origins of verse satire and the recognition of Lucilius as the founder of a purely Roman literary genre;[25] if that is the case, this image could draw attention to Lucilius' inefficiency, as he failed to keep his work free from non-Roman elements. In that case, the implication could possibly concern the use of a large number of Greek words by Lucilius,[26] a matter Persius was particularly

[15] Lucil. 1000 1 W = 1095 6 M; the same image is adopted by Horace (*Sat.* 2.1.85) as well.

[16] For the various dim metaphorical implications of *secare*, which are reinforced here, see Kissel (n. 14), 261 on 1.114 15.

[17] Perhaps this is another echo of Horace; cf. *Sat.* 2.1.77: *fragili quaerens illidere dentem.*

[18] It is worth noting that the poetic choice of the word *genuinus* enhances the sense of the fierceness of the conflict, as the reference to a tooth found deep in the mouth completes the metaphorical image of biting with the further image of chewing; cf. Kissel (n. 14), 263 on 1.115.

[19] The *Scholia* (ed. Jahn) *ad* 1.114 misleadingly interpret: *ut frangeret genuinum illorum.*

[20] See F. Muecke, *Horace: Satires II* (Warminster, 1993), 112 on Hor. *Sat.* 2.1.75.

[21] Cf. Hier. *Chron. a. Abr.* 1914.

[22] Cf. F. Villeneuve, *Essai sur Perse* (Paris, 1918), 399.

[23] K. Freudenburg, *Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal* (Cambridge, 2001), 178, n. 108: 'The forms *genuinus* ('molar' from *gena* 'jaw') and *genuinus* ('inborn', 'genuine') are indistinguishable'.

[24] See OLD, s.v. genuinus[1], 1, b.

[25] For verse satire as a Roman literary genre, apart from Quintilian's famous phrase: *Satura quidem tota nostra est* (10.1.93), cf. also Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.64 7: *fuerit Lucilius, inquam,/comis et urbanus, fuerit limatior idem/quam rudis et Graecis intacti carminis auctor/quamque poetarum seniorum turba.*

[26] On Graecisms in Lucilius, see Rudd (n. 8), 111 24; id., *Themes in Roman Satire* (Norman and London, 1986), 162 70.

sensitive about.[27] The likelihood of a negative suggestion directed at Lucilius in the phrase in question is increased when we further consider the fact that in Persius the metaphorical depiction of poetry as food is dominant.[28] Thus, the fractured back tooth could imply rough, hard, and indigestible poetic creation,[29] an accusation that brings to mind Horace's criticism of Lucilius on linguistic and stylistic matters.

A far more interesting and convincing interpretation has to do with Lucilius' integrity. A broken tooth points to mutilation and loss of wholeness, and thus, by extension, to loss of *integritas*, which at a metaphorical level has the connotations of moral uprightness, probity, and integrity.[30] Besides, it is worth noting that Horace applies the adjective *integer* to himself as a satirist in *Sat.* 2.1.84–5: *si quis/opprobriis dignum latrauerit integer ipse?* and that the particular satire relates to Lucilius. Thus it is possible that breaking a tooth here hints at breaking integrity, perhaps implying that the savagery was running away with itself and losing sight of the supposed moral aim. Lucilius attacked many eminent members of Roman society savagely and became so intensely embroiled in personal disputes, occasionally for political reasons, that at times the moral dimension of the criticism of the *uitia* was waved aside, as has already been noticed by the *Scholia.*[31] This interpretation is further reinforced by the fact that the particular tooth is called σωφρονιστήρ by the Greeks, since it is regarded as a wisdom tooth[32] because it grows at about the age of twenty.[33] Consequently, Persius' comment could refer to Lucilius' deviation from the supposed aim of society's moral correction, as well as to his state of being affected by passion, prejudice, or partiality, thus making him a person of diminished integrity.

The identification of *genuinus* with the Greek σωφρονητήρ or σωφρονιστήρ is mentioned already by the *Scholia.*[34] However, according to a second interpretation in the *Scholia*, the tooth in question is identified with the canine tooth. In that case, which seems less probable here, Persius is possibly exploiting the dog imagery strongly connected with Lucilius. It is worth noting, as I have stated, that this particular image has already been used a few lines earlier (1.109 10). Besides, a reference to the canine

[27] Cf. esp. 1.69 70: *ecce modo heroas sensus adferre docemus/nugari solitos Graece* and the rejection of the Graecisized poetry in 1.92 106. In addition, the probability of a potential criticism of Lucilius' Graecisms could be increased by Horace's precedent, who accused Lucilius of frequent use of Greek words; cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.20ff., esp. 27 30: *scilicet oblitos patriaeque patrisque Latini,/cum Pedius causas exsudet Poplicola atque/Coruinus, patriis intermiscere petita/uerba foris malis Canusini more bilinguis.*

[28] See e.g. Bramble (n. 2), esp. 45 59; E. Gowers, *The Loaded Table; Representations of Food in Roman Literature* (Oxford, 1993), 180 8.

[29] Cf. the comment on *genuinum* by C. Cowherd, *Persius, Saturae* (Bryn Mawr, 1986), 57 on 1.115: 'if poetry must be food, it should be hard and tough'.

[30] See OLD, s.v. integritas, 3.

[31] *Scholia* (ed. Jahn) *ad* 1.114: *Certe nouimus, Lucilium in urbe Roma satirographum ita inuectum esse in uitia, ut uideretur non mores carpsisse, sed homines uulnerasse et necasse. Quos enim non uituperauit et uitiauit? Considera* Lupum, Mutium *et alios proceres nostrae reipublicae.*

[32] Cf. e.g. Clearch. fr. 115 Wehrli = *Schol. ad* Nicand. *Theriaca* 447 ὑπὸ κραντῆρος: κραντῆρες λέγονται οἱ ὕστερον ἀναβαίνοντες ὀδόντες παρὰ τὸ κραίνειν καὶ ἀναπληροῦν τὴν ἡλικίαν. νεωτέρων γὰρ ἤδη ἡμῶν γενομένων φύονται οἱ ὀδόντες οὗτοι. Κλέαρχος δέ σωφρονιστῆρας αὐτοὺς καλεῖ. νῦν ἁπλῶς τοὺς ὀδόντας. σωφρονιστῆρες δὲ διά τὸ ἅμα τῷ ἀνιέναι αὐτοὺς καὶ τὸ σῶφρον τοῦ νοῦ λαμβάνειν ἡμᾶς.

[33] Cf. Plin. *N. H.* 11.166: *homini nouissimi, qui genuini uocantur, circiter uicensimum annum gignuntur.*

[34] *Scholia* (ed. Jahn) *ad* 1.115: Genuinus *proprie dens, qui sub genis, qui simul cum homine nascitur et una cum eo interit, qui dens a Graecis* σωφρονητήρ *uocatur. Vel dentes uehementer mordentes* genuini *dicuntur, quos Graeci* κυνόδοντας *appellant.*

tooth and an allusion to a dog could reinforce the image of biting and the implications of *secuit*.

In Horace's case it is worth noting the transition from *urbs* to *amicus*[35] and the replacement of personal attacks with the criticism of *uitium*. In other words, Horace does not adopt the ferocity of Lucilius or the method of personally attacking eminent contemporaries, but he appears friendlier, the smile his most characteristic trait.[36] It is not surprising, therefore, that, due to the fact that he 'follows' the example of the Socratic method in the second book of his *Satires*, Horace has been called 'the Roman Socrates'.[37]

Horace's mildness is a central theme in Persius' passage and it has been argued that it is implied even by means of the reference to him with his cognomen *Flaccus*. The particular cognomen originates from the word *flaccus*,[38] which means someone with drooping, floppy, pendulous ears.[39] It should also be observed that Horace himself uses his cognomen pointedly (*Epod.* 15.12; *Sat.* 2.1.18).[40] Thus the fact that Horace is here referred to as 'Flabby' has been interpreted[41] as an indirect statement about the mildness of Horace's practice as opposed to the harshness of Lucilius. But this view must be treated with more caution. The ear imagery is frequently found in Persius' first satire and especially useful in its interpretation, since it relates to the myth of Midas,[42] important in this satire,[43] where it stands for the low aesthetic criteria of Rome. In four[44] of the five cases we find the diminutive *auricula*, which is used in a derogatory sense[45] to describe those who have faulty ears and therefore cannot make sound aesthetic judgements; only when he refers to his ideal reader does Persius choose the non-diminutive form *auris*,[46] which represents a healthy attitude and an ability to appreciate good poetry. Hence, the fact that

[35] At this point Persius adopts Horace's statement (*Sat.* 1.4.73 4): *nec recito cuiquam nisi amicis, idque coactus,/non ubiuis coramue quibuslibet.*

[36] The practice in question is summed up in his famous phrase *ridentem dicere uerum* (Hor. *Sat.* 1.1.24).

[37] Cf. W. S. Anderson, 'The Roman Socrates: Horace and his Satires', in id. (ed.), *Essays on Roman Satire* (Princeton, 1982), 13 49 (= J. P. Sullivan [ed.], *Critical Essays on Roman Literature: Satire* [London, 1963], 1 37).

[38] Cf. Plin. *N. H.* 11.136: *Aures homini tantum inmobiles. ab his Flaccorum cognomina.*

[39] OLD, s.v. flaccus[1].

[40] Cf. e.g. N. Horsfall, 'Three Notes on Horace's *Epodes*', *Philologus* 117 (1973), 136 8, at 137 8, who notes that the poet was clearly aware of the comical quality of his cognomen and underlines the place in Roman humour of such jokes on cognomina.

[41] Cf. Freudenburg (n. 23), 179.

[42] According to the myth, for which see e.g. Ov. *Met.* 11.85 193 and Hyg. *Fab.* 191, as judge in the musical competition between Apollo and Pan, Midas preferred the latter. His verdict incurred Apollo's punishment, who angrily turned Midas' ears into those of an ass.

[43] For the significant role of the myth of Midas and the ear imagery in the first satire, see more recently J. P. Sullivan, 'Ass's ears and *Attises*: Persius and Nero', *AJPh* 99 (1978), 159 70, esp. at 160 1; W. S. Anderson, 'Persius and the rejection of society', in id. (ed.), *Essays on Roman Satire* (Princeton, 1982), 169 93 (= *Wissenschaftliche Zeitschrift der Wilhelm Pieck Universität Rostock, Gesellschafts und Sprachwissenschaftliche Reihe* 15 [1966], 409 16), at 174ff.; N. Rudd, 'Persius', in E. J. Kenney and W. V. Clausen (edd.), *The Cambridge History of Classical Literature. II. Latin Literature* (Cambridge, 1982), 503 10, at 503; M. Morford, *Persius* (Boston, 1984), 30 1, 37 8, 76, 82 3, 88, and 113 n. 11; Powell (n. 10), 159, 169; Freudenburg (n. 23), mainly 175 and 180.

[44] 1.22: *tun, uetule, auriculis alienis colligis escas*; 1.59: *nec manus auriculas imitari mobilis albas*; 1.107 8: *sed quid opus teneras mordaci radere uero/auriculas?*; 1.121: *auricu las asini quis non habet?*

[45] For Persius' diminutives, see V. D'Agostino, 'I diminutivi in Persio', *AAT* 63 (1928), 5 23.

[46] 1.126: *inde uaporata lector mihi ferueat aure.*

Horace is referred to as *Flaccus* could imply a person with ears in non-diminutive form, who has the necessary aesthetic criteria and the ability to acknowledge poetry of quality. On the other hand, a possible reference to Horace's flaccid and pendulous ears could connect him with Midas,[47] who had the wrong taste in poetry (and a defective attitude to gold). Furthermore, the likelihood of a potential hint at the flaccid Horatian kind of censure by means of a play with his cognomen, as Freudenburg implies, is greatly decreased by the fact that the particular cognomen is common to both Horace and Persius. Accordingly, if there is any significance in Persius' use of the cognomen, it would be better to turn to different explanations. For example, a potential hint at Horace's pendulous ears could facilitate the imagery of *suspendere* two lines later (1.118). In addition, a possible allusion to the sameness of the two poets' cognomen could constitute an indication of Persius' respect for Horace. In this way the relationship between the two poets appears closer and Persius more easily connotes his similarity with his predecessor.

Persius, naturally, appreciates and acknowledges the significance of Horace's contribution, as we can deduce from the frequency of echoes of the latter in the former's work.[48] This imitation, however, for which Persius was so extensively criticized,[49] reveals a free spirit who recreates his model creatively, often overthrowing or revising it. Thus, as we will see further on, even the passage which refers to Horace himself in lines 1.116–18 is based on Horatian vocabulary. This, in turn, becomes the vehicle by means of which Persius, while demonstrating in general his respect for Horace, expresses his disagreement with some of his predecessor's practices.

The adjective *uafer*, used to describe Horace, is probably chosen as a *uariatio* for *callidus*, which appears later. Most scholars prefer not to read into this selection any negative connotation about the poet.[50] It is, however, a word which generally refers to the cunning, devious slave and quite often appears in Horace's *Satires*.[51] The attempt to interpret the choice of the epithet based on the fact that Persius lacks Horace's

[47] Cf. Ov. *Met.* 11.174 9: *nec Delius aures/humanam stolidas patitur retinere figuram,/sed trahit in spatium uillisque albentibus inplet/instabilesque imas facit et dat posse moueri:/cetera sunt hominis, partem damnatur in unam/induiturque aures lente gradientis aselli.* In addition, let us not forget that Horace has likened himself to an ass with drooping ears in *Sat.* 1.9.20–1: *demitto auriculas, ut iniquae mentis asellus,/cum grauius dorso subiit onus.* Thus the risk of an implicit connection with Midas, which does not seem probable in Persius' passage, would be increased.

[48] For Horatian echoes in Persius, see e.g. G. C. Fiske, 'Lucilius, the *Ars Poetica* of Horace, and Persius', *HSPh* 24 (1913), 1 36; Faranda (n. 12), 522 33; D. Henss, 'Die Imitationstechnik des Persius', in D. Korzeniewski (ed.), *Die römische Satire*, (Darmstadt, 1970), 365–83 (= *Philologus* 99 [1955], 277 94); N. Rudd, *Lines of Enquiry; Studies in Latin Poetry* (Cambridge, 1976), 54 83; D. M. Hooley, '*Mutatis mutandis*: imitations of Horace in Persius' First Satire', *Arethusa* 17 (1984), 81–95; id., 'Persius' refractory muse: Horatian echoes in the Sixth Satire', *AJPh* 114 (1993), 137–54; id., *The Knotted Thong; Structures of Mimesis in Persius* (Ann Arbor, 1997), *passim.* In addition, the question in lines 1.103–4: *haec fierent si testiculi uena ulla paterni/uiueret in nobis?* indicates Persius' respect for the literature of the past.

[49] It is for this reason that criticism of Persius by earlier scholars was dominated by the term 'bookish'. For a refutation of this view, see recently P. Connor, 'The Satires of Persius: a stretch of the imagination', *Ramus* 16 (1987), 55–77, esp. at 55.

[50] Cf., for instance, Villeneuve (n. 22), 403, who notes that the negative sense of the word does not exist here; N. Scivoletto, *Auli Persi Flacci Saturae* (Florence, 1961^2, repr. 1964), 31 on 1.116 18, who thinks that *uafer* is said 'in senso buono, come *callidus* successivo'; Harvey (n. 2), 50 on 1.116, who translates it as 'artful' and believes that it is complimentary; Kissel (n. 14), 264 5 on 1.116 17, who attributes the adjective to Persius' intention to avoid a panegyric, which is not consistent with the traditional satiric style.

[51] Hor. *Sat.* 1.3.130; 2.2.131; 2.3.21; 2.4.55; 2.5.24.

discretion[52] misses the point. Persius most probably borrowed a characterization common in Horace and attributed it to him so as to relay all the more convincingly his stance towards not only his predecessor's methods and practices, but also his poetic persona.

This interpretation is reinforced when, later, Horace appears to touch on every human fault (*omne uafer uitium ridenti Flaccus amico/tangit*). Let us not forget that the proverb 'Style is the Man' (*talis hominibus fuit oratio qualis uita*) is the theme of the first satire. This is an Ancient Greek proverb attributed to Socrates that directly connects the language of a person and his life. It has become a Stoic notion, also explored by Seneca in *Epistle* 114, which argues that literary style is an indicator of morality.[53] Therefore, the particular reference to Horace may not be restricted to the thematic material of his poetry, but it could also reflect the way of life he presents, since Horace praises *carpe diem* in his work, suggests *dulce est desipere in loco* (*C.* 4.12.28), and often in his poetry appears to succumb to worldly pleasures. The choice of the verb form *tangit* strengthens such an interpretation, implying both Horace's close connection to *omne ... uitium* and the dominant role the senses played in his poetry. The particular attitude towards life, with the frequently intense Epicurean elements, could hardly remain unremarked upon by Persius, whose thought is manifestly influenced by the Stoic dogma dominant in his day.[54]

[52] Cf. R. G. M. Nisbet, 'Persius', in J. P. Sullivan (ed.), *Critical Essays on Roman Literature: Satire* (London, 1963), 39 71, at 48: 'The characterization is brilliant: *uafer*, for instance, pic tures Horace as a clever, ingratiating slave. Yet though Persius is so ingenious with his words, he does nothing about imitating Horace in practice.'

[53] S. M. Braund, *Juvenal and Persius* (Cambridge, MA and London, 2004), 17. For the central role of this view in Persius' first satire, cf. also, among others, D. Korzeniewski, *Die erste Satire des Persius*, in id. (ed.), *Die römische Satire* (Darmstadt, 1970), 384 438 (Originalbeitrag 1968), at 388, 435; Bramble (n. 2), esp. 16 25; J. P. Sullivan, *Literature and Politics in the Age of Nero* (Ithaca and London, 1985), 108 9; G. Lee and W. Barr, *The Satires of Persius* (Liverpool, 1987), 66 and 82 3 on 1.103 4 Dessen (n. 9), 23ff., 70, 95; D. M. Hooley, *The Knotted Thong; Structures of Mimesis in Persius* (Ann Arbor, 1997), 26 7. The proverb is frequently found in many other Latin writers; cf. Cic. *Tusc.* 5.47: *sic enim prin ceps ille philosophiae* (sc. *Socrates*) *disserebat: qualis cuiusque animi adfectus esset, talem esse hominem; qualis autem homo ipse esset, talem eius esse orationem; orationi autem facta similia, factis uitam*; Sen. *Ep.* 114.1: *Hoc quod audire uulgo soles, quod apud Graecos in prouerbium cessit: talis hominibus fuit oratio qualis uita*; Quint. 11.1.30: *nec sine causa Graeci prodiderunt ut uiuat quemque etiam dicere.*

[54] For Persius' philosophical orientation, apart from the many sporadic references in the commentaries on his *Satires* both in their introductions and, occasionally, concerning particular lines, see e.g. Ch. Burnier, *Le rôle des satires de Perse dans le développement du néo stoïcisme* (Chaux de Fonds, 1909), where the contribution of Persius' *Satires* to the evolution of Stoic thought is examined; Villeneuve (n. 22), esp. 24 109, where Persius' relationship with Thrasea Paetus and Cornutus is described, and sporadically in the rest of the work; N. Festa, 'Persio e Cleante', in *Scritti per il XIX centenario dalla nascità di Persio* (Volterra, 1936), 15 30, where the relationship between Persius and Cleanthes is examined, as well as, to a greater extent, the fifth satire; J. W. Duff, *Roman Satire: Its Outlook on Social Life* (Berkeley, 1936), 116 19, where Persius' commitment to Stoic thought to the point of consid ering it a panacea for literary decadence and social failings is highlighted; J. M. K. Martin, 'Persius—poet of the Stoics', *G&R* 8 (1939), 172 82, where mention is made of the people who introduced Persius to Stoicism and where the role of this philosophical movement in the poet's moral and literary protest is underlined; K. J. Reckford, 'Studies in Persius', *Hermes* 90 (1962), 476 504, esp. at 490 8, where, while the presence of Stoic paradoxes and terminology in the *Satires* is noted, Persius' characterization as a Stoic moralist is considered a bad over simplification; Ch. Witke, *Latin Satire; The Structure of Persuasion* (Leiden, 1970), 79 112 and 272, esp. 89 110, where various Stoic elements are noted in an analysis of the fifth satire; D. Škoviera, 'Persius' world of thought', *GLO* 5 (1973), 39 47, who believes that the

The close relationship Horace enjoyed with the people he criticized and his mild practices are main themes to which Persius turns his attention, again employing Horatian diction in his description.[55] Thus, Horace is depicted as provoking his friend's smile (*ridenti ... amico*) and attempting to become accepted in his heart, where he is playing (*admissus circum praecordia ludit*). The amiable approach dominates at this point and reaches a climax in the reference to Horace's intention to enter *circum praecordia*, the seat of hidden passions and emotions.[56] This practice, however, constitutes an admission of the problem of vice, but it does not demonstrate the extent of the opposition to it. There is not even the slightest reference either to indignation brought on by faults or to an attempt at their rectification. Even if we were to interpret the phrase *omne uitium tangit* as a medical image, this would still be restricted to a diagnosis of the problem.[57] The presence of *ludit* could lead to similar conclusions. The choice of this word is possibly connected to Horace's self-imposed definition of *ludi* with regard to his satiric poetry[58] and it should be observed that the term *ludus* is used in a similar way by Lucilius,[59] while it is applied to Persius' composition by Cornutus at 5.16,[60] where it helps to temper the severity of the aims attributed there to Persius.[61] At the same time, however, in the particular context of Persius' description of Horace, the word *ludit* is in accordance with the predominant sense of Horace's amiable approach; thus it reinforces with its implications the impression regarding his mild practices in highlighting the *uitia* and does not indicate an attempt to solve the problem. At this point it is worth considering the phrase in line 5.22: *excutienda damus praecordia*, where Persius himself offers Cornutus his own *praecordia* for examination and analysis, and comparing the term *ludit* with the much stronger *excutienda.* Both Persius' philosophical orientation and the very times in which he lived call for a different, more drastic approach to the *uitia* than the one found in Horace, which, examined in the light of the new conditions, appears inefficient. Although criticizing your friend must surely still have some value, even in Persius' Neronian context, the *uitia* of Nero's time cannot be compared to those of the Augustan period and, evidently, a non-Horatian age deserved non-Horatian satire.[62] Thus, this is the reason that

reverberation of Stoicism is clear in every line of Persius' work; Wehrle (n. 10), 98 106, where the poet's view on freedom and the factors which curtail it, a view influenced by Stoic thought, is mainly examined; Dessen (n. 9), *passim*, who primarily stresses the central role of Stoicism in Persius' imagery.

[55] Cf. Hor. *Ars P.* 5: *spectatum admissi risum teneatis, amici?*

[56] For this poetic usage of the word *praecordia*, see Kissel (n. 14), 264 on 1.116–17, where many parallels are given.

[57] Villeneuve (n. 22), 403 regards the phrase *omne uitium tangit* as one of the medical metaphors frequently used by the Stoics and cites 3.107: *tange, miser, uenas*. However, *tangere* in line 3.107 constitutes a plea to the patient to realize his illness and stands as a synonym of *inspicere*. It thus functions on the diagnostic level and does not recommend treatment; cf. F. Bellandi, *Persio: dai 'verba togae' al solipsismo stilistico (Studi sui* Choliambi *e la poetica di Aulo Persio Flacco)* (Bologna, 1996[2]), 58, n. 67. Though generally speaking Bellandi's approach is particularly acute, the characterization of Horace's satire as 'morbida' (68, n. 89) has to be considered exaggerated.

[58] Cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.138 9: *ubi quid datur oti,/illudo chartis*; 1.10.37: *haec ego ludo*.

[59] Lucil. 1039 W = 1039 M: *ludo ac sermonibus nostris*.

[60] Pers. 5.15–16: *pallentis radere mores/doctus et ingenuo culpam defigere ludo*.

[61] Cf. Lee and Barr (n. 53), 133 on 5.16. However, the line has been interpreted in many ways; see Kissel (n. 14), 591 3 on 5.16.

[62] See Reckford (n. 54), 500.

Persius does not restrict himself only to his predecessor's laughter, but goes on to guffaw.[63]

Horace's portrayal in the passage is concluded and qualified with the appositional phrase *callidus excusso populum suspendere naso* that most likely explains *omne ... uitium ... tangit et admissus circum praecordia ludit*. While his friend is laughing, the poet is capable of touching every fault in him and, once he has been admitted, of frolicking around his friend's heart, since he is clever at dangling the public from his cleaned-out nose. Horace's method and his relationship with his public are represented here through an image of hanging that depicts the public suspended[64] from the blown nose of the poet, which also points directly to Horatian models.[65] So far, this image has been interpreted in a number of ways.[66] However, the presence of *suspendere* and the reference to the blown nose also allow us to see an indirect metaphorical equation of the public as nasal mucus, demonstrating Persius' contempt for the people (a stance which echoes Stoic dogma) and possibly constituting an indirect expression of Persius' opposition to Horace's practice. A clean nose indicates a better sense of smell and symbolically, therefore, more acute criticism and shrewdness.[67] The fact that in Persius' image the people who are criticized are still hanging on Horace's nose, although it is blown, leads to thoughts of a partly inefficient olfactory system in Horace's case and, by extension, a partly inefficient critical ability, highlighting his close connection to his public, which he is too weak or unwilling to shake off.

The satirist's attitude towards the city and the people appears as a central theme in Persius' thought. Thus, it is possible that the expediency of the phrase *secuit urbem* is not entirely restricted to the imitation of a literary model and to the suggestion of Lucilius' violence. *Vrbanitas*[68] is a characteristic of Lucilius extensively highlighted by Latin writers. It is worth noting both Horace's lines *fuerit Lucilius, inquam,/comis et* ***urbanus*** (*Sat.* 1.10.64–5) and a reference to Lucilius found in Cicero (*De Orat.* 1.72: *Sed, ut solebat C. Lucilius saepe dicere, homo tibi subiratus, mihi propter*

[63] Cf. 1.122: *hoc ridere meum* and 1.11 12: *tunc tunc ignoscite (nolo,/quid faciam?) sed sum petulanti splene–cachinno* and see Lee and Barr (n. 53), 68–9 on 1.8 12. It is worth noting that Juvenal later adopted Persius' practice (cf. 10.31: *rigidi censura cachinni*), as his times also demanded drastic means for dealing with the *uitia*. For different approaches, see J. C. Relihan, 'Pardoning Persius' laughter', *Mnemosyne*[4] 44 (1991), 433–5; M. Morford, '*Sum petulanti splene: cachinno:* the humor of Persius', *CB* 77 (2001), 35 49.

[64] Regarding this image, it is interesting to observe the craft with which the line's structure reinforces its content: the word *populum* is placed in the exact centre of the line with two words on either side, reaching a total of six syllables. Thus, despite the intense hyperbaton, there is a dominant sense of balance.

[65] Cf. Hor. *Sat.* 1.6.5: *naso suspendis adunco*; 2.8.64: *Balatro suspendens omnia naso*. For the metaphor and its history, see mainly G. Bernardi Perini, '*Suspendere naso*. Storia di una metafora', *Mem. Accad. Patavina,Cl. di Sc. mor., Lett. ed Arti* 79 (1966 7), 233 64; cf. also E. Pasoli, 'Attualità di Persio', *ANRW* II.32.3 (1985), 1813 43 (= *Tre poeti latini espressionisti: Properzio, Persio, Giovenale* [Rome, 1982], 377–426), at 1824 6.

[66] See e.g. Morford (n. 63), 38 9 with n. 9, who believes that line 1.118 renders Horace's ability to hang people up for ridicule by sticking his unblocked nose in the air, citing Harvey (n. 2), 50 on 1.116–18 and J. R. Jenkinson, *Persius: the Satires* (Warminster, 1980), 75 n. 36; cf. also B. L. Gildersleeve, *The Satires of A. Persius Flaccus* (New York, Cincinnati, and Chicago, 1903, repr. New York, 1979), 100 on 1.118; Scivoletto (n. 50), 31 on 1.116 18; Kissel (n. 14), 265 on 1.118.

[67] Cf. *Scholia* (ed. Jahn) *ad* 1.118: Excusso naso, *emuncto, unde intelligitur prudenti, ut e contrario qui* stulti *sunt*, mucosi *dicuntur, ita* prudentes emuncti, and see Harvey (n. 2), 50 on 1.118, who cites Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.8: *emunctae naris* and Phaedr. 3.3.14; Jenkinson (n. 66), 75, n. 36.

[68] On the notion and its implications, see predominantly E. S. Ramage, Urbanitas: *Ancient Sophistication and Refinement* (Norman, 1973).

eam ipsam causam minus quam uolebat familiaris, sed tamen et doctus et ***perurbanus****, sic sentio neminem esse in oratorum numero habendum, qui non sit omnibus eis artibus, quae sunt libero dignae, perpolitus*).[69] With his phrase *secuit urbem* Persius is possibly attempting to comment on this position, especially the term *perurbanus*. The case is further reinforced by the fact that in Cicero's text[70] the friction between Lucilius and Mucius Scaevola is also emphasized, the latter being one of the two persons Persius later names (*te Lupe, te Muci*) as having been criticized by Lucilius. In this case, the phrase *secuit urbem* could constitute an allusion to *perurbanus* and wordplay with that characterization, aiming at the re-evaluation of the urbane Lucilius to a slasher of the *urbs*. In other words, Persius is illuminating here two different aspects of his predecessor, and criticizing Lucilius' urbanity and the fact that he is too directly involved in the urban context which he satirizes rather than his savagery itself. Accordingly, the particular phrase could also be seen as an attempt on Persius' part to underline Lucilius' close relationship with the city. Thus, although his predecessor appears violent and cruel with regard to the city, which he castigates and divides, he does not place himself outside it but, as is demonstrated by the use of *secuit*, 'between' it.

Although in the relevant passage Horace's attempt to enter his friends' *praecordia* and his unshaken relationship with his public point towards a definite differentiation from his predecessor's practices, in his case too there is no departure from the city. Persius is possibly referring not only to the *Satires*, but also to the *Epistles*,[71] especially to the first book, since Horace himself does not rigorously distinguish his hexameter poetry-books. The city–country antithesis and the theme of withdrawal from the city are quite prominent there, as is generally the case in Roman satire.[72] Here are some examples. In *Sat.* 2.7.28–9 and *Ep.* 1.8.12 Horace oscillates between city and country life. In *Ep.* 2.2.65–86 the poet gives an unfavourable picture of Rome in order to explain why he cannot write poetry there; on the contrary, the country is presented in lines 77–8 as an ideal setting for composing poetry.[73] Similarly, in *Ep.* 1.7.44–5 Horace writes: *paruum parua decent. mihi iam non regia Roma,/sed uacuum Tibur placet aut imbelle Tarentum*, where for him country symbolically represents *otium* and independence; later in the same poem, however, he presents a story in which life in the city is portrayed as pleasant

[69] Cf. also in Cicero, *De Orat.* 2.25: *Nam ut C. Lucilius, homo doctus et* ***perurbanus****, dicere solebat ea, quae scriberet neque se ab indoctissimis neque a doctissimis legi uelle, quod alteri nihil intellegerent, alteri plus fortasse quam ipse* and *Fin.* 1.7: *facete is quidem, sicut alia; sed neque tam docti tum erant, ad quorum iudicium elaboraret, et sunt illius scripta leuiora, ut* ***urbanitas summa*** *appareat, doctrina mediocris*.

[70] The many echoes of the *De Oratore* in Persius' *Satires* indicate that the latter was aware of Cicero's particular work. A fine example can be found in Persius' famous phrase *ore* ***teres*** *modico* (5.15), which recalls Cic. *De Orat.* 3.199: *sed si habitum etiam orationis et quasi colorem aliquem requiritis, est et plena quaedam, sed tamen* ***teres****, et tenuis, non sine neruis ac uiribus, et ea, quae particeps utriusque generis quadam mediocritate laudatur*.

[71] Cf. Freudenburg (n. 23), 178 n. 108, who notes that with the singular *amico* Persius signals Horace's *Epistles*. For friendship as the dominant relationship in the *Epistles* I, see R. S. Kilpatrick, *The Poetry of Friendship: Horace Epistles I* (Edmonton, 1986).

[72] For city and country in Roman Satire in general, see S. H. Braund, 'City and country in Roman Satire', in *eadem* (ed.), *Satire and Society in Ancient Rome* (Exeter, 1989), 23 47, where Horace's stance is commented upon extensively. She argues (23) that the Roman satirists use the city as a setting for satire and as an object of attack, while the country appears as a retreat from city life.

[73] See Braund (n. 72), 37 8.

(56–9), whereas life in the country is marked by hard work and setbacks (83–7).[74] In *Sat.* 2.6 the poet frequently hints at the moral superiority of country life to city life, while the well-known fable of the town mouse and the country mouse at the end of the satire (77–117) reinforces such an impression. However, we cannot deduce that Horace desired to leave the city.[75] Rather, we are dealing with different aspects of the *persona* Horace is presenting, which correspond to the contrasted portraits of himself, as townsman and countryman, in the satire as a whole.[76] *Epistle* 1.10 needs more attention. Here Horace appears as *ruris amator* (2) and, in implicit contrast with his kingship in the country (8), he feels himself a slave in town, since he rejects urban pleasures as the runaway slave refuses sacrificial cakes (10).[77] He praises rustic life, hints at its moral superiority, and believes that true freedom exists only in the country. At the close of the poem, however, Horace implicitly acknowledges that where we live is of less importance than a cheerful acceptance of what we have.[78] Thus, despite the praise of the countryside, the city is not ruled out as a place for contented living.[79] The idea is further developed and qualified in *Epistles* 1.11 and 1.14, where respectively the poet suggests that location cannot provide you with peace of mind, because this comes from within, and argues that happiness is a state of mind.[80] In general, although Horace acknowledges the moral advantages and the benefits of country life, in the first book of the *Epistles* the countryside does not provide a retreat for Horace the poet, as we can find in the *Odes* and even in the *Satires*, and no longer serves to promote poetic composition.[81] Since the happiness comes from within and the part location plays is limited, withdrawal from the city does not become a necessary action and the only option.

On the other hand, while Lucilius attacks the city and quarrels with eminent citizens, and while Horace plays, making his friend laugh, Persius rejects[82] society and withdraws, as he categorically states immediately before his reference to his predecessors (1.114: *discedo*[83]). Thus, Persius fixes his place in the course of the satiric genre's evolution not between Lucilius and Horace,[84] but beyond the latter. Through

[74] See Braund (n. 72), 43 4.

[75] See Braund (n. 72), 39 43, who notes (42) that 'The implicit message of the poem contra dicts any conclusion we might draw about Horace's desire to leave the city. Horace betrays his obvious enjoyment of the importance his association with Maecenas brings' and cites, for example, line 32, where the poet admits: *hoc iuuat et melli est, non mentiar.*

[76] See Muecke (n. 20), 195, with relevant bibliography.

[77] See R. Mayer, *Horace*, Epistles, *Book I* (Cambridge, 1994), 182 3 on *Ep.* 1.10.10.

[78] Mayer (n. 77), 187 8 on *Ep.* 1.10.44 8.

[79] See Mayer (n. 77), 195, who notes: 'Horace nowhere says that anyone has to live in the country to be happy. The country there is an emblem of simplicity and "naturalness" and as such it is in marked opposition to the city, but that does not rule the city out as a place for con tented living. That is the point made at line 44 *laetus sorte tua*. The country helps, but no exclusive claims are made for it.'

[80] See Braund (n. 72), 44.

[81] Cf. Mayer (n. 77), 46 7.

[82] Concerning Persius' negative stance towards society, cf. e.g. H. Bardon, 'Perse, ou l'homme du refus', *RBPh* 53 (1975), 24 47; Bramble (n. 2), 134 5; Anderson (n. 43); M. Malamud, 'Out of circulation? An essay on exchange in Persius' *Satires*', *Ramus* 25 (1996), 39 64, at 43 4.

[83] A change in the usual punctuation here, proposed by Jenkinson (n. 66), 75 n. 35 and Powell (n. 10), 169, who regard *discedo* not as a statement but as a question, would distort the meaning.

[84] Cf. Malamud (n. 82), esp. 56 7, who correlates lines 1.114 18 with lines 6.18 22, where two twin brothers are described, the one avaricious, the other extravagant. She is of the opinion that Lucilius and Horace are concealed in the image of the brothers, the former being the

this very opposition to Lucilius' and Horace's *urbanitas* a clearer light is shed on the meaning of *semipaganus* in the Prologue,[85] which thus approaches the meaning of *semirusticus*, as has already been mentioned in the *Scholia*.[86] Consequently, apart from its other implications, Persius' neologism, which has troubled scholars no end,[87] condenses the poet's intention to distance himself from the city and disclaim all that urban life entails.[88]

Persius' indifference to the size of his readership also reinforces this interpretation. The question of which public the satirist desires is a common theme in both Lucilius and Horace, who attempt to define it. In particular, Lucilius excludes the very learned and uneducated,[89] while Horace restricts his readers to friends[90] and a group of *pauci lectores*, among whom he includes eminent writers and literary patrons of his day.[91] Persius, who also follows the practice of defining the audience he wants, is more selective and negative towards the opinion of the many. He states that he expects but few readers, if any at all,[92] a position which is in total accord both with the Stoic doctrine that only the wise man is a good poet[93] and with his intention to distance himself from the crowd.

Examined under this light, perhaps it is no coincidence that terms we saw used in the passage referring to Lucilius and Horace (*secuit, fregit, uafer, ridenti, ludit*) are then employed in the description of the readers Persius disclaims:

> inde uaporata lector mihi ferueat aure,
> non hic qui in crepidas Graiorum **ludere** gestit
> sordidus et lusco qui possit dicere 'lusce,'
> sese aliquem credens Italo quod honore supinus
> **fregerit** heminas Arreti aedilis iniquas,
> nec qui abaco numeros et **secto** in puluere metas
> scit **risisse uafer**, multum gaudere paratus
> si cynico barbam petulans nonaria uellat.
> his mane edictum, post prandia Callirhoen do. (1.126–34)

As my reader I want someone set on fire by those authors with his ear steamed clean, not the crude man who loves jeering at the sandals of the Greeks or who can say 'One-eye!' to a one-eyed man, thinking he is Somebody because, stuck up with provincial importance, as

extravagant, as he 'spends his fortune' on outspokenness, and the latter the avaricious, as he attempts to 'accumulate riches' by saying little. Based on this premiss, she concludes that Persius lies somewhere in between the two.

[85] Prol. 6–7: *ipse semipaganus/ad sacra uatum carmen adfero nostrum.*

[86] *Scholia* (ed. Jahn) *ad* Prol. 6: Semipaganus, *semipoeta. Et hoc uerbo humili satyrico modo usus est.* Pagani *dicuntur rustici, qui non nouerunt urbem,* ἀπὸ τοῦ πάγου, *a uilla. Aliter.* Semipaganus, *semiuillanus, i. e. non integre doctus. Ego autem inter poetas et rusticos sum medioximus.* Pagos *enim uilla, fons, unde pagani dicuntur uillani, quasi ex uno fonte potantes.*

[87] See e.g. E. Ch. Witke, 'The Function of Persius' Choliambics', *Mnemosyne*[4] 15 (1962), 153–8, at 156–7; J. H. Waszink, 'Das Einleitungsgedicht des Persius', *WS* 76 (1963), 79–91; G. D'Anna, 'Persio semipaganus', *RCCM* 6 (1964), 181–5; V. Ferraro, 'Semipaganus/semiuillanus/semipoeta', *Maia* 22 (1970), 139–46; Pasoli (n. 65), 1828–34; W. T. Wehrle, 'Persius *Semipaganus*?', *Scholia* 1 (1992), 55–65; F. Bellandi, 'Persio e la poetica del *semipaganus*', *Maia* 24 (1972), 317–41; id. (n. 57), 33–71.

[88] For city and country in Persius' *Satires*, see Braund (n. 72), 44–5, where she mentions that Persius underlines the countryside's moral superiority to the city and that the countryside is used as a symbol of what is real, substantial and valuable.

[89] Lucil. 632–5 W = 592–3, 595–6 M.

[90] Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.71–8.

[91] Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.74–91.

[92] 1.2–3: *'quis leget haec?' min tu istud ais? nemo hercule. 'nemo?'/uel duo uel nemo.*

[93] For the Stoic proposition that is implied here, see Bramble (n. 2), 68, who cites Stob. *Ecl.* vol. II p. 67, Wachsmuth and Sen. *Ep.* 7.9.

aedile at Arretium he broke up short measures, not the rascal who knows how to make fun of sums on the counting board and cones in the furrowed dust, ready to take huge delight when a cheeky tart tugs a Cynic's beard. To these I recommend 'What's On' in the morning and *Callirhoe* after lunch. (trans. Braund, Loeb)

Given the well-known attention Persius devoted to his choice of vocabulary,[94] the repetition of these particular words a few lines later acquires more significance. I believe one must not interpret this as simply an intention to compare effectively the writers whom Persius admires with the kind of audience he disdains.[95] Rather, this is a means by which the poet, along with his main intentions here, expands on his already expressed views concerning his predecessors. Of course, I do not argue that it is just a matter of Horace and Lucilius on the one hand and Persius' readers (or non-readers) on the other. The poet has not created such a symbolical system that equates his predecessors with the kind of audience he rejects. Besides, while the other words in the description of Lucilius and Horace relate to the satirists, *ridenti* refers instead to Horace's target, and in the passage about Persius' readers, whereas *ludere*, *fregerit*, *risisse*, and *uafer* relate to the ignorant and worldly mocker, *secto* relates to the activity of the victim of the mockery. However, with these intratextual verbal echoes, Persius, in the relevant passage, is possibly seizing the opportunity to imply that the suitable reader of his work is not only he who lacks the particular traits that are explicitly mentioned, but also he who shall not attempt to approach and interpret his poetry according to criteria suited to the poetry of his predecessors, since his work presents differences as to the characteristics, the aims, and the victims of his satire. Hence Persius suggests that reading his work demands a different approach and therefore a different, albeit small, readership. Thus he hints at his own separate place in the satiric tradition, a place which sets him apart from his predecessors.[96]

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[94] Cf. *Vita Persi* 41: *scriptitauit et raro et tarde* and see Merwin and Anderson (n. 11), 35 45, esp. 37, where, with regard to Persius' language, it is noted that there is not a word wasted anywhere in his *Satires*; Witke (n. 87), 155, where the occurrence of the form *pallidam* in line Prol. 4 is deemed to show how curiously Persius chooses his words; C. W. Mendell, *Latin Poetry: The Age of Rhetoric and Satire* (Hamden, CT, 1967), 56 7, where the unusual economy concerning words is highlighted; Morford (n. 43), 92 and 107, where mention is made of 'skilled and exact use of vocabulary' and 'accuracy in choice of words' respectively; J. P. Sullivan, 'In defence of Persius', *Ramus* 1 (1972), 48 62, at 61 and id. (n. 53), 112 as well as S. H. Braund, *Roman Verse Satire* (Oxford, 1992), 35 6, where the density of Persius' language and the unusually compressed sequence of pithy thoughts and images are stressed.

[95] For such an approach, see Dessen (n. 9), 38.

[96] I would like to thank the editor, Prof. R. Maltby, and the anonymous reader for this journal for their critical comments and suggestions, which greatly improved my paper.