THEATRE, SPECTACLE, AND THE SATIRIST IN JUVENAL

CATHERINE CLARE KEANE

BESIDES HIS FAMOUS POSTURE OF *INDIGNATIO*, Juvenal's most notable contribution to the genre of Roman satire is colorful, sustained narrative of human activities. In Horace and Persius, stories and tableaux are relatively brief and ancillary to dialogues and monologues, but Juvenal takes us with ceremony to the streets of Rome, to the homes of the great, and even to foreign parts, to show us what he is attacking. At 1.63–64 Juvenal encourages us to think of him standing on a street-corner, watching the depraved world go by, and scribbling furiously. Even his more focused accounts of specific events or lists of exempla, such as the council on Domitian's big fish (*Satire* 4), the parade of foolish human prayers (10), and the cannibalistic battle in Egypt (15), showcase theatrical narrative and tableau description more than the satire of his predecessors does. As the survey of Schmitz (2000: 20–34) indicates, Juvenal's emphasis on the visual suggests the influence of theatre and spectacle.

The satirists who preceded Juvenal cultivated a programmatic connection with literary drama, especially comic drama. Horace situates his *Sermones* in the comic family tree (1.4);[1] Persius invokes Horace's claim that satire is related to Old Comedy (1.123–124), and also figures his authorial role as speech-writing (1.44). Similarly, Juvenal likens his satire to drama, broadly construed, when he refers to one subject as a character whom he must often summon "to play his part" (*Crispinus . . . est mihi saepe vocandus ad partes*, 4.1–2). He also explicitly compares human affairs to theatre and games (14.256–257, 262–264):

> *monstro voluptatem egregiam, cui nulla theatra,*
> *nulla aequare queas praetoris pulpita lauti . . .*
> *. . . ergo omnia Florae*
> *et Cereris licet et Cybeles aulaea relinquas:*
> *tanto maiores humana negotia ludi.*
>
> I show you an extraordinary passion, with which you could equate
> no theatres, no stages of a rich praetor . . .
> . . . Thus you can leave behind
> all the games of Flora and Ceres and the stage-shows of Cybele;
> human affairs make such superior games.

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[1] The most recent discussion of Horace's engagement with Old and New Comedy is Cucchiarelli 2001: 15–55; cf. Leach 1971.

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With this broad comparison, Juvenal includes *ludi*, festival shows that could include races, gladiatorial combat, and various dramatic performances, in the category of "drama" that satire resembles. Whereas the programmatic comments of Horace and Persius hint at formal and stylistic affiliations between satire and drama, Juvenal expands satire's theatrical identity by likening its material to a broad range of entertainments. While his programmatic strategy reflects the applicability of the theatrical model to everyday life, this paper will demonstrate that Juvenal also explores deeper potential relations between satire and spectacles of all kinds. The satirist positions his work in relation to that of his predecessors not simply by imitating their programmatic gestures, but by situating his satire in his own picture of the contemporary theatrical climate.

Juvenal's narratives that comment on theatre and performance emphasize the supposedly perverse aspects of contemporary entertainments and their negative impact on Roman culture. These ideas are more subtly engaged in three well-known programmatic passages from *Satires* 1, 6, and 10. Through a close reading of these three passages, I will argue that Juvenal purposely figures his own generic experiments as transgressions in perverse theatrical mode which exceed the dramatic experiments of his predecessors. That a satirist would take such a self-critical position might seem strange, but Freudenburg (2001) has recently argued that this is Roman satire's primary strategy after Lucilius. By highlighting their failures and limitations in the face of political pressures, the successors of Lucilius demonstrate that conditions in Rome have harmed their genre most of all. It is also useful to remember Henderson's (1995) argument that Juvenal 1 is an exercise in belated and derivative poetics.[2] Being "late" is the first topic of Juvenal's work—in both historical and poetic senses—and is thus a condition and theme that *enables* his satire. What remains to be explored in this vein is the specific relationship between depictions of entertainment *in* Juvenal and the "Juvenalian theatre" described in programmatic contexts. Satiric rhetoric, both programmatic and narrative, constructs fictions; I argue that Juvenal's theatrical programmatic images are designed to interact meaningfully with his narrative fictions.

I. THE PERVERSIONS OF PERFORMANCE

Juvenal makes frequent reference to theatre and spectacle, expressing conservative moral attitudes that Edwards has argued are typical of elite Romans of the Republic and Empire (1993: 98–136; cf. Parker 1999: 163–167). While theatre, spectacles, and games played a vital role in Roman politics and culture, they also engaged some of the deepest anxieties of moralists. Like many authors, Juvenal both recognizes the political and social functions of theatre, games, and races, and condemns those who engage in performance as shameless and perverse. An analysis of the attitudes commonly expressed, and a survey of the Juvenalian

[2] Cucchiarelli (2001: 204–217) analyzes Juvenal's development of programmatic imagery.

passages that illustrate them, will illuminate my subsequent reading of the relevant programmatic material.

The wide appeal of theatre and *ludi* throughout Roman history made these institutions useful political tools. Magistrates and emperors who sponsored shows took credit for their success, and used these occasions to "see and be seen"—to observe the sentiments of the people and to hold audience with petitioners.[3] The division between people and rulers was underscored by seating arrangements based on status, which must have created a striking visual representation of the Roman social hierarchy.[4] As Pompey and Caesar did in the late Republic, the emperors adopted the practice of wearing crowns and triumphal dress at shows.[5] In sum, the shows themselves were backdrops for the real political and social drama on display in the stands: the elaborate, color-coded presentation of Rome's stratified society, and the self-defining communication, from the official to the everyday, that took place within that arrangement.[6] Every member of the audience would perform his or her social identity just by sitting in a particular section and wearing certain attire.

The same popularity that made such entertainments useful for politicians and emperors also makes them excellent material for satire. In Juvenal, the seats at the theatre, amphitheatre, and circus witness the telling behavior of Rome's citizens, from the gossiping *plebs* through self-important *nouveax riches*, to lascivious women who lust after pantomime actors. While Horace's code-words for venues of gossip-exchange are doctors'-offices and barber-shops (*Sat.* 1.7.3), Juvenal's are larger, more socially organized gathering-places: banquets, baths, roadsides, and theatres (*omnis / convictus thermae stationes, omne theatrum*, 11.4). Just as people gather here to share gossip, so too Juvenal comes to these venues to show us examples of vice. At the theatre, the rich sons of pimps, auctioneers, gladiators, and trainers loudly demand the front seats reserved for equestrians, pushing the poor away (3.153–158). In his sixth *Satire*, against marriage, virtually the first place that Juvenal looks in order to reveal the character of women is the theatre seats (*spectacula*). In a scene ironically reminiscent of Ovid's *Ars am.* 1.41–228, the satirist asks what woman his addressee might "pick out" (*excerpere*, 62) from the seats, when their behavior there is so lascivious (63–75). Writing satire seems only to require observation of these gathering-places. Even from a

[3] General: Hopkins 1983: 14–20; theatre in the Republic: Rüpke 2000: 41; events in the Imperial period: Millar 1977: 368–375; Parker 1999: 166–167; Bartsch 1994: 1–35; Cameron 1976: 157–190.

[4] Origins of these arrangements: Val. Max. 2.4.3, 4.5.1; Cic. *Har. Resp.* 24; Livy 34.44, 54. Observation of the laws under the Principate: Tac. *Ann.* 13.54; Suet. *Aug.* 44, *Dom.* 8; Petron. *Sat.* 126. Distinguishing clothing worn by different tiers of the audience: Plaut. *Amph.* 68; Suet. *Aug.* 35.2, 44; Mart. 5.23; Calp. *Ecl.* 7.23–29. Juvenal (3.172–179) points out that in a humble rustic setting, these distinctions are less visible.

[5] Pompey: Vell. Pat. 2.40.4; Dio Cass. 37.21.4; Caesar: Suet. *Iul.* 76; Dio Cass. 42.19.3, 44.4.2; Augustus: Dio Cass. 51.19.2.

[6] Parker 1999: 163: "The theater . . . provided a specific place and time for all the dramas of Roman society to be played out, with a full cast of characters, to a complete and representative audience."

distance, at his country retreat in *Satire* 11, the satirist mockingly conjures the urban scene: "Today all of Rome is crammed into the circus" (*totam hodie Romam circus capit*, 197). The crowd at the circus, arena, or theatre is a microcosm of Rome itself—and so of Juvenal's panoramic satire.

Audiences are not the only rich satiric material; the stage and the arena offer much of interest to Juvenal. As it was, performers, especially actors, already held an ambiguous position in Roman society. Some ancient accounts of theatre imply that acting is a morally base practice that was originally alien to Rome, and point out that while Greek culture both excels at and celebrates acting or mimesis, Roman culture accepts and cultivates the practice with ambivalence.[7] One tradition attributes the birth of theatre at Rome to the crisis of the plague in 390 B.C.E., during which officials called in Etruscan performers to appease the gods.[8] The early Romans, naturally warlike as Livy puts it (7.2.3), found the performances a novelty; even after theatre was introduced, the Roman community prided itself on resisting Greek-style luxuries such as seats, elaborate decorations, and permanent theatres.[9] This version of Roman theatre history has a moral agenda: Edwards (1993: 100–103) argues that the view that theatre was imported to Rome is a by-product of conservative distrust of theatre itself.

Actors, though some were quite renowned and well-connected, experienced the effects of this distrust. Seen as catering to the sensual pleasures as cooks or perfumers did (Cic. *Off.* 1.150), actors were not viewed as real Roman *viri*, but as practitioners of an "effeminate art" (Quint. *Inst.* 1.10.31; cf. Plin. *Pan.* 46.5). Presumably as a result of this perception, actors in Rome faced legal restrictions that grouped them with prostitutes, pimps, and slaves, and they were subject to occasional mass banishment.[10] Most were kept from enrolling in voting tribes and from entering the army.[11]

Juvenal exploits the negative perception of actors. His most vehement exponent of their perversity is Umbricius, the downtrodden urban dweller who delivers most of *Satire* 3. A self-described guileless native of Rome (41–48, 84–85), Umbricius resents the city's Eastern immigrant population, many of whom, he points out, either act professionally or apply their natural mimetic abilities to their social relations. Umbricius alludes to the proverbial effeminacy of actors when he suggests that their performances of female roles are disturbingly authentic (93–97). In social life, effective acting has an even greater impact: it is easy to monopolize and flatter wealthy patrons, Umbricius complains, when one is willing and able to praise bad singing, imitate emotions, and seduce entire households

[7] For example, Cic. *Rep.* 4.13; Livy 24.24.3; Nep. *Lives* pref. 5; Tac. *Dial.* 10.5.

[8] Livy 7.2; Val. Max. 2.4.4; cf. Plut. *Mor.* 289d. For the more likely story of a native Italian theatre, see Rawson 1991: 468–487.

[9] Val. Max. 2.4.2, 6; Tac. *Ann.* 14.20–21.

[10] Legal disabilities: *Dig.* 48.5.25; Suet. *Aug.* 45.3; Tac. *Ann.* 1.77; cf. Edwards 1997: 69–82. Banishments of actors from Rome and Italy by imperial decree: Tac. *Ann.* 4.14; Suet. *Nero* 16.

[11] Cic. *Rep.* 4.10; Livy 7.2.12.

(86–93, 100–112).[12] For Greeks especially, the practice of dissimulation comes naturally: "Their whole race is a comedy" (*natio comoeda est*, 100).[13] This skill is an enormous aid to immigrants; the Greeks' ability to transplant themselves is embodied in their hero Daedalus, the Athenian native exiled to Crete who crafted wings to flee abroad (79–80).

For honest native Romans, mimesis poses a threat. True Romans should be as pure and guileless as the air that they breathe and the food they eat: "*My* infancy drank in the air of the Aventine and was nourished on the Sabine berry [the olive]" (*nostra infantia caelum / hausit Aventini baca nutrita Sabina*, 84–85). But as Umbricius indicates, Romans have also proved impressionable, absorbing the behaviors and fads of the immigrant population. Now even farmers wear Greek slippers and perfume (67–68) and all Romans struggle to pose as wealthy: "Here you see splendor of dress beyond people's means" (*hic ultra vires habitus nitor*, 180). And as other characters in Juvenal demonstrate, hypocrisy can be learned as well: it is the weapon of the moralistic pathics of *Satire* 2 and of the devious Virro of *Satire* 9. The "spectacle of pathics" of *Satire* 2 dramatizes especially well the satiric procedure of identifying and parading deviance in a way that both morally gratifies and entertains the community (Walters 1998). In this case, by forcing the pathics to act in a performance that he designs himself (cf. 4.1–2), the satirist counters their own everyday hypocrisy. Romans have evidently harnessed mimesis to serve themselves in daily life. Umbricius himself alludes to their attempts to perform in society: "[Offering insincere praise] is certainly allowed and praised among us, but *they* [Greeks] are believed" (*haec eadem licet et nobis laudare, sed illis / creditur*, 3.92–93). While Umbricius, like Juvenal, posits an innate distinction between devious Greeks and honest Romans, he also milks the idea that this particular Greek tendency has invaded and corrupted Roman society.

In Rome, the conservative suspicion of acting was also manifested in the belief that performers themselves could be morally damaged by their behavior. This attitude underlies the scandal that attached to members of the nobility who took part in theatre or other entertainments such as gladiatorial combat. While the legal status of gladiators differed in some ways from that of actors, both professions were a form of self-display, and both activities would thus incur similarly dire consequences for members of the upper orders (Edwards 1997: 85–90). Although particular cases are recorded from the late Republic and early Principate, ancient historians associate this phenomenon especially with the reign of Nero, who forced and bribed nobles of both sexes to endure the humiliation of an appearance on stage or in the arena.[14] Some appearances even seem to

[12] Cf. 6.63–75 on actors' seduction of Roman women.

[13] In a paradoxical doubling of the mimetic theme, even the ethnic label of Greek is often falsely assumed; Umbricius points out that most "Greeks" in Rome are actually from regions further east (61–66).

[14] For example, Laberius performed in a mime for Julius Caesar (Macrob. *Sat.* 2.7.4–5) and aristocrats appeared at the games of Marcellus in 23 B.C.E. (Dio Cass. 53.31). See also Dio Cass.

have been voluntary; the license enjoyed by the performer held enough allure to tempt some, despite the loss of reputation, *infamia*, that they would automatically face (Edwards 1993: 131–136; 1994). In the historians' accounts of these events, the theatre or amphitheatre seems to stand for Rome itself, which must witness the disgrace—whether willing or unwilling—of its blue-bloods. Juvenal himself provides a well-known commentary on the phenomenon of the performing noble (8.183–230),[15] and like his contemporaries he indicts Nero's bad example. The emperor who loved performing in person encouraged many to defy convention: "When the *princeps* is a lyre-player, a noble in a mime is hardly a surprise" (*res haut mira tamen citharoedo principe mimus / nobilis*, 198–199). But Juvenal also places blame on the *populus* itself, which willingly watches such shows (188–192; Tac. *Ann.* 14.14 also reproaches the *populus*). The satirist fully exploits the theme of the performing noble, condemning the practice of performance itself while also criticizing the crowd's taste for scandalous spectacles.

Roman authors with a moral agenda express fairly consistent views about popular taste in entertainment. Although the circus was Rome's oldest entertainment venue, predating the theatre (Livy 7.2.3), its political function allowed it to become associated with the supposedly crude tastes of the mob (Juv. 10.77–81; Fronto *Ep.* 2.216 Haines). By the mid-third century B.C.E. aristocratic Roman funerals were featuring gladiatorial shows (Val. Max. 2.4.7), but subsequently the increasing frequency of such entertainments was attributed to the crude tastes of the mob. Cicero describes the ostentation and violence of Pompey's games in 55 B.C.E. as having little appeal to a man of culture (*Fam.* 7.1). One strategy for attacking the circus races and games specifically is to hold up the theatre as a foil: the popular spectacles contrast with the more refined pleasures of literary drama, as Terence famously complains (*Hec.* prol. 2). This implicit classification of types of entertainment as refined or vulgar (despite the clear evidence that Romans of all classes attended and enjoyed the latter)[16] expands the moral-rhetorical usefulness of the topic of entertainment.

Like the Romans who imitate Greeks in Juvenal *Satire* 3, however, theatre is not only a foil for things "vulgar," but can be portrayed as corruptible as well. The Republican period saw a gradual increase in expenditure on theatrical productions, which became increasingly spectacular. Livy writes that the Etruscan players in 390 B.C.E. initiated a practice that has grown into a form of "insanity" in terms of expense and ostentation (7.2.13). Valerius Maximus compares the early benchless

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54.2.5; Suet. *Aug.* 43; *Tib.* 35. Under Nero: Suet. *Nero* 11–12 (alleging a total of 400 senators and 600 knights); Tac. *Ann.* 14.14–15; Dio Cass. 61.19.

[15] Cf. 4.95–102 on Acilius Glabrio, who volunteered for the beast fights in order to curry favor with Domitian; the fact that he was exiled and executed all the same makes the unnecessary sacrifice of his integrity all the more appalling to the satirist.

[16] Augustus, for example, is said to have enjoyed the shows (Suet. *Aug.* 45), though a further motive for attending was that he "considered it courteous to join in with the pleasures of the crowd" (*civile rebatur misceri voluptatibus vulgi*, Tac. *Ann.* 1.54).

theatres, a reflection of the early Romans' *virilitas*, with the elaborate structures and displays that became fashionable in the last decades of the Republic (2.4.2–6; cf. Tac. *Ann.* 14.20). As Juvenal's Umbricius points out, only the rustic parts of Italy still preserve simpler theatrical traditions: in a country theatre spectators rest on the grass itself, and mothers and babies may watch an old Atellan farce and remain morally unscathed (172–179). For the playwrights themselves, however, no such retreat is possible. Horace laments that the excessive focus on the visual (in parades, *entr'actes*, and costumes) comes at the expense of the drama itself (*Epist.* 2.1.182–207). The culture of spectacle that rewards performers and politicians instead of authors of dramatic poetry seems to be to blame for the plight of poets that Juvenal recounts in *Satire* 7. In that poem, the system of patronage that traditionally supports literary careers is failing, and poets are forced to see rich actors, rather than the nobility, as potential patrons (90).

To sum up, Juvenal's *Satires* echo conservative attitudes towards theatre and entertainment that are expressed throughout Roman literature and historiography. The poet's account of the entertainment climate is a satiric fiction, but a purposeful one. Juvenal is not to be categorized as a typical proponent of old-fashioned Roman morality; while the moral discourse of his *Satires* supports such views, his identity as satirist is more complex than that. Juvenal the satirist does what other sources on theatre and entertainment cannot: he appears as an "actor" in the particular version of reality that he depicts. This has consequences for his representation of satire itself.

II. PERFORMANCE AND PROGRAM

In the remainder of this paper, I will argue that Juvenal inscribes his own generic experiment into his account of theatre and entertainment in several programmatic passages. These references to performance activate Roman prejudices while simultaneously implicating the satirist figure as a potential target of those prejudices. The poet takes a different role in each of these cases. First, he plants himself in a spectacle that links the risks of writing satire with a grisly type of show cultivated in Imperial Rome. Second, in a programmatic suggestion about genre-mixing, he figures himself both as a transgressive performer and as a generic pioneer, and this portrait is imbued with the well-known Roman suspicion of imported foreign practices. Third, he employs a complex allusion to Horace in order to place his satire in a diachronic account of Roman theatre—an account that emphasizes the political dimension of theatre as well as the notion that it competes with gaudier forms of entertainment.

While Juvenal's first *Satire* employs programmatic strategies familiar from Horace and Persius, namely the dialogue with an interlocutor and the summoning of Lucilius as precedent, this poem also greatly expands the scope of the genre. Juvenal brings epic into the list of satire's literary influences; he makes the unprecedented claim to study human experiences throughout history (85–86);

and he adds a memorable chapter to the life story of the satirist figure.[17] Juvenal not only describes the motivations and the mission that sent him forth to write satire, but also imagines the career-ending climax of his gruesome death. This comes after the conventional interlocutor appears to warn the satirist away from writing offensive verses. In the versions of Horace and Persius, the satirist risks receiving the cold shoulder at the doors of powerful men (Hor. *Sat.* 2.1.60–62; Pers. 1.108–110); whereas in Juvenal's day, fearsome Lucilian satire will bring the poet far more than just a chilly reception in private homes. Quite the opposite—the satirist's "burning heart" (*animo flagrante*, 152) will put him at risk for a *literal* burning in the center of the arena (1.155–157):

> *pone Tigillinum: taeda lucebis in illa*
> *qua stantes ardent qui fixo gutture fumant,*
> *et latum media sulcum deducit harena.*
>
> Defame Tigillinus, and you'll blaze as part of that torch
> in which men with fixed throats burn and smoke;
> and which traces a broad furrow through the middle of the sand.

The name Tigillinus (155) takes us back decades to the reign of Nero and to the interrogations and executions allegedly conducted by this praetorian prefect and master of depravity (Tac. *Ann.* 14.57, *Hist.* 1.72). The punishment that Juvenal describes recalls the treatment of some Christians after the fire of 64: they were displayed as human torches both in Nero's gardens and in the circus (Tac. *Ann.* 15.44). But the scene of the satirist's punishment does more than dig up a horrific tale from Nero's regime: it asks us to compare the current conditions of satire with the genre's original spirit as represented by Lucilius. As Freudenburg (2001: 243–245) has argued, the scene highlights the degradation of both satirist and rulers. The low-born operator Tigillinus contrasts outrageously with Mucius Scaevola, the eminent adversary of Lucilius named in the previous line. The new satirist's vulnerability to this public type of punishment also indicates his distance from the free and powerful status of Lucilius: no *eques* should have been subjected to execution of this nature. The satirist and his work are thus added to the casualty list of Rome's decline.

Against this background of social and political degradation, we can also observe in 1.155–157 a striking variation on satire's association with performance. The arena scene wrenches the satirist and his targets out of the private social world described by the interlocutors of Horace and Persius and into the most public venue imaginable. Juvenal takes on the role of performer, not as a free-speaking Old Comic hero or as a self-undermining New Comic preacher, but as a victim of a recently evolved and deadly genre of performance. Like many executions of

[17] On Juvenal's programmatic modifications, see Braund 1996: 110–121; Cucchiarelli 2001: 205–212. On epic in particular, see Winkler 1989. On the satirist figure's programmatic past, see Keane 2002.

criminals in the early Imperial period,[18] his punishment is designed as a spectacle (as implied by the grisly metaphor of the torch and by the setting of the arena). The name of Tigillinus also recalls Nero and the scandalous displays that the "lyre-playing prince" (*citharoedus princeps*, 8.198) notoriously orchestrated, encouraged, and otherwise inspired. Like the humiliating performances of unwilling noble actors and gladiators, Juvenal's involuntary performance is a punishment meant to incur the loss of his *dignitas* as well as, in this scenario, his death. More lowly even than a gladiator, who at least wields a sword like Juvenal's hero Lucilius (this metaphor for Lucilian satire appears at 165), Juvenal plays the role of an expendable criminal. The spectacle of the satirist's execution distorts satire's conventional association with drama and drastically lowers the status of the satiric poet.

The scene of the satirist's execution exchanges satire's traditional affiliations with theatre for a more sensational form of entertainment. But Juvenal also pursues the possibilities that literary drama has to offer as a model for satire. As I noted above, Horace and Persius look to the specific genres of Old and New Comedy as models for their satiric projects and styles. Juvenal, for his part, is known for using the serious tone and high style associated with tragedy.[19] In the fifteenth *Satire* the poet even uses that genre as a foil for the admittedly "tragic," but far more sordid, events that took place in an Egyptian village one festal day—"more serious than all tragedies combined" (*cunctis graviora coturnis*, 29). More familiar, however, is the lengthier comparison of the satiric catalogue of bad wives with tragic subject matter in *Satire* 6. Reaching the height of his tirade with a survey of child- and husband-killers, Juvenal imagines a reader objecting to the generic twist taking place (6.634–638):

> *fingimus haec altum satura sumente coturnum*
> *scilicet, et finem egressi legemque priorum*
> *grande Sophocleo carmen bacchamur hiatu*
> *montibus ignotum Rutulis caeloque Latino?*
> *nos utinam vani.*
>
> I suppose I'm inventing this, with my satire taking up
> the high tragic boot, and I've passed the boundary and law set by my predecessors
> and am revelling with Sophoclean gape to produce
> a poetry alien to Rutulian hills and the sky of Latium?
> I *wish* I were making it up.

This passage prompts the post-classical characterization of Juvenal as a "tragic satirist" in contrast to the comic Horace (Weber 1981). But the dramatic analogy is qualified. Unfortunately, Juvenal assures us, his material is not made-up myth but all too real (*nos utinam vani*). Even worse, as the ensuing lines insist, modern-day Roman murderesses, who kill their relatives for money, have far baser motives

[18] Coleman 1990.

[19] Smith 1985; Freudenburg 1993: 227–228; Schmitz 2000: 38–50; Cucchiarelli 2001: 204–205.

than their Greek mythological counterparts (643–652). Real Roman life is not simply *as bad as* tragedy; it is far worse.

On the surface, the exchange between satirist and imaginary critic reduces the questions surrounding "tragic satire" to the issue of fact versus fiction. The initial verb *fingimus* is the only element that the satirist addresses in his brief response to the charge (*nos utinam vani*), and the critic's objection thus appears to have been dismissed. But two points problematize this superficial reading. First, the entire passage, although it is framed as a hostile charge, is Juvenal's own rhetorical creation; the satirist himself raises these criticisms, and at the climax of his longest poem. Each element of the description of "tragic satire" introduces terms that the satirist intends his audience to consider.

Second, in addition to questioning the factuality of Juvenal's accounts, the critic's complaint brings some other highly charged analytical criteria to the surface. The three-word answer in line 638 makes it easy for us to miss the fact that the critic raises a *series* of questions about genre and literary history. Juvenal does not clarify the relevance of certain suggestions in these four lines: that he has broken a generic law established by his predecessors (635); that he is converting satire into tragedy (and specifically Greek tragedy; 634, 636); and that he is introducing an alien form to Italy (637). The entire list of propositions appears in a rhetorical question which is distanced from the satirist's voice with the sarcastic "I suppose" (*scilicet*, 635). The satirist neither challenges nor confirms their validity.

Each of the judgments expressed in the passage, which together suggest that both generic and cultural transgressions have been committed, demands further scrutiny. The critical reader whose objections Juvenal describes complains that the satirist has passed beyond the "boundary and law of my predecessors" (*finem et legem . . . priorum*, 635). While a reader might infer that Juvenal's critic is contrasting the *Satires* with the comic work of Horace and Persius, the critic stops short of confirming this interpretation, and moves on to a melodramatic description of "tragic satire." This begins with the colorful and telling ablative absolute in line 634, *altum satura sumente coturnum*. Juvenal's *satura*, the subject of that absolute, is personified here and described as playing dress-up, "taking up the high tragic boot." The personification is reminiscent of the "generic essentialism" that Barchiesi identifies in Horace's representations of iambus; in his *Epistles*, Horace figures the form as a subject that has actively participated in its own generic development—having innate attributes, but affably admitting other metrical combinations, generic contexts, and so on (Barchiesi 2001: 143–147). Like Horace's iambus, Juvenal's *satura* assumes control of its own transformation, taking on the responsibility for dressing up in tragic costume (*coturnum*). And poetry seems to be mimicking poet here: Juvenal himself, two lines later, is alleged to be "ranting out a grand poetry in a Sophoclean gape"—that is, assuming a tragic mask, denoted by *hiatu* (cf. the "gape of the pale mask," *personae pallentis hiatus*, in the Atellan farce at 3.175).

Meanwhile, to increase the shock of the accusation, tragedy is being essentialized in its own way: it is described specifically as the tragedy of Sophocles, ancient and remote, as represented first in the verb *bacchamur*, which conjures up the god in whose honor the Athenian playwrights competed, and then in the rigid old-fashioned mask, the *hiatus*. Juvenal's imaginary critic gives that mask a double function: metonymically, it stands for that ancient form of tragedy, and symbolically it represents the absurd generic posture that this new satirist is assuming. Thus the critic in *Satire* 6 figures the satirist's generic experimentation as an outrageous performance, complete with inappropriate costume and offensive cultural miscegenation. This links Juvenal (in the critic's eyes at least) to some of the most pervasive and corrupting phenomena in his Rome: the performing noble, mimesis and dress-up, and the influx of foreign customs.

The passage also makes a curiously exaggerated claim about the relevance of tragedy to Roman affairs. The critic's analogy of tragedy-is-to-fiction-as-satire-is-to-reality is a shallow one, for it resists admitting the political resonance of mythological tragedy, recognized by authors and audiences alike, from its inception in Greece to its archaizing recited forms in imperial Rome. Accounts of reactions to mythological tragedies in the late Republic and early Empire indicate that plays were in fact construed as potentially relevant to contemporary affairs (e.g., Cic. *Sest.* 115–126).[20] And in a literary work by a contemporary of Juvenal's, Tacitus' *Dialogue on Orators*, the tragedian Maternus is urged to recognize the resonance that his work can have with a suggestible audience, regardless of authorial intentions (2–3). In this case too, it is worth using the odd critical perspective of Juvenal's attacker as a point of access to the passage's more interesting themes. In line 637, the imaginary critic suggests that the tragic satirist is producing a form previously "alien to the Rutulian hills and Latin sky." With this image Juvenal poses as a generic innovator in an even more extreme sense than that implied by his shift from comic to tragic satire. The merging of satire and tragedy is described as nothing less than the introduction of a Greek form into the innocent terrain of Latium. It recalls the complaint of Umbricius that sycophantic immigrants are monopolizing the privileges due to one who in childhood "drank in the air of the Aventine and was nourished on the Sabine berry" (3.84–85). Both complaints figure the invasion by Greek customs as a physical violation of the pure Italian landscape.

It would be absurd to suggest that Juvenal is actually giving his Roman audience its first glimpse of tragedy, yet this seems to be implied in the scandalized description of his transgression. This puzzling suggestion can be better understood in light of an older account which the passage recalls. Juvenal's satiric predecessor Horace recounts the birth of the Roman literary tradition in his *Epistle* 2.1,

[20] Nicolet (1980: 366–373) discusses cases in the late Republic; cf. Bartsch 1994: 63–97. On the political context and significance of tragedy in classical Athens, see Goldhill 1990.

and implies that tragedy gave Rome its first taste of Greek literature. Roman imitations soon followed (*Epist.* 2.1.162–167):

> *. . . post Punica bella quietus quaerere coepit,*
> *quid Sophocles et Thespis et Aeschylus utile ferrent.*
> *temptavit quoque rem, si digne vertere posset,*
> *et placuit sibi, natura sublimis et acer;*
> *nam spirat tragicum satis et feliciter audet,*
> *sed turpem putat inscite metuitque lituram.*
>
> After the Punic wars, [the Roman], at peace, began to seek out
> what of use Sophocles and Thespis and Aeschylus might bring.
> He also made the attempt to see if he could worthily reproduce it,
> and he was satisfied, being of lofty and fierce nature;
> for he certainly breathed tragic spirit and his daring was successful,
> although, foolishly, he was afraid to erase, thinking it disgraceful.

Horace's account of tragedy's appearance in Rome sounds more historically accurate than the extreme suggestion of Juvenal's critic, for it at least acknowledges the tragic tradition of the Republican period, but Horace nonetheless employs stereotypes of his own. The story is a caricature of the early Roman national character, which Horace describes in the same poem as practical and business-oriented in contrast to eager, imaginative, experimental Greece (103–117; cf. *Ars P.* 323–332). The Roman featured here approaches Greek drama at first for something "useful" (*utile*, 163) before he takes an especial liking to the genre's high style.[21]

It is remarkable that Juvenal, at the end of *Satire* 6, chooses to take us back to this historic moment of literary exposure. Juvenal's critic likens the satirist to a pioneer of the third and second centuries[22] who both enhances his cultural consciousness and (as the critic puts it) violates the very landscape of his homeland. In fact the critic's description of Juvenal bears an uncanny resemblance to the Horatian character of "the Roman": he is finding the conventions of classical tragedy to be *utile* for his own moral themes and perspectives, and he is making his own version of it (*vertere*, 164) by writing it into his historical satire. And as the early Roman followed his own rules (*placuit sibi*, 165), so does Juvenal: in this, his longest poem by several hundred lines, he exhibits a "lofty and fierce nature," "tragic spirit and successful daring."

[21] Horace describes the early Roman tragedian as *natura sublimis* (165). Writing on the Juvenal passage, Schmitz (2001: 44) notes that it is appropriate for Juvenal to choose Sophocles as his tragic counterpart, for Quintilian identifies Sophocles as the most *sublimis* of the three great Attic tragedians at *Inst.* 10.1.68.

[22] Horace's phrase *post Punica bella* (*Epist.* 2.1.162) could refer either to the first phase of the war (262–241 B.C.E.) when Livius Andronicus and Naevius were active, or to the second phase (212–201 B.C.E.) and the careers of Ennius, Pacuvius, and Accius. Rudd (1989: 102) prefers the latter interpretation, as the *Epistle* does not discuss the earlier authors as dramatists.

The programmatic image in *Satire* 6 places the satirist in a major literary-historical and cultural role: that of generic *inventor* and mediator between a Greek product and Rome. And in the context of the *Satires*, this role is less heroic than it is in Horace's literary history, which sees such evolution as progress, not decline (cf. Horace's claims about his own career at *Epist.* 1.19.21–34). Juvenal's critic inserts the poet into the dire picture of a "Greek Rome" painted by Umbricius (*Graecam urbem*, 3.61) by figuring him as an importer. The satirist's alleged act of "trying on" Greek tragedy thus ties together two linked types of perversion: dressing in inappropriate garb, and facilitating the corruption of old-fashioned Roman tastes with Greek merchandise. Here, as in 1.155–157, the programmatic portrait ties satire's evolution into that of drama; once again the underlying moral theme of that combined history is perversion.

A third programmatic image that engages aspects of the theatrical landscape of the *Satires* comes at the beginning of *Satire* 10. Here Juvenal introduces what is thought to be an alter ego for himself in the portrait of the philosopher Democritus of Abdera (fifth century B.C.E.), who chose to laugh rather than weep at the follies of humanity.[23] Juvenal speculates that Democritus would have even more reason to laugh were he to be resurrected today (10.33–48):

perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat
Democritus, quamquam non essent urbibus illis
praetextae trabeae fasces lectica tribunal.
quid si vidisset praetorem curribus altis
extantem et medii sublimem pulvere circi
in tunica Iovis et pictae Sarrana ferentem
ex umeris aulaea togae magnaeque coronae
tantum orbem, quanto cervix non sufficit ulla?
quippe tenet sudans hanc publicus et, sibi consul
ne placeat, curru servus portatur eodem.
da nunc et volucrem, sceptro quae surgit eburno,
illinc cornicines, hinc praecedentia longi
agminis officia et niveos ad frena Quirites,
defossa in loculos quos sportula fecit amicos.
tunc quoque materiam risus invenit ad omnis
occursus hominum . . .

Democritus used to shake his lungs with unbroken
laughter, even though cities in those days didn't have togas
bordered with purple and scarlet, or the rods or litters or the tribunal.
What if he'd looked on the praetor, standing out in a high
chariot and high above the dust of mid-circus,
wearing Jupiter's tunic and the Tyrian hangings of the

[23] This argument is laid out by Bellandi (1980: 66–101) and Anderson (1982: 340–361), and revisited by Braund (1988: 184–189) and Cucchiarelli (2001: 214). Juvenal's description of Democritus owes much to Sen. *Dial.* 4.10.5 and 9.15.2.

> embroidered toga from his shoulders, plus the ring of the
> great crown so big that one neck isn't enough for it?
> Of course a public slave holds it, sweating, and, just so the consul
> won't be self-satisfied, is carried on the same chariot with him.
> Consider this too—the bird which sits atop the ivory scepter,
> and from one side trumpet-players, from another the parading clients
> in a long train, and by the reins the white-clad Romans whom
> the dole tucked into purses made into "friends."
> [Despite not having seen this,] even then Democritus found cause
> for laughter in all human interactions . . . .

Line 35, with its list of items that make good satiric targets (*praetextae trabeae fasces lectica tribunal*) echoes another case of asyndeton in a programmatic context: Juvenal's introduction of his own satiric material at 1.85–86, *quidquid agunt homines, votum timor ira voluptas / gaudia discursus, nostri farrago libelli est* ("whatever people do—prayers, tears, anger, pleasure, joys, interactions—is the fodder of my little book"). The satiric approach that Juvenal takes to this spectrum of human experiences is analogous to Democritus' imagined reaction to the trappings of Roman politicians. The allusion is doubled at the close of the passage: Democritus, who looks upon "human interactions" (*occursus*, 48), resembles the speaker of *Satire* 1, whose subject matter includes the *discursus* of humans (86). But the philosopher's choice to laugh, rather than rage, at these sights signals a revision of the satiric *indignatio* of Book 1.

The depiction of the mocking persona has been the most studied aspect of the passage, but it is also important to note that the scene uses a theatrical analogy for satire. In this case the satirist, through his alter ego Democritus, acts as a spectator of everyday affairs. What serves as visual *materia* for Democritus' laughter (47) is easily converted into subject matter for Juvenal's dramatic satire. The performative feel of the scene before Democritus is established on the surface by linguistic clues,[24] and in a deeper way by Juvenal's allusion to and modification of a model with a more explicitly theatrical theme. In the opening of *Satire* 10, Juvenal is understood to be alluding once again to Horace's *Epistle* 2.1. Shortly after his account of early Roman tragedy (162–167), Horace writes that playwrights face a major challenge in audiences that are easily distracted by more vulgar arts; nowadays people go to the theatre not to listen to fine words, but to gaze upon the colorful props and other visual diversions. Here, just as Juvenal will do in *Satire* 10, Horace summons Democritus from the past to observe human behavior in the present (*Epist.* 2.1.194–207):

> *si foret in terris, rideret Democritus, seu*
> *diversum confusa genus panthera camelo*
> *sive elephans albus volgi converteret ora,*

[24] Schmitz (2000: 27–28) analyzes the scene as a spectacle, noting the double meaning of *aulaea* at 39: the "hangings" of the praetor's toga are also "curtains."

spectaret populum ludis attentius ipsis
ut sibi praebentem nimio spectacula plura;
scriptores autem narrare putaret asello
fabellam surdo. nam quae pervincere voces
evaluere sonum referunt quem nostra theatra?
Garganum mugire putes nemus aut mare Tuscum,
tanto cum strepitu ludi spectantur et artes,
divitiaeque peregrinae; quibus oblitus actor
cum stetit in scaena, concurrit dextera laevae.
"dixit adhuc aliquid?" "nil sane." "quid placet ergo?"
"laena Tarentino violas imitata veneno."

If he were on earth, Democritus would laugh, whether
a mixed creature such as a panther crossed with a camel,
or a white elephant, attracted the eyes of the crowd,
since they would offer him more spectacles by far;
but he'd think the playwrights were telling their stories
to a deaf ass. For what words have ever been able
to overpower the din that our theatres send out?
You'd think the wood of Garganus or the Tuscan sea was bellowing,
when people watch the games and works of art,
and those exotic riches, with such a clamor; when the actor, decked
out in all this, takes his place on the stage, right hand smacks left.
"Has he said anything yet?" "Oh no." "Then what's so pleasing?"
"His cloak; with its Tarentine dye it looks just like violets."

While the philosopher's laughter (*rideret*, 194) is one point of contact between this passage and the scene in Juvenal 10 (Braund 1988: 189), the allusion takes on more depth when we consider Horace's broader argument. Horace writes that the excitable theatre audience itself makes as good a spectacle as what is on stage, and he links this phenomenon to the decline of popular interest in words—the *poesis* behind the dramas—as a result of the increasing popularity of parades and gaudy spectacles. Horace uses the figure of Democritus as a judge, albeit a light-hearted one, of current tastes in drama—or, more accurately, of popular taste for spectacle *instead* of literary drama.

Juvenal makes several modifications to Horace's Democritus scene that resonate with the material that I surveyed earlier. First, he borrows the Horatian image of a spectacle appealing to popular taste, while simultaneously illustrating the even greater degradation of his own age. Like Horace's Democritus, Juvenal's philosopher is taking note of the excitement aroused by spectacle—in this case the races at the circus (10.37), one of the "popular entertainments" often contrasted with literary drama. While the circus is in fact one of Rome's oldest institutions, Juvenal's substitution of it for the theatrical scene in his Horatian model is telling. As Horace would see it, Juvenal is placing Democritus in an even more degraded theatrical environment: the philosopher is no longer at the theatre (*nostra theatra*, *Epist.* 2.1.201) where visual elements and interludes draw attention away from

the language of the plays, but now at the circus, where there are no words at all to distract one from the visual entertainment. Juvenal's portrait of Democritus, then, magnifies Horace's picture of frivolous spectacles.

Second, the environment in which Juvenal locates his Democritus illustrates the political uses of *ludi* in Rome. While Horace's philosopher is watching the audience at a theatrical performance, Juvenal's is placed not at the theatre or even at the races themselves, but at a meaningful side-show: the *pompa circensis*, a parade of magistrates and their retinues that heralds the beginning of the races at the *ludi Romani* (Courtney 1980: 457–458). At this event, the presiding praetor would dress like a triumphing general, in the special tunic and toga borrowed from the treasury of Jupiter Capitolinus (cf. 11.194–195).[25] The occasion makes him resemble the actor in Horace's *Epistle* who commands attention merely by appearing on stage in his dyed cloak (*Sarrana aulaea* at Juv. 10.38–39; cf. the *divitiae peregrinae* at Hor. *Epist.* 2.1.204). Juvenal's praetor is also accompanied by a public slave and by his throng of clients (*longi agminis officia et . . . amicos*, 45–46). The tableau nicely exemplifies what Parker (1999: 163) calls the "dramas of Roman society," the ritualized displays of the social hierarchy integrated into entertainment events.

These features of the Juvenalian scene, which play up the intersection between spectacle, politics, and moral climate, tie it to the picture of contemporary theatre and entertainment in the *Satires*. Furthermore, since Democritus functions as an alter ego for the satirist, the details of his role as a spectator have programmatic significance as well. The connections to the *Epistle* passage emphasize the already-degraded environment that is the subject of Horace's criticism there; Juvenal is able to suggest that in his own time, Democritus' hypothetical *materia* has become predictably worse. Although the satirist follows the description of the *pompa circensis* with the comment that even in his time, Democritus found other scenes to mock, the attention to detail in the *pompa* scene qualifies this claim. In contrast to the generalized "all human interactions" (*omnis / occursus hominum*, 47–48) and the "cares and joys of the crowd" (*curas . . . et gaudia vulgi*, 51) that Democritus watched in his own time, the parade is described in vivid detail. The philosopher appears especially captivated by this contemporary scene.

As an alter ego for Juvenal, Democritus sets an example not just with his mocking laughter but with one particularly telling aspect of his spectatorship. In Horace, Democritus is an innovator in spectacle-making. He uses an existing theatrical event to *create* his own version of theatre, going one better than the sponsors of the plays by focusing on the audience, who "offered more spectacles by far" (*praebentem nimio spectacula plura, Epist.* 2.1.198). Democritus' attentive, creative spectatorship (197) allows him to perceive and interpret the unscripted behavior of members of the crowd as they respond emotionally to the shows. The philosopher autonomously transforms a ready-made theatrical scene into his own

[25] Versnel 1970: 58–59 (on the Juvenal passage) and 96–98.

"material," giving it entirely new meaning. Juvenal expresses the same attitude in his comparison of human affairs to theatre and games at 14.256–264. There, the satirist diverts his readers from staged spectacles to the everyday life that he finds makes an even better show. But while the Juvenalian satirist in that passage is empowered in the same way that Horace's Democritus is, Juvenal's Democritus in *Satire* 10 has a more passive and compliant role. He watches the *pompa circensis*, which is a spectacle *designed* to attract the eye of every member of the populace in attendance—a spectacle designed, moreover, to reinforce the social order by visual means. The trappings listed in the asyndetic line 35 draw Democritus in. Reading the scene, we are made to follow the philosopher's gaze up and down the praetor's decorated body (36–41, pausing on his head at 39–40), then down the procession of white-clad clients positioned by his team of horses (44–46). Again, the subsequent claim that Democritus' age provided analogous entertainments is subtly undercut by the detail of 35–46. In Juvenal, Democritus passively participates in the dramatization of the political hierarchy, and therefore lacks the autonomy and the theatre-making ability possessed by Horace's Democritus.

This lack of autonomy underscores the programmatic theme of degradation associated with theatre and shows, linking it to Juvenal's satire. But as I suggested earlier in this paper, degradation and belatedness can be seen as *enabling* conditions for this satirist, inasmuch as he highlights and thematizes them in programmatic contexts. Juvenal's Democritus lacks autonomy, but his gaze nevertheless creates satire. This is made possible in part by what Parker calls "the paradox of the gaze," the double function of the popular gaze as power-enhancing and damaging. Opportunities for "political theatre" allowed politicians to display and reinforce their power, but as subjects of the popular gaze they also risked the vulnerability, even *infamia*, that public performance can incur.[26] This vulnerability gives the viewer, who is participating in the dramatization of hierarchy, a degree of power himself. Democritus' gaze in Juvenal 10 takes the fullest advantage of this paradox, making the praetor into an actor like the one in Horace's *Epistle*—making satire, as it were, from political drama. At the same time, his power as viewer is compromised by the fact that the spectacle has been designed to capture his attention in the first place. Democritus embodies the ambiguous position of the Juvenalian satirist who writes dramatic satire in an atmosphere of dramatic perversion. The climate of his time (as he presents it to the reader) both provides him with *materia* and dictates what his position within that climate will be.

Juvenal's manipulation of the traditional programmatic connection between satire and performance is a brilliant strategy of generic construction. When the satiric poets declare a programmatic affinity with drama, the rich and ideologically charged history of theatre floods into satire's generic space. Juvenal, in his self-consciously belated position, makes creative use of this ambiguous history.

[26] Parker 1999: 167: "To appear in the theater under the eyes of the multitude carried the risk of assimilation to those who appeared on the stage or in the arena."

He figures himself both as a witness to, and as a participant in, the evolution of types of entertainment. The satirist figure that he constructs takes on the consequences of the trends that his satire itself criticizes, namely the popularity of spectacle and the personal degradation that it enables. The images of Juvenal as spectacle subject, generic transgressor, and manipulated viewer support two important ideas about satire that bear further consideration. First, the genre's authors deliberately take on abject or degraded personas for programmatic and rhetorical purposes, and second, satiric narrative and programmatic discourse are both fictional constructions designed to engage the reader in the debate about satire's true nature.

Department of Classics
Washington University
Campus Box 1050
St. Louis, MO 63130–4899
U.S.A. ckeane@artsci.wustl.edu

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