

Preface

This is positively the last general book on Roman satire I shall write. (There's a hostage to fortune!) Let me say a few words about how it came to be written. The editor of the series, Michael Gunningham, invited me to write it more years ago than I care to admit. But it has been a long time coming and I am grateful to the Press for not pulling the plug on it. The book has been in my head since I first drafted the proposal for the Press, yet most of it was written during my long-awaited study leave in the Spring of 1995. I hope it is worth waiting for.

In the end I enjoyed writing it very much, but it was not an easy book to write. One of my key aims was to produce something entirely complementary to the overview I offered in *Roman Verse Satire*, which appeared in 1992 in the Greece & Rome survey series, *New Surveys in the Classics* (no. 23). In *The Roman Satirists and their Masks* I have tried to find a radically different approach to the subject of Roman satire. Because of my increasing interest in viewing literature as performance and because of my conviction that the creation of different characters or 'masks' – a result of the Greek and Roman training in rhetoric – is central to any understanding of Latin literature, I decided to treat the texts of Roman satire as performances and to consider the characters whose voices we hear in these performances. To this extent, the book can be seen as the culmination of my work on *persona* theory in Roman satire. And I hope that my act of cutting up the subject and pasting it together in a way not done before will stimulate debate and reaction by shaking people out of assumptions that they may never have questioned. Above all, I hope that it will provide an accessible way into the fascinating genre of Roman satire for students meeting it for the first time.

Only a fool would offer a typescript like this to the Press without testing it against the 'critical nail' (Persius *Satire* 1.65) first. The willing guinea-pigs were my friends Barbara Bell and Jonathan Walters. Both have improved the book immeasurably and I am most grateful to them. In particular, the addition of the glossary of technical terms (with the terms listed marked * on their first occurrence) was Barbara's suggestion. I am grateful too to the editor of the series, Michael Gunningham, for his careful attention to detail and to John Betts, as my colleague at Bristol and as 'Mr Bristol Classical Press' for his continued support and advice. I am delighted to be able to use the excellent translation of Juvenal by Niall Rudd, for the excerpts quoted. These are reproduced by

the kind permission of Oxford University Press (N. Rudd, *Juvenal. The Satires*, Oxford World's Classics series, 1992). The quotations from Lucilius are reprinted by permission of the publishers of the Loeb Classical Library from *Remains of Old Latin* vol. 3, translated by E.H. Warmington, Cambridge, Mass., Harvard University Press, (1938 repr. 1979). The translations of Horace and Persius are my own. The photograph of Stephen Fry as Juvenal (from the programme on Juvenal entitled *Laughter and Loathing*, BBC2, August 1995) was supplied by the BBC Picture Archives. The three drawings within the text are original line drawings taken from the 1831 edition by A.J. Valpy of Theophrastus' Characters. The engraving used to illustrate the angry satirist is 'The Morose', the mocking satirist is 'The Dissembler' and the smiling satirist is 'The Plausible'. I am grateful to John Betts for drawing my attention to them. Finally, the fine cover drawings (after Roman portrait busts) are by Chris Hall: to her, my profound thanks.

This was a project which was often elusive and sometimes downright stubborn. It resisted being written. The greatest encouragement to bring it into realisation came from Adam Morton – and to him above all I am grateful.

Introduction to Roman Satire: The Basics

Old and new ways into Roman satire

Studying ancient literature is like detective work. We have to piece together the evidence which survives from antiquity and make intelligent guesses about what does not survive. This is especially true of Roman satire, where there are authors whose work survives only in fragments or not at all. The detective work does not end there. To make intelligent guesses about Roman satire we have to try to shed our modern prejudices about literature, modern prejudices which we are often hardly aware of, modern prejudices which can easily blur our view of ancient literature. Important questions to ask include: Who writes literature? From what social and educational background? Why? For what audience? What did 'publication' consist of? What are the shared expectations of author and audience? The last of these questions is the largest and in this book I shall attempt to suggest some fruitful approaches.

Some of the questions posed here can be answered with reference to Roman literature in general. Roman literature was the almost exclusive preserve of a tiny élite of wealthy, highly-educated men of well-born and well-connected families. Such men divided their time between 'business' (*negotium*) – primarily politics, in the widest sense of competing for power and status and other rewards – and leisure (*otium*). Their education in literature and rhetoric was designed to equip them for both of these aspects of their adult lives. Not that these are watertight categories. The leisure activity of 'literature' can function in the political realm, just as politics can surface within literature and can shape it. This is evident, for example, in the occasion of the literary recitation, which (at least from the time of Horace onwards) was a prime way of disseminating new literary works. Whether a private recitation at a dinner-party attended by 'friends' (i.e. patrons and clients) or a more formal public occasion, the recitation displayed and reinforced the power relationships at the heart of Roman society. Recitations were a part of the structure of 'friendship' (*amicitia*) at which debts and obligations between individuals were advertised or created. For example, a powerful person, a 'patron' might hold a recitation of his own poetry which his friends of inferior status, his 'clients', had to attend. Or a patron might host a recitation at which one of his clients who wrote poetry was able to present his works, to

which the patron's other clients and maybe his patrons too, more powerful men again, would be invited. The patron in turn would support his powerful friends by attending any recitations which they hosted. It is important to bear in mind that for the Romans 'literature' is always situated within the context of 'friendship' (*amicitia*). This emerges particularly so in the case of Roman satire, in which friendship is a prominent theme.

The social context of literature will be a concern throughout this book. To provide a basis for my interpretation of satire, I use the introduction to this book to provide a brief outline of the genre* of Roman verse satire, starting with its origins and sketching its development through more than three centuries. This traditional type of literary history can, of course, be found in and supplemented from other textbooks. My aim here is to introduce the reader to the authors of Roman verse satire and the extent and scope of their work before I move to an approach which emphasises not the authors but what they created.

The seven chapters of the book itself will attempt a fresh approach to Roman verse satire. Instead of chapters arranged in chronological sequence devoted to each satirical poet in turn, the central approach of this volume will be to treat satire as drama, on the basis that the authors of satire are not engaged in autobiography but use masks (*personae*) in their satire, a theory which is illuminated by the broader context of the Roman rhetorical training shared by author and audience (ch.1). The three chapters which follow will examine the three most prominent masks created by the satirical poets: the angry character (ch.2); the laughing, mocking character (ch.3); and the smiling, ironic character (ch.4). In these three chapters I shall draw substantial amounts of illustrative material from the best-known satires, primarily of Horace and Juvenal. An important feature will be my use of the term 'the satirist' to denote not the author but the character created (as I shall explain in chapter 1).

In chapter 5 I shall analyse the relationship between the satirist and society by considering the imagery used of satirists by themselves and by others: does he belong in society or is he essentially an outsider? Then, using an analogy with cinema, I shall investigate the authority of the satirist, which makes satire seem at times so realistic (ch. 6). Developing the argument of chapter 1, I shall underline how the rhetorical background shapes satire and I shall show how satire's relationship with epic is another important influence. After this demonstration of the 'literariness' and sophistication of Roman satire, which makes it hard to use as source material on Roman society, I shall close this chapter by

suggesting ways in which Roman satire can be used as evidence for Roman life. In the final chapter (ch. 7) I shall consider the relationship between satirists and their audiences, inside and outside of the text. The genre of satire, which calls itself ‘conversation’ (*sermo*), uses a variety of forms—monologue, dialogue and letter—which subtly affect the relationships between the different voices and listeners. My analysis will highlight the wide range of potential relationships between author and audience in this genre which is a significant factor in making satire tricky and slippery to interpret. Satire, after all, provokes perhaps the strongest emotions and the widest range of reactions in its audience. This prompts the question whether or not there is, or can ever be, a ‘right’ response to it. My view is that of course there are better- and worse-informed readings of satire, but that, ultimately, any individual’s response is inevitably a product of the way they interact with that particular text. Because satire engages so closely with its readers, the potential for attraction to and repulsion from the character of the satirist and the views he (usually he, not she) expresses is enormous. That is what generates such a variety of responses.

Suggestions for further study and further reading follow and a glossary of technical terms (marked in the text by * the first time each occurs) and an index of the poems discussed conclude the volume.

Roman satire – truly Roman

The origins of Roman verse satire are obscure, although various theories are offered by the Romans themselves. What seems clear is that there is no Greek original on which the writers of Roman satire modelled their works. That’s how Horace can describe satire as a Roman genre, ‘verse never handled by the Greeks’ (*Satires* 1.10.66) and the first century AD professor Quintilian can claim Roman supremacy in this genre: ‘Satire is entirely our own’ (*The Training of an Orator, Institutio Oratoria* 10.1.93). Ancient theories connect the name *satura* with ideas of variety and abundance. Most appealing is the explanation which makes the author of satire a cook serving up to his audience a sausage stuffed full of varied ingredients. Other theories offer possible links with drama. The combination of humour and mockery suggested a link between *satura* and satyrs, presumably as portrayed in satyr plays, the obscene after-pieces to Greek tragedies, and the satirical poets themselves claim Greek Old Comedy as an ancestor (Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.1-5, 1.10.16, Pers. 1.123-4). Livy goes further than this and includes in his account of the development of Roman drama a musical stagershow without an organised plot which he names *satura* (7.2.4-10). Such ideas, although not necessarily

to be accepted literally, are valuable for their emphasis upon the dramatic dimension in satire.

The earliest known proponent of the genre was Ennius (239-169 BC), who was from the south of Italy and therefore influenced by the cultures of Greece, southern Italy and Rome. Perhaps it was this multiculturalism which inspired his many literary innovations. He is most famous for his establishment of Latin epic in his *Annales (Annals)*. But his literary experiments were not confined to epic: he also wrote various types of drama and four books of *Saturae*. Unfortunately, only 31 lines of his satires survive. But even from these few fragments we can see that the poems were in a variety of metres and on a variety of themes – a real miscellany, fitting with the ancient explanations which connect *satura* with ideas of variety and abundance.

Lucilius – a father figure for the genre

Ennius’ satires were clearly experimental. That is perhaps why it was not Ennius but Lucilius who was regarded by later writers of satire as the founder of the genre (e.g. Hor. *Sat.* 1.10.48). Gaius Lucilius (died 102/1 BC, an old man) was a wealthy aristocrat (*eques*) from Campania and member of the politically powerful and culturally influential clique around Scipio Aemilianus, the general, politician and patron of the arts. Lucilius wrote thirty books of satires, initially continuing Ennius’ experiments with metre but then settling upon the hexameter* of epic and so standardising the metre of the genre. Only 1300 fragments survive of his thirty books and of these the longest is only 13 lines long. This makes it hard to reconstruct his satires with confidence. But features which later appear as standard were established by Lucilius. These include use of the first person (‘autobiographical’) presentation and the loose construction suited to ‘conversations’ (*sermones*); the range of subject-matter including criticism of morality in public and private life and criticism of literature and language; and the range of language available in satire, from mundane and obscene words, usually excluded from poetry, through technical vocabulary, to grand words of the epic register and epic quotation and parody. It is also clear that Lucilius used his satires to stage vigorous political attacks upon some of Scipio’s enemies, for example, the Lupus and Mucius mentioned by Persius in his *Satire* 1.115 (see p. 40 below). More generally, he presents an assertive view of political morality, for example, in the so-called *Virtus* fragment (1196-1208W), making his satires reflect the ideals and aspirations of Scipio’s clique (see Hor. *Sat.* 2.1.62-74).

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Horace – a new Lucilius for the Augustan age

The next satirical poet known to us is Horace, writing at least 70 years later. Quintus Horatius Flaccus (65-8 BC) refers to Lucilius in a mixture of praise and criticism to establish his own literary, moral and political credentials as his successor – a new Lucilius for a new age. According to Horace, Maecenas and Octavian are the focus of culture and power, as Scipio was for Lucilius. In contrast with Lucilius, Horace's social position was not one of security and independence. His father was a freedman who made a fortune from his activities as an entrepreneur and who lavished money on giving his son an education fit for a young man of higher social standing. With this good start in life, Horace at the age of 21 became attached to the staff of Brutus and the following year was appointed tribune of the soldiers, thereby gaining equestrian status. But disaster then struck: in 42 BC Brutus committed suicide after his defeat by Antony at the battle of Philippi and on his return home Horace found himself in difficult economic circumstances. He was then fortunate and shrewd enough to find a permanent position in the public finance office and in 38 BC was introduced by his friend Virgil to Maecenas, a rich and influential patron, and later to Octavian, the future emperor Augustus. Horace soon produced his first publication, *Satires* Book 1, in 35-4 BC. After the battle of Actium in 31 BC he published the second Book of *Satires* and the *Epodes*. *Odes* 1-3 were published together in 23 BC. He returned to the form of hexameter satire in *Epistles* 1, published in 20-19 BC, and in *Epistles* 2.2 which appeared the following year. He resumed lyric in 17 BC with the *Secular Hymn* (*Carmen Saeculare*), commissioned by Augustus for the Secular Games and in 13 BC with the publication of *Odes* 4. It is hard to date *Epistles* 1 and the so-called *Art of Poetry* (*Ars Poetica*). Throughout his work Horace articulates the ideology* of the élite group of which he was a member.

Persius' concentrated brew

After Horace, the next exponent of satire whose work survives is the Neronian poet Persius. Aulus (possibly Aulus) Persius Flaccus (AD 34-62) was born in Etruria into an important family of high status and educated at Rome as a pupil of Cornutus the Stoic. He took no part in public life but seems to have moved in elevated circles and was acquainted with the epic poet Lucan, who greatly admired his single book of *Satires*. This brief book of less than seven hundred lines, which may or may not be complete, consists of six satires preceded by a prologue. They are packed

with literary echoes and allusions, showing in particular an intimate familiarity with the satirical works of Lucilius and Horace. Yet at the same time they are entirely original, thanks to Persius' self-presentation as an angry and alienated young man (see discussion of the *persona* below).

Of the satirical poets writing in Quintilian's time, the 'eminent satirists today who will be celebrated in the future' (*Institutio Oratoria* 10.1.94), nothing survives beyond the name of one, Turnus, writing under Domitian. We can only guess at the kind of influence he and the others may have exercised upon Juvenal.

The grand rhetoric of Juvenal

Little is known about the life and circumstances of Juvenal (Decimus Iunius Iuuenalis). He is described as eloquent by his contemporary Martial and his satires reflect the rhetorical training received by the Roman élite; the fact that his satires are not dedicated to any patron may indicate that he was of relatively high social status, like Lucilius and Persius. His sixteen Satires, of which the last breaks off in a patently unfinished state, were published in five books. Book 1 comprises *Satires* 1-5, Book 2 *Satire* 6 alone, Book 3 *Satires* 7-9, Book 4 *Satires* 10-12, and Book 5 *Satires* 13-16 (the last poem is unfinished). The few datable references suggest that the first two books were written in the second decade of the second century AD, towards the end of Trajan's reign or, possibly, soon after Hadrian's accession in AD 117. The third book appears to have been written early in Hadrian's reign and the fifth book dates from after AD 127. Juvenal, then, was writing his *Satires* at about the same time as Tacitus was writing his *Annals*, which strike the modern reader as so similar in their biting tone.

He is renowned for his angry tone of voice, a tone which he developed from Persius' creation of the angry young man. What is less often appreciated is that Juvenal experimented with satire as he wrote and that he developed his satiric voice from one of anger to one of ironic detachment in the later satires. Throughout, he uses the 'grand style' inspired by rhetoric and epic to set satire on a new level, very different from the lowly 'conversations' of Horace. But it is the vigour and vehemence of Juvenal's savage indignation (*saeva indignatio*) that determined ideas of 'satire' for ever after. The acute cruelty of *Private Eye* and *Spitting Image* owes a great deal to Juvenal.

Chapter 1

The Masks of Satire

Satire as drama

To view satire as a kind of drama is perhaps the most illuminating approach available. There is some basis for this in the ancient evidence about the origins of satire. We have seen in the Introduction that there may be a link between *satura* and satyrs and that Livy's account of the history of Roman drama included a stage-show called *satura* (p.x). Moreover, the satirists themselves connect their work with Greek Old Comedy. But whether or not such links are accepted, the analogy between satire and drama invites thoughts of performance. These are poems written not to be read silently but to be performed in front of an audience. The view of satire as drama reminds us that the authors of satire are using dramatic forms, primarily the monologue and the dialogue. (These and other forms will be discussed in Chapter 7.) This use of the forms of drama distinguishes satire from epic (whose hexameter metre it borrows), in which the predominant form is third person narrative. (For the relation between satire and epic see Chapter 6.) Satire, then, combines the forms of drama with the metre of epic. It is a hybrid form.

To view satire as a kind of drama, as a performance, helps us resist seeing satire as autobiography. This type of interpretation, which was prominent earlier this century, is the result of a post-Romantic* view of poetry as the expression of emotions straight from the heart. The fact that satire often uses the first person presentation doubtless seemed to support such a view. It is now generally accepted that this kind of post-Romantic interpretation is inappropriate to any kind of Roman poetry, even love poetry. Roman poetry is the product of a highly educated élite and an arena in which the intellect as much as the emotions are exercised. To ask if the expressions of the passions of anger or pity or love are what we would call 'genuine' is not a question the Romans would have framed or even, perhaps, understood. For the Romans, the most important ideas were those of plausibility (*fides*) and appropriateness (*decorum*): how convincing a display of anger or pity or love is this? This throws the emphasis onto the quality of the performance. That is why it is helpful to see satire as a type of drama. And that is why I distinguish between

the authors of satire and the 'satirists' they create in their poems: these dramatic characters who perform upon the satiric stage are not to be confused with the writers of satire.

Masks and satire

To see satire as a type of drama leads easily to the idea that the writers of satire use various masks or *personae* in their poems. Many types of theatrical performance in Greco-Roman antiquity used masks (*personae*) which served as an instant kind of characterisation. This was especially so where there were stock characters with stock masks. For example, in 'New Comedy' written in Athens by Menander and others in the fourth century BC and imitated in Rome by Plautus and Terence in the early second century BC, the irritable old father and his son, the love-lorn young man, the domineering old wife and the scheming slave are some of the stock characters. And in the native Italian form of drama called the Atellan farce stock characters included the fool and the glutton. Rather like the dramatic poets, the writers of Roman satire are creating roles, even if those roles are complex and ambiguous and, at times, shifting. And this view of the voices of Roman satire as a series of *personae* would not have been alien or difficult for the original Roman audiences. It seems that the Romans thought of life, perhaps more than we do, in terms of roles performed and the variety of *personae* adopted in differing circumstances.

A very explicit statement of this outlook is found in Cicero's theory in *On Duties (De officiis)* 1 concerning the four *personae* available to each individual. The first *persona* is the universal one of the human self, of being a human as opposed to an animal; the second *persona* is that of the individual with particular skills and capacities, for example, strength, attractiveness, wit and shrewdness. The third *persona* is that which arises from circumstances, for example, high and low birth, wealth and poverty, and the fourth is the *persona* which consists of our individual choice of role in life. Cicero explains that this might be a decision to specialise in philosophy or law or oratory, to follow in your father's footsteps or deliberately to take a different course. These ideas drawn from Cicero's philosophical analysis of the individual's place in society suggest how readily the Romans thought in terms of *persona* – the image presented to society. And although we do not so readily conceive of ourselves as playing out roles, we might usefully compare the function of 'image-makers' in affecting the popular perception of public figures such as politicians and

members of the Royal family, of sporting heroes and film-stars.

The use of the mask to create an image (*persona*) and the emphasis upon plausibility and appropriateness and performance is by no means confined to Roman satire but is part of a much wider phenomenon. It pervaded all aspects of the public life of the Roman élite. Nowhere is this more visible than in the rhetorical education of the young Roman. This education was designed to equip the sons of the élite for life in a highly competitive socio-political milieu in which the chief means of attaining superiority was skill in public speaking. Skill in public speaking centred upon being convincing; acting out the appropriate role in the most effective way possible. For the Romans, drama and rhetoric were mutually interdependent.

Drama and rhetoric

The basic education of young Roman boys from wealthy families was in Latin and Greek language. Then, at about the age of eleven, boys went to the *grammaticus*, the teacher of literature, for lessons in reading and the interpretation of texts. We can get some idea of the syllabus – or at least the ideal syllabus – from Quintilian, a professor who was writing at the end of the first century AD. He laid down the texts that he thought should form the programme of studies for school-boys in his twelve-book *The Training of an Orator (Institutio Oratoria)*, for example, 1.8.5-6:

That, then, is an excellent procedure, to begin by reading Homer and Virgil, although for the full appreciation of their merits the intellect needs to be more firmly developed: but there is plenty of time for that, because the boy will read them more than once. In the meantime let his mind rise with the sublimity of heroic poetry, take its inspiration from the greatness of its theme and be filled with the highest feelings. The reading of tragedy is also useful, and lyric poets nurture the mind, so long as there is a careful selection of not only the authors but also the passages from their works which are to be read. For the Greek lyric poets are often risqué and even in Horace there are passages which I should be unwilling to explain to a class.

Not exactly a Roman National Curriculum, but perhaps the nearest thing! Literature was studied not for its own sake but to develop skill in public speaking. And the most privileged boys, between the ages of fifteen and eighteen usually, proceeded to a teacher who specialised in this type of

training – the teacher of rhetoric, the *rhetor*.

The education in rhetoric was modelled on the Greek system in which public speaking was divided into three types of oratory: judicial oratory, deliberative oratory and epideictic oratory. Judicial oratory, also called forensic oratory, consisted of speeches of prosecution and defence in cases being heard in the courts. (The word ‘forensic’ actually derives from the Roman practice of having its law-courts meet in the forum.) Deliberative oratory involved making speeches advising or urging or rejecting a proposed course of action in the Senate, for example, or any other body making such decisions. And epideictic oratory, that is ‘display’ oratory, consisted chiefly of speeches of praise (also called panegyric and encomiastic speeches) about a god or an individual or a city or about a public building such as a temple. The opposite to panegyric is invective, where the ‘display’ speech attacks an individual or place.

The training in all three kinds of public speaking was done through a combination of exercises and the study of specimen speeches. Students had to compose practice cases on specific or general themes. The earliest Roman handbook which survives, the *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, which dates from around 80 BC, shows the set topics which were thought likely to crop up in senatorial debates and in the law-courts. But our fullest source is the writings of the Elder Seneca of the first half of the first century AD. Seneca’s works are memoirs of famous rhetorical teachers and famous orators of his time. This body of Roman declamation*, i.e. public speaking, is divided into *Suasoriae* (persuasions) and *Controversiae* (disputes).

Suasoriae consist of advice given to famous characters from history or legend on the proper course of action they should take. For example, ‘Agamemnon deliberates whether to sacrifice Iphigeneia, for Calchas says that otherwise sailing is impossible’ (Seneca *Suas.* 3); ‘Alexander the Great, warned of danger by an augur, deliberates whether to enter Babylon’ (*Suas.* 4); ‘Cicero deliberates whether to beg Antony’s pardon’ (*Suas.* 5); ‘Antony promises to spare Cicero’s life if he burns his writings: Cicero deliberates whether to do so’ (*Suas.* 7). In giving this advice, the orator would often appeal to concepts such as honour (*honestum*), right (*fas*), fairness (*aequum*), advantage (*utile*), obligation (*necessarium*), duty (*pium*) and so on.

In a *controversia*, the speakers argued on opposite sides of a legal or quasi-legal case: competition was, therefore, a central feature of this kind of declamation. Plausibility was important, but so was innovation. These two demands pulled in opposite directions at times, as can be seen

from a couple of examples. First, in the case of the prostitute priestess (Seneca *Contr.* 1.2), a virgin who had been captured by pirates and sold into prostitution but later returned to her family seeks a priesthood. The dilemma is deepened by the story: she appealed to her clients for assistance but when one client refused, a struggle followed in which she killed the man; she was, however, acquitted of his murder. The *controversia* consists of arguments as to whether or not the woman is eligible for priestly office, given the legal requirement that a priestess be chaste and pure. Another example is Sen. *Contr.* 1.5, ‘The man who raped two girls’. The law cited here is as follows: ‘A girl who has been raped may choose either marriage to her ravisher without a dowry or his death.’ The situation posed is this: ‘On a single night, a man raped two girls. One demands his death, the other marriage.’ The *controversia* consists of the arguments for and against the different outcomes. It is a matter of some debate how close such cases were to real-life legal cases. The general suspicion is that the emphasis on originality resulted in a lurid and grotesque flavour which seems to resemble the obsessions of our tabloid newspapers today.

Personae, persuasion and power

The Roman education system, then, was directed towards public speaking. The training in words was paramount: the emphasis was upon anything and everything that might impress and persuade: clever arguments, paradox, point (*sententia*), vivid description (*enargeia**), the arousal of emotions. And this training gave the speaker the means of adopting different *personae* on different occasions, depending on the circumstances, and of doing so convincingly. The young aristocrat needed this skill to succeed, because Roman public and political life centred upon public speaking. Power was in the word. And because this training was shared by the members of the élite, they were in a position to recognise and appreciate the use of precisely this skill by others both in declamation and in other spheres of expression, such as poetry.

Rhetoric and satire: Cicero and Juvenal

An example which brings together rhetorical theory and the practice of Roman satire will show how this works. Cicero provides a list of the topics which an orator can use to arouse indignation or pity from his audience in the conclusion (*peroratio*) of his speech *On Invention (De inventione)* 1.100-9. His extensive list of fifteen topics which can fire the

audience's indignation (1.100-5) shows a striking similarity to the kinds of things Juvenal's angry speaker says. It would be possible to draw examples from throughout Satires 1-6 but the point is perhaps made most effectively by focusing upon one extended passage. The closing passage of *Satire 6* (627-61) is in effect the peroration* to Juvenal's angry satires and it is particularly rich in these marks of indignation. The message here is that women are capable of the worst crimes. This general message corresponds to the following topics in Cicero's list:

2. Passionate demonstration of the parties affected by the act which is being denounced: all people or superiors or peers or inferiors.
7. Demonstration that the deed was foul, cruel, wicked, tyrannical.

The passage starts with a warning addressed to wards and to children about their stepmothers and mothers :

Why, now it is lawful to murder a stepson.
I'm warning orphans as well: if you own a sizeable fortune,
watch out for your lives; don't trust anything served at table.
Those blackening cakes are highly spiced with a mother's poison.
Let somebody else be the first to munch what she who bore you
offers you; get your nervous tutor to test the drinks.
(*Sat.* 6.628-33)

This corresponds to topic no. 11 in Cicero:

11. Demonstration that the crime was committed by a person who least of all should have committed it and who might have been expected to prevent it happening.

The vivid picture created by the details of 631-3 is typical of the graphic descriptions which abound in Juvenal and which put into practice Cicero's advice to the orator:

10. Enumeration of the attendant circumstances to make the crime as vivid as possible.

The speaker proceeds to appeal to the Roman state:

You think this is fiction? That my satire has donned theatrical
boots,
that going beyond the bounds and law of earlier writers
I am raving in Sophocles' gaping style a lofty song
of things unknown to Rutulian hills and Latin skies?
(634-7)

This connects with Cicero's first piece of advice to the orator, that indignation may be aroused by:

1. Consideration of the great concern shown by the relevant authority – the gods, ancestors, rulers, states, Senate, authors of laws – about the matter under discussion.

The next lines make it clear that the woman's murder of her children was premeditated:

Would it were all a dream. But Pontia cries 'It was me!
I confess; I got some aconite and administered it to my children.
The murder was detected and is known to all; but I am the
culprit!
Two, do you say, at a single meal, you venomous viper,
two at a sitting? 'Yes, and seven, had there been seven!'
(638-42)

This exactly puts into practice item 6 on Cicero's list:

6. Indication that the act was premeditated.

By calling her a 'venomous viper' (641) the speaker places the murderess on a bestial level, fulfilling another element of Cicero's advice:

8. Demonstration that the deed is unique and unknown even among savages, barbarians and wild beasts, typically acts of cruelty committed against parents or children or acts of injustice towards people who cannot defend themselves.

The remainder of the poem introduces a comparison between the horrific heroines of Greek tragedy and modern women which is designed to show how much worse modern women are:

Let us believe what tragedy says concerning Procne and the cruel woman of Colchis; I won't dispute it. They too dared to commit some monstrous crimes in their generation – but not for the sake of cash. Extreme atrocities tend to cause less shock when fury incites the female to outrage, and when, with their hearts inflamed by madness, they are carried down like boulders wrenched from a mountain ridge as the ground collapses and the vertical face falls in from beneath the hanging cliff-top. I cannot abide the woman who assesses the profit, and coolly commits a hideous crime. They watch Alcestis enduring death for her man, but if they were offered a similar choice they would gladly let their husband die to preserve a lapdog. Every morning you meet Eriphyles in dozens, and also daughters of Danaus; every street has a Clytemnestra. Whereas, however, Tyndareus' daughter wielded an oafish and awkward two-headed axe which needed both her hands, now the job is done with the tiny lung of a toad – though it may need steel if your son of Atreus is now immune, as the thrice-defeated monarch was, through Pontic drugs.

(643-61)

This is an excellent case of Cicero's ninth recommendation:

9. Comparison of the deed with other crimes to enhance the horror.

And, finally, it is clear that the speaker expects his audience's sympathy throughout, just as the orator trying to simulate and provoke indignation does, according to Cicero:

14. Request to the audience to identify with the speaker.

The convergence of rhetorical theory and practice in this passage – and throughout Juvenal's satires – would have been appreciated by his audience who had received the same grounding as the poet. When De Decker entitled his important monograph of 1913 *Juvenalis declamans*, he drew attention to a crucial aspect of Juvenal's approach to satire. This was augmented by Scott's 1927 study of the grand style in Juvenal: anger, after all, is a big emotion and needs an expansive form of expression.

Both scholars understood well the close relationship between Roman poetry and the rhetorical education of the Roman élite. (Modern reservations surrounding the word 'rhetoric' are completely inappropriate in a Roman context. In our society it is possible to say of a politician's speech, 'it's just rhetoric', as a way of dismissing that speech without engaging with it, probably because we feel distanced from the entire process of politics. The élite Romans with whom we are concerned here, by contrast, were constantly engaged in politics.) Juvenal, like his élite audience, was trained to be a showman: to create whatever *persona* is required for the context and to make it a convincing creation. And this does not apply to Juvenal alone. The same applies to whatever *persona* is selected: the mask of anger, the mask of mockery or the mask of irony. In every case, the poems of Roman satire are best understood as performances and as miniature dramas.