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The Art of Poetry: A portrait of Lucilius in Horatian satire (Satires 1.4, 1.10 and 2.1)

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to study three of Horace's most characteristic Satires: 1.4, 1.10, and 2.1. These are programmatic and constitute the poet's literary manifesto about the art of poetry. They also focus on the basic principles of his own satirical writing, as compared to earlier literary tradition. More specifically, in 1.4 he rebukes Lucilius' satire, while in 1.10 he recognises his contribution to the shaping of the genre. Also, in 2.1, Horace chooses Lucilius as an exemplary poet who portrayed his life in his work. Therefore, he emphasises the virtues of his predecessor's writing and points out his personal devotion to writing satirical poetry. Moreover, in 2.1, the poet cites all the motifs that prevail in the 1st book of his *Sermones*, but at the same time he highlights the literary goals of the 2nd. The paper also focuses on Horace's *ars saturica* in these three poems and presents them as an essay on poetics, an element that has been discussed to a smaller extent by previous scholars.

Keywords: Lucilius, art of poetry, satire, Horace

The purpose of the present paper is to shed light on the portrait of Lucilius in Horatian satire as discussed by previous scholars.¹ Horace's Satires 1.4, 1.10 and 2.1 are programmatic and constitute his literary manifesto about the art of poetry, focusing on the basic principles of his own satire as compared to earlier satirical tradition.² In addition, they serve as praise and rebuke to Lucilius' satire. Nevertheless, although he used one of his predecessor's metrical choices, the dactylic hexameter, he managed to differentiate himself significantly in terms of style and theme.³

¹ See Freudenburg 2005: 1-7 and 2004: 100-108, Muecke 2005: 33-37, as well as Oliensis 1998: 17-63 for further details.

² See also Freudenburg 2004: 15-23 and 27-44.

³ For the Latin texts, the version from LOEB of Fairclough (1929) is used.

With regard to earlier scholarship, Schlegel (2000) examines the use of Horace's satiric *persona* in relation to Lucilius and concludes that he is included in Horace's satiric project as a contradictory figure, against whom the poet can appear both moderate and restrained poetically and morally. She also believes that he uses Lucilius' failings as a poet to distinguish himself as a satirist from this commonly recognised master of the genre.

Moreover, Muecke (2005) focuses on generic continuity between the satires of Ennius and Lucilius, without elaborating on the intertextual dialogue with Horatian poetry. Harrison (1987) however, analyses lines 30-34 of Satire 2.1, with intention to state that the portrait of Lucilius in 2.1 echoes that of poems 1.4 and 1.10; he also proves that satire, according to Horace, does not belong to the grand literary genres. As stated above, Harrison elaborates only on these lines in relation to some fragments from 1.4 and 1.10, without including a complete analysis of all the literary manifesto that can be found in these three Satires.

Given the above, as it is clear that there is still room for more work in this area of scholarship, this paper aims to examine in detail three of Horace's most significant Satires (1.4, 1.10 and 2.1), which focus on the basic principles of his own satirical writing. It also focuses on Horace's *ars satirica* and presents these poems as an essay on the composition of poetry, an element that has been discussed to a smaller extent by previous scholars. As a result, this paper builds on material and methodology from the fields of classical philology and through an extensive dialogue with the existing bibliography of previous scholars, it will examine the poet's statements about the art of poetry under a new perspective.

In Satire 1.4, Horace states that he is inspired by Lucilius, as he criticises the human vices already mentioned in 1.1-1.3. However, his aim is not personal abuse, as in the case of the representatives of Old Comedy ('Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae / atque alii, quorum comoedia prisca virorum est – Eupolis and Aristophanes and Cratinus and other poets, among the men who represent Old Comedy), and does not resort to criticise by name well-known personalities of his time ('cum libertate notabant' – marked them freely). In addition, in lines 6-8 he comments that the style

of the latter was uncouth and rough ('durus'), while he was also known for his lack of stylistic refinement and the consequential prolific output, but not for the quality of his lines:

hinc omnis pendet Lucilius, hosce secutus,
mutatis tantum pedibus numerisque, facetus,
emunctae naris, durus componere versus.

Lucilius derives from all these men, as a follower who only changed rhythm and metre: funny with a sensitive nose, but rough as far as the composition of the verses is concerned.⁴

In contrast, Horace's poetry will be characterised by stylistic refining and polishing (Hellenistic and neoteric principles of the *labor limae*),⁵ while he presents a new, milder satire in a more refined style. In other words, Horace's novelty is the use of a Callimachean-inspired style in developing satirical themes, which Lucilius treated with less refined poetics. In fact, the satirical poet calls himself a bit too negative and a 'lowly spirit of rare and scanty speech'⁶ (lines 17-21). Nevertheless, he is not well received by the public, since he decries human faults (*vitia*), such as avarice and ambition (*avaritia* and *ambitio*, 17-21):

di bene fecerunt, inopis me quodque pusilli
finxerunt animi, raro et perpauca loquentis;
at tu conclusas hircinis follibus auras
usque laborantis, dum ferrum molliat ignis,
ut mavis, imitare.

Thank the gods I'm a man of few ideas, with a poor and weak spirit
one who speaks only rarely, and then says little;
but if it's what you prefer, then you imitate air shut in goat-skin bellows
and you labour until the fire melts the iron.

In fact, I believe that in 1.4 Horace acknowledges the ideological affinity of his work with Old and New Comedy, Archilochus' iambos, Callimachus, and Lucilius,⁷ but tries

⁴ The translations of the Latin texts are my own. I wish to express my gratitude to Gregoria Dama (translator of English language) for her suggestions and her insightful feedback.

⁵ For the intertextual dialogue of Horace with Hellenistic poetry, see Thomas 2007: 50-62.

⁶ Fairclough 1929: 49.

⁷ For further reading concerning the interaction between Horace and his Latin and Greek satiric models, see also Cucchiarelli 2001.

to differentiate himself from his predecessors and lead his satire to different paths that are more appropriate to the goals of his poetry (lines 17-21), as well as to the political and social conditions of the time he writes. After all, according to Horace, the new regime of Rome, where satirical poetry flourishes, does not allow the existence of a satire using freedom of speech (*libertas*),⁸ but on the contrary promotes the genre as abhorred, an element also highlighted in line 24 of 1.4 ('quod sunt quos genus hoc minime iuvat' - since there are some who take little pleasure for that genre).

In 1.4 Lucilius, mentioned by name for the first time in *Satires*, is noted for the harshness of the language he used in his poetry in order to rebuke writers, politicians, and high-ranking personalities, living or dead. The targets of the poet's censure were not usually enemies of the state, but foes of his friends, especially of Cornelius Scipio Emilianus, a well-known Roman general and statesman and a leading figure in the destruction of the city of Carthage in 146 BC.⁹ Therefore, his voice is that of an assertive aristocrat, interested in the political affairs of his time, appearing also as a commentator and critical observer of various affairs.¹⁰ Horace himself alludes to the satirical poet's role in earlier tradition as a person who exercises censorship against higher echelons through the names of the ancient comedy writers he chooses, alluding to the word aristocracy (Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophanes). In the words Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophanes in line 1 ('Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae'- Eupolis and Cratinus and Aristophanes, the poets) there are the words *polis*, *state* and *ἄριστος* as their first or second compound.¹¹ In fact, those three comedy writers were rivals; therefore, in this case, they are referred in combination with Lucilius in terms of differentiation from Horace, not similarity.¹² Their common element is the fact that Horace's way of writing is very different from theirs, as he distinguishes himself from the tradition and establishes a new type of

⁸ Gowers 2012: 148.

⁹ Freudenburg 2004: 19.

¹⁰ Freudenburg 2004: 19.

¹¹ According to Freudenburg 2004: 20, 'Traces of that legend can be heard to emanate from the opening lines of S. 1.4, where notions of high aristocracy, and deep political engagement, both assumed in the 'poet as censor' metaphor, are cryptographically figured into the impressive set of names that begins the poem, the most famous of Greek comedy's 'real Romans': Eu-polis, Crat-inus Aristo-phanesque. But given that this was the dominant, overbearing paradigm for the interpretation of Lucilius in Horace's day, it is hard to see how Horace would have us believe that his poems belong to the same tradition in anything other than a tangential way.' See also Gowers 2012: 153.

¹² Hooley 2007: 48.

satire, breaking free from the Old Comedy of ancient Greece and the previous satirical poets.

In addition, in lines 21-25 the satirical poet clearly expresses for the first time his thoughts on poetry, in order to criticise the formal literary tradition of the genre and its representatives:

beatus Fannius ultro
delatis capsis et imagine, cum mea nemo
scripta legat, volgo recitare timentis ob hanc rem,
quod sunt quos genus hoc minime iuvat, utpote pluris
culpari dignos.

Lucky is Fannius, who offers
his books and a bust unasked, while no one reads
my own texts, and I'm afraid to recite it aloud
since there are some who take little pleasure for that genre, and many
men deserve criticism.

At the same time, in lines 33-38, Horace explains that many people accuse the satirical poets of being malevolent and offensive, not hesitating to reveal their friends' secrets:

omnes hi metuunt versus, odere poetas.
'Faenum habet in cornu, longe fuge; dummodo risum
excutiat sibi, non hic cuiquam parcat amico
et quodcumque semel chartis inleverit, omnis
gestiet a furno redeuntis scire lacuque
et pueros et anus.' agedum pauca accipe contra.

All of them are afraid of (our) verses and hate the poets.
'he's marked by hay tied to his horns, go away! As long as he can get a laugh
for himself, he won't spare any friend:
and whatever he's scribbled all over his parchments
he's eager for all the slaves and old women to know,
on their way from the bake-house or the well.' Well, listen
To these few words of reply.

Moreover, for Horace, poetry should be characterised by *divinior mens* and *magna sonaturum* (divine inspiration and an eloquence to display great things).¹³

¹³ Hor. *Sat.* 1.4, v. 40-41: 'cui mens divinior atque os / magna sonaturum, des nominis huius honorem'
- give the honored name (of poet), / to one with a superior mind / and eloquence for great sounds.

In line 105 ('insuevit pater optimus hoc me'- the best father formed me) the motif of Horace's father¹⁴ is introduced as the person who handed down to him the basic principles that shaped his character. In particular, in line 106 the poet concedes that his father taught him to steer clear of all the vices which are the core of satire already mentioned in the previous three poems of the collection ('ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quaeque notando' - by showing me with examples every fault so as to avoid it).¹⁵ However, in lines 137-140, the poet avows that his main frailty, namely his love for writing poetry, cannot be eliminated as it is an integral part of his life:

haec ego mecum
compressis agito labris; ubi quid datur oti,
inludo chartis. Hoc est mediocribus illis
ex vitiis unum;

So, I advise myself with my lips tight closed: and when I
have free time I play with my writings. It's one of (my) minor failings.

Horace's father has a *sanus* son,¹⁶ close to the Roman model, respected for his character (lines 116-120):

mi satis est, si
traditum ab antiquis morem servare tuamque,
dum custodis eges, vitam famamque tueri
incolumem possum

It is enough for me that I follow

¹⁴ Horace uses this motif also in Satire 1.6 (verses 65-88), where he praises him for the formation of his personality and his education. See also Schlegel 2000: 93 who states that 'Satires 1.4 and 1.6 are the well-known *loci* of Horace's upbringing by his father, told in the context of Horace's relation to Lucilius, his satiric forebear, and to Maecenas, the man conventionally known as Horace's patron. All four figures - father, son, satiric predecessor, and patron are artifacts of the poet's generic construction, dramatic *personae* structured to provide a definition to Horace's satiric art. The freed-man father who so famously raised his son, by hand as it were, serves to organize the relation between Horace and the two figures Horace makes to loom in his poetic life, Lucilius and Maecenas. Paired in their respective poems with Horace's father, Lucilius and Maecenas are given a fatherly relationship to Horace only to be displaced by the biological parent. More remarkably, Horace's biological father emerges from the poems as Horace's poetic father too, and this leaves Lucilius and Maecenas deprived of the poetically crucial role which they seemed bound to assume in the satire and life of the poet.'

¹⁵ Demeas from *The Brothers* of Terence could serve as a model for the poet's father, but in this case the poet does not compose New Comedy or *fabula palliata*. Instead, he writes a satire focusing on the *res* of his art, examining it from different angles of his recent literary past and redefining it in new satirical contexts, which are clearly related to the world of *palliata*; prostitutes, gluttony and scandals are also presented in Horatian satire and comedy. See also Hooley 2007: 51 for further details.

¹⁶ Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.129-130 (ex hoc ego sanus ab illis / perniciem quaecumque ferunt – I am free from these things that bring ruin). See also Schlegel 2000: 102.

the code our ancestors handed down,
and while you need a guardian I can keep your life and your
reputation
safe from harm.

He also protects his son from *vitia*, such as adultery and avarice. This is achieved by the very means of satire, that is, by rebuking all those vices, so as to mentor his child. Therefore, in 1.4, the poet tries to explain, interpret, and define the poetry he composes, giving at the same time the impression that he does not want to employ treacherous speech, because that is exactly his character.¹⁷

In other words, the focus on his father serves the satirical poet's poetic program, as it allows him to align his satire, which is low style poetry,¹⁸ with Horace's humble and low-profile character in his *Sermones*.¹⁹ The father's model is elaborated by the poet in order to create his own satirical lines and his own poetic framework. It is also an innovative element in the genre of satire, and it is indicative of Horace's own stylistic and thematic novelty. Going one step further, the paternal figure he identifies across his *Satires* seems more of a literary motif and might not have necessarily corresponded to Horace's father in real life.²⁰ In my opinion, the satirical poet is also a father, and his *Satires* should be read as paternal advice so that his readers realise their *vitia*. At the same time, he depends on another model (Lucilius), as a child depends on his parents. In other words, Horace is a *pater* because he gives out paternal advice, aligning himself with the literary construction of his own *pater*, as well as with his model Lucilius.²¹

Consequently, Horace in Satire 1.4 rebukes the poetry of his predecessor, who is

¹⁷ Schlegel 2000: 106.

¹⁸ Ruffell 2003: 35.

¹⁹ For further details concerning the portrait of Horace in the first books of his *Satires*, see Gowers 2003: 55-91.

²⁰ Schlegel 2000: 93.

²¹ According to Schlegel 2000: 106, 'In Satire 1.4 Horace creates a distance between himself and Lucilius, his literary father, by making his biological father critical to his development as a satirist, endowing the fault-noting habit of satire with a Horatian bent to engender virtue. The actual father is a wedge between Horace and his figurative, literary father Lucilius, and the Roman patriarchal context of this strategy gives Horace's satire a pedigree which enhances his redefined genre. Although the impulse to reject a parent to make space for oneself is consistent with the manner in which Horace treats Lucilius in 1.4, it is vital to recognize the quality of this rejection, that it is done in the context of writing in Lucilius' genre, done in a poem which marks Horace's poetic activity as inside the tradition of the older poet. His rejection of his model coincides with the embrace of his model, and the embrace as well as the criticism is reinforced in the following poem (1.5), a Lucilian *imitatio*.'

noted for the harshness of the language he used in his poetry in order to attack famous personalities of his time, without hesitating to mention their names. Horace on the other hand will avoid criticising famous people by name and will focus on presenting all the common human faults of contemporary Romans.

Going one step further, the main theme of Satire 1.10, the last one of the first book, is the basic characteristics of satire: successful humor, terseness, explicitness, clarity of speech, and refined composition; all this characterises the plain style, as well as oratory (lines 9-15):

est brevitatem opus, ut currat sententia neu se
inpediat verbis lassas onerantibus auris,
et sermone opus est modo tristi, saepe iocoso,
defendente vicem modo rhetoris atque poetae,
interdum urbani, parcentis viribus atque
extenuantis eas consulto. Ridiculum acri
fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res.

Conciseness is needed, so that the thought can run on,
without being entangled by words that weigh heavy on weary ears:
you also need a style sometimes serious, often witty,
suited somehow the role of orator and the poet,
at times the urbane man who controls his strength
and parcels it out wisely. Ridicule usually
cuts through big problems better, more swiftly, than force.

Satire 1.10 is a didactic and programmatic poem,²² as it focuses on the proper way of writing a satire. Through this satire, Horace responds to his detractors, who accused him of rebuking Lucilius, his predecessor, in 1.4. More precisely, the poet's criticism against Lucilius is here quite different from those in Satire 1.4; fulfilling his earlier promise (1.4.63: 'alias, iustum sit necne poema' - it will be right to see if this genre is poetry another time), he now emphasises not the social repercussions of satire, but instead its stylistic faults. While he claims credit for praising Lucilius' caustic wit (1.10.3-4: '*sale multo urbem defricuit*' - he lashed well the city with lots of salt), he still deplores his messy composition and accuses him of his uninhibited mixture of Greek and Latin words (1.10.20-1: 'at magnum fecit, quod verbis graeca latinis / miscuit' - he did something important, as he mingled Greek with Latin words).

²² Gowers 2012: 304.

In lines 64-71, Horace essentially highlights the conflict between two satirical approaches, while acknowledging to his forerunner his contribution to the formation of the genre and the vigor of his satirical speech:

fuerit Lucilius, inquam,
comis et urbanus, fuerit limatior idem
quam rudis et Graecis intacti carminis auctor
quamque poetarum seniorum turba; sed ille,
si foret hoc nostrum fato delapsus in aevum,
detereret sibi multa, recideret omne quod ultra
perfectum traheretur, et in versu faciendo
saepe caput scaberet vivos et roderet
unguis.

Let's agree, I can say,
Lucilius was pleasant and witty, more polished
than a maker of rough forms the Greeks never touched
and than the crowd of older poets: but he, had he
happened to be destined to live in our age, he
would have rubbed away too, cutting out whatever was
less than perfect, scratching his head as he wrought
his verses, and often biting his nails to the quick.

In particular, the poet equally aims to project his literary manifesto and the principles of his own satire. In other words, in contrast to 1.4, he recognises in 1.10 Lucilius' satirical vigor, but considers that his style is not successful, since his lack of stylistic refinement did not appeal to the literary taste of Horace's contemporaries. Horace on the other hand imitates Callimachus, as he prefers indiscriminate publicity, vanity and stylistic impurity in a kind of poetry that will be praised by the few and demanding ones.²³ He also believes that humour is preferable to Lucilius' coarse rebuke; furthermore, in line 20 he criticises the imitators of the *poetae novi*, as well as poets who mingle both Greek and Latin linguistic elements ('at magnum fecit, quod verbis graeca latinis miscuit' - and it was a great achievement to blend Greek and Latin).

In particular, in line 32 ('vetuit me tali voce Quirinus' - Quirinus forbade me to do so with such words) the motif of the dream is introduced.²⁴ However, Horace sees here

²³ Gowers 2012: 305.

²⁴ Gowers 2012: 322.

Quirinus, a Roman god identified with the deified Romulus and not someone from ancient Greek mythology. I believe that Quirinus, the 'father' of Romans, has here the admonitory role of Horace's father or the poetic god Apollo as satiric muse (4.124 *uetabat*- prohibited), advising the composition of Latin verses.²⁵ Nonetheless, Horace's dream alludes to the encounters of Callimachus (fr.1.21-4) and Virgil (*Eclogues*) with Apollo. In the first case, Apollo appears in order to ask Callimachus to keep the delicate Muse (*λεπταλή μοῦσα*) in his poetry (fr.1.21-4 Pf.),²⁶ urging him in this way to write refined verses:²⁷

Καὶ γὰρ ὅτε πρώτιστον ἐμοῖς ἐπὶ δέλτον ἔθηκα
γούνασιν, Ἀπόλλων εἶπεν ὃ μοι Λύκιος:
Ἀοιδέ, τὸ μὲν θύος ὅτι πάχιστον
θρέψαι, τὴν Μοῦσαν δ' ὠγαθὲ λεπταλήν.

Indeed, when I first placed a tablet
on my knees, Lycian Apollo said to me:
poet, feed the victim to be as fat as possible but,
keep, dear, the Muse slender.²⁸

Moreover, Apollo appears in the sixth book of Virgil's *Eclogues* (lines 3-5), grasping the poet's ear, in order to urge him to compose well-elaborated and refined poetry:²⁹

Cum canerem reges et proelia, Cynthus aurem
vellit, et admonuit: "Pastorem, Tityre, pinguis
pascere oportet ouis, deductum dicere carmen."

When I sang about kings and battles the Cynthian grasped my ear
and warned me: 'Tityrus, a shepherd should feed
fat sheep, but sing a slender song.'

'Like Apollo in Callimachus, if not in Virgil, Quirinus speaks in homely language, although his second verse, with its combination of alliteration and a ponderous concatenation of long syllables, evokes and parodies the style of earlier Roman

²⁵ See also Gowers 2012: 322 for further reading.

²⁶ For the ancient text, see Pfeiffer 1953.

²⁷ This dream is rather numinous, comparing to the late-night wet dream in Satire 1.5 (1.5.84: 'immundo somnia visu' - dream plenty of sordid visions).

²⁸ The translations of the Ancient Greek fragments are my own.

²⁹ Zetzel 2002: 39. For the Latin text of Virgil's *Eclogues*, see Fairclough 1974.

poetry.³⁰ However, the differences of the Horatian Quirinus from the epiphany of Apollo in the other two poets are even more apparent: in place of the opposition between long and short poetry is a contrast between Greek and Latin verses as far as the poetic composition is concerned.

For instance, the choice of the word *versiculos* in line 58 is neoteric ('versiculos natura magis factos et euntis' - whether it was the harsh nature of his themes that denied him verses more finished and smoother in their flow), but at the same time it parodies the neoteric style. More precisely, as Zetzel (2002) claims: 'The response to his putative critics has two equally important elements: he rejects Lucilius for his style, but he rejects Hermogenes and the *simius* for their content (1.10.17-19):

quos neque pulcher
Hermogenes umquam legit neque simius iste
nil praeter Calvum et doctus cantare Catullum.

Those whom pretty
Hermogenes never reads, nor that skillful ape
in singing Catullus and Calvus.

They have not read the great comic poets; what they admire in Lucilius (clearly his diction and wit, not merely his use of Greek words) is misguided, while they ignore the grand substance of his poetry. Again, the dream of Quirinus makes the important point: Roman substance and elegance of Roman diction are to be sought, and neither the less felicitous aspects of earlier Roman poetry nor the imitation of the Greeks is admirable.³¹

In other words, in this case, I believe that the poet becomes Callimachean and anti-Callimachean at the same time; Horace decides to choose as a poetic starting point his influence by Callimachus, but he does not hesitate to attach Hellenism. Therefore, the word *luteum* in line 37 characterises Lucilius' style, which is far from that of Callimachus.³²

³⁰ Zetzel 2002: 40.

³¹ Zetzel 2002: 42.

³² See also the description of Euphrates in the Hymn to Apollo of Callimachus, lines 108-109 ('Ἀσσυρίου ποταμοῦ μέγας ῥόος, ἀλλὰ τὰ πολλὰ / λύματα γῆς καὶ πολλὸν ἐφ' ὕδατι συρφετὸν ἔλκει' - the flow of the Assyrian river is huge, but it drags so much / filth and debris from the land in its water).

Then, in line 66, he recognises the predecessor's contribution in the formation of a non-Greek poetic genre ('Graecis intacti carminis auctor' - a maker of rough forms the Greeks have never touched), although Lucilius used a lot of Greek words in his verses; he also emphasises that the nature of his poetic art and his lack of stylistic refinement are far from the prevailing aesthetics of Horace's time. In the end, the satire acquires an advisory tone again, urging the other poets to prefer the few and cultured readers, such as Virgil, Varius, Maecenas, and Messala, rather than the ignorant mob (lines 81-90):

Plotius et Varius, Maecenas Vergiliusque,
 Valgius et probet haec Octavius optimus atque
*Fuscus et haec utinam Viscorum laudet uterque
 ambitione relegata. te dicere possum,
 Pollio, te, Messalla, tuo cum fratre, simulque
 vos, Bibule et Servi, simul his te, candide Furni,
 conpluris alios, doctos ego quos et amicos
 prudens praetereo, quibus haec, sint qualiacumque,
 adridere velim, doliturus, si placeant spe
 deterius nostra.*

Let Plotius praise me, as well as Varius, Maecenas, Virgil,
 Valgius, and the best of men Octavius and Fuscus:
 let the Viscus brothers praise!
 And I can name you Pollio, without flattery,
 and you, and your brother, Messalla, and you, Bibulus, Servius,
 and you my honest Furnius,
 and many another learned friend,
 I deliberately omit: and I'd like these verses,
 such as they are, to please them, grieved if
 they enjoy them less than I hope.

This perception essentially leads to the *σφραγίς* of this specific work (line 92: 'i, puer, atque meo citus haec subscribe libello' - go, boy, quickly, add these lines to my little book). The poetic collection of *Satires* is called *libellus* by the poet himself, following Catullus' model (Cat.1.1-2: 'Cui dono lepidum novum labellum / arida modo pumice expoliturum?' - To whom do I give this new little book of wit / just polished off with dry pumice?), in order to highlight in this way his literary identity.³³

³³ Gowers 2012: 338.

Likewise, in Satire 1.10 Horace proves that he is a poet whose preference for short verses in poetry fits perfectly with Maecenas' eclecticism.³⁴ In Maecenas' circle, he discovers an ideal environment which allows him to compose a poem addressed to a limited audience, and not the ignorant mob (lines 83-92). At the time Horace was no longer one of Maecenas' friends or a moralist in the context of the diatribe, but a master of a literary genre who knew well what kind of audience he aimed at, as well as the objectives of his writing, the poet's *ars saturica*.³⁵

In general, in Satire 1.10 the poet recognises Lucilius' contribution in the formation of a non-Greek poetic genre, as well as his lack of refinement in style. It is also a satire about poetic art that presents Horace's *ars poetica* and his intertextual dialogue with Callimachean aesthetics. He prefers a short verse poetry, addressed to a limited but *doctum* audience.

Finally, in 2.1, Lucilius' example does not appear so as to criticize him, but in order to highlight the toils and dangers that those who decide to engage in writing satire must face through the conversation between the poet and Trebatius. At the outset of the second book of his *Satires*, the poet refers directly to Lucilius' way of writing, as in 1.4 and 1.10, and indirectly promises to write elegantly composed poems, which will be approved even by Caesar; having this promise in mind, the reader moves onto the remaining satires of the second book.³⁶ In other words, 2.1 is a perfect introduction and preparation for the subtle irony apparent in the following satires, where Horace's character, thoughts, and attitudes are highlighted only implicitly.³⁷

However, the poet announces in 2.1 that he has a new social position, since he states that he is no longer only Maecenas' friend, but Caesar's as well. In lines 28-29, he even refutes the notion that he is recruited to write what might be pleasant to his friends, not only by not composing poetry exalting Caesar, but also by promoting his poetry as a form of self-presentation ('*me pedibus delectat claudere verba Lucili ritu / nostrum melioris utroque*' - my delight is to imprison words in poetic meter,

³⁴ Gowers 2012: 334.

³⁵ Oliensis 1998: 39.

³⁶ Harrison 1987: 52.

³⁷ Harrison 1987: 52.

like Lucilius / a better man than either of us). The motivation for his writing is therefore not external (to please his friends), but internal (he composes because he is a writer).³⁸

Nevertheless, in lines 32-33 the simile *ut omnis / votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella vita senis* (so the whole life of an old poet lies open to view, as if it were depicted on a votive tablet) is used ambiguously by the poet, not only to allude to Lucilius' poetic writing, but also to highlight the contradiction between Horace's writing endeavor and that of his predecessor.³⁹ In other words, Horace wants to underline the superiority of his own satire, which is a literary work of art, as compared to that of Lucilius. Besides, as mentioned above, 2.1 is a little sharper and more virulent than the rest of his *Sermones*, so it is possible that Horace, full of confidence after writing his first book, wants to defend, even in an indirect way, his creation and show how he keeps his distance from previous satirical poets. In my opinion, this phrase is therefore deliberately ambiguous in the poem, as the poet does not aim either to directly condemn nor clearly praise a particular way of writing. The reader, however, may infer for themselves what exactly is implied by Horace, depending on the perspective he chooses to present his own satirical poetry in relation to the previous tradition; this allusive way of writing is also typical of the literary genre of satire.

Going one step further, this simile gives us the impression that poetry was for him the 'canvas' of his life; through his prolixity, he managed to fit it in 30 books. With these lines, at first glance Horace shows that Lucilius' satires were a "vivid" public document, like a votive tablet, through which he wished to highlight his need to escape from the toils of his daily life. The tablets, which served as tributes to the gods mainly in the context of fulfillment of an oath, were usually deposited by people in temples, in order to show gratitude to deities for various benefits towards them or for a dangerous situation which has previously been avoided. Nevertheless, they are not literary works; on the contrary, they have little, if any, literary value.

³⁸ Oliensis 1998: 44.

³⁹ Harrison 1987: 49.

Therefore, Lucilius' books probably prove that his work is not a literary masterpiece, since he was no better than a stone craftsman, who accumulated images of his own *arcana* for the sake of his audience, without achieving a particularly impressive aesthetic result. However, in my opinion, there is one last element in this simile concerning the art of satire: in the *tabulae votivae* a great literary effect may not be achieved, but information can be found about the daily life of that time; likewise, satire is a low-style poetry, which nevertheless aims to depict the truth of everyday life.⁴⁰

At the same time, I believe that from the dialogue between the two interlocutors in 2.1, the major difference between the two books may be inferred; in the first, the poet converses directly with the audience in order to express his thoughts and complaints, while in the second, the satires function as private conversations between the poet and another person. In lines 35-59, Horace, alluding to Lucilius, starts talking about himself, as befits the context of the genre, since one of the features of satire is to give the impression that the poet adds autobiographical elements to his work; however, Horace does not do this (lines 34-39):

sequor hunc, Lucanus an Apulus anceps;
nam Venusinus arat finem sub utrumque colonus,
missus ad hoc pulsus, vetus est ut fama, Sabellis,
quo ne per vacuum Romano incurreret hostis,
sive quod Apula gens seu quod Lucania bellum
incuteret violenta.

I follow him, Lucanian or Apulian:
since colonists in Venusia plough the border,
sent there, as the old tale goes, when the Samnites
were expelled, so no enemy could assail the Romans
across the gap if Apulian or Lucanian race
threatened violent war.

In lines 4-6, Trebatius' advice to the poet is to give up writing satire altogether ('Trebati / quid faciam? praescribe. quiescas. ne faciam, inquis / omnino versus?' aio' - Hor.: Give me advice, Trebatius. What am I to do? Treb. Take a rest. Hor. Not write verses at all, you mean? Treb. Yes). This shows in turn the difficulty of the

⁴⁰ Harrison (1987): 49.

endeavor shortly after the Battle of Actium, since the targets of Horace's satire mentioned are people without prestige. On the contrary, Lucilius attacks well-known political figures (e.g. Metellus in fragments 676M and 677M in the 26th book of his *Satires*).

In lines 74-78, Horace also claims that his friends are as important as Lucilius, perhaps even more:

quidquid sum ego, quamvis
infra Lucili censum ingeniumque, tamen mecum
magnis vixisse invita fatebitur usque
invidia et fragili quaerens inlidere dentem
offende solido—nisi quid tu, docte Trebati,
dissentis.

Whatever I am, however far,
in rank or wit, below Lucilius, envy, reluctantly, must admit I lived among
great men, and trying to bite on something soft
she'll sink her teeth in what's solid. But maybe you, wise Trebatius,
disagree.

Nonetheless, he has nothing to fear (lines 39-46):

sed hic stilus haud petet ultro
quemquam animantem et me veluti custodiet ensis
vagina tectus. quem cur destringere coner
tutus ab infestis latronibus? o pater et rex
Iuppiter, ut pereat positum robigine telum
nec quisquam noceat cupido mihi pacis! at ille,
qui me conmorit—melius non tangere, clamo—
flebit et insignis tota cantabitur urbe.

But my stylus will never harm
a living soul, of my free will, but it will only defend me,
like a sword laid up in its sheath. Why would I try to draw it, when I'm
safe from dangerous thieves? O king and father, Jupiter,
let my weapon be vanished because of rust,
let no one harm me, the lover of peace! But the one
who provokes me- better not touch (me), I scream!- will suffer
and his blemishes will be sung throughout the whole city.

In other words, his satirical pen (*'stilus'*) functions as a defensive weapon and a

means of self-defense for him (stiletto) and not as a tool to compose virulent satire.⁴¹ He declares that he wants to be peaceful but absolutely still communicates threat in line 45 ('*melius non tangere*') against anyone who will try to disparage him;⁴² likewise, he projects his own way of writing as mild rather than harsh, proper to Horace's peaceful character, as he uses his pen as a defensive, but not offensive weapon.

Trebatius, as a representative of the old school before the Battle of Actium, worries about his client and tries to persuade him with a clever legal argument, first to give up writing poetry altogether (*status coniecturalis*), then compose an epic praising Augustus (*status definitionis*) and write a toned down satire (*status qualitatis*).⁴³ However, Horace in the lines 83-84 humorously manages to parody his indictment based on the laws of the Twelve Tables and even argue for himself how he writes verses with integrity, deserving Caesar's praise ('*esto, siquis mala; sed bona siquis / iudice condiderit laudatus Caesare?*' - whatever, if they are ill verses: but if they are good and praised by Caesar?). Therefore, he shatters Trebatius' argument that his punishment will be similar to that imposed on those who compose malevolent poems ('*mala*' - morally bad and aesthetically tasteless). For this reason, it seems that, at the end of 2.1, Horace appears full of confidence. Holding Lucilius' sword and with Caesar's favor, he no longer has to fear anyone, even the death sentence that may result if he is accused of the composition of *mala carmina* and violation of the laws of the Twelve Tables.⁴⁴

In other words, Horace in Satire 2.1 returns to the more traditional, Lucilian satires of the first book of his *Sermones* and introduces us perfectly to the dramatic ironies of the remaining satires of the second Book, in which, for the most part, the thoughts and attitudes of Horace emerge only indirectly.

To sum up, it is observed that the poet evolves and comes out, for a while, from silence, in order to promote his literary manifesto. In 1.4, he rebukes Lucilius for his

⁴¹ Schlegel 2010: 261.

⁴² See also lines 117-118 in Satire 2.7, where Davus' remarks enrage Horace, who in turn threatens to send him to a Sabine farm if he does not stop accusing him, reminding him in this way that everything should be done in moderation ('*ocius hinc te ni rapis / accedes opera agro nona Sabino*' - if you don't take yourself off in a minute, you'll become the ninth slave on my Sabine farm).

⁴³ Freudenburg 2004: 106.

⁴⁴ Freudenburg 2004: 108.

lack of stylistic refinement and his low style. This Satire is also well-known for Horace's reference to his upbringing by his father, told in the context of the poet's relation to Lucilius. The freed-man father serves to organize the relation between Horace and his literary 'father', Lucilius, while Horace at the same time is also a 'father' for his readers who tries to teach them how to avoid all the human *vitia* that are presented in his *Sermones*. Going one step further, in 1.10 he acknowledges the contribution of his forerunner in shaping the genre of satire in relation to Old Comedy; at the same time, he highlights the basic principles that should recur in satirical poetry of his time. Finally, in 2.1 the satirical poet of the first book sets the goals of the second one through its dialogue with the law-abiding Trebatius. In this case, Horace uses Lucilius as a striking *exemplum* that depicted his life in his poetry, while at the same time, the poet, full of confidence, emphasises the virtues of his own writing and his love for composing satirical poems. In other words, the *ars saturica* of Horace is apparent in these three poems, which function as an essay on poetics and prove that the poet managed to differentiate himself from his predecessor, without avoiding an intertextual *ludus* with Lucilius' *Satires*.

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