

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

## SATIRES OF ROME

This book sets out to locate Roman satire's most salient possibilities and effects at the center of every Roman reader's cultural and political self-understanding, by describing the genre's numerous shifts in focus and tone over several centuries (from Lucilius to Juvenal) not as mere "generic adjustments" that reflect the personal preferences of its authors, but as separate chapters in a special, generically encoded story of Rome's lost, and much lionized, Republican identity. Freedom exists in performance in ancient Rome: it is a "spoken" entity. As a result, satire's programmatic shifts, from "open," to "understated," to "cryptic," and so on, can never be purely "literary" and "apolitical" in focus and/or tone. In *Satires of Rome*, Professor Freudenburg reads these shifts as the genre's unique way of staging and agonizing over a crisis in Roman identity. Satire's standard "genre question" in this book becomes a question of the Roman self.

KIRK FREUDENBURG is Professor of Greek and Latin at Ohio State University. He received his doctorate from the University of Wisconsin and has previously taught at Kent State University. He has published widely on Latin literature and is the author of *The Walking Muse: Horace on the Theory of Satire* (Princeton, 1993). He is currently editing *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire* and Book II of Horace's *Sermones* for the Cambridge Greek and Latin Classics series.

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

# SATIRES OF ROME

*Threatening poses from Lucilius to Juvenal*

KIRK FREUDENBURG

*Professor of Greek and Latin, Ohio State University*



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press  
 0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal  
 Kirk Freudenburg  
 Frontmatter  
[More information](#)

PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
 The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS  
 The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge CB2 2RU, UK  
 40 West 20th Street, New York NY 10011-4211, USA  
 10 Stamford Road, Oakleigh, VIC 3166, Australia  
 Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014, Madrid, Spain  
 Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa  
<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Kirk Freudenburg 2001

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception  
 and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,  
 no reproduction of any part may take place without  
 the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2001

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeset in Baskerville and New Hellenic Greek [A0]

*A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloguing in Publication data*

Freudenburg, Kirk  
 Satires of Rome: threatening poses from Lucilius to Juvenal / by Kirk Freudenburg.  
 p. cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

ISBN 0 521 80357 8 (hardback) ISBN 0 521 00621 x (paperback)

1. Verse satire, Latin—History and criticism.
2. Lucilius, Gaius, ca. 180—ca. 102  
 b.c.—Criticism and interpretation.
3. Persius—Criticism and interpretation.
4. Juvenal—Criticism and interpretation.
5. Horace—Criticism and interpretation.
6. Rome—In literature. I. Title

PA6056 .F74 2001

871'.0109—dc21

2001025772

ISBN 0 521 80357 8 hardback  
 ISBN 0 521 00621 x paperback

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

*For my parents, Victor and Delores Freudenburg,  
with love and appreciation*

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Contents*

<i>Acknowledgments</i>	<i>Page</i> ix
<i>Key dates for the study of Roman verse satire</i>	xii
<i>Glossary of key names and technical terms</i>	xv
Introduction	1
1 Horace	15
The diatribe satires ( <i>Sermones</i> 1.1–1.3): “You’re no Lucilius”	15
<i>Sermones</i> book 1 and the problem of genre	23
Remembered voices: satire made new in <i>Sermones</i> 1.1	27
The social poetics of Horatian <i>libertas</i> : since when is “enough” a “feast”?	44
Hitting satire’s <i>finis</i> : along for the ride in <i>Sermones</i> 1.5	51
Dogged by ambition: <i>Sermones</i> 1.6–10	58
Book 2 and the totalitarian squeeze: new rules for a New Age	71
Panegyric bluster and Ennius’ <i>Scipio</i> in Horace, <i>Sermones</i> 2.1	82
Coming to terms with Scipio: the new look of post-Actian satire	93
Big friends and bravado in <i>Sermones</i> 2.1	100
Book 2 and the hissings of compliance	108
Nasidienus’ dinner-party: too much of not enough	117
2 Persius	125
Of narrative and cosmogony: Persius and the invention of Nero	125
The Prologue: top-down aesthetics and the making of oneself	134
Faking it in Nero’s orgasmatron: Persius 1 and the death of criticism	151
The satirist-physician and his out-of-joint world	173
Satire’s lean feast: finding a lost “pile” in P. 2	183
Teaching and tail-wagging, critique as crutch: P. 4	189
Left for broke: satire as legacy in P. 6	195
3 Juvenal	209
A lost voice found: Juvenal and the poetics of too much, too late	209

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

viii

*Contents*

Remembered monsters: time warp and martyr tales in Trajan's Rome	215
Ghost-assault in Juv. 1	234
The poor man's Lucilius	242
Life on the edge: from exaggeration to self-defeat	248
Beating a dead fish: the emperor-satirist of Juv. 4	258
Satires 3 and 5: the poor man's lunch of Umbricius and Trebicus	264
<i>List of works cited</i>	278
<i>General index</i>	285

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

## *Acknowledgments*

Thanks are many for a project so long in the tooth. The first urges to write this book were stirred at the Institute for Research in the Humanities at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. There I had been commissioned to write something altogether different (a commentary, still in the works) as one of two inaugural Solmsen Fellows for the academic year 1994–5. But the old lunch crowd there, egged on especially by my fellow Solmsen, Christopher Rowe (taking no sugar whatsoever in his cappuccino), challenged me to think bigger thoughts than I had been thinking. And so I undertook to write this book instead.

Many have read the book in draft. Others have been subjected to its basic notions in lecture form. Horace had the decency to save his “take a look at my high-powered friends” list for the last lines of his first book (and I’ll bore you with that in chapter 1). But convention dictates that I pre-impress you right here with mine – and make no mistake, these acknowledgments are always about the business of getting you properly impressed. I am especially grateful to audiences at the University of Basel, UCLA, Baylor University, the University of Bristol, the Cambridge Greek and Latin Seminar, and Durham University for their helpful responses to my Juvenal chapter when it was in bud. Tony Woodman, *qui cogere posset*, opened my eyes to many matters of crucial importance during my days “in the tower” at Durham castle, and he has followed up his conversations with helpful written advice. Denis Feeney changed entirely the way I think about Horace with a few deft strokes in my margins. Michael Putnam pushed hard for a better intertextual reckoning of Virgil in my analysis of Horace’s early works. I am most grateful for his insights. Charles Martindale provided comments from start to finish that helped “balance” the book into its several parts. The final product is much better for

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

x

*Acknowledgments*

his hard work. Alessandro Barchiesi provided scores of incisive comments, besides a number of bibliographical suggestions that proved invaluable, saving me much embarrassment. His enthusiasm for the book (because it is *his*) has been most heartening. Andrea Cucchiarelli did me the great favour of both commenting on my manuscript, and allowing me to read his own forthcoming work, thus doubling my debt to him. Tom McGinn kept me from legal trouble in chapter 1, and Emily Gowers carefully read the book in one of its last revisions, leaving me to revise what I could one last time. She is thus to be thanked not only for writing her stellar *The Loaded Table*, but for giving me the benefit of her proven expertise on satire. Also to be thanked for generous insights are the book's anonymous readers for Cambridge University Press. They know who they are. And I think I do, too.

Now to my most indefatigable readers, those who subjected themselves to a second reading of the entire work. When Daniel Hooley first got a hold of this book he caught me spelling Persius with an "e" (Perseus). That will give you some measure of just how far he had to lead me along my journey's yellow brick road, and how patient he has been with me from the start. I hope to have repaid him, my Scarecrow, in some small measure, by letting you know in the course of this book just how brainy his soft-spoken work on Pers-i-us really is. John Henderson, the Wizard himself, needs no stamp of approval from me, and I certainly know better than to try to thank him publicly, and in such a respectable venue as this. He would be the first to tell you to pay no attention to that man behind the curtain, and to insist that such thanks can never be as much about him as they have to be about me. And he's right. That said, I leave it to my readers to judge just how much his diagnostic wizardry has electrified my thinking and (it is hoped) this book's every page.

Penultimate thanks go to my home Department of Greek and Latin at the Ohio State University for taking a chance on me, and encouraging me to be myself, when no other university dared, and to Ohio State's very fine Humanities College for always supporting my research in full. In the end, this book is much better for its having been penned at Ohio State, among colleagues both encouraging and smart.

Pauline Hire encouraged this project at an early stage. Now freshly retired, she deserves not just my heartfelt thanks for what

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Acknowledgments*

xi

she has done for me, but something much more (a conference in her honor, in Kathmandu) for playing the leading role in promoting “New Latin” studies at Cambridge University Press for the past twenty years. Michael Sharp has taken over from her in a manner that suggests the Press will be well served for many years to come. I thank him for his continued encouragement, his attention to detail, and, especially, for his letting me get away with what you are about to read.

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Key dates for the study of Roman verse satire*

- ca. 440 – ca. 405 BCE** The floruit of Greek Old Comedy (Eupolis, Cratinus, Aristophanes)
- ca. 404 – ca. 321** Period of Greek Middle Comedy
- ca. 320 – ca. 250** Period of Greek New Comedy (esp. Menander)
- ca. 315** Bion of Borysthenes arrives in Athens; active as lecturer until ca. 245
- ca. 205–184** Plautus writes Greek-style comedies (*fabulae palliatae*) for the Roman stage
- 204–169** Quintus Ennius active in Rome as playwright, writer of panegyric epic, and *Saturae*
- 166–159** Terence writes Greek-style comedies for the Roman stage
- 134–133** Lucilius serves under P. Cornelius Scipio Aemilianus at the siege of Numantia; thereafter writes 30 books of *Saturae* in Rome ca. 129 – ca. 101
- 81–67** M. Terentius Varro writes 150 books of satires in the manner of Menippus of Gadara (early third century)
- 65** Horace born on 8 December in Venusia
- 42** Horace serves as military tribune under Brutus at the Battle of Philippi
- 37** Pact of Tarentum renews détente between Octavian and Antony
- 35** Horace publishes book 1 of his *Sermones*
- 31** Battle of Actium (2 September). Antony defeated
- 30** Horace publishes book 2 of his *Sermones*
- 27** Octavian named “Augustus” by the Roman Senate

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Key dates*

xiii

- 23** Horace publishes books 1–3 of his *Carmina*
- 19** Horace publishes book 1 of his *Epistles*
- 8** Horace dies on 27 November
- 14 CE** Death of Augustus, succession of Tiberius
- 14–37** Reign of Tiberius
- 34** Persius (Aules Persius Flaccus) born to rich, Etruscan parents
- 37–41** Reign of Gaius (Caligula)
- 41–54** Reign of Claudius
- 54** Accession of Nero. The deification of Claudius satirized in Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis*
- 59** Death of Agrippina. Nero performs on stage at the *Juvenalia*
- ca. 60–2** Persius active as a writer of *Satires*. The collection is edited and published after his death, late in 62
- 68** Suicide of Nero
- 69** Civil wars. Year of the Four Emperors
- 69–81** Flavian period commences: reigns of Vespasian and Titus
- 81–96** Reign of Domitian. Floruit of Statius and Martial
- 85** Domitian named *ensor perpetuus*
- 93** Death of Agricola. Domitian pursues “Stoic opposition”: the Younger Helvidius, Aurulenus Rusticus, and Herennius Senecio executed
- 96** Domitian murdered in a palace coup, 18 September. Accession of Nerva
- 97** Tacitus suffect consul. Pliny attacks Certus, prosecutor of Helvidius
- 98** Death of Nerva. Accession of Trajan (January). Tacitus publishes his *Agricola*. Pliny and Tacitus prosecute Marius Priscus
- 100** Pliny takes up consulship for September and October; writes his *Panegyricus*
- ca. 99–109** Pliny publishes books 1–9 of his *Letters*
- ca. 100 – ca. 130** Juvenal writes satires in five books
- ca. 105–106** Tacitus collecting material for his *Histories*
- ca. 116** Tacitus publishes first book(s) of the *Annales*

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

---

xiv

*Key dates*

**117** Death of Trajan. Accession of Hadrian

**late second century** Helinius Acro writes commentary on Horace

**early third century** Pomponius Porphyrio writes commentary on Horace

*Glossary of key names and technical terms*

**Actium** a bay in northwest Greece where Octavian defeated Antony in 31 BCE  
**adsentator** “flatterer”

**Bion** Cynic street-preacher (a proto-“satirist”) of the late fourth/early third century BCE

**Bona Dea** lit. “Good Goddess,” an Italian deity whose annual rites in Rome were presided over exclusively by women

**Callimachean** exhibiting the “refined” and “scholarly” tastes of Callimachus, Alexandrian poet of the third century BCE

**carmen maledicum** “hostile song”

**cena** a formal, evening dinner-party in Rome

**ensor** an elected Roman magistrate in charge of public morals, the keeping of citizen-lists, and regulating membership of the Senate

**choliambic** the “limping iambic” meter of Hipponax (late sixth century BCE)

**Chrysippus** third-century-BCE head of the Stoa and ardent shaper and defender of Stoic orthodoxy

**consul** the title of Rome’s chief civil and military magistrates during the Republic. Two consuls were elected annually

**convivia** “dinner-guest”

**crux (pl. cruces)** a difficult, “tortured” passage (lit. a “cross”) that defies interpretation

**Cynic** an aggressively anti-social, primitivist (lit. “dog-like”) beggar-philosopher in the tradition of Diogenes (fourth century BCE)

**deductum carmen** a “finely-spun song” in the manner of Callimachus

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xvi

*Glossary*

**descriptio** a highly contrived “scene-painting” in words, designed to arouse pity and/or indignation

**diatribe** an informal “street-sermon” in the manner of Bion (above)

**equus** “horseman,” a member of the “equestrian order,” the status group immediately below the “senatorial order”

**farrago** “horse-feed,” Juvenal’s metaphor for (his own) low-grade satire

**fautores Lucili** “fans/patrons of Lucilius,” critics of Horace in book 1 of his *Sermones*

**fnis** “end/limit,” a watchword of Epicurean moderation

**genus** a term meaning literary “genre” as well as social “class”

**hexameter** the six-foot (monostichic) metrical scheme of epic and formal verse satire

**homoioteleuton** ending consecutive words with similar “rhyming” sounds

**iambic** the basic short–long meter (in numerous schemes) of Greek and Roman iambic poetry (e.g. Archilochus, Lucilius), tragedy, and comedy

**incessus** the formal, parade-like “entrance” of a Roman aristocrat into the city

**indignatio** rage that stems from a lack of due honor (a sense of being “undeservedly” abused)

**iunctura** a figurative expression that derives from the “joining” of mismatched words and/or ideas

**katabasis** an epic hero’s “descent” into the underworld

**lanx satura** a “plate stuffed full” to overflowing, satire’s most prominent symbol in the ancient world

**libertas** “freedom / freedom of speech”

**Lucilianus modus** the “Lucilian manner” of acerbic and uncompromised free speech

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)*Glossary*

xvii

**Maecenas** from the early 30s to 23 BCE he was Octavian's right-hand man in Rome, famous for his generous patronage of Virgil, Horace, and Propertius

**modus** "limit/measure," a favorite watchword of Horace's political and stylistic discretion

**neoteric** in the manner of Rome's "new poets" (especially Calvus and Catullus)

**nota** the censor's "mark" branding bad morals and removing one from the Senate

**Octavian** adopted son of Julius Caesar, later named Augustus by the Roman Senate

**Old Comedy** the openly political, fantastical comedies of Aristophanes, Eupolis, and Cratinus (Athens, fifth century BCE)

**Palatine** Rome's augural hill, site of a temple to Apollo and the emperor's private homes (whence English "palace")

**parabasis** in an Old Comic play, an interlude where the play's lead actors "step aside," allowing the chorus to address the audience on matters of topical (often literary-critical) import

**parasite** in Greek and Roman New Comedy, a hungry, bankrupt nobleman who wheedles and connives to satisfy his high-class tastes

**Parnassus** Apollo's holy mountain in north-central Greece, famous for the shrine of Delphi on its south slope

**patella** "small plate," a symbol of satire opposed to the larger *lanx* (above)

**praescriptio** a written "preface" defining the scope of a lawsuit

**praeteritio** a rhetorical device that touches on certain persons and/or topics by promising to leave them unmentioned

**praetor** one of several Roman magistrates in charge of the city's legal and financial affairs and the administration of the courts

**princeps senatus** a leading figure (lit. "first man") in the Roman Senate

**recusatio** a poet's stylized "refusal" to sing of a great man's (especially military) achievements in epic song

Cambridge University Press

0521803578 - Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal

Kirk Freudenburg

Frontmatter

[More information](#)

xviii

*Glossary***sapiens** the ideal “wise man” of the Stoics**satis** adverb meaning “enough,” attached to “satire” by a false etymology**satir** the root word (lit. “stuffed full,” cf. *lanx* above) behind most ancient etymologies of “satire”**scholiasts** ancient grammarians, both Greek and Latin, who wrote commentaries (often in the margins of texts) on the works of “classical” authors**Second Triumvirate** the coalition of “three men” (Octavian, Antony, Lepidus) that ruled Rome from 43 to 36 BCE, subsequently giving way to a temporary détente between Antony and Octavian (36–31 BCE)**semipaganus** “half-rustic,” a key term in Persius’ self-description**sermo** “talk.” Horace uses the pl. *sermones* (“talks”) of his satires**soros** the Stoic “grain-pile” paradox that poses the puzzle: “When does a pile become a pile?”**subscriptio** the formal, written specification of crimes in an indictment**telos** “end/goal” (pl. *tele*)**triuuium** a bustling intersection of three roads in downtown Rome**ubertas** stylistic “richness”**umbra** lit. “shadow,” an uninvited tag-along guest at a Roman banquet**Vestal Virgin** one of six virgin priestesses of Vesta, goddess of the Roman hearth, in charge of tending the goddess’s “undying fire” in the Roman Forum**Vita** a poet’s biography attached as a preface to ancient commentaries