CLASSICVM

Joint Journal of the Classical Association of New South Wales
and of the Classical Languages Teachers Association of New South Wales
C/o Department of Ancient History, Macquarie University, N.S.W. Australia 2109.

Vol. XXIX.I, April 2003 Editor: I. M. Plant ISSN 0155 0659

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ARTICLES

REVIEWS

DOMUS AND *VIA*: PLACE-HUNTING IN HOR. *SATIRES* 1.9 AND JUVENAL 3

In a recent article on Hor. *Sat.* 1.9 Tara S. Welch has shown that topographical relationships, that is, the implied contrast between the Forum (the traditional public space of Rome) and the house of Maecenas in his gardens (a newly-made private space) 'provide the poet an arena for indirect meditation about his movement from the wider Roman community into the selective circle of Maecenas, and about the relationship between his poetry and his patron.'[1] As she suggests by the title of her article, the word *locus* in l. 51 serves to draw together the broader theme of 'place-hunting' with the specific setting of the poem, with its contrast between the public street, open to all, and the removed and exclusive dwelling of Maecenas. Various senses of *locus* are thus activated: 'locality', 'situation', 'place to stay', 'opportunity', 'turn', 'role', 'position in society', 'status'.[2] Critics have often found it natural to use spatial metaphors of the poem.[3]

In its immediate context *est locus cuique suus* ('each has his own place') is a reproof of the pest's assumption that Maecenas's circle is competitive, and that entering it could be effected by displacing others.[4] Taken as a motto for the whole poem it suggests, not only that each friend is secure in the recognition of his true merits, and has been given his due status, but also a certain satisfaction and pride in the achievement of this position.[5]

If *Sat.* 1.9 mocks the attempts of an outsider to become an insider, Juvenal 3 is the complaint of an already displaced person. Horace's metaphorical 'distancing' has become reality. Umbricius's first words in the satire (21-2) *quando artibus...honestis/nullus in Vrbe locus* ('since there is no place in Rome for respectable skills') read like an answer to Horace. In this paper I will use the idea of place just considered, to develop some further similarities and differences between the two poems in their handling of the themes of exclusion and displacement in relation to topography.

Let us consider the initial situations of the poems. We meet Horace in the *Via Sacra*, in the heart of Rome, but detached from it, by virtue of his poetic calling, and the protection of Maecenas.[6]

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[1] '*Est locus uni cuique suus*: City and Status in Horace's *Satires* 1.8 and 1.9', *Classical Antiquity* 10, 2001, 165-92: 166. While I agree that the poem would imply a topographical contrast between the Forum and Maecenas's house on the Esquiline, if it had already been built (see *S.* 2.3.307-13, which may imply that Maecenas is building. *S.* 2.3 must be after 33 B.C.), we should note the indirectness of the reference in *domus* 'household' (49). Another exploration of symbolic topography in Roman satire is E. Gowers, 'The Anatomy of Rome from Capitol to Cloaca', *JRS* 85, 1995, 23-32. For more general treatments see S.H. Braund, 'City and Country in Roman Satire' in *Satire and Society in Ancient Rome* (ed. S.H. Braund), Exeter, 1989, 23-47, R. Bond, '*Urbs Satirica*: The City in Roman Satire with special reference to Horace and Juvenal', *Scholia* 10, 2001, 77-91. Note the linking of Forum and grand house at Hor. *Epode* 1 1-8, *beatus ille qui procul negotiis...Forumque vitat et superba civium/potentiorum limina.* See Treggiari TAPA 128 (1998) on house

[2] See OLD s.v. *locus*.

[3] E.g. E. Oliensis, *Horace and the Rhetoric of Authority*, Cambridge, 1998, 37: 'The satire dramtizes Horace's efforts to distance himself, both physically and discursively, from his unwelcome companion.'

[4] I follow N. Rudd (*The Satires of Horace*, Cambridge, 1966, 74) in calling him the 'pest'. Horace deliberately suppresses his name (l. 3). We should also note the identity he claims for himself — a poet, see P. M. Brown, *Horace Satires I*, Warminster, 1993, on l. 7 *docti sumus*, and D. R. Shackleton Bailey, *Profile of Horace*, London, 1982, 21:'a poet in the still modish 'neoteric' style'.

[5] See Rudd 82-3.

[6] It is important that Horace has no business in the Forum, except as an observer, whereas the pest by his nature is 'at home' there. Cf. Lucilius 1145-1151W: 'Now indeed from dawn to dusk, on holidays and workdays, all the people and all the senators alike busy themselves in the forum, never leaving it. All have given themselves over to one and the same study and art—to be

Darting out of the crowd the pest makes himself known to Horace (but never to the readers; as he will never 'make it' he is defined by his anonymity). His goal is Maecenas's house, admission to which would mean he had obtained the support of a powerful patron. But that he is destined to remain an outsider is confirmed in his last utterance (57-8): *hodie/si fuero exclusus*. While Horace and the pest are opposed as insider and outsider, Horace, ambiguously, is split or caught between two locations, the street and the house:[7] the street as the *locus* of his satiric material, the house as the *locus* of his poetic status. In Juvenal 3 the 'speaker' is split into two distinct figures: the satirist remains in Rome, with his material, the urban social scene, while his *alter ego*, Umbricius, abandons the city along with the struggle to find a place.

Accordingly, the conversation between Umbricius and the satirist takes place just outside the walls of Rome, in the Vale of Egeria, a location the description of which encapsulates the ensuing denunciation of the topsy-turvy city — a Rome no longer Rome. I quote Courtney ad loc. on 3.10-20: 'Juvenal and Umbricius look for a non-urban setting for the denunciation of Rome, but the one they find is spoiled by foreigners..., by greed which profiteers from the sacred, by *luxuria* which despises simple Roman stone, and in short by lack of respect for Roman tradition.'[8] The word-choice underlines the theme (*mendicat silva, speluncas/dissimiles veris, ingenuum violarent marmora tufum*) by interpreting places according to socio-moral categories.

In the first part of Umbricius's tirade his lament is his failure to find a place in a rich patron's house. At 126ff. his complaint is the topsy-turvy disruption of moral values caused by the perversion of the system of patronage. In Juvenal's Rome, unlike Maecenas's house, poverty is an obstacle to worth (164-5, cf. *Sat.* 1.9.51-2). It is only in the country that the poor man can maintain his self-respect, because there all are equal in appearance (171-9, cf. 153-9). Next we are shown the poor man's rented dwelling in Rome, compared with the great ancestral house (190-222). Yet the country does offer the prospect of a home of one's own (*domus, domini* 224, 231). The final section, further reasons for leaving Rome, focuses on the dangers of the streets, dangers to which the poor are particularly exposed. As the final image shows (*clausis domibus* 303), the house is the place of refuge from the street, the street the site of competition for survival.

The conversation between Horace and the pest takes place in the in the civic, religious and commercial centre of Rome, a Rome that hardly exists in Juvenal 3. In that poem no civic or religious sites are mentioned.[9] The contrast is no longer between the *Via Sacra* and the Esquiline, the centre and the periphery.[10] Instead, Juvenal's Rome is epitomized by the huge social distance between the low-lying *Subura* (5) and the Esquiline and Viminal hills (71) it was between, that is between the busy, narrow, noisy, dirty and disreputable streets of the area which lay in the valleys to the east of the Fora and the (nearby) grand residences of the rich, set amid park-like gardens on the hills.[11] The city is regarded simply as a place where people live, the wealthy in

able to swindle without getting caught, to fight by cunning, to compete by smooth talking, pretend to be a fine fellow, to lay traps as if all are enemies of all.'

[7] See Welch 181-2.

[8] E. Courtney, *A Commentary of the Satires of Juvenal*, London, 1980, 159. In contrast Hor. *Sat.* 1.8 commemorates Maecenas's creation of a new, purified, 'non-urban' garden just outside the Esquiline gate, see Welch, 184.

[9] The traditional citizen body is evoked, however, by *Quirites* 60, 164, *Quirine* 67, and the mention of civic, military and judicial duties in 125ff. We will discuss the special case of the theatre below.

[10] On the 'apartness' of Maecenas' villa see Welch 170-2. It 'seems to have straddled the city walls' (168 n. 14). The topographical reality is the opposite of the social, cf. Oliensis 64: 'Horace is fighting [in the *Epodes*] at once to stabilize a disordered world by establishing its center and defining its periphery and to protect his own face by ruling himself in and others out.'

[11] In the satirists the *Subura* is e.g. *fervens* (Juv. 11.51, and schol. *frequentissima regio*), and *clamosa* (Mart. 12.18.2). See Platner-Ashby, *A topographical dictionary of ancient Rome*, London, 1929, s.v. For a discussion of the topographical problems, and a less lurid picture, see K. Welch in Steinby, E.M. (ed.), *Lexicon Topographicum Urbis Romae*, Rome, IV, 1999, 379-83 : 'A

their great houses, the poor in their apartment blocks. The first half of the satire is dominated by the goal of entry to the great house, the second by the narrow, crowded streets outside (made all the more horrific by the lurid descriptions of their dangers), to which Umbricius is condemned by his failure to find a 'place'. Our final glimpse of the poor Roman underlines the point (302-3). Excluded from all the shut-up shops and houses, he is left alone on a dark street to be robbed of everything he stands up in.

Domus is a key term for the theme of displacement in Juvenal 3. Rome itself was Umbricius's *domus*, or *patria* (29), the place where he was born, but he is repelled by the 'Greek city' (61). Indeed, it is not his *frivola* (198) which are being loaded onto one wagon outside the Porta Capena, but *tota domus* (10). The choice of *domus* as the word for 'possessions' here emphasizes both the theme of poverty and the theme of displacement. The true Roman leaves the Greek city, while Greeks from a whole catalogue of Eastern places make for the Esquiline and Viminal to become the hearts of the great houses and, eventually, their owners: *viscera magnarum domuum dominique futuri* (69-72). The *magna domus* (212) is the grand house of the wealthy man, from the threshold of which the poor man is driven away (124). Umbricius says *limine summoveor*, whereas it is the insider Horace whom the pest envisages himself as helping to do the driving away in Hor. *Sat.* 1.9 47-8 *peream ni/summosses omnis.* (And is this not closer to the truth than he sees?) *Res angusta domi* (165) again underlines Umbricius's poverty. In order to pay his repects to his patron the poor man has to bribe the slaves of the wealthy house (*plena domus libis venalibus*,187). Even the cameo at 261ff. (where *domus* is used in the sense of household slaves) can be seen as an image of poverty and displacement. The dead man who has been crushed in the street accident will never return home, and is equally excluded from the underworld by his lack of the fee to pay the ferry-man.

In each of the two satires one place stands apart as a place of refuge from the ambitious striving of getting on in Rome. In *Sat.* 1.9 it is the household of Maecenas, the 'magic circle' where *ambitio* and *invidia* are disarmed, even though inherent inequalities remain (48-53).

> 'non isto vivimus illic,
> quo tu rere, modo; domus hac nec purior ulla est
> nec magis his aliena malis; nil mi officit, inquam,
> ditior hic aut est quia doctior; est locus uni
> cuique suus.' 'magnum narras, vix credibile.' 'atqui
> sic habet.'
>
> 'We don't behave there in the way you imagine. It's a thoroughly/ decent place — quite free from that kind of nastiness. I'm not/at all worried, I assure you, that so and so is better read/and better off than I am. Everyone has his own position.'/'That's fantastic! I can hardly believe it!' 'It's true all the same.'[12]

In Juvenal 3 the idealized vision of country life, epitomized by the audience at the theatre during the country festival, has this same quality (172-8):

> ipsa dierum
> festorum herboso colitur si quando theatro
> maiestas tandemque redit ad pulpita notum
> exodium, cum personae pallentis hiatum

thriving commercial district of Rome with a substantial elite presence, the *S.* was less unusual than is suggested by Martial and Juvenal... The district gained notoriety because it happened to be close to the *Forum Romanum*, the centre of elite activity. It was for this reason that the *S.* became the proverbial demimonde of the Latin poets.'(383).

[12] Trans. N. Rudd, *The Satires of Horace and Persius*, Harmondsworth, 1973. Note the use of the words 'place' and 'position' in this translation, and 'place' in that of Juv. 3.153-9 below.

in gremio matris formidat rusticus infans,
aequales habitus illic similesque uidebis
orchestram et populum; clari uelamen honoris
sufficiunt tunicae summis aedilibus albae.

On grand occasions,/when a public holiday is being held in a grassy theatre,/and the well-known farce, so long awaited, returns to the platform/(the peasant child in its mother's arms cowers in fear/when confronted by the gaping mouth of the whitened mask),/even then you will see similar clothes being worn by the stalls and the rest alike; as robes of their lofty office, /the highest aediles are content to appear in plain white tunics.[13]

Inequalities and status distinctions (between 'senators', magistrates and the people) are not obliterated, but they cease to oppress because all are alike in appearance.

The country festival, with its theatrical *ludi*, is presented as an antithesis to the city games (153-9):

"exeat" inquit,
"si pudor est, et de puluino surgat equestri,
cuius res legi non sufficit, et sedeant hic
lenonum pueri quocumque ex fornice nati,
hic plaudat nitidus praeconis filius inter
pinnirapi cultos iuuenes iuuenesque lanistae."
sic libitum uano, qui nos distinxit, Othoni.

"Shame on you!" says the speaker./"Kindly leave the cushioned seats reserved for knights,/if your means are less than the law requires. You will give your place/to brothel-keepers' boys, who first saw the light in some bawdy house./The debonair son of an auctioneeer can sit and applaud here,/on his right a fighter's well- dressed lad, on his left a trainer's."/Thus decreed the brainless Otho, who assigned us our places.

(Trans. N. Rudd.)

The theatre, 'a substitute for public life',[14] is yet another scene of the poor man's humiliation, where he loses his status because of his shabby dress. What should be an occasion for release from the pressures of the rat-race, becomes another place for the poor man's dispossession and an illustration of the way that new and disreputable fortunes overthrow the old hierarchical distinctions. For, since L. Roscius Otho's *Lex Roscia theatralis* of 67 BC, knights had sat in fourteen rows behind the senators in the *orchestra*, away from the people.[15] The theatre may thus function as a symbol of a status-ordered society.[16]

In Juvenal 3, then, we find another symbolic place, which is semiotically mid-way between the *domus* and *via*. If the house and the street are antithetically opposed (one private, closed, a place where one stays and to which access is controlled, the other public, open, a place of constant movement and uncontrolled encounters), the theatre, primarily an organized social space, has

[13] Trans. N. Rudd, *Juvenal. The Satires*, Oxford, 1992.

[14] See C. Schnurr, 'The *lex Julia theatralis* of Augustus: some remarks on seating problems in theatre, amphitheatre and circus', *LCM* 17 (1992) 147-60, at 156.

[15] Cf. Hor. *Epode* 4.15-6, where an ex-slave arouses antagonism by sitting with the knights *Othone contempto*, and *Sat.* 2.6.48, where Horace is envied for watching the games with Maecenas.

[16] For another view of the symbolic value of these passages see K. Freudenburg, *Satires of Rome: threatening poses from Lucilius to Juvenal*, Cambridge, 2001, 268-9.

aspects of both. Ideally, the theatre contains and controls the street-crowd, which loses its chaotic qualities of disorderly mingling and clashing and contending movement.

Despite the similarities we have noticed between the two satires, there are some important differences. Horace's poem is based on a specific occasion. The focus is on the pest himself, and the reader is subtly induced to draw wider conclusions about social values through trying to interpret the situation as it unfolds. In Juvenal 3, in contrast, the equation between Rome and the perversion of values is clearly stated from the outset, but it is a Rome '*en masse*'.[17] Topographical identifications of places in Rome are rare, and the most detailed is of the spot already outside Rome where the conversation of the satire is set.

Further differences in approach, style and tone could be noticed, but my purpose has been to juxtapose the two satires' handling of a theme central to them both.

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[17] E. Gowers, *The Loaded Table*, Oxford, 1993, 188 : 'For the first time [in Juvenal], satire represents Rome *en masse*.'