Humans, Beastly Men and the Roman State:

The Politics of Humanity from Cicero to Persius

By Lazar Maric
Student ID: 30653487

Bachelor of Arts
Bachelor of Arts (Honours) First Class

Macquarie University
Department of Ancient History

This thesis is presented for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Date submitted: 6th July, 2010

Table of Contents

Synopsis

The politics of humanity is the practice of projecting and shifting the political boundaries that separate 'humans' from those who are 'inhuman,' inept at being human, or in need of being humanised. This thesis concerns itself with the study of the politics of humanity in ancient Rome, and primary emphasis is given to the philosophical and literary works of Cicero, Seneca, Horace and Persius. In Chapter One, I commence with an analysis of Greek political theory, which outlined the moral and political conditions necessary for biological humans to achieve a truly human level of existence as neither slaves to tyrants, nor as stateless, animal-like savages. This body of theory was influential with Roman writers, and Cicero used it to conceptualise the Roman Republic and its constitution as absolute prerequisites for Romans to exist as true human beings. Because Cicero considered the Roman state as largely dysfunctional at the time of his writing, he portrayed the Roman citizen body as dehumanised, and the political struggles of his day as a war between the human and subhuman elements within the state. In Chapter Two, I observe a body of ideas produced during the early imperial period which were intended to provide a conceptual basis for the preservation of the humanity of imperial subjects under conditions previously considered incompatible with it, namely, under the monarchy. Here, I focus mainly on the author Seneca. In Seneca's works, the politics of humanity involved neutralising the dehumanising potential inherent in the rise of the emperor and actively constructing the principate as a humanising institution. Furthermore, Seneca was concerned with reserving the status of human being for loyal imperial subjects while denying it to dissidents. In Chapter Three, I turn to Horace and the politics of humanity in his *Sermones.* In this collection of poems, Horace set out to portray himself and his powerful patrons Maecenas and Octavian Caesar as true humans while denying this status to all who did not share their values. Nevertheless, in the *Epistles*, a collection of poems published a decade or so later, Horace reversed the project of the *Sermones* by portraying his poetic *persona* as a deceptive 'human' mask. I observe this same twist to the politics of humanity in Chapter Four, where I turn to *Satire* 1 of the Neronian poet Persius. Here I argue that Persius 'exposed' contemporary Roman society as dehumanised and, in the process, also revealed his own failure to achieve the standards necessary for him to exist as a true human being.

Statement of Candidate

I certify that the work in this thesis entitled "Humans, Beastly Men and the Roman state: The Politics of Humanity from Cicero to Persius" has not previously been submitted for a degree, nor has it been submitted as part of requirements for a degree to any other university or institution other than Macquarie University.

I also certify that the thesis is an original piece of research and it has been written by me. Any help or assistance that I have received in my research work and the preparation of the thesis itself has been appropriately acknowledged.

In addition, I certify that all information sources and literature used are indicated in the thesis.

Signed: _____

Lazar Maric
Student ID: 30653487

Date: _____

Acknowledgements

A PhD is a team effort and my greatest debt is to the team members who in various ways bore the brunt of it: my wife Karen and my daughters, Ekatarina and Aria. My sincerest thanks also go to my principal supervisor Dr Andrew Gillett for all his advice, encouragement, corrections and cautions. I owe the same gratitude to my associate supervisors, Professor Laurence Welborn and Dr Trevor Evans, for making themselves available in various ways in order to make this thesis possible. Thanks also to Dr Stephen Llewelyn, Dr Lea Beness, Professor Robert Morstein-Marx, Professor Richard Leo Enos and Professor Kirk Freudenburg for kindly agreeing to read parts of this work and for offering their valuable comments. To my dear mother in-law, Bettina Spencer, for proofreading and my parents Branka and Ilija, and my sister Marina, for keeping up the pressure by enquiring once a week about my submission date. Lastly, I thank those no longer among us but to whom I owe a great debt of gratitude: Marcus Tullius Cicero, Lucius Annaeus Seneca, Quintus Horatius Flaccus and Aulus Persius Flaccus.

Introduction

"Wherever we look…we find anxiety, latent or explicit, about any form of behaviour which threatens
to transgress the fragile boundaries between man and the animal creation…
It was bestial for men to have unduly long hair:
"Beasts are more hairy than men," wrote Bacon,
"and savage men more than civil."
K. Thomas, *Man and the Natural World*.

We might define human as a *dynamic* process produced by a series of identifications and misidentifications
with animality.
S. Critchley, *Is Humor Human*?

In the ancient Greco-Roman world, it was a philosophical commonplace to assert that human beings are distinguished from animals — those fiercer, crueller, less intelligent nonhuman 'beasts' — by virtue of their reason, understanding and morality. This distinctively anthropocentric approach to understanding the human-animal boundary has been central to the definition of human identity throughout most of Western history. "The brute creation," as Thomas observes, "provides the most readily available point of reference for the continuous process of human self-definition," as well as an "almost inexhaustible fund of symbolic meaning."[1] From Plato onwards, ancient humanists tried to discover what is authentically and specifically human, what being human means and how a human might lose his or her humanity, and their answers regularly depended on the presence of the animal.[2] These humanists defined humanity by referring to the uniqueness of humans and to the clear boundaries that separate humans from the rest of animal creation, and perceived inhumanity as a state in which both of these were jeopardised. Human beings were seen as unique only through being endowed with the potential for achieving the quality of 'human-ness,' but the full actualisation of this potentiality required conforming to the rational nature of humans and transcending the brute behaviour of

---

[1] K. Thomas (1983), *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500-1800,* London, p. 40.

[2] G. Steiner (2005), *Anthropocentrism and its Discontents: The Moral Status of Animals in the History of Western Philosophy*, Pittsburgh, p.38; M. Scholtmeijer (1997), 'What is "Human? Metaphysics and Zootology in Flaubert and Kafka,' in J. Ham and M. Senior (eds.), *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History*, New York and London, 127-143.

non-rational animals. Choosing to engage in behaviours often designated as *inhuman*, *bestial* or *beastly* would destabilise the human-animal boundary and lead to the loss of those attributes which had once made that person human.[3] Thus people who had previously been accepted as human were now redefined as 'animals' or 'beasts' as the depths of their perceived moral degradation was seen as disallowing their continued membership within the human race.[4]

Modern day philosophers sometimes protest that labelling human vices as 'bestial' is to libel animals, but no offence to animals was typically intended: the human 'beast' was a new animal, a rhetorical and symbolic monster who represented all that humans should not be, and the ancients were ready to admit that this creature was far worse than any other.[5] These beasts were a constant feature within ancient philosophical discourse; in Plato, Aristotle and in Stoic writings, they stood as a warning about the dire consequences of failing to achieve human standards of behaviour. They were metaphors employed for moralising and socialising purposes, used to express the view that important social norms had been violated, and accordingly were a vital aspect within the rhetoric of moral and social regulation.[6] Of chief concern for this thesis is the role of human beasts within the "politics of humanity" in ancient Rome. I have borrowed this phrase from Bauman, who argued relatively recently that humanism as a philosophical discourse has had one central function throughout most of Western history, namely to act as a "philosophical gloss on the politics of humanity":[7]

> As a philosophical issue, humanism is an ethical discourse — though more often than not it appears in ontological disguise. Ostensibly, it is about "human nature" and the human being's natural endowments. However, defining human nature also means drawing a boundary around the "human" to make sense of the already drawn or intended to be drawn political boundary

---

[3] Steiner (2005:38, 55).

[4] M. Midgely (1973), 'The Concept of Beastliness: Philosophy, Ethics and Animal Behaviour,' *Philosophy* 48, 111-135, pp. 115-17. See also M. Midgley (1979), *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature*, London, p. 40; J. E. Salisbury (1997), 'Human Beasts and Bestial Humans in the Middle Ages,' in J. Ham and M. Senior (ed.), *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History*, New York and London, 10-21, p. 10.

[5] Arist. *Pol*. 1253a29-33.

[6] R. Tapper (1988), 'Animality, Humanity, Morality, Society,' in T. Ingold (ed.), *What is an Animal*?, London, 47-62, p.51; S. Baker (1993), *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity and Representation*, Manchester, p. 89.

[7] Z. Bauman (2003), 'The Project of Humanity,' in P. Sheenan (ed.), *Becoming Human: New Perspectives on the Inhuman Condition*, 127-147, p. 127.

separating "human" from "inhuman" (or more to the point, from "inept at being human," "undeserving to be human ," or "bound to be humanised")… The politics of humanity is the practice of projecting and shifting such boundaries — the very practice on which humanism offers a philosophical gloss.

This study will examine the politics of humanity in ancient Rome, the renegotiation of the boundaries separating the 'human' from the 'subhuman' or 'inhuman' during the political transition from the Late Republic to the early Empire. Bauman indeed argues that the successive resurrections of humanist topics throughout history have been prompted primarily by changing political and ideological agendas; the emergence of new political problems and ambitions, he asserts, make imperative yet another renegotiation of the issues of human nature and of the boundaries of humanity.[8] The shifting of these boundaries can also be understood anthropologically "as part of a continuous process of self-definition, in which the self is defined in opposition to an animal other or an animalised other."[9] Anthropologists such as Mary Douglas observe that: "In each constructed world of nature, the contrast between man and not man provided an analogy for the contrast between the member of human society and the outsider."[10] Such processes made the human-animal divide extremely flexible as certain societies or dominant sections of a society would choose to limit the label 'civilised' or 'human' to themselves, while designating neighbouring or marginalised groups within their society as 'savages' or 'animals.'[11] Barbara Noske has observed that the dominant tendency in Western societies is to divide between the human realm of "culture" and the realm of "nature," suggesting that this opposition also entails assumptions about gender inequality: "in as far as humanness is equated with the shaping of culture and history, men are made to appear more human than women." [12]

The tendency in the ancient world to deny full humanity to women, slaves and barbarians is well known, and the fact that philosophers and humanists were among the leading deniers is also widely recognised. Aristotle, for example, argued that barbarians are savages unable to

---

[8] Bauman (2003:127-128).

[9] Baker (1993:79).

[10] M. Douglas (1975), *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology*, London, p. 289.

[11] Thomas (1983:41).

[12] B. Noske (1989), *Humans and Other Animals: Beyond the Boundaries of Anthropology*, London, p. 40; see also Baker (1993:79).

develop 'human' political institutions as they are of a similar nature to slaves, that is, not fully rational beings who possess only the ability to obey their truly human masters. Nevertheless, at least one ancient school of philosophy, namely the Stoics, rejected such divisions and insisted that once certain moral conditions had been satisfied, all humans could belong within a common body of humanity. Scholars sometimes regard the emergence of this school of thought as the point at which men started to believe that all humans belong to the same species. Paul Veyne, on the other hand, has rejected such a view as a "hagiographical novel," stating that:[13]

> This novel praises Cicero or Seneca for speaking of the "common society of the human race" (*Fin*. 3.19.62); it honours the Stoics for so-called universalism; at times it affirms that, before those philosophers, the Greeks held the slave or the barbarian to be nonhuman; it sees Terence's famous *homo sum, humani nihil a me alienum puto* ("I'm a man, I count nothing human foreign to me") one of the great moments in history. Such is the tenacity of the idealistic — or rather the academic — illusion that confounds the reality of history with the image of that reality in the mirror of classical texts.

Veyne goes on to assert that the discovery of the unity of humankind dates from the first hominids who were able to recognise members of their own species; Plato and Aristotle, he argues, were both aware that slaves and barbarians belonged to the human race and were as universalist as the Stoics, yet in their works inequalities between individuals took precedence over mankind's common nature. What made the Stoics different, Veyne continues, was their lack of concern with justifying social and political inequalities; the Stoics thus had no issues with acknowledging what both Plato and Aristotle knew to be fact, namely, that all humans belong to the same species.[14] To Veyne, therefore, it was the extent to which philosophers were concerned with the politics of humanity that ultimately determined their professed views on human nature. There is much in my study that will support Veyne's view, as well as demonstrate that the Stoic universalist ideas of human nature were as well suited to the politics of humanity as the ideas of Aristotle and other like-minded philosophers.

---

[13] P. Veyne (1993), '*Humanitas*: Romans and Non-Romans,' in A. Giardina (ed.), *The Romans*, Chicago & London, 342-369, p. 346.

[14] Veyne (1993:346-347).

My primary concern within this thesis will be with the politics of humanity as it applied to groups other than women, slaves and barbarians, to those otherwise 'human' citizens caught up in the political and ideological manoeuvrings of individuals and groups anxious to assert their own human status while undermining that of others. The methods of conducting this brand of politics varied: sometimes it was as simple as naming someone a 'beast' or an 'animal,' while at other times a more subtle approach was required. It will not always be clear whether such analogies were purely metaphorical or whether they were identifications intended to have practical consequences, but in the ancient world clear parallels can usually be drawn between rhetoric and practice. The ancients considered slaves to be closer to animals than to human beings in both nature and purpose, and this animalisation often provided justification for their maltreatment.[15] In modern times, we are accustomed to referring to this phenomenon as 'dehumanisation,' a common feature in wars which involves the reclassification of human victims as animals in order to deprive them of any rights or claims to moral consideration.[16] Dehumanisation as a strategy is of particular value when the nature, extent or very existence of the victim's crime is uncertain. Tacitus writes of occasions when Christians were condemned to death because the "human race detested them" (*odio humani generis*); they were dressed in animal skins and thrown to the dogs (*Ann.* 15.44.4). This clearly shows how easily metaphorical animals could become real in ancient Rome, and we will see that the politics of humanity can be viewed at least some of the time as a strategy of dehumanisation, intended to deprive the target of any moral consideration and of any protection offered to them under the law.

The authors of primary importance to this study are Cicero, Seneca, Horace and Persius. Chapter One, "Subjugating the 'Beast Within': the Humanising Mission of the State in Plato, Aristotle and Cicero," will analyse the politics of humanity in Cicero but will also include a brief discussion of Plato and Aristotle's ideas on the central role of the state in making people 'human.' Both Plato and Aristotle insisted that the state played a crucial role in subjugating the 'Beast Within,' the irrational entity within all humans that seeks to enslave and deprive human beings of their claim to a rational and human existence. They also asserted that only a true state, one with a proper constitution and leadership, could effectively serve this function. This notion

---

[15] M. I. Finley (1980), *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, New York, p. 94.

[16] A. Montagu and F. Matson (1983), *The Dehumanisation of Man*, New York, p. 11; Thomas (1983:48). See also E. Kahler (1967), *The Tower and the Abyss,* New York, p. 13.

came to form one of the central themes in Cicero's *De Re Publica* and *De Legibus*, where he forged an alliance between the republican constitution and the humanity of the Republic's citizens. Cicero insisted that only this constitution could provide the necessary long-term moral and political conditions for the Romans to exist as human beings, and this insistence became one of the central features in Cicero's brand of the politics of humanity. This idea allowed Cicero to conceptualise the late republican political struggles as a war between human and subhuman forces, between the true human community — those who wished to preserve the Roman Republic — and those who wished to destroy it. The Romans of Cicero's age largely shared the view that the republican constitution guaranteed their humanity because they identified their political *libertas* with it; without *libertas*, they agreed, they could exist only in a subhuman condition of slavery to their political masters. For this reason, the collapse of the Republic and the rise of the emperor necessitated an ideological shift that would provide a conceptual basis for the preservation of humanity within this new system of government. Analysing this ideological activity will be the concern of Chapter Two, "Defending Humanity: the *Princeps*, *Nobiles* and the Ideology of Humanisation." The focus here will be on the works of Seneca and his version of the politics of humanity, which involved constructing the Roman monarchy as a human and humanising institution, as well as appropriating the status of human being for the imperial loyalists and denying it to political dissidents.

In Chapter Three, "Horace and the Poetry of *Dissimulatio*: the Humanising and De-Humanising of the Poet in *Sermones* 1 and *Epistles* 1," and Chapter Four, "The Politics of Humanity and Self-Knowledge in Persius's *Satire* 1," I analyse the works of the Augustan poet Horace and the Neronian poet Persius. Before I say more on the politics of humanity in their works, it is necessary to mention an additional aspect of the charge of lacking humanity. This accusation also implied that the target of such a charge was deceiving his fellow citizens, using his human body and other deceptive strategies in order to pass himself off, in their eyes, as a human being. This aspect of the politics of humanity gave it an important role in shaping Roman ideas of the 'self,' of self-fashioning and the performance of self on the social stage, and part of the project of my thesis is to analyse this role. The above topics have received some much-deserved attention in recent years, and I believe that their analysis against the background of the

politics of humanity can provide us with some fresh insights.[17] Amongst other benefits, it might help us resolve some of the apparent contradictions in ancient evidence regarding the moral legitimacy of donning masks in public life. Following Stephen Greenblatt's landmark study on Renaissance self-fashioning, ancient identity is usually conceived as something "constructed" and "assumed" like a mask, and then performed on the social stage.[18] Scholars often caution that this process had little to do with modern ideas of sincerity and authenticity and that our modern tendency of equating such performances with bad faith or insincerity distorts the fact that the ancients had different attitudes towards such things. The Romans, it would appear, saw no moral issue in creating for themselves an effective socio-rhetorical *persona* ("actor's mask," "role," or "character") and performing it on the social stage like an actor would, in a way that would best secure the support and admiration of one's fellow citizens.[19] They appear to have been accustomed to equating one's exterior with his interior, to regard one's social mask as a reliable indicator of what that person essentially was, and as a result did not object to such practices. Corbeill, for example, observes that: [20]

> The equation of exterior and interior in the dramatic setting influenced everyday linguistic usage. The Latin word for mask, *persona*, came to denote the personality of the character behind the mask and thus, by extension, was commonly applied to any individual's moral temperament. In

---

[17] For the good overview of scholarship on these topics, see D. Hammer (2009), 'What is Politics in the Ancient World?,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought,* 20-35.

[18] See, for example, M. H. Wikander (2002), *Fangs of Malice: Hypocrisy, Sincerity and Acting*, Iowa, p. xi-xxii.

[19] For a long history of acting as a metaphor for human social existence see, for example, C. Edwards (2002), 'Acting and Self-Actualisation in Imperial Rome: Some Death Scenes,' in P. Easterling and E. Hall (eds.), *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession*, Cambridge, 370-384, pp. 370-371. Training in rhetorical arts is often seen as having provided the Romans with the skills to assume and create suitable social *persona* as circumstances might demand. For example, Boyle observes "training in declamation…which required diverse and sustained role playing, gave to contemporary Romans not only the ability to enter into the physic structure of another…but a substantial range of improvisational skills to create *persona* at will," A. J. Boyle (1997), *Tragic Seneca: An Essay in the Theatrical Tradition*, London, p. 116. See also D. Potter (1996), 'Performance, Power and Justice in the High Empire,' in W. Slater (ed.), *Roman Theater and Society*, E. Togo Salmon Papers, Ann Arbour, 129-159, p. 131.

[20] A. Corbeill (1996), *Controlling Laughter: Political Humour in the Late Roman Republic*, Princeton, p. 41.

other words, whether in a dramatic or a political context, the *persona* did not serve as concealment but as a visual clue to the person beneath.

To assume that the Romans conceived of *persona* as something that concealed reality, as De Pretis observes, does not match ancient theories, where *persona* is the way in which reality manifests itself.[21] We certainly have an abundance of evidence that supports this point of view, but also some that suggests otherwise. We know that the Romans would often charge each other with pretence and hypocrisy, and that they would sometimes use the term *persona* in its meaning of 'mask' to articulate this charge. The Roman rhetorical theorists approved of artistically fashioned socio-rhetorical *persona* but were also eager to distinguish the veracity of the public speech from the fiction of the theatre, "the *decorum* of the gentleman from the license of the artist."[22] The Roman acceptance of social aesthetics did not mean no moral value was placed in personal and public relations on something that at least approximates our modern idea of sincerity, and a consideration of the politics of humanity might provide us with at least one possible answer as to what type of sincerity the Roman social stage demanded. Within the politics of humanity, the process of self-fashioning involved constructing and claiming for oneself a 'human' identity while denying the same to one's opponents. This strategy involved an additional claim that one's externals, one's human body and social *persona,* were indeed the surface manifestations of one's inner humanity, while those of the dehumanised target were a deceptive mask, mere 'human' externals over a beastly essence. Within this brand of politics, therefore, sincerity involved being 'sincerely human,' a type of sincerity not incompatible with the often necessary false front. True insincerity involved one's failure as a human being, and thus entailed a fundamental and perpetual falseness on the social stage, where one could only pose as a human being while being in truth an animal. These concerns were central to the politics of humanity and in Horace and Persius they assumed a particularly personal dimension, as these poets both appear to have been engaged in the process of determining and disclosing to their readership the precise nature of their own poetic *persona*; namely, whether it was the socio-poetic self of a human, or a subhuman's human face.

---

[21] A. De Pretis (2004), *Epistolarity in the First Book of Horace's Epistles,* New Jersey, p. 17.

[22] E. Fantham (2002), 'Orator and/et Actor' in P. Easterling and E. Hall (eds.), *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession*, Cambridge, 362-394, p. 363.

At one point or another, each of the four authors analysed in this thesis engaged in this type of politics and self-fashioning; they claimed humanity for themselves and asserted the 'sincerity' of their *personae* while denying both to selected others. Nevertheless, it is only Cicero and Seneca who engaged in this strategy consistently; Horace and Persius diverged from the pattern, each for his own reasons, and gave us something rather different. Cicero fashioned himself into a 'human' politician at war with the 'beasts' that wished to destroy the Republic, while Seneca did something similar in response to the ideological needs of his own period: he reserved the status of human being for imperial loyalists and portrayed the dissidents as the beastly and destructive enemies of the human community. Horace, a poet in the service of his patrons Maecenas and Octavian Caesar, adopted this same strategy in his *Sermones.* He presented his collection of satirical poems as a new breed of ethical and 'humanised' satire, an evolved version of the immoral and more 'savage' kind produced during the Republic, and argued them to be the product of his own essential 'humanity' as well as of the more 'human' age presided over by his powerful *amici*. Throughout this collection, Horace identified his critics with morally derelict subhumans and attributed their criticism to their inability to cope with the moral message of his poetry. He repeatedly asserted that his brand of satire was suitable only for 'human' consumption, for his patrons and friends, as they would be the only ones able to welcome its ethical message. In this way Horace drew boundaries of humanity around the ethical, aesthetical and political values of his circle and thus invited his audience to demonstrate their own humanity by approving and sharing in these values, or alternatively to expose their inhumanity by choosing to criticise.

Nevertheless, for reasons known only to him, Horace seems to have decided to dismantle the ideological structure of *Sermones* in his later collection of poems, the *Epistles*. In Chapter Three I will argue that Horace in this collection 'exposes' his poetic *persona* as a human mask hiding the subhuman slave. My argument here involves an additional claim that this collection allows a re-establishment of the connection between the historical author and his poetic *persona,* that the author reveals this *persona*'s 'deception' in order to disclose to his readership some deep personal truths. In the eyes of many, this is an extremely problematic assertion but, while I will certainly acknowledge the numerous problems and pitfalls of such a claim, I will argue that a good case can be made for viewing *Epistles* in such a way. In Chapter Four, I turn to the politics of humanity in Persius's *Satire* 1 and argue that the author's project in this poem is in many ways

comparable to that of Horace in *Epistles*. Persius's politics of humanity involved denying full membership in the human race to all his contemporaries as well as to himself. His portrayal of the Rome of his day as a dehumanised society can be considered as political in that it undermines the ideological efforts of authors such as Seneca who struggled to humanise their existence under the Caesars. On the other hand, *Satire* 1 does not appear to have been a political poem but rather something of a personal manifesto, a portrait of a man engaged in the process of discovering the nature of his own *persona* and sharing some of his discoveries with his readers.

As I will introduce each of the four chapters individually, this brief overview will suffice for the time being, although a few words on the relevant modern scholarship are still due. The body of works dealing with the ways in which the Romans articulated their identities, their social hierarchies and their inversions is considerable, and the huge debt this thesis owes to these studies will become clear as I progress. My hope here is to complement these works by considering the neglected role of the animal within these processes. The human-animal boundary in antiquity is increasingly becoming a topic of interest to scholars and I will single out Ingvild Gilhus's *Animals, Gods and Human Morals* as having provided me with great insight into the ancient metaphorical systems based on animals.[23] As a phenomenon, the politics of humanity is not exclusive to the ancient world, and Erica Fudge's *Perceiving Animals: Humans and Beasts in Early Modern English Culture* and *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality and Humanity in Early Modern England* have allowed me to observe similar ways of problematicising the animal-human boundary within a different culture's literature. The same can be said for Steve Baker's *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity and Representation*, which examines the role of the 'beast' in modern English politics, showing it as still possessing some currency in modern political representations. Nevertheless, the study of this phenomenon in antiquity presents several unique challenges, which would be impossible to resolve without substantial scholarship on related issues within this historical period. This is particularly true in regards to the poets, and in the last two chapters I have borrowed from the insights and approaches of a number of critics, whom I have no need singling out here as the extent of my debt will become evident soon enough.

---

[23] Other studies in this field I have found of immense value include R. Sorabji (1993), *Animal Minds and Human Morals: The Origins of Western Debate*, Ithaca; U. Dierauer (1977), *Tier und Mensch im Denken der Antike: Studien zur Tierpsychologie, Antrophologie und Ethic*, Amsterdam.

Chapter One

Subjugating the 'Beast Within': the Humanising Mission of the State in Plato, Aristotle and Cicero

What is a human being?

A rational moral creature.

From what then, are we distinguished by rationality?

From wild beasts.

And from what else?

From sheep and the like.

Take care, then, never to act like a wild beast. Otherwise, you have destroyed your humanity…

Epictetus 2.9.1-6.

I

Introduction

One of the chief reasons for the oft-noticed inseparability between ethics and politics in ancient political thought is that ancient political thinkers, from Plato onwards, conceived of and analysed the role of the state in terms of its ability to humanise, or to ensure that humans achieved their potential by living in accordance with their rational human nature. Because morality was humanity's central ingredient, the political environment in which 'mere' biological humans could exist as full humans was also by necessity a moral environment. Only in such an environment could biological humans be educated in human ways and only there ― under the state's law and the rational authority of its leading citizens ― could their irrational 'animal' side be properly restrained. In the eyes of the Greek political theorists, such restraint was the first condition of 'freedom' for the vast majority of people, because they relied on it to prevent the enslavement of their better, rational human self to their irrational and inhuman inner 'beast.' In the following section of this chapter, "Humanising the Greek: Subjugating the 'Beast Within' in Plato and Aristotle," I will examine these ideas in some detail, concentrating primarily on the humanising role of the state in the political thought of Plato and Aristotle. While they differed in their

respective approaches to the task of 'making men good,' both agreed that the ultimate goal of this undertaking was to prevent men from falling prey to their own animal nature. As this thesis progresses, we will see that Plato and Aristotle are among the chief contributors to a conceptual framework that enabled the politics of humanity in republican and imperial Rome. Both stressed that the state's ability to perform its central humanising function depended on it having a proper constitution and leaders of the highest moral virtue and ability. Should these conditions cease to exist, the people inhabiting that state would cease to be truly human, either because they were enslaved to tyrannical leaders or, if left politically leaderless, enslaved to their own inner beasts. Accordingly, 'beastly' and 'slavish' men feature in the works of both Plato and Aristotle as examples of the failure of individuals or groups to achieve the status of human beings due to their inability or unwillingness to subject themselves, or otherwise be subjected, to the rule of reason.

In the third section of this chapter, "Cicero, *Humanitas* and the Mask of Humanity," I will commence an analysis of the politics of humanity in republican Rome, concentrating initially on Cicero's views of what being human means, and how humanity might be achieved and lost. Cicero's humanism owed much to Stoicism, the school of philosophy which postdated Plato and Aristotle but which remained in fundamental agreement with them, in that it saw morality as a prerequisite for humanness and the adherence to specific moral rules and prohibitions as necessary if a descent into the bestial was to be avoided. Scholars usually hold that Stoic ethics appealed to Cicero because it resonated with traditional Roman practices and the customs of the ancestors (*mores maiorum*).[1] They also often state that Cicero's Stoic-inspired ideas on human nature are less philosophical than they are political, serving only as a vehicle for his political partisanship and as a background for his social and political ideas of how to build and maintain the state and be a good citizen, statesman and orator.[2] My primary objective in this second section will be to observe the manner in which Cicero utilised these ideas in order to forge a divide between 'true' and 'false' humans, as well as to point to the problem of the false human's

---

[1] R. A. Belliotti (2009), *Roman Philosophy and the Good Life*, Lanham, p. 29.

[2] N. Wood (1988), *Cicero's Social and Political Thought*, Oxford, p.88; M. L. Colish (1990), *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, Vol. 1, Leiden, pp. 97, 102; M. Schofield (1995), 'Cicero's Definition of *Res Publica*,' in J. G. F. Powell (ed.), *Cicero the Philosopher: Twelve Papers,* Oxford, 63-83, p. 78; A. A. Long (1995), 'Cicero's Politics in De Officiis,' in A. Laks and M. Schofield (eds.), *Justice and Generosity: Studies in Hellenistic Social and Political Philosophy, Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium Hellenisticum,* Cambridge, 213-240.

'deception,' that is, his usage of his human body and various other deceptive tactics to pass himself off as a true human on the social stage. The vast majority of the material discussed in this section is drawn from *De Officiis,* which was written towards the end of Cicero's life and career. Nevertheless, the issues this work explores can be traced back to Cicero's earliest works, where it is possible to observe a consistent effort to delineate between the human and subhuman elements within the state. Of particular relevance in this section will be Cicero's account of the Stoic theory of four-*personae* as well as his treatment of socio-rhetorical aesthetics, both of which are usually of great interest to scholars of the ancient conception of 'self' and self-fashioning. Scholars often observe that in *De Officiis*, Cicero uses the theory of four-*personae* and his related discussions to argue for the legitimacy of creating for oneself a suitable socio-rhetorical *persona* and for doing so via the self-conscious use of techniques of stagecraft. I will take this view a step further and emphasise the notion inherent in this theory that social aesthetics and one's public *persona* are a legitimate social expression of selfhood only if applied over the face of a true human; if the human utilising them is 'false,' his *persona* becomes that which it serves as: a deceptive mask, or a layer of human make-up over a subhuman creature. I will show that in noting this double function, we can considerably enrich our understanding of *persona* as a notion, as well as our understanding of ancient ideas on what constitutes sincerity and insincerity, that is, when the 'false front' of a social actor is truly false and when it is merely an external and temporary manifestation of one's inner 'humanity.'

In the fourth section, "Humanising the Roman: Subjugating the 'Beast Within' in *De Re Publica* and *De Legibus*," I will observe the humanising role of the state as Cicero conceived it in *De Re Publica* and *De Legibus*. While it will be possible here to notice clear affinities with the works of Plato and Aristotle,[3] Cicero's *De Re Publica* is unique in several respects. Firstly, it conceives of Rome as it was during the period of the mid-Republic as a state which had achieved that ideal that the Greeks could only theorise about; it was a truly 'human' and humanising state, with a constitution and values that were the product of and perfectly suited to molding the superior Roman *natura*. The second difference is that Cicero's analysis of the humanising function of the Roman state took place during a time in which he believed this role was no longer being performed. Cicero wrote most of his works against a background of political turmoil that

---

[3] It has been suggested that Cicero intended this work to be the Latin version of Plato's *Republic*. See M. Fox (2007), *Cicero's Philosophy of History*, Oxford, p. 100.

culminated in the dictatorship of Caesar, followed by Caesar's assassination in 44 BC and Cicero's own murder in 43 BC during his final struggle with Antony.[4] Cicero claimed on several occasions that the political turmoil of his day had ruined the state and deprived it of substance; all that was left, he lamented, was the state's outer form and outlines. Because for Cicero only the 'true state' could beget 'true humans,' his assertion that the Roman state was 'false' involved an additional claim that the vast majority of Roman citizens were similarly false, dehumanised by the state's collapse and thus human only in their outer form. The notion of Rome as a 'false state' was an important component of Cicero's self-fashioning, which involved forging an image of himself as a truly 'human' politician in perpetual war with the inhuman 'beasts' who had ruined the state and dehumanised its citizens. This aspect of Cicero's self-fashioning inevitably involved the claim that his humanity was self-sufficient and no longer dependent on the state's institutions for its flourishing and survival. This type of 'stateless' self was still quite new in the ancient world, but it was certainly there; in this case, it was the final product of Cicero's self-fashioning as a politician who had remained a true human against all odds, and who was perhaps the state's last hope for once again becoming 'true.'

In the fifth section, "Cicero, Sallust and the Rhetoric of Animality," I will observe how Cicero reinforced the subhuman/human divide in his speeches as well as in several of his philosophical works. This section will also include a brief discussion of Sallust's *Bellum Catilinae*, where it will be possible to see that Sallust portrayed contemporary Romans in almost identical terms to Cicero, that is, as largely dehumanised. Here I will analyse specific instances in Cicero's speeches where he sought to portray his individual enemies as inhuman beasts, outsiders to the human community and a most serious threat to what remains of it. Many of these accusations of immorality and inhumanity have long been recognised as forming a central place in late republican politics, where to attack an opponent's character was the preferred way of getting ahead of one's competition.[5] Nevertheless, while this type of rhetoric might have been commonplace and best understood in terms of competition between the elites, I believe that in Cicero's case these accusations should be viewed as a strategy of dehumanisation which was intended to have consequences beyond mere character assassination. It would appear that in these

---

[4] For a brief history of this period see, for example, Wood (1988:28-41).

[5] For a good treatment of this theme, see C. Edwards (1993), *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome*, Cambridge.

instances Cicero was describing these men as 'beasts' in order to suggest that they should be treated as such — in order to make a case for denying them their rights as citizens and depriving them of the protection they enjoyed under Roman law.

In the sixth and final section, "Humanising and Dehumanising by Speech: The Role of the Orator," I will consider the role of these ideas and strategies within Cicero's rhetorical theory. The crucial importance of oratory to Cicero's career and self-fashioning is well known, and my emphasis below will be on Cicero's argument that the orator's role in society is to act as a humaniser, to persuade the irrational masses into humanity. Both in his youthful *De Inventione* and in the more mature *De Oratore*, Cicero argued that it was an orator who was the first to gather a savage and scattered humanity into one place, an orator who persuaded them to create the first state and adopt an exclusively human way of life. This notion, I will argue, was important to Cicero's project of self-fashioning because it allowed him to imply that his own role in his contemporary and dehumanised Rome was comparable to that of the first orator. Because the civilising process this first orator had initiated had in Cicero's time been largely reversed, the time was ripe for another such individual to gather the people and persuade them to abandon their savage ways and become human once again. The chief obstacle to this project was the dehumanising influence of the beasts who deceived people by posing as humans on the orator's stage, utilising various tools of rhetorical self-presentation, such as rhetorical *ethos* ("character"), to become appealing to the people and provide themselves with a human face. Cicero argued that the true orator also needs *ethos*, preferably a different one for each different audience or case, but here we will observe him formulating his ideas on this rhetorical concept against what he saw as a self-evident truth: that the *ethos* of a true human orator, however insincere in its views and tactics, is never truly deceptive, only a suitable temporary manifestation of the orator's humanity.

II

Humanising the Greek: Subjugating the 'Beast Within' in Plato and Aristotle

"What desires do you mean?" he said. "Those," said I, "that are awakened in sleep when the rest of the soul, the rational, gentler and dominant part, slumbers. Then the Wild Beast in us, full fed with meat and drink, becomes rampant and shakes off sleep to go in quest to gratify its own instincts…"

Plato, *Republic*, 9.571C

When Aristotle famously proclaimed in *Politics* that "man is the best of animals when he has reached his full development and the worst of all when divorced from law and justice,"[6] he voiced what was already a common assumption in Greek thinking in regard to human nature and the role of the state in the development of human potential. From Homer and down through the classical Greek writers, the word *anthropos* signified a rational creature with intellectual and moral faculties not shared by other animals, and this distinction earned man the title of *zoon logikon*, "a rational animal," while all the rest were designated *ta aloga* ― "the irrational ones."[7] Nevertheless, in order to be effectively distinguished from other animals, the human was required to live in accordance with its rational and moral nature, to control some of its impulses and to develop others by exercising its distinctively human rational capacities.[8] The first requirement for such a development to occur was for one to inhabit a human community governed by law; as Redeker has observed, the "human is a living being, which, as opposed to other animals, *inhabits*; the habitation is the *humus* that allows the human."[9] The Greeks believed that only in human communities could members of the human species forsake 'beastly' violence in favour of peaceful and mutually advantageous social cooperation, and thus develop a distinctively and truly human character (*ethos*).[10] As a result, the concept of 'justice' (*dikê*) acquired particular

---

[6] Arist. *Pol*. 1.2.15 (1253a 29-33).

[7] Aristotle, for example, denied animals reason (*logos*), reasoning (*logisimos*), thought (*dianoia*), intellect *(nous)* and belief (*doxa*); see R. Sorabji (1993), *Animal Minds and Human Morals: The Origins of Western Debate,* Ithaca, p. 12; I. S. Gilhus (2006), *Animals, Gods and Humans: Changing Attitudes in Greek, Roman and Early Christian Ideas*, London, p.39.

[8] For a collection of views from different schools of philosophy, see J. Annas (1993), *The Morality of Happiness,* Oxford, pp.142-179. See also E. Fudge (2006), *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality and Humanity in Early Modern England*, London, pp. 60-88.

[9] R. Redeker (2007), *The New Face of Humanity*, Bethesda, p. 10.

[10] Hesiod said the rule of force is a characteristic of the animal kingdom, while to humans Zeus gave laws and justice, *WD* 276-85. A similar concern with what is distinctively human underlies *Odyssey*'s representation of the non-human Cyclopes who do not respect the ordinary conventions or standards of civilised human life and thus resemble the predatory animals of Hesiod's poems, *Od*. 9.105-15. Odysseys's description of Cyclopean society, the polar opposite of the healthy, functioning human community, enabled Homer to link justice and humanity exclusively to the Greek *polis,* which he envisioned as the most suitable context for the development of justice among human beings; see P. Vidal-Naquet (1986), *The Black Hunter*, Baltimore, pp. 15-38; R. K. Balot (2006),

significance in Greek political thought, in that it was seen as an enabler of humanity without which any distinction between the 'human' and 'animal' levels of existence would be obliterated.[11]

The Greek political formula was always deeply rooted in the concept of the politically autonomous and democratic city (*polis*). Plato and Aristotle considered it as self-evident that the *polis* was necessary for human flourishing, and to Aristotle this necessitated a further definition of the human being as a "political animal" (*politikon zoon*), which literally means an "animal that lives in a *polis*" (*Pol*. 1.2.9-11). By this definition, Aristotle excluded from the human community anyone who was not subject to the laws and norms of the *polis*, arguing that one cannot consider such individuals as proper human beings, but instead as either gods or beasts (*Pol*. 1.1.1):[12]

> It is evident that the *polis* belongs to a class of things that exist by nature and that man is by nature a political animal. He who is without a *polis*, by reason of his own nature and not by some accident, is either too bad or too good, either subhuman or superhuman, like the man of whom Homer wrote in denunciation: 'Clanless and lawless and heartless is he' (trans. E. Barker, p. 10).

Without the *polis*, Aristotle held, the human being is the "most unholy and savage being and worse than all others in indulging in lust and gluttony" (*Pol*. 1253a25). Aristotle insisted that such an existence was not a human existence, and was in fact no different from that of a "grazing beast" (EN 1095b19-20). Because humanity for Aristotle was based not on one's biology but on one's actions, he was quite ready to speak of a category of humanoids who, by virtue of living wholly by 'sensation' and for the momentary gratification of their instincts, are not human in the

Greek Political Thought, Oxford: "His [Homer's] description of a monstrous 'community' in which such features are absent helps to define that which is characteristically human," p. 22.

[11] "If laws were abolished and each individual were given the power to do what he liked, not only does our communal organisation vanish but our very life would be no different from that of the animals," Dem. 24, 143, 25.8. Also, Xenophon equated human lawlessness with the behaviour of animals, *Anab*. 5.7.32; *Cyr*. 5.217; Eur. *Or*. 1.55; Arist. EN 7.1150a3. K. J. Dover (1974), *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle*, Berkeley, pp. 74-75; Balot (2006:22).

[12] Elsewhere Aristotle characterised a man without a *polis* as "a hand without a body," (*Pol*. 1253a18-23); R. G. Mulgan (1977), *Aristotle's Political Theory: An Introduction for Students of Political Theory*, Oxford, p. 13; R. Trigg (1988), *Ideas of Human Nature: An Historical Introduction,* Oxford, pp. 32-34.

real sense of the word, but are rather 'beasts' or 'savages' (EN 1149a10). [13] While some 'beasts' (*thērion*) in Aristotle are naturally bestial and ready to commit crimes on a vicious and horrifying scale, more often the descent is provoked by a number of excesses of vice, like cowardice, brutality or licentiousness. [14] For Aristotle, any of these excesses of vice could be thought of as bestiality, and he finds irrationality the common feature in all of them because, like most of the ancient philosophers, he held that virtue requires reason and that vice results primarily from a failure to be reasonable. [15]

For both Plato and Aristotle, as Barker has observed, "the essential mission of the state is ethical: whatever else it may do, it is pre-eminently and particularly a moral force. The state is the positive institutor of goodness." [16] Plato insisted that the *polis* and its leaders could benefit the citizens only by "making them good," [17] while Aristotle argued that the *polis* was necessary for the human being to achieve 'human good,' usually identified with *eudaimonia* ("happiness" or "human flourishing"), which consisted of exhibiting a distinctively human excellence (EN 1.7.1098a 16-17). [18] The *polis,* Aristotle argued, enables the human being to discharge his central function (*ergon*), that is, to use the reason that distinguishes him from other animals (EN 1097b24-1098a7). [19] According to Aristotle, life in accordance with reason is the human *telos* (the end purpose), and is thus "the best and pleasantest, since reason more than anything else is man. This life is also the happiest." [20] The chief function of the *polis*, then, is to provide for a "good

---

[13] J. M. Rist (1996), 'Aristotle, the Value of Man and the Origin of Morality,' in J. M. Rist (ed.), *Man, Soul and Body: Essays in Ancient Thought from Plato to Dionysius,* Brookfield, 1-23, p. 2.

[14] Arist. EN 1148b17, 1148b31, 1149a5, 1150a; Rist (1996:6).

[15] Rist (1996:6).

[16] E. Barker (1959), *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle,* New York, p. 245.

[17] Plato, *Stsm.* 306a, 308e-310a; *Laws,* 630d-632d; S. S. Mayer (2008), *Ancient Ethics: A Critical Introduction*, London, p. 46.

[18] See also Mulgan (1977:2-6).

[19] Mayer (2008:62-64). "Because he is endowed with reason and destined, by virtue of his reason and its power of controlling the appetites, to discharge the function of a moral being and not only to live but to act and act nobly. These are his potentialities; this is his end," Barker (1959:266).

[20] Arist. EN 1097b24-1098a7, 1178a. The Stoics also said that being happy (*eudaimonein*) is the goal (*telos*) for the sake of which everything is done and this consists of living in accordance with virtue which is nothing more than living in accordance with one's own human nature, Stob. 2.77. 27W (=SVF 3.16). In *Epistles*, for example, Seneca states that "with life according to reason, man fulfills his nature and perfected reason is called virtue, which is also

life" and for the happiness of its citizens: "The *polis* achieves its purpose when its citizens are happy," Aristotle argued, "and they are happy when living a life of intellectual and ethical virtue."[21] Such a conception of the state's role by these thinkers makes it impossible to draw any clear distinctions between the respective spheres of ethics and politics: indeed, as Randall observed: [22]

> Social organisation, the *polis*, provides the means of training in these individual excellences, and it also furnishes the field in which they can operate… Ethics and politics are thus two aspects of the same 'architectonic' science. The excellences or *aretai* of the individual are formed in the *polis* and they can function only in the *polis*.[23]

Because Plato and Aristotle believed that a good man (human) must be a member of the *polis* and could only be made good through that membership*,* questions such as 'what is a good man' and 'how is a good man made' were inevitably for them questions of both moral philosophy and political theory.[24] This lack of separation between ethics and politics is one of the most characteristic features of ancient thought and practice; whether they were practicing or analysing politics in the real world, or developing ideas of how politics ought to be, Greeks (and Romans) most often kept the two intrinsically linked.[25]

It is beneficial when discussing these issues to keep the term 'ethical' separate from 'moral,' to think of the former as concerned with the prohibitions, obligations and rules of behaviour, without much emphasis on the inner dispositions of the moral agent, and of the latter as concerned with character formation.[26] Ancient theorists believed that the vast majority of people lacked that truly 'human' disposition of character that would make them into *self-*

---

what is noble" (*Haec ratio perfecta virtus vocatur eademque honestum est*) *Ep*. 76.10; Sorabji (1993:139); Mulgan (1977:32); Barker (1959:266).

[21] Arist. *Pol*. 1252b31, 1280b29-35; Mulgan (1977:32).

[22] Aristotle's *polis* "is the socio- political environment in which persons are trained in virtuous habitual conduct — the environment in which person's character (*ethos*) is formed," A. B. Miller (1974), 'Aristotle on Habit (*ethos*) and Character (*eethos*): Implications for Rhetoric,' *Speech Monographs* 41, 309-316, p. 311.

[23] J. H. Randall (1962), *Aristotle*, Columbia University, pp. 253-254.

[24] Barker (1959:82).

[25] Balot (2006:4).

[26] Balot (2006:10-11).

motivated moral agents and, as a result, argued that this majority had to be compelled into moral behaviour by external forces, such as the state's laws and customs. A brief survey of the history of the word 'ethics' will allow us a better understanding of the need to maintain such a distinction. The term 'ethics' is directly derived from the Greek *ethos*, which means 'custom, disposition, character,' but *ethos* is itself derived from *ēthos,* which in texts from before the 5th century BC is translated as "animal haunts" or "the places where animals are found."[27] Chamberlain has traced the development of the word *ēthos* from referring to 'animal haunts' to designating 'character' and showed how a word may change greatly in meaning, while still remaining connected to its original sense.[28] Homer uses *ēthos* three times and always in connection with animals and the places in which they dwell, while Herodotus extends the meaning of *ēthos* to designate places where barbarians (*barbaroi*) as well as animals dwell.[29] The association of *ēthos* with barbarians and their realm is hardly surprising given that in Greek writing and imagination they were more akin to animals than they were to humans, in that they were considered to be particularly brutal, and of feeble mind and cowardly character.[30] Plato is said to have given thanks to the gods just before his death, "first that he was born a human being, then that he was Greek and neither a barbarian nor an irrational animal."[31] The association of ideas, as Mazzolani has observed, is worth noting.[32]

By the time of Plato and Aristotle, *ēthos* had started to refer to an apparently irrational and unaccountable entity, the untamed animal side of a living being; Aristotle defines it as "a quality of the irrational part of the soul which can follow the orders of reason."[33] Aristotle is

---

[27] Chamberlain, C. (1985), 'From "Haunts" to "Character": the meaning of *Ethos* and its relation to Ethics,' *Helios* 11, 97-109; D. Campbell (1972), *Greek Lyric Poetry: A Selection of Early Greek Lyric, Elegiac and Iambic Poetry*, Glasgow, p. 360.

[28] Chamberlain (1985:97-109).

[29] Hom. *Od*. 14.411; *Il*. 6.511, 12.268; Her. 1.15, 157; 4.76, 80; 5.14, 15; 7.75; 8.100; Chamberlain (1985:97-109).

[30] T. J. Reiss (2003), *Mirages of the Self: Patterns of Personhood in Ancient and Modern Europe*, Stanford, p. 168.

[31] Plut. *Mar*. 46; Lactantius, *Div*. *Inst*. 3.19; L. S. Mazzolani (1967), *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought: From Walled City to Spiritual Commonwealth*, London, p. 19.

[32] Mazzolani (1967:19).

[33] Arist. EN. 2.2.1220b5-6; Chamberlain (1985:99). Also, C. Chamberlain (1984), 'Why Aristotle Called Ethics Ethics: The Definition of *Ēthos* at *Eudemian Ethics* 2.2,' *Hermes* 112, 176-83.

aware of the distinction between the animal *ēthos,* which was seen as an immutable entity,[34] and the human *ēthos,* which was regarded as being endowed with the potential to follow reason and thus to be 'humanised.' Accordingly, he connected human *ēthos* with *ethos* ('habit') and argued that this irrational element can be influenced and altered through virtuous habits or by the repeated doing of right acts (EN. 1103a18-26).[35] Such habits can of course only be acquired in a 'human environment' or human *ēthea* so, in what Chamberlain calls the "political usage" of the word, from designating 'animal lair,' *ēthos* begins to refer to the places where cities were located.[36] Several occurrences show *ēthos* being used to refer to the peculiarities which people of a certain *polis* acquired as a result of being brought up under its particular laws and customs.[37] In this context*, ēthos* was used in connection with *paideia* (education or socialisation of children), and it started to refer to a kind of moral ambience which enabled the metamorphosis of the irrational human *ēthos* into a fully human character (*ethos*).[38] Plato and Aristotle gave primary importance to *paideia* for developing the natural human capacities and the excellence of soul worthy of a human being; as well as educating citizens, *paideia* was meant to inculcate attitudes of kindliness, fellow feeling and civility and thus work to restrain the innate savage instincts of men.[39] Once these instincts were restrained, it was assumed, the human being could engage in

---

[34] Animals, the Greeks believed, could not change their *ēthos* because they do not share in *logos* like the human being. For example, Pindar states: "the fox and the lion cannot change their innate *ēthos*," *Od.* 11.19-20. In *Iliad*, Aeschylus compares the Trojans' reception of Helen to a man who tried to raise a lion cub; at first gentle and "fawning because of the necessities of his belly, in time it showed forth the *ēthos* inherited from his parents," and "the house was mixed with blood," *Il.* 725-28; Chamberlain (1985:99).

[35] Trigg (1988:26-7); Chamberlain (1985:103). Aristotle held that one's habitual behaviour (*ethos*) is indicative of a person's character (*eethos*), see Miller (1974:310-311).

[36] Hes. *Op*. 222, Herodotus 1.65.

[37] Thyc. 2.61.4, 6.18.7; Pindar P. 4.258. Orators also start to speak to their audience of 'your' or 'our' *ethe*; *Isoc.* 10.37; *Demos*. 6.8; 18.114, 204; 20.11; 25.90. In this "political setting," *ēthos* is often found in connection with *nomoi* — the city's laws and customs, Chamberlain (1985:101).

[38] Chamberlain (1985:101-103); W. K. C. Guthrie (1969), *A History of Greek Philosophy III*, Cambridge, pp. 277-278, 366-367.

[39] Plato, *Gorg*. 503e-504e, 506d-507a; *Rep*. 402a, 429d-e; *Laws*, 653a-c; Arist. EN. 1104b11-13; 1103b23-25; Mayer (2008:81). See also, R. Bauman (2000), *Human Rights in Ancient Rome*, London, pp. 10-11. *Paideia*, as Bauman observes, "promotes the mindset, a behavioural pattern that distinguishes civilised man from savages and beasts, a pattern that predisposes him against (amongst other things) committing acts of brutality," p. 20.

moral behaviour, acquire the habit (*ethos*) of doing so and eventually become morally self-sufficient, or able to consciously choose virtue and a virtuous life for its own sake.[40]

Nevertheless, it is important to observe that the Greeks did not believe that all biological humans had an equal capacity to develop a fully rational human *ethos*; some humanoids, they often argued, only look human without being so, simply because nature intended it that way. Scholars often notice the hierarchical ordering of human relations that was fixed in the Greek imagination and practice by at least the end of the 5th century, where the free male citizen of the *polis* was "at the top of the human heap," well above women, slaves and barbarians.[41] According to the dominant conception, a citizen who attained human perfection as a member of his political society had to be liberated from hard manual labor, and the way to do this was to relegate this kind of work to slaves.[42] Nevertheless, the humanising of the Greek male via liberation from demeaning labour came at the expense of the slave's own humanity. In order to distinguish slaves from human beings who were not property, the ancients sought to deprive them of their humanity by such means as various legal restrictions and institutional procedures intended to degrade and undermine it.[43] Aristotle famously argued that slavery is based on natural differences between slaves and full humans, or that the slave "participates in reason to the extent that they apprehend but not possess it" (*Pol*. 1.5 1254b23-33).[44] This natural difference justified the subjection of the

---

[40] See below, at n. 80.

[41] For example, Reiss (2003:167). See also P. Cartledge (2002), *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self & Others*, 2nd ed., Oxford, pp. 53-56, 78-85, 132-166.

[42] Plato's follower Heraclius Ponticus stated, "Enjoyment and good living is reserved for free men, for this exalts and enhances the spirit. Labouring, on the other hand, is for slaves, and that is why their character deteriorates," Athen. 12.512a. While most Athenians valued hard work, they all objected to slavish professions like manufacture. Agriculture, on the other hand, was considered worthy of a free man. In some surviving law court speeches, it is apparent what disgrace could follow for a family if some members had to resort to hired labor or other degrading jobs; see, for example, N. R. E. Fisher (1993), *Slavery in Classical Greece*, London, p. 101; J.Vogt (1974), *Ancient Slavery and the Ideal of Man*, Oxford, p. 13.

[43] M. I. Finley (1980), *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, New York, p. 94.

[44] Aristotle discussed "natural slavery" in *Politics* (1254a17-1254b39) and while he did not actually equate slaves with animals, this inclination was evident enough. While he writes that the slave is not an animal in that he can comprehend reason and can thus obey it, he denies that the slave possesses reason and states that a slave is as appropriate a hunting target as a wild animal, *Pol*. 1254b20-4, 1256b22-6. For a collection of evidence of the

slave to the authority of a fully rational master; in fact, Aristotle argues, such subjection is advantageous to the slave who would otherwise be abandoned to the perils of savage life (1254b12-13).[45] Such a view involved further moral degradation and dehumanisation of the slave because by being considered as someone who does not have any goals in life except to survive — comfortably if possible — the slave is also excluded from the possibility of leading a moral life. The purpose of human life, Aristotle often reminded, is to live morally, not merely to survive or to live comfortably or pleasurably; such a life, he insists, is chosen only by the "totally servile" who see no problem in living "the life of beasts" (EN. 1.3.1095b19-20).[46] The result of such restrictions and arguments was the total dehumanisation and indeed animalisation of slaves: the Greeks, as is well known, branded slaves like cattle and often referred to them as *andrapodon* ("man-footed creature"), which was built on the foundation of a common term for cattle, namely *tetrapodon* ("four-footed being").[47]

The Greeks regarded themselves as inhabiting what was essentially a 'human realm' which knew justice and had recourse to law, and they believed that outside it one could exist only in a subhuman state, like the barbarian who lives mainly for the gratification of his animal instincts and obeys only beastly force.[48] Barbarians were an additional category of biological humans who in the eyes of ancient Greeks lacked the attributes necessary to be considered proper human beings; their supposed inferiority and inhumanity was one of the major themes of Panhellenic discourse and political propaganda.[49] The barbarians of Europe were seen as wild and brutal while those in Persia were proverbially servile and prone to immoral excesses

---

dehumanisation of slaves, see K. Bradley (2000), 'Animalising the Slave: The Truth of Fiction,' *JRS* 90, 110-25, p. 110; Mulgan (1977:42); Vogt (1974:13).

[45] Aristotle argued that natural slaves are "those for whom it is expedient and just to be slaves," *Pol*. 1.5.1255a3. See also R. Bodéüs (1999), 'The Natural Foundations of Right and Aristotelian Philosophy,' in R. C. Bartlett and S. D. Collins (eds.), *Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle*, New York, 69-99, p. 93.

[46] Bodéüs (1999:96).

[47] For a good discussion of evidence, see Bradley (2000:110); Finley (1980:1980:99); Cartledge (2002:151-153).

[48] Eurip. *Med*. 2.538-8; S. Said (2002), 'Greeks and Barbarians in Euripides' Tragedies: The End of Differences?,' in T. Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and Barbarians*, Edinburgh, 62-100, p. 71; Cartledge (2002: 51-77).

[49] Said (2002:71).

involving food, drink and sex.[50] The Greeks considered these barbarian moral defects as reinforcing their monarchical institutions and causing them to live in a state of abject servitude to their kings and tyrants; the barbarians' immoral inclinations, in other words, made them literally incapable of achieving the human and humanising system of government that was the *polis*.[51] To Aristotle, everything boiled down to natural differences: barbarians, he argued, possess the same subhuman nature as slaves (*Pol*. 1252b2); they "do not share in happiness nor in living according to their own choice," and so are no more able to form a *polis* than animals are (*Pol*. 1280a25). Aristotle suggests, therefore, that even before the existence of the *polis,* when the Greeks themselves were animals roaming fields and forests, they were a superior sort of animal, since only they were potentially human, naturally predisposed towards a virtuous life and towards creating the political institutions that would make it possible.[52] Barbarians, on the other hand, were naturally incapable of such progress and were fit only to exist as slaves, under the rule of tyrants or, alternatively, under Greek rule.[53]

To be truly and fully human, therefore, one had to be free rather than a slave, Greek rather than barbarian, male rather than female, and morally upright rather than deviant. Once these conditions of humanity were fulfilled, human political institutions naturally followed. The Greeks considered the *polis* and its institutions as the political manifestation of their innate moral

---

[50] For excesses in food and drink, see Xen. *Cyr*. 8. 8-11, 16; *Ages*. 9.3. For barbarian servility, see Isocrates: "their souls are humiliated and terrified by the monarchy," (4.151). Plato states in *Laws* (698a) that "the governmental regime of the Persians is tainted by an excess of servitude among the populace and an excess of despotism among their masters." For the Persians' insatiable taste for luxury (*tyrphe*), see Athenaeus, 4.144, c. For various other excesses and character deficiencies, see P. Briant (2002), 'History and Ideology: The Greeks and "Persian Decadence",' in T. Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and Barbarians*, Edinburgh, 193-210. Barbarian traits were sometimes explained by the soil and climate as well as by the political systems under which they lived. The most famous of such theories is Hippocratic treatise, *Airs, Waters and Places*. See Said (2002:80); Reiss (2003:168); Cartledge (2002:55-56).

[51] Reiss (2003:168); Mazzolani (1967:19).

[52] The Greeks' confidence in their own superiority, as Mazzolani has observed, was based on the concept of spontaneous obedience by an individual to an internal code of ethical conduct, which they believed made them naturally predisposed to form 'human' political systems such as the democratic *polis,* Mazzolani (1967:19).

[53] Arist. *Pol*. 1252b2, 1254b. The heroine of Eurupides' *Iphigenia in Aulis* says to her mother, "It is right for Greeks to rule barbarians, not for barbarians to rule Greeks. They are slaves, we are free" (1400-1); Trigg (1988:28); Mazzolani (1967:17).

uprightness, or of their 'moral freedom,' and the barbarians' political slavery as the direct result of their moral deviancy or of their prior 'moral servitude.' Greek philosophers often spoke of moral life as a life of 'freedom' and of the immoral as a life of 'enslavement' to the irrational self, to one's *ēthos* or the 'beast within,' and as a result they would conceptualise the humanising mission of the *polis* in terms of a 'liberation' from slavery. Plato is usually regarded as "the first active exponent of the Beast Within" in that he presented in the *Republic* a psychological theory which proposed that the human soul consists of three components: the rational (*nous*), the spiritive (*thymos*) and the appetitive (*epithymia)* (580d-e).[54] The appetitive element, the source of sexual desire, hunger, thirst and other appetites, Plato likened to a monster with a ring of animal heads of different species, some fierce, others gentle (588c-d). This element is the largest component of the human soul and the most volatile one because of its inbuilt tendency towards excess (*Rep.* 439d, 442a.708). The spirit, which motivates us to seek esteem and avoid humiliation, Plato also represented as an animal ― a lion ― but unlike the previous monster, he considered this one to have a certain affinity with reason, and thus saw it as capable of acting as reason's natural helper (4.441a, 441e, 588c-d).[55] Plato represented the third element, reason, as a human being (588d). Reason is the component by virtue of which we learn (436a, 580d, 581b) and reason (439d), and its primary function is to rule the soul (441e, 442c).[56]

This theory served Plato well in describing and explaining a variety of dispositions of character, from the virtuous to the vicious. In the virtuous person, reason is the undisputed ruler while the two other elements accept its hegemony; where this "natural hierarchy" exists, Plato insisted, it creates virtues (*aretai*) such as justice, wisdom, courage and self-control (441c-442d).[57] Plato argued that even in the most well-disposed and virtuous soul, reason and spirit

---

[54] Gilhus (2006:205).

[55] 'Spirit' is the traditional translation of *to thumoeides* (441a). At 581b, it is called "the part that loves honour and winning" (*to philonikon, to philotimon*), J. Annas (1981), *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, Oxford, p. 126. 'Spirit' is a brute in that it cannot itself engage in the distinctively human activity of reasoning, but it is an educable brute that can be humanised to a very considerable extent; see M. Schofield (2006), *Plato: Political Philosophy*, Oxford, pp. 270-271.

[56] It is usually called "the reasoning part" (*to logistikon*, 439d), though at 581b it is called "the part that loves wisdom and loves learning" (*to philosophon, to philomathes*); Annas (1981:125).

[57] N. Blösner (2007), 'The City-Soul Analogy,' in G. R. F. Ferrari (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic,* Cambridge, 147-385, p. 350.

need to consistently subordinate appetite and on occasion "weed out" the inappropriate desires this component will give rise to (*Rep.* 442a-d, 589a6-b6).[58] Appetite is particularly difficult to control because of its tendency to excess. Its proper function is to drive people to acquire the resources necessary to support life (558d-559c), but if given half a chance it will attempt to govern reason and spirit (4.442b). Should this occur, the person stands no chance of virtue because appetite is ready to do whatever gratifies it in any given moment ─ from incest to murder, "it omits no act of folly or shamelessness" (571c5-d5). This theory also allowed Plato to answer one of the *Republic*'s central questions: what is justice? Plato defined justice as the "physic harmony" that is achieved when each of the three elements performs its proper function, and such an inner state of affairs is possible only under the rule of reason. To make this point Plato utilises a medical metaphor and says that "to produce health is to establish the elements in the body in the natural relation of dominating or being dominated (*kratein…krateisthai*) by one another, while to cause disease is to bring it about that one rules or is ruled (*archein…archestai*) by the other contrary to nature." He continues and states: "Is it not likewise the production of justice…to establish its principals in the natural relation of controlling and being controlled by one another, while injustice is to cause the one to rule or be ruled contrary to nature" (*Rep.* 444c-d).[59] Any rule apart from reason's is "contrary to nature" and "unjust," because unlike the other two elements that would rule the soul only in their own interests, reason has the capacity to rule by virtue of knowing what is best for the soul as a whole (4.441c, 442c).[60] Accordingly, Plato often speaks of a person in complete control of their inner animals as "just" while the person who lacks such control is "unjust." [61]

Plato made it clear that a person is made most fully human by identifying with reason and made least human by identifying with his or her bestial desires; in order for a human to truly be human, that which is brutish and base needs to be subjected to the rule of the human element

---

[58] H. Lorenz (2006), *The Brute Within: Appetitive Desire in Plato and Aristotle*, Oxford, p. 3.

[59] See M. S. Hurwitz (1993), 'Justice and the Metaphor of Medicine in Early Greek Thought,' in K. D. Irani and M. Silver (eds.), *Social Justice in the Ancient World*, Westport, 69-98.

[60] Annas (1981:132).

[61] Annas (1981:132); Balot (2006:202).

within the soul, rather than be itself enslaved by it (589d).[62] Plato described the consequences of reason being dethroned as the dominant element in one's soul as a process of progressive decline; from the spirit-dominated "timocratic man" to the appetite-enslaved "oligarchic" and, even worse, to the "tyrannical man."[63] Because within their souls one of the beasts is in charge and their inner human enslaved, none of these three types of men are free or human in the real sense of the word. Accordingly, Plato sometimes characterised the person ruled by reason as free, by which he means 'the human within' is free, whereas the person ruled by another part of the soul is a slave, that is, enslaved to the beasts.[64] Now, to prevent these beasts from taking control of the soul was for Plato an issue of both psychology and politics; just as trained and knowledgeable doctors care for the body, Plato argued, so too must trained and knowledgeable political leaders care for the souls of their citizens by making provisions for social justice and education.[65] The task of education (*paideia*) and its two traditional components, cultural education *(mousike)* and physical training *(gumnastikê)*, is to establish order in the soul, or to bring about that psychological condition that he calls justice (442a-d). Once this inner justice was established in the individual, Plato argued, the society one was a part of itself becomes just.[66]

The leap of justice from a personal to a social virtue was to Plato a natural one in that he

---

[62] Plato repeatedly stresses the need for identifying with the human element, for acting and speaking in such a way that the human within "looks after the many-headed monster like a farmer, feeding and nursing the gentle growths, but not allowing the fierce ones to sprout," *Rep*. 9.589b.

[63] "Timocratic man," the spirit-dominated man who cares for honour and physical prowess above all else (538-539), is the first step in the soul's decline. His successor is the "oligarchic man" whose soul is dominated by desire and who thinks money is all-important. Next in line is the "democratic man" who rids himself of all authority and discipline (559-561) and yields rule to whichever part of his soul happens to be uppermost in any given moment. The final stage of decline is the "tyrannical man"; his soul is enslaved to one master desire, lust, which produces a chronic state of unsatisfied need (556-576); Annas (1981:134-135).

[64] When ruled by Appetite, Plato states, Spirit and Reason squat like slaves before the Persian king and obey its orders. Even the tyrant for all its outwardly exercised power is not free but enslaved in the worst fashion by that which is lowest and basest within him, *Rep*. 579c-e, 589d; Annas (1981:134-135).

[65] Plat. *Gorgias* 464b3-8; Balot (2006:194).

[66] Mayer (2008:30-31).

believed in a perfect analogy between city and soul (e.g. 441c-e).[67] For Plato the good of the individual was identical to the good of society and there could be no discrepancy between individual and social morality; after all, he stated, "States do not come out of an oak or a rock but from the characters of men that dwell therein" (*Rep.* 544d). The underlying premise of the *Republic* is that the state is the product of human minds; it is unavoidably an economic, military and rational organisation, for these are expressions of the appetitive, spiritative and rational aspects of the human soul.[68] Each of these elements becomes respectively the basis of the classes in Plato's ideal state: the Guardians, whose souls are ruled by reason; the Auxiliaries, who are ruled by spirit; and the Productive Class, ruled by desire.[69] Plato argued that the same 'natural hierarchy' that exists in the soul exists in the city, and that justice is possible to ensure only by the rule of Guardians whose superior insight is able to guarantee a balance among interests and thus the harmonious existence of the different classes. By contrast, any disturbance to this hierarchy produces injustice, conflict and the enslavement of the citizen body. Guardians rule by virtue of possessing reason, which acts as a substitute to that of their subjects, whose own reason, of course, has been dethroned: by the spirit in the case of the Auxiliaries and by the appetite in the case of the Productive Class. In these men, Plato argued, the best human part of their souls is naturally weak, "so it cannot govern and control the brood of beasts within but can only serve them and can learn nothing but ways of flattering them" (590c). The only chance for reason becoming the governing component within the souls of these people is if reason is imposed from without (590c-d):[70]

> Therefore, in order that such a man be ruled by a principle similar to that which rules the best men, we say he must be enslaved to the best man, who has a divine ruler within himself. It is not to harm the slave that we believe he must be ruled…but because it is better for everyone to be ruled by the divine intelligence. It is best that he should have this within himself, but if he has not,

---

[67] The analogy between city and soul is dealt with twice in the *Republic*, first in Book 4 and again in Books 8 and 9. For a collection of instances, see T. J. Anderson (1971), *Polis and Psyche: A Motif in Plato's Republic*, Stockholm, pp. 22-28.

[68] M. Zeitlin (1997), *Rulers and Ruled: An Introduction to Classical Political Theory from Plato to the Federalists*, Toronto, p. 11.

[69] Plat. *Rep*. 581b-c; Zeitlin (1997:9).

[70] M. Schofield (2006: 273); Blösner (2007:353).

then it must be imposed from outside, so that, as far as possible, we should all be alike and friendly and governed by the same principle (trans. P. Shorey, pp. 407-409).

While Plato referred to all subjects of Guardians as 'slaves' (*douloi),* which is consistent with his habit of using the word *douleia* beyond actual legal slavery to encompass various forms of subordination,[71] he meant only that the dominant part of the subjects' souls are enslaved to the Guardians. The Spirit of the Auxiliaries and the Desire of the productive class are enslaved to the Guardians' reason, which then liberates the 'human within' their souls and makes the Guardians' subjects 'free.' In *Laws*, Plato similarly stated that all men ought to be "slaves to the laws" (715b-d) but he clearly uses the language of slavery to explain the relationship between reason, as embodied by the laws, and one's appetites and desires.[72] The citizens are "slaves" to the laws, as Hitz has observed, "in that they treat them as expressions of divine reason, as having absolute authority over appetites, desires and emotions."[73] Reason's authority, she goes further, "is necessary for one to attain one's good and to achieve human excellence or virtue."[74] The only people in Plato who seem not to rely on laws for their humanity are the Guardians, whose souls are ruled by reason in the stronger sense and who are self-motivated to be just and moral. All others exist as humans only under the condition of being 'enslaved' to the laws and the Guardians; true loss of freedom, true slavery and dehumanisation become a genuine prospect

---

[71] These forms include political subjection, moral servitude, subjection of a child to its parents, and of course, of the body to the soul, G. Yvon (1982), *Les esclaves en Greece anciennė*, Paris, p. 32; G. Vlastos (1960), 'Slavery in Plato's Thought' in M. Finley (ed.), *Slavery in Classical Antiquity: Views and Controversies*, Cambridge, pp. 133-149. There appears to be no difference in Plato's political theory between the relations of a master to his slaves and of a sovereign to his subject; or as Aristotle put this Platonic doctrine: mastership (*despoteia*), statesmanship (*politikė*) and kingship (*basilikė*) are all the same thing. See Arist. *Pol*. 1253b18, 1252a8.

[72] Z. Hitz (2009), 'Plato on the Sovereignty of Law,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Chichester, 367-381, p. 374. In Book 5, Plato describes the relationship between the soul and the body as that between a master and a slave (*Leg*. 727e1-6): "Of all man's own belongings, the most divine is his soul, since it is most his own. A man's own belongings are invariably twofold: the stronger and better are master [*despozonta*], the weaker and worse are slavish [*doula*]; wherefore, of one's own belongings one must honor those that are master above those that are slaves [*douleuōntōn*]."

[73] Hitz (2009:375).

[74] Hitz (2009:375).

only if this rule collapses or, alternatively, if one choses to disobey it.[75]

Plato outlined the hypothetical scenario of such a collapse and traced the decline of the just state through the same four stages he earlier traced in the soul: timocracy, oligarchy, democracy and tyranny.[76] The priorities of timocracy are determined by ambition and the search for glory, oligarchy pursues money while democracy signifies a breakdown of authority and a weakening of natural hierarchies (555b-557a). In each of these forms of state, personal advantage can only be gained at another's expense (349b-d); a man cannot be pre-eminent and superior unless others are inferior, one man's unlimited striving for wealth impoverishes others (555c-d), while the omnipotence of one tyrant enslaves and thus dehumanises the entire citizen body (569bc).[77] Because unjust political authorities lack the ability to impose the natural hierarchies in their citizens' souls, they cannot prevent the enslavement of their citizens to their inner beasts; under their rule, the city is inevitably inhabited by moral slaves and as such is properly labelled as a "city of pigs" (372d).

Aristotle largely adopted Plato's psychological theory and held that in the virtuous person the appetite and the spirit are brought into perfect harmony with reason by being affected and improved over time by the cultivation of virtuous habits of behaviour.[78] According to Aristotle's theory, there is a sense in which all parts of the soul of a mature human being are rational: one part (reason) is, strictly speaking, rational, while the others are rational only in an extended sense, in that they are capable of obeying and being influenced by reason.[79] While in the *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle treated morality and goodness as a psychological condition, as a state of the soul in which the supremacy of the rational part is recognised, in *Politics* he treated them in connection to the moral agent's environment, as something influenced, created and enforced by the political authority. I have already mentioned the importance of habituation to Aristotle's thought, but it is important to remember that he saw habituation as only a means to an end, a necessary step if one is to achieve full virtue, which entails knowing virtue for what it is and choosing to perform virtuous acts for their own sake (EN. 1105a28-33).[80] One must learn, in

---

[75] Plat. *Rep*. 547b-c; Annas (1981:176-177).

[76] Annas (1981:295).

[77] Blösner (2007:364-365).

[78] The *Nicomachean Ethics* include an outline account of the human soul, 1.13.1102a26-1103a3; Lorenz (2006:3).

[79] Lorenz (2006:186).

[80] Barker (1959:241-242).

other words, to do the right thing for the wrong reasons before one can do it for the right reasons. What this means is that anyone not in the possession of full virtue, which is to say the vast majority of people, must rely on forces outside themselves to live a virtuous and thus human life. Accordingly, Aristotle argued that the best instrument for maintaining virtue is law (EN. 1180a 18-b7) because "most people obey necessity rather than argument and punishments rather than a sense of what is noble" (EN. 1180a1-5). Accordingly, if one wishes to make people good, one needs to make them obey the law: "Presumably," he argues, "the man who wants to make men better through his careful attention…must attempt to become skilled in legislating, if we are to become good men through laws" (EN. 1180b23-5).[81] For Aristotle, the state in its ideal form is the vehicle of pure reason and its law is "reason without passion," necessary for the majority of people who rely on it for moral guidance and the necessary restraint.[82] This identification of lawful with moral, as Mulgan has noticed, is facilitated by the Greek word *nomos*, which covers shared rules of social behaviour, such as unwritten custom and conventions, as well as law in the sense of statutes passed by legislative bodies.[83]

Aristotle argued that the *polis* arises from the basis of the distinct hierarchical roles that were first established within the household: the "ruling element" (the male head) rules the family through his practical reason while the "ruled element" (the women, children and slaves) are better off through being ruled (*Pol.* 1252a24-b1, 1278b30).[84] For Aristotle, this is the natural order of things and he certainly endorses a type of subordination of the individual to the state which might be described as authoritarian or paternalistic.[85] Like Plato before him, Aristotle believed that only the best men who possess full virtue, self-knowledge and self-control should rule the state, because only they are self-motivated to be virtuous and require no external compulsion.[86] Aristotle distinguished between different types of rule based primarily on the aims and intentions with which rulers exercised their power, and made a basic distinction between "free" and "despotic rule." Whether the rule was one or the other was not determined by the particular constitution, but only by the ruler's intentions, whether they ruled in their own interests or that of

---

[81] Mulgan (1977:25).

[82] Barker (1959:243).

[83] Mulgan (1977:79).

[84] Balot (2006:239).

[85] Mulgan (1977:34); Balot (2006:239).

[86] Mulgan (1977:78).

their subjects.[87] Aristotle regarded despotic rule, which literally means "like the master over the slave" (*despotes*), as "perverted" precisely because the despotic ruler is regarded as pursuing his own interest (*Pol.* 1278b30-1279a21). Unless one is naturally a slave, in which case one might properly be ruled in such manner, "free rule" is 'normal' or 'correct' in that the rulers are pursuing the interests of subjects. Aristotle also equated the common interests protected by such rulers with absolute justice or, as he stated in *Politics*: "Justice is the political good and it consists of what is of common advantage" (*Pol.* 1282b16-18). Under such rule, the *polis* fulfils its function and its citizens are free to do "what they ought to do" and live as human beings and this, Aristotle confirms, "ought not be regarded as slavery, but rather as salvation" (*Pol.* 1310a35).

The above brief overview of some of the central aspects of Plato and Aristotle's political thought is sufficient to show that the primary function of the *polis* in these thinkers can be described in terms of humanising the potentially human Greeks by 'taming' and 'restraining' the inner beast which, if allowed, would enslave the inner man. Plato and Aristotle discussed the ideal state, but laboured under some deeply held assumptions in regard to what the *polis* had already achieved overall, namely, it had enabled the Greeks to reach a human level of existence which the subhuman horde of barbarians outside their boundaries had no hope of reaching. Nevertheless, their accounts contain the implicit warning that the *polis* can decline and lose its humanising properties and that, as a consequence, the humans within its walls may cease to be human and revert to their bestial natures. In Plato, the decline originates in the soul of the citizen body or in the process whereby the inner human of each individual citizen is gradually dethroned by his own inner beasts. It was to Plato self-evident that this decline would manifest itself politically and be further reinforced by increasingly corrupt and dehumanising political institutions. Likewise, Aristotle concluded that the *polis* which is governed by any of the "perverted" constitutions ceases to exist as a *polis* and becomes instead a "mere alliance," which "lacks the capacity to make citizens good and just" (*Pol.* 1280b6, 1281a11). Because unjust governments also enforce unjust laws (1282a41), they literally dehumanise the governed, whether by enslaving them or by ceasing to enslave the beast within their souls. In any case, the path

---

[87] The six types of constitution are: the rule of one man in the common interest (kingship); the rule of the few in the common interest (aristocracy); the rule of the many in the common interest (polity); the rule of one in his own interest (tyranny); the rule of the few in their own interest (oligarchy); the rule of the many in their interest (democracy), *Pol.* 1279a32-b10; Mulgan (1977:60-62).

becomes clear for the human to become "the worst of all animals." Political theorists in subsequent centuries often recalled Plato's beasts in order to warn humanity about the dire consequences of the collapse of the political order, and we shall now turn to a man who did this perhaps more than any other, the Roman politician, philosopher and orator, Marcus Tullius Cicero.

III

Cicero, *Humanitas* and the Mask of Humanity

> To describe the human we couldn't dispense with the metaphor of the garment that has been woven,
> that people have collectively woven themselves, a process it makes sense to call civilisation.
> The human after all is a garment…
> R. Redeker, *The New Face of Humanity*

Roman philosophers and theorists used the word *homo* to identify a creature that is superior to other animals by virtue of possessing and exercising its unique rational and moral capacities.[88] The richest source of these ideas in the Roman world is Cicero, who was an adherent of the Skeptical academy but who preferred to rely on the Stoic school of philosophy for his views on human nature.[89] For the Stoics, human moral progress, purpose and "final good" consisted of transcending the brute behaviour of non-rational animals by conforming to the rational and essentially virtuous nature of a human being.[90] In *De Officiis*, Cicero observed: "When the Stoics say that the final good is living in agreement with nature, what this means is always be in accord with virtue (*virtus*) and choose the things which are in accordance with nature, if they are not in

---

[88] Cic. *Leg*. 1.7.22, 1.22-3. Also, in *De Officiis* Cicero states that man, unlike animals, is endowed with reason: "The animal we call man…alone has a share in reason and thought, while all the rest of living beings are deprived of it," *Off*. 1.11-12.

[89] His writings show a deep appreciation for Stoic ethics and in particular that of a prominent member of the 'Scipionic circle,' Panaetius of Rhodes. See Belliotti (2009:1-33).

[90] Epictetus 2.9.10-11; A. A. Long, (2002), *Epictetus: A Stoic and Socratic Guide to Life,* Oxford, p. 225.

conflict with virtue" (*Off.* 3.13).[91] In this passage, *virtus* denotes something different to what it traditionally denoted in Rome, namely "manliness" or "courage," but I will leave this issue aside for the moment in order to concentrate on *virtus* as we encounter it here, that is, as a philosophical and purely ethical concept. This *virtus* is the result of the proper hierarchy in the human soul, which in Stoic psychology is divided between appetites (*appetitus*) and reason (*ratio*); the former "carries the man off this way or that way" (*hominem huc et illuc rapit*) while the latter "teaches and makes plain what should be done and what avoided" (*…docet et explanat, quid faciendum fugiendumque sit*). The result, Cicero concludes, is "that reason governs and appetite obeys" (*…ratio praesit, appetitus obtemperet, Off.* 1.101).[92]

The Stoics also gave morality a stable foundation in a rational cosmology and argued that by living up to our human nature, we also live up to the nature of the universe, of which human nature is merely a part.[93] In Stoicism, living in accordance with human and cosmic nature entailed subjection to the precepts of "natural law," which outlined the specific rules and prohibitions it was necessary to obey if one was to live as a human being.[94] Cicero defined natural law as "the highest reason, implanted in nature, which commands what ought to be done and forbids the opposite" and insisted that subjection to this law was mandatory for anyone deserving the attribute "human being."[95] A famous passage in *De Re Publica* states this most clearly (3.33):

---

[91] In an essentially Stoic vein, Cicero argued that *virtus* is sufficient for a good and happy life, regardless of one's external circumstances, while a life containing even a touch of evil can be neither happy nor good, Cic. *Tusc*. 5.12, *Fat*. 5.86-90.

[92] Cicero elaborates on this metaphor in the paragraph that follows and compares appetites to horses; they must be curbed and guided by the reason to which Nature's laws has made them subject (*…subiecti lege naturae*), *Off*. 102.

[93] Diog. 7.85-99; Annas (1993:160). M. Schofield (2003), 'Stoic Ethics,' in B. Inwood (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Stoics*, 233-256.

[94] A good account of Natural law is found in Chrysippus who stated that: "Law is the king of all things, human and divine. It must preside over what is noble and what is base, and be their ruler and leader. In accordance with this it must be the standard of what is just and what unjust, and for creatures that are by nature social it must be prescriptive of what one should do and prohibitive of what one should not do," Marcianus *Inst*. 1; Annas (1993:302); P. Mitsis (1994), 'Natural Law and Natural Right in Post-Aristotelian Philosophy: The Stoics and their Critics,' *ANRW* II, 36.7, 4812-4850, p. 4813.

[95] Cic. *Leg*. 1.18; *Rep*. 1.39; Wood (1988:74, 90-91).

> …Est quidem vera lex recta ratio naturae
> congruens, diffusa in omnes, constans, sempiterna,
> quae vocet ad officium iubendo, vetando a fraude
> deterreat…nec vero aut per senatum aut per populum
> solvi hac lege possumus, neque est quaerendus ex-
> planator aut interpres eius alius…cui qui non parebit
> ipse se fugiet ac naturam hominis…

> True law is right reason in agreement with nature; it is of universal application, unchanging and everlasting; it summons to duty by its commands, and averts from wrongdoing by its prohibitions…We cannot be freed from its obligations by Senate or People, and we need not look outside ourselves for the expounder or interpreter of it…Whoever is disobedient is fleeing from himself and denying his human nature…(trans. C. W. Keyes, p. 211).

Like the Stoics, Cicero believed that the specific rules of moral conduct proscribed by natural law are discoverable by human reason, but at this point he was somewhat vague as to what they are, suggesting only that they include religion, gratitude and truth.[96] In *De Legibus*, Cicero was more precise, but I will turn to this in the next section.

The Stoics identified two main reasons one might have for disobeying natural law: a natural propensity for pleasure and avoidance of discomfort, and a susceptibility to misguided communication and instruction.[97] Cicero had something to say on both of these causes of dehumanisation and here I will observe the former aspect, self-inflicted dehumanisation through hedonism, cruelty and related 'beastly' behaviors, while dehumanisation through misguided communication will be discussed below in the context of the late republican political struggles. The seeking of sensual pleasures was often described in Roman discourse (Stoic or otherwise) as weak and feminine, the opposite to manly *virtus,* and as such the ultimate aspiration of low

---

[96] Cic. *Inv*. 2, 65-66, 161; Wood (1988:72).

[97] Cic. *SVF*. 3.228, 229; I. Gildenhard (2007), 'Greek Auxilaries: Tragedy and Philosophy in Ciceronian Invective,' in J. Booth (ed.), *Cicero on the Attack: Invective and Subversion in the Orations and Beyond,'* Swansea, 149-183, p. 171.

characters, such as slaves.[98] The Stoics often spoke of such practices as "contrary to nature" and regarded them in Platonic terms as an enslavement of the 'human within' to the appetite-driven beast; as a result, they often made a clear distinction between legal slavery and 'true' moral slavery.[99] Much like their legal counterpart, moral 'slaves' would often be animalised: according to Aulus Gellius, for example, whoever surrenders to bodily pleasures should be counted among beasts (19.2):

> Ex his omnibus quae inmodice voluptas capitur,
> ea turpis atque improba existimatur…voluptates
> duae gustus atque tactus, id est libidines in cibos
> atque in Venerem prodigae, solae sunt hominibus
> communes cum beluis et idcirco in pecudum fero-
> rumque amimalumnumero habetur, quisquis est his
> ferinis voluptatibus praevinctus.

> The enjoyment of excessive pleasure from any of these [five senses] is seen as low and reprehensible…The two pleasures of taste and touch, that is to say gluttony and lust, are the only ones which humans have in common with lower animals and so whoever is enslaved to these animal pleasures is counted as among brute beasts (trans. C. Edwards, 1993, p. 197).

For Cicero, sensual pleasures are "unworthy of the dignity of man," but if one is inclined towards such practices, he writes, he should at least have the shame and decency to hide such inclinations,

---

[98] Such practices by slaves were regarded as confirmation of their slavish nature and also as an indication of the underlying servility of all the seemingly free men indulging in them. For example Sen. *Ep.* 90. 19; Edwards (1993:176, 194).

[99] The Stoics recognised that all human beings are made of a common substance and are not naturally subject to constraints, which they regarded as external. The wise man, according to the Stoics, gives assent to external circumstances he cannot control and thus, whatever his external situation or legal status, does not act under constraint and is free. The evil man, on the other hand, cannot achieve what he wants and is subject to constraint and prevention and is thus a slave; see C. E. Manning (1989), 'Stoicism and Slavery in the Roman Empire,' *ANRW* 36, 3, 1518-1543, p. 1520. W. Richter (1958), 'Seneca und Die Sclaven,' *Gymnasium* 65, 196-219; P. Garsney (1996), *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine,* Cambridge, pp. 116-117.

if he is to have any hope of being a level above "the beasts of the field."[100] In *Paradoxa Stoicorum*, Cicero placed several great men from Roman history who were characterised by *virtus*, self-restraint and abstinence, such as Scipio Africanus and Cato, against the pleasure seekers of his own time. Only the former, Cicero asserted, are truly human, while the latter are merely "cattle" who have accepted that there is really no difference between them and some four-footed animal (*sic se ipse abicies atque prosternes ut nihil inter te atque quadrupedem aliquam putes interesse*).[101]

The central idea, therefore, is a familiar one: only those people who conform to certain standards of behaviour fully merit the adjective 'human' or the attribute 'humanity.' In Cicero, many of these standards are embodied in the word *humanitas*.[102] This term made its appearance on the Roman scene in the mid-second century BC within the group of intellectuals around Scipio Aemilianus, one of whom was the Stoic philosopher Panaetius.[103] This group, according to Schadewaldt, modified a number of traditional Roman ideas by synthesising them with Greek thought, and *humanitas* in particular acted as a prism, drawing values like *clementia* into a synthesis with *gravitas* and *severitas* in order to designate the proper balance between the sturdy and the gentle character traits.[104] *Humanitas*, as Veyne has observed, "designates persons who are worthy of the fine name 'human' because they are neither barbarian nor inhuman nor uncultivated…it means literary culture, the virtue of humanity and the state of civilization."[105] By the time of Cicero, the primary connotation of the word *humanitas* was that quality of civilised behaviour that is inculcated in people by education and training: "The wise man," says Scipio in

---

[100] Cic. *Off*. 1.105-6.

[101] Cic. *Par. Stoic*. 1.14.

[102] Baldry, H. C. (1965), *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought*, Cambridge, p. 201.

[103] W. Schadewaldt (1973), 'Humanitas Romana,' *ANRW* I 4, 43-62; Bauman (2000:22).

[104] Schadewaldt (1973:52-4). The amalgam was "a coincidence of opposites" to which Cicero drew attention when discussing the character of Atticus who, he writes, "has achieved the most difficult combination of *gravitas* and *humanitas*, both in his life and his language. Avidius has such a well balanced character that it combines the most rigid *severitas* with a highest degree of *humanitas*," *Leg*. 3.1; *Fam*. 12.27. *Humanitas*, as Bauman has observed, can also be seen as "an umbrella under which were grouped the moral values that furthered the ideals of the parent concept, the most important being *clementia*, with *aequitas, lenitas, moderatio, iustitia, fides* and *pietas*," Bauman (2000:6: 22).

[105] P. Veyne (1993), '*Humanitas*: Romans and Non-Romans,' in A. Giardina (ed.), *The Romans*, Chicago, 342-369, p. 342.

De Re Publica, "believes that while others may be called men, only those really are men, who are accomplished in the arts characteristic of *humanitas.*"[106] *Humanitas* was a merit rather than a universal trait and in Cicero in particular, *homo* and *humanitas* acquire a practically identical meaning in that *humanitas* most often referred to an action that was above the savagery of irrational animals, thus signifying that characteristic of a human being which marks him as a possessor of *mores compositos* as opposed to *mores efferos.*[107] Cruelty towards one's fellow men, for example, Cicero considered as entirely devoid of *humanitas* and thus "false to Nature and mankind."[108]

In his efforts to outline general rules and prohibitions that would apply to all humans, Cicero did not neglect to allow for individual differences, stressing that some behaviours might be right for one type of person but not for another. For such importance to be given to the individual was a relatively new development, and one Cicero owed to Panaetius, or to his ethical doctrine of four-*personae* which Cicero outlined in the first book of *De Officiis*. The purpose of this doctrine was to provide general guidance on how to 'act' human on the social stage by discovering what is the appropriate act for any given person in any given situation. The theory states (*Off* 1.107-15):

> Intellegendum etiam est duabus quasi nos a na-
> tura indutos esse personis; quarum una communis
> est ex eo, quod omnes participes sumus rationis
> praenstatiaeque eius, qua antecellimus bestiis, a qua

---

[106] Cic. *Rep*. 1.28. In Cicero's writings, the character of Scipio Aemilianus was representative of the humanising and refining influence of Greek culture on the stern and practical qualities of Roman character, see *Lael*. 3.11; *Verr*. 2, 4.44.98. O.E. Nybakken (1939), 'Humanitas Romana,' *TAPhA* 70, 396-413, p. 397-398. Cicero has described Scipio and Laelius as reformed types of Romans who, under the influence and teaching of Panaetius, became gentler, wiser men, *Arch*. 7.16, *Mur*. 31.56ff, *Off*. 1.26.90, 1.30.108.

[107] Cic. *Rep*. 2.26.48, *Divin*. 1.1.2, *Quinct*. 31.97; *Fin*. 5.12.35; Nybakken (1939:402); Baldry (1965:201).

[108] In a speech condemning his former son-in-law Dollabela of murdering and desecrating the body of his enemy, Cicero describes him as "forgetful of *humanitas*" and thus "false to nature and mankind," *Phil*. 11.8-10. Cicero condemned cruelty as inimical to *humanitas*; defending S. Roscius on the charge of *parricidium* (murder of a parent); arguing against the traditional penalty of a sack, dog, snake and a rooster, Cicero states: "Banish this cruelty from the state…When every hour brings another act of cruelty, even those of us who are most merciful by nature, lose all feeling of *humanitas*," *Rosc*. *Amer*. 154; Bauman (2000:2).

omne honestum decorumque trahitur, et ex qua ratio
inveniendi officii exquiritur, altera autem quae pro-
prie singulis est tributa…Ac duabus iis personis, quas
supra dixi, tertia adiungitur, quam cassus aliqui aut
tempus imponit, quarta etiam quam nobismet ipsi
iudicio nostro accommodamus.

We must realise that we are invested by nature with two characters, as it were; one of these is universal, arising from the fact of our being all alike endowed with reason and with that superiority which lifts us above the brute. From this all morality and propriety are derived, and upon it depends the rational method of ascertaining our duty. The other character is the one that is assigned to individuals in particular … To these two characters is added a third, which some chance or some circumstance imposes, and a fourth also which we assume by our own deliberate choice. (trans. W. Miller, pp. 109, 117-18).

Cicero did not go into detail about how the four masks interact to form one subject, but it is clear that the wearer of the four *personae* is a rational and moral being with his or her own will, judgment, and mental and physical peculiarities.[109] The theatrical metaphor utilised here goes back to early Stoicism, where humanity was conceived in terms of a role that had to be performed properly — as if on a stage — and one of its central premises is that anyone can deliberately choose and cultivate their own role or their own way of life.[110] Scholars consider this theory to be of relevance in the study of the ancient conception of the 'person' and the 'self,' with the second *persona* receiving the most attention because some have seen in this concept the seeds of our modern individuality.[111] Cicero advised each person to discover what he has as his own

[109] H. Cancik (1998), 'Persona and Self in Stoic Philosophy,' in A.I. Baumgarten, J. Assmann, and G. G. Stroums (eds.), *Self, Soul and Body in Religious Experience,* Leiden, 335-346, p. 337.

[110] There can be little doubt that the theatrical image goes back to the early days of the Stoia. Zeno's follower Aristo described the wise man as "like the good actor who whether he puts on the mask of Thersites or Agamemnon, plays either part in a proper way," LS 58G. "Remember," says Epictetus, "that you are an actor in a drama, as the director wants you to be," *Encheiridion* 17. Cancik (1998:330-337); A. A. Long (2006), *From Epicurus to Epictetus: Studies in Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy*, Oxford, p. 16.

[111] Some have seen here the seeds of something like the modern self, or the more radical ethical individualism such as that found in modern thinkers like Nietzsche or Sartre. For some discussions, see for example, C. Gill (1994),

peculiarity (*quid quisque habeat sui)* and talent (*ingenium*) and then to choose a 'role' in life, like a good actor who picks only those roles suited to his/her nature and ability (1.113-114).[112] If in time one should find this role to be unsuitable, Cicero stressed further that one should discard it and assume another that is more fitting (120). Cicero also illustrates the great variety of characters formed by nature and habits (*nautrae, mores*) and insists that none of them ought to be criticised (*vituperari*, 1.109).

It is well known that the prevalent tendency in the ancient world was to emphasise collective rather than individual identity. Modern scholars sometimes speak of the ancient "corporate personality," by which they mean that the ancients never saw themselves "as single beings but as an irreducible part of a larger group."[113] Because they used the concept of human nature as a normative reference-point and, because this nature could be fulfilled only in the community, the individual became almost by necessity defined by the repute he had gained within this community, rather than by his own sense of uniqueness or inner worth.[114] In these circumstances, the ancients could hardly imagine a self that would act independently of the community's laws, inherited traditions and the expectations inherent in any particular social role.[115] Because the most appropriate way of understanding the normative ancient self is by recognising the role of interpersonal and communal relationships in its formation and moral judgments,[116] the stress in the above theory on maintaining distinctive individual character traits

---

'Peace of Mind and Being Yourself: Panaetius to Plutarch,' *ANRW* II, 36, 4599-4640, p. 4607; R. Sorabji (2006), *Self: Ancient and Modern Insights about Individuality, Life and Death*, Oxford, pp. 158-160; S. Bartsch (2006), *The Mirror of the Self: Sexuality, Self-Knowledge and the Gaze in the Early Roman Empire*, Chicago, 216-217.

[112] Sorabji (2006:160).

[113] Robinson in Sorabji (2006:49).

[114] See for example, D. Clay (1990), 'Missing Persons, or the Selfless Greeks,' in W. J.Carroll, J. J. Furlong and C. S. Mann (eds.), *The Quest for the Individual: Roots of Western Civilization,* New York, 13-26, p. 13.

[115] B. J. Malina and J. H. Neyrey (1996), *Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality,* Louisville, 198-201, pp. 227-231.

[116] Gill uses an example from Homer when Odysseus, having faced the Trojan warrior Diomedes, asks himself whether to flee or to risk death. He then answers his own question by asserting that only cowards flee, while the best men stand their ground. Gill observes that "Odysseus recognises the priority of what is implied in 'being best' through engagement with the roles and practices in which such an ideal makes sense, and not through any abstract moral imperative"; see C. Gill (1996), *Personality in Greek Epic, Tragedy and Philosophy: The Self in Dialogue*, Oxford, pp. 77-78. See also Bartsch (2006:234).

is unusual and a significant step towards our modern notion of the individual self.[117] The four-*personae* theory is, as Gill puts it, unusual in that it seems to be concerned with "personality" in the sense of personal individuality and uniqueness, as well as with "personhood," which was previously a dominant concern that stressed rationality and the capacity for assuming moral, legal and social responsibilities.[118]

Nevertheless, the second *persona* is not an ancient representative of modern ethical individualism.[119] Among other reasons, this *persona* is strictly subordinated to the first *persona,* from which all morality (*honestum*) and propriety (*decorum*) are derived and upon which depends the rational method of ascertaining our duty (*officia*).[120] The theatrical metaphor of 'assuming' the first human *persona* signifies the subjection of the irrational part of the soul to the rational portion, so to subordinate the second *persona* to the first is to say that individuality cannot be gained at the expense of one's humanity. Accordingly, Cicero urged that: "…we must act in such a way that we attempt nothing contrary to universal nature; but, while conserving that, let us follow our own nature."[121] Gill outlines another reason why the second *persona* does not represent a radical step away from the ancient conception of the 'corporate' self, namely: "this increased interest in actual differentiated human beings" is still embedded in "a highly social perspective; the individual is viewed in a social setting and judged by social norms."[122] Gill was right to observe that the examples of different individual dispositions Cicero outlined can only be

---

[117] This change is often associated with Panaetius's shift of emphasis from the ideal Stoic sage towards the diversity and relative imperfection of actual human beings; see P. H. De Lacy (1977), 'The Four Stoic Personae,' *ICS* 2, 163-172, p. 166; C. Gill (1988), 'Personhood and Personality: The Four-*Personae* Theory in Cicero, *De Officiis* I,' *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 6, 169-199, p. 178.

[118] Gill (1988:169-70); D. Dennett (1976), 'Conditions of Personhood,' in A.O. Rorty (ed.), *The Identities of Persons (Identities)*, Berkley, 175-196.

[119] See Gill's convincing argument against this notion (1994:1599-1640).

[120] Cic. *Off*. 1.11-14, 101; *Tusc.* 2.47.48, 51.53; *Rep*. 1.60. As Hadot has observed, the first *persona* requires that we "exercise our share in the universal stock of reason…to recognise ourselves as a part of the reason-animated cosmos," P. Hadot (1995), *Philosophy as a Way of Life*: *Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault,* Oxford, p. 86. Epictetus states this in a virtually identical way, by using the notion of a *prosopon* ('mask'), 1.2; Gill (1994:4620); H. C. Baldry (1965:201).

[121] Cic. *Off*. 1.108-110, *ut contra universam naturam nihil contendamus, ea tamen conservata propriam nostram sequamur.*

[122] Gill (1988:171).

understood within the social framework: the people Cicero quotes are 'distinguished' in the sense of being "accomplished and notable in society."[123] Consequently, Gill argues, the model of selfhood propagated in this theory is still essentially ancient, or what he calls elsewhere the "objective-participant" model as opposed to the modern, "subjective-individualist" model.[124]

Nevertheless, while I largely agree with Gill, I believe that when it comes to Cicero a somewhat more complex model of selfhood emerges, one closer to that which Bartsch has recently identified in Seneca's writings and labeled "objective-individualist."[125] According to Bartsch, the "objective-individualist" self is "a comparatively isolated self not predominately embedded in the values of its community but nonetheless believing that its own values are objectively true."[126] In *De Officiis*, the model of selfhood Cicero advocates as proper and ideal is indeed Gill's "objective-participant" in that it is shaped and judged by the standards of the *mos maiorum* (customs of the ancestors), and subordinated to and regulated by community-generated and accepted norms.[127] This framework does not admit conflict between the individual and society, and individual preferences are in complete harmony with social demands.[128] Nevertheless, at the time of writing, Cicero believed that his normative frame of reference had been fractured and that the society and customs that had previously guaranteed the well-being of the individual no longer existed. In these circumstances the "objective-participant" self is no longer feasible and one can only exist as an "objective-individualist," if one is to exist at all.

We will see below that Cicero considered the Roman citizen body to be largely dehumanised by the social and political collapse of his day, so the only human self that could survive in these circumstances was a self that had achieved moral self-sufficiency and no longer depended on society for its existence. Throughout most of his career, Cicero conceived of himself

---

[123] Cic. *Off.* 1.108-9. Gill (1988:181).

[124] Gill (1996:10). See also the more recent C. Gill (2006), *The Structured Self in Hellenistic and Roman Thought*, Oxford, pp. 20-21.

[125] Bartsch (2006:250).

[126] Barsch (2006:250).

[127] In *De Officis* Cicero argues that social rules and customs are a reliable and necessary guide to proper human behaviour. He mentions Socrates as an example of a man who challenged social conventions and beliefs but insists that he did this only as a matter of privilege, on account of his superhuman virtue. Ordinary men, he insists, need to rely on the rules of society to be able to live a good life, *Off.* 1.148.

[128] G. Reydams-Schils (1998), 'Roman and Stoic: The Self as a Mediator,' *Dionysius* 14, 35-62, p. 44.

as someone who lived without the state, due to the fact that the contemporary Roman Republic, together with most of the people in it, had become 'false.' On occasions, Cicero would experience this loss of country as a loss of his very self,[129] but often, even when in Rome, he claimed to be 'stateless' yet very much in possession of his selfhood.[130] Hammer regards Cicero as someone who managed only partially to recover and absolve himself of this loss through recourse to philosophy, and sees him as unable to do so fully due to the importance Cicero assigned to the political world.[131] In the discussion below, it will be possible to observe a somewhat different Cicero, one that emerges from his own conceptualising of late republican struggles as a war between human and subhuman forces fought largely in the subhuman realm that the state of Rome has become. In this realm, only rare men remain unaffected and are able to exist within it while retaining their humanity and their 'selves.' This largely abandoned or "comparatively isolated self" is Cicero's own self and that of his fellow *boni*: the rest, he will argue, lost their selves as they lost their humanity.

This will emerge gradually as I progress, but the first step in perceiving the divide which for Cicero separates true and false humans and their respective realms lies in noticing the important dimension of the theatrical metaphor contained in the above theory, and the equally important concept of *decorum*. *Decorum* was an aesthetic concept converted into an ethical doctrine by Panaetius, and Cicero presents it in *De Officiis* as a result of the successful integration of the four *personae*. *Decorum* was the 'the outer face of virtue,' the 'appropriate,' 'beautiful' and consistent performance of one's primary role as a human being, in accordance with one's individual nature, circumstances, station in life and so on.[132] Cicero classified *decorum* into two types. The first type is a general sort of propriety, which is found in moral goodness and is defined as that "which harmonises with man's superiority in those respects in which his nature differs from the rest of animal creation" (*quod consentaneum sit hominis excellentiae in eo in quo natura eius a reliquis animantibus differat*, 1.96). The second type

---

[129] During his exile, for example, Cicero wrote to Atticus that he "misses himself" (*Att*. 3.15).

[130] MacKendrik observes the frequency in *Tusculans* of the verb *carere*, which means "to feel a lack" or "be without," whether in terms of career, country or family, in D. Hammer (1998), *Roman Political Thought and the Modern Imagination*, Norman, p. 40.

[131] Hammer (1998:41).

[132] Cic. *Off*. 1.13-14, 94-8, 107, 110-1, 113-4; 120; 125. T. N. Mitchell (1991), *Cicero: the Senior Statesman*, Yale, p. 35; De Lacy (1977:165); Gill (1988:191-192).

"harmonises with Nature in the sense that it manifestly embraces temperance and self-control, together with a certain deportment such as becomes a gentleman" (*quod ita naturae consentaneum sit, ut in eo moderatio et temperantia appareat cum specie quadam liberali*).[133]

The primary duties of *decorum* involve the faithful observance of the laws of Nature and ensuring that reason is always in command (*ratio praesit, appetitus obtemperet,* 1.101). As a result, Cicero asserted, *decorum* is inseparable from moral goodness, for what is morally right is also appropriate and what is appropriate is morally right (*quod decet honestum est et, quod honestum est, decet*).[134] Nevertheless, while it is necessary for *decorum* to keep impulse subservient to reason (*horum tamen trium praestantissimum est appetitum optemperare rationi*), it is also important to ensure that this inner domination provides the exterior "with a certain polish."[135] This polish, Cicero argued, has to be provided by the outer *persona* of the social actor who handles himself with manly dignity and who understands and knows how to adopt a suitable pose at the suitable time. This is the outwardly orientated and visible side of *decorum* (1.126):

> Sed quoniam decorum illud in omnibus
> factis, dictis, in corporis denique motu et statu
> cernitur idque positum est in tribus rebus, for-
> mositate ordine, ornatu ad actionem apto, diffi-
> cilibus ad eloquendum, sed satis erit intelegi, in
> his autem tribus continetur, cura etiam illa, ut
> probemur iis, quibuscum apud quosque vivamus...

> But the propriety to which I refer shows itself also in every deed, in every word, even in every movement and attitude of the body. And in outward, visible propriety there are three elements ― beauty, tact and taste; these conceptions are difficult to express in words, but it will be enough for my purpose if they are understood. In these three elements are included also our concern for the good opinion of those with whom and amongst whom we live… (trans. W. Miller, p. 129).

---

[133] Cic. *Off.* 1.96.

[134] Conversely, to be morally wrong and unjust in one's actions is always inappropriate and contrary to *decorum* (*et iusta omnia decora sunt, iniusta contra, ut turpia, sic indecora*) *Off.* 1.94.

[135] Cic. *Off.* 1.27, 96, 141.

Cicero then proceeds to outline what is conducive to *decorum* in terms of speech, clothing, manners and walk, emphasising the importance of social theatrics and the self-conscious use of techniques of stagecraft as a means of social and political self-enhancement.[136] For Cicero, it appears, the socio-political stage had much in common with the theatrical; he indeed "seems to presuppose a degree of awareness of one's own actions and of other's reactions, that assimilates social life to a theatrical performance."[137] The emphasis on theatricality in *De Officiis*, as Dugan has observed, invites each person to adopt a quasi-aesthetic attitude towards himself and his life, and as such "it parallels the assumption within rhetorical theory and practice that one can deliberately fashion a self."[138]

Cicero certainly appears to have blurred the line between moral guidance and tips on social expertise, and as such he is sometimes thought to have anticipated some modern works on social psychology, most notably Erving Goffman's *Presentations of Self in Everyday Life*.[139] The issue scholars often have with these passages and Cicero's idea of "self-fashioning" is that it appears to involve an outward show distinct from the inner reality; after all, they point out, the primary meaning of *persona* is a 'mask,' quite distinct from a persistent identity.[140] It was commonplace in the ancient world to describe *persona* as something one assumes, or 'puts on,' in order to disguise one's 'real self' and to produce a particular effect or illusion. Cicero himself uses *persona* in this way in *Tusculans* when he lashes out at Epicurus for putting on the *persona* of a philosopher, rather than actually being one.[141] As a result, these passages have often been

---

[136] Cic. *Off*. 1.126-132, 135-7, 144.

[137] Cic. *Off*. 1.133, 135-7, 144; Gill (1988:194-195).

[138] J. Dugan (2005), *Making a New Man: Ciceronian Self-Fashioning in the Rhetorical Works*, Oxford, p. 5.

[139] See Gill (1988:193-195).

[140] The word *persona* was originally an Etruscan word for mask, and among its several meanings, it also designated the theatrical mask worn by Greek and Roman actors. See, for example, R. C. Elliot (1982), *The Literary Persona*, Chicago, p.21; P.A. Taylor (1999), 'Imaginative Writing and the Disclosure of the Self,' in *The Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* 57, 29-39, p. 28.

[141] Cic. *Tusc*. 5.73.3. Also, when Cicero wrote to Atticus he lamented, "why should I wear a mask [or assume a character] before men's eyes?" (*Quid est autem, ergo personatus ambulem*), Cicero, *Ad. Att*. 15.1. "*Personatus* in this case has to do not with a role one assumes in life, but with false appearance, a meaning close to the original sense of a mask," Elliot (1982:26-27). Lucretius says "the mask is torn off, the truth left exposed" (*eripitur persona, manet res* DRN 3.58). In *Epistle* 24.13, Seneca asserts "not just men but also things should have their mask removed and their own face restored" (*non hominibus tantum sed rebus persona demenda est et reddenda facies sua*). In

taken as an indication that for the Romans the 'social self' was something performed, like a role, rather than an authentic manifestation of selfhood. Bartsch has argued against such a view and observes that in the normative republican usage of the term, away from the actual practice of drama, *persona* usually points to a public role that was not felt to be a concealment of some truer or inner private self.[142] Inasmuch as an individual's social and political roles constituted an important part of that person, she observes, the *persona* was neither felt to be the whole of the individual nor a fake: "the *persona* represented an aspect of being rather than an exposition or a dissimulation of that person."[143] Bartsch was here reacting to what she has perceived as two extreme views in scholarship in regards to the meaning of *persona* in the ancient world. The first suggests that the Romans felt that the selves presented on the social stage were feigned performances rather than authentic manifestations of selfhood, while the other argues that the *persona* and its interior were for the Romans identical: that "there is no difference between comporting oneself as a virtuous individual and actually being one."[144] These two extremes, as Bartsch observes, "are difficult to map into Roman culture because they map *persona* into a true/false axis in the mind rather than understanding it in terms of propriety and impropriety, or in terms of Roman civic performativity."[145]

While correct in many ways, Bartsch's analysis does not tackle the fundamental reason behind the existence of such extremes of interpretation, namely, that Roman texts contain a wide variety of meanings applied to *persona*, ranging from the external and false, mask-like self, to the social role and even to the internal ('true') self.[146] This divergence of meaning is often seen as a gradual progression from the former to the latter and philologists are often puzzled in regards to

---

Plautus, the word *persona* primarily occurred in the sense of 'disguise,' *Persa*. 783. Rhetoricians often speak of putting *persona* on and off; Quint. *Inst*. *Orat*. 3.8.50; Cic. *De Or*. 2.24.102, 3, 54; *Off*. 3.43. Also, see J. J. Hughes (1994), 'Dramatic Ethos in Cicero's Later Rhetorical Works' in J. S. Baumlin and T. F. Baumlin (eds.), *Ethos*: *New Essays Rhetorical and Critical Theory*, Dallas, p. 211-227. De Lacy (1977:165); Elliot (1982:21); Taylor (1999:28).

[142] Bartsch (2006:225-256).

[143] Bartsch (2006:222).

[144] D. Burchell (1998), 'Civic Personae: MacIntyre, Cicero, and Moral Personality,' *The History of Political Thought* 19, 101-118, p. 114.

[145] Bartsch (2006:221).

[146] See for example, Cic. *Ad*. *Fam*. 4.55, 7.33.2; *Planc*. 100. Allport has summed up the meanings of *persona* in Cicero's writings, and observes meanings ranging from the external and 'false' to the internal and 'true' self; see G. W. Allport (1937), *Personality: a Psychological Interpretation*, New York, pp. 26-28.

how something which originally designated 'mask,' an instrument of concealment, also becomes an expression of man's inner moral essence.[147] I will propose that the potential inherent in *persona* to contain these contradictory meanings is the result of the two central functions it could serve in ancient philosophy and theory. These functions were dependent on what was below the *persona*: over the face of a human, *persona* could designate his social role or become the social and external expression of his moral essence, while over the face of a subhuman it would retain its original meaning, as it would necessarily act as a human mask disguising the animal below. Within the context of the four-*personae* theory, everything depended on whether the first *persona* had been assumed prior to the other three. If one assumes the first *persona* (or subjects oneself to the rule of reason), any subsequent *persona* becomes merely its 'proper' and 'fitting' surface manifestation, appropriate to that particular individual, his station in life or to his immediate situation. This is the essence of both the inner- and outer-orientated *decorum*. On the other hand, should one fail to assume the *persona* of humanity, any subsequent *persona* inevitably becomes a deceptive mask, that is, its function, now determined by this failure, is to cover up and hide the subhuman below. The socio-political aesthetics of the secondary *decorum* are now only human make-up over the subhuman creature.

From this, it follows that we need to grasp the double aspect of the first *persona*. The first aspect is the performative, in which the first *persona* can be envisioned as an external mask, made up of observable actions proper to the role of a human being. To Cicero, life might have been much like a theatrical performance but this particular stage did not allow portrayals of wicked men, only of rational beings, subjects to the moral law.[148] The true human should behave and be seen to behave in a rational and moral manner, while avoiding those irrational and immoral actions which are unworthy of a human being and are outright 'bestial' (*Off.* 1.41):

> Cum autem duobus modis, id est aut vi aut fraude,
> fiat iniuria, fraus quasi volpeculae, vis leonis videtur;
> utrumque homine alienissimum, sed fraus odio digna
> maiore. Totius autem iniustitiae nulla capitalior quam
> eorum, qui tum, cum maxime fallunt, id agunt , ut viri

---

[147] Elliot (1982:6-31).

[148] Cic. *Off.* 1.98, 107, 114; *Epict.* 3.23; 4ff.

boni esse videantur.

> While wrong may be done then in either of two ways, that is, by force or by fraud, both are bestial: fraud seems to belong to the cunning fox, force to the lion; both are wholly unworthy of man, but fraud is more contemptible. But of all forms of injustice none is more flagrant than that of the hypocrite who, at the very moment when he is most false, makes it his business to appear virtuous (trans. W. Miller, p. 145).

The seeking of sensual pleasure and cruelty towards one's fellow humans, as we saw above, are examples of such 'beastly' actions. This passage also touches on the second aspect of the first *persona*, which is to act as an internal mask, assumed in order that the human exterior, which all biological humans share, is the accurate representation of the interior; that one *is* as human below as he/she *appears* to be on the surface. A failure to assume the first *persona* is a failure to subject oneself to the rule of reason and thus to meet the moral requirements for true humanity. The result is that one only appears human but is below an animal. Cicero described this state of affairs in *De Re Publica* in somewhat dramatic terms (*Rep.* 4.1):

> Etenim, si nemo est quin emori malit quam
> converti in aliquam figuram bestiae, quamvis
> hominismentem sit habiturus, quanto est miserius
> in hominis figura animo esse efferato!

> And indeed if there is no one who would not prefer death to transformation into an animal of any sort, even if he could retain the mind of a man, how much more wretched is it to have the mind of a beast while retaining human form (trans. C. W. Keyes, p. 231)!

"Retaining human form" here means retaining a human body, but it can also refer to engaging in bestial actions while making it appear that those actions are in fact human. In several passages, Cicero argues that the 'beast' cannot easily deceive the careful observer because his disturbed inner hierarchies tend to manifest externally through a distorted voice, posture or face.[149] Such a

---

[149] "Not only our minds," Cicero argues, "but the bodies as well are disordered by such appetites" (…*non modo animi perturbantur, sed etiam corpora*, 1.102). When men are no longer subject to the law of Nature, their "faces,

view is commonplace in Roman moralising texts; Cicero's brother Quintus, for example, wrote an essay-epistle to Cicero during Cicero's candidacy for consulship and emphasised that the candidate's door should always be open, both to his house and to his soul, the latter of which can be reached through one's facial expressions (*Q. Cic. Pet*. 4):[150]

> (est) cura…ut aditus ad te diurni nocturnique pateant,
>
> neque solum foribus aedium tuarum, sed etiam vultu
>
> ac fronte, quae est animi ianua; quae (si) significat
>
> voluntatem abditam esse ac retrusam, parvi refert patere
>
> ostium.

> Care should be taken that there be access to you day and night, not only through the entrance of your house but also through your facial expression (*vultu ac fronte*), which is the door to your soul. If your expression reveals that your will is hidden away, it makes little difference that your home is open (trans. A. Corbeill, p. 145).

The notion that the face mirrors the soul is in Cicero described in terms of 'similarity to oneself,' or as he puts in *De Legibus*: "For no thing is so similar and equal to another as we are to ourselves" (*Nihil est enim unum uni tam simile, tam par, quam omnes inter nosmet ipsos sumus,* 1.29). Self-similarity (*similis sui*) ensured that the human exterior is a reliable indicator of what is below but, as in the passage above, Cicero stressed that some beasts are quite good at problematicising the equation of external appearance with internal character, because "at the very moment when he is most false, he makes it his business to appear virtuous" (*Off.* 1.41). In this case, the socio-political or any other observable *persona* is particularly deceptive because the beast knows how to forge the pose *similis sui,* or dis-simulate.[151]

---

voices, and motions undergo a change" (*…voltus, voces, motus statuesque mutantur*, 1.102). Elsewhere, Cicero states: "Isn't it true that we consider many people worthy of our contempt when they can be seen, through a certain kind of movement or posture, to have scorned the law and limit of nature?" (*none odio multos dignos putamus, qui quodam motu aut statu videntur naturae legem et modum contempsisse*, *Fin*. 5.47).

[150] Tacitus, in *Dialogus*, uses face (*facies*) as a metaphor for 'true nature' and so "recalls the republican ideal whereby faces could be trusted just as nature can be," A. Corbeill (2004), *Nature Embodied: Gesture in Ancient Rome*, Princeton, pp. 148-150.

[151] Corbeill (2004:151).

In Roman texts, *dissimulatio* denoted the notion of playing a role false to oneself,[152] but it is crucial to remember that not everything we would regard as 'pretense' was for the Romans *dissimulatio*. This term designates a practice whereby the subhuman assumes the human mask in order to deceive, which, in Cicero at least, is quite different to the situation in which a true human assumes a 'false-front' (socio-rhetorical *persona*) to serve some short-term goal. A brief analysis of the Roman idea of 'sincerity' will illustrate this difference clearly. The Latin term which comes nearest to expressing the idea contained in our word 'sincerity' is *fides* ("trust," "faith") which Cicero saw as central to the business of society and at the heart of justice itself (*Off.* 3.69-70). *Fides* helped to ensure that one's confidence in one's fellow man was not abused; it described the honest dealings of honest people, free from lies and deception on either part (3.69-70). As an example of contrary behaviour, Cicero mentions taking advantage of a neighbor's ignorance in order to sell him deficient goods (3.72). Such immoral practices, Cicero argued, undermine *fides* and are usually caused by a mistaken notion about the relationship between the morally good and the expedient action (3.72).[153] In *De Officiis* Cicero dealt extensively with the relationship between virtuous and advantageous conduct (*honestum et utile*), arguing that in essence they are one and the same: every truly virtuous act is expedient and every truly expedient act is also virtuous.[154] It is never expedient to do wrong, he asserts further, because that is always immoral (*turpe*) and it is always expedient to be good because that is morally right (*honestum*, 3.64). To take personal advantage of someone else's disadvantage or ignorance is useless and immoral and it ultimately causes one to lose his very humanity (3.82):

> …Quid est, quod afferre tantum utilitas
> ista, quae dicitur, possit, quantum auferre, si boni
> viri nomen eripuerit, fidem iustitiamque detraxerit?
> Quid enim interest, utrum ex homine se converat
> quis in beluam an hominis figura immanitatem ge-
> rat beluae?

What is there that your so-called expediency can bring you that will compensate for what it can

---

[152] Cic. *Verr.* 2.1.39, 2.4.6. See Bartsch (2006:226).

[153] Cic. *Off.* 3.72.

[154] Cic. *Off.* 1.9, 2.9, 3.7.

take away, if it steals from you the name of a 'good man,' and causes you to lose your sense of honour and justice? For what difference does it make whether a man is actually transformed into a beast or whether, keeping the outward appearance of man, he has the savage nature of a beast within (trans. W. Miller, p. 355)?

The intention to deceive for one's personal advantage is immoral in that it undermines trust and thus constitutes what we would regard as 'insincere' behaviour. Nevertheless, the type of insincerity Cicero describes above clearly goes well beyond mere lying to an unsuspecting party in order to profit from this deception. This type of insincerity is the result of an animal pretending to be a human being; this is the true pose of *similis sui*, the true *dissimulatio*.

Personal expediency and moral right most often conflict in Cicero's writings when it comes to the pursuit of "military or civil offices and glory" (*imperiorum, honorum, gloriae cupiditas*).[155] The pursuit of these was an essential part of traditional Roman honour code, which demanded achievement in public life as well as the public recognition of that achievement, and Cicero does not disapprove of it in principle, only if it undermines the common good.[156] Cicero argued that in contemporary Rome, the pursuit of offices and glory had become divorced from their ideological basis in *honestum* (virtuous conduct) and that their true purpose — a reward earned by actions benefiting the state — had been perverted by the enemies of the Republic to whom these goals served only as a pretext for their self-aggrandizement.[157] These men, as we will see below, are false humans pursuing false glory, but at this point Cicero is only concerned with directing his son Marcus to the path to true glory (*vera gloria*). This path is reached through truly virtuous and truly expedient actions, or by 'really being how one wishes to seem.' At this point Cicero quotes Socrates's maxim, "the nearest way to glory — a short cut, as it were — is to strive to be what you wish to be thought to be" (…*viam ad gloriam proximam et quasi compendiariam dicebat esse, si quis id ageret, ut, quails haberi vellet, talis esset*).[158] Cicero contrasted this state with "pretence and empty show, dissembling in speech and countenance" (*Off.* 2.43).[159]

---

[155] Cic. *Off.* 1.26.

[156] Cic. *Off.* 1.65. See also Long (1995:216).

[157] Cic. *Off.* 1.68, 85-87. Long (1995:226).

[158] Cic. *Off.* 2.42-3.

[159] See also *Amic*. 95-97.

Quodsi qui simulatione et inani ostentatione et ficto
non modo sermone, sed etiam voltu stabilem se
gloriam consequi posse rentur, vehementer errant.
Vera gloria radices agit atque etiam propagatur, ficta
omnia celeriter tamquam flosculi, decidunt, nec simu-
latum potest quicquam esse diuturnum.

For if anyone thinks that he can win lasting glory by pretence, by empty show, by hypocritical talk and looks, he is very much mistaken. True glory strikes deep roots and spreads the branches wide; but all pretenses soon fall to the ground like fragile flowers and nothing counterfeit can be lasting (trans. W. Miller, pp. 212-213).

Cicero warns his son Marcus that one's true character is impossible to disguise and that anyone engaging in public life should know that the public gaze is all-knowing and all-seeing: "The eyes of the world are turned upon him; his life and character are scrutinised… not a word and not a deed of his can be kept secret."[160]

Now, Cicero did not advise Marcus to be 'sincere' in the sense that his social comportment and professed views need at all times to accurately reflect his views and attitudes, but only that he should be as 'human' as he appears to be. In public life, this is accomplished once the person identifies his own interests with the true interests of the state, removing thus any possibility of conflict between virtuous and expedient socio-political conduct. As for one's social comportment, which Cicero argued has to be calculated and calibrated for its effect, one can be less than sincere. This is quite consistent with the Roman idea of *fides,* which is different from what we understand by sincerity in that it simultaneously contains within itself the idea of 'persuasiveness.'[161] To be persuasive one might need to know how and when to assume a suitable temporary *persona,* which might or might not be the most accurate representation of one's inner attitudes. As long as this *persona* is assumed over the face of a true human, it does not undermine

[160] Cic. *Off.* 2.45: *...in hunc oculi omnium coniciuntur atque in eum, quid agat, quem ad modum vivat inquiritur et, tamquam in clarissima luce versetur ita nullum obscurum potest nec dictum eius esse nec factum.*

[161] The meaning of *fides* has been studied by Heinze, and he has shown that it contains an essential notion of a relationship existing between an individual and others who assume a particular attitude towards him, R. Heinze (1928), 'Fides,' *Hermes* 64, 140-166, pp. 140ff.

fides, nor does it constitute *dissimulatio*. There are two passages in *De Officiis* that provide good examples of different situations where one's exterior resembles one's inner disposition and where it does not; in both cases, neither humanity nor the sincerity aspect of *fides* is jeopardised. In both cases, everything comes down to controlling the inner passions, but in the former case this control is accurately reflected externally and in the latter, it is not. While advising on what is appropriate in terms of conversation in social situations, Cicero states (*Off.* 1.136):

> Sed quod modo in omni vita rectissime
> praecipitur, ut peturbationes fugiamus, id es motus
> animi nimios rationi non optemperantes, sic eius
> modi motibus sermo debet vacare, ne aut ira exsistat
> aut cupiditas aliqua aut pigrita aut ignavia, aut tale
> aliquid appareat….

> But as we have a most excellent rule for every phrase in life, to avoid exhibitions of passion, that is, mental excitement that is excessive and uncontrolled by reason; so our conversation ought to be free from such emotions: let there be no exhibitions of anger or inordinate desire, of indolence or indifference, or anything of the kind (trans. W. Miller, p. 139).

In this case, one's inner self-control is reflected on the surface in a controlled manner of speech and this is both morally right and useful because, as Cicero adds below, such a display of *decorum* is also persuasive as it is sure to leave a lasting impression on one's social peers.[162] Having framed his advice on how to be persuasive in social situations in terms of one's control over one's irrational passions, Cicero clearly assimilated it to advice on the proper conduct for a human being. Nevertheless, the moral imperative of inner control can sometimes demand an opposite external effect, or a 'false front,' which is also more persuasive. This passage comes immediately below the one quoted above, and it clearly demonstrates the relationship between the immutable first *persona* with the more flexible and changeable social one (*Off.* 1.136-137, 144):

> Obiurgationes etiam non numquam incidunt ne-

---

[162] Cic. *Off.* 1.102.

Cessariae, in quibus utendum est fortasse et vocis

contentione iaiore et verborum gravitate acriore, id

agendum etiam ut ea facere videamur ira…sed tamen

ira procul absit, cum quae nihil recte fieri, nihil considerate

potest.

It may sometimes happen that there is a need of administering reproof. On such occasions we should, perhaps, use a more emphatic tone of voice and more forcible and severe terms and even assume an appearance of being angry…We may seem angry, but anger should be far from us; for in anger nothing right or judicious can be done (trans. W. Miller, p. 139).

So not only could the true human legitimately assume a 'false front' without jeopardising his humanity or the sincerity aspect of *fides,* he might actually be required to do so. Cicero advised the appearance of anger because it is useful and persuasive, while adding that a display of true emotion should be avoided; the previous passage made clear that such a display of anger is dehumanising as it indicates that reason is no longer in charge. The very falsity of the exterior, therefore, is a testament to the supremacy of reason within that individual.

It is clear, therefore, that if we wish to understand the ancient notion of 'sincerity,' we need to be aware that we are potentially dealing with two types of it, and I will refer to them from this point on as "primary" and "secondary." Primary sincerity satisfies the moral imperative of being as human below as one appears on the surface; a person who is sincere in this sense utilises his socio/rhetorical *persona* as an 'outer face of virtue,' in order to reveal his inner humanity (first *persona*) rather than to disguise his inner inhumanity. Secondary sincerity is concerned with one's social and rhetorical comportment, which needs to be calibrated for its effect and does not necessarily involve the sincere disclosure of every aspect of one's inner views or attitudes. The person who is sincere on the primary level could be insincere on the secondary without engaging in *dissimulatio* or jeopardising his primary sincerity, but the person who is insincere on the primary level is always and necessarily insincere at the secondary level, and this insincerity always constitutes *dissimulatio*.

Another issue that needs to be clarified at this point is Cicero's differentiation between the morally derelict subhuman posing as a human and the good man possessing a "semblance of virtue." Cicero states in *De Officiis*: "The men we live with are not perfect and ideally wise, but

men who do very well, if there be found in them but the semblance of virtue" (*Quoniam autem vivitur non eum perfectis hominibus planeque sapientibus, sed cum iis, in quibus praeclare agitur si sunt simulacra virtutis,* 1.46). The statement that *simulacra virtutis* is morally sufficient has often been seen as evidence that there was no difference for Romans between comporting oneself as a virtuous individual and actually being one. This is certainly not so, and we need to remember that the official source and model for *De Officiis* is a work by Panaetius entitled, "On Proper Functions" (*Peri kathēkontôn*). In Stoic philosophy *kathekonta* (*officia*) are "appropriate actions" which ordinary moral agents perform, as distinct from *katorthomata* or "virtuous actions" of which only the sage is capable.[163] The distinction between a *kathēkon* and a *katorthōma* is comparable to the Aristotelian distinction between a virtuous action and a virtuous action performed as a virtuous agent would perform it — that is, from a virtuous disposition to so act.[164] In Cicero, the division is between "mean duties" (*officia media*), the duties demanded by Natural law and by society whose institutions and customs accurately reflect this law, and the "perfect and absolute right" (*recta perfecta atque absoluta*) of the Wise Man.[165] Performance of *media officia* is sufficient for morality and to perform them is to perform the role of a human being properly but, because the performance is largely conducted under external constraint, the actor cannot be said to be truly virtuous but only to possess a "semblance of virtue."[166] If there exists the proper external authority (the state), the vast majority of people exist on this level; they are still human, it is just that they need help being so. In *De Re Publica* and *De Legibus*, Cicero discussed the humanising role of the state and its laws in these precise terms, and it is to this issue that we now turn.

IV

---

[163] Cic. *De Fin*. 4.15; *De Leg*. 2.8, 1.18-19.

[164] See Diogenes 7.88; Arius 76.10-11. The extensive passage in Sextus states that the virtuous person is distinguished not by what he does but by his disposition in doing it, PH 3.244; Annas (1993:98); Mitsis (1994:4843): "Both the wise and unwise perform the *kathekonta* enjoined by the natural law; but while their actions share the same descriptive content, there is a crucial difference in intentional content." M. Pohlenz (1964), *Die Stoia: Geschichte eine geistigen Bewegung*, 3rd edition, Göttingen, p. 186ff; M. Reesor (1951), 'The Indifferents in the Old and Middle Stoia,' *TAPhA* 82, 102-110; Mitsis (1994:4827, 4843).

[165] Cic. *Off*. 3.13-14, 17; *Am*. 20-1.

[166] See also, Cic. *De Fin*. 4.15; *De Leg*. 1.18-19, 30, 2.8; *Am*. 21.

Humanising the Roman: Subjugating the 'Beast Within' in *De Re Publica* and *De Legibus*

Cicero opens the fifth book of *De Re Publica* with a quotation from Ennius: "The Roman state is built on ancient customs and on men" (*moribus antiquiis res stat Romana virisque*, 5.1). He then goes on to assert that neither men without customs nor customs without men willing to defend them would have been able to create a state as great as Rome.[167] The men Cicero had in mind here were not just any men but men unrivalled in *virtus,* which should here be understood in its traditional sense of "manliness" or "courage."[168] The term *virtus* is derived from *vir* (man) and it characterises the ideal behaviour of a man.[169] *Vir* was only one of a number of Latin words that were used to denote a man but, unlike others that were used merely to distinguish man from woman (*femina*) or from boy (*puer*), it carried numerous positive connotations: it was associated with Roman citizenship and would often refer to a politically active man.[170] The designation *vir* was even more exclusive than *homo* because a slave could be designated as *homo*, even though he lacked the status of a human being,[171] but never as *vir*. Male adult slaves were regularly referred to as *puer* to indicate that they were not *vir,* as they were incapable of possessing *virtus*.[172] The Romans also regarded *virtus* as an essentially Roman quality, "the badge of the Roman race and breed" that was chiefly responsible for Roman greatness.[173] Consequently, *virtus* became the foundation of "Roman-ness" or Roman national identity most often articulated in

---

[167] Cic. *Rep*. 5.1, 1.1, 2.12. See also Livy, 31.25.4-5. For others expressing similar views, see C. Edwards (1993:24-33, 178-206).

[168] B. W. Boyd (1987), 'Virtus Effeminata and Sallust's Sempronia,' *TAPhA* 117, 183-201, p. 193.

[169] A. Ernout & A. Meillet (1960), *Dictionnaire etymologique de la langue latine*, 4th ed. Paris, p. 739.

[170] M. McDonnell (2006), *Roman Manliness, Virtus and the Roman Republic*, Cambridge, p. 2.

[171] See below, n. 196-197.

[172] The quality possessed by a good slave was *fides* (loyalty), not *virtus.* See S. Treggiari (1969), *Roman Freedmen During the Late Republic*, Oxford, pp.11-20, 265-268. *Homo* was also different from *vir* in that it could be accompanied with a pejorative adjective or with one that denoted the status a man was born into (*novus*, *nobilis*, *Romanus*); McDonnell (2006:2); T. Pulju (1994), '*Vir* and *Homo* in Cicero's *Pro Milone,*' LACUS *Forum* 19, 567-574.

[173] Cic. *Phil*. 4.13; *Ver*. 4.81; Sall. *BC* 53.2-5; McDonnell (2006:3).

terms of the moral superiority of the Romans to other peoples.[174] *Virtus* was also of crucial ideological significance to the Roman republican nobility (*nobiles*), who ruled the state by their cumulative influence (*auctoritas*) and their virtual monopoly on public offices, both of which were officially the reward for and the recognition of their *virtus*.[175]

Traditionally, *virtus* referred to 'manly' courage and martial prowess, but by the late Republic, two distinct conceptions of the term developed ― one traditional and essentially martial in nature, the other Greek-influenced and primarily ethical, which came to take on the modern meaning of 'virtue.'[176] The second development and usage we have already observed in Cicero above who, together with Sallust, is usually credited with refashioning *virtus* into an all-embracing concept that subsumed the other cardinal Roman virtues, prudence, justice, self-control and courage (*prudentia*, *iustitia, temperamentia*, *fortitudo*), becoming thus the sum of all the virtues required of the true Roman *vir bonus*.[177] Cicero's motives for promoting this conception of *virtus* can probably be traced to him being a *novus homo* with no military background. In these circumstances, the only hope Cicero had of staking a claim to possessing *virtus* equal or greater than that of the warlike aristocracy lay in refashioning the term by "not only denying it an exclusively aristocratic character but by extending its reference beyond the martial sphere to include himself."[178] But even in Cicero, *virtus* was not always entirely divorced from its original meaning: often the two meanings would be combined, or made interdependent. For example, Cicero argued that "the whole of [ethical] virtue rests in the exercise of virtue" (*virtus in usu sui tota posita est*, *Rep*. 1.2.2) but, as he would state elsewhere, only the true

---

[174] See Pliny NH. 7.130; Edwards (1993:21); McDonnell (2006:3).

[175] Roman education was based on *exempla*: the descendant of *nobles* had both an obligation and the privileged opportunity to reproduce the *virtus* of their ancestors through imitation; see A. Wallace-Hadrill (2005), 'Mutatas Formas: The Augustan Transformation of Roman Knowledge,' in K. Galinsky (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, Austin, 55-84, pp. 67-68.

[176] McDonnell (2006:9).

[177] McDonnell (2006:5, 105-141, 320-384); H. F. North (1966), 'Cannons and Hierarchies of the Cardinal Virtues in Greek and Latin Literature,' in L. Wallach (ed.), *The Classical Tradition: Literary and Historical Studies in Honour of Harry Caplan*, New York, 168-183, pp. 176-177; W. Eisenhut (1973), *Virtus Romana*, Munich, 14-22; Edwards (1993:20-21); L. R. Lind (1972), 'Concept, Action and Character: The Reasons for Rome's Greatness,' *Transactions and Proceedings of the American Philological Association*, Vol. 103, 235-283, p. 236; McDonnell (2006:5).

[178] McDonnell (2006:346).

Roman male can exercise virtue in the manly and courageous fashion that befits the *vir*.[179] This exclusively Roman action-prone spirit is also in Cicero an essential ingredient for *decorum*, which he describes at one point as that which "is done with great and virile spirit" (*quod enim viriliter animoque magno fit, id…decorum videtur, De Off*. 1.27.94).

Thus, 'ancient customs and men' created the Roman state and prior to it, Cicero makes clear, the Romans did not exist as human beings. Like Plato and Aristotle, Cicero denied the name of human being to any who did not share in the *societas humanitatis* because, he argued, life in accordance with reason became possible only with the creation of the state, which fulfilled people's material and moral needs.[180] Cicero adhered to the theory that man is a naturally social animal,[181] but he followed the Stoic line in stressing that animals, like humans, also have impulses for community life.[182] Accordingly, while advocating the naturalness of the impulse to society,[183] Cicero asserts that a mass of human beings (biologically speaking) herding together do not necessarily constitute a society or 'a people' (*populus*). A collection of "uncivilized savages" or a gang of robbers cannot be designated as a *populus* or as a human society any more than a pack of animals can; neither are rational creatures, nor are they participating in a truly human

---

[179] For example, Cic. *Tusc*. 1.2; *Sex. Rosc*. 79-70; *De Orat*. 1.15. In *Tusculans,* Cicero goes as far as to suggest that for man to be truly a man, *ratio* needs to be complemented by *fortitudo* which is a specifically Roman quality, or as Enenkel puts it "a crucial and venerable Roman virtue"; see K. A. E. Enenkel (2005), 'The Propagation of *Fortitudo*: Gladiatorial Combats from ca. 85 BC to the Times of Trajan and their Reflection in Roman Literature,' in K. A. E. Enenkel and I. L. Pfeijffer (eds.), *The Manipulative Mode: Political Propaganda in Antiquity ─ a Collection of Case Studies*, Leiden and Boston, 275-93, p. 277. The lessons of *ratio* can be taught through philosophical education, Cicero argued; *fortitudo* cannot be taught as it is an innate Roman quality; see I. Gildenhard (2007), *Paideia Romana: Cicero's Tusculan Disputations*, Cambridge, pp. 74-77, 260.

[180] Cic. *Rep*. 1.39-41, 2.26; *Off*. 2.15.

[181] It is a natural inclination in humans who, because they participate in universal reason, are by nature social creatures; in *De Finibus*, for example, Cicero states "we are all so born as to be fitted (*apti*) for justice, temperance and the other virtues… and we are also born for living together with other man and for the fellowship and association of the human race" (*ad congregationem hominum et ad societatem communitatemque generis humani*), *Fin*. 4.4. See also *Fin*. 3.23, 68; *Amic*. 87-8; M. R. Wright (1995), 'Self-Love and Love of Humanity in *De Finibus* 3,' in J. G. F. Powell (ed.), *Cicero the Philosopher: Twelve Papers,* Oxford, pp. 171-189.

[182] DL 7.107; *Off*. 1.50; *Fin*. 5.25-26, 37-9. On the inferiority of animals, see DL. 7.129; *Off*. 1.105; *Leg*. 1.23.5, 36; G. B. Kerferd (1983), 'Two Problems Concerning Impulse,' in W. W. Fortenbaugh (ed.), *On Stoic and Peripatetic Ethics: The Work of Arrius Didymus*, New Brunswick, 87-98.

[183] Cic. *Rep*. 1.39. This position is reasserted in *Leg*. 1.35 and *Off*. 1.12, 157-158; Schofield (1995:70-71).

community bound by reason and justice.[184] Accordingly, in the first book of *De Re Publica* Cicero states (1.39):

> …populus autem non omnis hominum coetus
> quoquo modo congregatus, sed coetus multitudinis
> iuris consensus et utilitatis communione sociatus.

> A people (*populus*) is not any collection of human beings brought together in any sort of way, but an assemblage of people in large numbers associated in a consensus with respect to justice and a partnership for the common good (trans. C. W. Keyes, p. 65).

The difference between the 'savage herd' and the true *populus,* therefore, is that the latter group's association is based on a consensus in respect to justice (*iurus consensus*). To further describe this arrangement, Cicero uses expressions such as "shared justice" (*commune ius, Rep*. 1.41) or "association based on justice" (*societas iuris, Leg*. 1.35), which usually means a shared sense of moral duty reflected both in the life of the citizens and in the institutional arrangements of a society.[185] In Cicero's definition of justice in *De Re Publica*, he emphasises its role as guardian of the common good (3.24): "Justice instructs us to spare all men, to consider the interests of the whole human race, to give everyone his due, and not to touch sacred or public property or that which belongs to others." The discussion of justice in *De Officiis* places the greatest emphasis on its common utility,[186] while in *De Inventione* Cicero defines it as "a mental disposition which gives every man his dessert (*dignitatem*) while preserving the common interest (*communi utilitate conservata*)."[187]

Cicero's concept of justice is closely tied to the Stoic notion of natural law. In one of his speeches, Cicero argues that natural law enabled the emergence of mankind from its early

---

[184] Cic. *Par. Stoic*. 27. Cicero often presented *humanitas* as the difference between primitive, ill-ordered societies with brutish concerns and brutish habits and those where unity, justice and order prevailed, *Rep*. 2.27; *Off*. 1.90; 3.32; *Part. Or*. 90; *De Or*. 1.33; *Leg*. 2.36; Mitchell (1991:38).

[185] Schofield (1995:72).

[186] Cic. *Off*. 1.15, 20-49, 153-159, 2.38-43.

[187] Cic. *Inv*. 2.160.

lawlessness and savagery to a state of civilization,[188] while in *De Legibus* he suggests that the part of the law of nature applicable *only* to human beings concerns itself primarily with justice.[189] Moral obligations of natural justice involve four major duties: not to injure others without cause, to respect private and common property, to fulfill obligations for which our word has been pledged, and to be kind and generous.[190] These duties concern standards of behaviour pertaining to the preservation of human society, and demand that each individual respects the interests of his fellow citizens. Cicero stresses repeatedly that the duties closest to Nature are those that safeguard human interests and that nothing should be viewed as more sacred than concern for the welfare of our fellow men.[191] In *De Legibus*, Cicero goes one step further and treats Natural law as a supra-legal sanction to which every law in force ought to conform. He argues that civil law (*lex civilis*), the statutory and customary law of any state and people, should conform to the universal ethical principles of the law of nature — if it fails to do so, by definition it is not a true law.[192] Unsurprisingly, Cicero repeatedly asserts that the laws and traditions of Rome are true laws as they can indeed be identified with Stoic natural law.[193] True humanity, therefore, is found through subjection to the laws of Rome, and whoever disobeys these laws disobeys in fact the

---

[188] In his speech on behalf of P. Sextius in 56 (91-2), Cicero stated: "Before the appearance of natural law or civil law, there was no settled order. But mankind was teachable, and wise men (the Stoics) brought people from savagery to justice and mildness. First came divine and human law, then communal public institutions, and finally states and cities. The difference between savagery and a life refined by humanity (*vitam perpolitam humanitate*) is the difference between violence and law (*ius*). If violence is to be eliminated, law must prevail, and so must the courts on which law depends."

[189] Cic. *Leg*. 1.19-23; Wood (1988:73).

[190] Cic. *Off*. 1.15, 20, 23, 42-45; Wood (1988:72); Wright (1995:184).

[191] Cic. *Off*. 1.153. Even that which would usually be considered as a virtue, like the pursuit of knowledge, or courage, if not applied for the interest of the preservation of human society, becomes unproductive or, in the case of courage, brutal and savage, 1.157.

[192] Cic. *Leg*. 2.13. Cicero refers to true law as "right reason squared with nature" (*Leg*. 1.28, 3.33), "the beginning of justice" (*Leg*. 1.18), and the supreme mind (*mens*) of God and divine wisdom (*Leg*. 2.8.10); Wright (1995:189).

[193] Cic. *Leg*. 1.22.58, 2.24.61-2; *Rep*. 3.22.33. Roman Stoics often equated natural law with traditional institutions; Rubellius Plautus, for example, "respected the maxims of old generations" in the strictness of his household, Tac. *Ann*. 14.57.3. Also Seneca admired *mores antiqui,* finding in them the secret of Roman greatness, Sen. *Tranq*. 9.2.

law of Nature and with that "rejects the nature of man."[194]

In the subjection to these very laws is also the essence of the Roman idea of *libertas*, which primarily denoted the status of a *liber*, that is, a person who was not a slave subjected to the mastery (*dominium*) of another person.[195] In the Roman world, those who were legally deprived of *libertas* were also deprived of the status of human being: in Roman law, a slave was property, a mere "thing" (*res*) with no share in justice (*alieni iuris*) and as such dehumanised and animalised.[196] Indeed, several Roman jurists state explicitly, in one context or another, that slaves have no *persona*.[197] This is not to suggest, of course, that the absence of *dominatio* was the only requirement for *libertas*. To be 'free' was to be subject to the law and the central notion inherent in every law is that of restraint; in the Roman mind, the lack of such restraint was a sure path to equally dehumanising licence (*licentia*).[198] By the same token, a liberated slave did not become 'free' by the removal of *dominatio*, but only by virtue of being subjected to the constraints of law and by being given the same share in justice as any other free citizen, irrespective of class.[199] This is further exemplified by the fact that, for Romans, *libertas* was an acquired *civic right* and not

---

[194] Cic. *Rep*. 3.22.33. See also J. Ferrary (1995), 'The Statesman and the Law in the Political Philosophy of Cicero,' in A. Laks and M. Schofield (eds.), *Justice and Generosity: Studies in Hellenistic Social and Political Philosophy, Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium Hellenisticum,* Cambridge, 48-73, p. 69.

[195] Gai. *Inst*. 1.52; *Dig*. 1.5.4.1, 1.6.1; C. Wirszubski (1968), *Libertas as a Political Idea at Rome During the Late Republic and Early Principate*, Cambridge, p. 1.

[196] In Roman law, slaves and cattle fell into the same category. The jurist Gaius, for example, commenting in the early 6th century on *Lex Aquilia* (passed around the third century BC) states, "It thus appears that the statute treats equally (*exaequat*) our slaves and our four-footed cattle (*quadrapedes*) which are kept in herds, as are sheep, goats, horses, mules and asses," *Dig*. 9.2.2.2; Finley (1980:99); Bradley (2000:111).

[197] There is a text in the *Novellae* of Theodosius (17.1.2) which explains a slave's incapacity to take part in legal procedures by the fact that he has no *persona* (*quasi nec personam habentes*). There are also two texts by Theophilius (*Ad. In*. 2.14.2, 3.17.) in which he explains that a slave has only the derivative power of being instituted an heir, again because he has no *persona.* See also, W. W. Buckland (1970), *The Roman Law of Slavery: The Condition of the Slave in Private Law from Augustus to Justinian,* Cambridge, pp. 3-6. The inferiority of the Roman slave, his loss of humanity, as Bradley observes, was complete and unqualified, K. R. Bradley (1988), 'Roman Slavery and Roman Law,' *Historical Reflections*, 477-495, p. 494.

[198] See Cic. *Rep*. 3.45 and below at n.208-209.

[199] "We are slaves to the law in order that we may be free," Cic. *Cluent*. 146. By being equally binding to all, patricians and plebeians, Roman laws were ensuring that genuine *libertas* could be enjoyed (*aequa libertas*), Livy, 38, 50.4ff; Cic. *Rep*. 1.47; Tac. *Dial*. 40; C. Wirszubski (1968:7-9).

the innate property or right of every man:[200]

> …full *libertas* is coterminous with *civitas.* A Roman's *libertas* and his *civitas* both denote the same thing, only that each does it from a different point of view and with emphasis on a different aspect: *libertas* signifies in the first place the status of an individual as such, whereas *civitas* denotes primarily the status of an individual in relation to the community. Only a Roman citizen enjoys all the rights, personal and political, that constitute *libertas*….If then the *libertas* of a Roman is conditioned by his *civitas*, the amount of freedom a Roman citizen possesses depends upon the entire political structure of the Roman state. In Rome ― as elsewhere ― the freedom of the citizen and the internal freedom of the state are in fact only different aspects of the same thing.

Here is the reason, Wirszubski argues, why the manumission of a slave in the Roman world was necessarily followed by granting him/her citizenship: "had manumission affected merely a release from the *dominica potestas,* the slave would become a *res nullus*, not a free man, because to be free means to be a member of the civic body."[201]

   The conditions of Roman *libertas* were also political and, should these be seen as lacking, one's perceived status in relation to the government would be regarded as incompatible with it, irrespective of one's legal, social and economic status. Romans of Cicero's age dated the acquisition of Roman political *libertas* from the abolition of the monarchy, which they regarded as *servitum*, and as a result fully identified this *libertas* with the republican constitution.[202] Cicero presented this constitution in *De Re Publica* as the *only* political arrangement that could, in the long run, guarantee *libertas* to its citizens. In Book 1 Cicero writes, "Every *res publica* which as I have said is the *res* of the *populus*, must be ruled with a certain amount of policy/deliberation (*consilium*) if it is to attain any permanence."[203] As a model of a constitution that could ensure this permanence, Cicero adopted Polybius's 'mixed constitution,' or a balanced combination of the basic forms of monarchy, aristocracy and democracy and argued that this model is the most stable, a device for protecting the status quo by preventing both "tyranny from below," the rule of

---

[200] Wirszubski (1968:3-4).

[201] Wirszubski (1968:3). For a good discussion of Roman citizenship see, E. Dench (2005), *Romulus's Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian*, Oxford, pp. 93-151.

[202] Livy. 1.17.3, 2.15.3; Sall. *Cat*. 7.2-3; Cic. *Flac*. 25; Tac. *Ann*. 1.1.1; *Hist*. 1.16; Wirszubski (1968:5).

[203] Cic. *Rep*. 1.41.

the licentious masses, and "tyranny from above," brought on by the corruption of the monarchy or aristocracy.[204] Simple constitutions, Cicero argued, easily degenerate into their opposite; monarchy tends to descend into tyranny, which destroys the human community (3.43):

> Ergo illam rem populi,
> id es rem publicam, quis diceret tum, cum crudeli-
> tate unius opressi essent universi, neque esset unum
> vinculum iuris nec consensus ac societas coetus, quo
> est populus?

> Therefore, how could that be called "the property of the people," (*res populi*) which is what commonwealth (*res publica*) means? For all were oppressed by the cruelty of one, and there was no bond of justice whatever, nor any agreement in partnership amongst those gathered together, though that is part of the definition of a people (*populus*) (trans. C. W. Keyes, p. 219).

Under tyranny, the *populus* is deprived of justice and *libertas* and thus ceases to exist as such, becoming instead a multitude of subhuman slaves who are no longer able to comprise that which might be characterised as a human community.[205] Excessive power in the hands of aristocrats leads to the same servitude as that suffered under a single tyrant and is therefore discounted on the same grounds.[206] Laelius acted as a spokesman against the "power of the multitude," which he saw as the tyranny of the irrational subhuman masses or, as he put it, of a tyrannical beast dissimulating as a *populus* (3.45):

> …non video, qui magis in multitu-
> dinis dominatu rei publicae nomen appareat, quia
> primum mihi populus non est, ut tu optime definisti,
> Scipio, nisi qui consensu iuris continetur, sed est tam
> tyrannus iste conventus, quam si esset unus hoc etiam

---

[204] Cic. *Rep*. 1.45, 53, 2.55-56, 69; *Leg*. 3.5.8, 10, 11, 24, 28; Poly. *Hist*. 4. See also Plato, *Laws*. 3-4; Arist. *Pol*. 1293a-1295b, 1318b-1319a; Poly. *Hist*. 4; Wood (1988:751); Mitchell (1991:52); E. Asmis (2005), 'A New Kind of Model: Cicero's Roman Constitution in *De Re Publica*,' *AJP* 126, 377-416.

[205] Cic. *Rep*. 1.50.

[206] Cic. *Rep*. 1.68.

> taetrior, quia nihil ista, quae populi speciem et nomen
>
> imitatur, immanius belua est.

> I cannot see how the name of commonwealth (*res publica*) would be any more applicable to the despotism of the multitude. For in the first place people exist only when the individuals who form it are held together by a partnership in justice, according to your excellent definition, Scipio. But such a gathering as you have just mentioned is just as surely a tyrant as if it were a single person, and an even more cruel tyrant, because there can be nothing more horrible than that monster which falsely assumes the name of the people (*populus*) (trans. C. W. Keyes, p. 223).

Scipio described the subversion of social and political hierarchies in such societies as reaching the point where men are obliged to give way to animals,[207] and then goes on to describe the birth of tyranny "from such an untamed or rather savage populace" (*ex hoc populo indomito vel potius immani*).[208] The adjectives *immanis ac ferus* are instructive, since they characterises the irrational part of the soul once it is left to itself.[209] Laelius confirms that under such conditions there can be no *res publica*, because the licentious mob is not a *populus* but a destructive mass with no common respect for justice.[210] With every 'pure' political system being discounted, Cicero leaves us with a Roman system of elected aristocracy as the only proper form of government for ruling human beings.[211]

Cicero's true government is composed of individuals superior in *virtus* ruling over the rest, and he saw this arrangement as ordained by Nature and necessary for humanity to flourish: a human being, after all, is the product of a situation in which the best, the mind and reason, rules

---

[207] Cic. *Rep*. 1.67, "And in abundance of liberty even the dogs, the horses, and asses are so free in their running about that men must make way for them in the streets" *(inque tanta libertate canes etiam et equi, aselli denique liberi sic incurrant, ut iis de via decendum sit)*.

[208] Cic. *Rep*. 1.66. In 1.9 the "common herd" is described as "insane and untamed" (*insanos atque indomitos*).

[209] Cic. *Div*. 1.60; *Rep.* 1.59.60, 3.36-7; Ferrary (1995:48-73).

[210] Cic. *Rep*. 3.45; Cicero had nothing but contempt for the "uncontrolled freedom and license" of Greek assemblies dominated by "artisans, shopkeepers, and all that scum," *Flacc*. 15-18; *Rep*. 43, 53; *Leg*. 3.44; Schofield (1995:72); P. A. Brunt (1988), *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Related Essays,* Oxford, p. 325.

[211] Cic. *Rep*. 1.51. As early as in the *Verrines* (70 BC), Cicero was arguing that the *res publica* could best be defended by the *consilium* of the senate. See also *Phil*. 3.34, 4.14; *Dom*. 102; *Sest*. 97.

the worst, the irrational passions.[212] A government's domination over its subjects, Cicero argued, is of two aspects: (1) as the mind governs the body, which he equates to a king's rule over his subjects or a father's over his children, and (2) as reason rules the passions, which he equates to a master's rule over his slaves.[213] Cicero held that both of these aspects of domination could potentially be found in the rule of one individual and, provided that the king was a creature of reason, argued that kingship was probably the best single form of government: the early Romans, he asserts, were turned away from their savagery by King Numa's reforms.[214] But like any other political system in its 'pure' unmixed form, a monarchy could easily degenerate into tyranny and so was not a feasible long-term option. Cicero claimed that one of the reasons for the longevity (and potential immortality) of the republican constitution was that the magistrates did not rule in their own name but subordinated their individual identity to their roles as representatives of the state: it was the place of a magistrate, he argued, "to bear in mind that he represents the state (*se gerere personam civitatus*) and that it is his duty to uphold its honour and its dignity."[215] Cicero here affirms that magistrates bear in themselves the character or *persona* of the state or, as Wood has observed, that "the public office carries with it the *persona* or mask of state authority," and each of the magistrates wears this same *persona*, losing their individual identity in a single

---

[212] A distinction between the highest and most distinguished individuals and the lowest and meanest ones, Cicero wrote, is necessary in every people: "nature has provided not only that those men who are superior in virtue and in spirit (*animo*) should rule the weaker (*imbecillioribus*), but also that the weaker should be willing to obey the stronger," *Rep*. 1.51-3, 3.34-38. Here Cicero expressed a view common among the Roman elite who were accustomed to justifying their superior position by pointing to their superior morals and their capacity for self-control. This capacity, they claimed, legitimated the control they exercised over others who were, it was implied, unable to control themselves. For more detail on this, see Edwards (1993:25).

[213] Cic. *Rep*. 3.38.

[214] Cicero described Numa's introduction of religion as motivated by a desire to turn the warlike Romans from savagery to "humanity and gentleness" (*quibus rebus institutes ad humanitatem atque mansuetudinem revocavit animos hominum studiis bellandi iam immanis ac feros…*), *Rep*. 2.27. Cicero had Scipio argue that kingship is probably the best single form of government, and the argument he particularly emphasised is that everything in the universe is ruled by the authority of one, and most importantly, as he forced Laelius to concede, the different parts of a human's mind should all be ruled by one single force: reason, *Rep*. 1.54-60.

[215] Cic. *De Off*. 3.60.

common role or function.[216] In this function, magistrates provide guidance and the necessary restraining force over the irrational elements in the masses as well as a model of humanity for the masses to emulate (1.52):

> Virtute vero gubernante rem publicam
> quid potest esse praeclarius, cum is, qui inperat
> aliis, servit ipse nulli cupiditati, cum, quas ad res
> civis instituit et vocat, eas omnis complexus est ipse
> nec leges imponit populo, quibis ipse non pareat,
> sed suam vitam ut legem praefert suis civibus.

> But what can be nobler than the government of the state by virtue? For then the man who rules others is not himself a slave to any passion, but has already acquired for himself all those qualities to which he is training and summoning his fellows. Such a man imposes no laws upon the people that he does not obey himself, but puts his own life before his fellow citizens as their law (trans. C. W. Keyes, p. 79).

The true statesmen of *De Re Publica* are men in whom reason rules supreme while the passions obey, and the authority they exercise over the *populus* is merely an outward projection of their inner self-control. In *De Legibus*, Cicero describes magistrates as ruling the people "as the law of nature rules them"; they are the embodiment and expression of the supreme law, or "the law speaking," while the law is "a silent magistrate" (*magistratum leges esse loquentem legem autem mutum magistratum*).[217] These men realise their humanity by means of education, self-interrogation and self-reflection and, unlike those whom they govern, they are able to find the divine laws of justice within themselves.[218] The duty of these men is to serve as a governing class and tame the animals within people's souls, that "fierce beast" which, as Cicero often wrote,

---

[216] Wood (1988:135-6). Referring to his post in Sicily, Cicero relapsed into theatrical analogy and said, "While I carried out my duties of quaestor of the province of Sicily I felt all men's eyes directed upon me and me only. I fancied myself and my office staged in a theatre where the entire world was my audience," *Verr*. 2.5.35.

[217] Cic. *Leg*. 3.1.3. Cicero also defined law as "the mind and reason of prudent man," 1.19, or "the reason and mind of the wise applied to command and prohibition," 2.18; Wood (1988:135-6); Colish (1990:100).

[218] Cic. *Rep*. 3.28, *Off*. 1.81, Mitchell (1991:17); A. A. Long (1991), 'Representation and the Self in Stoicism,' in S. Everson (ed.), *Companion to Ancient Thought 2: Psychology,* Cambridge, 102-120, p. 117.

is in all humans and is opposed to reason.[219] Indeed, in the second book of *De Re Publica*, Scipio explicitly equates the governing of people with the taming of a large animal (2.67):

> Sed tamen ist ille prudens, qui…immani et vastae insidens
> beluae coercet et regit beluam quocumque vult
> et levi admonitu aut tactu inflectit illam feram….
> at vero ea, quae latet in animis hominum
> uaeque pars animi mens vocatur, non unam aut
> facilem ad subigendum frenat et domat, si quando
> id efficit, quod perraro potest. namque et illa
> tenenda est ferox…

> And yet he is a wise man too who rides on a huge and monstrous beast…and guides this animal in whatever direction in whatever way he wishes with a gentle word or touch… but that power which is hidden in men's minds and forms part of them, and is called reason, controls and subdues not merely one animal, or one which is easily mastered — that is, if it ever accomplish that which is rarely possible; for that fierce [beast] also must be held in check… (trans. C. W. Keyes, p. 181).

'To subjugate the wild beast,' in this passage, is to achieve in society "a harmony (*concentus*) which is produced by the agreement (*consensus*) of the upper, lower and middle classes, like musical tones."[220] The consensus mentioned here is a consensus in respect to justice (*iuris consensus…sociatus*) because, as Cicero states only a few lines below, without justice true harmony between these disparate elements can never be achieved.[221] But the humanising role of such men consists not only of their ability to coerce, but also their ability to inspire people to emulate them. A passage in *De Re Publica* describes this in terms of a statesman's humanity 'shining out' and humanising the masses simply by virtue of being displayed in front of them: as the people observe the statesman and the brilliance of his image, Cicero states, the citizens perceive the inner humanity, the true self of every man, and recognise it in their own souls.[222]

---

[219] Cic. *Rep*. 1.45, 2.45, 2.67-68.

[220] Cic. *Rep*. 2.69-70.

[221] Cic. *Rep*. 2.69.

[222] Cic. *Rep*. 6.26; *Leg*. 1.58-62; Ferrary (1995:65).

It is clear that Cicero did not admit the possibility of a truly human existence under any political system apart from that of the Roman Republic, or at least not in the long run. This system depended for its long-term survival on the very thing that was behind its creation, men of *virtus*, and Cicero emphasised time and again that it is impossible have a well constituted state without its elite being men of the highest moral standards.[223] Should the moral standards decline among this group, they would decline throughout the whole state; in *De Legibus*, for example, he insisted that "whatever change took place in the lives of the prominent men has also taken place in the whole people" (*quaecumque mutatio morum in principibus extiterit, eandem in populo secutam*).[224] Cicero argued that in olden days men relied less on laws or virtuous leaders to restrain their 'beasts within,' because their own sense of shame (*verecundia*) and their concern for the opinion of their wider society was sufficient to effect such restraint (*Rep*. 5.6):

> Nec vero tam metu poenaque terrentur, quae est
> constituta legibus, quam verecundia, quam natura
> homini dedit quasi quendam vituperationis non
> iniustae timorem…ut pudor civis non minus a delictis
> arceret quam metus. Atque huaec quidem ad laudem
> pertinent.

> Nor indeed are they deterred from crime so much by the fear of the penalties ordained by law as by the sense of shame which Nature has given to men in the form of a certain fear of justified censure…shame deters the citizens from crime no less effectively than fear. The same applies, indeed to the love of praise (trans. C. W. Keyes, p. 251).

There is no one so wild, Cicero wrote elsewhere, as not to be greatly moved, if not by desire for those things honourable in themselves, than by fear of reproach and dishonour (*nemo est enim tam agrestis, quem non, si ipsa honesta minus, contumelia tamen et dedecus magnopere*

---

[223] For example, *Rep*. 5.7.

[224] Cic. *Leg*. 3.31. "Few men, on account of their official position and great reputation, have the power either to corrupt the morals of the nation or to reform them" (*pauci enim atque admodum pauci honore et gloria amplificati vel corumpere mores civitatis vel corrigere possunt*), 3.32.

moveat).[225] While the Romans of his day still largely feared these things, the problem, as Cicero saw it, was that they had lost any sense of what true honour, praise and glory entailed. The imaginary settings for the dialogues of *De Re Publica* and *De Legibus* belonged to a distant past when the Roman state's humanising role was still being performed. Cicero considered this no longer the case: the Roman state of his day was a dysfunctional shadow of its former self, with a largely dehumanised citizen body. Nevertheless, the dehumanisation, as he saw it, was not complete, and the state was still divided into human and subhuman realms. On the level of the *populus,* the division was between the human 'true People' (*verus populus*) and the subhuman rowdy mob (*peculiaris populus*), while on the elite level the divide was between the human preservers of the state and 'beasts' bent on destroying the human community.

<div align="center">

V

Cicero, Sallust and the Rhetoric of Animality

The war with beasts and human outlaws who make beasts of themselves
is fundamental to civil human order.
S. Clark, *Good and Bad Ethology*.

To what fate of mine, Conscript Fathers, shall I say it is due,
that no one in the last twenty years has been an enemy of the state
who did not at the same time also declare war on me.
Cicero, *Philippics*.

The commonwealth of Athens is become a forest of beasts.
W. Shakespeare, *Timon*.

</div>

---

[225] Cic. *Part. Or*. 23.79, 26.91-92. Cicero was here describing what was widely regarded as the critical functions of shame, *fama* and *rumor* in Roman society to act as the custodians of the *mores* of the citizens. Plutarch also wrote, "The Romans did not think it proper that anyone should be left free to follow his personal preferences and appetites…without a large measure of surveillance and review." For this reason, he observes, Romans had an office of censor who was given "the right to enquire into the lives and manners of the citizens…to watch, regulate and punish any tendency to licentiousness or voluptuous habits and departures from the customary way of living," Plut. *Cato Maior* 16.1-2. See also, Livy, 10.9.6; Tac. *Ann*. 2.85; C. A. Barton (2001), *Roman Honour: The Fire in the Bones,* Berkeley, p. 20.

During the late Republic, there was a widespread belief among the Romans that they had realised their inherent capabilities for perfection during the time of their ancestors but that they had been declining ever since. Roman writers usually blamed the Greek influence and influx of riches for the perversion of Roman *natura* and the abandonment of ancestral customs (*mos maiorum*); once it had lost its currency, *mos maiorum* was no longer able to shape men of *virtus,* while men without *virtus* lacked the will to live by and maintain the ancestral customs.[226] Cicero and Sallust lamented the loss of ancient virtuous simplicity and the widespread indulgence in luxury and sensual pleasures and would often warn that these practices were incompatible with *virtus*. Because their idea of *virtus* was all-inclusive, involving human and ethical excellence as well as 'manliness,'[227] they conceptualised its loss not only in terms of the Romans going 'soft' or 'feminine,' but also in terms of them crossing over onto the animal side of the human-animal boundary. In his two monographs, *Bellum Catilinae* and *Bellum Iugurthinum,* Sallust used *virtus* in both the ethical and martial sense, but used the former in his prologues and the latter in the narrative sections.[228] The result of this strategy was that the prologues portrayed the loss of *virtus* in explicitly dehumanising terms, which then aided his subsequent argument that the martial *virtus*, commonly regarded as responsible for Roman greatness, had done more evil than good in the contemporary Roman Republic.[229] *Bellum Catilinae* contains perhaps the most explicit analysis of the republican crisis in such terms, and Sallust opens this work with a general outline of some of the basic differences between humans and non-rational animals (1.1-3):

> Omnis hominess qui sese student praestare
> ceteris animalibus summa ope niti decet ne vitam

---

[226] See, for example, Livy, 31.25.4-5; Cic. *Rep*. 5.1. For others, see C. Edwards (1993:24-33, 173-206).

[227] The latter meaning was borrowed from the Greek *arête*, which allowed Cicero and Sallust to directly contrast *virtus* with a host of other vices. In Sallust, these include *ambitio* (*BC*. 52.22); *audacia* (*BC*. 33); *luxuria* and *avaritia* (*BC*. 52.22). McDonnell observes that in *De Re Publica*, Cicero uses the figure of M. Cato as a transitional figure from martial to ethical *virtus*: Cato had a reputation for martial *virtus* but was also known for championing *virtus* against *voluptas,* which he regarded as a threat to the martial spirit of the Romans and also as a contributing factor to the greed and laxity of Roman office holders. See W. Eisenhut (1973), *Virtus Romana*, Munich, pp. 64-71; McDonnell (2006:330, 338-339). See also P. A. Brunt (1982), '*Nobilitas* and *Novitas,' JRS* 72, 1-17; D. R. Shackleton Bailey (1986), '*Nobiles* and *Novi* Reconsidered,' *AJP* 107, 255-260.

[228] McDonnell (2006:356).

[229] McDonnell (2006:374).

silentio transeant veluti pecora, quae natura prona

atque ventri oboedientia finxit. Sed nostra omnis

vis in animo et corpore sita est; animi imperio, cor-

poris servito magis utimur; alterum nobis cum dis,

alterum cum beluis commune est.

It behooves all men who wish to excel other animals to strive with might and main not to pass through life unheralded, like the beasts, which Nature has fashioned grovelling and slaves to the belly. All our power on the contrary lies in both the mind and body; we employ mind to rule the body rather than to serve; the one we have in common with the Gods, the other with the brutes (trans. J. C. Rolfe, p. 3).

In the lines that immediately follow this, Sallust proceeded to condemn the immoralities of his age; after the destruction of Carthage, he argues, people started to disregard modesty and chastity, becoming thoughtless and reckless and neglecting everything that is human and divine (…*pudorem, pudicitiam, divina atque humana promiscua*, 12.2). Such disregard, he concluded, caused them to become the "basest of creatures" (12.5). Sulla features as a major contributor to this sad state of affairs; while campaigning in the East, he encouraged greed among Roman soldiers, made them engage in the impious behaviour of stripping temples (11.6) and allowed them to indulge in the luxury typical of Asia.[230] Upon their return, this 'Asianisation' spread and weakened the moral fibre (*animos molliverant,* 11.5) of citizens previously known for their *virtus*.[231] With the dehumanisation inevitably came *dissimulatio*: "ambition made many men to become false; to have one thought locked in the breast, another ready on the tongue; to value friendships and enmities not on their merits but by the standards of self-interest, and to show a good front rather than a good heart" (*ambitio multos mortalis…subegit…magis…voltum quam ingenium bonum habere,* 10.5).[232] What was urgently needed, Sallust argued, was re-humanisation: a re-learning of how to employ the resources of the intellect as opposed to beastly strength (1.4), and the abandonment of slavish sensual pleasures by cultivating good morals and

---

[230] J. R. Dunkle (1971), 'The Rhetorical Tyrant in Roman Historiography: Sallust, Livy and Tacitus,' *CW* 65, 12-20, p. 16; Boyd (1987:187).

[231] Boyd (1987:188).

[232] Sall. *Catil*. 10.5.

justice in society (9.1).[233]

The vices Sallust outlines as the most prevalent among Romans are also worth noting for their dehumanising overtones. The vices are those characteristic of a tyrant: avarice (*avaritia*), force (*vis*),[234] arrogance (*superbia*), lust (*libido*)[235] and cruelty (*crudelitas*).[236] The concept of tyranny signified to the Romans all that it signified to the Greeks: autocracy, the characteristic psychology of personality, as well as that typical manner of inhuman behaviour marked by a total lack of morality.[237] The Romans denied to tyrants (real or imagined) the status of a human being,[238] and Sallust's claim that the Romans were guilty of those vices which usually characterised tyrants clearly represents an additional claim that the Roman society of his age was largely dehumanised. The crux of Sallust's argument in *Bellum Catilinae* is that it is only in such a dehumanised state that ambitious and ruthless rebels like Catiline can muster support, and in

---

[233] Corbeill (2004:155). Perhaps, as McDonnell (2006:374) has observed, Sallust identified *virtus* with mental ability in order to equate his task as a historian with the renown traditionally won by serving in war, in order to suggest that an historian can also serve the state; Eisenhut (1973:56).

[234] *Vis* denotes the force a tyrant must employ to gain and hold power. Superbus, according to Livy, had no right to the kingship beyond the force he employed (1.49.3). See also, Cic. *Off.* 2.24.

[235] *Libido* refers to more than just 'lust': it also signifies a despotic caprice that characterises rule according to the desire of one man. "In the Roman mind, *libido* represents everything that was opposed to the principles of the Republican government. The opposite of *libido* was *lex*, the law which formed the basis of the republican government," Dunkle (1971:168).

[236] Sall. *BC*: *superbia* (2.5), *crudelitas et superbia* (10.4), *libido* (*BJ* 31.2.8), *vis* (31.25); Dunkle (1971:15-16); R. Sklenar (1998), 'La Republique des Signes: Caesar, Cato and the Language of Sallustian Morality,' *TAPhA* 128, 205-220, pp. 207-211.

[237] "The psychological basis of tyranny is…the appetite…it is a brutal and lawless appetite — the lust of the flesh and pride of power — which man has in common with beasts," Barker in Dunkle (1971:154). See *Her.* 3.80.5; Euripides, *Supp.* 426-55. The Romans had adopted the figure of a tyrant in political invective at least by the time of Tiberius Gracchus; Plutarch reports that Scipio Nasica called Tiberius *tyrannos* during his tribunate in 133 BC, *Tib. Gracch.* 19.3. The words *tyrannus, tyrannis*, and *tyranicus* were used in Rome interchangeably with the Latin words *rex, dominus, regnum* and *dominatio* to refer to the Roman despot, most often during the last decades of the Republic, with the rise of powerful individuals such as Caesar; see J. R. Dunkle (1967), 'The Greek Tyrant and Roman Political Invective of the Late Republic,' *TAPhA* 98, 151-171, p. 152, n. 3. See also S. Forsdyke (2009), 'The Uses and Abuses of Tyranny,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Chichester, 231-246.

[238] See below, at n. 263.

this he clearly recalls the account in Plato's *Republic* of the various directions the life of a tyrannical man can take, depending solely upon which type of city he lives in. In the 'oligarchic' city, Plato stated, the tyrannical man leads the life of the idle rich, of a beggar or a criminal (552b-d); in the democratic city, he is a politician or a traveller (564b-565c), but only in a tyrannical city are the conditions right for him to become an actual tyrant.[239] In *Bellum Catilinae*, Sallust clearly presents Rome as just such a tyrannical city, a place that provides the right conditions and many opportunities for the career of a potential tyrant to flourish.

Cicero's treatment of Roman dehumanisation is somewhat more complex and varied, but I wish to start with *Tusculans*, where Cicero placed his concerns over the Roman 'fall from nature' within a Platonic frame of reference. In the *Republic*, Plato represented the difference between those human beings who had enjoyed a proper upbringing and education in the state and those who had not by using his famous cave allegory (514a). This allegory was meant to illustrate that only the former gain an understanding of the true world of being and can thus strive towards the true good, while the latter remain shackled in a world of darkness and shadows. This notion of two worlds, one of appearance and falsehood and another of substance and truth, is behind the strings of metaphors Cicero uses to describe the sorry state of affairs in contemporary Rome. For example, Gildenhard has observed great similarities between the preface of *Tusculans* 3 where Cicero described a variety of potentially corrupting influences that human beings may face from n early age onwards and Plato's *Republic* 491a-95b, where Plato described the gradual corruption of the Guardian class by the temptations of power.[240] According to Cicero, young people become corrupted first under the influence of their parents, teachers and even poets. Because they often hold false beliefs, under their instruction the truth (*veritas*) is replaced by untruth (*vanitas*), so that a genuine education is impossible to acquire; all that is acquired is a "grandiose semblance of learning and wisdom" (*magna species doctrinae sapientiaeque, Tusc*. 3.2). With such a lack of foundations, the young Roman would become extremely susceptible to a mistaken belief that "for a human being nothing is better, more desirable or more important than public offices (*honores*), military commands (*imperium*) and popular acclaim (*popularis Gloria, Tusc*. 2.3). Cicero saw this belief as well entrenched among the aristocrats who now spent their lives pursuing false goods, in the process making their country and their very selves false:

---

[239] See Blösner (2007:375).

[240] Gildenhard (2007:182).

Ad quam fertur optimus quisque, veramque
illam honestatem expetens, quam unam natura
maxime anquirit, in summa inanitate versartur con-
sectaturque nullam eminentem effigiem virtutis, sed
adumbratam imaginem gloriae. Est enim gloria
sollida quaedam res et expressa, non adumbrata; ea est
consentiens laus bonorum, incorupta vox bene iudi-
cantium de excellenti virtute, ea virtuti resonat
tamquam imago: quae quia recte factorum plerumque
comes est, non est bonis viris repudianda; illa autem,
quae se eius imitatricem esse vult, temeraria atque
incosiderata et plerumque peccatorum vitiorumque
laudatrix, fama popularis, simulatione honestatis for-
mam eius pulcritudinemque corrumpit.

It is to this that all the noblest are attracted, and in their quest for the true honour which alone is the object of nature's eager search, they find themselves where all is vanity, and strain to win no lofty image of virtue, but a shadowy phantom of glory. For true glory is a thing of real substance and clearly wrought, no shadowy phantom; it is the agreed approval of good men, the unbiased verdict of judges deciding honestly the question of pre-eminent merit; it gives back to virtue the echo of her voice; and as it generally attends upon duties rightly performed it is not to be disdained by good men. The other kind of glory, however, which claims to be a copy of the true, is headstrong and thoughtless; and generally lends its support to faults and errors; it is public reputation, which perverts through imitation the fair beauty of true honour (trans. J. E. King, p. 229).

Gildenhard has noticed in this section an interesting overlap of Platonic ontology and Cicero's Roman sociology. Cicero has adopted Plato's idea of two degrees of being: the ideal forms, which can only be perceived in the mind, and their material manifestations, which we can see or hear. In regards to empirically observable reality, Cicero has used the terms *effigies* and *forma* (representation and form) which resemble ideal types, but the problem, as Cicero saw it, is that most men choose to pursue the 'false' version of each: instead of an "outstanding

representation of excellence" (*eminens effigies virtutis*), they try to obtain a "shadowy image of glory" (*adumbrata imago gloriae*). Their perception of glory is confused because true glory "is something solid not shadowy" (*solida…non adumbrata*). Cicero did not dismiss the concepts of *gloria*, but insisted on their right conception, and Gildenhard is correct to observe that in the passage above, Cicero aimed simultaneously for ontological perfection and social consensus; true glory "is the agreed approval of good men, the unbiased verdict of judges deciding honestly the question of pre-eminent merit." Cicero believed that the indiscriminate pursuit of false glory (*fama popularis*) had made the state false: in *De Officiis* he describes this in the same Platonic terms: "we possess no substantial, life-like image of true Law and genuine Justice; a mere outline sketch is all that we enjoy" (*Sed nos veri iuris germanaeque iustitiae solidam et expressam effigiem nullam tenemus, umbra et imaginibus utimus,* 3.69). If justice in the state is 'false' then the state itself is false, and at this stage the revolt from nature is complete and "everyone is within the world of shadows, seeming and make believe."[241] Having lost every sense of what constitutes true praise and true glory in their persistent pursuit of the 'false,' the Romans have turned the Roman Republic into a 'false state,' or a state only in form but entirely deprived of substance.[242]

This notion of the "dissimulating state," which necessarily involves the general *dissimulatio* of its dehumanised citizens, will repeatedly recur as this discussion progresses; in Cicero, this notion largely describes his own time, while the imperial *nobiles* avoided such a suggestion only by the most strenuous of ideological efforts. In *De Re Publica*, Cicero traced the roots of this malady to the tribunate of Tiberius Gracchus or to the 'split' that he caused in the state during his days as tribune. In the first book, Laelius states that Tiberius's tribunate "has divided a single people into two parts" (*divisit populum unum in duas partis*), so that now there are "two senates and virtually two peoples in a single state" (*in una re publica duo senatus et duo paene iam populi*).[243] In the Senate, this division resulted from Tiberius's perceived defiance and disregard for it, while in the *populus*, the split was the outcome of only one of its sections supporting Tiberius's self-serving proposals. This division is essentially between the 'true' and 'false' in each; the Senate was divided between true and false humans, the *populus* along the

---

[241] Gildenhard (2007:177).

[242] Cic. *Off.* 2. 1-6, 23-29, 3.4, 83-85; *Rep.* 5.2. Suetonius reports that Caesar commented that the Republic was a contentless artefact — an *imago sine re*, Suet. *Jul.* 77.

[243] Cic. *Rep.* 1.31-32.

same lines. In *De Officiis*, we might remember, Tiberius is a prime example of a dissembling politician and a direct opposite to the virtuous statesman who is 'what he seems.' The true statesman pursues true glory (*vera gloria*) or the "consensus of good men," while Tiberius opted for the shadowy and false *gloria popularis*, or the consensus of the masses. Cicero often speaks of the masses as an irrational rowdy mob (*peculiaris populus*) in contrast to the 'true People' (*verus populus*), but the former group is not necessarily such; rather, they have ceased being the *verus populus* through their support of men like Tiberius.[244] Cicero often lamented that such men are referred to as *populares* ("friends of the people") while they only "hypocritically and deceptively" (*ficte et fallaciter*) pose as such; 'true' *populares,* he insists, are men like himself (*boni*), concerned for the *salus* of the *populus*.[245] Supporting false *populares* renders people 'false' because they become accessories in the rebellion against the state and its institutions and thus against the law of Nature. Supporting *boni* makes the *populus* 'true,' it makes them human and 'good men' and their consensus confers true glory on a true statesman.

By Cicero's time, the original division in the state and the ensuing struggle had seen the 'false' triumph over the true; the majority of men now pursued false goods such as *gloria populis*, with the result that the shadowy realm of subhumans had enlarged at the expense of the solid human realm. Cicero saw the Roman Republic of his day as largely false, a realm of dissimulating subhumans in which only rare men are human and what they seem. These rare men had managed to preserve their humanity despite the fact that they were living in a state that could no longer provide the moral, legal and political conditions necessary for a truly human existence. Cicero repeatedly stakes the claim that his humanity had remained unscathed by this collapse: in the second book of *De Officiis,* for example, he explains to Marcus that when Caesar destroyed the Republic and forced him out of public life, he chose to write philosophy so as not to be dehumanised by a life of leisure and sensual pleasures.[246] Most of Cicero's literary production was concentrated within this period of forced retirement, at a time in which the state was at its least true, so this production itself constituted his claim to moral self-sufficiency, that he

---

[244] R. Morstein-Marx (2004), *Mass Oratory and Political Power in the Late Roman Republic,* Cambridge, p. 148; Asmis (2005:406).

[245] Cic. *Sest.* 97-98, 103-127, 138. On true and false *populares,* see *Leg Agr.* 1.23, 25; *Cat.* 4.2; *Dom.* 77, 88; *Phil.* 7.4; *De Or.* 3.138; R. Seager (1972), 'Cicero and the Word *Popularis,' CQ* 22, 328-338, p. 333; Morstein-Marx (2004:148).

[246] Cic. *Off.* 2.2-6

possessed more than a mere "semblance of virtue." Cicero claimed that men like himself were the last beacons of light, the last hope for the Roman state to become true again,[247] yet for this to happen, they had to triumph over the dissimulating 'beasts' who wished to destroy them and the last remnants of the human community.

For Cicero, the crucial distinguishing factor between humans and subhumans was that the former had absolute regard for the common good while the latter absolutely did not. Disregard for the common good was a vice that struck at the very core of social justice and of human society, which by its very definition should serve the common advantage (*utilitatis communione sociatus*).[248] Anyone who makes his own advantage the sole standard for all his actions, Cicero insisted repeatedly, rebels against true society, and cannot be considered a good man nor a human being as his is the "savage nature of a beast within" (*…an hominis figura immanitatem gerat beluae, Off*. 3.82).[249] Only those men who are indifferent to personal advantage, in whom *honestum* and *utile* are entirely reconciled, who are loyal and dignified (*graves et honestos homines*) preservers of the state (*conservatores civitatis*), can be trusted to protect human society.[250] Of course, Cicero put himself forward as an *exemplum* of such a politician, declaring that his life had served as an "example of preserving the state,"[251] while at the same time, he cast his enemies into the role of false humans whose pursuit of political pre-eminence was characterised by a total and highly irrational disregard for the common good.[252]

In his speeches, Cicero often described his enemies in terms that suggested they were not proper human beings but rather 'beasts' posing a menace to society.[253] For example, Clodius is a

---

[247] Cicero insists that the *regnum* which Caesar has instituted implies a darkness eradicable only by glowing individuals (*lumina civitatis*), who draw the eyes of the citizens to them like beacons. At one point, he thanks the gods for filling his mind with *clarissimum lumen* so he can act to protect the blinded *populus, Sul*. 40. For more on political metaphors involving *lux* and *lumen,* see K. Welch (2005), '*Lux* and *Lumina* in Cicero's Rome: A Metaphor for the *Res Publica* and Her Leaders,' in K. Welch and T. W. Hillard (eds.), *Roman Crossings: Theory and Practice in the Roman Republic*, Swansea, 313-337.

[248] See above, at n. 153-57.

[249] Cic. *Off*. 3.76, 82; *Leg*. 28.49.

[250] Cic. *Rep*. 1.27; *Sest*. 98, 105.

[251] Cic. *Sest*. 49.

[252] Cic. *Off*. 1.26, 43, 57, 62; *Pro. Sest*. 48; *Ad Att*. 7.17.4; *Phil*. 1.14.

[253] On this, see C. Lévy (1998), 'Rhétorique et philosophie: la monstruosité politique chez Cicéron,' *Revue des Études Latines* 76, 139-157; also, J. M. May (1996), 'Cicero and the Beasts,' *Syllecta Classica* 7, 143-153, which

"foul and noxious beast" (*taetram immanemque beluam*),[254] Catiline is a monster who wishes to eliminate senators and ravage the earth with fire and slaughter,[255] Piso is a "beast" (*belua*), a "gelded pig" (*maialis*), a "most foul and inhumane monster" (*inhumanissimum ac foedissimum monstrum*).[256] Elsewhere, Cicero describes Gellius and Piso as "two savage monsters" (*duo importuna prodigia*) as well as irrational, reckless, "raving and morally abandoned men" (*furibundi hominis ac perditi*).[257] He denotes their mental derangement by the nouns *furor* and *furia*, referring to madness, insanity and lack of self-restraint, the opposite of *temperamentia*.[258] Cicero also invited his audience to pay attention to the external demeanour of these men, which, he argued, acts as a reliable indicator of their bestial nature: "Isn't it true that we consider many people worthy of our contempt when they seem, through a certain kind of movement or posture, to have scorned the law and limit of nature?" (*none odio multos dignos putamus, qui quodam motu aut statu videntur naturae legem et modum contempsisse?*).[259] Cicero argued that these men betray their nature in their walk (*incessus*) and expression (*vultus*), and he invited his audience to observe these carefully so that their crimes might better be recalled.[260] Only twice in his speeches did Cicero utilise the word *truculentus*, commonly used to denote the behaviour of beasts, and both times it was in order to describe the physical deportment of Rullus and Piso.[261] Finally, in order to describe these unscrupulous politicians collectively, Cicero uses the term *grex,* which

---

was unavailable to me. See also, I. Gildenhard (2007b), 'Greek Auxilaries: Tragedy and Philosophy in Ciceronian Invective,' in J. Booth (ed.), *Cicero on the Attack: Invective and Subversion in the Orations and Beyond*, Swansea, 149-183, p. 149.

[254] Cic. *Sest*. 16.

[255] Cic. *Catil*. 1.2-3.

[256] Cic. *Pis*. 1, 19, 31; V. Arena (2007), 'Roman Political Invective' in W. Dominik and J. Hall (eds.), *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric*, Malden, 149-190, p. 152.

[257] Cic. *Sest.* 15, 27, 40, 43, 47, 51, 52. Later he describes them as "reckless and morally abandoned men" (*audaces homines et perditi*), 100.

[258] N. Wood (1986), '*Populares* and *Circumcelliones*: The Vocabulary of "Fallen Man" in Cicero and St. Augustine,' *History of Political Thought* 7, 33-51, p. 35.

[259] Cic. *Fin.* 5.47.

[260] Cic. *Sest.* 17.

[261] Corbeill (2004:119).

usually denotes a herd of animals.[262]

What these men aim for and what Julius Caesar ultimately accomplished, is to "overrun all laws of gods and men" and become the most horrible of all beasts, the tyrant (*Rep.* 2.48):[263]

> Simul atque
>
> enim se inflexit hic rex in dominatum iniustiorem
> fit continuo tyrannus, quo neque taetrius neque
> foedius nec dis hominibusque invisius animal ullum
> cogitari potest; qui quamquam figura est hominis,
> morum tamen inmanitate vastissimas vincit beluas.
> Quis enim hunc hominem ritem dixerit, qui sibi cum
> suis civibus, qui denique cum omni hominum genere
> nullam iuris communionem, nullam humanitatis
> societatem velit?

For as soon as this king[264] turned to a mastery less just than before he instantly became a tyrant; and no creature more vile or horrible than a tyrant, or more hateful to gods and men, can be imagined; for, though he bears a human form, yet he surpasses the most monstrous of the wild beasts in the cruelty of his nature. For how could the name of human being rightly be given to the creature who desires no community of justice, no partnership in human life with his fellow-citizens — aye, even with any part of the human race (trans. C. W. Keyes, p. 157)?

Accusations of aiming for tyranny and possessing tyrannical vices were commonplace in Roman invective and characteristic of the period. Cicero's *Verrine Orations* provide abundant examples

---

[262] Cic. *Sest.* 38. Greek orators also employed the term 'beast' (*thērion*) for similar purposes; see, for example, Dem. 25.143, 25.8. St. Augustine borrowed the very same language from Cicero 400 years later in his attack on the *circumcelliones,* the Donatist peasants terrorising North Africa. To Augustine theirs was the beastly nature of "fallen man," tainted by original sin and Adam's defection from God. Augustine used almost identical terms to Cicero to describe the *circumcelliones*; they are "the most insane herds of morally abandoned men" (*perditorum hominum dementissimi greges*); see Wood (1986:33); Dover (1974:75).

[263] See also, *Off.* 1.26, 2.23.

[264] This passage refers to Tarquin the Proud, who was reputedly a notorious despot, but to read Caesar into it is surely not too farfetched.

of him using the terms *rex*, *dominus* and *tyrannus*[265] to describe Veres, claiming that he exhibited every one of the tyrant's vices and modes of behaviour during his infamous governorship of Sicily.[266] Piso and Gabinius are charged with *superbia, crudelitas* and *libido*,[267] and in *Philippics* (3.29) Cicero denied humanity to Antony by describing him as cruel and arrogant (*crudelem superbamque dominationem,* 3.34), by attacking his most cruel domination (*crudelissimus dominatus*), and the force (*vis*) he used to have a law passed conferring upon himself the provinces of Cisalpine Gaul and Gallia Comata.[268]

It has often been stated that in Roman politics personalities were more important than political programs, and that orators usually judged it more expedient to defame the character of a political opponent than to attack his political principles. While we might sometimes be justified in regarding dehumanising insults such as *belua* as metaphorical commonplaces, perhaps not meant to be taken seriously,[269] we need to be aware that such accusations involved the suggestion that the person accused no longer participates in the human community and as such has lost, or should loose, any right of protection under human laws. Roman invective worked to exclude the target from the community, regardless of any particular guilt in the eyes of the law, for which reason the orator would often dwell on such things as physical deficiencies that could provide "powerful rhetorical means for excluding that opponent from society."[270] Dehumanisation was an essential part of such rhetorical exclusions, and Cicero did not limit this strategy to his invective but employed it in several of his other works. In an interesting passage in *Paradoxa Stoicorum,* Cicero addressed his enemies by recalling his exile and claiming that, since all the universal principles and laws had expelled them and could no longer harbour them, they were in fact the true exiles, not him, meaning, of course, that they were exiled from the human race.[271] Because

---

[265] Cic. *Ver.* 2.1.82, 2.5.103.

[266] Cic. *Ver.* 1.14, 2.2.9, 1.56, 2.1.14, 2.1.122-3.

[267] Cic. *Prov. Cons.* 6, 8, 11.

[268] Cic. *Phil.* 5.10, 6.3.

[269] For example, J. G. F. Powell (2007), 'Invective and the Orator: Ciceronian Theory and Practice,' in J. Booth (ed.), *Cicero on the Attack: Invective and Subversion in the Orations and Beyond,* Swansea, 1-25, p. 18.

[270] A. Corbeill (2002), 'Ciceronian Invective' in J. M. May (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Cicero, Oratory and Rhetoric*, Leiden, 198-217, p. 208; also, S. Koster (1980), *Die Invektive in der griechischen und römischen Literatur*, Meisenheim am Glan, pp. 38-39.

[271] Cic. *Par. Stoic.* 4.31-2.

their 'exile' meant they were no longer subject to human laws, there was no reason why they should enjoy their protection; they were outlaws, and as such fair game. This view comes across most clearly in Cicero's justification of Caesar's assassination: Caesar lost his claim to humanity in his attempt to destroy the human community, so killing him was morally justified, even required (*Off*. 3.32):

> Nulla est enim societas nobis cum tyrannis, et
> potius summa distractio est…atque hoc omne genus
> pestiferum atque impium ex hominum communitate ex-
> terminandum est. Etenim, ut membra quaedam amputatur,
> si et ipsa sanguine et tamquam spiritu carere coeperunt et
> nocent reliquis partibus corporis, sic ista in figura hominis
> feritas et immanitas beluae et communi tamquam humanitate
> corpore segreganda est.

> We have no ties of fellowship with tyrants, but rather the bitterest feud…all that pestilent and abominable race should be exterminated from human society. And this may be done by proper measures; for, as certain members are amputated, if they show signs themselves of being bloodless and virtually lifeless and thus jeopardise the health of other parts, so those fierce and savage monsters in human form should be cut off from what might be called the common body of humanity (trans. W. Miller, p. 229).

Cicero appears here to have used dehumanisation in a way that has many modern parallels, that is, to deny human attributes to the target, in order to deny them the rights and protection the law commonly awards to other human beings (citizens).[272] In the *Philippics,* where Cicero waged an attack on Caesar's one-time deputy but now potential successor Antony, Cicero again justifies and commends Caesar's assassins for killing him (2.117), portraying this act as a legitimate measure necessary to rid the Republic of the tyrant who destroyed the *libertas* of the Roman people.[273]

---

[272] For a good discussion of Cicero's justifications of the murder of Caesar, see Belliotti (2009:143-179).

[273] For Caesar's suppression of *libertas* see, for example, *Phil*. 1.6, 1.13, 2.26, 11.36. For numerous other examples, see E. Cowan (2008), '*Libertas* in the *Philippics*,' in T. Stevenson and M. Wilson (eds.), *Cicero's Philippics: History, Rhetoric and Ideology*, Auckland, 140-152.

Cicero continued with the same strategy in *Philippics* and portrayed Antony as sharing in all the 'beastly' tyrannical traits that also characterised Caesar.[274] Stevenson is right to observe that Cicero's handling of the tyrant figure in *Philippics* was more elaborate than usual, "as though it is more than a conventional device for attacking a powerful competitor."[275] Indeed, at this stage, Cicero's audience was well aware that the potential for one-man rule had been realised, and Cicero's objective was to make them see that another tyrant would emerge if Antony, a man with the same lust for domination as Caesar (2.217), had his way.[276] Against this background, the figure of the tyrant served several useful functions. It allowed Cicero to exploit his audience's tyrannophobia and 'dehumanisation anxiety'; to remind them, if they needed reminding, that a tyrant's rule is incompatible with *libertas* (3.36.6), and that life without *libertas* is slavery incompatible with true humanity.[277] At the same time, Cicero could present himself as Antony's opposite, stake the claim to being the arch-defender of Roman *libertas*, and thus point his audience towards the light of humanity emanating from his own person.[278] Antony's dehumanisation would ensure that when Cicero warned that Antony could well meet the same fate as Caesar (2.218), it would have been clear to all concerned that, should this scenario eventuate, the life that would end would not be a human life. In this way, Cicero offered a potential solution, comparable to the one we observed in *De Officiis*, to the legal and moral problem Antony's assassination would present to the brave men who might opt to carry out such

---

[274] For numerous examples of Antony being described in *Philippics* as possessing tyrannical traits, see T. Stevenson (2008), 'Tyrants, Kings and Fathers in the Philippics,' in T. Stevenson and M. Wilson (eds.), *Cicero's Philippics, History, Rhetoric and Ideology*, Auckland, 95-113, pp. 100-101.

[275] Stevenson (2008:195).

[276] Stevenson (2008:95-99, 105).

[277] For this "rhetoric of crisis," see J. Hall (2002), '*The Philippics*,' in J. M. May (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Cicero, Oratory and Rhetoric*, Leiden, 273-304, pp. 283-287. In the twelfth *Philippic* Cicero dwells on Antony and Lucius's savage and beaststly natures in order to excuse himself from the proposed embassy to Antony, that is, to underline the dangers to himself at the hands of such unscrupulous individuals, *Phil.* 12.26; J. Hall (2008), 'The Rhetorical Design and Success of Cicero's Twelfth *Philippic*,' in T. Stevenson and M. Wilson (eds.), *Cicero's Philippics, History, Rhetoric and Ideology*, Auckland, 282-304.

[278] Stevenson also argues that Cicero uses this negative stereotyping of Antony to simultaneously describe himself as Antony's opposite, highlighting his own claim to the position of *Pater* (*Parens*) *Patriae*, (2008:95, 102-113). For Cicero's luminous character see above, n. 247.

a great deed.[279]

In order to portray Antony as one in a long line of enemies of the Republic and himself as its long-term defender, Cicero also associates him in *Philippics* with Catiline (*Phil.* 2.118-119), whom Cicero famously put to death as a public enemy along with Catiline's fellow conspirators during his consulship in 63.[280] This act was illegal under *lex Sempronia* of 123 (by C. Gracchus), which denied the right of a magistrate to declare a Roman citizen a public enemy and execute him without a trial or right of appeal.[281] For this act, Cicero was forced into exile and was himself accused of being a tyrant,[282] but at the time, he argued that Catiline and his fellow conspirators were public enemies who had forfeited their rights as Roman citizens (*Cat.* 410), and who as such had no right of protection under Roman law, including the *lex Sempronia*. His recollection of this episode in *Philippics* also reads retrospectively as Cicero's suggestion that he had never ordered the executions of human beings in 63. Dehumanisation in Cicero, therefore, does appear to be more than just another rhetorical strategy directed towards the character assassination of his opponents; it actively marshals arguments for sidelining the moral and legal considerations that would arise from their murders. Modern parallels of this strategy are too numerous to count.

In the following and last section of this chapter, I will observe the impact and presence of these ideas in Cicero's work on rhetorical theory. Oratory was ultimately Cicero's strongest weapon, and Cicero gave it a primary role in the fight against the subhuman elements in society. The idea was simple: the orator had to erode people's support for the false *populares* —'beasts' — from the orator's stage, and to do this he had to be versed, as Aristotle put it, in "all the available means of persuasion."[283]

VI

---

[279] There is much in *Philippics* that would speak to potential assassins who might have been contemplating such an act at the time of the speech's delivery. For example, recalling the assassination of Caesar, Cicero states (2.217): "Think you not of these things? Do you not understand that it is enough for brave men to have learned how beautiful in act, how grateful in benefit, how glorious in report, it is to slay a tyrant?" (*Haec non cogitas, neque intellegis satis esse viris fortibus didicisse, quam sit re pulcrum, beneficio gratum, fama gloriosum tyrannum occidere*).

[280] Cowan (2008:145).

[281] See S. O. Shapiro (2005), *O Tempora! O Mores!: Cicero's Catilinarian Orations*, Oklahoma, pp. 65, 190.

[282] Cic. *Fam.* 7.24.1.

[283] Arist. *Rhet.* 1355b2-7.

Humanising and Dehumanising by Speech: The Role of the Orator

But since we have the ability to persuade one another…not only do we avoid living like animals,
but we have come together, built cities, made laws and invented arts… Speech is responsible for nearly all our
inventions. It legislated in matters of justice and injustice and beauty and baseness… We regard speaking well to be
the clearest sign of a good mind…and truthful, lawful and just speech
we consider the image of a good and faithful soul.

Isocrates, *Antidosis,* 254-5.

Words are the persuasive thing, especially the words of clever people. It is the speaker's personality that carries
conviction, not his words.

Menander, *Hymnis,* fr.407 K.

The necessity for addressing the 'democratic element' of the Roman constitution made oratory an important and highly useful skill for the aspiring republican politician. Because political careers were based on success in elections for public office, the ability to present oneself effectively by speaking in front of the voting *populus* was an important factor which often influenced voting.[284] Eloquence was Cicero's most important political asset: as the *novus homo* with no military background, he made his claim to *virtus* on the orator's stage, while speaking in the Senate house, law courts or in the *contio* (assembly).[285] The orator's stage, Cicero often asserted, was the place where the statesman was most visible and from where his *virtus* could "shine forth," or

---

[284] See, for example, C. E. W. Steel (2001), *Cicero, Rhetoric and Empire*, Oxford, p. 14; J. M. May and J. Wisse (2001), *Cicero On the Ideal Orator*, Oxford, pp. 4-6.

[285] 'New men' are, of necessity, self-inventions, and by the late Republic, rhetoric was one of the chief means of making oneself in Roman society; see B. A. Krostenko (2001), *Cicero, Catullus and the Language of Social Performance*, London, 179-180; A. J. E. Bell (1997), 'Cicero and the Spectacle of Power,' *JRS* 87, 1-22, p. 19: "The *populus*…had the power to make Cicero the sort of man he could never be solely on his own merits." For the importance of oratory in Republican Rome, see C. E. W. Steel (2006), *Roman Oratory*, Cambridge. For oratory and *populus* in Republican Rome, see F. Pina Polo (1996), *Contra Arma Verbis: Der Redner vor dem Volk in der späten römischen Republic*, Stuttgart; C. Döbler (1999), *Politische Agitation und Öffentlichkeit in der späten Republik*, Frankfurt am Main; F. Millar (1986), 'Politics, Persuasion and the People before the Social War (150-90 BC),' *JRS* 76, 1-11.

"shine in the darkness" and "bring light to *res publica*,"[286] exposing those whose marks of *virtus* were deprived of genuine content, mere "vaunting and display."[287] In Cicero's eyes, the contional crowd was characterised by its irrational animal-like passions at the best of times, but especially so when dominated by false *populares* who incited these passions even further.[288] When occupied by men who deceived and dehumanised the gullible crowds, Cicero stated, the stage of the *contio* is no different from the theatrical: it is a place of illusion and deception, where false humans pose as human beings by falsely claiming to be championing the people's interests.[289] In order to see the light of humanity, people had to be made to see beneath the illusions of the flatterer, and the man to do this was Cicero's true orator, who restrained and subjected his passions to the rule of reason with his *gravissima persona* and oratory of "weight" (*gravitas*) and "grandeur" (*maiestas*).[290]

Cicero's idea of the orator's role in society was essentially a humanising one, and he argued this to be the case from the very beginning of human civilisation. Cicero opens *De Inventione,* his earliest work on rhetorical theory, by imagining a time when men wandered at large in fields, like animals, doing nothing by the guidance of reason, until one man ― great and wise ― assembled them (*De Inv.* 1.2):

---

[286] Cic. *Mur.* 32, 54; *Dom.* 23; *Fin.* 3.8; *Sest.* 60; *Phil.* 13.44; *Fam.*12.5.3. Cicero would often link eloquence to *virtus*; in *De Oratore* he made the claim that the orator needs to possess all the virtues and he even asserts that only such an orator possesses true *virtus*, *De Or.* 1.83, 3.136; McDonnell (2006:335); Bell (1997:19); see also J. Connolly (2007), 'Virile Tongues: Rhetoric and Masculinity,' in W. Dominik and J. Hall (eds.), *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric*, Malden, 83-97.

[287] Cic. *Fam.* 3.13.1; *Acad.* 2.140; *Off.* 1.46; *Inv.* 1.3; *Am.* 86; Bell (1997:19).

[288] *De Or.* 1.31, 3.337. Cicero characterises *contiones* dominated by false *populares* as "incited" (*turbulentae*), *Off.* 1.62-65, 90; *Phil.* 2.116; *Sest.* 106; *Clu.* 202; *Att.* 1.16.1; *Mil.* 5; Morstein-Marx (2004:62); A. M. Riggsby (1999), *Crime and Community in Ciceronian Rome,* Austin, pp. 72-77.

[289] Cic. *Amic.* 95-97. As Morstein-Marx (2004:65) insightfully observes, the question before the people gathered around the Rostra was not: "Do I agree with this *popularis* in favor of agrarian redistribution or that *optimates* against it, but is the proposer of this agrarian law really championing our interests, as he avows, or is he pursuing some private interest?"; see also Morstein-Marx (2004:213-214, 232, 244-245).

[290] Cic. *De Or.* 1.31, 2.333, 3.337. Cicero cites the younger Cato as an example of such a man, and he credits his *auctoritas* for quieting the turbulent assembly during the strife in the *contiones* over what was to be done with Clodius's killer, *Mil.* 58; see also *De Or.* 2.333; *Amic.* 95-97; Morstein-Marx (2004:65).

Nam fuit
quoddam tempus cum in agris homines passim be-
stiarum modo vagabantur et sibi victu fero vitam
propagabant; nec ratione animi quicquam, sed ple-
raque viribus corporis administrabant…

Quo tempore quidam magnus videlicet vir et
sapiens…qui dispersos homines in agros et in tectis
silvestribus abditos ratione quadam compulit unum
in locum et congregavit et eos in unam quamque
rem inducens utilem atque honestam primo propter
insolentiam reclamantes, deinde propter rationem at-
que orationem studiosius audientes ex feris et imam-
nibus mites reddidit et mansuetos.

For there was time when men wandered at large in the fields like animals and lived on wild fare; they did nothing by the guidance of reason, but relied chiefly on physical strength…At this juncture a man, a great and wise man I am sure, assembled…and gathered them in accordance with a plan. He introduced them to every useful and honourable occupation, though they cried out against it at first because of its novelty, and then when through reason and eloquence they had listened with greater attention, he transformed them from wild savages into a kind and gentle folk (trans. H. M. Hubbel, p. 7).

Without this rational leader to persuade people to live in a society, therefore, their capacity for civilisation and justice would never have been developed. In his more mature *De Oratore*, Cicero asked, "what other power (but oratory) could have been strong enough to gather scattered humanity into one place, or lead it out of its brutish existence in the wilderness up to our present condition of civilisation, as men and as citizens?"[291] Because he assigned to oratory this central humanising function, Cicero regarded other political virtues, such as *sapientia, temperamentia* and *prudentia*, as incomplete and ineffective without the addition of *eloquentia*.[292] As far as

---

[291] Cic. *Or*. 31.8.33; *Inv*. 1.2-3; *Sest*. 91-2; R. D. Cumming (1969), *Human Nature and History: A Study of the Development of Liberal Political Thought, Vol. 1*, Chicago, p. 271.

[292] Cic. *Inv*. 1.3.6; *Or*. 1.45-60. Mitchell (1991:27); Coleman (2000), *A History of Political Thought: from Ancient Greece to Early Christianity*, Oxford, p. 253.

Cicero was concerned, the importance of this virtue increased even further in the Republic of his time, because the civilising process initiated by the first orator had been reversed by unscrupulous politicians who were literally persuading people to abandon their humanity.

In *De Oratore*, the arguments for the central role of the orator in the creation of human society were put into the mouth of Crassus (L. Licinius Crassus, *cos*. 95 BC) while the objections to this thesis were raised by Scaevola (Q. M. Scaevola, *cos*. 117 BC), who argued that the credit lay with wise reasoning rather than with eloquence. Scaevola considers eloquence as damaging to society and, by way of proving his point, recalls the ills inflicted on the state by men of first-rate eloquence, such as Tiberius and Gaius Gracchus (*De Or*. 1.38-39).[293] Crassus responds to these arguments by denying that such men possess *eloquentia* precisely because they lack the wisdom, knowledge and virtue necessary for true eloquence. Such unscrupulous politicians might have learned the art of speaking from incompetent rhetoricians who composed their books on rhetoric without considering topics such as "fair dealing, justice, loyalty and subduing of the passions."[294] The orator, Cicero argues, needs both knowledge of philosophers and the moral character of a true human; without these, he cannot be worthy of the name 'orator.'[295] Morally derelict subhumans can never legitimately be designated orators, because the virtue of *eloquentia* is exclusive to humans and is, in fact, the highest mark of humanity. The faculty of speech, Cicero argues, separates men from animals and only the truly eloquent man makes the most of it and thus creates an unbridgeable divide between himself and the lower beasts (*De Or*. 1.32-33):

…Hoc enim uno

---

[293] In *De Inventione*, Cicero similarly questioned whether communities had received more good or evil from the practice of oratory; after all, he acknowledged, many of the present troubles had been caused by men of eloquence, 1.1.

[294] Cic. *De Or*. 1.86-87. These principles, he argued, are in the domain of rhetoricians, even though rhetoricians have to go to philosophers to learn about them, *Or*. 3.122-23. Cicero believed that the separation of eloquence and philosophy occurred with Socrates, but insists that this should have never been the case, *Or*. 1.45-69. He stated elsewhere that *eloquentia* is nothing more than philosophy speaking fluently (*copiose loquens sapientia*); see *De Part. Or*. 79. He also argued that the ideal orator is superior to philosophers, even in the philosopher's own field, *De Or*. 1.45-73; 3.142-143; May & Wisse (2001:3).

[295] Cic. *De Or*. 2.85; May & Wisse (2001:10-12); C. J. Classen (1986), 'Cicero's *orator perfectus*: ein *vir bonus dicendi peritus*?,' in S. Prete (ed.), *Commemoratio: Studi di filologia in ricordo di Riccardo Ribuoli*, Sassoferrato, 43-55; J. G. F. Powell (1995), *Cicero the Philosopher,* Oxford, p. 50.

praestamus vel maxime feris, quod colloquimur inter

nos, et quod exprimere dicendo sensa possumus.

Quam ob rem quis hoc non iure miretur, summeque in

eo elaborandum esse arbitretur, ut, quo uno homines

maxime bestiis praestent, in hoc hominibus ipsis antecellat ?

For the one point in which we have our very greatest advantage over brute creation is that we hold converse with one another, and can reproduce our thought in word. Who therefore would not rightly admire this faculty, and deem it his duty to exert himself to the outmost in this field, that by so doing he may surpass men themselves in that particular respect wherein men are superior to animals (trans. E. W. Sutton, p. 25)?

In Book 3, there is even a passage on correct grammar where Crassus states than no one ever admires an orator for correct grammar, but if the grammar is bad he is laughed at and the audience "not only think of him as no orator but not even a human being" (…*si est aliter, irrident, neque eum oratorem tantummodo sed hominem non putant*).[296]

On an abstract level, the division between a 'true' and 'false' orator is clearly drawn, but once we consider some of Cicero's practical advice to the orator, this line is in danger of becoming somewhat blurred. For a start, Cicero appears no more committed to 'truth' or to the orator's 'sincerity' than those whom he accuses of failing both. In *De Officiis*, for example, he writes: "We need not have scruples against undertaking on occasion the defense of a guilty person," where "the business of an advocate is to maintain what is plausible, even if it be not strictly true" (2.51).[297] Here and in various other places, Cicero draws a distinction between what Austin has labeled "constantive utterances," which more or less truthfully describes a state of affairs, and "performative utterances," which aim to bring about a certain state of affairs and which share no such concerns.[298] Another way of saying this is that Cicero appears to have been enough of a realist and practical politician to know and admit that the practice of oratory involved

---

[296] Cic. *De Or.* 3.52.

[297] Cicero insists that this is the view of the Stoics, *De Off.* 2.51. See also, J. Coleman (2000:288).

[298] J. L. Aistin (1971), 'Performative-Constantive,' in J. R. Searle (ed.), *Philosophy of Language*, Oxford, 13-22.

a large portion of, as Frankfurt puts it, "bullshit."[299] Such views are typical of the neo-Aristotelian tradition of rhetoric, which emphasises the strategic role of rhetoric in pragmatic communication rather than, as is characteristic of the neo-Platonic tradition, its moral obligation to portray the objective truth.[300] Plato denounced rhetoric as an art that fails to acknowledge truth as a primary value and presumed to replace it with persuasion, opinion and belief,[301] while Aristotle saw it as fundamentally unconcerned with some ideal truth, but only with "finding all the available means of persuasion."[302] Cicero, who asserted that he wrote *De Oratore* "in Aristotelian fashion" and who defined the aim of rhetoric as "to get hold of the assemblies…to win their goodwill, direct their inclinations wherever the speaker wishes, or divert them from whatever he wishes," certainly appears to have subordinated all moral concerns to the goal of effective persuasion.[303]

---

[299] H. Frankfurt (1986), 'On Bullshit,' *Raritan* 6, 81-100; J. E. Combs and D. Nimmo (1992), *The New Propaganda: The Dictatorship of Palaver in Contemporary Politics*, New York, pp. 238-240.

[300] Johnson, for example, remarked that, "The overall shape of the discipline of rhetoric can be understood as a composite of neo-Platonic and Neo-Aristotelian views, which incorporates the moral obligation of rhetoric to objective truth on the one hand and the strategic role of rhetoric in pragmatic communication on the other"; see N. Johnson (1984), 'Ethos and the Aims of Rhetoric,' in R. J. Connors, L. S. Ede and A. A. Lunsford (ed.), *Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse,* 98-114, p. 105.

[301] The philosophical objections against rhetoric were essentially moral; they centered on its association with sophistry, the art of persuasion grounded in the pejorative context of "making the worse appear the better case," *Apol.* 8; *Gorg.* 463a-b; Aristotle, *Rhet.* 1355b2-7; L. D. Kimmel (1991), 'The Dialectical Convergence of Rhetoric and Ethics: The Imperative of Public Conversation,' in V. Aarons and W.A. Salomon (eds.), *Rhetoric and Ethics: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives*, Lewiston. 1-17, p. 4; G. A. Kennedy (1994), *A New History of Classical Rhetoric,* Princeton, p.7; O. Andersen (2001), 'How Good Should an Orator Be?' in C. W. Wotten (ed.), *The Orator in Action and Theory in Greece and Rome*, Leiden, 3-16, pp. 3-5.

[302] As such, Aristotle held, rhetoric is intrinsically morally neutral; it may be used "well" or it may be used "badly," depending on the speaker, *Rhet.*1355b2-7.

[303] *De Or.* 1.7.30, 1.229-230. Late Republican Rome is often imagined as a society in which morality was openly subordinated to successful careers and which greatly encouraged flights of eloquence "drawing on all the rhetorical skills of the speaker, with little limitation by what was true, relevant or probable," see Kennedy (1994:104). H. Gotoff (1993), 'Oratory: The Art of Illusion,' *HSCP* 95, 289-313: Oratory aims at "suspension of disbelief, or the fabrication of credibility…The sincerity and truth…is to be measured only by its effectiveness on the day of the performance," pp. 89-90. E. Fantham (2004), *The Roman World of Cicero's De Oratore,* Oxford: "The advocate gains more prestige by defending the guilty than the innocent, the notorious rather than the respectable," p. 55.

While in many ways this is indeed so, Cicero's views are founded on the assumption that the orator is a man of the highest moral standards who, whether or not strictly truthful at any given moment, will use his eloquence for good purpose and in the common advantage. He is an opportunist, but his opportunism does not create a moral issue because his personal expediency (*utile*) is entirely reconciled with moral goodness (*honestum*), and as such is never in conflict with the interests of society. The virtuous individual, Cicero states, is in fact *required* to exercise his virtue in a way that secures the support of other men: in *De Officiis*, he states that the chief function of virtue is (2.17) "to conciliate the minds of men and secure their support for one's interests" (*proprium hoc statuo esse virtutis, conciliare animos hominum et ad usus suos adiungere*). While doing so, he need not always worry about the truth, which in any case is often beyond anyone's reach; when it comes to discovering what our 'mean duties' (*officia media*) are, for example, Cicero asserts the necessity of relying on probability and "a strong argument" and opting for that "which seems more persuasive" (*Off.* 3.20).[304] Knowledge of 'mean duties' can be attained by men who have a natural goodness of heart and advancement in learning (3.14), but the crowd, as a rule, does not know how far it falls from perfection and thus needs to rely on these men to direct it (3.15). This brings us back to the humanising role of the true statesman and orator, who is then allowed to advance that which is 'probable' and 'persuasive' in the common interest, which, it goes without saying, he perceives at all times. Unscrupulous politicians, on the other hand, lack such understanding and their personal expediency is always detrimental and in conflict with the common good.

While Cicero might have had a clear idea about who is true and who false in Roman politics, the crowd in *contio* lacked such understanding, and were thus forced to make the decision whether or not to support a particular orator based on his appearances or, in particular, on their impression of his character. It is well known that the competition played out amongst the republican elite took place at the level of persons rather than ideas. Morstein-Marx has observed that: "The competition — at least the one the People were invited to judge — was one between rhetorico-political *personae* that constituted credibility and authority, rather than one between ideas to which all, at least in public, made obeisance…The issue turns to men, not ideology."[305] Accordingly, like most of the rhetorical theorists, Cicero attached great importance to a speaker's

---

[304] See above, at n. 165-166.

[305] Morstein-Marx (2004:207, 232).

character and emphasised the need for the orator to be perceived by the audience as a good and trustworthy man. This aspect of rhetoric is commonly known as *ethos*. In Aristotle's *Rhetoric, ethos* is one of the three major *pisteis*, or means of persuasion (the other two being *logos*, the argument itself, and *pathos,* the arousal of the audience's emotions), and it refers to the orator's need to portray himself through his speeches as having a good moral character, "practical wisdom," and a concern for his audience (*arête, phronesis*, *eunonia*).[306] Aristotle's *ethos* is artificially constructed within the speech, and the question of the orator's actual goodness, wisdom or concern for the audience is subordinated to the rhetorical imperative of *appearing* to be such.[307] It was not concerned with sincere self-presentation or the speaker's inherent worth; it referred to an artificially constructed character which did not need to bear any resemblance to the orator's real self and, if utilised skilfully, it would necessarily *disguise* this self if it was unsuited to the argument in question and to the audience one was trying to persuade.[308]

Cicero's analysis of *ethos* differed from Aristotle's because, as May has observed, Aristotle's conception of *ethos* would have been unacceptable and inadequate to a Roman steeped in the tradition of *mos maiorum*.[309] In this tradition, a politician's character was supposed to be open to visual scrutiny,[310] and Cicero indeed often stressed the necessity of maintaining a

---

[306] Arist. *Rhet*. 1356a4-6. For a detailed discussion, see C. Carey (1994), 'Rhetorical Means of Persuasion,' in I. Worthington (ed.), *Persuasion: Greek Rhetors in Action*, London, 26-45.

[307] Arist. *Rhet*. 1356a. "…we more readily and sooner believe reasonable men on all matters. But this effect too must come about in the course of the speech, not through the speaker being believed in advance to be of certain character…Character contains almost the strongest proof of all, so to speak." Ramsay observes that Aristotle was "not concerned with the ethics of *ethos*," A. Ramsey (1981), 'Rhetoric and the Ethics of Seeming,' *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 11, 85-96, p.86. Although Aristotle does say that the orator "must not use rhetorical skill to persuade people of morally bad things" (in *Rhet*. 1355a31), this cannot be construed as a general requirement that the accomplished orator be a morally good man. Among other reasons, it is impossible to combine such a view with the normal conception of rhetoric as stated above, that is, that it is morally neutral; see above, n.302. See also T. Engberg-Pedersen (1996), 'Is there an Ethical Dimension to Aristotelian Rhetoric?,' in A. O. Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric,* California, 111-126, p. 121.

[308] Arist. *Rhet*. 3.1, 1404a1ff; C. Atherton (1988), 'Hand over Fist: The Failure of Stoic Rhetoric,' *CQ* 38, 392-427, pp. 419-420; J. Wisse (1989), *Ethos and Pathos from Aristotle to Cicero,* Amsterdam, pp. 30-1.

[309] J. May (1988), *Trials of Character: The Eloquence of Ciceronian Ethos,* North Carolina, pp. 9-10, 168.

[310] See A. Corbeill (2002b), 'Political Movement: Walking and Ideology in Republican Rome,' in D. Fredrick (ed.), *The Roman Gaze*, Baltimore, 182-215, pp. 192-193.

consistent public *persona*, or as Dugan puts it, in Cicero's thought: "one's various words and deeds must form a stable sign system that constitutes a harmonious image — the signifiers must point to the same signified."[311] Similarly, Enos and Schnakenberg have convincingly argued that Cicero "Latinised *ethos*" or fashioned it in a way which owed less to Greek rhetorical theory than it did to the idiosyncrasies of the socio-political environment of republican Rome; Cicero's *ethos*, they argue, extended beyond the immediate rhetorical situation and was bound with such concepts as *auctoritas, dignitas, honor* and *gloria*.[312] Nevertheless, we can certainly notice in Cicero the same pragmatic approach to *ethos* we observed earlier in Aristotle, and this is particularly clear in his undeserved defense of the orator's right to a public façade. Cicero defined *ethos* as the winning of the audience's goodwill through the presentation of a favourable character; or, as he stated elsewhere, *ethos* could be understood as the strategy of choosing the appropriate character token to suit a particular audience and argument.[313] Cicero advised his orator to have at his disposal a variety of suitable artistically fashioned *personae* and insisted that an advocate's arguments must be chosen to suit the case and the audience rather than to reflect his personal opinion.[314]

We can start to resolve this apparent tension in Cicero between the moral imperative to display or reveal oneself and the rhetorical one to strategically disguise those aspects of self unsuited to the rhetorical moment by appealing to the afore-mentioned notion of primary and secondary sincerity. Cicero's *ethos* can be regarded as essentially Aristotelian in the sense that it designated a changeable external mask adapted to suit each particular rhetorical occasion, but that was truly deceptive only if utilised by a less than human orator, such as the beastly false

---

[311] Cic. *Off*. 1.111. Dugan (2005) has observed that one of the central governing principles of Cicero's 'etiquette,' was that the elite Roman male must present himself as a consistent and harmonious entity: "his words and deeds must come together to present a coherent *persona*," p. 130. Dugan argues that Cicero fashioned himself in his rhetorical theory as a transparent and 'truly known' politician, in sharp contrast with the morally degenerate nobility who were hiding behind their mask-like family reputations, p.5. I am in basic agreement with this view as well as with Dugan's overall argument that Cicero's rhetorical theory was not a disinterested undertaking but one propelled by the objective of constructing his identity, as well as with fashioning the ideal orator, p. 17.

[312] R. L. Enos and K. R. Schnakenberg (1994), 'Cicero Latinizes Hellenic *Ethos*,' in J. S. Baumlin and T. F. Baumlin (eds.), *Ethos*: *New Essays Rhetorical and Critical Theory*, Dallas, pp. 191-206.

[313] Cic. *De Or*. 1.152, 160; *Orat*. 128; *Ad Fam*. 1.9.23; Enos & Schnakenberg (1994:192).

[314] Cic. *Cluent*. 50.138-151.142.

populares. The *ethos* of the virtuous orator, even if insincere in the secondary sense, was always sincere in the primary, being in a sense a rhetorical and temporary manifestation of his permanent first *persona*. Nevertheless, in order to understand some of the finer features of this theory, it is necessary to consider Cicero's views on *ethos* in more detail. Cicero's treatment of *ethos* is complex: he used several terms to describe it and chose not to define it in clearly labeled and extractable passages.[315] Above, Cicero referred to the speaker's character as *gravissima persona*,[316] but in his rhetorical theory he preferred to deal with *ethos* in terms of its function, describing it with the apparently unrelated verbs *conciliare* and *delectare*. Furthermore, at one point, he also likened *ethos* to a mild *pathos*.

I will begin by considering the verb *conciliare,* which Cicero uses to denote the function of *ethos* in *De Oratore.* In this work, *ethos* is usually recognised in one of the three functions of a speech: *docere, conciliare* and *movere* ("to prove," "to conciliate" or secure goodwill, and "to stir").[317] It is common to consider these functions as the three *pisteis* of Aristotle recast in Latin terminology: *logos* is recognised in *docere*, *ethos* in *conciliare* and *pathos* in *movere*.[318] While the function of *conciliare* is not the only and perhaps not even the best route for understanding

---

[315] It is documented only in *Or.* 128. Quintilian in *Inst. Or.* 6.2.8-9 states that *ethos* had no Latin synonym; Enos and Schnakenberg (1994:192).

[316] *Ethos* is often brought into connection with *persona,* in its meaning of socio-political self, and they are often even seen as synonymous or interchangeable. One will find that the use of *persona* is part of a common Roman application of stage terminology to rhetorical concepts, *De Or.* 2 24.102, 3.54; *Ad. Att.*15.1; G. F. Held (1985), 'The Meaning of *Ethos* in the *Poetics*,' *Hermes* 113, 280-293; E. Schutrumpf (1987), 'The Meaning of *Ethos* in the Poetics — a Reply,' *Hermes* 115, 175-181; R. D. Cherry (1998), '*Ethos* versus *Persona*,' *Written Communication* 15, 384-404, p.394. For objections on conflating the meaning of *ethos* and *persona,* see Enos and Schnakenberg (1994:193). Still, as Cherry observes, "although there are good historical and conceptual grounds for maintaining the distinction between *ethos* and *persona*… it would be overzealous to characterise the distinction in terms of binary opposition. *Ethos* and *persona* are not mutually exclusive but interact with one another in a rather complex way," p. 394.

[317] The persuasive speech, according to Cicero, relies wholly upon three things: proving the allegations (*ut probemus…quae defendimus*), winning the hearers' favour (*ut conciliemus…qui audiunt*) and rousing the emotions of the audience (*ut animos…ad quemcumque cause postulabit motum vocemus*), *De Or.* 2.115

[318] Among others, E. Fantham (1973), 'Ciceronian *Conciliare* and Aristotelian *Ethos*,' *Phoenix* 27, 262-275.

Cicero's *ethos,*[319] it does seem to recall the humanising function of the statesman's character that we already observed in *De Re Publica. Conciliatio* does not refer exclusively to creating the goodwill of the audience but it can also refer to a *consensus,* which, as Cumming has observed, already exists teleologically among men: "it refers to the internal psychological tendency towards a cohesion that preserves the relations which are intrinsic to some whole."[320] In *De R e Publica*, we may recall, the statesman restrains the large beast that is the *populus* by words and by the force of his "luminous character," achieving in the state "a harmony (*concentus*) which is produced by the agreement (*consensus*) of the upper, lower and middle classes, like musical tones."[321]

Within Cicero's rhetorical theory and practice, consensus is a rhetorical achievement,[322] and Cicero often refers to it as *consensus bonorum*: the consensus of "good men" brought about by other good men, in the context of what modern scholars sometimes label as the Roman republican 'spectacle.'[323] The notion of *consensus bonorum* was meant to express that only a consensus on issues advanced by a true orator qualifies as a true or 'people's consensus,' because it is only by arriving at such a consensus that the crowd becomes an assembly of good men, or the *verus populus*.[324] Once such a transformation has occurred, the *populus* would acquire an

---

[319] See, for example, Enos and Schnakenberg (1994:195-196); W. M. A. Grimaldi (1990), 'The Auditor's Role in Aristotelian Rhetoric,' in R. L. Enos (ed.), *Oral and Written Communication: Historical Approaches*, Newbury Park, 66-81, p. 69.

[320] Cumming (1969:147, 250).

[321] Cic. *Rep*. 2.69-70, 6.25-27.

[322] Cumming (1969:136) indeed observes that such a consensus usually refers to unanimous agreement indicated by applause.

[323] The ways of reaching, or appearing to reach, a consensus on political issues in Ciceronian Rome have sometimes been analysed in terms of Roman public discourse's ability to live up to the Habermasian standards of unconstrained and open deliberation. According to Habermas, the path to true consensus can only be reached via "communicative action," or egalitarian, rational communication free from bias and emotion; see G. Myerson (1994), *Rhetoric, Reason and Society: Rationality as Dialogue,* London, p. 24. Placed against these standards, Roman republican discourse indeed fares poorly; Rome was not a "deliberative democracy," and *contio* was not about deliberation but about weaving the common citizen into the fabric of the *res publica.* As Morstein-Marx observes, "The member of the contional crowd was again and again 'hailed' to locate himself without critical reflection within the discourse and ideology it perpetuated," in Morstein-Marx (2004:15).

[324] It is well known that Cicero had nothing but contempt for the 'beastly' democratic element in the Roman constitution and would often refer to Roman crowds as "scum," Cic. *Ad. Quint. fr*2.5.3; *Pis*. 9; *Cat.* 2.7.

auctoritas to which, Cicero often stated, the leaders of the Republic have to bow.[325] The sovereignty of the Roman people was one of the fundamental principles of the Roman government, and Cicero often insisted that *res publica* means *res populi* (*Rep*. 1.39), so "it is fitting that all powers, all commands, all commissions are granted by the Roman people."[326] Nevertheless, while Cicero was quite ready to take orders from the *populus*, he had only the human portion of it in mind, which becomes truly human only if made so by Cicero himself or a like-minded orator. In effect, Cicero was suggesting that in their approval for the true orator, the crowd becomes a *populus* with the authority to demand from the orator the course of action the orator himself argues for. Indeed, on one occasion Cicero characterised his audience's favourable response to him as "casting him in a role" (*persona*) that he was bound to carry out, like an actor in a play produced by the *Populus Romanus*.[327]

The function of *conciliare* can, therefore, be understood as referring to the orator's use of his character to "transform the scattered selves of his listeners into a unified collective"[328] by making them agree on a certain issue, which then allows them to demand from the speaker the course of action they now perceive to be in their best interests. Given the importance of character in Roman politics, it is not surprising that Cicero would charge the speaker's *ethos* with this central humanising function, but in doing so, he perhaps also brought *ethos* back to its roots. Smith and Hyde have suggested that one can understand the phrase "the *ethos* of rhetoric" to refer not only to the speaker's character but also to the way rhetorical discourse is used to

---

Nevertheless, once they unite in approval for a true orator such as himself, they regularly become the "true *populus*." Cicero often claimed to have affected such a consensus: according to his testament, he was elected to consulship by "the complete *consensus* of the *universus populus Romanus* and the remarkable enthusiasm of all the best men — the most magnificent election in memory," Cic. *Vat*. 6. Cicero is not saying here that an entire population of Roman citizens voted for him but that those who did constitute the *populus*, while those who perhaps opposed him or were otherwise excluded from this circle were in all likelihood not *verus populus*; see, *Leg. Ag*. 2.4, 7, 17; *Dom*. 15; *Cat*. 4.19; *Fam*. 10.12.4, 12.5.3; F. Millar (1998), *The Crowd in Rome in the Late Republic*, University of Michigan, pp. 37, 151, 172-3; Bell (1997:17). Morstein-Marx (2004:148); Asmis (2005:406).

[325] Cic. *Leg. Man*. 63, 71: *Leg. Agr*. 2.16-17; *Phil*. 6.18; *Sest*. 97-8, 104-8, 114, 119, 138; Morstein-Marx (2004:148); Asmis (2005:406).

[326] Cic. *Leg. Agr*. 2.17; J. Tatum (2009), 'Roman Democracy ?,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Chichester, 214-227, pp. 215-216.

[327] *Leg. Agr*. 2.242. See also L. Pernot (2005), *Rhetoric in Antiquity*, Washington, p. 112.

[328] J. Connolly (2007b), *The State of Speech: Rhetoric and Political Thought in Ancient Rome*, Princeton, p. 221.

transform spaces into ethical human 'dwelling places' (*ēthea*), where people can deliberate about and "know together" (*con-scientia*) some matter of interest.[329] These scholars are looking at the above-mentioned "primordial" meaning of the term *ethos* as "an accustomed place," an "animal haunt" or a "human abode" to inform their understanding of this rhetorical concept.[330] Several years earlier, Welch warned that reducing *ethos* to "rhetorical proof" causes only "residual ancient connections to remain for the current reader,"[331] while Reynolds has observed that careful attention to the etymology of *ethos* ― its connections to space, place or location ― helps to reestablish it as a social act and as a product of a community.[332] Reynolds points to the contemporary usage of the term to designate the character of an age, society or a culture, "something like *zeitgeist*," in order to indicate how accustomed we are to thinking of *ethos* as referring to the social context "surrounding the solitary rhetor."[333] Reynolds calls on Michael Halloran who also recognised the importance of these etymological relationships and stated that:

> In contrast to modern notions of the person or self, *ethos* emphasises the conventional rather than the idiosyncratic, the public rather than the private. The most concrete meaning in the Greek lexicon is 'a habitual gathering place' and I suspect that it is upon this image of people gathering together in public space, sharing experience and ideas, that its meaning as character rests.[334]

According to Reynolds, once we consider the inherently communal roots and social construction of *ethos*, we can see that *ethos* cannot be faked or manipulated, because individuals are formed by the values of their culture and not the other way around.[335] She points to Aristotle's treatment of *ethos* in the *Nicomachean Ethics* where he used the concept in order to describe the

---

[329] M. J. Hyde (2004), 'Rhetorically, We Dwell,' in M. J. Hyde (ed.), *The Ethos of Rhetoric*, South Carolina, 13-28, pp. 13-14.

[330] See above, at n. 27-28.

[331] K. E. Welch (1990), *The Contemporary Reception of Classical Rhetoric: Appropriations of Ancient Discourse*, Hillsdale, p. 17.

[332] N. Reynolds (1993), '*Ethos* as Location: New Sites for Understanding Discursive Authority,' *Rhetoric Review*, 11, 325-338, p. 327.

[333] Reynolds (1993:327).

[334] M. S. Halloran (1982), 'Aristotle's Conception of *Ethos*, or If Not His, Somebody Else's,' *Rhetoric Review 1*, 58-63, p. 60.

[335] Reynolds (1993:328).

humanising function of the *polis*, or its role in the formation of the truly human character (*ethos*) by 'taming' the irrational *ēthos* through virtuous habits.[336] Consequently, she concludes, "an individual *ethos* cannot be determined outside the space in which it was created or without a sense of the cultural context."[337]

Cicero's rhetorical *ethos* was also largely a product of the communty in which it was created; it arose out of the orator's understanding of his social and political milieu, his knowledge of human nature, the practices of the citizens and their tastes and modes of expression.[338] Cicero insisted that such an understanding was crucial to any orator; among other reasons, without it the orator would not be able to manipulate his character to suit the sensibilities of each particular audience. Nevertheless, in Cicero's case, it would be incorrect to say that because *ethos* was a social construct, the product of and grounded in the values of the community, it could not be faked or manipulated. Cicero's self-fashioning as a solitary human politician and orator inhabiting a largely subhuman realm, comparable to that inhabited by the first orator, also necessarily involved the rejection of his community's false values. He remained human precisely because of this rejection so, for Cicero, 'faking' *ethos* was a moral imperative. Because he would not advertise this rejection to the audience but would instead claim to be sharing in their values, this 'faking' also became a pragmatic necessity. Once again, therefore, *honestum* and *utile* are perfectly reconciled.

The picture becomes somewhat more complex in Cicero's later works on rhetorical theory, where *conciliare* falls almost entirely out of use in favour of *delectare* ("to give pleasure"). In *De Oratore,* Cicero states that for each of the three functions of speech (*conciliare*,

---

[336] Arist. EN. 2.1.1103a17-30; EE. 2.2.1220b2-6. Nevertheless, it needs to be acknowledged that the *ethos* of *Rhetoric* is different from that found in Aristotle's ethical works. Wisse, for example, observed the difference between the 'ethical' *ethos* of *Nicomachean Ethics* and the rhetorical *ethos* of *Rhetoric* and stated that while in *Ethics* the truly good person must be 'possessed of good sense,' in *Rhetoric,* due to the device of *ethos*, he may be wicked, as long as he knows how to hide his thoughts, Wisse (1989:30-31). For a good discussion of the *ethos* of *Nicomachean Ethics,* see Miller (1974:309-316).

[337] Reynolds (1993:329). Smyth expresses this by saying that *ethos* "*dwells*… in the speaker's 'personal character' before the *boulē* or in the courts of the agora," C. R. Smyth (2004), 'Ethos Dwells Pervasively: A Hermeneutic Reading of Aristotle on Credibility,' in M. J. Hyde (ed.), *The Ethos of Rhetoric*, South Carolina, 1-19, p. 2.

[338] Cic. *De Or.* 1.224-230, 2.68; J. M. May (2002), 'Ciceronian Oratory in Context,' in J. M. May (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Cicero, Oratory and Rhetoric*, Leiden, 49-70.

docere and *movere*) there is a proper style: the plain style for proof (*logos*), the middle style for pleasure (*delectare* — *ethos*?), and the grand style for stirring the emotions (*pathos*).[339] *Logos* and *pathos* are easily recognised in the plain and the grand style, but *ethos,* if we are to recognise it at home in the middle style, was quite oddly stated as concerned with giving aesthetic pleasure to the audience.[340] The function of *delectare* acknowledges that every speech is a spectacle, an aesthetic performance, but the question here is why Cicero considered *delectare* to be a concern of *ethos* in particular.[341] We can think of *delectare* as a goal of the middle style as such, rather than of *ethos*, since like the grand style it was linked with *ornatus*,[342] but the ease of recognising *logos* and *pathos* in the plain and grand style does suggest that Cicero was consciously inviting the reader to regard *delectare* as a concern of *ethos*. In any case, as Fantham has observed, Cicero deliberately avoided *conciliare* as a term,[343] thus posing the legitimate question of why he became dissatisfied with it.

The first clue, I believe, lies in another peculiarity, namely, that at one point in *De Oratore,* Cicero ascribes to *pathos* some of the functions Aristotle reserved for *ethos*. Cicero stated that *ethos* was much like *pathos* except that it involved milder feelings.[344] This is usually explained by a possible overlap in effect between *ethos* and *pathos*, that is, by aiming at *conciliare*, at producing a feeling of goodwill or sympathy *(eunoia)* in the audience, *ethos* could be seen as aiming at an emotional response.[345] This is a reasonable suggestion, but perhaps more

---

[339] Cic. *Orat*. 69. See also *Brut*. 185, 187-188, 197, 276; *De Or*. 3.25. Quintilian conflates the terms and states that the middle style "seems to fulfil the task of charming, or as others say, of conciliating" (*…delectandi sive, ut alii dicunt, conciliandi praestare videatur officium*). This is probably a misunderstanding, as the two terms are sufficiently different to invite questions; see Wisse (1989:215-220).

[340] The term *delectare* was frequently associated with *voluptas* and it means "to give pleasure," *De Or*. 3.25; *Brut*. 188, 276; Wisse (1988:215).

[341] A meaningful connection of *delectare* with *ethos* is certainly difficult to forge: Wisse (1988:215), for example, holds that *delectare* is in no way compatible with *ethos*, while Fantham notes that by discarding *conciliare* for *delectare* Cicero, at the very least, severed all connection with Aristotle's *ethos*. Fantham (1973:274-275), "The term had nothing in common with Aristotle, but carried rather aesthetic and stylistic associations."

[342] Cic. *Orat*. 92, 95-96.

[343] Fantham (1973:274).

[344] Cic. *De Or*. 2.183-185, 212.

[345] Kennedy, G. (1972), *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World: 300 BC-AD 300,* Princeton, p. 222. Wisse (1989:243); May & Wisse (2001:35). See also *Inst*. 6.2.8-9. For criticism, see Enos & Schnakenberg (1994:194).

might be said by considering the controversy against which this theory was forged, namely the Asianist-Atticist debate. The issues that fuelled this controversy can be traced back to Plato's objections to rhetoric, or to the aesthetic appeal of the orator's language in particular, which he saw as serving no other purpose than bedazzling the audience.[346] Plato's attitudes were probably a model for the Stoia's conception of essentialist rhetoric, which regarded any form of embellishment in speech or any argument in language more elaborate than the truth demanded, as outright immoral.[347] The Stoic conception of rhetoric influenced in turn the late republican Atticists, who tried to impose their idea of rhetorical essentialism as a universal standard in public discourse; the Atticists attacked rhetorical aesthetics and firmly rejected excessive rhetorical elaboration, insisting only on the legitimacy of simple, unadorned, emotionally restrained oratory.[348]

The Atticists labeled oratory which they perceived as overly elaborate, emotional and "full of attractive faults" as "Asiatic," and argued that its primary objective involved bedazzling and pleasing the audience rather than communicating the truth.[349] Accordingly, anyone who was found guilty of excessive rhetorical elaboration would open himself to charges of fakery or 'Asianism.' Cicero was one of the accused, and the Atticists criticised him for his repetitiveness,

---

[346] The Socrates of *Apology,* for example, refuses to offer cunningly crafted speeches and asks the judges to ignore the 'manner' of what he says and concentrate on deciding whether or not it is just, *Apol*. 18a2-6. For a discussion, see J. Hesk (1999), 'The Rhetoric of Anti-Rhetoric in Athenian Oratory,' in S. Goldhill and K. Osborne (eds.), *Performance Culture and Athenian Democracy*, 201-230, p. 217. Also, Atherton (1988:394).

[347] The Stoics, as Quintilian informs us, did not "indulge in eloquence," *Inst*. 10.1.84. See also Cicero, *De Or*. 1.229. The Stoics, according to Cicero, "pursue no glory of speech and do not dilate upon an argument," *Brutus,* 114ff. In the anonymous prologue to Hermogenes, the author says "by speaking well, Stoics meant speaking the truth," *Anon. Prolog. Ad. Hermog. Rhet. Gr*. 8.8; Pernot (2005:117); Krostenko (2001:134-135).

[348] The Atticists imitated the plain style of Lysias, and among the Romans, the model orators were Cato the Elder, Rutilius Rufus, Brutus, and Calvus; see *Brut*. 283-284; *Ad Att*. 15.1a2. See also C. Connors (1997), 'Field and Forum: Culture and Agriculture in Roman Rhetoric,' in W. Dominik (ed.), *Roman Eloquence, Rhetoric in Society and Literature*, London, 71-89, p. 87. In *Inst*. 6.1.7, Quintilian states that the Atticists appealed to classical Athenian law, which forbade the orator to move the emotions of the audience; Atherton (1988:404).

[349] Quint. *Inst*.10.1.129-130.

figures, rhythms and excessive emotionalism,[350] arguing that these features were signs of his underlying effeminacy; that he was, as Quintilian put it, "softer than a man."[351] While these accusations were rhetorical commonplaces in Roman invective, they were extremely serious to Cicero whose political *persona* was chiefly a rhetorical creation. Having lacked the most obvious claims to *virtus* (military achievement), Cicero had to rely on his reputation as an orator, so the Atticist challenge to him involved the suggestion that his public *persona*, chiefly the product of rhetorical self-fashioning, was entirely deprived of substance, serving only as an external cover over a less than masculine individual. Cicero certainly considered these charges to be sufficiently serious to respond to them in his later works on rhetorical theory, *Orator* and *Brutus*. Here, he drew heavily on his humanistic training which included philosophy, law and literature in order to demonstrate that the aesthetics of his oratory were not incompatible with its ethics, or indeed with his *virtus*.[352]

One of Cicero's responses to Roman Atticism was to insist that his oratory was more Attic than the oratory of those who attacked him because the term admits three legitimate styles, the plain, middle and grand, which the good orator needed to master and combine in a single speech.[353] We have encountered these three styles above: plain for *logos*, middle for *delectare* and grand for *pathos*. In assigning the function of *pathos* to the grand style, Cicero followed Aristotle who typified the 'emotional style' by the presence of "compound words and many epithets and unusual terms."[354] Nevertheless, despite the overt aesthetics of the grand style, its primary function was not to provide the audience with aesthetic pleasure but to arouse their

---

[350] For example, Quintilian reports that the Atticists criticised Cicero for being "swollen, redundant, repetitious, and almost softer than a man," Quint. *Inst*. 12.10.12, 9.4.12. Also see Sen. *Ep*. 100.7; Cic. *Brut*. 284-91; *Orat*. 23-32, 75-90; Connors (1997: 84-88); Pernot (2005:117).

[351] See above, n. 346; Tac. *Dial*. 18.4-5; Krostenko (2001:224-225).

[352] Cic. *Brut*. 284-91; *Orat*. 23-32, 75-90; Hughes (1994:211-227); Pernot (2005:117); E. Narducci (2007), 'Orator and the Definition of the Ideal Orator,' in J. M. May (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Cicero, Oratory and Rhetoric*, Leiden, 427-443.

[353] Cic. *Orat*. 74.

[354] Cicero did the same in *De Oratore* where he described Crassus's emotional passages as containing "a flow of the most grand and best words" (*flumen gravissimorum optimorumque verborum*), *De Or*. 2.188; see also 212-15; C. Gill (1984), 'The Ethos/Pathos Distinction in Rhetorical and Literary Criticism,' *CQ* 34, 149-166. For a discussion of Cicero's *pathos*, see J. Hall (2007), 'Oratorical Delivery and the Emotions: Theory and Practice,' in W. Dominik and J. Hall (eds.), *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric*, Malden, 218-234, pp. 232-234.

emotions; aesthetic pleasure was the function assigned to the middle style (*delectare-ethos*). The question we must ask now is why Cicero would forge this allegiance between his *ethos* and aesthetic pleasure, between the central concept in his rhetorical self-fashioning and that which his Attic critics regarded as the most problematic and 'false' in his oratory. In order to see how such a move would have served Cicero's agenda, we might first observe the relationship in these works between *ethos* and *pathos*, or between the functions of *delectare* and *movere* and their respective styles. The first thing we need to observe is that the difference between the middle and the grand style was not forged at the level of their aesthetics but at the level of their 'emotion'; they were both aestheticised but, being unconcerned with *pathos*, the former style was less emotional. Cicero did say, we might remember, that *ethos* (*delectare*) was much like *pathos* but that it involved milder feelings. Keeping this in mind, let us observe the additional connection of *ethos* and *pathos* in Cicero's rhetorical theory as forged by their common association with theatrical *persona*.

At first sight, this association was a problematic one. In Rome, actors were regarded as liars by profession and were branded as *infames* ― "without reputation" or "without a voice."[355] Romans considered actors to be all about empty aesthetics; they often stressed their charm and beauty but insisted that these qualities were of a deceitful nature, illusionary and deprived of any essence and goodness.[356] In short, actors were not proper humans and theirs were the original faces behind the *persona*, which, as we know, in its original meaning denoted the actor's mask.[357] Normally, orators went to a great deal of trouble to point out the differences between themselves and the actors who in rhetorical writings often figure as the orator's polar opposite; their orientation towards the aesthetical, towards pleasure and fiction, usually served as foils against

---

[355] Edwards (1993:118).

[356] Tac. *Ann.* 11.28, 11.36; Suet. *Dom.* 3.1, 3.10; Edwards (1993:118).

[357] The fact that they wore masks did not help actors' reputations in Rome, because their masks were often seen as at the very centre of their personal and professional deceit. Some authors complained that actors utilised masks in order to conceal their identity while delivering attacks on respectable citizens, Tac. *Ann.* 4.14; Edwards (1993:126); W. Beare (1939), 'Masks on the Roman Stage,' *CQ* 33, 139-146, p. 143. A brief fable from *Phaedrus* goes: "A fox after looking by chance at a tragic actor's mask (*persona*) remarked: O what a majestic face is here, but it has no brains." Similarly, it is said that Roscius, the famous actor and friend of Cicero, used a *persona* primarily to cover up his squint; see Elliot (1982:19).

which the orator establishes his own validity.[358] Nevertheless, Cicero is unusual in this respect: already in *De Oratore* he employed actors in a way that acknowledged positive examples and role models among them.[359] One of his positive role models was the tragic actor Aesophus, who, as Plutarch tells us, tutored Cicero himself.[360] Aesophus was peculiar in the sense that he would on occasion make it very difficult for his contemporaries to distinguish between Aesophus 'the actor' and his *persona.* He was 'sincere' in that he suffered the passions of his *persona* to the point of becoming a murderer: on one occasion he became so absorbed in his role that he struck and killed one of the servants who suddenly rushed across the stage during his performance.[361]

Within *De Oratore*, theatricality is an integral and necessary aspect of proper oratory and Cicero even argued that the orator needs to master acting techniques more than actors do: actors are merely "imitators of truth" while orators are the true "actors of truth itself" (*De Or.* 3.214). For Cicero, one aspect of the proper 'acting of truth' concerned the orator's emotion, which in regard to actors was displayed on their theatrical masks. In the Roman world, theatrical *personae* served to portray the primary emotions, like terror and grief, and it seems that they did this in a much more exaggerated emotional style than did the masks of the Greek theatre.[362] Cicero made note of this feature of the actor's mask, but he also noticed that on occasion and with a better sort of actor, the mask and the actor's face could fuse into one. Such fusion would occur at the emotional level, and it seems that Cicero thought this happened regularly with the true orator who employs the mask and yet in the course of his speech also identifies himself with it. A famous passage in *De Oratore* can easily be seen as the point at which the theatrical *persona*, Ciceronian *pathos* and *ethos* collide in a most spectacular fashion. Narrating the importance of emotion in oratory, Antoninus states (2.1.193-194):

---

[358] E. Gunderson (2000), *Staging Masculiitny: the Rhetoric of Performing in the Ancient World*, Michigan, p. 147.

[359] Within *De Oratore*, theatricality is an integral and necessary aspect of proper oratory and Cicero even argued that orators need a mastery of acting techniques more than actors, who are "imitators of truth" while orators are "actors of truth itself," *De Or*. 3.214; Dugan (2005:135).

[360] Plut. *Cic*. 5.4-5.

[361] Plut. *Cic*. 5.4-5.

[362] W. Beare (1964), *The Roman Stage*, London, Appendix L; D. Henry and E. Henry (1985), *The Mask of Power: Seneca's Tragedies and Imperial Rome,* Wiltshire: "Educated and popular tastes in ancient Rome were united in what they expected from…drama, that is, the enactment of human experiences of an intensely emotional kind," p. 3.

> …quid potest esse
>
> tam fictum quam versus, quam scaena, quam
>
> fabulae? Tamen in hoc genere saepe ipse vidi,
>
> ut ex persona mihi ardere oculi hominis his-
>
> trionis viderentur spondalia illa dicentis….
>
> …flens ac lugens dicere videbatur. Quae si
>
> ille histrio, cotidie cum ageret, tamen agere
>
> sine dolore non poterat, quid Pacuvium putatis
>
> in scribendo leni animo ac remisso fuisse?

> What can be so unreal as poetry, the theater or stage plays? And yet, in that sort of thing, I myself have often been a spectator when the actor-man's eyes seemed to me to be blazing behind the mask, as he spoke those solemn lines…I thought I heard sobs of mourning in his voice. Now if that player, though acting it daily, could never act that scene without emotion, do you really think that Pacuvius when he wrote it was in a calm and careless frame of mind? (trans. E.W. Sutton, p. 337).

Here, as Gunderson has observed, Antoninus makes an important claim about the orator: "The good and weeping actor is made into our model orator…in fact it is always easier to make the claim for the orator, as he is almost certain to be the author, the performer and the performance, his own face serving as a mask."[363] Only a few lines earlier Antoninus claimed that the orator should himself feel the emotion he wishes to arouse, or at least never attempt to persuade his audience into feeling anything he himself does not feel.[364] Such an orator does not merely play on the emotions of his audience but invites them to share in his own, creating the 'community of feeling' that goes a long way towards uniting people in a common cause.[365] Just as the tears of the actor above fused his face with his tragic mask (already fashioned as weeping), the orator's face is fused with his *ethos*; he is not unmasked as such but, for the time being, he becomes the

---

[363] Gunderson (2000:145).

[364] Most likely speaking for Cicero, Antoninus states "…I certainly never in court wanted to excite sorrow, pity, ill-will or hatred with my speeches except if in the course of rousing the judges I were utterly moved by those very same emotions towards which I wished to lead them," *De Or*. 2.189.

[365] See C. R. Smith and M. J. Hyde (1991), 'Rethinking the Public: The Role of Emotion in Being-With-Others,' *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77, 446-466, p. 448.

mask.

Antoninus applies this principle to his own experience as an advocate for M. Aquilius, whose cloak he ripped during the course of a speech in order to expose his battle scars and thus arouse the audience towards feeling sympathy for the old man.[366] While he was attempting to inspire his audience into this emotion, Antoninus claims to have himself been genuinely moved by the old man's scars. The act of unveiling the body, as Dugan observes, itself vouchsafes for the authenticity of the theatricality imbedded in this act; it functions "as the most legitimate of signifiers" in that "it lays bare corporeal reality beyond the bounds of play acting."[367] While on some level and up to a certain point, this can resolve the issue of the relationship between *persona*, *ethos* and *pathos*, we should not forget that Cicero disapproved of the display of raw emotion on the grounds that it dehumanises. However useful, emotion had to be moderated and restrained, and Cicero indeed appears to have harboured a deep mistrust of overtly emotional oratory and would often criticise the "aggressive" and "frenzied" oratorical outbursts of unscrupulous orators.[368] Cicero's orator might have been invited to feel *pathos*, but he had to feel it on a much more refined level, one that would not jeopardise the integrity of his self-government; the raw, irrational and, indeed, murderous 'sincerity' of Aesophus was certainly not an option for him. Here, ultimately, everything boiled down to *decorum*, and the champion of *decorum* in *De Oratore* was Cicero's friend, the actor Roscius. Roscius wrote a handbook on acting which did not survive, but there is a rich anecdotal tradition around him and his theory that seems to confirm that Roscius conformed to the Roman behavioural ideals of *decorum*, restraint and self-control.[369] For Cicero, as Duncan has observed, Aesophus and Roscius embody the two major and opposing theories of acting from the ancient world, each of which had its drawbacks: "if acting is a possession by another self, then the actor is mad and possibly dangerous…if acting

---

[366] Cic. *De Or*. 2.195.

[367] Dugan (2005:142).

[368] Cic. *Brut*. 241; Hall (2007:230-231).

[369] Cic. *De Or*. 3.132. Cicero defended Roscius against a charge of fraud, *Q. Rosc*. 22-3, and claimed in his speech that Roscius applied the same restraint in his life as in his work. Cicero describes him as someone who has "more honesty than art and more truth than study" because of his self-control, *Q. Rosc*. 6.17-19; *Quinct*. 76. See also A. Duncan (2006), *Performance and Identity in the Classical World*, Cambridge, pp. 160-185. For *decorum* in *Orator,* see Narducci (2007:432).

is a skill…then the actor is a dangerously close to being a deliberate liar."[370] Roscius, Duncan observes further, was a more positive example than Aesophus because his public image tapped into the idealisation of self-control and restraint in Roman culture.[371]

Nevertheless, this explanation does not resolve the tension described above, that is, if Roscius's ways and his theory of acting had its drawbacks in that it emphasised skill and self-control over emotional sincerity, in which sense did his 'fakery' represent a positive role model for Cicero's orator? Furthermore, we also have to question this portrayal of Roscius as 'self-controlled' and 'truthful' and ask what his supposed truth and self-control had to do with his acting, which, as Cicero himself claimed, is ultimately an "imitation of truth"? Precisely because he was an imitator of truth, Roscius could act the roles he was best known for, pimps and parasites, without losing the moral credibility he seems to have enjoyed.[372] So, the question is what was 'true' or 'sincere' in Roscius' performance and yet sufficiently 'self-controlled' or 'false' for him to have been able to be both a great actor, a moral man and a worthy model for Cicero's orator? A relatively modern theory on theatre, namely Lewes's theory of "natural acting," might provide us with a conceptual stepping stone for understanding this tension. Like Cicero, Lewes argued that without genuine emotion actors have no hope of performing superbly or of touching their spectators, but these emotions, he clarified, should only provide the raw material for the actor's performance. Naïve, unmediated expression of passionate feelings, Lewes argues, would be unintelligible to the audience: "If the actor were really in a passion his voice would be a scream, his gestures wild and disorderly, he would represent a painful, not an aesthetic, spectacle."[373] This line of reasoning also leads Lewes to the central paradox of good acting: "If he (the actor) really feels, he cannot act, but he cannot act unless he really feels."[374] Lewes addresses this paradox by theorising a self that is split into two constituent selves: the interior, spontaneous and feeling self, and the reflective thinking self which functions both as its controller and a spectator:

The actor is the spectator of his own tumult; and although moved by it, can yet so master it as to

---

[370] Duncan (2006:184).

[371] Duncan (2006:185).

[372] For Roscius's roles, see Duncan (2006:173-175).

[373] G. H. Lewes in L. M. Voskuil (2004), *Acting Naturally: Victorian Theatricality and Authenticity,* Virginia, p. 94.

[374] Voskuil (2004:50).

select from it only those elements which suit his purpose. We are all spectators of ourselves...This is also true of a fine actor, and many of my readers will recognise the truth of what Talma [an actor] said of himself — "I have suffered cruel losses, and have often been assailed with profound sorrows; but after the first moment grief vents in crisis and tears, I have found myself involuntarily turning my gaze inwards…and found the actor was unconsciously studying the man, and catching nature in the act."[375]

Lewes's "natural actor," therefore, needs much more than a mere theatrical ability to manipulate theatrical conventions; he requires both self-knowledge and self-control; the capacity to be a spectator, a restraining force and a player at the same time, instantaneously transforming his own authentic feeling into the artificial materials of art.[376] In *De Officiis*, we may recall, Cicero presented such an act of controlling and aestheticising one's own inner turmoil as the ultimate human act, demanded by *decorum* and bound to pay dividends in one's social interactions. Lewes claims further that when the actor's subjective experience of passion, now aesthetically packaged, is made available to spectators it results in the entire theatrical community being brought together in a shared experience of feeling.[377] Spectators are encouraged to recognise their common human nature on stage, fostering thus a "state of sympathy" that links them into a harmonious community.[378] This last point is certainly reminiscent of Cicero's *ethos*, as recognised in *conciliare*, and Vosculi indeed observes that Lewes's theory of natural acting provides "the theoretical materials by which various forms of community might be assembled; a collective self that transcends the traditional constraints of class, culture, and nation to achieve new ways of organising society."[379]

Lewes's paradox helps to explain why in *De Oratore* Cicero advises the orator to feel the emotion he is trying to arouse, while in *De Officiis* he advised against really feeling it as this would turn one into a raving subhuman, and that, Cicero would certainly agree, is "a painful, not an aesthetic spectacle." The fact that they both shared an idea of the self that is split into two constituent selves: the spontaneous and feeling (irrational) self and the reflective thinking

---

[375] Voskuil (2004:52).

[376] Voskuil (2004:52).

[377] Voskuil (2004:28).

[378] Voskuil (2004:49).

[379] Voskuil (2004:49).

(rational) self may have predisposed both theorists to formulate the same solution to this paradox. In any case, the idea of an 'internal spectator' is commonplace in Roman Stoicism, where such an entity is imagined as either a virtuous other scrutinising and moderating the life performance of a *proficiens* or, in the case of a *proficiens* who has progressed up the moral scale, as his own rational inner self.[380] Cicero clearly appropriated this idea when he required his ideal orator/statesman to become accustomed both to self-examination and to self control; to be both the "spectator of the self," of the irrational and emotive 'animal,' but also, being a creature of reason, to be detached and in control of this irrational force.[381] On the oratorical stage, the orator is confronted by a moral, aesthetic and rhetorical imperative to produce a self that is both sincere (sincerely human) and a work of art; a self that is capable of creating goodwill and consensus in the audience (*conciliare*), while at the same time providing them with an aesthetically pleasing spectacle (*delectare*). However elaborate the mask and however grand the language, if assumed and utilised by a true human, neither can ever be truly fake. Both are always and necessarily the expression and surface manifestation of the orator's inner humanity. This was the point necessary to make in the Asianist-Atticist war.

VII

Conclusion

Throughout his political career, Cicero's adoption of Greek ideas on 'being human' and of Greek views in regards to the humanising function of the state allowed him to formulate a strategy of self-promotion that involved constructing for himself the image of a truly human politician, the saviour of the state, and allocating to his enemies images of destructive, subhuman beasts. It would appear that Cicero's politics of humanity formed one of the central components of the

---

[380] Seneca advises his reader to imagine all his actions as being scrutinised by some great man such as Scipio, Cato or Laelius, *Ep*.25.5-6. But, he also states, "When you have made so much progress that you have respect for yourself also, you may send away your tutor," *Ep*. 11.8ff. In the latter case, therefore, theatre becomes internalised.

[381] Scipio specifies the requirements of the statesman's role as "improving and examining himself continually, urging others to imitate him, and furnishing in himself, as it were, a mirror to his fellow citizens by reason of the supreme excellence of his life and character," *Rep*. 2.69.

ideological superstructure constructed by his intellectual, political and literary activity during the last years of the Republic. The conceptual bonds he forged between Stoic ethics, cosmology and his own political theory allowed him to portray the Roman Republic of the past and its magistrates, laws and institutions as agents of divine reason that enabled the Roman citizens of that age to exist as true humans. Within this ideological framework, a commitment to the conservative political values and ideals promulgated within *De Re Publica* came to signify one's full participation in the rational universe, while a failure to do so signified rebellion against it and the consequent descent into the bestial. Cicero's politics of humanity also played a significant role within his project of self-fashioning in the sense that it allowed him to defend his propensity for socio-rhetorical aesthetics. One of the central notions within Cicero's theory is that social aesthetics allow humans to appropriately express and perform their humanity on the social stage, as demanded by *decorum*, while only 'beasts' utilise social aesthetics deceptively in order to hide their inhumanity. Depending on their perceived function, therefore, the socio-rhetorical concepts of *persona* and *ethos* could designate a variety of things: over the face of a subhuman who failed to assume the first human *persona,* any subsequent socio-political *persona* inevitably stood for a deceptive mask, while the *persona* assumed over the 'mask of humanity' became its external and, if the situation demanded it, temporary manifestation. Cicero argued that the first *persona* could demand a 'false front,' but insisted that the true human's occasional and necessary insincerity is quite different from a false human's *dissimulatio*. This notion allowed Cicero to reconcile the moral imperative of having a stable and consistent socio-political identity and of 'being what one wishes to seem' with the rhetorical one of adjusting one's external appearance to suit the socio-rhetorical occasion. In the next chapter, we will observe the ideologues of the imperial period using this same formulation to preserve their humanity in the face of imperial autocracy, to distinguish their 'falsity' from the dehumanising and slavish *dissimulatio*. They did so while responding to one of the central ideological challenges of the imperial period: the preservation of humanity under the rule of one man. Cicero, as well as a number of republican martyrs who chose to die rather than to live in a state deprived of its *libertas*, considered this an impossibility. Nevertheless, the majority of *nobiles* who survived the turmoil and lived as subjects beneath the first emperor disagreed. These men did their best to convince themselves and each other that humanity and autocracy were not mutually exclusive, and it is to the observation of these efforts that we now turn.

Chapter Two

Defending Humanity: the *Princeps*, *Nobiles* and the Ideology of Humanisation

There is no matter in which the virtue of man approaches closer to the divine authority of the gods
than in the founding of new states or the preservation of those already existing.
Cicero, *De Re Publica,* 1.12.

By freedom, spirit grows, by servitude, it is crushed.
Seneca, *De Ira,* 2.21.3.

You may retain the illusion of liberty by desiring whatever is enjoined on you.
Lucan, *Pharsalia*, 1.146f.

I

Introduction

When Caesar's nephew Octavian eliminated his last serious competitor, Antony, at the battle of
Actium, he completed the process that characterised the late Republic by which power and
authority in Rome was gradually relocated from the Senate and traditional institutions and into
the hands of individual dynasts. Octavian entered the Roman political scene apparently for
personal reasons, in order to avenge his assassinated uncle Julius Caesar, but the arch-republican
Cicero was soon to recognise in him the long-awaited saviour of the Republic. Cicero lauded
Octavian's outstanding personal qualities, his purity of motive and his sense of higher mission
which urged him to fight with conviction for *rei publicae causa*, for the good of all.[1] This image
became largely discredited in subsequent years as Octavian's opportunistic and often brutal

---

[1] "The young man is the perfection of purity and decorum; we have no more brilliant example of traditional piety
among our youth," *Phil.* 3.6.15; "The young man is convinced — I have played some part in that — that our
salvation depends on him," *Ad Brut.* 1.3; "He has embraced the cause that would be the most grateful to the Senate,
to the people, to Italy, to Gods and men…," *Phil*. 5.16.17.

conduct during the civil wars showed him in a somewhat different light, earning him the nickname *adulescentulus carnifex* ("teenage executioner"). [2] Apart from its original use to designate a public slave who carried out executions, the term *carnifex* was often applied to tyrants to indicate their inhumanity and the inversion of the king's proper role that their rule represented.[3] Nevertheless, history does not remember Octavian as a tyrant, mostly because in 27 BC he publicly renounced the extraordinary powers that he had accumulated during the civil wars and claimed no larger portion of power (*potestas*) than any of his colleagues.[4] As a sign of gratitude, the Senate bestowed on Octavian a number of honours: the name Augustus; a golden shield commemorating his virtues of valour, clemency, justice and piety (*virtus, clementia, iustitia, pietas*); and a civic crown (*corona civica*) which the Senate ordered to be fixed to his door.[5]

While Octavian's dominant role in Roman politics did not cease after 27 BC, his military dictatorship officially metamorphosed into political power based primarily on his personal moral prestige (*auctoritas*) which conferred on him the designation of *princeps*, the "first citizen."[6] It is no simple matter to identify the precise nature of the institutional arrangements which we call the 'principate' or the real and ultimate power on which Augustus's position in the *res publica* rested.[7] One central issue involves deciding whether Augustus used the settlement in 27 BC to

---

[2] For the cruel treatment of the survivors of Philippi, the exile of the Nursians and the massacre of 300 men in Perusia, see Tac. *Ann.*1.10; Suet. *Aug.* 13-15.

[3] Seneca calls his tyrants *carnifices*, worthy of death (*Ira*, 14.4) or, lacking other alternatives, of escape through suicide, *Ira,* 3.15.3, 15.3.4. For Caligula as *carnifex* see *Ira*, 2.33.6. For the role of *carnifex,* see Tac. *Ann.* 5.9; Suet. *Cal.* 34; Pliny, *Ep.* 4.11.

[4] In his own words, "I transferred the *res publica* from my power to the discretion of the Senate and the people of Rome," *RG* 34.1, 3.

[5] *RG* 34.4.

[6] The appellation *princeps* was a familiar one in the Roman political vocabulary. It was attached during the Republic to prominent public figures, like the Scipios or the elder Cato. Rather than an official position, it suggested only the highest personal and moral qualities. See, for example, K. Loewenstein (1973), *The Governance of Rome,* Hague, pp. 315-318.

[7] As Eder puts it: "To speak of Augustus means to speak of power: of power overtly exercised, of power disguised, of power relinquished." W. Eder (1990), 'Augustus and the Power of Tradition: The Augustan Principate as Binding Link between Republic and Empire,' in K.A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (eds.), *Between Republic and Empire:*

restore the Republic in some meaningful sense, or whether he used it merely to preserve the fiction of the traditional republican order to serve the political and ideological needs of the new monarchical state. Velleius Paterculus was one of the contemporaries who saw no reason for scepticism and in his histories thus recalled the year 27 BC as the year in which the Republic was restored (2.89.3-4):

> Finita vicesimo anno bella civila, sepulta
> externa, revocata pax, sopitus ubique armorim
> furor, restituta vis legibus, iudiciis auctoritas, senatui
> maiestas magistratuum ad pristinum radactum modum
> …Prisca illa et antiqua rei publicae forma revocata.

> The civil wars were ended after twenty years, foreign wars suppressed, peace restored, the frenzy of arms everywhere lulled to rest. Validity was restored to the laws, authority to the courts, and dignity to the senate, the power of the magistrates was reduced to its former limits…The old traditional form of the Republic was restored (trans. F. W. Shipley, p. 237).

Nevertheless, the further they were removed from these early years, the readier writers and historians were to acknowledge that Augustus's reign had indeed caused a major rupture in the Roman political system: Suetonius already regarded Augustus as a second monarch, while Dio Cassius was confident enough to assert that after Actium, Augustus's rule was *monarchia*.[8] Tacitus opened his *Annals* with the words "Augustus subjected all to his power ─ under the name of *princeps*" and then proceeded to argue that Augustus had created and presided over a dissimulating state, or an "image of the Republic" (*Republicae imago*).[9] Tacitus believed that Augustus created this illusion in order to obscure the grim reality that the true Romans had not survived the civil wars and that those who were left and had accepted the *princeps* as their ruler

Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate, Berkeley, 71-122, p. 71; R. Syme (1939), *Roman Revolution,* Oxford, p. 406.

[8] Dio. 53.17; Suet. *Div. Aug.* 28.1. See also, W. Eder (2005), 'Augustus and the Power of Tradition,' in K. Galinsky (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, Austin, 13-32, p. 15.

[9] Tac. *Ann*. 1.1, 13.28.

were, to use Tiberius's phrase, "men fit to be slaves" (*homines ad servitutem paratos*):[10]

>   …nullo adversante
> cum ferocissimi per acies aut proscriprione ceci-
> dissent, ceteri nobilium, quanto quis servitio promp-
> tior, optibus et honoribus extollerentur ac novis ex
> rebus aucti, tuta et praesentia quam vetera et peric-
> ulosa mallent

> Opposition there was none: the boldest spirits had succumbed on stricken fields or by
> proscription-lists; while the rest of the nobility found a cheerful acceptance of slavery the
> smoothest road to wealth and office, and, as they had thriven on revolution, stood now for
> the new order and safety in preference to the old order and adventure (trans. J. Jackson, p. 245).

The majority of modern scholars more or less agree with such an assessment and hold that
Augustus camouflaged his monarchical powers in quasi-constitutional forms because he
understood that for his fellow Romans *libertas* and *regnum* were mutually exclusive concepts.[11]
Libertas stood at the heart of everything; it embodied the customs of the ancestors (*mos
maiorum*), it entailed the condition of not being a slave and was the central attribute of *humanitas
Romana.*[12] Without Augustus's 'masking' of his monarchy into the forms of the *res publica*, his
continued domination over the Roman state would have signified to his fellow aristocrats their
collective descent into slavery. Scholars have observed that from the late Republic onwards,
words, images and symbols closely associated with slavery and with the slave's experience were
starting to be used to characterise the relationship between rulers, or the dynasts of the late

---

[10] Tac. *Ann*. 1.2.1, 3.65.

[11] Cic. *Rep*. 2.43; Loewenstein (1973:189); E. Gruen (2005), 'Augustus and the Making of the Principate,' in K.
Galinsky (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, Austin, 33-51, "…nor was he deceived in his
expectation that the Senate and the people would submit to slavery provided they were respectfully assured that they
still enjoyed their ancient freedom," p. 33.

[12] "All other nations endure slavery but our city cannot," Cicero reminds the Romans. "We have been trained and our
minds imbued by our ancestors to refer our acts and thoughts to the standards of *dignitas* and *virtus*," Cic. *Phil.*
10.10.20.

republic, and their (juridically) free subjects, especially aristocrats.[13] Given the non-human status of slaves in Roman society and law, metaphorically deploying conceptual categories associated with slavery in order to structure power relations in the domain of politics also involved the implicit claim that the emperor's subjects were dehumanised by being reduced in some crucial respects to animals or 'things.'[14] Republican martyrs chose death over such an existence,[15] but the majority had to be convinced that *libertas* and principate were indeed compatible and that they could exist as true human beings under the *princeps*'s rule.

Apart from denying the reality of the Augustan restoration, Tacitus also touches in this passage on what he sees as the chief mechanism by which Augustus ensured the compliance of the *nobiles*, namely the imperial *beneficia*. It is an old and largely accepted thesis that Augustus (and all subsequent emperors) placed himself at the apex of the Roman social institution of patronage. The emperor, it is often argued, now in the possession of enormous resources, continuously disbursed them on his subjects in the expectation that their gratitude would generate loyalty and support which would further cement and sustain his position of domination.[16] To

---

[13] For more examples, see M. B. Roller (2001), *Constructing Autocracy: Aristocracy and Emperor in Julio-Claudian Rome*, Oxford, pp. 215-217.

[14] As Roller has observed: "The word *servitus* and its cognates carried powerful negative connotations. These derived from the slave's stereotyped liability to moral and physical degradation, to coercion by the threat and application of force…When this word is projected *en bloc* into the derived domain, it brings along these connotations, thus providing not just the formal structuring but also an affective structuring of that domain." Roller, (2001:227). See below, 33-38.

[15] The dying Cato, they were told, proclaimed that, having been reared in freedom, he could not learn slavery. See Dio 43.10.5, 47.49.1-2; App. *BC.* 4.135; Plut. *Cat. Min.* 73.3; J. Osgood (2006), *Caesar's Legacy: Civil War and the Emergence of the Roman Empire*, Cambridge, p. 99.

[16] Patronage can be defined as a "largely instrumental friendship in which an individual of higher socio-economic status (the patron) uses his own influence and resources to provide protection or benefit for a person of lower status (the client), who for his part reciprocates by offering social support and personal service," Scott in T. Johnson and C. Dandeker (1989), 'Patronage: Relation and System,' in A. Wallace Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society,* London, 219-243, p. 221. The view of the emperor as supreme patron originated in the thesis of A. Von Premerstein (1937), *Vom Werden und Wesen des Prinzipats,* Munich, pp. 13-116. Some of the details of von Premerstein's thesis have been criticised but overall it has gained wide acceptance. See, for example, Syme (1939:349-385); P. Garsney and A. Saller (1987), *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture*, Berkeley, pp. 148-150; R. MacMullen (1988), *Corruption and the Decline of Rome*, New Haven, "It is the web of favours given or owed that enables an imperial administration of only a few hundred to rule the empire," p. 121; A. Wallace-Hadrill (1989), 'Patronage in

Tacitus, the institution of imperial patronage was built on a general willingness among surviving *nobiles* to 'play the slave' and submit to the *princeps*'s despotism in return for handsome rewards from his purse. Tacitus's rather dark assessment of this social institution, which had a long history in Rome, was by no means exclusive to him; Publilius Syrus, among others, asserted that to ask for and receive *beneficium* was equivalent to selling off one's *libertas*.[17] A famous passage in Cicero's *De Officiis* indicates that many of the aristocrats of his age agreed, as they all seemed to have suffered pronounced anxiety at being on the receiving end of the patronal relationship (2.69):

> Qui se locupletes honoratos beatos putant, ii
> ne obligari quidem beneficio volunt; quin etiam
> beneficium dedisse arbintrantur cum ipsi quamvis
> magnum aliquod acceperint, atque etiam a se aut
> postulari aut expectari aliquid suspicantur, patro-
> cinio vero se usos aut clientes appellari mortis insar
> putant.

> They who consider themselves wealthy, honoured and favourites of fortune, do not wish even to be put under obligations by our kind services…It is equivalent to death for them to have accepted a patron or to be called clients (trans. W. Miller, p. 245).

By 'equivalent to death' Cicero also means 'equivalent to slavery' because, being deprived of

---

Roman Society: From Republic to Empire,' in A. Wallace Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society,* London, 63-88; D. Shotter (1991), *Augustus Caesar,* New York, "*Auctoritas* and patronage was the means by which compliance was achieved, patronage of senators, equestrian order and plebs," p. 43; J. E. Lendon (1997), *Empire of Honour: The Art of Government in the Roman World*, Oxford, p. 12; F. Millar (1977), *Emperor in the Roman World (32 BC-AD 337)*, Duckworth. Millar documents the emperor's enormous resources for giving as well as the social, political, economic and ideological significance of his distributions particularly well. See also Seneca, who stated that "the emperor is kept safe by his benefactions: he has no need for guards — weapons he keeps for decoration," Sen. *Clem.* 1.13.5; Dio. 53.4.1.

[17] Pub. *Syr*. 61, 641. On this attitude among the late republican senators, see also Dio. 46.34.1-2; C. A. Barton (2001), *Roman Honour: The Fire in the Bones,* Berkeley, pp. 118-119.

their *libertas* and humanity, slaves were often described as the "walking dead."[18] Placing oneself under the umbrella of imperial patronage could be seen, therefore, as a self-induced dehumanisation, as a disgraceful selling-off of one's *libertas* and as a further indication and confirmation of the underlying slavish nature of the surviving post-republican *nobiles*.[19] As the principate progressed, imperial senators had to accept the further humiliation of approaching and bribing freedmen for patronal favours in order to advance their careers, bringing themselves into a position of clientage with these men and becoming thus the 'slaves of slaves.'[20]

The above brief outline of some of the commonly stated views and issues concerning the early years of the principate is sufficient to bring to our attention some of the central ideological challenges faced by the early imperial *nobiles*. It is reasonably clear that by exposing force and favours as the central pillars on which the *princeps*'s authority rested, the *nobiles* were also exposed — if only to a hostile eye — as relating to the *princeps* as his slaves.[21] Such a way of relating to the emperor was essentially dehumanising for his imperial subjects, regardless of whether they were 'enslaved' by his swords or by his *beneficia*. It is reasonable to expect, therefore, that the problems and challenges of these early years would have stimulated increased ideological activity; the search for a new conceptual framework within which the recent political developments would represent something other than the metaphorical or literal enslavement of the *nobiles* to the power mechanisms of the new state.[22] Below I intend to observe a body of

---

[18] For example, in his last stand against Antony, Cicero declared, "Life does not consist in the breath of life; there is no life at all in the slave" (*non enim in spiritu vita est, sed ea nulla est omnino servienti*)˙.

[19] The voluntary selling-off of one's freedom was seen as motivated by greed and undue ambition, and as such was even more disgraceful than forced slavery. See P. Millet (1989), 'Patronage and Its Avoidance in Classical Athens,' in A. Wallace-Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society,* London, 15-48; D. Konstan (1995), 'Patrons and Friends,' *CP* 90, 328-342, p. 328.

[20] Epic. *Diss*. 4.1.148, 3.7.71, 4.7.19.

[21] Epictetus's sermon 'On Freedom' clearly encapsulates this state of affairs: "Look you, no one is afraid of Caesar himself, but he is afraid of death, exile, loss of property…Nor does anyone love Caesar himself…but we love wealth, a tribuneship, a praetorship, a consulship. When we love and hate and fear these things, it needs must be that those who control them are masters over us," *Diss.* 4.1.60.

[22] Clifford Geertz argued that severe changes in the established socio-political order usually cause a "loss of orientation" or "conceptual confusion." This confusion in turn leads to intensive ideological activity or "a search for a new symbolic framework in terms of which to formulate, think about and react to political problems," C. Geertz

ideas produced in response to these challenges, and I will refer to them, for convenience's sake, as the 'ideology of humanisation.' The ideology of humanisation, I will argue, was intended to provide a conceptual basis for the preservation of the 'humanity' of Roman imperial subjects under conditions previously considered incompatible with it; and it involved both neutralising the dehumanising potential inherent in the rise of the *princeps*, as well as the active construction of the principate as a humanising institution.

The difficulties of conceptually pinning down the term 'ideology' are well known; definitions range from "a body of ideas characteristic of a particular social group or class," to "systematically distorted communication," to "ideas which help to legitimise a dominant political power."[23] In regards to the ideology of the early principate, I am in agreement with Roller who argued that 'ideology' and its production during the early empire was the process by which each group sought to articulate the character of the principate in ways most advantageous to themselves.[24] As such, ideology was not promulgated from above but instead resulted from an interactive process between the *princeps* and his aristocratic subjects who were "attempting to guide and shape the new order — to constitute their social reality — even as they struggled to comprehend and articulate it."[25] Part of the strategy of the ideology of humanisation involved constructing the emperor as a social figure who related to the *nobiles* in non-dehumanising ways, like 'the first citizen' or 'the father,'[26] but its primary concern was in ensuring the *princeps*'s 'sincerity' in the primary sense. Because the *nobiles* could continue to exist as free humans only under a 'human' *princeps*, the ideology of humanisation was concerned with constructing the *princeps* as a true human, and thus removing any suspicion of him being a dissimulating tyrant animal. Part of this effort involved the concrete ideological representation and expression of the *princeps*'s humanity in the form of numerous honours, but more important than the honours themselves was the display of enthusiasm for the *princeps*'s rule that such occasions signified. Such occasions were, in fact, expressions of 'belief' in the *princeps*'s humanity and this belief, I will argue, continued to guard the *nobiles* against dehumanisation in the centuries after Augustus.

(1973), 'Ideology as a Cultural System,' in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz,* New York, 193-233, pp. 219-221; Roller (2001:9).

[23] For these varied definitions, see M. S. Santirocco (1995), 'Horace and Augustan Ideology,' *Arethusa* 28, 225-243.

[24] Roller (2001:6).

[25] Roller (2001:10).

[26] Roller (2001:9).

It is recognised that it is almost impossible to speak in general terms about the early principate without paying adequate attention to the personalities of the various *principes*.[27] This is particularly true with the first *princeps*, whose personality constituted the most important impetus and determinant of all aspects of his age: political, moral, social, religious and artistic. When it comes to Augustus's political legacy, or in particular to the question of the reality or fiction of the restoration of the Republic, the issue often becomes that of Augustus's 'sincerity'; Hammond, for example, has observed that "whether or nor Augustus was sincere is a question to which anyone concerned with the Augustan achievement must formulate an answer."[28] Because Augustus came to power as the last in a long line of republican magnates, all of whom claimed to be champions of *libertas*,[29] the central issue was always in determining whether Augustus was merely the last of the republican 'saviours' and 'liberators,' or the true liberator who triumphed over those who had claimed such titles falsely. This was primarily an issue of the *princeps*'s character, of his sincerity or his humanity. The same was true in regard to the Republic's restoration, because to ask in those days whether the Republic was restored was to ask whether the *princeps* was sincere in the act of restoring it. While initially this could only have been a matter of faith, the *nobiles* had every reason to believe that Augustus was indeed sincere in his effort to restore the Republic, because the price of Tacitean skepticism, or of viewing Augustus as a man of "unfeeling heart" and "cowardly disposition" who never laid down "the mask of hypocrisy"[30] was their very humanity.

To conceive of Augustus as insincere, as a tyrant and a false human who wrapped himself in the guise of the true, was to conceive of Rome as a false state in the guise of a true state

---

[27] Z. Yavetz (1990), 'The Personality of Augustus: Reflections on Syme's Roman Revolution,' in K.A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (eds.), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate*, Berkeley, 21-41.

[28] M. Hammond (1965), 'The Sincerity of Augustus,' *HSCP* 69, 139-162, p. 139.

[29] *Libertas* was the most often invoked rallying cry of the late Republican dynasts. Caesar and Pompey, for example, both styled each other as a *dominus* who had enslaved or threatened to enslave the Roman state, while casting themselves in the role of defenders of the collective *libertas* against the threat of despotism posed by the other, Dio. 41.57.2. After his victory, Caesar emerged as the sole liberator and remained so until his assassins claimed the title and then proceeded to style Octavian as the 'master' who wished to enslave the Romans, Dio. 37.49.5, 40.55.3, 47.42.3-43; Plut. *Pomp.* 30.3.5, 54.4; *BC* 1.22.5; *Ad. Brut.* 1.17.4. For Antony as 'master,' see *Phil.* 3.34-36; Roller (2001:248).

[30] As Gibbon famously characterised him. E. Gibbon (1910), *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, London, p. 3.

(*Republicae imago*) and of its people as 'false people' (slaves) in the guise of the 'true' (*verus populus*). Belief in Augustus's humanity, therefore, was an ideological imperative, the first step towards creating a conceptual basis for Rome's continuing to exist as a true state inhabited by true and 'free' people. This imperative, I believe, provided the primary impetus for the metamorphosis of Octavian, the subhuman *carnifex,* into Augustus, a true human and finally a god. By making ideological provisions for the *princeps*'s humanity, or by ensuring Augustus's sincerity in the primary sense, his sincerity in the secondary sense would also be ensured and with it the truth of his official assurance that the Republic had been restored. Reasons for questioning the reality of the Republic's restoration would emerge only if the *princeps* was suspected of being a dissimulating tyrant animal, and so the ideological effort of humanising the *princeps* would in effect ensure that the gap between 'reality' and the official version of it was closed. Once they removed such suspicions, therefore, the Romans had their Republic back and could start to conceptualise their submission to the *princeps*'s *auctoritas* as an act compatible with *libertas*, as something proper, beneficial and human, as opposed to something forced, misplaced and slavish.[31]

The belief in the *princeps*'s humanity, which guarded the *nobiles* against dehumanisation, was still relevant in the years after Augustus, but it was somewhat harder to maintain under emperors who were less than interested in disguising their tyrannical tendencies. Imperial authors continued to portray tyrants as subhuman 'beasts'[32] and their subjects as utterly dehumanised;

---

[31] Roman *libertas,* Loewenstein has observed, was always seen as freedom within the established order, and to submit by free will and reason to the leadership of those recognised as one's betters was seen by the Romans as the test rather than a negation of liberty. This was a moral rather than a legal attitude, and the ensuing cooperation between leaders and subjects was seen as providing order with liberty or liberty within order. See Loewenstein (1973:188).

[32] Tyrants in Seneca and Quintius Rufus are 'beasts' and slaves whose actions remove them from the human community. In *De Ira*, Seneca narrates the account of Alexander's murder of Clitus and goes on to describe Alexander's action as 'bestial' (*feritas,* 17.1). He later reiterates that by such behavior Alexander excluded himself from common humanity, 17.1-4. See also *Ep.* 83.19. During the empire, *saevitia* began to replace *crudelitas* as the most popular term to describe a tyrant's cruelty and, while it could still be loosely translated as cruelty, it includes in addition connotations of hysteria and maniacal sadism and properly refers to the ferocity of wild animals and only metaphorically to the cruelty of men, Verg. *Aen.* 8.482-483; Ovid, *Met.* 6.581; Sen. *Clem.* 1.12.1; Juv. *Sat.* 7.150-1; J. R. Dunkle (1971), 'The Rhetorical Tyrant in Roman Historiography: Sallust, Livy and Tacitus,' *CW* 65, 12-20, p. 15.

either as slaves or, in Seneca's case, as inanimate objects used as instruments of torture.[33] Tacitus designated most of the emperors as subhuman beasts whose rule signified the *nobiles*' total descent into slavery.[34] He portrayed even the masses as losing all human sympathy and descending ever deeper into savagery and brutality in response to Tiberius's reign of terror.[35] Under some emperors, the *nobiles* would be explicitly denied the status of human beings by long-existing and institutionalised tools of dehumanisation, such as torture and 'slavish' punishments.[36] By becoming liable to such punishments, senators were denied the status of human beings, and emperors such as Caligula were ever ready to deny it to them.[37] Caligula's arsenal included countless strategies of dehumanisation and degradation; apart from forcing senators to run like slaves beside his chariot, he would often profess his intention to appoint his horse Incitatus as consul, clearly suggesting the level of dignity he was prepared to grant to this

---

[33] Sen. *Clem.* 1.12.2.

[34] Tacitus states that if one could see into Tiberius's soul, he would find it lacerated by *saevitia* and *libido*, *Ann.* 6.6.9; Nero is portrayed with *crudelitas*, *Ann.* 15.64.2, *libido*, 13.22.6 and 14.15.11, and *saevitia*, 15.44.27 and 15.62.10. For Galba's *saevitia*, see *Hist.* 1.37.20 and 1.87.5; for Otho's *libido*, 2.31.3, and *saevitia,* 2.31.6; Viteliuss's *saevitia* and *libido*, 2.73.6-7. For Domitian, see *Agr.* 3.2; *Hist.* 4.39.9, 4.68.5. For imperial subjects as slaves, Tac. *Ann*. 1.2.1, 3.65. Describing the early days of Tiberius's reign, Tacitus states, "Meanwhile, at Rome, consuls, senate, knights, became servile" (*At Romae ruere in servitum consules, patres, eques*), *Hist*. 2.71.
[35] Tac. *Ann*. 6.19.

[36] As Finley observed, "If a slave is a non-person and yet undoubtedly a biological human being, institutional procedures are to be expected that will degrade and undermine his humanity and so distinguish him from human beings who are not property. Corporal punishment and torture constitute one such procedure," M. I. Finley (1980), *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology,* New York, p.94. Also, T. J. Reiss (2003), *Mirages of the Self: Patterns of Personhood in Ancient and Modern Europe* Stanford, p. 58.

[37] Seneca describes the torture of the senators Sextus Papinius and Betilienus Basus at the hands of Caligula, which reduced them to the level of "worthless slaves," Sen. *Ira*, 3.19.2. Seneca also describes the story of Telesphorus the Rhodian who mutilated his friend, cut off his ears and nose, and shut him in a cage so small it did not allow him to stand upright, thus forcing him to spend his days on all fours like an animal. Seneca says that "while he who suffered these things was utterly unlike a human being, he who inflicted them was still less like one" (*Tamen, cum dissimillimus esset homini qui illa patiebatur, dissimilior erat qui faciebat*), *Ira*, 3.17.4. He leaves us unsure whether Telesphorus's loss of humanity was the result of his disfigured face or the disgrace he suffered by receiving such a slavish punishment. In any case, here the emphasis is on the inhumanity of the tyrant. See also Roller (2001:213-228).

office and to those who filled it.[38] In those years, the ideology of humanisation set as its goal an additional and more ambitious objective; namely, it sought to end the dependence of the 'humanity' of the *nobiles* on that of the emperor, or to endow the tyrant's subjects with an inner inviolable humanity far beyond his reach. In the hands of Seneca, Stoic philosophy played a major role in this quest for emancipation and it did so not by intruding on the existing ideological framework, but by building on and refining some of its central features.

I will divide the discussion below into two parts, the first of which will centre on the imperial virtue of *clementia,* which with the rise of the principate became the ideological basis for the emperor's morality and 'humanity.' *Clementia*, according to Bauman, is the most important offshoot of *humanitas,* which in the imperial period *clementia* largely replaced.[39] Below I will examine some possible reasons for the imperial preference for *clementia* over *humanitas*, as well as for the increased emphasis on this virtue at the beginning of Nero's reign, as described in Seneca's treatise *De Clementia*. Seneca addressed this treatise to Nero and in it argued that *clementia* is the most 'human' of all virtues, the most suited to a prince and the chief indicator of his inner human disposition. Outwardly, *De Clementia* appears to have been intended to serve as a 'mirror for princes,' to instruct Nero on the importance of displaying *clementia* in his conduct with his misbehaving subjects, but the examination below will reveal an additional ideological agenda, particularly clear once this treatise is read in conjunction with *De Ira*. Seneca, I intend to show, invested *clementia* with additional humanising properties but did so only in order to draw a clear divide between the subhuman and human elements of society; the former usually being identified with political subversives, the latter with conformists. Furthermore, Seneca was concerned with humanising *dissimulatio*, the practice of concealing one's feelings and opinions that was often necessary under the rule of tyrants but was still essentially the mark of a fearful slave or a flatterer trying to secure imperial favours. Seneca, probably the master

---

[38] Suet. *Cal*. 26, 55; Dio. 59.14.

[39] R. A. Bauman (2000), *Human Rights in Ancient Rome*, London, pp.68-9, 77. See also, R. A. Bauman (1980), 'The "Leges Iudicorum Publicorum" and their Interpretation in the Republic, Principate and Later Empire,' *ANRW* II, 13, 103-233. Velleius Paterculus has only one passing reference to Tiberius's *humanitas,* but more generous notice of Augustus's *clementia,* Vell. 2.141.1, 2.85.5-87.3. Scholars sometimes regard acts such as Augustus's recoiling from the full rigours of the *poena parricidi* as carrying the precepts of *humanitas,* in its meaning: "moral and intellectual education…kindness, goodness and sympathy, the restraint of one's will, and consideration for others," Suet. *Aug*. 33; F. Schultz (1938), *Principles of Roman Law*, Oxford, p. 190.

dissimulator himself, reformulated and 'humanised' *dissimulatio* in *De Ira,* arguing it to be the clear mark of a human being and indicative of one's mastery over the irrational and 'animal' self.

In the second part of my discussion, I will focus on the imperial virtue of *liberalitas*. Here I will observe the role of the ideology of humanisation in neutralising the dehumanising aspect of imperial patronage as well as in constructing it as a fully humanising force. Seneca, who treated the role of *beneficia* in society in his *De Beneficiis,* is again the prominent source. Seneca situated the exchange of *beneficia* in an exclusively human realm, where the bestowal and receiving of benefits is the clearest indication of one's humanity and one's willingness to assume responsibility for maintaining the conditions necessary for the preservation of human society. In this treatise, Seneca reworked the pre-existing aristocratic code of beneficence in order to build further on its already recognised ideological potential to safeguard the humanity and *libertas* of the recipients of imperial *beneficia*. This code allowed *nobiles* to request and receive gifts in good faith, from one whom they 'believed' was a true human and as such free from any desire to 'enslave' them. Such a belief should have prevented these acts from being perceived as a conscious selling-off of their *libertas*. Seneca went one step further and claimed that the act of placing oneself under the umbrella of imperial patronage not only does not jeopardise one's *libertas* and humanity, but also in fact secures it. Willing participation in a network of exchange with the emperor, Seneca argued, signifies one's willingness to engage in the ultimate 'human' behaviour, while refusal to do so most certainly excludes one from the human community.

II

Humanising by Mercy: Humans, Disobedient Animals and the *Princeps*'s *clementia*

I have been selected to perform on earth the office of the gods. I am the lord of life, death and destiny.
But I bear the sword of severity sheathed, and wear instead the breastplate of clemency.

Seneca, *De Clementia.* 1.1.1-4.

During the Republic, *clementia* was just one of the virtues under the umbrella of *humanitas* that furthered the humane ideas of this concept and promoted a mindset or behavioural pattern that distinguished true humans from savages and beasts by presupposing them against committing

acts of brutality.[40] During the final years of the Republic, *humanitas* gradually faded from the picture and *clementia* began the ascent that would see it evolve into one of the cardinal virtues of the *princeps*. *Clementia* was first emphasised by Julius Caesar during his dictatorship and was integrated into the foundation of Roman civil life in 44 BC when the Senate decreed a temple to *Clementia Caesaris*.[41] In 27 BC, the Senate acknowledged *clementia* on the golden shield as one of the personal virtues of the *princeps*, which according to *Res Gestae*, resulted from Augustus's merciful conduct during the civil wars and his general reluctance to kill his enemies.[42] From this point on, *clementia* became the chief indicator of the *princeps*'s 'human' disposition of mind: in *De Clementia*, for example, Seneca describes *clementia* as the most human of all virtues (1.3.2):

> Nullam ex omnibus virtutibus homini magis convenire,
>
> cum sit nulla humanior, constet necesse est
>
> non solum inter nos, qui hominem sociale animal
>
> communi bono genitum videri volumus, sed etiam
>
> inter illos, qui hominem voluptati donant, quorum
>
> omnia dicta factaque ad utilitates suas spectant.

> That no one of all virtues is more seemly for a human being, since none is more human, is a necessary conviction not only for those of us who maintain that man is a social creature, begotten for the common good (Stoics) but also for those who give men over to pleasure (Epicureans), whose words and deeds look to their own advantage (trans. J. W. Basore, p. 365).

In *De Clementia*, Seneca was concerned with showing Nero the 'human' side of this virtue, arguing it to be the chief distinguishing factor between a king and a tyrant. Accordingly, Seneca usually describes the behaviour of kings as characterised by *clementia* and that of the tyrant by inhuman *crudelitas* or *saevitia*.[43] I will revisit Seneca's treatment of *clementia* below, but for now, it is more important to concentrate on the early days of the principate and on the possible

---

[40] Bauman (2000:67-77).

[41] Dio. 44, 6.4; Plut. *Caes.* 57.4; J. R. Fears (1981), 'The Cult of Virtues and Roman Imperial Ideology,' *ANRW* II 17.2, 827-948, p. 885.

[42] "As victor I spared all citizens who sought my mercy…I preferred to pardon than to exterminate," *RG* 3.1-2.

[43] See above, 32. Also M. T. Griffin (1976), *Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics*, Oxford, p. 157.

reasons for this virtue coming to prominence within this emerging institution.

For the last generation of republican *nobiles*, the display of *clementia* had unmistakably despotic overtones**:** Brutus, for example, complained to Cicero that both Octavian and Antony wanted them to appeal to their clemency so that "our lives should be his gift, that we should hold our positions to his pleasure" (*salutem ab se peti, precariam nos incolumitatem habere*).[44] Brutus is describing here the essence and origins of slavery, where a commander in the field would spare the lives of a vanquished enemy in order to enslave them.[45] *Clementia,* as Brutus sees it, is nothing more than a tyrant's human face and should he accept the 'mercy' of either of these men he would accept what would have essentially amounted to dehumanising slavery. Cicero, too, saw *clementia* as an external human mask disguising the tyrant; in a letter to Atticus, he characterises Caesar's clemency as "cunning" (*insidiosa clementia*), stating that, although not opposed to cruelty by inclination or nature, Caesar has calculated that *clementia* will win him popular favour.[46]

The virtue of *clementia,* therefore, would have been an ideological liability to the first *princeps* if his primary level of sincerity, or his 'humanity,' was not ensured by additional ideological representations. Accordingly, on the golden shield, *clementia* was backed with several other key human virtues typically lacking in the tyrant (*virtus*, *iustitia* and *pietas*). The shield was also complemented by the civic crown (*corona civica*), which was the standard award for saving the life of a citizen in battle. The bestowal of *corona civica* was concerned with indicating the *princeps*'s 'sincerity,' in that it suggested that he had saved the lives of Romans as a fellow soldier would, selflessly and with no thought of return, rather than as a general or would-be tyrant who wished to enslave them.[47] The selfless nature of this act was signified by the

---

[44] Cic. *Ad. Brut*. 25.4.

[45] The term *servi*, as Florentius suggests, originally referred to conquered enemies who receive the benefit of being saved (*servare*), *Dig*. 1.4.2. Alternatively, as Barton has observed, "The emperor's *clementia* made his subjects guilty. It convicted those pardoned" (2001:193).

[46] Cic. *Att*. 8.16.2, 10.4.8.

[47] The *corona civica* was the standard award for saving the life of a citizen in battle; an act conducted at great peril to the saviour, who expects nothing in return. The *corona civica* was to become an imperial monopoly in later ages. See, for example, Alföldi, who traces the evolution of the Roman notion of the 'saviour' from a soldier who rescued another soldier from the enemy at great risk, to an abstract and inherent quality of the emperor, involving no risk. A. Alföldi (1971), *Der Vater des Vaterlandes in rőmischen Denken*, Darmstadt, p. 178. See also Bauman (2000:77).

modest nature of the honour; *corona civica,* after all, was a crown of oak leaves. Seneca's own 'trust' in *De Clementia* that Nero possesses this virtue was based on his professed conviction that Nero was a true human rather than a tyrant animal hiding its true nature (1.1.5-6):

> Difficile hoc fuisset, si non
> naturalis tibi ista bonitas esset, sed ad tempus
> sumpta. Nemo enim potest personam diu ferre,
> ficta cito in naturam suam recidunt; quibus veritas
> subest quaeque, ut ita dicam, ex solido enascuntur,
> tempore ipso in maius melisque procedunt.

> This would indeed be difficult if that goodness of yours were not innate but only assumed for the moment. For no one can wear the mask for long; the false lapses quickly back to his own nature; but whatever has truth for its foundation, and whatever springs, so to speak, from out of the solid earth, grows by mere passing of time into something larger and better (trans. J.W. Basore, p. 361).

Once the *princeps'*s humanity was ensured in such a way, the path towards conceptualising his *auctoritas* as a humanising force, as opposed to the tyrant's dehumanising coercion, was clear. In addition to 'humanising' the *princeps' auctoritas, clementia* also had great potential to provide it with a 'legal' base from which it could supersede the authority of written law. According to several legal theorists, *clementia* enabled a kind of justice that went beyond the imperfect written law. In *De Legibus,* for example, Cicero argued that there is often disparity between the dictates of *recta ratio* and the provisions of imperfect written law, so that *clementia* was needed to correct the penalties of written law so that it could conform to the justice laid down by *recta ratio*.[48] Seneca had precisely this role of *clementia* in mind when he wrote that *clementia* has freedom in decision; it sentences not by the letter of the law, but in accordance with what is 'fair and good' (*Clementia liberum arbitrium habet; non sub formula, sed ex aequo et bono iudicat*).[49] He further

---

[48] Griffin (1976:166).

[49] Sen. *Clem.* 2.7.3. This, of course, does not involve the remission of deserved punishments because *clementia*, as opposed to *misericordia*, represents control of the passions and leads only to the rationally justified remission of penalties, which is conducive to justice. This is why *clementia* was compatible with *severitas* since, unlike *misericordia* and *crudelitas* (with which they could often be confused), both involved the exercise of reason. See

asserts the supremacy of *clementia* over laws in terms of knowing the true standards of justice (2.7.3):

> Et absolvere illi licet et,
>
> quanti vult, taxare litem. Nihil ex his facit,
>
> tamquam iusto minus fecerit, sed tamquam id, quod
>
> constituit, iustitissimum sit.

> It may acquit and it may assess the damages at any value it pleases. It does none of these things as if it were doing less than is just, but if the justest thing were that which it has resolved upon (trans. J. W. Basore, p. 445).

Superior insight into the 'fair and good' allows *clementia* to go beyond the law and this, of course, presupposes an enormous authority. The fact that *humanitas* was never invested with such authority provides us with one plausible cause for it being sidelined in favour of *clementia* as the ideological basis for the emperor's morality and humanity. This authority would not be lost once *clementia* was invested in the person of the *princeps* and thus, as well as implying the *princeps'*s 'human' disposition of mind, it would suggest his superior awareness of standards of justice.[50] This awareness, then, would allow the *princeps*'s *auctoritas* to legitimately supersede these laws — which it often did — and to do so in the interests of all.[51]

   The famous story of Augustus and Vedius Pollio provides, I believe, a great ideological portrait of precisely this aspect of the emperor's authority. Augustus, the story goes, was dining with Vedius Pollio in Vedius's house when one of his host's slaves broke a crystal cup. Vedius condemned the slave immediately to a cruel death: to be thrown to the gigantic lampreys he kept

---

Griffin (1976:159-160); C. F. Norena (2009), 'The Ethics of Autocracy in the Roman World,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Chichester, 266-279, p. 272.

[50] Cicero often stressed the need to know the difference between 'true laws,' which are known by men in whom reason has been perfected, and the random, oppressive and dehumanising decrees of the tyrant; Cic. *Leg.* 2.3.8, 4.11.

[51] Although Augustus refrained from assuming the right to legislate alone (*legis datio*), which according to his self-report was offered him by the Senate and the people three times, *RG* 6 (19, 18 and 11 BC), he still acted as the anonymous source of legal norms and the supreme superintendent of laws and morals, Gaius *Inst.* 1.5; Ovid. *Metam.* 15, 832ff; Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.1ff; C. Wirszubski (1968), *Libertas as a Political Idea at Rome During the Late Republic and Early Principate*, Cambridge, p. 117; Loewenstein (1973:357).

in his fishpond. The horrified slave took refuge at the *princeps*'s feet with the single request that he might be killed in some other way than being eaten by fish. Augustus was extremely shocked by Vedius's brutality, and ordered the release of the slave before rebuking Vedius (*Ira*, 3.40.5):

> E convivo rapi homines imperas et novi generis poenis
> lancinari? Si calix tuus fractus est, viscera hominis distra-
> hentur? Tantum tibi placebis, ut ibi aliquem duci iubeas,
> ubi Caesar est?

> Will you vaunt yourself so much as to order men to be hurried from a banquet to death, and to be torn to pieces by tortures of an unheard-of kind? If your cup was broken, is a human being to have his bowels torn asunder? Will you vaunt yourself as to order a man to be led to death in the very presence of Caesar? (trans. J.W. Basore, p. 349).

Augustus, as he appears in this story, has come a long way from *adulescentulus carnifex:* here, his behaviour is characterised by a concern for human suffering and the preservation of human life, and it shows him as someone determined to carry out the precepts of *humanitas* (*clementia*). This story was popular with imperial commentators, who used it to contrast Vedius's subhuman cruelty with the humane clemency of Augustus, hoping, it is presumed, that Augustus's behavior might serve as a model to subsequent emperors.[52] Nevertheless, we might observe some additional messages embedded in this story, which may allow us to situate it within the framework of the ideology of humanisation.

Let us first recognise what Vedius's slave actually demanded from Augustus. The short answer is humanity, even if this entailed nothing more than being allowed to die as a human being. The punishment Vedius decided on was cruel, but nevertheless proper for a slave who, due to his subhuman status, could be subjected to particularly harsh and degrading forms of execution, such as *crematio* (burning alive), crucifixion or *damnatio ad bestias*.[53] To be eaten by

---

[52] Vedius's treatment of his slaves and Augustus's conduct towards him became popular subjects for anecdotes in antiquity. Apart from the instance in Seneca quoted above, see also Pliny *NH* 9.23.39, 9.53.78; Tac. *Ann*. 1.10, 12.60. Vedius was characterised by the tyrannical vices of *crudelitas* and *saevitia,* Sen. *Ira*, 3.40.

[53] I. S. Gilhus (2006), *Animals, Gods and Humans: Changing Attitudes to Animals in Greek, Roman and Early Christian Ideas*, London, p. 16.

animals was an extreme degradation of the human form and to be punished in such a way was fitting only for those who were entirely outside human society, either by virtue of their status or their crime.[54] In fact, as a way of further denying the humanity of those condemned, they would often be dressed in animal costumes before they were thrown to the beasts to be devoured.[55] Vedius's punishment, therefore, was innovative but still essentially a variation on *damnatio ad bestias*. Vedius's slave, we might notice, accepts his death penalty but rejects *the manner* of his death*, although it was widely considered a proper death for a person of his status. The slave's plea, then, was essentially a request to be granted human dignity, if only in death.

Because Augustus had nothing to gain politically from being kind to a slave, his *clementia* appears in this story as undoubtedly genuine and derived from the mental disposition of a true human. The purpose of the exercise and the extent of the *princeps*'s *auctoritas* are also important to note; the *princeps* used his *auctoritas* to directly oppose and nullify the false authority of a subhuman tyrant as well as his *legal right* to deal with his own slave at his discretion. The law, it is important to remember, would have tolerated Vedius's cruelty and so, in terms of its capacity to act as a source of justice, was here portrayed as far inferior to the *princeps*'s judgment. In extent and exercise, then, the *princeps*'s *auctoritas* is proper and desirable, being in the interests of a more 'humane' form of justice. Furthermore, by exercising his authority, the *princeps* not only saved a slave's life but also bestowed on him the kind of life he did not have before the incident. Having what was regarded as a semblance of life, the slave was, in the Roman mind, one of the 'walking dead.' Such was the life of Vedius's slave prior to the incident, yet afterwards this was clearly no longer the case. The *princeps* regarded the slave as a human being and his life as intrinsically valuable, and ensured by his *auctoritas* that this value was recognised. He placed his *auctoritas,* in other words, between the slave's humanity and his master's desire to deprive him of it, and thus in effect did what the law could not: he granted and guaranteed to the slave the 'human life' he had previously lacked. This story is the ideology of humanisation at its best; the subhuman is made human in the faithful act of prostrating himself

---

[54] Gilhus (2006:16); Roller (2001: 225); C. A. Barton (1996), *The Sorrows of the Ancient Romans: The Gladiator and the Monster*, Princeton, p. 33; S. Brown (1992), 'Death as Decoration: Scenes from the Arena on Roman Domestic Mosaics,' in A. Richlin (ed.), *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, Oxford, 180-211.

[55] Tacitus, for example, mentions that the Christians who were killed under Nero were first dressed as animals and then killed by dogs, *Ann.* 15.44.4.

at the feet of his *princeps*.

Such a message fitted well with one of the principate's central ideological claims that at the time of Augustus's arrival on the Roman political scene all Romans were 'dead,' enslaved by late republican magnates as well as by their own 'beasts within.' According to *Res Gestae*, the *princeps* dealt with those tyrannical magnates relatively early on in his regime (*RG* 1):

> Annos undeviginti natus exercitum privato
> consilio et privata impensa comparavi, per quem
> rem publicam a dominatione factionis oppressam
> in libertatem vindicavi.

> At the age of nineteen, on my own initiative and at my own expense, I raised an army by means of which I restored liberty to the Republic, which had been oppressed by the tyranny of a faction (trans. F. W. Shipley, p. 347).

The 'faction' referred to here is accepted to be that of Antony whom Octavian forced to withdraw from Rome in late 44 BC. Elsewhere, Octavian labelled Antony an 'enemy of humankind' and, by referring to his preeminence here as *dominatio,* he represents him as a *dominus* ― a common term for a master in respect to his slaves.[56] To portray his own actions, Augustus uses the phrase *vindicare in libertatem* which describes a judicial procedure "whereby a person called an *assertor* or *vindex libertatis* asserts in the presence of a magistrate, a slave, and a slave's master, that the slave is in fact a free person who is being illegally held in a servile condition."[57] Augustus's usage here implies that the Roman state was being held illegally as a 'slave' to its 'masters,' and that he had restored it to its properly free condition.[58] Nevertheless, because the expressions *vindex libertatis* and *vindicare in libertatem* were so often used by competing late republican aristocrats that they were by Augustus's time "outworn phrases" which "retained little of their original positive meaning,"[59] additional ideological safeguards and representations were needed to ensure the *princeps*'s 'sincerity.' Augustus's act of 'restoring' the Republic, his avoidance of

---

[56] Osgood (2006:105).

[57] Roller (2001:214).

[58] Roller (2001:215).

[59] Wirszubski (1968:104)

any abrasive ways of dominating the Senate, his unwillingness "to let native Roman stock be tainted by foreign and servile blood" and to permit the manumission of more than a limited number of slaves, can all be viewed as the extension of this policy and an expression of his genuine willingness not to enslave or otherwise dilute the humanity of his Roman subjects.[60]

Roman *libertas* was not only threatened by 'outer beasts,' such as the republican magnates, but by inner ones as well. It was largely accepted at the time of Augustus's accession that the collapse of the Republic was the result of a general moral degeneration; that in losing their ancient *mores*, the elites had descended into moral slavery and thus lost their ability to govern themselves. To exist on such a moral level, the Romans agreed, was to exist as a beast, a slave, or to exist not at all: "Of late years," Livy states, "wealth has made us greedy, and self-indulgence has brought us through every kind of sensual excess, to be, if I may so put it, in love with death, both individual and collective."[61] Sallust saw the life and death of moral slaves "as about alike, since no record is made of either" (...*vitam mortemque iuxta aestumo, quoniam de utraque silentur*).[62] Because such moral slavery was seen as a vital factor in political change, and as the primary cause behind the subsequent descent into political slavery, political liberation could never be seen as having been truly accomplished without it being accompanied by a comprehensive program of moral reform. The *princeps* initiated such a program in 18 BC, which involved promulgating a number of laws: a *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* penalising adultery

---

[60] Throughout his reign, Augustus considered it an insult to be called *dominus* and forbade that anyone should call him by that name, *Aug.* 53.1; Dio. 55.12.2. For manumission of slaves, see Suet. *Aug.* 40. While owners were previously allowed to free slaves informally, by a simple written or verbal declaration, and while this manumission entailed automatic citizenship, following the *lex Junia* they were only given "Latin rights," a second class citizenship without voting rights. The *lex Fufia Caninia* limited the number of slaves that an owner could free at his will and the *lex Aelia Sentia* imposed some age limits: see A. Everitt (2006), *Augustus: The Life of Rome's First Emperor*, New York, p. 241. Augustus also checked the social phenomenon of powerful, wealthy educated slaves and freedmen reaching unseemly heights and kept a strict account of status distinctions, never inviting freedmen to his table, Suet. *Aug.* 74. The social rise of slaves and freedmen reinforced the perceptions among the elite that the distinctions between them and this group were disappearing, and this constituted an additional dimension in which the emergence of the imperial regime could have been represented as reducing the established aristocracy to "slavery," Roller (2001:267-272).

[61] Everitt (2006:236). Similarly, Elder Pliny criticised the pursuit of sensual pleasures by stating: "The consequence is, I protest, that pleasure has begun to live and life itself has ceased," *NH* 14.1.5-6.

[62] Sall. *Bel. Cat.* 2.8.

and other irregular sexual relations, a *lex Iulia de maritandis ordinibus,* to encourage marriage and the procreation of children, *a lex Iulia de ambitu* to curb electoral corruption, and a *lex Iulia sumptuaria* to check extravagance and luxury.[63]

Another way in which the *princeps* sought to emancipate Romans from their moral slavery was by providing them with a model of humanity to emulate. Ancient Romans saw emulation as the mechanism through which *maiores* transmitted their virtuous practice as well as that through which people were corrupted once the elite degenerated morally.[64] Augustus's role as *exemplo maior* is well known: throughout his life he dressed simply, lived in a relatively modest and undecorated house, and professed his intention to revive a traditional society in which *exempla maiorum* was once again the chief source of moral instruction.[65] Subsequent generations often commented that the emperor's subjects were inclined to imitate him in all matters, from hairstyle to dietary habits,[66] and some urged the emperor to take advantage of this tendency and affect a moral reform.[67] It is hard to know for certain, but one can see how the

[63] In *Res Gestae* 6 he made sure to record his role as a moral reformer: "In the consulship of Marcus Vinicius and Quintius Lucretius (19 BC), and afterwards in that of Publius and Gnaeus Lentulus (18 BC) and a third time in that of Paulus Fabius Maximus and Quintius Tubero (11 BC), when the Senate and Roman people unanimously agreed that I should be elected the overseer of laws and morals…" See also A. H. M. Jones (1970), *Augustus*, London, p. 63.

[64] "The state," Cicero argued, "always had the character of its leading men….whatever transformation of manners emerged among its leaders, the same followed in people," *De Leg.* 3.31.

[65] Vel. Pat. 2.126.4. While many of the rich changed bedrooms with the seasons, Suetonius reports, Augustus slept in the same room for 40 years, *Suet.* 72. His family also served as a role model for the ideal Roman family. When some equites complained about his marriage laws, Augustus merely asked them to follow the example of Germanicus and his six children, Suet. *Aug.* 34.2. Suetonius also reports that he erected statues of virtuous Romans of the past "as an example" against which, as Augustus himself declared, "the citizens should demand that he should personally be measured, so long as he lived," *Aug*. 31. He also took particular interest in the education of the young, with the full awareness that Roman youngsters were best educated by *exempla* of noble deeds, Hor. *Ep.* 2.1.130-131; A. Wallace-Hadrill (1993), *Augustan Rome*, London, pp. 26, 70; Z. Yavetz (1984), 'The *Res Gestae* and Augustus's Public Image,' in F. Millar and E. Segal (eds.), *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects,* Oxford, 1-36, p. 20.

[66] Libanius observed, "Whatsoever is scorned by our rulers is neglected by all; what is honoured by them, all practice," Lib. *Or.* 18.156; Men. *Rhet*. 376.

[67] Pliny, *Paneg*. 45; Sen. *Clem.* 2.2.1; Dio. 52.34.1-3. Tacitus describes the moral decline of the aristocracy and its recovery as arising from their imitation of Vespasian: "obedience to the emperor and love of emulating him" (*obsequium…in principem et aemulandi amor*) had affected a great moral reform among the Roman aristocracy, Tac. *Ann*. 3.55.

imitation in all matters of those who were officially acknowledged as embodiments of virtue and humanity could have acted as an easily accessible and reasonably effective antidote to dehumanisation.

It is clear that in the very moment Romans started interpreting their political slavery as caused by a descent into moral slavery they sowed the seeds for a future liberation arriving in the guise of moral regeneration. The events of 18 BC started to reveal that the Republic and its *libertas* were restored in the person of the *princeps* whose *auctoritas* demanded unquestioning obedience but which, since it oppressed only the 'beast within,' liberated men first in the moral sense and then, inevitably, in the political. The *princeps*'s outward displays of moral uprightness would have provided the Romans with much needed external proof of the *princeps*'s virtuous inner disposition and lent further credibility to the idea that he had already subjugated in himself the 'beast' he sought to subjugate in them. Echoes in these representations of the *princeps* of Cicero's statesman, although still somewhat vague, are unmistakable: by the force of his *auctoritas,* Augustus has 'subjugated the wild beast' in the hearts of the Romans,[68] restored harmony and established a *consensus* between all classes in the state.[69]

The claim to rule by *consensus* was central to the principate from the very beginning: according to Augustus's own words, he ascended to power by "universal consent in complete control of affairs" (*per consensum universorum potitus rerum omnium*).[70] Ancient theorists

---

[68] Cic. *Rep* 2.69-70. That this metaphor was well suited to Augustus was ensured by Augustan poets who portrayed the civil wars he had brought to an end as having made the Romans sink to a level lower even than beasts. In Virgil's *Aenead* 1, the crowd is a "base mob" brought to violence by "insane rage," while the statesman "rules their minds" with his words, 151, 153. For this kind of imagery in Horace's *Epodes,* see, for example, R. Bond (2009), 'Horace's Political Journey' in W. J. Dominik, J. Garthwaite and P. A. Roche (eds.) *Writing Politics in Imperial Rome*, Leiden, 133-152, pp. 133-36.

[69] As Yavetz puts it, "His success was achieved through *consensum universorum*, just as vague a concept as Cicero's *consensus omnium bonorum*. But just as the latter refused to restrict *bonitas* to one social class, so did Augustus refuse to present himself as the leader of one stratum of the population" (1984:13); Suet. *Aug.* 58.

[70] *RG* 33. Augustus emphasises that the oath was taken by *tota Italia* of its own free will (*iuravit in mea verba tota Italia sponte sua*) *RG* 25.2. The language of consensus became in subsequent centuries the common refrain of loyal subjects and the *princeps* alike; it provided the ideological backdrop for the *princeps*'s initial refusal of power which elicited from the people an expression of their consensus ― a stylised expression of *libertas* ― and thus actively forced them to consent to his rule, C. Ando (2000), *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*, Berkeley, pp. 135-137; J. Beranger (1953), 'Recherches sur l'aspect ideologique du principat,' *Schweizerische*

agreed that the consent of the subjects meant the difference between the rule of tyrants and that of monarchs, as well as between that which some theorists labelled the 'natural monarchy' found in the animal kingdom (like that of the lion over other beasts) and the elected monarchy, found among and suited to humans.[71] Nevertheless, we should not lose sight of the fact that the Augustan *consensus universorum* was the ideological basis for the restored Republic rather than for the 'legitimate' monarchy. The monarch-tyrant antithesis was of limited ideological use against centuries of antimonarchical tradition, which held that the sole rule of any man was possible only at the price of everyone else's *libertas*.[72] Augustus was well aware that the establishment of a principate would be regarded as a restoration of or as a suppression of *libertas* only according to it being seen as a restoration of or suppression of the traditional form of government.[73] Accordingly, the official goal of his reign was the restoration of the Republic and the constitutional basis for Roman *libertas*, rather than the establishment of monarchy.

The act of restoration in 27 BC was, ideologically speaking, the easy part; the greater problem lay in ensuring the belief in the sincerity of this restoration. To a modern mind, Augustus's continued supremacy based on an *auctoritas* previously invested only in the Senate is the chief obstacle to believing this act represents anything more than the veiling of a monarchy in quasi-constitutional wrappings.[74] Nevertheless, at the time, Augustus's continued position at the apex of Roman politics would not have been seen as a contradiction or as incompatible with the notion of a restored Republic; in fact, it would have been seen as a *prerequisite*. The validity of

---

Beitrage zur Altertumswissenschaft 6, 137-169; H. U. Istinsky (1940), 'Consensus universorum,' *Hermes* 75, 265-278.

[71] J. Beranger (1975), *Principatus*, Geneva, p. 165-190; R. G. Mulgan (1977), *Aristotle's Political Theory,* Oxford, p. 136; J. Chrys. *Homil. Ad populum Antiochenum* 7.2; "There are two types of royal power, natural and elected. Examples of natural monarchies are that of the lion over the beasts and that of an eagle over the birds. But the rule of the emperor among us is an elective monarchy," Ando (2000:202).

[72] *Libertas,* Cicero reminds, does not entail serving a just master but serving no master at all, Cic. *Rep.* 2.43; Dio. 65.18.2. Wirszubski (1968:108).

[73] Wirszubski (1968:108).

[74] Cic. *Rep.* 2.43, "Power lay with the people and *auctoritas* with the Senate" (*Cum potestas in populo, auctoritas in senatu sit*); see also *De Leg.* 3.28. The republican magistrate could possess *auctoritas*, but did not govern by it nor did he represent himself in the act of governing. The scope and nature of his authority was clearly defined by his office while his individual identity was subordinated to his official role of representing the majesty of the Roman state and people, Wirszubski (1968:115-117).

the claim of 27 BC, as I mentioned above, ultimately depended on what the Romans believed, or professed to believe, in regard to Augustus's moral state. It is quite clear that to express a belief in Augustus as a selfless 'true human' whose only agenda was to serve the interests of his fellow citizens was, in fact, to express a belief in the restored Republic. Only if Augustus's humanity was doubted, only if there was reason to suspect he was a dissimulating tyrant animal, would there be a reason to suspect that he presided over a dissimulating state. Accordingly, once Augustus's humanity was established and agreed upon, there could be no further reason to question the sincerity behind the official claim that the Republic had been restored.

The restoration of the Republic also involved the claim that the man doing the restoring possessed superior *auctoritas* to anyone else in the state. For his subjects to accept this claim, to recognise that the *princeps* did, in fact, possess such *auctoritas* entailed once again recognising his humanity, because the tyrant, who lacks all the human virtues from which *auctoritas* is derived, can never theoretically possess it; in fact, tyrants were seen as basing their authority on *vis* precisely because they lacked *auctoritas*.[75] Because the sincerest and probably the only way in which the *princeps*'s subjects could truly recognise his possession of *auctoritas* was by submitting to it, their act of submission started to signify their recognition of the *princeps*'s humanity, which in turn ensured the sincerity of his claim that the Republic had been restored. The act of submission, therefore, is itself ideological in that it closes the gap between the official version of reality and the mutually agreed upon reality. In the act of renouncing his unconstitutional powers, the *princeps* made the claim that the Republic had been restored, while his subjects' submission to the *auctoritas* by which he ruled from that point on signified their mutual agreement that this claim was indeed valid and true. Once they arrived at this point ideologically, it was correct to say that the Republic was restored because the princeps had said it was restored, or even more accurately, because he *ordered* it. By the time Pliny delivered his panegyric to Trajan, he could easily summarise this ideological paradox by the words: "You order us to be free: we shall be; you order us to speak what we feel in public: we shall express

---

[75] For example, in *Historia Augusta*, Marcus Aurelius is said to have put down turmoils among the Sequani by the force of his *auctoritas*, while Maximus Trax, who lacked *auctoritas* and assumed he would be scorned by his betters, used terror, Marcus, *HA* 22.10; *Maxim.* 8.8.11. For a good discussion of the concept of *auctoritas,* see G. Agamben (2005), *State of Exception*, Chicago, pp. 74-88.

ourselves" (*Iubes esse liberos: erimus: iubes quae sentimus promere in medium: proferemus*).[76]

Even when the notion of *republica restituta* was long gone and forgotten, *libertas* continued to materialise only under the *princeps*'s orders. This ideological paradox emerged with the very first *princeps,* so the sometimes-asserted sharp contrast between the 'republican' principate and the later 'dominate' is probably largely artificial and of our own making.[77] The reality of the Republic's restoration and the continued survival of the 'true' state came to depend from the very beginning on unquestioned submission to the *princeps*.[78] Once the Romans came to believe that *libertas* was found only in their submission to the *princeps*, it became harder to enslave them, or to interpret their submission as indicative of their underlying servility. This belief guarded them against dehumanisation from the very beginning. When Pliny, for example, condemns Domitian for his tyrannical ways, or for demanding to be called *dominus et deus*,[79] but at the same time addresses Trajan as *domine*,[80] he demonstrates clearly that his *libertas* depends less on titles than on what he believes or has believed about the moral states of these men. When Domitian ruled him, we may safely assume, Pliny believed in Domitian's humanity and, as a result, was as free under him as he later was under Trajan. While Pliny's present claim that Domitian was a tyrant suggests he had in fact been deprived of *libertas* in the past, such a claim is ideologically harmless as it does not suggest Pliny's submission was servile, but only based on misplaced trust. We will observe below the workings of this ideology within the institution of imperial patronage and will find it clearly stated that one's belief or trust in a ruler's humanity is an absolute condition for a human being to exist as one.

For now let us turn to the consensus expressed in 2 BC when the various strata of Roman society joined together in order to bestow on Augustus the title of *Pater Patriae* ("Father of the

---

[76] Pliny, *Pan.* 66.4.

[77] Augustus, Tiberius and Claudius rejected the title *dominus* for its associations with autocracy and servitude, but *dominus* gradually gained acceptance as an official title of the Emperor through the second century. See Suet. *Aug.* 53.1, 55.12.2; *Tib*. 27; Tac. *Ann.* 2.87.2, 12.11; Dio. 57.8.1-2; T. R. Stevenson (1992), 'The Ideal Benefactor and the Father Analogy in Greek and Roman Thought,' *CQ* 42, 421-436, p. 422.

[78] Seneca, for example, writes that the *princeps* and the state are identified to such a degree that neither one could be withdrawn without the destruction of both (*Olim enim ita se induit rei publicae Caesar, ut seduci alterum non posset sine utriusque pernicie*), *Clem.* 1.3.3.

[79] Pliny, *Pan*. 2.3, 21.4, 94.4.

[80] Pliny, *Ep.* 10.

Fatherland").[81] This consensus provided additional ideological confirmation that the man everybody obeyed was obeyed justly. "Our ancestors," Cicero asserts, "did not call those men whom they justly obeyed lords and masters — nor kings even — but custodians of the fatherland, but fathers, but gods" (*Non eros nec dominos apellabant eos, quibus iuste paruerunt, denique ne reges quidem, sed patriae custodes, sed patres, sed deos*).[82] Official deification was to wait for the *princeps*'s death and it merely confirmed Augustus's success in his life mission to restore the Romans to humanity. As for the title of *pater,* it is easy to see its significance within the ideology of humanisation. The Roman *paterfamilias* held in law the same power over his children as over his slaves,[83] but father-child and master-slave relationships were usually invoked in opposition in that they were used as paradigms for positive and negative modes of monarchic rule.[84] Constructing the *princeps* as *pater* allowed his subjects to relate to him as his children rather than as his slaves; it allowed them, in other words, to preserve that which made them human, in a state

---

[81] *RG* 35.1; Ovid *Fasti* 2.127; Suet. *Aug.* 58. Sources declare that the people, the equestrians and the Senate urged Augustus to officially accept the title *pater patriae* and that, after initially resisting, Augustus agreed. Suetonius presents his agreement as compelled by the overwhelming consensus of all concerned: "When Augustus refused, Mesala Corvinus spoke in the Senate: 'The Senate, in consensus with the people of Rome salutes you as a *pater patriae*.' Crying, Augustus responded: 'Having realized the object of my prayers, Conscript Fathers, for what am I now to pray to the immortal gods other than that it be permitted to me to retain this, your consensus, until the end of my life?'" Suet. *Aug.* 58.1-2.

[82] Cicero invoked Romulus as a father rather as a master, *Rep.* 1.41.64, 2.47.

[83] *Paterfamilias* held *vitae necisque potestas* (the "power of life and death," including the choice to rear or expose infants) in regards to both slaves and children. See A. Alföldi (1971); W. K. Lacey (1986), '*Patria Potestas*,' in B. Rawson (ed.), *The Family in Ancient Rome*, Oxford, 121-144; E. Eyben (1991), 'Fathers and Sons,' in B. Rawson (ed.), *Marriage, Divorce and Children in Ancient Rome*, Oxford, 140-173; Y. Thomas (1984), 'Vitae necisque potestas: Le pére, la cite, la mort,' in *Du châtiment dans la cité: Supplices corporels et peine de mort dans le monde antique*, Rome.

[84] In Julio-Claudian texts, the father-son relationship was often invoked in opposition to the paradigm of the master-slave relationship. Seneca, among others, sets forth a variety of paradigms for the emperor's relationship with his subjects, both those he should reject, like the master-slave relationship, and those he should embrace, like the father-son relationship. He points out that the father-son relationship has been institutionalised as a model for the emperor through the title *pater patriae*, *De Clem.* 14.2.3. See also, Gai. *Inst.* 1.52, 55; Arist. EN. 1160a36-b30; Roller (2001:236-245); Barton (2001:193). For a recent discussion of the background and precedents regarding the acceptance of the title of *Pater Patriae,* and some controversial details, see T. Stevenson (2009), 'Acceptance of the Title *Pater Patriae* in 2 BC,' *Antichthon* 43, 97-108.

of total and unconditional surrender.[85] What is more, by accepting fatherhood over the Romans, Augustus symbolically bestowed on his subjects their human status in the same sense that every *paterfamilias* bestowed it on his newborn children. [86]

Some years later, Seneca would instruct Nero to be mindful that the submission of slaves and free subjects (or children) falls into two different categories, requiring from the emperor different treatment.[87] The outward aspect of a child's obedience, or the manner in which children were expected to obey their father, was identical to the obedience of slaves. The crucial difference came down to their inner disposition. Children were seen to be obeying willingly, their obedience being proper and due, while the obedience of slaves was dishonourable, involuntary and coerced (*coercet et frangit*).[88] If a child refused to give his or her father proper respect and obedience, the father could be forced into actions identical to that of a tyrant. Still, Seneca argues, the father is no tyrant because of his different inner disposition: unlike with tyrants, one could presume that the father punishes with the child's interests at heart, whilst being saddened by the need to inflict punishment.[89]

---

[85] Roller (2001:236-245); Barton (2001:193).

[86] In Rome, a newborn child lacked the status of human being prior to being recognised by the *paterfamilias* and was liable to die like a slave in the most degrading fashion, for instance, by being devoured by animals. See Gilhus (2006:16).

[87] Seneca, who regarded the good king as a father, insists that, unlike with slaves, "nothing humiliating or servile should be endured by the child; never should it be necessary for him to beg" (*nihil humile, nihil servile patiatur: numquam illi necesse sit rogare suppliciter*), *Ira*, 2.21.4. It was thought that corporal punishment in the form of beatings was appropriate only for those deprived of honour, and so the *paterfamilias* typically chastised his slaves, but not his sons, in this way. Indeed, while slaves were commonly whipped for their transgressions, it was thought more appropriate to chastise one's sons with words and other non-corporal punishments, precisely so as not to deprive them of honour and thereby conflate them with slaves**,** Roller (201:133-50, 238).

[88] Cic. *Rep.* 3.25.37. As Livy puts it, "No controversy was shorter than that between father and a son," 1.50.9. Obedience to one's father was an example of laudable behavior: "There is no power of words or genius that can express how beneficial, how laudable…is the ability to say: 'I obeyed my parents, I yielded to their rule, and whether it was just or unjust and harsh, I showed myself obsequious and submissive," Sen. *Ben*. 3.38.2; S. Joshel (1992), *Work, Identity and Legal Status at Rome: A Study of Occupational Inscriptions*, p. 27.

[89] Sen. *Clem*. 1.14.2; Barton (2001:167).

It is sometimes thought that these ideological developments 'infantised' Romans,[90] and while in many ways this is true, we should be careful not to understand infantisation as a descent into a state of helplessness and moral unaccountability, because this is something the *nobiles* were extremely keen to avoid. The basic premise that the well-behaved child would allow his father to govern in a mild manner is also found in Cicero, but in a somewhat different context. In the second *Tusculan*, Cicero argues that the rational part of the soul ruled over the irrational in a manner that depended on the way in which the irrational part behaved. It rules "as the master over a slave, the general over a soldier or the parent over the son" but, Cicero concludes, it is only in the soul of the wise man that (*Tusc*. 2.51):

> …si igitur sive ea ratio,
> quae erit in eo perfecta atque absoluta, sic illi parti
> imperabit inferiori, ut iustus parens probes filiis;
> nutu quod volet conficiet, nullo labore, nulla molestia…

> Such reason as will be found in him in complete and perfect measure will govern the lower part of his nature in the same way as the righteous parent governs sons of good character; he will secure the carrying out of his wishes by a hint, without trouble and without vexation (trans. J. E. King, p. 205).

Romans have taken on the status of children, but only in the sense of being Cicero's "sons of good character." Such sons enable their *pater* to govern them "without trouble and without vexation," because they have chosen to obey him out of a conscious sense of duty which is deeply ingrained in their moral fibre and rooted in an understanding of what is best. The Augustan *nobiles* portrayed their obedience to the *princeps* as having resulted from a rational understanding that the restoration and the survival of the state depended on the *princeps*'s continuous governance.[91] By the time Seneca entered the scene, submission to the *princeps*

---

[90] Barton argued that the collapse of the Republic turned Romans into little children in certain respects: the voluntary assumption of absolutes and absolute authority, of dependence on the mercy of the father and the indulgence of the prince. Barton refers to this development as the 'infantisation' of the Romans (2001:283).

[91] For the *nobiles* formulating their "terms of acceptance" of the principate see, for example, R. Syme (1989), *The Augustan Aristocracy*, Oxford, pp. 439-454.

became a sign of moral maturity, of willingness to take responsibility for one's own and society's moral and political wellbeing.[92] In this way, a descent to the level of morally unaccountable children, or 'infantisation' as understood in the cruder sense, was avoided, and the foundation was laid for conceptualising political conformism as indicative of higher intellectual and moral development. Conformism, in other words, became the price of humanity, while to adopt any other attitude to the *princeps* and his authority was to effectively exclude oneself from the human community.

The effort to utilise the ideology of humanisation for the purpose of creating a divide between 'human' political conformists and subhuman dissidents can most easily be observed in Seneca's *De Clementia* and *De Ira*. In *De Clementia,* as we saw above, Seneca asserts that *clementia* is the most human of all the virtues, adding also that this virtue is the one most suited to a prince. Of all men, Seneca asserts, none is more graced by mercy than the prince (*nullum tamen clementia ex omnibus magis quam regem aut principem decet*) upon whose approach subjects do not flee as if from some monster or deadly beast but rush eagerly forward as if toward a bright and beneficent star (*clarum ac beneficium sidus*).[93] The echoes of Cicero's ideal statesman who illuminates his fellow citizens with the light of his humanity are unmistakable. But, while in Cicero the statesman's self-control and *humanitas* are merely the source of the *auctoritas* he needs to exercise outwardly in order to humanise, in Seneca *clementia* is largely self-sufficient and does all the humanising. Nevertheless, it is important to notice that Seneca bases his arguments about the humanising potential of *clementia* on the assumption that the vast majority of men are moral slaves or, at a moral and intellectual level, animals.[94] A case in point is Roman crowds, which for Seneca are a prime example of potential humans who have failed and continue to fail at fulfilling their human potential (*Ira*, 2.7.3):

> Ferarum iste conventus est, nisi quod
> ilae inter se placidae sunt morusque similium abstinent,
> hi mutua laceratione satiantur. Hoc omino ab

---

[92] Seneca urged his peers to cherish the *princeps* as the author of all good, arguing that this was the sign of the true man, upright and pure (*vir sincerus ac purus*), Sen. *Ep.* 73.2-5.

[93] Sen. *Clem*. 1.3.3.

[94] *Ep*. 47.17, "Show me a man who is not a slave; one is a slave to lust, another to greed, another to ambition, and all men are slaves to fear" (*Ostende, quis non sit; alius libidini servit, alius avaritiae, alius ambitioni, omnes timori*).

animalibus mutis differunt, quod illa mansuescunt

alentibus, horum rabies ipsos a quibus est nutrita

depascitur.

It [the crowd] is a community of wild beasts, only that beasts are gentle towards each other and refrain from tearing their own kind, while men glut themselves with rending one another. They differ from the dumb animals in this alone — that animals grow gentle towards those that feed them, while men in their madness prey upon the very persons by whom they are nurtured (trans. J. W. Basore, pp. 181-183).

Seneca confirmed this view in one of his letters where he cautioned his young friend Lucilius: "You are wrong if you trust the faces of those you meet in the street: they have the likeness of men, but the minds of wild animals" (*Erras, si istorum tibi qui occurrunt vultibus credis: hominum effigies habent, animos ferarum*).[95] Seneca draws one important implication from this sorry state of affairs, that is, people who exist on this moral level are largely unaccountable morally, and so to treat them harshly is highly irrational, equivalent to repaying a kicking mule with kicks and a dog with biting (*Numquis satis constare sibi videatur, si mulam calcibus repetat et canem morsu*).[96] If an animal escapes punishment on account of its lack of moral awareness, Seneca argues, so too should a man who is morally at their level. He states: "For what difference does it make that his other qualities are unlike those of dumb animals if he resembles them in the one quality that excuses dumb animals for every misdeed — a mind that is all darkness?" (…*quid enim refert an alia mutis disimilia habeat, si hoc, quod in omni peccato muta defendit, simile habet, caliginem mentis*).[97] The only reason one might have for treating such individuals harshly is if one is blinded with anger, in which case one becomes the animal he is punishing: "A dumb animal perhaps, or something just as dumb, you become like it if you get angry" (*Mutum animal est aut simile muto; imitaris illud si irasceris*).[98] In *De Ira* Seneca was concerned with showing the dehumanising side of anger, in rulers and subjects alike. He argues that anger is the primary source of tyrannical cruelty and as such is most characteristic of tyrants

---

[95] Sen. *Ep.* 103.2.

[96] Sen. *Ira,* 3.27.1.

[97] Sen. *Ira*, 3.27.2-3.

[98] Sen. *Ira*, 2.4-5.

(2.5.3):

> Origo huius mali ab ira est, quae ubi
>
> frequenti exercitatione et satietate in oblivionem
>
> clementiae venit et omne foetus humanum eiecit
>
> animo, novissime in crudelitatem transit.
>
> The source of this evil [cruelty] is anger, and when anger from oft-repeated indulgence and surfeit has arrived at a disregard for mercy and has expelled from the mind every conception of the human bond, it passes at last into cruelty (trans. J.W. Basore, p. 177).

"How great a blessing," Seneca writes, "to escape anger, the greatest of all ills, and along with it madness, ferocity, cruelty, rage and the other passions that attend anger" (*Quantum est effugere maximum malum, iram, et cum illa rabiem, saevitiam, crudelitatem, furorem, alios comites eius adfectus*).[99] Anger, Seneca argues, is never justified, not even anger aroused by the sight of sin. He asserts that every man who walks the streets walks among 'wild beasts' — criminals, misers and spendthrifts — but to become angry at them is to risk becoming like them.[100] Seneca recognises that only the Wise Man is entirely unperturbed by the sins of the crowds; morally unperfected individuals like himself are at constant risk of being dehumanised just by virtue of spending time among them. In *Epistle* 7, for example, Seneca writes to Lucilius of the dangers of spending too much time in the Circus (7.3):

> Nihil vero tam damnosum bonis moribus quam in
>
> aliquo spectaculo desidere. Tunc enim per volup-
>
> tatem facilius vitia subrepunt. Quid me existimas
>
> dicere? Avarior redeo, ambitiosior, luxuriosior, im-
>
> mo vero crudelior et inhumanior, quia inter homines
>
> fui.

---

[99] Sen. *Ira*, 2.12.6.

[100] Sen. *Ira*, 2.7.9-10; 2.10.3-5. To allow one's passions to depend on someone else's wickedness, Seneca argues, is to risk being consumed by anger and to lose that which makes one a human being, *Ira*, 2.10.4. "Never will a wise man cease to be angry, if once he begins" (*Numquam irasci desinet sapiens, si semel coeperit*), 2.9.1.

But nothing is so damaging to good character as the habit of lounging at the games; for then it is that vice steals subtly upon me through the avenue of pleasure. What do you think I mean? I mean that I come home more greedy, more ambitious, more voluptuous and even more cruel and inhuman ─ because I have been among human beings (trans. R. M. Gumere, p. 37).

One should seek the company of true humans in order to remain or become human since even the animals, Seneca argues, become tame in their association with human beings.[101] Accordingly, Seneca advises his peers to remain calm and unaffected by the sins of wild beasts, to avoid prolonged association with them as well as being angry at them.[102] To the ruler, on the other hand, Seneca advises that the best way of dealing with such beasts is by a show of *clementia.* Seneca argues in *De Clementia* that, as well as being the most 'human' of virtues, *clementia* is *the* virtue by which the *princeps* raises the morally handicapped to a human level of existence. For this reason, Seneca considers *clementia* to be the virtue most suited to a prince, that is, the prince who bestows *clementia* on his erring subjects cures their diseased souls and recalls them to the light of humanity (1.17.1-2):

> Nullum animal morosius est, nullum maiore
> arte tractandum quam homo, nulli magis parcendum.
> Quid enim est stultius quam in iumentis quidem et
> canibus erubescere iras exercere, pessima autem
> condicione sub homine hominem esse? Morbis
> medemur nec irascimur; atqui et hic morbus est
> animi; mollem medicinam desiderat ipsumque
> medentem minime infestum aegro.

> No creature is more difficult to temper, none needs to be handled with greater skill than man, and to none should more mercy be shown. For what is more senseless than to subject man to the foulest treatment at the hands of man, while one will blush to vent his anger on beasts of burden and dogs? Diseases do not make us angry ─ we try to cure them; yet here too is a disease, but of the mind; it requires gentle treatment, and one to treat it who is anything but hostile to his patient (trans. J. W. Basore, p. 407).

---

[101] Sen. *Ira*, 3.8.3.

[102] Sen. *Ira*, 3.8.3-4.

Clementia appeals to the human side of those on whom it has been bestowed while cruelty breaks their spirit, and the broken spirit is no longer a human spirit. But even dogs, horses and beasts of burden, Seneca argues, are healthier and work better when their spirit is not broken by excessive cruelty.[103] *Clementia*'s humanising potential also lies in its capacity to deter vice, which provides the foundation for a truly human society created, Seneca adds, in the image of its ruler (1.22.3, 2.2.1):

> Constituit bonos
> mores civitati princeps et vitia eluit, si patiens
> eorum est, non tamquam probet, sed tamquam
> invitus et cum magno tormento ad castigandum
> veniat. Verecundiam peccandi facit ipsa clementia
> regentis; gravior multa poena videtur, quae a mitti
> viro constituitur…Tradetur ista animi tui man-
> suetudo diffundeturque paulatim per omne imperii
> corpus, et cuncta in simulitudinem tuam formabuntur.

> Good morals are established in the state and vice is wiped out if a prince is patient with vice, not as if he approved of it, but as if unwillingly and with great pain he had to resort to chastisement. The very mercifulness of the ruler makes men shrink from doing wrong; the punishment which a kindly man decrees seems all the more severe…That kindness of your heart will be recounted, will be diffused little by little throughout the whole body of the empire, and all things will be moulded into your likeness (trans. J. W. Basore, pp. 419, 433).

Now, to argue that *clementia* is proper because those who have sinned are morally unaccountable subhumans is to imply that all who have sinned against the *princeps*, those who would place themselves in the situation to need the *princeps*'s *clementia* in the first place, are subhuman. That this is precisely the point Seneca wished to bring across is suggested in an anecdote he narrated in order to provide Nero with a positive example of a ruler exercising *clementia*. The Greek historian Timagenes, the story goes, was given lodging in Rome in the

---

[103] Sen. *Clem*. 1.17.

house of Asinius Pollio and was in the habit of making hostile remarks against Augustus and his family. His behaviour went unpunished, but Pollio was somewhat concerned about incurring the anger of the *princeps*. Augustus was not angry at Pollio but on one occasion remarked to him, "You are keeping a wild beast" (or "You are keeping a menagerie").[104] Seneca approved of Augustus's reluctance to punish Timagenes and his reasoning, found only a few lines below, we already know: to punish such behaviour is equal to "repaying the kicking mule with kicks and the dog with biting."[105] The disease such men suffered from, Seneca reminded Nero, "requires gentle treatment and the one to treat it is he who is anything but hostile to his patient."[106]

Having characterised Timagenes as morally unaccountable, Seneca denied him the status of a human being; he intended, it appears, Augustus's characterisation of him as a 'wild beast' to be read literally. It is important to notice that the only crime Timagenes committed, viewed by Seneca as sufficient to exclude him from the human community, was his criticism of the *princeps*. The implication is clear: true humans submit to the *princeps*'s *auctoritas* while the false disobey; one becomes human by submitting and a beast through disobeying. True humans submit because they know it is for the best, they rely on the *princeps*'s *auctoritas* for guidance and for aid in their own quest to suppress the beast within. Beasts, on the other hand despise the rule of reason (inner and outer) and the only hope they have of ever seeing the light of humanity is in the *princeps*'s *clementia*. Seneca was well aware that Timagenes's behaviour could be viewed by some as a display of *libertas*, but he makes sure he suggests precisely the opposite. The ability to submit to proper authority, Seneca asserts, separates humans from animals and those without such ability, although impossible to enslave, lack the attributes of the human being (*Ira*, 2.15.4):

> Deinde omnes istae feritate liberae gentes leonum
> luporumque ritu ut servire non possunt, ita nec
> imperare; non enim humani vim ingenii, sed feri
> et intractabilis habent; nemo autem regere potest,
> nisi qui et regi.

> Then again, all those people which are, like lions and wolves, free by reason of their very

---

[104] Sen. *Ira*, 3.23.8.

[105] Sen. *Ira*, 3.26-27.4.

[106] Sen. *Clem.* 1.17.1-2.

wildness, even as they cannot submit to servitude, neither can they exercise dominion; for the ability they possess is not that of the human being but of something wild and ungovernable; and no man is able to rule unless he can also submit to be ruled (trans. J. W. Basore, p. 201).

Seneca's idea of *libertas* was of freedom within the established order and to undermine that order was to undermine *libertas*. Most imperial writers were keen to disassociate behaviour such as Timagenes's from *libertas*; the Elder Seneca, for example, says of T. Labienus, who criticised indiscriminately of rank or station, that, "His *libertas* was such that it surpassed the definition of *libertas*" (*libertas tanta ut libertatis nomen excederet*).[107] Even Tacitus scorned such behaviour as empty displays, while Plutarch accused Favonius, an emulator of Cato Uticensis, of exaggerating his "free speech" (*parrhesia*) into insolence (*authadeia*) and exposing himself in the process as a "mere dog" (*haplokuna*).[108]

There is, of course, a clear limit to which such arguments can be taken. In the event that criticism of the ruler is warranted and true, one's failure to voice it would indicate the disposition of a fearful slave. It is commonplace in ancient literature to find descriptions of the subjects of cruel tyrants who refrain from criticism out of fear for their own lives, who hide their true feelings and opinions while expressing those of which the tyrant approves. Seneca, for example, narrated the tale of Alexander's murdering his friend Clitus for "flattering him [Alexander] insufficiently, and too slowly making the transition from a free Macedonian to a Persian slave" (*qui Clitum carissimum sibi…inter epulas transfodit manu quidem sua, parum adulantem et pigre ex Macedone ac libero in Persicam servitutem transeuntem*). In Seneca, Clitus's fate stands as a warning to others confronted by such a ruler that "they must watch their tongues, lest they might be subject to persecution."[109] Here, Seneca appears to be advising *dissimulatio,* which was prevalent during the empire, especially under such rulers as Caligula or Nero, when one's very survival could depend on successfully practicing it.[110] Vasily Rudich defined *dissimulatio* as a

---

[107] Sen. *Con.* 10.

[108] Tac. *Ann.* 16.22; Plut. *Pomp.* 60; Barton (2001:181).

[109] Sen. *Clem.* 1.26.2.

[110] Tacitus's account of Nero's murder of Britannicus at the family table is a classic example of the necessity of *dissimulatio* under such emperors. Tacitus writes that everyone at the table knew that Britannicus was poisoned and dying but all accepted Nero's claim that he was suffering an epileptic attack, including Britannicus's sister Octavia, who "had learned to conceal pain and love and every emotion," *Ann.* 13.16.3-4; S. Bartsch (1994), *Actors in the*

"complex and contradictory state of mind within one and the same person," a result of conflicting forces ─ intellectual, emotional and instinctive, which involved "a concealment of one's true feelings by a display of feigned sentiments."[111] The practice of *dissimulatio* signified to Romans the practitioner's 'loss of humanity'; during the Republic, as we saw, the emphasis was on the moral causes of such loss while in the empire, dissimulators were usually fearful political 'slaves.'[112] *Dissimulatio* represented the secondary level of insincerity, a social 'false front' necessary to those who were insincere on the primary level or, in this case, to those who were the dehumanised and tyrannised subjects of a tyrant animal. The slavish dimension of *dissimulatio* is particularly pronounced in a passage of *Annals* where Tacitus describes the accession of Tiberius (1.7):

> At Romae ruere in servitium consules,
> patres eques. Quanto quis inlustrior, tanto magis
> falsi ac festinantes, vultuque composito, ne laeti
> excessu principis neu tristiores primordio, lacrimas,
> gaudium, questus, adulationem miscebant.

> Meanwhile, at Rome consuls, senate, knights, precipitately became servile. The more distinguished men were, the greater their urgency and insincerity. They must show neither satisfaction at the death of one emperor, not gloom at the accession of another; so their features were carefully arranged in a blend of tears and smiles, mourning and flattery (trans. J. Jackson, pp. 253-255).

"The true cost of despotism that emerges by way of Tacitus," as Hammer has observed, "is not

---

Audience: Theatricality and Doublespeak from Nero to Hadrian, Harvard; J. C. Scott (1990), *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts,* New Haven, p. 28. See also Tac. *Agr.* 2; *Ann.* 14.49, 15.61.

[111] The practice of *dissimulatio* in imperial Rome, Rudich has argued, was a behaviour derived from a complex psychological state caused by self-contradictory moral imperatives. Especially under tyrannical emperors, Rudich claims, one's *pietas* (dedication to the commonwealth) and the ambition to stay politically involved played against one's *dignitas* (self-respect) and the need to preserve respectability in the eyes of men like Thrasea Paetus, for whom compliance with a tyrannical emperor meant cowardly complicity and was no different from slavery, V. Rudich (1993), *Political Dissidence Under Nero: The Price of Dissimulation,* London, p. 17.

[112] For example, Cic. *Tusc.* 5.61; Livy 31.15.2, 31.25.10, 45.10.11; Plur. *Mor.* 52D, 56E.

dead bodies but the lifeless souls of individuals who are consigned to navigate through a political netherworld in which nothing, including one's own expression of experience, has any measure of authenticity."[113] This same despotism is sometimes seen as driving the term *persona* to change its meaning and revert to its theatrical origins of denoting a deceptive mask. Bartsch has traced this process and observes that in the imperial period, the term *persona* was no longer used to describe the naturalness of public identity (as it did in Cicero) but rather started to refer to a form of inauthentic self-performance.[114] Bartsch concludes that this shift in meaning was driven by the politically oppressive conditions in imperial Rome:[115]

> We have moved from an iteration of the theory of *De Officiis* to a more sinister world in which adopting an inappropriate *persona* is no longer just unproductive, or a sign of a lack of self-knowledge. It is a deliberately false self-representation to the world, one driven by evil or necessitated by fear.

Perhaps we would be right to view *persona* in this period as changing its predominant *function* rather than its meaning; it was always a 'mask' in that it denoted the exterior and visible side of a person, but whether it had any deceptive connotations depended on whether it was used to disguise or to express that which lay below it. The world Tacitus describes above is largely dehumanised, the emperor's subjects fearful slaves, and over their faces, their *personae* always and necessarily acted as human disguises.

Seneca appears all too aware of the dehumanising dimension of *dissimulatio* and, as a way of showing the human side of this practice, he illustrates in *De Ira*, by a series of *exempla*, this art and its occasional necessity.[116] It is interesting to note that Seneca does not argue that

---

[113] D. Hammer (2002), *Roman Political Thought and the Modern Theoretical Imagination*, Norman, p. 10.

[114] For example, Sen. *Ep.* 80.6.80, "The cheerfulness of those men who are called happy is feigned, or their sadness is heavy and festering, all the more so because it is not permitted for them to be sad in public, but they must act the happy man while eating up their very heart amid their sorrows…all their happiness is role playing" (*omnium istorum personata felicitas est*).

[115] Bartsch, S. (2006), *The Mirror of the Self: Sexuality, Self-Knowledge and the Gaze in the Early Roman Empire,* Chicago, p. 226. See also A. J. Boyle (2006), *An Introduction to Roman Tragedy*, New York, pp. 181-185.

[116] Seneca might have had personal reasons for dealing with this topic, since it appears his contemporaries often pointed to a discrepancy between his message and his personal conduct. Seneca himself wrote that he was often

dissimulatio is compatible with political *libertas*, but he does argue it to be very much compatible with humanity, even that is a *prerequisite* for anyone who wishes to exist as a human being. The first episode Seneca narrates comes from Caligula's reign. Caligula, he writes, arrested the son of a man named Pastor who then intervened on his son's behalf. Having received Pastor's plea, Caligula had his son executed and then invited Pastor for dinner. Pastor suppressed his emotion, accepted the invitation and "dined as if he had prevailed and gained his son back."[117] The other *exempla* are taken from Herodotus and deal with proverbial events of ancient Persian and Median history.[118] Praexapes, friend and councillor to the king Cambyses, on one occasion advised Cambyses to drink less. Cambyses replied that he never lost command of himself, no matter how drunk he might be. Wishing to prove his point, Cambyses summoned Praexapes's son and announced that he would shoot him in the heart with an arrow and then proceeded to do so. Praexapes's only response to his son's murder was to compare Cambyses's shot to that of Apollo.[119] The third is the famous story, also found in Herodotus, of a man named Harpagus who was fed the cooked flesh of his children by the Median king whom he had disobeyed.[120] When the king asked him if the dinner was to his liking, he replied, "At the king's table, any dinner is enjoyable."[121]

The thrust of the argument in *De Ira*, as Rudich has observed, suggests that this particular attitude towards the powerful was still a worthy and respectable mode of living.[122] Indeed, Seneca went on to say that "such restraint of pain is necessary for those whose lot it is to lead this

---

confronted with the accusation: "You speak one way and live another," *De Vit. Beat.* 18.1. Despite all attempts, he was never fully exonerated from these charges of duplicity: Tac. *Ann*. 13.42, "By what kind of wisdom, by the precepts of which philosophers, did he amass during four years of royal friendship, three hundred million sesterces? In Rome the childless and their legacies are like captives in his net, and Italy and the provinces are exhausted by his monstrous usury." Seneca's usury, many believed, was directly responsible for Queen Boudicca's uprising in Britain, Dio, 62.2. For a detailed discussion, see V. Rudich (1997), *Dissidence and Literature under Nero: the Price of Rhetoricisation*, London, pp. 17-106.

[117] Sen. *Ira*, 2.33.2-5

[118] Her. 3.34f.

[119] Sen. *Ira*, 3.14.3.

[120] Her. 1.118-19.

[121] Sen. *Ira*, 3.14.5.

[122] Rudich (1993: 84-88).

sort of life and be admitted to the royal table."[123] He then offers rational justifications for such behaviours: Pastor had another son to worry about and Harpagus avoided eating the remainder of the meal.[124] But Seneca goes further than this. His professed objective in narrating these episodes is not to ponder the practice of *dissimulatio* or its occasional necessity but to demonstrate to his readers that "even in such circumstances it is possible to suppress anger" (*id de quo nunc agitur apparet, iram suprimi posse*).[125] We might remember that *De Ira* was a work dedicated to demonstrating the evils of unrestrained anger, and the behaviours of Pastor, Praexaspes and Harpagus were used in this context as exemplars of the successful restraint of the irrational self. So, when Seneca concluded the above episodes with "even in such circumstances it is possible to suppress anger," we should be reading 'even in these circumstances, it is possible to remain human.'

In *De Ira*, therefore, *dissimulatio* is no longer the mark of a fearful slave, but of the unperturbed human in absolute control of his irrational passions.[126] Seneca was well aware that in such circumstances many would see a display of anger as completely justified, that the legitimately wronged father would be well within his rights, even obliged, to express it. Nevertheless, we may recall that he has already dismissed the view that "anger on account of another's sin" is justified or that a display of anger can and should ever be seen as a sign of virtue.[127] Early in *De Ira*, Seneca has his adversary suggest that men who are prone to anger are more sincere and free from dissimulation. Seneca grants such men only the appearance of ingenuousness, but in reality they are reckless (*incautos*) which, he makes sure to add, is the term applied to morally unaccountable fools, voluptuaries and spendthrifts, and to all who ill disguise their vices (*stultis, luxuriosis nepotibusque hoc nomen imponimus et omnibus vitiis parum*

---

[123] Sen. *Ira*, 3.14.6.

[124] Sen. *Ira*, 2.33.5, 3.15.1.

[125] Sen. *Ira*, 3.14.4.

[126] In regards to Praexaspes, Seneca does concede, "Heaven curse such a man, a bond slave in spirit even more than in station!" (*Dii illum male perdant animo magis quam condicione mancipium*). Nevertheless, this remark is clearly provoked by Praexaspes's flattery (comparing the shot to that of Apollo), not by his failure to respond angrily to the killing of his son: "He praised the deed," Seneca writes, "which it were too much even to have witnessed," 3.14.3.

[127] Sen. *Ira*, 2.6.1. At the suggestion that being angry at the sight of a vice is a virtue, Seneca replies: "Virtue will never be guilty of simulating vice in the act of repressing it; anger itself she considers reprehensible. For it is in no way better, often even worse, than those shortcomings which provoke anger," *Ira*, 2.6.2.

callidis).[128] Furthermore, having repeatedly characterised tyrants as wild beasts, and thus morally unaccountable, any display of anger on account of an injury done by such a creature now becomes irrational and dehumanising.[129] Seneca then further supplemented the above accounts with a series of arguments about the futility of revenge and the unaccountability of evildoers, making sure to mention that in the act of revenge one renounces his human nature.[130] As for the deserved punishment, Seneca states that "having done it" and the subsequent torture of remorse is punishment enough.[131]

It is quite clear, therefore, that with his treatment of this sensitive subject in *De Ira*, Seneca has managed to reclaim the humanity of political conformists and dissimulators. Not only is such a practice no longer the mark of a fearful slave, it is an absolute condition for the preservation of one's humanity under the rule of tyrants. One would expect a Stoic to emphasise the importance of inner disposition over outer appearance, but Seneca clearly uses these ideas to service the ideological needs of his class, integrating them into the larger framework of the ideology of humanisation. His is the most assertive attempt to endow the often dehumanising outward appearance of life under tyranny with an inner and inviolable humanity. The humanising of *dissimulatio* in *De Ira* was only one of several steps Seneca took in order to emancipate his humanity and that of his peers from its dependence on that of an emperor; he still had to deal with another particularly problematic form of *dissimulatio*, as yet unaddressed. With the advent of the principate, as numerous sources testify, aristocrats were increasingly portrayed as flatterers of the emperor and his inner circle intent on securing benefits.[132] Seneca himself was a recipient

---

[128] Sen. *Ira*, 16.3. The adversary is even made to object with the remark that the orator does better when he is angry (*Orator…iratus aliquando melio est*). Seneca, undoubtedly recalling Cicero, warns that the good orator is never angry (or ruled by anger) but merely pretends to be when the situation demands; like an actor who is successful not when angry but when he plays the angry man well (*Immo imitatatus irratum*; *nam et histriones in pronuntiando non irrati populum movent; sed iratum bene agentes*), *Ira*, 2.17.1.

[129] Sen. *Ira*, 2.26.2. "…it is not less mad to be angry at dumb animals, which do us no injury because they cannot will to do so; for there can be no injury unless it arises from design."

[130] Sen. *Ira*, 3.5.6-8, 3.24-30.

[131] Sen. *Ira*, 3.26.3.

[132] Suet. *Aug*. 53.1-2; *Tib*. 27; Plut. *Mor*. 60 C-D; Tac. *Ann*. 1.14, 2.12, 14.10, 15.59. Such tactics appear to have been reasonably successful: Tiberius, according to Suetonius, was so pleased with the good fellowship of his dining companions Pomponius Falcchs and Lucius Piso that he appointed the former as a legate to Syria and the latter a city prefect, declaring them "exceptionally pleasant," *Tib*. 42. Suetonius also reports that Tiberius preferred for a

of many of these benefits, and it was absolutely paramount for him to address the issue of imperial *beneficia* which also, as we saw above, had an inherent dehumanising potential. Before Seneca entered the scene, the *nobiles* had raised formidable ideological barriers against dehumanisation by *beneficia*, but Seneca, as we will now see, took this ideology to a whole new level.

<div align="center">

III

</div>

Humanising by Gifts: Grateful Humans and Inhuman Ingrates

<div align="center">

There is no benefit in the gift of the bad man.

Euripides, *Medea.*

</div>

In the Greco-Roman world, when an individual 'founded,' 'saved' or otherwise dominated a state, he would assume in the people's perceptions the role of benefactor or parent.[133] The Roman emperors took the role of benefactor extremely seriously. They applied the term *beneficium* to a wide range of acts, not only to their grants of money,[134] citizenship,[135] senatorial and equestrian offices,[136] and admission into the equestrian or senatorial order,[137] but even to the most banal administrative decisions as well as to the mere execution of acts of law.[138] The idea fostered — that almost every aspect of imperial rule was a benefit of some sort — might be explained by an appeal to the thesis that viewed the emperor as the 'supreme patron' who distributed privileges, offices and statuses in expectation of generating gratitude and loyalty among his beneficiaries.[139] Emperors continuously expanded on the number of acts from which they could draw the

---

quaestorship a candidate of low birth to one of high because the former finished off an amphora of wine after Tiberius drank to his health, *Tib*. 42.2.

[133] Stevenson (1992:425).

[134] Suet. *Ner*. 24.2.

[135] Pliny, *Paneg*. 37.3; P. Veyne (1976), *Bread and Circuses: Historical Sociology and Political Pluralism*, Harmondsworth, p. 348.

[136] Suet. *Vesp*. 14; Sen. *Ben*. 1.5.1, 2.9.1.

[137] Dio. 55.13; Sen. *Ben*. 3.9.2.

[138] Veyne (1976:347); R. P. Saller (1982), *Personal Patronage in the Early Empire*, Cambridge, p. 34.

[139] See above, n. 16.

necessary loyalty and support; the numerous occasions in which emperors would remind their beneficiaries of their obligations to display due gratitude are testament enough to their expectation that *beneficia* would help them sustain their position at the political apex.[140] On the other hand, viewed from the perspective of the imperial beneficiaries, the situation appears in a somewhat different light. Here, the ever-expanding category of *beneficia* was a testament that the emperor was a benefactor by definition. In the orations and official pronouncements, the emperor appears as an entirely disinterested benefactor, as someone who is essentially good and as such can do nothing but good deeds (*beneficia*), even in his impersonal administrative activities.[141]

In his capacity as a benefactor, the Roman emperor came to closely resemble the Hellenistic *euergetes* whose benevolence was the product of his altogether generous and good nature, the product of a "traditional, even inherited attitude of mind."[142] Such developments are sometimes seen as spontaneous and inevitable in a society in which the emperor's right to rule was largely unquestioned, that is, beneficiaries could not explain why the emperor gave except because he was intrinsically good.[143] Nevertheless, given the fact that in the Greco-Roman world one's potential to rule (or to acquire power) was so often linked to one's ability and willingness to give, it is difficult to speak with confidence about such a thing as 'unquestioned rule.'[144] What

---

[140] Examples of emperors bestowing benefits and then reminding their subjects of their obligations are numerous; see, for example, Plut. *Caes.* 5.8.9; Suet. *Cal.* 38.2, *Ner.* 32.2, *Otho* 4; Dio. 59.15.1-2.

[141] Dio of Prusa, among others, stated that the emperor could not be anything but a benefactor; he could no more be a cause of bad than "the sun can be the cause of darkness," Dio P. *Or.* 1.25-26. See also Saller (1982:34); H. Kloft (1970), *Liberalitas Principis*, Cologne, p. 181.

[142] The statement of disinterest was central to the ideology of Greek *euergetism* in both the classical and Hellenistic period. See M. Austin (1981), *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest: A Selection of Ancient Sources,* Cambridge, pp. 43, 97, 98, 110, 113, 119, 120; Demos. *De Cor.* 18.257. For Hellenistic kings in the role of *euergetes*, see F. E. Adcock (1953), 'Greek and Macedonian Kingship,' in *Proceedings of the British Academy* 39, 163-183, p. 174; B. Dignas (2002), *Economy of the Sacred in the Roman and Hellenistic Asia Minor*, Oxford, p. 39; Veyne (1976:75); G. Shipley (2000), *The Greek World After Alexander 223-30 BC,* London, p. 98.

[143] Veyne (1976:302).

[144] In Greek political theory, kingship was considered the prerogative of benefactors whose leadership, we are told, people were generally willing to accept, Polyb. 6.6.4; Arist. *Pol.* 1286b. The Romans also saw a close connection between giving and ruling, and numerous passages from the imperial period imply or assert that the allegiance of aristocrats is won by imperial giving, Sen. *Ben.* 1.5.1-2, *Ira,* 3.31.2-3; Dio. 52.34.11, 53.4.1, 60.11.7; Tac. *Hist.* 3.37. Emperors in making would usually secure the army's support by means of generous giving; see, for example, Suet. *Otho* 4; Kloft (1970:153-155); R. Tabacco (1985), 'Il tiranno nelle declamazioni de scuola in lingua Latina,'

we need to explain is why the imperial *nobiles* often admitted that their allegiance was won by imperial giving, but at the same time denied that their ruler was benefiting them *for the purpose* of cementing and legitimising his rule. I will propose below that this insistence on the purity of the emperor's motives was an additional way of constructing the emperor as a 'true' human who benefits for the purpose of 'humanising' his beneficiaries as opposed to dehumanising or enslaving them. The insistence on the benefactor's disinterestedness and inner goodness was an intrinsic part of the Greco-Roman code of beneficence, and before I consider its likely place within the ideology of humanisation, it is necessary to consider some of its central ideas in more detail. In the Greek world, this code can be deduced mainly from epigraphic evidence. In the Roman context, its main propagators were Cicero's *De Officiis,* which treated beneficence within the context of duties, and Seneca's *De Beneficiis,* where Seneca's aim was to explain how to give, receive and return benefits correctly.

Greco-Roman elites often bestowed benefactions on the lower classes, and modern scholars mostly agree that, in one sense or another, these were concerned with the legitimisation of their political power or the reaffirmation of their socio-political supremacy.[145] Nevertheless, for their part, the ancient elites traced their political dominance to their intellectual and moral superiority, to their guardianship of the ancestral *mores,* and to whichever admirable ability or attribute they might have possessed which the lower orders did not have a share in, *but not* to their economic and financial dominance.[146] While the beneficiaries often came to regard the

---

Memorie dell' Accademia delle Scienze di Torino, Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche 9, 1-141, pp.116-118; Lendon (1997:154-160); Roller (2001:173-212).

[145] Finley, for example, maintains that benefactions justified, or helped to justify, "the entrustment of political leadership to them (the rich) as a class, and to gain popular support for individual members of the elite in their competition with each other for influence," in M. Finley (1983), *Politics in the Ancient World,* Cambridge, p.37. Veyne, on the other hand, argued that rather than paying to govern, the elites paid because they governed, "just as a businessman finances his own business." Benefactors were honoured in public with statues, crowns and public eulogies which managed to create an "inequality of prestige" and to "satisfy the need human groups feel to express their superiority, even if only through symbols," Veyne (1976:117-120, 130).

[146] H. Mourtissen (2001), *Plebs and Politics in the Late Roman Republic,* Cambridge, pp. 138-40. For a collection of and detailed discussion about the abundant evidence outlining these attitudes in the Greek world, see P. Brantlinger (1983), *Bread and Circuses: Theories of Mass Culture as Social Decay,* Cornell, p. 62.

payments as their entitlement,[147] the elites insisted that giving benefit for the purpose of acquiring political power or establishing a relationship of dominance was corruption.[148] Aristocrats regarded giving as a display and further proof of their moral virtues; the good politician, they often insisted, is a man of virtue; he is responsible, capable and sincere, and these virtues, not the payments he makes, are the chief and only justification for his rule.[149] Well aware that money might easily have been seen as the ultimate source of their power, the elites were concerned with creating as much distance between the two as possible. Plutarch, for example, advised that benefactions should be entirely separated from political offices and instead be given on non-political occasions such as during religious worship.[150]

The Roman elites shared this basic attitude, and while they regarded the exchange of gifts and favours as crucial to the workings of human society,[151] they were very concerned with avoiding the impression they were purchasing power and influence. The Romans referred to the

---

[147] Evidence for the reliance of Greek cities on the benefaction of the rich comes all the way from classical Athens, where the rich were expected to outlay money for the welfare of their fellow citizens. For example, Xen. *Oec*. 2.5-6. Xenophon speaks of the various benefactions a rich man must give to the city lest he may get in trouble "with gods and man alike." Plutarch, writing in the second century AD, observed that "the masses are more hostile to a rich man who does not give them a share of his private possessions than to a poor man who steals from the public fund…" *Mor*. 822.30.

[148] Plutarch, for example, was well aware of the necessity of benefactions in public life, *Mor*. 822.30, but still called benefactions bribery if they were used for political gain, *Mor*. 821.29: "…and he who first said that the people were ruined by the first man who bought its favour was well aware that the multitude loses its strength when it succumbs to bribe taking."

[149] A good politician, Plutarch insists, pleases the people with his dedication to public life, his honesty and his sincerity, and while the masses may demand benefactions without fair pretext, they should be opposed, *Mor*. 822 B-C. Demosthenes on one occasion made clear that, as far as he was concerned, the greatest service he had done to his city was his good council and not his financial contributions, *Cher*. 8.70.

[150] He suggested that benefactions should be given and seen to be given for any reason other than to gain political office: "First let the gifts be made without bargaining for anything; for so they surprise and overcome the recipients more completely; and secondly, they should be given on some occasion which offers a good and excellent pretext, one which is connected with the worship of god and leads people to piety," *Mor*. 822.30.

[151] Both Cicero and Seneca approved of the wealthy undertaking acts of generosity on the poorer sections, as such behaviour was in accordance with nature: "Nature requires one man to want to consider the interests of another, whoever he is, simply because he is man," Cic. *Off*. 3.27. For the approval of donations made by early Roman patricians, see *Rep*. 2.26, 2.33, 38, 59; *Off*. 1.47.8; Sen. *Ben*. 1.4.2.

character disposition from which the act of conferring *beneficium* was derived as *liberalitas*, and Cicero and Seneca described it in traditional Stoic terms as a good in itself, to be displayed for its own sake rather than for the sake of the socio-political rewards that might follow from one's generous act. Accordingly, they both insisted on the purity of the benefactor's motives: in *De Officiis,* for example, Cicero stated that it was necessary to avoid "the slightest suspicion of self-seeking" when conferring benefits, lest the benefaction be seen as a bribe.[152] To bestow benefactions on one's fellow man in order to reap the subsequent rewards, Cicero argued, is to be motivated by "the meanest and most sordid motive of all, both for those who are swayed by it and for those who venture to resort to it. For things are in a bad way when that which should be obtained by merit is attempted by money."[153] At the opening of *De Beneficiis,* Seneca displays similar concerns and finds himself in doubt, not knowing whether it is more shameful to repudiate a benefit or to ask for repayment of it (*Nec facile dixerim, utrum turpius sit infitiari an repetere beneficium*).[154]

These ideas informed the theoretical discussions of Roman *amicitia,* the friendship between people of different or the same social status, which Cicero regarded as an essential component of Roman virtue, in complete harmony with Nature and one of the bonds of society.[155] While encompassing relationships that modern scholars might regard as patronal, Roman theorists formulated *amicitia* in terms of mutual respect, love, regard and selfless

---

[152] Cic. *Off.* 2.22, 2.75. See also *Off.* 1.14.43, 1.14.45, 1.15.47. The benefactor, as he appears in Cicero and Seneca, must be concerned with the real advantage of the recipient rather than a public proclamation of his own virtue, *Lael.* 51; *Off.* 1.44, 3.118. This emphasis on disinterest is attributed to Panaetius and is developed in more detail by Seneca, and it could be argued that by the beginning of the second century AD, Cicero's arguments had become part of the intellectual furniture of the Roman ruling classes. See C. E. Manning (1985), '*Liberalitas* ─ the Decline and Rehabilitation of a Virtue,' in *G&R* 32, 73-83.

[153] Cic. *Off.* 2.21-22. Also, *Off.* 1.14.43, 1.14.45, 1.15.47.

[154] Sen. *Ben.* 1.1.3. Throughout *De Beneficiis*, one constantly encounters statements expressing this same idea, for example: "the man who when he gives has any thought of repayment deserves to be deceived," 1.1.10. For a good discussion, see B. Inwood (1992), 'Politics and Paradox in Seneca's *De Beneficiis*,' in *Justice and Generosity: Studies in Hellenistic Social and Political Philosophy, Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium Hellenisticum,* A. Laks & M. Schofield, 241-265.

[155] Cic. *Amm.* 4-5, 17-20; *Off.* 1.14.43, 1.14.45, 1.15.47.

benefits.[156] *Beneficia* was considered to be a natural part of *amicitia* but, the Roman theorists insisted, it should not be its lifeblood; gifts should be bestowed only to honour and to further demonstrate a previously forged bond of mutual respect and affection.[157] They did not deny that *beneficia* had the ability to win favour and gratitude,[158] but they insisted that this gratitude was not owed to the benefactor, rather, it was the private moral affair of the receiver and something owed to one's own conscience: people who were guilty of ingratitude, Cicero stated, were guilty of a sin "committed against themselves."[159] The true benefactor's reward consisted of achieving or merely demonstrating the moral excellence that suited a man of his class, but the ensuing gratitude and reputation for virtue would inevitably pay further dividends in the form of lasting

---

[156] The *patronus-cliens* relationship was emphasised in Rome only in cases of clear social inequality, where the clients were artisans, farmers or workmen, but in the vast majority of cases, the terms *amicus* and *amicitia* were used, most likely in order to disguise social inequality or dependence. See, for example, Saller (1982:11-12), "In contrast to the words *patronus* and *cliens,* the language of *amicitiae* did not carry any inherent notions of differential social status, since the word *amicus* was sufficiently ambiguous to encompass both social equals and unequals. This ambiguity was exploited and there was a tendency to call men *amici* rather than demeaning *cliens* as a mark of consideration." T. Gallant (1991), *Risk and Survival in Ancient Greece: Reconstructing the Rural Domestic Economy,* Cambridge, "The social image of equality often masks a social praxis of inequality," p. 333. In a study of politics in fourth century Athens, Strauss remarks that "there are many polities, including Rome, where friendship is a euphemism for patron and client," B. Strauss (1986), *Athens after the Peloponnesian War: Class, Faction and Policy 403-386 BC,* London, pp. 22-23.

[157] Discussions of friendship in classical antiquity were heavily influenced by Aristotle's analysis in the *Nicomachean Ethics* and the *Eudemian Ethics* which was embedded in the ideology of equality. Aristotle's definition of friendship as mutual good will and selfless regard for the other continued to inform the literature regarding bonds between unequal partners. According to Cicero, *amicitia* arises not from a need for reciprocal services but from natural affection and benevolence, from which reciprocal services result in turn, *Amic*. 19.32. Seneca also argued that *amicitia* was supposed to be based on virtue (especially *fides*) and not *utilitas*: an *amicus* tied only by *utilitas,* Seneca continues, will abandon his friend as soon as he falls on hard times, *Ep*. 9.8; Pliny *Ep*. 9.30; Konstan (1995:330-334); P. Garnsey & R. Saller (1987:149).

[158] Bestowing benefits, Cicero argued, was one of the chief functions of virtue, which was to win the hearts of men and to attach them to one's own service (*conciliare animos hominum et ad usus suos adiungere*), *Off*. 2.17. Accordingly, gratitude and such other forms of symbolic good which benefits were thought to generate were not neglected: "the favour conferred upon a man who is good and grateful finds its rewards," Cicero argued, "the memory of them (benefactions) shall be handed down to children and to children's children, so that they too may not be ungrateful. For all men detest ingratitude…" *Off*. 2.63.

[159] Cic. *Off*. 2.63.

influence and the support of the people.[160]

Scholars often see these and similar views as extremely remote from the actual socio-political practice and thus dismiss them as unrealistic sterile jargon or, as MacMullen famously judged, as "high-minded nonsense."[161] It is a truism that the way power is exercised and legitimised in practice in a particular society often bears little resemblance to its publicly stated ideals, but ideals exist for a reason and we would do well to try to understand what they are. The ideals encountered in these works were not purely philosophical but were shared and social,[162] and thus most likely indicated the elite's deep-seated need to view their own power in terms that were morally unobjectionable and in accordance with the view they held of themselves.[163] In the passage above, for example, Cicero displays concern over the potential the self-interested gift has to jeopardise the moral credentials of the benefactor as well as the beneficiary: if "that which should be obtained by merit is attempted by money," the socio-political supremacy of the former becomes exposed as reinforced by bribery, the submission of the latter indicative of his willingness to sell off his *libertas*. Republican aristocrats would hardly admit — to themselves or to us — that they were purchasing the very thing they claimed to be most concerned with keeping

---

[160] Cic. *Off.* 2.22-3, 43.4, 53. Such a view, of course, is in tune with the central theme of *De Officiis,* which is how virtuous conduct need not conflict with the pursuit of advantage, *Off.* 2.32, 65, 69.71.

[161] R. MacMullen (1986), 'Personal Power in the Roman Empire,' *AJP* 107, 512-524, p.521. Saller, on the other hand, finds little justification for such or similar views: "Patronal language and ideology permeated Roman society, and there seems to be little justification for the hypothesis that the language can be dismissed as the 'jargon of bureaucrats'" (1982:37).

[162] Griffin notices that the less high-minded treatments of these issues, like Pliny's letters, still tend to closely parallel *De Officiis* and *De Beneficiis,* which may suggest that the code these works advocates is not remote from that widely accepted in Rome among the members of the class conferring benefactions. Cornelius Nepos, a contemporary to Cicero, was resistant to philosophy, but in a biography of Atticus he described his liberality as "neither time-serving nor calculating," in M. Griffin (2003), '*De Beneficiis* and Roman Society,' *JRS* 93, 92-113, pp. 102, 112. See also, F. R. Chaumartin (1985), *Le* De Beneficiis *se Sénèque sa signification philosophique, politique et sociale*, Paris, pp. 290-310.

[163] J. Merquior (1979), *The Veil and the Mask: Essays on Culture and Ideology,* London. Merquior claims that ideology often acts as a "veil distorting the image of social reality within class and sublimating its interest basis… its function is to act as a catalyst for the mind of a group whose interests it sublimates into a justificatory set of ideals," p. 29. Ideology conceived as such does not act to deceive socio-political inferiors, but is primarily for the consumption of the elite themselves: "As far as belief is concerned, ideological legitimacy is chiefly, though not exclusively, for internal consumption," p. 34.

in the people's possession.

Using money to purchase power and influence was to Cicero the domain of subhumans who wished to destroy the Republic. *Liberalitas,* he argued, was a disposition present in the minds of all humans, but only in the minds of those who are "desirous of splendour and glory" (*cupidi splendoris et gloriae*) does it become perverted and self-regarding, its object usually being the procurement of popular favour and popular votes.[164] The chasm between the ideal *liberalitas* and the self-regarding one was not in Cicero's mind that between an unreachable socio-political ideal and reality, but between the disposition (or the moral state) of those concerned with the preservation of human society and that of others who were bent on destroying it. The imperial aristocracy did not share Cicero's concerns but, having arrived at the receiving end of the exchange, these ideals acquired for them an importance Cicero would hardly have been able to appreciate. The imperial *nobiles,* as we will see below, utilised and further adapted these constructs in order to place their relationship with the supreme patron in a framework which neutralised much of the dehumanising potential inherent in imperial patronage. Traces of this aspect of the ideology of humanisation can be found in almost all imperial writers, but Seneca is once again the dominant source. By restricting the ability to bestow a 'true' benefit to a 'true' human, Seneca managed to neutralise, if only in theory, much of the dehumanising potential of imperial *beneficia*. Furthermore, in his treatment of gratitude, he appears to have swung the pendulum to the other side. Seneca argued that gratitude was an exclusively human and humanising emotion, that feeling gratitude was a necessary precondition for true humanity, and participation in the network of exchange was the best way to stimulate it. By receiving *beneficia* in good spirit, by feeling grateful and by merely wishing to reciprocate, one was enabled, Seneca argued, to become 'more human' (*humanior*).

Seneca gave to the human being two things that separated him from other animals: reason and fellowship (*rationem et societatem*), and he argued that without both, such a separation is no

---

[164] Cic. *Ad Att*. 4.17.3; *Off.* 1.43; *Verr*. 2.2.28-29. In the political trials of the late Republic, *liberalitas* was used as a euphemism to cover electoral bribery: Caesar's spending in his early career was widely regarded as crucial for securing the support he enjoyed, Plut. *Caes.* 5.8-9; Sal. *Cat.* 54; Suet. *Iul.* 26-28. That this practice was seen as a corruption of *liberalitas* may be seen in Catullus, who described Caesar's *liberalitas* as *sinistra*, 29.16. Sallust's Cato comments that amongst his contemporaries, *liberalitas* often consisted of bestowing other people's goods, *Cat.* 52.11-12; Manning (1985:78).

longer feasible as the human's superior potential cannot be fulfilled.[165] Seneca's human is "a social being born for the common good," whose life is established in mutual services (*beneficiis*); to be human is to be of use to others or, as Reiss has observed, to cherish humanity was for Seneca the same as cultivating one's own.[166] One of the central points Seneca elaborates in *De Beneficiis* is that because the social structure, itself an image of the order of the divinely ordained rational cosmos, is founded on reciprocal bonds between rational animals, the exchange of *beneficia* is an exclusively human activity, engaged in for the sake of the preservation of this society.[167] Humanity, Seneca insisted, is within the reach of everybody, provided that one is ready to engage in the exclusively human behaviour of benefitting and being benefited by one's fellow man.[168] Nevertheless, before this potential can be realised, both the benefactor and beneficiary need to understand that not every gift is a benefit and not every return a sign of gratitude. Accordingly, in *De Beneficiis* Seneca defines these categories and explores in more detail the proper way to give, receive, and return gifts and favours.

Seneca defined benefit as the "act of a well-wisher who bestows joy and derives joy from the bestowal and is inclined to do what he does from the prompting of his own will" (*Benevola actio tribuens gaudium capiensque tribuendo in id*, *quod facit, prona et sponte sua parata*). This definition is further clarified by a statement: "what counts is not what is done or what is given but the spirit of the action, because benefit consists solely in the intention of a giver or a doer" (*Itaque non, quid fiat aut quid detur, refert, sed qua mente, quia beneficium non in eo, quod fit aut datur, consistit, sed in ipso dantis aut facientis animo*).[169] This definition was intended to exclude two categories of gifts as genuine benefits: first, those gifts given in order to get something in return: "He who has given the benefit in order that he might have something back has not really given it" (…*qui beneficium ut recipieret dedit, non dedit*).[170] In fact, according to Seneca, even the benefactor *thinking* that his benefit might generate a return disqualifies his gift

---

[165] Sen. *Ben.* 4.18.3.

[166] Sen. *Clem*. 1.3.2; *Ira,* 1.5.2-3; Reiss (2003:149).

[167] Sen. *Ben*. 1.4.2; Cic. *Off.* 1.47.8; B. Inwood (2005), *Reading Seneca: Stoic Philosophy at Rome*, Oxford, p. 92.

[168] One common Stoic definition of 'good' glosses it as 'benefit,' DL. 7.94; Sen. *Ep*. 87.36. Presumably, as Roller has observed, what benefits a person as a rational being, and contributes towards the end of living in accordance with nature, is therefore good (200:67).

[169] Sen. *Ben.* 1.6.1.

[170] Sen. *Ben.* 4.14.1.

from being considered a proper benefit (*Non fuit hoc beneficium, cuius proprium est nihil de reditu cogitare*).[171] The second category of gift that cannot be considered a true benefit is the one bestowed by someone who lacks human conscience and free will, such as an animal or a tyrant. Seneca illustrates this point with an account of a lion that saved his keeper's life in the amphitheatre, and argued this to be a category of false benefit (2.19.1-2):

> Num ergo beneficium est ferae auxilium? Minime,
> quia nec voluit facere nec faciendi animo fecit. Quo
> loco feram posui, tyrannum pone; et hic vitam dedit
> et illa, nec hic nec illa beneficium.

> Is then the assistance of the wild beast to be counted as a benefit? By no means, for it neither willed to do one, nor actually did one with the purpose of doing it. In the same category in which I have placed the wild beast, you place your tyrant — the one as well as the other has given life, neither the one or the other a benefit (trans. J. W. Basore, p. 91).

This argument forms one of the principal themes in *De Beneficiis,* which is that *beneficium* must be rational or conceived in the mind of the true human who is the only one to possess free will: *liberalis,* after all, is derived from *liber*, or as Seneca asserts, *liberalitas* is "not so-called because it is owed to a free man but because it is born from a free mind" (…*quae non quia liberis debetur, sed quia a libero animo proficiscitur, ita nominata est*).[172]

Seneca, therefore, situated the exchange of *beneficia* within an exclusively human realm, in which the bestowal of benefits is the clearest indication of one's humanity. As far as Seneca's peers were willing to share in this ideal, they were welcome to conceive of their role as patrons as a confirmation of their status as human beings, and an indication that the role they played in society was still essentially a humanising one, or conducive to the preservation of a human society. These arguments were also to provide the base for additional ideological safeguards,

---

[171] Sen. *Ben.* 2.31.3. Accordingly, throughout *De Beneficiis* we encounter statements such as: "Let us make our benefits not investments but gifts," or "The man who when he gives has any thought of repayment deserves to be deceived," *Ben.* 1.1.10.

[172] Sen. *Vit. Bea*. 24.3. On the derivation of *liberis*, see A. Walde (1938), *Lateinisches Etymologisches Worterbuch*, Heidelburg, p. 791. See also Sen. *Ep*. 81.10, 2.16.1, 4.9.3.

necessary for dealing with the dehumanising potential inherent in the role of beneficiary. It follows from the above argument that one cannot be placed under obligation, nor be ungrateful, to anyone prevented from bestowing true benefit by reason of their possessing a less than human, self-regarding nature. This was the central assumption underlying Seneca's treatment of imperial *beneficia,* which he discussed at length, usually by using Augustus as a positive example and Caligula as a counter-example. In order to demonstrate a situation in which the *princeps*'s gift does not constitute benefit, Seneca narrates the case of Pompeius Pennus and Caligula. Caligula, Seneca writes, spared Pompeius's life and then demanded that Pompeius display his gratitude by an act of servile obeisance, which involved kissing Caligula's foot.[173] Caligula's benefit to Pompeius was supposedly that of *clementia,* which in *De Clementia* Seneca singled out as the most human of all virtues and the greatest benefit a prince could confer on his subject.[174] Nevertheless, Seneca argues, Caligula could not confer the benefit of *clementia* to Pompeius because, as a subhuman tyrant *carnifex,* he lacked this virtue, while the mere appearance of *clementia* which did save Pompeius's life is disqualified as a benefit because of Caligula's ulterior motive to reduce Pompeius to Persian slavery.[175]

Such a line of reasoning allowed Seneca to contradict Velleius Paterculus, who argued that Caesar's assassins were *ingrati* (being recipients of Caesar's *clementia*), by asserting that it was only by doing injuries that Caesar came into a position to spare these men; he thus neither displayed true *clementia* nor conferred true benefit (*nec beneficium dedit, sed missionem*).[176] Furthermore, Seneca argued that even if a bond had previously been forged between a tyrant and his beneficiaries, it became nullified by virtue of the tyrant's departures from humankind (*Quidquid erat, quo mihi cohaereret, intercisa iuris humani societas abscidit*).[177] To reciprocate to a tyrant entailed joining him in a crime against humanity and thus in his subhuman state (*priorque mihi ac potior eius officii ratio est, quod humano generi, quam quod uni homini*

---

[173] Sen. *Ben*. 2.12.2-3.

[174] In Seneca, *clementia* is closely tied to the virtue of *liberalitas*: in one occasion in *De Clementia* Seneca uses *liberalitas* as virtually a synonym for *clementia,* by describing as *liberalitas* the attitude of Tarius who pardoned his son and punished him with pleasant exile as opposed to death (as was permitted by the law), *De Clem.* 1.14.2.

[175] Sen. *Ben*. 2.12.2-3.

[176] Vel. Pat. 57.1; Sen. *Ben.* 2.20.

[177] Sen. *Ben*. 7.19.8.

debeo).[178] The potential of these ideas to act as a formidable ideological barrier that, in theory at least, could prevent any possibility of a beneficiary being enslaved by *beneficia* is clear. Should the intention to enslave exist, the benefactor is no true benefactor, the benefits are not true benefits, and thus no gratitude is owed.

Nevertheless, useful as it was, such a notion was not an ideological magic bullet because potential beneficiaries had a moral responsibility to neither request nor accept a gift from someone they suspected of seeking to 'enslave' them. Accordingly, Seneca cautioned his contemporaries to be extremely careful when choosing from who to accept benefits and warned that one "should never seek a benefit from a man whose esteem is not valued" (…*nullius puto expetendum esse beneficium, cuiuis vile iudicium est*).[179] If one accepts a gift from a man whose esteem is questionable, Seneca writes, it is accepted "as it would have been accepted from Fortune, who you are well aware might in the next moment become unkind."[180] In other words, one has to be aware that he may be called on to reciprocate in whichever manner the benefactor sees fit. Burdened by such an awareness, one is placed under a moral obligation to refuse the benefit. Accordingly, Seneca approves of Julius Graecinus who rejected benefits from a certain Fabius Periscus, a man so depraved that Julius once said he would not accept from him even a toast to his own health.[181] The same judgement, Seneca warns, has to be exercised when it comes to emperors. Seneca approves of receiving gifts from men like Augustus who were genuine benefactors, but less so when it came to men like Claudius who was the opposite.[182]

At the time Seneca wrote, Augustus was long dead and the *nobiles* were dealing exclusively with men who were less than disinterested benefactors. Sources are full of accounts of emperors recalling their benefactions and demanding displays of gratitude and loyalty from the *nobiles*.[183] The *nobiles* were well aware that they were dealing with less than ideal benefactors and yet, we may safely assume, the refusal of an emperor's gifts was rarely, if ever, practiced.

---

[178] Sen. *Ben*. 7.19.9.

[179] Sen. *Ben.* 1.15.6. He insisted that one must be far more careful in choosing benefactor than a creditor for a loan (*Itaque eligendum est, a quo beneficium accipiam; et quidem diligentius quaerendus beneficii quam pecuniae creditor*), *Ben.* 2.18.5.

[180] Sen. *Ben*. 1.15.5.

[181] Sen. *Ben.* 2.21.5.

[182] Sen. *Ben*. 1.15.6.

[183] See above, n. 137.

Nevertheless, we might notice one useful purpose the notion of the ideal benefactor would have served in the 'real world.' In a situation where the acceptance of a gift could be made problematic by the benefactor being suspected of having an ulterior motive, one could either choose to refuse the gift or, alternatively, one could eliminate the suspicion and then accept it. We have abundant evidence testifying to the *nobiles*' preference for the second option. Despite their better judgement, the recipients of imperial *beneficia* would regularly insist upon the emperor's innate goodness and that his gift-giving was characterised by a total lack of self-interest. For example, the only recompense Pliny's Trajan expected for his numerous benefactions was experiencing the immense joy he found in the act of giving.[184] For his part, Dio of Prusa stated that the good king (1.24):

> Finds greater pleasure in conferring benefits than those benefited do in receiving them, and in this one pleasure he is insatiable. For the other functions of royalty he regards as obligatory; that of benefaction alone he considers both voluntary and blessed (trans. J. W. Cahoon, p. 15).

The presumption of the emperor's goodness and the disinterested nature of his benefits would have, for a time, unburdened the *nobiles* from the troublesome suspicion that the emperor might demand something back for his benefits. Even more troublesome was the implication that they might have sold him something that he might demand, namely their obedience. They knew well that the emperor might recall his benefactions at some later date, and demand some concrete returns, but the important thing for the *nobiles* to ensure at this ideologically sensitive time was that they were guilty only of misplaced trust, not of a slavish selling off of their *libertas*.[185] Seneca's treatment of this issue was clearly informed by these same ideological considerations, but he took things one step further. Although he clearly urged his peers to discriminate between the true and false benefactor when accepting benefits, he sought to provide them (and himself) with a solution to the problem of the true benefactor being something of a fictional character. Every act of accepting a gift, according to Seneca, was already imbedded with the presumption of

---

[184] Pliny, *Pan.* 2.21, 25.2, 39.3, 42.4, 43.5, 44.6. Pliny asserts that Trajan can be praised precisely because his gifts have no strings attached, *Pan*. 28.3; *Ep*. 9.30; Manning (1985:76).

[185] For workings of this ideology in the Hellenistic period, see L. Maric (2006), 'The Good King and the Virtuous Noble: Ideology and Legitimacy in the Hellenistic Age,' *Classicum* 32, 2, 7-17.

the benefactor's inner goodness and pure motives (2.31.2):

> Qui beneficium dat, quid pro-
> ponit? Prodesse ei, cui dat, et voluptati esse. Si
> quod voluit, effecit pervenitque ad me animus eius ac
> mutuo gaudio adfecit, tulit, quod petit. Non enim in
> vicem aliquid sibi reddi voluit; aut non fuit benefi-
> cium, sed negotiatio…beneficium qui dat, vult excipi
> grate; habet, quod voluit, si bene acceptum est…
> Beneficium mihi dedit; accepi non aliter, quam ipse
> accipi voluit: iam habet quod petit, et quod unum petit,
> ergo gratus sum.

> When a man bestows a benefit, what does he aim at? To be of service and to give pleasure to the one to whom he gives. If he accomplishes what he wished, if his intention is conveyed to me and stirs in me a joyful response, he gets what he sought. For he had no wish that I should give him anything in exchange. Otherwise, it would have been not a benefaction but a bargaining…he who gives a benefit wishes it to be gratefully accepted; if it is cheerfully received he gets what he wanted…A benefit has been bestowed on me; I have received it in precisely the spirit in which the giver wished it to be received; he consequently has the reward he seeks, and the only reward he seeks; therefore I show myself grateful (trans. J. W. Basore, p. 113-114) .

The transaction of giving and receiving is for Seneca performed in peoples' minds (*res inter animos geritur*): the benefit does not consist in what is given but in the thought behind it, and gratitude does not consist in showing it but in feeling it.[186] Such a view is consistent with Seneca's persistent denial of the significance of publicly observable actions. At the core of Stoic philosophy, of course, is the claim that only internal states (rather than external behaviours) are of true moral significance and, because true moral value lies within and cannot be observed, any external judgements of it are unreliable.[187] Nevertheless, in the passage above, Seneca clearly invests the socially observable action of receiving benefits with ethical significance, namely, it

---

[186] Sen. *Ben.* 1.4-6, 2.32-34.1.

[187] Sen. *Ben.* 3.9.

acts as a demonstration of the recipient's gratitude and of his trust that the benefit is disinterested and a product of the benefactor's virtuous disposition. In Book 4, Seneca further states (4.21.1):

> Duo genera sunt grati hominis. Dicitur gratus, qui
> aliquid pro, eo, quod acceperat reddidit; hic fortasse
> ostentare se potest, habet, quod iactet, quod proferat.
> Dicitur gratus, qui bono animo accepit beneficium,
> bono debet; hic intra conscientiam clussus est.

> There are two classes of grateful men. One man is said to be grateful because he has made a return for something that he received; he perhaps is able to make himself conspicuous, has something to boast about, something to publish. He too is said to be grateful who has accepted the benefit in good spirit, who owes in good spirit; this man keeps his gratitude shut up in his heart (trans. J. W. Basore, p. 247).

Although Seneca emphasises only the inner desire to act reciprocally and denies that the validity of someone's claim to being *gratus* depends upon making concrete remuneration in the sight of an external audience,[188] he stresses that gratitude can and should be externally demonstrated by the enthusiastic acceptance of the gift. Through this act, one demonstrates trust in the benefactor's virtuous moral disposition (which is unobservable) and also repays the benefit, because at the core of the trust is the assumption that the benefactor wished for nothing more than making his recipient happy.[189]

Seneca will clarify his position further, but for now he turns to his imaginary interlocutor who is much more sceptical and sees only the reality of self-interest and thus no reason for maintaining any presumption of the benefactor's goodness.[190] The interlocutor displays an

---

[188] "The person does ill who is grateful because of reputation rather than conscience" (*at vereor ne homines de me sequius loquantur," male agit, qui famae, non conscientiae gratus est*), Sen. *Ben.* 6.42.2; *Ep.* 91.20.

[189] Such a line of reasoning leads Seneca to the paradoxical clause: "Often he who has returned a favour is an ingrate, and he who has not is grateful" (*saepe enim et qui gratiam rettulit ingratus est, et qui non rettulit gratus*), Sen. *Ben.* 4.21.3.

[190] Sen. *Ben.* 2.31.3: "'But,' you say, 'he wished to gain something besides!' Then it was not a benefit, for the chief mark of one is that it carries no thought of return. That which I received, I received in the same spirit in which it was given — thus I have made a return.'"

anxiety of being 'enslaved' by benefits, of engaging in a relationship with social superiors whose gifts one is unable to repay in kind and to whom one thus remains permanently in debt.[191] Such anxiety usually manifests itself in refusal, in grudging acceptance or, if possible, in the immediate return of benefits.[192] Seneca, of course, addresses here the relationship he and his peers enjoyed with the supreme patron who is "placed by Fortune in a position in which they are able to bestow many favours but will receive very few and inadequate returns."[193] Seneca proceeds to refute his interlocutor as well as to counteract the view that regards the avoidance of engaging in such a relationship as a sign of independence and one's desire to preserve one's *libertas*. He starts by reaffirming the necessity of *beneficia* for the preservation of human society and thus characterises the refusal of benefits as an action with the potential to undermine this society. Such an action, he proceeds to argue, is dangerous, a sign of ingratitude, and the ingrate, he makes clear, is the worst subhuman of all.

The acceptance of a gift provided for Seneca the basis for the practical application of the benefactor's virtues in the social context: to refuse it due to lack of trust, therefore, denied the opportunity for the moral virtues of the potential benefactor to find their social expression. "I shall accept it as willingly as it is given," Seneca writes, "and I shall allow my friend to find in me an ample opportunity for exercising his goodness" (*Accipiam tam libenter, quam dabitur, et praebebo me amico meo exercendae bonitatis suae capacem materiam*).[194] Seneca is well aware that such a trust can be betrayed and that the benefactor can turn out to be someone whose intentions are less than honourable.[195] Nevertheless, he insists that this should not deter beneficiaries from engaging in similar relationships in the future, because this would undermine the institution that acts as the chief bond of human society and thus human society itself. The benefactor too is morally required to maintain faith in the moral qualities of the other party and not to allow himself to be disillusioned by deceptive individuals who wish only to profit from the system. Ideally, the benefactor should choose his beneficiaries on the basis of their outstanding

---

[191] P. White (1993), *Promised Verse: Poets in the Society of Augustan Rome*, London, p. 31, "An exchange that was badly balanced over a time might also work to clientise a friend." Griffin (2003:97).

[192] Sen. *Ben*. 4.40.4, 5.1.3-5, 5.2.1, 6.35.3, 6.42.

[193] Sen. *Ben*. 5.4.2. …*quos eo loco fortuna posuit, ex quo largiri multa possent pauca admodum et imparia datis recepturi*.

[194] Sen. *Ben*. 4.40.2.

[195] Sen. *Ben*. 3.12.3.

moral character,[196] but in reality he has no greater insight into the inner moral disposition of his beneficiaries than they have into his. Consequently, here too everything boils down to trust or, to be more precise, to hope, which is equal to that which parents cherish in regard to the wellbeing of their children (3.11.1):

> Non poterat illis
> dici, quod beneficia dantibus dicitur: "Cui des,
> elige; ipse tecum, si deceptus es, querere; dignum
> adiuva." In liberis tollendis nihil iudicio tollentium
> licet, tota res voti est.

> You could not say to them (parents) what you say to those who give benefits: "choose the one to whom you will give; you have only yourself to blame if you have been deceived; help the deserving man." In the rearing of children, nothing is left to the choice of those who rear them — it is wholly a matter of hope (trans. J. W. Basore, p. 147).

Seneca disapproved of indiscriminate giving and believed that ideally only the deserving should receive gifts,[197] but in real life there are no guarantees, which, in any case, are entirely unnecessary; if one is deceived by an unworthy beneficiary, all he has to do is remind himself, "I made the gift for the sake of giving" (*Ego illud dedi, ut darem*).[198] He who allows a betrayed trust to deter him from further giving exposes himself as a false benefactor who wishes to gain in return. The true benefactor, Seneca asserts, is like a god who gives to the grateful as well as ungrateful or like the best of parents who only smile at the shortcomings of their children.[199]

Just as the enthusiastic acceptance of a gift is the surest sign of one's gratitude, refusal or accepting it grudgingly and unwillingly is a sign of ingratitude: "He who is unwilling to accept new benefits," Seneca states, "must resent those already received, and is thus ungrateful" (*qui*

---

[196] Cic. *Amm.* 4-5, 17-20; *Off.* 1.14.43, 1.14.45, 1.15.47; Sen. *Ben.* 1.14-15. In *Panegyricus*, Pliny praises Trajan for encouraging moral integrity by giving only the good men priesthoods and provinces, *Pan.* 44.7-8. Requesting priesthood from Trajan, Pliny writes: "Since I know *domine* that to be honoured by the judgement of such a good Princeps lends approbation to my good character," *Ep.* 10.13; also, 4.8.1; Griffin (2003:107).

[197] Sen. *Ben.* 1.14-15.

[198] Sen. *Ben.* 1.2.3.

[199] Sen. *Ben.* 7.31.4.

nova accipere nn vult, acceptis offenditur).[200] Every man is the recipient of something from someone ― it is only that some understand this and are mindful and grateful, while others have forgotten and thus are ungrateful. For Seneca, the greatest of all benefactors is the emperor, because he guarantees the peace and leisure that enables everything else, but it is only grateful men who understand this and thus offer him spontaneous thanks.[201] Grateful men accept further benefits from the emperor because they see him as the "author of all good" and themselves as permanently indebted to him.[202] On the other side of the spectrum are ingrates; the forgetful and unmindful subhumans who, in Seneca's eyes, are far worse than any other subhuman category encountered so far (1.10.4):

> Erunt homicidiae, tyranni,
> fures, adulteri, raptores, sacrilegi, proditores; infra
> omnia ista ingratus est, nisi quod omnia ista ab
> ingrato sunt, sine quo vix ullum magnum facinus
> adcrevit.

> Homicides, tyrants, thieves, adulterers, robbers, sacrilegious men, and traitors there always will be; but worse than all these is the crime of ingratitude, unless it be that all these spring from ingratitude, without which hardly any sin has grown to great size (trans. J. W. Basore, p. 33).

Because benefits and gratitude acted as the chief bond of human society, the vice of ingratitude was a uniquely disruptive force and one which undermined human society more than any other. Accordingly, in *De Beneficiis* Seneca launched a rhetorical attack against human ingratitude which put special emphasis on ingratitude in the political sphere. In fact, in Book 5, Seneca claimed that the collapse of the Republic was caused primarily by the vice of ingratitude; Catiline, Marius, Sulla, Pompey, and Antony were all ingrates and out of that vice sprang all of

---

[200] Sen. *Ben.* 4.40.2. Once the gifts are accepted, Seneca states, one should not be too anxious to return them, even if one can, because this shows a desire to wipe them out of memory and "he who is too eager to pay his debt is unwilling to be indebted, and he who is unwilling to be indebted is ungrateful" (…*ut breviter, qui nimis cupit solvere, invitus debet; qui invitus debet, ingrates est*), 4.40.5.

[201] Sen. *Ep.* 73.2-5

[202] See above, 92.

their other vices which directly caused the ruin of the state.[203] In short, what being self-seeking was to Cicero, ingratitude was to Seneca.

Seneca saw ingratitude as the worst moral state imaginable and ingrates as even further removed from the light of humanity than any other morally deprived creature, even the tyrant.[204] Nevertheless, ingrates had one chance of seeing the light of humanity, namely by being provoked into feeling gratitude towards a true benefactor. To cause men to be grateful, Seneca asserts, is to win them over from darkness and heal their souls by flooding them with its beauty and light.[205] Even the fiercest of animals, Seneca reminds us, can be won over by the gentle treatment and good deeds (1.2.5):

> Officia etiam ferae sentiunt, nec ullum tam imman-
> suetum animal est, quod non cura mitiget et in
> amorem sui vertat. Leonum ora a magistris impune
> tractantur, elephantorum feritatem usque in servile
> obsequium demeretur cibus…

> Even wild beasts are sensible of good offices, and no creature is so savage that it will not be softened by kindness and made to love the hand that gives it. The lion will let a keeper handle his mouth with impunity; the elephant, for all his fierceness, is reduced to the docility of the slave by food…(trans. J. W. Basore, pp. 11-12).

Grateful men are similarly reduced to the "docility of the slave" in front of their benefactors, but they are not slaves, as their inner disposition is far from slavish. Grateful men are motivated into submission by the most human emotion of gratitude towards their benefactor and *pater*, to whom they owe everything.[206]

Once again therefore, the ideological mechanisms by which *libertas* and humanity are

---

[203] Sen. *Ben.* 4.18.1, 5.16-17.2.

[204] Sen. *Ben.* 3.5.2.

[205] Sen. *Ben.* 1.4.6, 4.22.2, 1.3.1. Also, 7.31.1, "Persistent goodness wins over bad men, and no one of them is so hard-hearted and hostile to kindly treatment as not to love a good man even while they wrong him" (*Vincit malos pertinax bonitas, nec quisquam tam duri infestique adversus diligenda animi est, ut etiam in iniuria bonos non amet).*

[206] The Romans were careful to distinguished between a "grateful spirit" (*gratus animus*) and a servile one (*humilis anumus*), Val. Max. 2.5.2.

preserved are formulated in terms of willing and enthusiastic submission to (and participation in) the system by which power in the society was maintained and perpetuated. Seneca leaves no doubt that to exclude oneself from the network of imperial exchange is to show oneself as a subhuman ingrate who undermines the bond on which the survival of the truly human society depends. Such exclusion would be quite proper if the benefactor was recognised as a morally depraved individual who clearly wished to enslave his beneficiaries. Of course, such recognition in regard to the supreme patron is hard to come by (at least during his lifetime) and all we ever find is the institutionalised expression of trust in his moral goodness. Much like one's expression of trust in the emperor's humanity rendered one's submission to his *auctoritas* unproblematic, in the context of requesting and receiving *beneficia* it allowed the *nobiles* to engage in such a relationship without being accused of selling their *libertas*. But, as Seneca himself reminds us, there are no guarantees. If and when at a later date the trust of the *nobiles* was shown to be misplaced and the emperor exposed himself as a less than true benefactor, it was only his moral credentials that would suffer; he would expose himself — and himself only — as a lesser human being, or indeed, as no human being at all. The most *nobiles* could be accused of was of being too trusting or, according to Seneca, not even of that; in *De Beneficiis* their oft-misplaced 'trust' became the surest sign of their humanity.

IV

Conclusion

We have seen, therefore, that from the very beginning the *princeps* and his subjects collaborated in their efforts to construct the principate as a humanising institution. The first *princeps* claimed for himself the humanising role of liberator in both the political and moral sense, while his subjects accepted his claim as true and valid by making ideological provisions for the emperor's 'sincerity' as well as by their willing submission to his human and humanising *auctoritas*. By investing in additional efforts to construct an ameliorative paternal image of the *princeps*'s authority, the *nobiles* sought to further neutralise the dehumanising potential inherent in their total and unconditional surrender to the same. The *auctoritas* Augustus wielded was previously invested only in the Senate, but once it was detached from association with the concept of

collective authority and transformed into an extension of his personality, the *princeps* became the state incarnate. Once the *princeps* was recognised as a 'true human,' the state he ruled was also recognised as 'true,' so unquestioned submission to the *princeps*'s *auctoritas* came to presuppose the level of moral and political maturity of those submitting and became indicative of their willingness to be a part of a truly human community. Since for the most part the *nobiles* agreed that the *princeps*'s rule provided discipline without despotism and preserved *libertas* while forbidding licence, it became possible to argue that all those not subject to the *princeps*'s *auctoritas* were free only by virtue of their wildness and thus, being slaves to the 'beast within,' were neither truly free nor truly human. By the closing decades of the fourth century, this ideological path had reached its logical conclusion as Romans became accustomed to using the word *civilis* in contradiction to *ferinus,* to thinking of the men of the Empire as true humans struggling against the subhuman barbarians who sought to destroy the rational order that Rome and Caesar had imposed on humankind.[207]

In the first part of my discussion, the focus was on the virtue of *clementia* which was one of the central concepts within the ideology of humanisation, in that it formed the ideological basis for the emperor's morality and humanity. Seneca's treatment of this virtue in *De Clementia* outwardly took the form of advice to the prince to adopt this most human of virtues, but the discussion above has revealed an additional ideological agenda of this treatise, particularly obvious once it is read in conjunction with *De Ira*. Seneca's demonstration to Nero of *clementia*'s humanising potential involved the assumption that those who rely on the emperor's display of this virtue for their humanity are, at a moral and intellectual level, animals. In this way, Seneca clearly delineated between the subhuman and human elements in the state, identifying with the former the subversives who by virtue of their very wildness would place themselves in a position to need the emperor's *clementia,* and the latter with grateful conformists who, being already human, had no need of such remedies. Seneca also appears to have been particularly interested in humanising the potentially dehumanising social practices of *dissimulatio* and of receiving imperial *beneficia*. To Seneca, engaging in both these practices was the sign of a true human, with the former being indicative of one's mastery over the irrational inner passions and the latter of one's desire to contribute towards the preservation of human society. Seneca also appears to

---

[207] See L. S. Mazzolani (1967), *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought: From Walled City to Spiritual Commonwealth,* London, p. 195.

have been most concerned with emancipating the humanity of imperial subjects from their dependence on that of the emperor. His humanising of *dissimulatio* in *De Ira* and dehumanising of the benefactor who wishes to enslave his beneficiaries in *De Beneficiis* provided a conceptual basis for the preservation of humanity under emperors who were bent on enslaving their subjects, whether by swords or *beneficia*. Seneca's move is generally in accordance with Stoic ethics in that he gave priority to the internal states of agents and sought to detach them from their external political circumstances, but his ideological efforts are also in tune with those we can observe from the Augustan age onwards. From the moment it became apparent that Rome's political future consisted of one man's rule, the *nobiles* perceived it as an ideological imperative to view themselves as ruled by a true human, to believe or trust — whether that trust was misplaced or not — in their emperor's virtuous inner disposition. Seneca's treatises were thus part of a wider ideological response to the rise of the principate, the product of a spoken or unspoken consensus among the elite that their humanity had to be preserved under the political conditions previously considered incompatible with it.

Chapter Three

Horace and the Poetry of *Dissimulatio*: the Humanising and De-Humanising of the Poet in *Sermones* 1 and *Epistles* 1.

> Though in shape I seeme a Man,
> Yet a Satyr wilde I am;
> Bred in Woods and Desert places;
> Where men seldome shew their faces;
> Rough and hayrie like a Goate,
> Clothed with Dame Nature's coat.
> G. Wither.

I

Introduction

The Augustan age was an age of poetry, and one of the most appealing ways for generations of scholars to view Rome during the transition period from Republic to Empire was through the eyes of the poet Horatius Flaccus. The few thousand lines of verse he left behind as his lifework gives us a self-portrait of "striking individuality and apparent frankness not easily paralleled in classical literature," and with it a seemingly personal perspective on some of the key events and personalities of this period.[1] This perspective certainly endeared Horace to the leader of the new state since, like most of the best authors of the day, he did his fair share in contributing to Augustus's ideological vision by eulogising his professed values and ideals. Accordingly, scholars often notice in Horace's poems 'Augustan' messages of peace, tolerance, stability and moral and political renewal, finding in them "the divine or near divine Augustus" who tamed savages outside and inside the boundaries of the Empire, the barbarians by the sword and the morally degenerate Romans, who had exchanged civic ideals for selfish hedonism, by his

---

[1] D. Armstrong (1989), *Horace*, Yale, p. 2; N. Holzberg (2009), *Horaz: Dichter und Werk*, Munchen, 1-61.

auctoritas.[2]

Such a display of enthusiasm for the principate is particularly striking considering that Horace fought on the losing side as a military tribune at Philippi, but once we consider Horace's social circumstances at the start of his poetic career (around 38 BC), his apparent change of heart seems less remarkable. At this time, we find Horace enrolled among the *amici* of Maecenas, Octavian's right hand man and, some would suggest, his "minister for propaganda."[3] Scholars generally recognise that the Augustan principate was on one extremely important level an exercise in public relations which required the production and dissemination of appropriate ideas and images throughout Roman society, and that the *princeps* deployed to this end a huge network of popular communication, incorporating many different forms of persuasion, including monuments, temples and statues.[4] Many believe that Octavian and Maecenas also understood the potentially enormous impact of organised literary backing on the popular acceptance of the new regime and that as a result, they proceeded to recruit promising writers to aid in the representation of their cause.[5] Horace is seen as one such poet who found both fame and riches under Maecenas's patronage, being required only to discretely renounce his past political loyalties and instead display in his poetry proper enthusiasm for the new order.[6]

Not everyone would concede that the relationship between poetry and politics in

[2] D. Shotter (1991), *Augustus Caesar,* New York, p.168; R. Syme (1939), *Roman Revolution,* Oxford, pp. 443-444; M. Lowrie (2007), 'Horace and Augustus,' in S. Harrison (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Horace,* Cambridge, 1-15; M. S. Santirocco (1995), 'Horace and Augustan Ideology,' *Arethusa* 28, 223-243; G. Williams (1990), 'Did Maecenas Fall From Favor? Augustan Literary Patronage,' in K. A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (eds.), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate*, Berkeley, 258-275; I. M. Le M. DuQuesnay (1984), 'Horace and Maecenas: The Propaganda Value of *Sermones* 1,' in T. Woodman and D. West (eds.), *Poetry and Politics in the Age of Augustus*, Cambridge, 19-57.

[3] Syme (1939:459-475); R. McNeill (2001), *Horace: Image, Identity and Audience*, Baltimore, p. 93.

[4] See, for example, P. Zanker (1988), *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus*, Ann Arbour.

[5] McNeill (2001:93); E. Lefèvre (1966), 'Horaz und Maecenas,' *ANRW* 2.31.3, 1987-2029.

[6] Horace made no secret of being enriched by Maecenas. In *Epistles* he acknowledges to Maecenas, "you made me rich" (1.7.15). Maecenas's most famous gift to Horace was his Sabine farm, *Sat.* 2.6.1ff; R. O. A. M. Lyne (1995), *Horace: Behind the Public Poetry*, Yale, p. 2. Horace's only other mentioned benefactor was Augustus, who according to Suetonius "enriched him with a couple of grants" (pp. 297, 34, Roth).

Augustan Rome was as straightforward as this general sketch of Horace's career implies.[7] When it comes to the issue of literary support for the Augustan regime, scholars have asked a variety of questions in order to determine the precise nature of the autocracy's influence on poets. The key issues involve determining whether Augustus dominated poetry by cultivating literary policy, as suggested above, or merely by dominating public opinion; were the poets under pressure to produce the right type of poetry or was the principate's effect on Roman literary life a "largely automatic, institutional pull?"[8] Those interested in the depths of the poets' personal motives and beliefs most often ask whether they were writing from personal conviction, expressing in their poetry their most deeply held beliefs, or whether they were merely craftsmen lending their skills to the highest bidder.[9] While it is unlikely that poets were forced to write in support of the Augustan regime,[10] they were certainly provided with some hard-to-refuse incentives to do so; namely, social connections, status and visibility, literary backing and money, and all the other fine things in life that allowed them to die rich and famous.[11] Nevertheless, although it was always clear that Horace took full advantage of these incentives, he has not traditionally been seen as a hired hand or as someone who traded off on his old political loyalties. This is largely because, in Horace's poetry, his relationship with his patrons appears as true *amicitia*, a close egalitarian friendship with no hint of sycophancy, based on sentiment and moral equality rather than on gifts and favours.[12] Consequently, critics often see Horace as exemplifying the "ideal of

---

[7] See, for example, Zanker (1988:158, 169, 176); C. O. Brink (1982), *Horace on Poetry: Epistles book II: The Letters to Augustus and Florus*, Cambridge; E. Doblhofer (1966), *Die Augustuspanegyrik des Horaz in formalhistorischer Sicht,* Heidelberg; D. P. Fowler (1995), 'Horace and the Aesthetics of Politics,' in S. J. Harrison (ed.), *Homage to Horace: A Bimilleniary Celebration*, Oxford, 248-266, p. 257.

[8] As suggested by P. White (1993), *Promised Verse: Poets in the Society of Augustan Rome*, London, pp. 111, 208.

[9] For example, A. Dalzel (1956), 'Maecenas and the Poets,' *Phoenix* 10, 151-162, pp. 154-155.

[10] As Griffin famously asserted: "We are not in the world of Stalin and the Writer's Union; there is no question of a bullet in the back of the head if the right sort of poetry is not immediately forthcoming," J. Griffin (1984), 'Augustus and the Poets: Caesar Qui Cogere Posset,' in F. Millar and E. Segal (eds.) *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects*, Oxford, 189-218, p. 203.

[11] See for example N. Horsfall (1981), *Poets and Patron: Maecenas, Horace and the Georgics, Once More,* Sydney.

[12] Horace refers to himself and those he celebrates as *amici* ("friends"), implying that his relationship with these men was based primarily on sentiment, *Odes,* 2.6.24, 3.8.13; *Serm.* 1.6, 1.9, 1.10.85-87; *Ep.*1.9.5. Konstan observed that "*Amicus…* means only 'friend' and does not mean client at all," D. Konstan (1995), 'Patrons and Friends,' *CP* 90, 328-342, p. 329. See also G. Williams (1994), 'Public Policies, Private Affairs, and Strategies of Address in the

freedom in the face of power," a poet whose support for the regime was most likely motivated by his personal conviction.[13]

These days critics are less ready to take Horace's words at face value[14] and are more likely to approach him with a general awareness that "between the poet and his honest effusions were metre, the conventions of his genre, and his own artistic goals."[15] Critics now insist that Horace did not engage in autobiographical self-representation or in the expression of his genuine views or beliefs in his poetry, but instead simply employed an artificially constructed 'self,' the socio-literary 'face,' *ethos* or *persona* best suited to his particular subject matter and audience.[16] Those who emphasise Horace's role as a political poet tend to regard Horatian self-representations as "image management," Horace's conscious policy of protecting his public image in order to preempt anyone developing the 'wrong' perception of him.[17] Lyne argued that Horace engaged in such a program in order to deal with his "personal embarrassments": one arising from the fact that he had come to endorse the regime that defeated the republican cause he himself had fought for in 42 BC, and another from the potential suggestion that he had become a

---

Poetry of Horace,' *CW* 87, 395-408, p. 395; P. White (2007), 'Friendship, Patronage and Horatian Socio-Poetics,' in S. Harrison (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Horace*, Cambridge, 195-206.

[13] Anderson in D. Konstan (1995b), 'Introduction: Viewing Horace,' in *Arethusa* 28:2/3, 141-149, p. 142.

[14] For a good overview of the biographical tradition of criticism of Horace, see S. J. Harrison (1995), 'Some Twentieth-century Views of Horace' in S. J. Harrison (ed.), *Homage to Horace: A Bimilleniary Celebration*, Oxford, 1-16, pp. 4-6.

[15] W. S. Anderson (1974), 'Autobiography and Art in Horace,' in G. K. Galinsky (ed.), *Perspectives of Roman Poetry: A Classics Symposium*, Austin, 33-56.

[16] In regards to *Sermones,* the current orthodoxy has been established by Anderson, Zetzel, Freudenburg, Morton Braund and others who hold that the personality presented in these poems is artificially constructed and attuned to the demands of the genre. The 'author,' they hold, is invisible behind an inconsistent and floating composite of *personae* based on comic stereotypes — the parasite, the buffoon, the philosopher and so on. J. E. G. Zetzel (1980), 'Horace's *Liber Sermonum*: The Structure of Ambiguity,' *Arethusa* 13, 59-77; K. Freudenburg (1993), *The Walking Muse: Horace and the Theory of Satire,* Princeton, 3-51; S. Morton Braund (1996), *The Roman Satirists and Their Masks,* London, ix; E. W. Leach (1971), 'Horace's *pater optimus* and Terence's Demea: Autobiographical Fiction and Comedy in *Serm.* 1.4,' *AJP* 92, 616-632. For *ethos* and *persona*, see M. Mack (1951-2), 'The Muse of Satire,' *Yale Review* 41, 80-92. For 'face' in preference to *persona*, see E. Oliensis (1998), *Horace and the Rhetoric of Authority*, Cambridge, pp. 1-2; E. A. Schmidt (2002), *Zeit und Form:Dichtungen des Horaz*, Heidelberg.

[17] Lyne (1995:13-20).

turncoat in return for money and gifts.[18] Being open to the charge of being nothing more than Maecenas's parasitic hanger-on, or a *scurra* whose only loyalty is to profit, Horace chose to cloak his 'parasitic' dependency in images of friendly camaraderie and thus constructed an alternative and more attractive version of himself in his poetry.[19] Such "image management," as McNeill has observed, would have had further positive implications in terms of the propaganda value of Horace's poetry; it would have provided Octavian's regime with seemingly free and independent support, which was far more effective in terms of its ability to change attitudes than the mere parasitic flattery or lip service expected of a client.[20]

McNeill argues that Horace's endorsement of the Augustan regime in his seemingly un-political *Sermones* constitutes 'true' sociological propaganda, or that which Jacques Ellul has termed the "propaganda of integration."[21] This type of propaganda is quite different from open political pamphleteering in that it aims at having a long-term effect, is harder to detect and is more effective, in that it is able to engage the target directly in its communicative system.[22] Horace accomplishes this task, McNeill argues, by airing what he presents as his individual views on moral and social issues, and by presenting episodes from his daily life in which he assumes the *persona* and perspective of an average Roman citizen.[23] At the same time, Horace manages to create a note of apparent personal distance, diverging occasionally from the party line as a way of delineating for himself a self-image as an "independent commentator" on Augustus and his

---

[18] Lyne (1995:13).

[19] For *scurra*, see below, at n.29-31. Some of Horace's contemporaries have thought it perfectly fitting to interpret his relationship with Maecenas in everyday terms of a dependent client doing the bidding of his master, *Serm.* 1.6.45-48. Most famously, Suetonius quotes a letter from Augustus to Maecenas requesting that Horace comes to work as Augustus's secretary: "Tell him," Augustus urges Maecenas, "he should leave that parasitic table of yours and come to my kingly table," Suet. *Vit. Hor.* 12. See also C. Damon (1997), *The Mask of the Parasite: A Pathology of Roman Patronage*, Ann Arbor, pp. 17, 24, 127. Horsfall (1981:14) sees scant reason to think that poets enjoyed a status which set them apart from "parasites, fortune-hunters, social climbers and other friends who attached themselves to the *domus* of a great man."

[20] McNeill (2001:104, 6, 102).

[21] This is the type of propaganda "that seeks to obtain stable behavior, to adapt the individual to his everyday life, to reshape his thoughts and behaviours in terms of a permanent social setting," J. Ellul (1965), *Propaganda,* New York, p. 4. McNeill (2001:92-97).

[22] McNeill (2001:92). See also A. P. Foulkes (1983), *Literature and Propaganda*, London, p. 107.

[23] McNeill (2001:97).

regime.[24] The choice of genre with which Horace commenced his poetic career, namely satire (*Sermones* 1), has also been seen as part of this same program. DuQuesnay has pointed out the significance of Horace's decision to present himself as the Lucilius of his age, because this inventor of the satiric genre was renowned for his outspokenness and integrity, had a reputation as a politically engaged poet, and was strongly associated with republican *libertas*, Scipio and the "Scipionic circle."[25] Horace's choice of Lucilius as a model, as DuQuesnay observes, clearly invites the readership to compare the two poets and their respective circles, as well as to see Octavian and Maecenas as cherishing the true republican idea of *libertas*.[26]

While they differ in their respective approaches, scholars like Lyne, McNeill and DuQuesnay share the view that in *Sermones*, Horace was concerned less with political themes than he was with preserving himself as a 'free' *amicus* of Maecenas and Octavian, as well with presenting his patrons as sophisticated, cultured and intelligent men who are humane in their attitudes to others and mindful of *libertas* and *mos maiorum*.[27] Every reader, DuQuesnay observes, takes away from the poems the impression of what Maecenas and his friends are like as people: "very human and humane, witty, cultured and morally serious."[28] If we chose to describe Horace's project of 'image management' in the figurative language of the ideology of humanisation, we would say that Horace, a potential subhuman, assumed in his poetry a human mask in order to present to the public an image of himself and his *amici as* 'true humans.' I chose to refer to Horace as a potential subhuman because the charge he sometimes faced, of being

---

[24] *Odes* 3.24; McNeill (2001:110).

[25] DuQuesnay (1984:31). For Lucilian *libertas* as a potent political symbol in the forties and thirties, see also Freudenburg (1993:86-102). In *Satire* 4 (1.4.1-7), Horace situates Lucilius within the tradition of Old Comedy, whose trinity (Eupolis, Cratinus and Aristophanes), as Ruffel has observed, could hardly be mentioned without prompting the thought of politics, A. Ruffell (2003), 'Beyond Satire: Horace, Popular Invective and the Segregation of Literature,' *JRS* 93, 35-65, pp. 35-36. Also G. Williams (1968), *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry*, Oxford; G. Williams (1982), 'Phases in the Political Patronage of Literature in Rome,' in B. K. Gold (ed.), *Literary and Artistic Patronage in Ancient Rome*, Austin, 3-27, p. 8. For criticism of this stance, see J. Griffin (1993), 'Horace in the Thirties,' in N. Rudd (ed.), *Horace 2000: A Celebration, Essays for the Bimillennium*, 1-22.

[26] DuQuesnay (1984:31).

[27] "The image of Maecenas's friends which emerges from the poems is… so exactly calculated to allay the fears and anxieties of Horace's contemporaries about the intentions, ambitions, and moral character of their new leaders, that is just not possible to suppose that the effect is accidental," DuQuesnay (1984:34).

[28] DuQuesnay (1984:57).

Maecenas's parasitic hanger-on or a *scurra*, was essentially dehumanising. The *scurra* is a commonplace figure in Latin literature, including in Horace's poetry, where he is usually identified with the comic parasite or the gossiper and flatterer of the powerful who is willing to perform any demeaning service to earn himself a place at his patron's table.[29] He was regarded as a morally bankrupt individual who had lost all the attributes of humanity due to his enslavement to his lower appetites.[30] It is this enslavement that led the *scurra* to flatter the powerful, and this behaviour acts as a further indicator of his subhuman nature or, as Demetrius put it, "A man who flatters the fortunate and…considers only means of gain, should surely be hated as an enemy of all human nature."[31]

I will divide the discussion below into two parts. In the first part, I will argue that Horace's image management in the first book of *Sermones* can indeed be properly described as a process whereby a (potential) subhuman assumes a human mask in order to humanise the public image of himself and of his powerful *amici.* As a result, I will conclude, this collection of poems can safely be assigned a place within the larger framework of the ideology of humanisation. In the second part, my focus will be on a collection of poems that was published a decade or so after the *Sermones*, namely, the *Epistles*. Here I will argue that Horace largely reverses the humanising project of *Sermones* in order to 'unmask' and dehumanise his poetic *persona*. I will clarify the necessary details of my argument when I examine the relevant individual sections of *Sermones* and *Epistles*, but before I move on to this, it is necessary to say something more about my general

---

[29] The late imperial glossaries define *scurra* as *parasitus buccellarius* ("loud mouth"), *subtilis impostor* ("illusionist conjuror"), P. Corbett (1986), *Scurra*, Edinburgh, p.1. Authors such as Cicero, Horace or Martial used the figure of the parasite in their depictions of dependent individuals who flattered the rich in order to earn their food and receive further invitations to lavish dinners, Hor. *Serm*. 2.6; Plut. *Mor.* 612C-748D; Suet. *Tib.* 56; Pet. *Sat.* 52.7, 61.1-2, 64.2; Sen. *Ep.* 47.8; R. L. Hunter (1985), 'Horace on Friendship and Free Speech (Epistles 1.18 and Satires 1.4),' *Hermes* 113, 480-490, p. 481.

[30] Plutarch says that, "The belly is all there is to his body. It's an eye that looks high and low, a beast that creeps along on its teeth," *Mor.* 54B; Damon (1997:32).

[31] *Dem.* 14.65. Cicero himself denounced several of his contemporaries as *scurra*, regarding them as a threat to conventional morality and to political stability and as such to the outside human community. Among others, Gnaeus Carbo and his brother Alba are considered *scurra improbissimus* (*Verr.* 2.3.146), as well as Quintius Manlius who is *petulans* and *improbus* ("aggressive" and "shameless") (*Cluent.* 39), and who by slander and civic discord had climbed to tribunate. In Cicero, the *scurra* engages in stirring up civil discord and litigation (*scurrae divitis cottidianum convicium*), Cic. *Quinct.* 62; Corbett (1986:59-61).

approach to these poems.

I will start from the initial claim that Horace's program of image management in *Sermones* 1 involved constructing his satiric *persona* as a surface manifestation of the proper inner hierarchies within himself, or of that which Panaetius and Cicero dubbed the first human *persona*. I am not the first to call on the four-*persona* theory to inform my reading of Horace's *Sermones*: Morton Braund, for example, recalled this theory in her discussion of 'satirical masks,' in order to support her general argument that satiric *personae* are artificial entities quite different from the actual historical author.[32] The four-*persona* theory, Morton Braund argues, indicates how readily the Romans thought in terms of *persona* ― the image presented to a society ― and that "for the Romans, the most important ideas were those of plausibility and appropriateness (*decorum*): how convincing a display of, for example, anger…is this?"[33] The background to satirical self-presentation, she argues further, lay in Roman rhetorical education, which placed primary value on being persuasive and on acting out an appropriate *persona* in the most effective way possible.[34] Roman satire, Morton Braund concludes, was a dramatic form closely allied to rhetoric so the "satirist's first aim was to persuade his audience and not to give a realistic account of Roman life."[35]

Morton Braund has situated the four-*persona* theory within scholarly traditions which since at least Maynard Mack have adhered to the thesis that it was not "self-revelation" that was important to the satirist, but the "establishment of an authoritative *ethos*" that would allow him to be "accepted by his audience as a fundamentally virtuous man…who has been, as it were, forced into action."[36] While this is certainly true, we need to remember that the ethical tradition from which the four-*persona* theory was derived brought with it some additional moral considerations which would make problematic the full assimilation of this theory into the rhetorical and aesthetic realm within which the primary emphasis was on the *persona*'s persuasive or entertaining potential. We have seen in the previous chapters that, within this ethical tradition, the wearer of the *persona* was required to be sincere in the primary sense, or to be a true human, as

---

[32] Morton Braund (1996:2-3).

[33] Morton Braund (1996:1).

[34] Morton Braund (1996:2). See also W. M. Bloomer (1997), 'Schooling in *Persona*: Imagination and Subordination in Roman Education,' *CA* 16, 57-79.

[35] Morton Braund (1996:49).

[36] Mack (1951-2:82).

this would ensure that the socio-rhetorical *persona* in question would indeed act as the surface manifestation of the wearer's inner humanity, rather than as a disguise over his/her inhumanity. Of course, we have scant reason to suppose that such considerations necessarily burdened the Roman poets who, it appears, did not feel artistically or morally obliged to be 'sincere' in whatever sense.[37] Nevertheless, I will argue that Horace made sincerity an issue for himself; firstly, by explicitly constructing his satiric *persona* as the socio-poetic manifestation of his inner virtuous disposition and secondly, by allowing the question to be posed in his poetry of whether his poetic *persona* was indeed what it purported to be, the socio-poetic manifestation of his humanity, or was in fact a mere disguise for a subhuman *scurra*.

This question is ever-present in both *Sermones* and *Epistles*, and both collections seek to answer it. Nevertheless, the answers they offer are different. While in *Sermones* Horace establishes and fiercely defends his humanity against those who would suggest otherwise, in *Epistles,* he is less willing to do so. By the final poem of *Epistles*, I will argue, Horace reveals that his satiric, lyric and any other *persona* he has ever or will ever employ is in fact an external human mask disguising a subhuman *scurra*. My contention is that in the final poem of *Epistles* 1, the author in fact disposes of his poetic mask, or reveals its deceptive purpose, in order to disclose to his readership some deep personal truths. My reasons for such a claim are several and I will outline them below, but for now I wish only to clarify that I do not advocate by this claim a return to the biographical approach of reading Horace's poetry. In my reading of *Sermones* and *Epistles*, I largely follow those scholars who choose to sideline the problematic issue of Horace's 'true self' in order to focus on his rhetorical and generic manipulations, but my adoption and recognition of the fundamental validity of this approach does not entail the belief that any concern with poetic 'sincerity' is a blind alley. My reading of *Epistles* in particular has

---

[37] While some ancient poets insisted upon their sincerity — Ennius drew his verses from the marrow of his bones, (*medullitus*) *Saturae* W. 6-7; Lucilius wrote from the bottom of his heart (*ex praecordis*) W. 670-1 — others explicitly rejected any suggestion that they were obliged to be sincere, or to maintain any connection between their verse and their private self. For example, Ovid wrote: "Believe me — my habits are unlike my poems. My life is respectable, it is my Muse that enjoys her fun" (*crede mihi; distant mores a carmine nostro Vita verecunda est, Musa iocosa mea*) *Trist.* 2.353-4; also see *Trist.* 1.9.59-60, 3.2.5-6; *Ex Ponto*, 2.7.47-50, 4.8.19-20. Similarly, Martial asserted: "My page is wanton, my life is pure" (*lasciua est nobis pagina vita proba*) I 4.8; Also, Apuleius *Apol.* 11; Ausonius *Cento* 130. For more examples, see N. Rudd (1976), *Lines of Enquiry: Studies in Latin Poetry,* Cambridge, p. 146.

strengthened my belief that we might be going too far in rejecting or bypassing any consideration of Horace's poems as evidence for the direct and personal experience of this historical individual. In this, I am in fundamental agreement with McNeill, who has pointed out that:

> …the suspicion commonly directed nowadays towards all forms of biographical literary criticism — and towards an author as an object worthy of attention and careful study — does a disservice to those who would understand the nature of Horace's art. For Horace encourages and demands that we as readers experience the sensation of coming to know him intimately. *Questions about what is real and what is invented lie at the very heart of Horace's poetry* [my italics]. We cannot simply dismiss the 'real' Horace from our considerations but must instead confront his existence and poetic function head on.[38]

While my approach differs from McNeill's, I too believe that it is possible to reconcile seemingly irreconcilable biographical and rhetorical positions. My claim that Horace disposes of his poetic mask in *Epistles* does not depend on reading *Epistles* as straight autobiographical documents. On the contrary, it depends on an understanding that many of the first-person statements made by Horace in this collection are misleading and better thought of as manufactured self-image. I will argue that in *Epistles*, Horace presents us with multiple 'deceptive' *personae*, but he makes their deceptions transparent, and this apparent transparency combined with several subtle methods of 'self-revelation' start to form — in my mind at least — a compelling case for Horace's intent to disclose in this book of poetry something of the 'true self' he has previously kept concealed.

II

The Politics of Humanity in Horace's *Sermones* 1

For reasons known only to him, Horace usually avoided the term "satire" to designate his first

---

[38] McNeill (2001:4).

collection of poems, preferring instead the title *Sermones* ("talks" or "conversations").[39] The first

three poems (usually referred to as "diatribe" satires) form a related group and they articulate a

familiar view of human happiness that urges the need to remain within the limits of Nature in

order to live contented and, indeed, human lives.[40] The issues presented in the first three satires

lie at the heart of Horatian ethics, which we can trace throughout his poetic corpus and which aim

at achieving and maintaining the delicate balance of the golden mean, the famous *aurea*

mediocritas, against the extreme torques of opposing vices, such as avarice and ambition, and

self-indulgence in food, drink or sex.[41] There are clear limits (*fines*), Horace argues, which are set

by Nature, the "fixed bounds, beyond and short of which right can find no place" (*sunt certi*

denique fines, quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum, 1.106-107). An inability or

unwillingness to live confined by these limits entails a descent into moral slavery and lower still,

into the bestial.[42] In the first three poems of *Sermones*, the doctrine of the mean is stated in the

formula *quod satis est* (that which is 'enough') and each of them takes a slightly different turn on

the concept of sufficiency, on what is *satis*. The ethical estimate of *quod satis est* stipulates the

minimum requirements, or basic goods without which human nature would not find its

fulfilment, while for its upper limits, it sets the criterion of whether our passions are our servants

---

[39] In the first book of satires, Horace only refers to "this genre of writing" (*genus hoc scribendi*, 65), "these trifles

I'm toying with" (*haec ego ludo,*1.10. 37), or "this here" *(hoc,* 1.10.46); M. Coffey (1989), *Roman Satire*, Wiltshire,

p.68; K. Freudenburg (2001), *Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal,* Cambridge, p. 26.

[40] C. Schlegel (2005), *Satire and the Threat of Speech*, Madison, p. 20.

[41] For example, *Car.* 2.10.5; *Serm.* 2.3.82-295; Aristotle EN. 2.107a2-3; J. Cody (1976), *Horace and Callimachean*

Aesthetics, *Collection Latomus* 147, Bruxelles, p. 28.

[42] The standard by which Horace judged freedom and slavery in Book 1 of *Sermones* was primarily a matter of

mental and spiritual condition. For example, in S.4, he writes, "One man is mad for screwing wives, another boys.

Silver has made a slave of one; Albius is stunned by bronze," 1.4.27-28. In *Epistle* 16 we encounter the memorable

image of a miser, a slave to his fears and hopes of gain (63-66). Such a person, whatever his legal status, has,

according to Horace, the mentality of a slave (*serviet utiliter,* 70). See also W. R. Johnson (1993), *Horace and the*

Dialectic of Freedom: Readings in Epistles 1, Ithaca and London, p. 46; M. A. Bernstein (1987), '"O Totiens

Servus": Saturnalia and Servitude in Augustan Rome,' in R. von Hallberg (ed.), *Politics and Poetic Value*, Chicago

and London, 37-61, pp. 50-51; R. Tarrant (2007), 'Horace and Roman Literary History,' in S. Harrison (ed.), *The*

Cambridge Companion to Horace, Cambridge, 63-76. Half a century ago, Anderson observed that Horace regularly

compares one sort of man to another, or man to an animal, in order to caution his readership that man should never

be comparable to a beast, that reason can and should permanently operate to direct moral existence, W. S. Anderson

(1960), 'Imagery in the Satires of Horace and Juvenal,' *AJP* 81, 225-260, p.233.

or our masters.[43] The opening satire, which also serves as a dedication of the whole book to Maecenas, urges the readership to "let acquisitiveness be kept within bounds" (*sit finis quarendi*, 1.1-3):

> Qui fit Maecenas, ut nemo quam sibi sortem
>
> seu ratio dederit seu fors obiecerit, illa
>
> contentus vivat, laudet diversa sequentis?

> How comes it Maecenas, that no man living is content with the lot which either his choice has given him, or chance has thrown in his way, but each has praise for those who follow other paths? (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 5).

This poem goes on to deal with folly and the futility of uncontrolled greed. In it, we are confronted by compulsive misers and moral slaves whose life motto is "you cannot have enough" (*nil satis est,* 62, 63-67); their desire for wealth drives them to a point entirely outside Nature's bounds (*finis,* 49-50); they have no sense of due measure (*modus*) and are incapable of ever being satisfied.[44] *Satire* 2 deals with the folly of running to extremes (1-22) and the evils and dangers of unrestrained and irrational sexual passions (30-110). The basic moral issue, and the speaker's point of attack, is similar to those of the preceding poem; unchecked fools stray towards extremes because they have no sense of the limits set by the Nature (111). *Satire* 3 is concerned mainly with inconsistency (1-19) and its general message is again one of balance and moderation. The poet also urges mutual forbearance (20-65); we are all born with faults, he states, and since ridding ourselves completely from them is impossible, we should be sparing in our criticism of friends.[45]

Anderson has seen these satires as part of Horace's project to warn humanity about the grave dangers of failing to live in accordance with reason and, as a consequence, goes on to label Horace as the "Roman Socrates" who "seeks to mend the faults of the sinful by exposing them as

---

[43] *Sat.* 1.1.74-75; *Ep.* 1.2.62-63; *Ep.* 1.10.40.41; Cody (1976:28).

[44] Freudenburg (2001:21, 30).

[45] As summed up in the lines 72-3, "One who expects his friend not to be offended by his own warts will pardon the other's pimples."

self-deluded and self-harming."[46] Since Anderson's article, commentators have attributed various degrees of seriousness and philosophical 'competence' to these poems, being aware, of course, that Horace never claimed to be the Roman Socrates, but rather the modern equivalent of Lucilius, whose own descent he traced to the greats of Greek Old Comedy, Aristophanes, Cratinus and Eupolis (4.1-7).[47] It is necessary to account, therefore, for the ethical concerns of these poems without losing sight of the fact that Horace was writing in a genre renowned for its aggression and *libertas* and seemingly inseparable from Lucilius, its founder. For the first century audience, as Freudenburg has observed, Lucilius *was* satire, and the idea of writing something decidedly un-Lucilian and calling it satire was to them "a little perverse, if not unthinkable."[48] However perverse or unthinkable it was, Horace did write satire, but only because he substantially erased and reprogrammed the term by locating and dislodging a number of assumptions inherited from Lucilius about what satire was, could and could not do; in this way, as Freudenburg notices, Horace made satire "his own."[49]

Older commentators would notice such 'reprogramming' efforts chiefly in the literary manifestos or "program poems" 1.4 and 1.10, where Horace directly defends his version of satire against its critics, but in more recent years, a consensus has grown that Horace starts his reprogramming with his very first poem. Lines 49-60 of *Satire* 1 are probably the most direct indication that this poem is as programmatic as 1.4 and 1.10:

> Vel dic, quid referat intra
> naturae finis viventi, iugera centum an
> mille aret? "at suave est ex magno tollere acervo."
> dum ex parvo nobis tantundem haurire reliquas,
> cur tua plus laudes cumeris granaria nostris?
> ut tibi si sit opus liquidi non amplius urna'
> vel cyatho, et dicas "*magno de flumine mallem*

---

[46] Anderson (1963:27) has seen here the methods of constructive and humane Socratic irony. P. Hills (2005), *Horace*, Liverpool, p. 15; Hunter (1985:480-490).

[47] See, for example, W. Turpin (2009), 'The Epicurean Parasite: Horace *Satires* 1.1-3,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies, Horace: Satires and Epistles*, 122-137.

[48] Freudenburg (2001:26).

[49] Freudenburg (2001:27).

quam ex hox fonticulo tantundem sumere." eo fit

plenior ut si quos delectet copia iusto,

cum ripa simul avolsos ferat Aufidius acer.

at qui tantuli eget, quanto est opus, si neque limo

turbatam haurit aquam, neque vitam amittit in undis.

Or, tell me what odds does it make to the man who lives within the Nature's bounds, whether he ploughs a hundred acres or a thousand? "But what a pleasure to take from a large pile!" So long as you let us take just as much from our little one, why praise your granaries above our bins? It is as if you need no more than a jug or a cup of water, and were to say, "I'd rather have taken the quantity from a broad river than from this tiny brook." So it comes about that when any find pleasure in undue abundance, raging Aufidius[50] sweeps them away, bank and all; while the man who craves only so much as he needs, neither draws water thick with mud, nor loses his life in the flood (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 9).

It is well recognised that this chapter announces Horace's adaptation of Callimachean aesthetic ideals to a Roman satiric tradition inherited from Lucilius. When Horace's imagined interlocutor, a miser who cannot be satisfied, asserts that "I'd rather have taken the quantity from a broad river than from this tiny brook" (55-66), he alludes to the end of Callimachus's *Hymn to Apollo* where Callimachus contrasts the muddy waters of the Assyrian river with the pure trickle brought for Demeter by the bees.[51] The Callimachean standards of poetic composition were established in Rome by the previous generation of Neoterics, and Horace's allegiance to this canon of careful workmanship in poetic composition (as emphasised in 1.4 and 1.10) is one of the key factors determining the difference between him and Lucilius.[52] Nevertheless, the ethical context in which Horace situated his programmatic statements also exposes that which is most distinctly un-

---

[50] The river in Horace's native Apulia.

[51] Call. *Ap.* 108-112; T. K. Hubbard (1981), 'The Structure and Programmatic Intent of Horace's First Satire,' *Latomus* 40, 305-21, p. 314. Also, B. Dufalo (2000), '*Satis/Satura*: Reconsidering the "Programmatic Intent" of Horace's *Satires* 1.1,' *CW* 93, 579-590, p. 585.

[52] Cody (1976:103-119); R. Scodel (1987), 'Horace, Lucilius and Callemachean Pollemic,' *HSCP* 91, 199-215. On the many points of contact between the two artists, see also A. Thill (1979), 'Alter ab illo,' *Recherches sur l'imitation dans la poĕsie personelle ă l'ĕpoque Augustĕenne*, Paris, 224-62. Also F. Wehrill (1944), 'Horaz und Kallimachos' *MH* 1, 69-76.

Callimachean about his poetry. Callimachus was an exponent of a virtual asceticism (the literary theory of 'art for art's sake') and as such tended to divorce art from life, poetry from ethics, or *dulce* from *utile,* while Horace professed that in order to achieve the proper function of poetry, the poet needs to unite them (*dulce* with *utile* or *delectare* with *prodesse*).[53] To the extent that he argues about the nature of poetry and the poet's role in both private and public contexts, Horace articulates seemingly ideal visions of the poet as a bard commissioned to morally instruct and bring the people from savagery to civilisation by enabling the necessary moral improvement.[54] Horace, therefore, added to his distinctively Callimachean regard for artistic form and technical perfection a deep concern for social, civic and ethical content, and this integration of ethical and aesthetical values is often seen as sufficient to merit for him the hybrid title of the "Socratic Callimachean."[55]

The ethical context in which Horace situates his programmatic statement tends to suggest that, in his view, Nature's limits need to define what is 'right' (*rectum*, 1.107) in regards to *poetry* as well as to people. Indeed, several scholars have noticed that beneath the moral lessons that urge us to observe nature's limits, Horace inserts a second set of lessons concerning the natural limits of satire. Freudenburg, for example, observes that "although the word 'satire' is never used in the poem, it is clear that its 'limits,' its definitional *fines* are being probed into by the poem's scattered images of piles, fools who cannot get enough (*satis*), and the dinner guest who finally gets his fill (*satur,* 1.119)."[56] This coalescence of ethics and poetics culminates in the concluding assertion that "this is now enough" (*iam satis est*, 120). Hubbard was the first to suggest that *iam satis est* contains a pun on the word *satis* ("enough") and *satura* ("satire"); "this is now enough" here also means "this is now a satire," the new Horatian version of satire that *Sermones* 1 has just articulated and demonstrated.[57] Unlike the fools who believe *nil satis est* ("You cannot have enough," 62), Horace wishes to demonstrate that he can discern the limits appropriate to a person as well as to a poem: "He has found the very thing that the pile-obsessed

[53] Hor. *Ars. Poet.* 343; E. R. Schwinge (1963), 'Zur Kunsttheorie des Horaz,' *Philologus* 107, 75-96; Cody (1976:15, 24).

[54] J. Tate (1928), 'Horace and the Moral Function of Poetry,' *CQ* 22, 65-72.

[55] Cody (1976:24).

[56] Freudenburg (2001:30).

[57] Hubbard (1981:312); Dufalo (2000:585).

fools inside the poem were so notoriously unable to find; that basic 'enough' of Nature."[58]

I will argue below that Horace's 'humanising' of the satiric genre, his confining it within Nature's bounds, is really an outcome of his humanising his own satiric *persona,* which he presents as the product of his ethical and aesthetical maturation under the auspices of his father and later of his patron, Maecenas. Horace, as I mentioned above, constructed his satiric *persona* as a surface manifestation of his own proper inner hierarchies, or of that which Panaetius and Cicero dubbed the first human *persona.* This 'humanisation' of Horace's *persona* is then made into the chief impetus for its parting of ways with the popular image inherited from Lucilius, of the satirist as a parasitic scandalmonger, or in metaphorical terms, as a rabid dog or a mad bull.[59] This, I will argue, was Horace's way of creating a divide between himself and Lucilius with the final aim of assigning to each of them a place within their own exclusive realms: to himself, a place within, and to Lucilius, a place outside Nature's bounds.[60] This divide also separated their respective audiences: admirers of poetry that lay outside Nature's *fines*, Horace went on to suggest, belong there themselves, while those who approve of poetry that is within the limits are themselves confined by them. In this way, I will suggest, Horace articulated the literary quarrels with his critics as a war between the subhuman and human elements of society, but before I can clarify this argument any further, I need to say more on Horace's audience, or to be more accurate, his audiences.

Barbara Gold has convincingly argued that in the first Book of *Sermones*, Horace was addressing at least four potential audiences. The first audience she termed the "primary," having in mind the dedicatee, Maecenas. The second group are the "internal audience," the artistically unsophisticated readers posing as interlocutors to Horace's rhetorical questions and displaying those moral faults such as greed and discontent which Horace seeks to admonish and correct.[61] In

---

[58] Freudenburg (2001:32).

[59] P. M. Brown (1993), *Horace: Satires* 1, Warminster, p. 89. For "mad bull," see W. Wimmel (1960), *Kallimachos in Rom: Die Nachfolge seines apologetischen Dichtens in der Augusteerzeit*, Wiesbaden, p. 156; Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.33-38.

[60] Scholars often observe that Horace's treatment of Lucilius's *persona* was motivated (or necessitated) less by the reality of the matter than by the complex needs of his own self-presentation. Bramble, for example, speaks of Horace's "falsification of Lucilius's *persona*," J. C. Bramble (1974), *Persius and the Programmatic Satire: A Study in Form and Imagery*, Cambridge, p.169. On Horace's slippery treatment of Lucilius's *persona,* see also Zetzel (1980:59-77) and Tarrant (2007:68).

[61] B. Gold (1994), 'Openings of Horace's Satires and Odes: Poet, Patron and Audience,' *YCS* 29, 161-185, pp. 162-3.

Satire 1, for example, Gold has observed a gradual shifting in focus from the primary audience to the internal audience; in the opening lines, Horace addresses his primary audience (Maecenas), but as the poem progresses, Maecenas fades from view and Horace starts addressing the greedy, miserly and foolish internal audience (i.e. 38-42). In addition to these, Gold also identifies two further groups: "the authorial audience," who are the upper-class writers and politicians to whose values Horace appeals. These are sophisticated readers on whose existence the artistic integrity of *Sermones* depends: they can scorn and mock the failures of the internal audience and are likely to understand Horace's poetic techniques, as well as the artistic tensions and inconsistencies of his poetry that are well beyond the internal audience's reach.[62] Finally, Gold identifies "the actual audience," the person hearing or reading the text at any given moment, i.e. us.[63] This audience was the most difficult for Horace to anticipate as the different perspectives and sets of assumptions held by his future readers were, of course, beyond his reach.[64]

Below, I intend to make some use of Gold's division of audiences and observe the manner in which these groups interact, in particular the first three, the primary, internal and authorial audiences. Within my argument, Horace's 'primary audience' inhibits the 'human realm' (within Nature's bounds) while the vice-ridden 'internal audience' is firmly situated within the subhuman realm, outside those bounds. As for the 'authorial audience,' I view it in somewhat more fluid terms than Gold, because I believe that Horace's *Sermones* allow for a progression from the 'internal' to the 'authorial' audience, from the subhuman to the human realm. This progression is conditional upon the acceptance and appreciation of the ethical and aesthetical human values and standards upheld in the *fines*-confined *Sermones*. It is no coincidence, of course, that Horace's powerful *amici* Maecenas and Octavian already display such an appreciation of and approval for *Sermones* and that their 'humanity,' as a result, is never in doubt. To be more precise, I will argue that from *Satire* 4 onwards, Horace assimilates the internal audience with his supposed critics, usually identified as the more faithful imitators and admirers of L ucilius, to whom, by comparison, Horace's attempt at satire was somewhat "gutless" (*sine nervis,* 2.1.2). The assimilation occurs because Horace traces his critics' objections primarily to their inability to

---

[62] Gold (1994:165).

[63] Gold (1994:162-163).

[64] Nevertheless, Horace's frequent references to posterity speak of his awareness of this particular audience, for example, *Sat.* 1.10; *Ep.* 1.20; Gold (1994:166).

cope with his human *persona* or with his humanisation of the satiric genre. Their moral state allows them to admire and withstand only that which belongs to their own realm, namely Lucilius and the Lucilian brand of satire. Nevertheless, the invitation to recognise the ethical and aesthetic superiority of Horace's brand of satire was implicit; one could chose to 'follow the light' and join the authorial audience and the human realm to which Horace and his powerful *amici* already belonged.

<div align="center">III</div>

<div align="center">**Constructing the 'Human'**</div>

> We are not discussing the man who is truthful in his agreements, nor in such things as relate to
> injustice or justice…but him who, in situations in which no such thing as justice is at stake,
> still is truthful in his speech and in his life, because such is his nature.
> Aristotle (EN. 4.13, 1127a33-1127b3).

Horace began separating the human from the subhuman realm in the very first satire, where he and Maecenas appeared to form a world apart from the misers and fools this poem goes on to admonish.[65] To belong to the same world as Maecenas, Horace needed to complete the process of his own humanisation, from ethical and aesthetic infancy to mature humanity. From *Satire* 4 onwards, Horace provides some well-chosen details of this maturation process, but in *Satire* 3 he prepares the ground by describing a process which is in many ways comparable to it (99-112):

> Cum prorepserunt primis animalia terris,
> mutum et turpe pecus, glandem atque cubilia propter
> unguibus et pugnis, dein fustibus, atque ita porro
> pugnabat armis, quae post fabricaverat usus,
> donec verba, quibus voces sensusque notarent,

---

[65] The opening statement of S.1 (1-3), as quoted above, does not explicitly exclude Maecenas and Horace from these people. Because Horace states that *nemo* ("no one") ever remains content with the life dealt out to him, he presumably includes himself and Maecenas. Nevertheless, as it will be clear below, Horace gradually distances himself and Maecenas from this group.

nominaque invenere; dehinc absistere bello,

oppida coeperunt munire et ponere leges,

ne quis fur esset, neu latro, nec quis adulter.

nam fuit ante Helenam cunnus taeterrima belli

causa, sed ignotis perierunt mortibus illi,

quos venerem incertam rapientis more ferarum,

viribus editior caedebat ut in grege Taurus.

iura inventa metu iniusti fateare necesse est,

tempora si fastosque velis evolvere mundi.

When living creatures crawled forth upon the primeval earth, dumb shapeless beasts, they fought for their acorns and lairs with nails and fists, then with clubs and so on step by step with weapons which need later forged, until they found words and names wherewith to give meaning to their cries and feelings. Thenceforth they began to cease from war, to build towns and frame laws that none should thieve or rob or commit adultery. For before Helen's day a wench was the most dreadful cause of war, but deaths unknown to fame were theirs whom, snatching fickle love in wild beast fashion, a man stronger in might struck down, like the bull in a herd. If you will but turn over the annals and records of the world, you must confess that justice was born out of the fear of injustice (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 41).

Horace describes here the gradual progress of humanity from its early brutish and subhuman state towards humanity proper, via the discovery of language, city life and institutionalised justice.[66] In her relatively recent discussion, Gowers has observed that, should one choose to read this civilising process as an analogy for something else, the most obvious parallel would be the history of satire — from bare-fisted confrontation to verbal vindictiveness and stigmatisation of sinners, and beyond that to restraint and deference.[67] She further observes that this civilising process also works as a prehistory of Horace himself: he, too, has crawled from his native soil, become articulate and civil, discovered language, learned to forgo destructive relationships with women owned by other men and finally, to draw in his claws.[68] In my view, Gowers's reading of this passage is essentially correct, but I intend to take a more holistic approach and observe how

---

[66] The doctrine here is based on Lucretius's *De rerum natura*, 5.780ff.

[67] E. Gowers (2003), '*Fragments of Autobiography in Horace's Satires 1*,' *CA* 22, 55-91.

[68] Gowers (2003: 84-85).

the story of Horace's progress reflects on his critics. In my opinion, Horace used this notion as a backdrop for what would become the gradual placement of himself, his satire and its audience on the ethical and aesthetical pinnacle of civilisation (a place within Nature's bounds), while at the same time denying any position there to his critics. Horace only hints at this process before *Satire* 4, but in this poem he leaves no room for doubting that he is a 'true human' satirist who has 'crawled out' of his earlier bestiality, while his critics and practitioners of the more traditional brand of satire are still largely there.

Satire 4 is the first of three satires in which Horace discusses literary problems, particularly his attitude towards Lucilius and the status of his own *sermones*. In the first five lines of *Satire* 4, Horace acknowledges the direct descent of Lucilius's satire from Attic Old Comedy, which attacked the faults of any who deserved it "with great freedom" (*multa cum libertate,* 1-5). Lucilius, Horace writes, followed the Greek comic writers in everything apart from metre and rhythm (6-7). As Horace sees it, Lucilius's chief shortcoming was his poetic style; whilst he was "witty and of keen scented nostrils, he was harsh in framing his verse" (*facetus, emunuctae naris, durus componere versus*).[69] Because he wrote too fast, too much and too carelessly, Lucilius's verse flows heavily; as in a muddy torrent, there is much in it one would want to remove (9-10).[70] As mentioned earlier, Horace uses this image to show that Lucilius's poetry has no sense of the proper limits; like a torrential river, it escapes the bounds nature has set it. Now Horace describes how contemporary imitators of Lucilius challenge him to compete in speedwriting (14-16).[71] He refuses to engage in such faulty poetic practices and describes himself as fortunate that the gods have made him by nature incapable of such faults (17-18); his 'rare' (*raro*) and scanty (*perpauca*) speech — key terms in Neoteric aesthetics — is engrained in his very nature.[72] It is important to recognise that Horace attributes the differences in his own and Lucilius's aesthetics to their characters; as Horace's Callimachean bent is engrained in his nature, so too were Lucilius's faults in his; he was lazy, Horace writes, and in wont of the self-discipline necessary for the hard task of writing well (*scribendi recte,* 13).

---

[69] Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.7-8.

[70] Hor. *Sat*. 1.4.9-10, 1.10.59-61; Hills (2005:15).

[71] Crispinus and Fannius in line 21 are most likely contemporary imitators of the Lucilian style, see G. C. Fiske (1920), *Lucilius and Horace: A Study in the Classical Theory of Imitation*, Madison, p. 358, n. 149.

[72] C. Schlegel (2000), 'Horace and His Fathers: *Satires* 1.4 and 1.6,' *AJP* 121, 93-119, p. 96.

But Horace's opinion was not, it appears, widely shared: unlike the writings of Lucilius's contemporary analogue Fannius, his writings were unpopular: "My writings," he complains, "no one reads and I fear to recite them in public, the fact being that this style is abhorrent to some, inasmuch as most people merit censure" (22-25).[73] With this sentence, Horace takes a leap from his criticism of Lucilius's aesthetics and the justification of his own, to the *moral* failings of his critical audience: "Choose anyone among the crowd," Horace exclaims, "he is suffering either from avarice or some wretched ambition. One is mad with love for somebody's wife, another for boys."[74] It is these people, Horace states, who "dread verses and detest the poet" (*metuunt versus, odere poetas*, 32). Horace then proceeds to reproduce the current criticism of the satirist as a "mad bull" who spares neither himself nor his friends by his malicious ridicule and his inability, or unwillingness, to keep secrets either from "slaves or old dames" (33-38).

Schlegel is right to observe that Horace's leap from his choice of a restrained style to the moral failings of his potential audience came as a surprise and, furthermore, given the popularity of Greek Old Comedy and Lucilius in Horace's time, the suggestion that the vice-prone *turba* ("crowd") hates such poetry and detests such poets is puzzling to say the least.[75] Horace does not say, of course, that people hate Lucilius or Old Comedy, only that they hate his own style of writing. The question we need to ask here is why Horace connected this issue to people's immoralities and to their open hatred of the 'poet' whom they perceived as a vicious gossiper on a mission to ridicule them. The most likely explanation is that Horace here claims that those who attack the aesthetics of his poetry in fact quarrel with his poetry's ethics; being steeped in vices, they have come to experience the ethics of *Sermones,* the 'Socratic' aspect of Horace's Callimacheanism, as a vicious attack, and thus they accuse the poet of wickedness and malicious intent and wish to silence him. Because the only poet initially singled out for criticism is Horace (24), we have no reason to think that the concluding lines (32-38) extend this criticism to include any other. This, I believe, is the point at which Horace for the first time assimilates his morally deprived 'internal audience' with his actual critics and, as we will see, he will continue doing this throughout the *Sermones* with various degrees of intensity and subtlety.

---

[73] *Cum mea nemo scripta legat volgo recitare timentis ab hanc rem quod sunt quos genus hoc minime iuvat, utpote pluris culpari dignos,* 22-25.

[74] *Aut ob avaritiam, aut misera ambitione laborat. Hic nuptarum insanit amoribus, hic puerorum,* 25-27.

[75] Schlegel (2000:97).

Now Horace proceeds to deal with the issue of whether anyone should fear his poetry (63-66) and, in an attempt to remove that suspicion, he frames an answer in reference to his own character. Horace states that he does not write for the general public, give public recitations or wish to cause pain to anyone (66-86). He then proceeds to provide examples of men who do these things and who indeed should be feared as nothing more than parasitic malicious gossipers (86-91):

> Absentem qui rodit amicum
> qui non defendit alio culpante, solutos
> qui captat risus hominum famamque dicacis
> fingere qui non visa potest, comissa tacere
> qui nequit; hic niger est, hunc tu Romane, caveto.
> saepe tribus lectis videas cenare quaternos
> e quibus unus amet quavis aspergere cunctos
> praeter eum qui praebet aquam; post hunc quoque potus
> condita cum verax aperit praecordia Liber.
> hic tibi comis et urbanus liberque videtur,
> infesto nigris.

> The man who backbites an absent friend, who fails to defend him when another finds a fault; the man who courts the loud laughter of others, and a reputation as a wit; who can invent what he never saw, who cannot keep a secret — that man is black of heart; of him beware, good Roman. Often on each of the three couches you may see four at dinner, among whom one loves to bespatter in any way everyone present, except the host who provides the water, and later him as well, when he has well drunk and the truthful god of free speech unlocks the heart's secrets. Such a man you think genial and witty and frank — you who hate the black of heart (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 55).

Horace gives us here "a 'parasite' theory of satire," an image of the satirist as a gossiper "too drunk to notice whom he is abusing and why."[76] To such a man, nothing is sacred: he is a slave to laughter[77] who lacks respect for himself and his friends, who is ready to betray any secret

---

[76] Freudenburg (2001:47).

[77] Aristotle EN. 14.1128a, 35.

to provoke laughter and to gain popularity. Horace's aim in this passage goes beyond delineating the vices of this creature to pointing out the problems of his popularity amongst the people. Not only is such a man — the true back-stabbing mad bull people accuse *him* of being — not feared, he is in fact *admired* for what people perceive as his wittiness and honourable display of *libertas*. Horace leaves it to his readers to draw parallels between such individuals, such practices, *libertas* and the much-admired Lucilius who in his satire "rubbed the city down with much salt."[78] Popular or not, Horace rejects in the strongest possible terms any link with such practices and such individuals: "That such malice should be far from my pages, and first of all from my heart, I pledge myself, if there is aught that I can pledge with truth."[79]

If Horace's critics defined their and Lucilius's work as a brand of honest and unrestricted censure (targeting the 'crimes of men' and unmasking them), while discrediting his own less direct brand of criticism as underhanded backbiting,[80] here Horace clearly turns the tables on them. First, he suggests that his critics criticise him precisely because they *do* perceive his satire as possessing a sharp critical edge: being vice-ridden, they fear, dislike and experience the moral truths of his satires as vicious attacks. From this it follows that what they admire for its supposed critical edge and *libertas* cannot truly possess either. People who are unable to withstand the satirist's criticism, who label him as a mad bull and wish to bridle him (deprive him of his *libertas*), would not admire the individual and practices described in the scene above *if* those practices had anything to do with attacking the 'vices of men' or with true *libertas*. Their admiration, therefore, can be traced to the same source as their criticism of Horace — their vices. They dislike Horace's satire because it threatens them and admire the other brand because it does not. Like the unsatisfied fools in *Satire* 1 who drown in the muddy torrent (1.49-61), consumers of the Lucilian brand of 'muddy' satire 'die' consuming it. We may recall that to Horace's contemporaries the moral state implied here was tantamount to death. There we saw Augustus saving their 'lives' and here we find Horace joining the effort: the fool in S.1 could survive by

---

[78] Scholars usually assume that *hic* in 4.90 is Lucilius who described such a banqueting scene in the first person, because in S.1.10 Lucilius is described in precisely the same manner as the parasite of 1.4: *comis et urbanus*, 10.64-65. Lucilius's display of *libertas,* as Anderson has noticed, often took place in the settings of such banquets, where under the influence of wine, it could become indistinguishable from parasitic licentious remarks about others; W. S. Anderson (1982), *Essays on Roman Satire*, Princeton, p. 16.

[79] *Vitium procul afore chartis atque animo prius, ut si quod promittere de me possum aliud vere, promitto*, 101-103.

[80] See, for example, Freudenburg (2001:47).

realising that a cup of pure water would suffice to restrain his thirst, the fool here by realising the same in regard to the "pure trickle" of Horace's poetry.[81]

In the lines that follow, Horace concedes that perhaps he does display a degree of *libertas* in his verse, but this, he argues, should be granted to him (103-104). Horace's brand of *libertas,* he leads us to believe, is engrained in his person by his upbringing, at the core of which was the use of moral examples (105-121):

> insueuit pater optimus hoc me,
> ut fugerem exemplis uitiorum quaeque notando.
> cum me hortaretur, parce frugaliter atque
> uiuerem uti contentus eo quod mi ipse parasset:
> "none uides Albi ut male uiuat filius utque
> Baius inops? Magnum documentum, ne patriam rem
> perdere quis uelit." A turpi meretricis amore
> cum deterreret: "Scetani dissimilis sis."
> ne sequerer moechas, concessa cum uenere uti
> possem: "deprensi non bella est fama Treboni"
> aiebat. "sapiens, uitatu quidque petitu
> sit melius, causas reddet tibi: mi satis est si
> traditum ab antiquis morem seruare tuamque
> dum custodis eges, uitam famamque tueri
> inculumem possum: simul ac durauerit aetas
> membra animumque tuum, nabis sine cortice." sic me
> formabat puerum dictis…

'Tis a habit the best of fathers taught me for, to enable me to steer clear of follies, he would brand them, one by one, by his examples. Whenever he would encourage me to live thriftily, frugally and content with what he had saved for me, "Do you not see," he would say, "how badly fares young Albius, and how poor is Baius? A striking lesson not to waste one's patrimony!" When he would deter me from a vulgar amour, "Don't be like Scetanus." And to prevent me from courting another's wife, when I might enjoy love not forbidden, "Not pretty," he would say, "is the repute of Trebonius caught in the act. Your philosopher will give you theories for shunning or seeking

---

[81] For Horace's *purus* poetry, see below, 138.

this or that; enough for me, if I can uphold the rule our fathers have handed down, and if, so long as you need a guardian, I can keep your health and name from harm." When years have brought strength to body and mind, you will swim without the cork (trans. R. Fairclough, pp. 57-58).

Horace's defence of his satire, therefore, rests here on a self-description which is couched in ethical rather than in poetic terms: his satirical impulse is presented as a moral reflex planted in him as part of a standard Roman upbringing.[82] Horace defines his own *libertas* as the essential property of a character who has internalised the moral lessons of his father. Being morally self-sufficient (he "swims without a cork"), he does not attack his fellow citizens mindlessly but instead, replicating his father's practice, instructs them in correct living.[83] Throughout the remainder of the poem, Horace describes his manner of life and his continual practicing of his father's precepts in order to be true to himself, dear to his friends, and to the people around him (129-140). Horace, therefore, effectively substitutes the concept of the satirist as an animal with that of the satirist as an intelligent true human being, whose satire has a central mission to humanise, not to ridicule. We are left to infer that only a moral slave and subhuman would reject this satirist's attempt to humanise, preferring to take offence at him, his message and his *libertas*, while at the same time regarding the false human, his malicious attacks and his false *libertas* as worthy of admiration.[84]

We have witnessed, therefore, the conversion of language in this poem from the poetic to the moral realm: the poem starts with Lucilius being characterised by his stylistic faults, moves on to the realm of fault being a moral failure, and ends with rightness being defined in terms of correct living.[85] Horace begins the poem by distinguishing himself from Lucilius stylistically but what evolves is a contemplation of human character in which poetic style is only one outcome of that character: as Schlegel puts it: "When Horace asks whether his poetry is justifiably *suspectum*

---

[82] For Horace and his father, see W. S. Anderson (1995), '*Horatius Liber,* Child and Freedman's Son,' *Arethusa* 28, 151-164.

[83] "As a neighbour's funeral scares gluttons when sick, and makes them through fear of death careful of themselves, so the tender mind is oft deterred from vice by another's shame," 4.126-129, 133-38; Schlegel (2000:99-119).

[84] In *Satires* Horace most often speaks of character deficiency in terms of moral slavery (see above 42), and of moral well-being in terms of freedom, himself being a spokesman for and example of the truly 'free' individual; for example, *Sat.* 1.5.75-87. See below, 115.

[85] Schlegel (2000:102).

(1.4.65), he answers by telling us who he is: the poet is the answer to the question about the genre. Style and *ethos* are thus made indistinguishable."[86] Inevitably, Horace invites us to see the same inseparability in regards to Lucilius's poetry, to regard the shortcomings in Lucilius's aesthetics as signposts to his character defects. From the very start of the poem, Horace attributes defects of Lucilius's style to his character deficiency (13), as well as his own style to his natural character disposition (17-18), and thus forces literary and moral terms into identity with each other. Besides this, Horace's audience was accustomed to reading the criticism of someone's aesthetics as an attack on that person's moral state; the idea that man's speech (spoken or written) reveals his character is extremely common in ancient literature and theory.[87] Good and orderly speech, it was believed, reveals the proper inner hierarchy within the person speaking, or that reason holds sway, while anything less was seen as indicative of the opposite.[88] The Romans were so accustomed to thinking in such terms that Cicero saw fit to open a speech against Sallust with that precise point (in Sall. *Orat*. 1.1-7):

> Ea demum magna voluptas est, C. Sallusti,
> aequalem ac parem verbis vitam agree, neque quic-
> quam tam obscaenum dicere cui non ab initio
> pueritiae omni genere facinoris aetas tua respondeat,

---

[86] Schlegel (2000:94).

[87] The fragment of Menander states clearly that "a man character is revealed by his speech," in Rudd (1976:146). Also Terence: "What you said was an indication of your character" (*quale ingenium haberes fuit indicio oratio*) *Heaut.* 384. In *Brutus* (117), Cicero mentions a rugged character called Q. Aelius Tubero who "in his speech, like in his life…was harsh, untrained and rough" (*sed ut vita sic oratione durus incultus horridus*). In Juvenal 4.82 we hear of Vibius Chrispus, a member of Domitian's court ─ a nice old man whose eloquence was gentle, like his character (*cuius errant mores quails facundia*). See also W. Dominik (1997), 'Style is the Man: Seneca, Tacitus and Quintilian's Cannon,' in W. Dominik (ed.), *Roman Eloquence: Rhetoric in Society and Literature*, London, 50-68.

[88] In his fortieth epistle, Seneca states: "What are we to think of the mind of a man whose speech is whipped up and allowed to run away and can't be reined in?" A disorderly way of speaking shows a disorderly mind, *Ep*. 40.6-7. In *Epistle* 114, using Maecenas as a negative illustration, Seneca writes that Maecenas's poetic diction was a sure sign of his moral depravity, as were his loose clothes, his house and his domineering wife. Quintilian, having orators in mind, states: "A man's way of speaking generally reveals his character and his inner mentality" and "when you see certain men ranting and wrangling you infer from their mental attitude (*mentis habitu*) that they are as reckless in taking on cases as they are in pleading them" (*Profert enim mores plerumque oratio et animi secreta detegit. Nec sine causa Graeci prodiderunt, ut vivat, quemque etiam dicere*), *Inst.* 11.1.29-30.

ut omnis oratio moribus consonet. Neque enim qui

ita vivit, ut tu, aliter ac tu loqui potest, neque qui

tam inloto sermone utitur vita honestior est.

It surely must be a great satisfaction to you, Gaius Sallustius, that you lead a life similar in all respects to your words, and that you say nothing so foul that your conduct, from earliest childhood does not match it with every species of vice; so that your language is wholly consistent with your character. For neither can one who lives as you do speak otherwise than as you speak, nor can one who uses such filthy language be any more respectable in his life (trans. J. C. Rolfe, p. 503).

It is likely, therefore, that by his criticism of Lucilius's aesthetics, Horace intended to score the same rhetorical point as Cicero and thus invite his audience to assign their aesthetic differences to their respective moral states. Indeed, at a later date, Horace would teach Piso's brothers that coarseness of speech was inimical to moral and stylistic sensibility, a sin against social propriety and *decorum,* and argue that the arts of poetic and social deportment involved self-scrutiny and the suppression of the irrational, as well as some more subtle refinements.[89] In the very first lines of *Ars Poetica,* Horace would use the image of a painting that contains the profiles of the horse-man Centaur and the fish-woman Scylla in order to represent the vice of aesthetic incoherence (1-5):

Humano capiti cervicem pictor equinam

iungere si velit, et varias inducere plumas

undique collatis membris, ut turpiter atrum

desinat in piscem mulier formosa superne,

spectatum admissi risum teneatis, amici?

If a painter wished to join a human head to the neck of a horse and to spread feathers of many a hue over limbs picked up now here now there, so that what at the top is a lovely woman ends below in a black and ugly fish, could you my friends, if favoured with a private view, refrain from laughing? (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 451).

---

[89] In *Ars Poetica*, Horace terms these finer refinements the "work of the file" (*limae labor*, 291), while Cicero describes them as a kind of finetuning, *Off.* 144; Oliensis (1998:203).

Ellen Oliensis has dubbed *Ars Poetica* as "*De Officiis* in aesthetic dress" and argues that Horace used this scene to illustrate to the Piso brothers the hidden consequences of a lapse of *decorum*, "in the broad Ciceronian sense of a revolt of animal appetite against the domination of reason."[90] In the poems that follow *Satire* 4, Horace continues to suggest, with various degrees of subtlety, that Lucilius's verse is the outcome of just such a revolt, an aesthetic manifestation of disturbed inner hierarchies in the man himself, and in the next satire (1.5) we can already start to acquire a general feel for this strategy.

Satire 5 is the account of a journey Horace made (or says he made) with Maecenas and other notables from Rome to Brundisium. This poem is part of the tradition of travel-writing and Horace is here most likely following in the footsteps of Lucilius who described such a journey from Rome to the Sicilian Straits.[91] Most scholars recognise that Lucilius is the link between Satires 4 and 5: Kiessling-Heinze, for example, suggests that Horace wrote *Satire* 5 with greater care in order to contrast his own writing with Lucilius's sloppiness.[92] The somewhat puzzling account of a contest of wit between the *scurra* Sarmentus and Messius (5.51-70) complements this view as it further recalls some of the ethic/aesthetic issues raised in S.4.[93] This duel was part of the evening's entertainment in the villa of Cocceius, and Horace gives us a sample of the exchange between these two (56-69): Sarmentus begins with "I declare that you look like a wild horse" (*equi te esse feri similem dico*). The audience laughs and Messius accepts the role and tosses his head (58).[94] Sarmentus then invites Messius to do a Cyclops dance in the manner of a horned satyr goatherd in which he could do *without* the comic mask and tragic buskins (63-65).[95]

---

[90] Oliensis (1998:199, 202) connects this scene to what Norbert Elias has termed the "civilising process," or the process whereby people "seek to suppress in themselves" and in their children every characteristic that they feel to be 'animal.'

[91] E. Gowers (2009), 'Horace, Satires 1.5: An Inconsequential Journey,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *Horace: Satires and Epistles*, Oxford, 156-180, pp. 157-158.

[92] A. Kiessling and R. Heinze (1961), *Q. Horatius Flaccus: Satiren*, Berlin, pp. 88-89.

[93] "This duel is another of the unresolved problems of the poem, mysterious to say the least," Gowers (2009:157).

[94] Messius had a scar on his head caused by the growth known as Campanian's disease, probably consisting of a horn-like excrescence. "If you hadn't had the horn cut off from your forehead," continues Sarmenius, "what would you be doing, since although mutilated, you still make threatening gestures?" (*O, tua cornu, ni foret exsecto frons, quid faceres, cum sic mutilus minitaris*?). See also Corbett (1986:67-68).

[95] Corbett (1986:67-68).

Horace draws here on the stock idea that a *scurra* would often resemble an animal of some sort, which would allow him to perform realistic animal impersonations.[96] But given that the *scurra* was already regarded as an animal by virtue of his moral state, such literary representations would also indicate the close resemblance of his external physical properties with that which lurks below. It is hardly a coincidence that we should encounter this image immediately after the onslaught on Lucilius's own poetic externals as well as the association of his brand of satire with such banquets and such individuals.[97] Once again, Horace reminds his audience to trust in appearances: if it looks (or writes or speaks?) less than human, it most likely is.

When it is Messius's turn to taunt Sarmentus, he chooses to concentrate on Sarmentus's past as a slave, reminding or revealing to the audience an additional way in which Sarmentus's human appearance is somewhat deceptive (65-70). Horace, of course, distances himself from these individuals and their antics; his place and role within this circle of friends is different. That which separates Horace from these men also muzzles his voice when it comes to the politics of this trip, the purpose of which was most likely the negotiation of peace between Antony and Octavian.[98] Horace was well placed to observe some of the events that provoked ancient curiosities (as they do modern), but when it comes to these events — like the meeting of delegates at the town of Anxur — Horace famously smears black ointment over his sore eyes (*hic oculis ego nigra meis collyria lippus / illinere*, 30-31). Whatever else might have stifled Horace's voice, he allows us to see only the sense of propriety and tact that prevents him from blurting out any details concerning the confidential affairs of his *amici*.[99] Lucilius, as we know, lacked such sense and a few lines below two other men without it will enter the scene: the finger-pointing subhuman parasites Sarmentus and Messius.

In *Satire* 6, Horace recalls once again the details of his childhood, but here he complements them with mentions of the harsh treatment he received at the hands of his social peers (on account of his servile origins) as well as with details of his introduction to Maecenas.

---

[96] Phaedrus portrays a *scurra* on the stage who put his head under a cloak imitating a pig by making sounds so convincingly that the audience came to think he really had a pig under his coat, *Fab*. 5.5 (*Scurra et Rusticus*) 7-19; Corbett (1986:67-68).

[97] Indeed, as Freudenburg observes: "That poem (1.5) is the most obvious of the extended imitations of Lucilius in the Horatian corpus, and is significantly placed right after the Lucilian criticisms of S. 1.4," Freudenburg (2001:52).

[98] P. Fedeli (1994), *Q. Orazio Flacco:Le Opere II, Le Satire*, Rome, pp. 410-413; Freudenburg (2001:53).

[99] See *Sat*. 1.3.25-27.

The poem opens with Horace's praise of Maecenas for not caring who a man's father is, unlike most people who would deny him a right to any dignity or honour (1-5, 45-50).[100] He then respectfully accepts the socio-political restrictions that were imposed on all whose family bore traces of a servile past, like the prohibition of being admitted to the senatorial order (19-22):

> Namque esto, populus Laevino mallet honorem
> quam Decio mandare novo, censorque moveret
> Appius, ingenuo si non essem patre natus.
> Vel merito, quoniam in propria non pelle quiessem.

> For the people could have put Laevius into office, not Decius the newcomer, and I might have been purged from the Senate by Appius, for having no freeborn father. But I would have deserved it, for not staying content in my own skin. (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 79).

In line 22, Horace alludes to the famous fable of the ass who dons a lion's skin and goes around terrifying other animals, but is finally exposed and ridiculed by the fox.[101] That Horace narrates or alludes to fables in his *Satires* to convey a moral lesson is well known, but it is important to notice that in Horace the literary redeployment of this genre is consistently associated with the direct presence or indirect evocation of slaves. Slavery and fables certainly go hand in hand: the fabulist and freedman Phaedrus explained the fables of Aesopus (also a freedman) as being the means by which slaves expressed their humanity under conditions of social, political and legal disenfranchisement and oppression.[102] As for the issue of the fable within the genre of satire, we

---

[100] Maecenas cared little for the prejudices of the masses: he required only that those men who were to be admitted to his friendship be of free birth (*cum referre negas quali sit quisque parente / natus, dum ingenuus,* 1-8) and of right character.

[101] Aes. 368; I. Marchesi (2005), 'Traces of a Freed Language: Horace, Petronius and the Rhetoric of Fable,' *CA* 24, 307-330, p. 311.

[102] "Now, why the genre of the fable was discovered. Briefly, I'll explain. Always liable to harm, the slave, not daring to speak outright what he wished, translated his own affections into fables and so eluded censure with made up jestings," Phaed. Book 3 (prologue); T. J. Reiss (2003), *Mirages of the Self: Patterns of Personhood in Ancient and Modern Europe,* Stanford, p. 181. "Slaves appropriated the animal status assigned to them by the official culture of their masters as a position from which to voice their own perspective," W. Fitzgerald (2000), *Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination,* Cambridge, p. 100.

may turn to a recent discussion by Ilaria Marchesi, who argues that in satire, the fable performs as a "freed genre" in that it "situates itself in the same ambiguous cultural space defined by the intersection of freedom and servitude in which Roman society located the freedmen."[103] Because fables were, so to speak, the slave's language, to claim independence from one's servile past through the language of the fable is, Marchesi argues, to preserve the traces of that very past.[104] To support her argument, Marchesi has observed how the literary freedmen depicted by Petronius in *Satyricon* react to the surfacing of zoomorphic language in conversation, and she notes that the emergence of the language of the fable is accompanied by an unwelcome recollection of the servile origins they strive to repress. For example, when the ex-slave Trimalchio is abused by his wife Fortunata with the insult "dog" (*canis*, 74.10-13), he lashes out by alluding to the same fable Horace employed in the third satire of the second book (2.314-320):

> Quid enim, inquit, ambubaia non memitis se? de machina
> illam sustuli hominem inter hominess feci. At inflat se tamquam
> rana et in sinum suum non spuit, codex, non mulier.

> What, then, has she forgotten her past as a courtesan? She was being sold in the market and I took her away from it; I made her a human among humans. Yet she puffs herself up like a frog and doesn't spit in her bosom. A block of wood, not a woman (trans. I. Marchesi, p. 309).

A few lines below, Trimalchio muses on his rise to power and the power of money to humanise, and alludes to the fable of an animal (a frog) who was transformed into a human being by acquiring wealth: "Believe me: you have a penny, and you are worth a penny; you are worth what you own. So your old friend, who was first a frog, now is a king" (*Credite mihi: assem habeas, assem valeas; habes, habeberis. Sic amicus vester, qui fuit rana, nunc est rex,* 77-78). It is precisely in the act of claiming to have humanised his wife, of claiming that money has humanised him, Marchesi observes, that Trimalchio betrays through his language of the fable the impossibility of such a metamorphosis.[105]

The act of speaking through fables bore in itself negative connotations for the Roman

---

[103] Marchesi (2005:308).

[104] Marchesi (2005:308).

[105] Marchesi (2005:327).

literary public, and Horace appears to have shared a heightened sensibility to them. Marchesi notes that Horace uses the language of the fable in the very first poem, in which he acknowledges his father's servile origin, but the wider context in which Horace employs this fable ensures his disassociation from this status. In *Satire* 6, his autobiographical association with a servile family past is couched in an argument about Maecenas's ability to distinguish personal talent from familial background, so the mention of a servile family history is then at the same time the point in which Horace most clearly and most strongly disassociates his *persona* from that past.[106] Marchesi's argument is further supported by Horace's description of his admission into Maecenas's circle in terms of his rise from the subhuman depths — socially speaking — in which his hostile society sought to keep him. In the lines that follow (45-50), Horace proceeds to answer to those who estimate personal worth solely according to free or noble birth and who, he claims, taunt him for his servile origins. In essence, Horace claims that he is a freer man than those who sneer at him because his freedom is true and moral. He recalls here once again the days of his education and describes it in social, economic and moral terms but, like before, he allows the moral aspect to dominate. Horace's father made sure his son received the best education money could buy (75-80), but without burdening him with expectations of social and political advancement. The freedman was concerned primarily with his son's morality; he understood the true standards of honour (83) and paid no attention to what career his son would adopt (85-87). This allowed Horace to enter the Roman public scene as a man free of burdensome ambition, freer than his critics whose moral state belies their legal status and their good birth.[107]

One thing that it is possible to observe in this recollection of Horace's childhood, which S.4 lacks, is that the picture here is fraught with his anxiety about his social position and about being harmed, physically and verbally.[108] Such representations show Horace in a very vulnerable

---

[106] "Thanks to Maecenas, the poet's familial past does not extend into his present and no father-son continuity is allowed to be constructed at this point," Marchesi (2005:311).

[107] Free from the obstruction of ambition, Horace does what he wants to do and goes where he wants to go (112-131), while many supposedly free men have enslaved themselves to ambition and thus are 'mad' (*insanus*, 27) or 'sick' (30). In *Satire* 6 the masses, slaves to their passions in the best of times, also act as slaves to the fame of these men (*famae servit*, 16).

[108] Keane has noticed in these lines vocabulary that evokes the fear and the shame associated with dealing with a hostile society (76, 81-82, 85, 89); C. Keane (2002), 'Satiric Memories: Autobiography and the Construction of Genre,' in *CJ* 97, 215-231, pp. 218-219.

position, as being rejected by a hostile society on the grounds of his humble origins to the point where he is perceived almost as a slave, as if in a state of 'social death.' This is something that truly changes only with Maecenas who, unlike the prejudiced masses, knows how to distinguish between the low and the respectable. Maecenas, as Horace describes him, is a man who is 'free' in the same sense as himself (18); he understands the true concept of *libertas* (18) and thus escapes the corruption of the common slavish herd (*grex*).[109] Horace now presents us with a selective autobiography and the circumstantial details of his introduction to Maecenas's circle. From the very beginning, he constructs his relationship to Maecenas in terms of fatherhood: his entrance into the friendship is described as a birth (56-64), and at their first meeting Horace is as speechless as an infant (*infans*).[110] That Horace's 'infancy' at the time of his first meeting with Maecenas is social and not moral is indicated by the cause behind his infantile speechlessness, that is, modesty (*pudor*, 57) which is the first virtuous attribute that Horace's father preserved in him (82-84).[111] Finally, Horace takes his leave from his future patron while the potential friendship gestates for nine months in Maecenas's mind, after which Maecenas recalls him and takes him into his friendship (61-62).[112] Like Horace's father, Maecenas's primary concern is with Horace's virtues and on the basis of these, he decides to admit Horace into his circle (62-71):

> Magnum hoc ego duco
> quod placui tibi, qui turpi secernis honestum
> non patre praeclaro sed vita et pectore puro.
> Atqui si vitiis mediocribus ac mea paucis
> mendosa est natura alioquin recta, velut si
> egregio inspersos reprehendas corpore naevos;
> si neque avaritiam neque sordis nec mala lustra

---

[109] Describing his moral character, Horace inserts a brief simile: his faults are minor, like the scattered spots on an otherwise strikingly handsome body (65-70). He uses the phrase *egregio corpore* (67) and with that, as Anderson notes, suggests that his character escapes the corruption of the common slavish herd (*grex*), Anderson (1960:231, 233).

[110] Schlegel (2000:110-111); J. Henderson (1999), *Writing Down Rome: Satire, Comedy and Other Offences in Latin Poetry*, Oxford, p. 184.

[111] Schlegel (2001:111)

[112] Schlegel (2001:111).

obiciet vere quisquam mihi, purus et insons

(ut me colladuem) si et vivo carus amicis:

causa fuit pater his…

I count it a great honor that I pleased you, who discern between fair and foul, not by father's fame, but by blamelessness of life and heart. And yet, if the flaws that mar my otherwise sound nature are but trifling and few in number even as you might find fault with moles spotted over a comely person — if no one will justly lay to my charge avarice or meanness or lewdness; if to venture on self-praise, my life is free from stain and guilt and I'm loved by my friends — I owe this to my father…(trans. R. Fairclough, pp. 81-83).

Because of his ability to distinguish personal virtue from familial background and to discriminate between the low and respectable (*turpi secernis honestum*), Maecenas has provided Horace with an opportunity to flourish in a sense denied to him by their prejudiced and morally corrupt society. Horace's construction of his relationship with Maecenas in terms of fatherhood is significant from the point of view mentioned in the previous chapter; that is, that in Rome the newborn child lacked the status of human being prior to being recognised by the *paterfamilias* and as such was liable to die like a slave, in a degrading fashion.[113] If we choose to view Horace's social anxieties against this background, we see that, in a social sense, Horace's second *pater* bestowed on him the humanity which wider society denied him and which his freedman father, situated somewhere between being a human and a slave, was unable to do.

Left to itself, society would have continued treating Horace unjustly, as if he was in a state of 'social death,' or to recall Trimalchio's designation for his wife, as if he was a 'block of wood.' In this sense, we may also say that by admission to Maecenas's circle, Horace was granted the 'social life' previously denied to him. This point brings us to *Satire* 8, which not coincidentally narrates the story of a former "block of wood" which has come to life in Maecenas's garden. This is the anecdotal account of a statue of the god Priapus who guarded Maecenas's Esquiline gardens. This garden was formerly a plebeian cemetery (*commune sepulchrum*) where *scurrae* and spendthrifts (*nepotes*) were buried (10-11), and this, as the poem suggests, made it attractive for witches who would come there to dig out bones and perform their dark rituals. Priapus narrates an occasion when two witches came to the garden to do their ghastly

---

[113] Gilhus (2006:16).

magic (23-36), but were chased away by his uncontrollable flatulence (45-50). This is the only satire of Book 1 in which the speaker is someone other than Horace, and this anomaly, as several scholars have argued, is one of many indications that Priapus is in fact a comically disguised Horace.[114] S.8 opens with Priapus's words: "I used to be a tree trunk" (*Olim truncus eram*). Priapus then relates how he has been transformed from his raw material of "useless wood" (*inutile lignum*) into an artifact, the statue of a god. Habash has observed similarities between Priapus and the Horace of *Satires* 4 and 6. Priapus was fashioned by a carpenter (*faber*) from a useless tree trunk and Horace's father fashioned him with his words, teaching him not to be useless (1.4.120-121).[115]

Habash notices that Horace uses "useless" (*inutile*) on two occasions in Book 1: when his father forbids him to do useless things (*an hoc inhonestum et inutile factu / necne sit addubites,* 1.4.124-5), and when he describes Priapus as being fashioned from a useless tree trunk (1.7.1-3), but he does not expand on what seems to be a fairly significant point. In regards to Priapus, the difference between being useless wood and himself, the final product, is the difference between being dead or alive. This is an obvious enough point, but we should not overlook that being alive for Priapus did not mean being fashioned into the form of a god but being put into *use*; as he puts it: "A god then, I became, of thieves and birds, special terror" (*deus inde ego, furum aviumque / maxima formido,* 3-4). He does not separate the function he serves from what he *is*. This inseparability of function and being is something we encounter in almost all the ancient schools of philosophy; Aristotle's 'function argument' being probably the best known example.[116]

---

[114] Anderson, although failing to fully commit to such a view, indicates the possibility of that being the case: "I shall not go as far as to call Priapus a comic version of Horace, although I would not reject such a suggestion," W. S. Anderson (1972), 'The Form, Purpose and Position of Horace's *Satire* 1.8,' *AJP* 93, 4-13, p. 12. More recent interpretations have demonstrated the high likelihood of this indeed being the case see M. Habash (1999), 'Priapus: A Portrait of Horace?,' *CJ* 94, 285-297. For Habash this is yet another "autobiographical satire in which Horace relates his own history and present circumstances as well as his contribution to and ideas about the genre of satire," p. 295. Also T. S. Welch (2001), 'Est locus uni cuiqie suus: City and Status in Horace's *Satires* 1.8 and 1.9,' *CA* 20, 165-192, pp. 184-188.

[115] Horace's own fashioning by his father — 4.120-21 *sic me/formabat puerum dictis,* and 4.119-20 *simul ac durauerit aetas/membra animumque tuum, nabis sine cortice* — finds a parallel in the finished god's emergence from the rough outer layer of a tree trunk (the primary sense of *cortex*). For further similarities, see Habash (1999:286-287).

[116] See, for example, K. K. J. Durand (2004), *Virtue: Essays in Ancient Philosophy*, Lanham, pp. 102-103.

Philosophers stressed that the virtue of any given thing consists in its fulfilment of its function (*ergon*), and that the function of the human being is action informed by reason.[117] Because such a life is also a moral life, it is often stated (particularly among Stoics) that the immoral man is dysfunctional and as such useless: Epictetus captures this by saying that an adulterer is as useless as a human being as a cracked saucepan is as a cooking utensil.[118]

Within his 'function argument,' Aristotle distinguished two kinds of life: a life of capacity (obeying reason) and a life of action, and argued that a life of action, being the higher of the two, is a 'full life.'[119] Presumably, a 'full life' refers to a life of social and political activity, as opposed to a life of seclusion and inactivity.[120] If we choose to apply this argument to Horace's portrayal of Priapus, we may say that Priapus, once a useless piece of wood, came to life in the act of being fashioned into a human-like form but was given 'full life' only by being put to use as a guardian of Maecenas's garden. It is hardly a stretch of imagination to recognise here a description of Horace's own life history as seen in *Satires* 4 and 6. Morally speaking, Horace came to life by virtue of his father's moral instruction, but full (social) life eluded him, as his father's failure to fully recover from his previous state of 'social death' meant that Horace too was not quite 'alive' in the eyes of his peers. Maecenas, who did not share such prejudices, granted Horace his friendship and thus created the conditions in which Horace's moral virtues could find their socio-literary expression. In this sense, therefore, Horace has come to life in the garden of his second father Maecenas, which he now guards against the assaults of the creatures that pester it.[121]

Scholars have perceived in this satire images of order, health and clearly drawn boundaries (7-16), and have observed that by digging up the bones of those once buried there, the

---

[117] Durand (2004:102-103); M. Zeitlin (1997), *Rulers and Rule: an Introduction to Classical Political Theory from Plato to the Federalists*, Toronto, p. 31; Rist (1996:2).

[118] Epict. 1.2; C. Gill (1994), 'Peace of Mind and Being Yourself: Panaetius to Plutarch,' *ANRW* II 36, 4599-4640, p. 4620.

[119] Arist. EN. 1098a7-8; Durand (2004:103).

[120] Cicero and Seneca granted or denied the status of a human being depending on whether one was contributing to the general wellbeing of a society by being useful to oneself and fellow man. Cicero, we may remember, dedicated *De Officiis* to arguing that the truly useful or expedient social action (*utile*) is also morally good (*honestum*) and thus that *inutile* is always morally wrong (*turpe*), *Off.* 1.9, 2.9, 3.7, 3.64; Zeitlin (1997:9).

[121] It was suggested in fact that Horace, Propertius and Virgil all lived on the Esquiline, in or near Maecenas's gardens, where his own house lay, R. C. Häuber (1990), 'Zur Topographie der Horti Maecenatis und der Horti Lamiani auf dem Esquilin nach Rom,' *Kölner Jahrbuch* 23, 11-107.

creatures that pester Maecenas's garden invalidate its restored status and recall the garden's past association with death, thus denying to it the life-conferring properties it has at present acquired. They have seen parallels between the transformation of the garden in the hands of Maecenas and the transformation of Lucilius's form of satire in the hands of Horace.[122] The witches invade Maecenas's garden and scrape its ground for long buried bones, or as Habash and Anderson have observed, scrape around in an attempt to retrieve the old form of satire.[123] If this is indeed correct, the fact that Horace represents the process of retrieving the old form of satire as an act of digging out the bones of a long dead *scurra* is hardly a coincidence.

In the satire that follows (S.9), Horace again defends Maecenas's garden from yet another intruder, a persistent social climber often referred to as 'the Pest,' who pursues the poet and seeks an introduction to Maecenas's circle.[124] In this poem Horace clearly establishes the boundary which divides the world he and his friends inhabit on the Esquiline from the morally and aesthetically degenerate world of the urban centre to which the Pest belongs.[125] The qualifications this individual claims to possess and which he hopes should ensure him admission into Maecenas's home recall the Lucilius of S.4 (9-11): "For who can write more verses," the Pest boasts, "or more quickly than I" (*nam quis me scribere pluris aut citius posit verus*, 9.24-25). Horace considered such voluminous writing as one of the greatest faults of Lucilius, and here this fault is accompanied by unmistakable traces of moral corruption and of the parasitic sub-humanity of the individual in question (24-47).[126] All of this, Horace makes clear, makes the aspirant morally and aesthetically unsuited to life in Maecenas's garden circle. Responding to the aspirant's questions and assumptions, Horace describes life as part of Maecenas's circle in terms of the nobleman's home (43-54):

> Non isto vivimus illic
> quo tu rere modo: domus hac nec purior ulla est

---

[122] Habash (1999:191-192).

[123] For Anderson, Priapus's successful purge of the witches demonstrates at once the salubrity of Maecenas's restored garden (1.8.14) and the success of Horace's new, more refined style of satiric poetry, Anderson (1982:82).

[124] Anderson was first to note the similarities between Priapus in S.1.8 and the besieged poet in S.1.9.

[125] S. Dyson and R. Prior (1995), 'Horace, Martial and Rome,' in *Arethusa* 28, 245-64, p. 262; Welch (2001:177).

[126] As Rudd (1966:74) observes, "There is in fact no word which will include the garrulity, the conceit, the persistence, and the crass insensitivity of the social climber."

nec magis his aliena malis; nil mi officit inquam

ditior hic au est quia doctior; est locus uni

cuique suus.

We don't live there on such terms as you think. No house is cleaner and more free from such intrigues than that. It never hurts me, I say, that one is richer or more learned than I. Each has his own place (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 109).

In the word *purus* (*domus hac nec purior ulla est*, 49), as Welch has observed, Horace aligns topography with moral and aesthetic concerns.[127] On the moral side of things, we may recall that in S.6 it was Horace's moral purity (*pectore puro*, 64) that made him a suitable candidate for joining the company of Maecenas's *amici*.[128] Horace's father ensured he would spend his time in suitable rather than corrupt places (6.68) and Maecenas's home, as described in the passage above, appears to be just such a suitable place; "through the word *purus,* Maecenas's house itself becomes a physical *locus* for the sort of moral excellence Horace acquired from his stern father."[129] Maecenas's house also appears to be the most appropriate setting for Horace's poetic production: the word *purus* refers to Horace's particular poetic style, the aesthetic choice of straightforward diction seen in 1.4.54 which invoked the traditions of Callimachean poetic values that we see recurring consistently from the very first satire.[130] Maecenas's Esquiline home, therefore, doubles as a metaphor for the moral behaviour and poetic values Horace promotes in his satires; it is a place marked by its absence of social and poetic competition, by its respect for others and by the rigour of its poetic practices (48-52). Furthermore, in his encounter with the Pest, Horace stays true to his moral purpose and his gentle ways; he never caricatures the Pest and is reluctant to get rid of him.[131] Horace, it appears, has acquired and internalised the humane

---

[127] Welch (2001:173-174).

[128] Welch (2001:171).

[129] Welch (2001:171).

[130] These references, as Welch has observed, "combine Callimachean polemic with more contemporary rhetorical theory to reveal Horace's bias for simple diction artfully arranged — both aspects resonant with the word *purus*," Welch (2001:173). Also, Freudenburg (1993:157-59, 188-190).

[131] As it happens, Horace is saved by the chance intervention of Apollo (78): Horace's coda "Thus Apollo saved me" is an allusion to Hector's deliverance from Achilles in battle in *Iliad* 20, Hills (2005:17).

values of Maecenas's home or, as Welch observes: "Horace the satirist has been pacified; where we might expect satiric invective against this caricature (the pest), we find instead only restraint."[132]

We can be reasonably confident at this point in asserting that Horace describes the moral, social and aesthetic ascent of himself and his poetry as part of a process that can be described in terms of him being 'socialised,' civilised or indeed humanised. In the simplest of terms, Horace presents himself and his *Sermones* as ethically and aesthetically evolved beyond the point at which he situates Lucilius, Lucilius's brand of satire and their contemporary admirers. The last satire of Book 1, *Satire* 10, clarifies this point and takes it a step further. In this poem, Horace renews his attack on Lucilian aesthetics (1-3), but immediately afterwards acknowledges the Roman admiration for Lucilius on the grounds of his *libertas* (3-4). He does not fail to add, however, that admiration on these grounds only is equal to the admiration of the lowly mimes (6-7). Next, Horace states something that appears to contradict the line of argument I have thus far been pursuing: he acknowledges Lucilius as his predecessor, claims that he *did not* surpass him and mentions Lucilius's glory by asserting that he would never dare to try to match it (46-49):

> Hoc erat, experto frustra Varrone Atacino
>
> atque quibusdam aliis, melius quod scribere possem,
>
> inventore minor; neque ego illi detrahere ausim
>
> haerentem capiti cum multa laude coronam.

> This (satire) which Varro of the Atax and some others had vainly tried, was what I could write with more success, though falling short of the inventor (Lucilius); nor would I dare to wrest from him the crown that clings to his brow with so much glory (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 119).

While it certainly seems that Horace here shows genuine respect for his predecessor and that he humbly acknowledges his inability to supersede the *inventor*, we need to approach this apparent praise with a certain degree of caution. It is necessary to remember that Horace always acknowledged the popularity of Lucilian verse, but that he explained that appeal by pointing to its apparent lack of ethical/aesthetic standards. These standards accorded with those of the masses

---

[132] Welch (2001:169).

while the standards of Horace's ethical poetry did not, with the result that the former was widely popular while the latter was not. So, because the crown which Lucilius wears, and which Horace would not 'dare' to wrest away, is bestowed on Lucilius by those whom Horace considered to be moral and aesthetic degenerates, we are left to infer that Horace's praise of Lucilius is really a polite way of distancing himself from Lucilius and his audience. Besides, because the poetry of both men was so tied to their characters — because Lucilius *was* satire and Horace was *Sermones* — Horace could 'live up' to the inventor only to the point that his character allowed him. What this means is that Horace could never really 'supersede' his predecessor in the real sense of the word; he could never write better 'Lucilian satire' simply because he was not Lucilius. As the remainder of the poem shows, Horace's primary concern in S.10 is to place the final touches on the barrier he has been gradually raising from the very first poem in order to divide the human realm, reserved for himself and his audience, from the subhuman, reserved for Lucilius and the hordes of contemporary admirers of that particular brand of poetry.

In the line immediately following Horace's 'praise' of the inventor, Horace once again designates Lucilius's poetry as 'muddy' (50), and then goes on to say that Lucilius too attacked the artistic credentials of his predecessors (53-55). With this remark, Horace leads us to a passage that, in addition to recalling almost every aspect of his criticism of Lucilius, introduces the notion of the evolutionary development of Roman poetry throughout the previous centuries (64-71):

> 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 unquis.

> Grant, say I, that Lucilius was genial and witty; grant that he was also more polished than you
> would expect one to be who was creating a new style quite untouched by the Greeks, and more
> polished than the crowd of older poets; yet had he fallen by fate upon this our day, he would
> smooth away much of his work, would prune off all that trailed beyond the proper limit and as he

wrought his verse he would oft scratch his head and gnaw his nails to the quick (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 121).

First, Horace characterises Lucilius as "genial and witty" (*comis et urbanus,* 63-65), using *precisely* the same terms he employed previously in S.4 in the description of the drunken parasite gossiper (1.4.90). Then, he portrays Lucilius as a kind of transitional figure between primitive early poetry and his own polished product. Horace grants to Lucilius stylistic superiority over those who came before him, but asserts that, should Lucilius have lived in his own day, he would have been required to add an additional polish to his work, or to be more precise, he would have needed to prune off that which strayed 'beyond the proper limit.' Gowers is right to observe that Horace here reworks the civilising process he described in S.3, the rise of humans from their early lawless bestiality to a full humanity enabled by laws and justice.[133] Horace clearly situates himself and his poetry on a sort of aesthetical pinnacle of civilisation, a realm so well governed by clearly defined laws that anything going 'beyond the proper limit' is automatically banished outside it. In the lines that follow (72-77), Horace immediately identifies all those banished: the crowds, the poets and the poetry they approve of. Horace states that writing good poetry involves a deliberate disregard for the taste of the masses that, we are left to infer, will disapprove of such polish; they prefer a lower quality of verse, something more Lucilian (72-77). Quality writing, Horace goes on to proclaim, will find approval only among the narrow circle of a truly sophisticated audience; in his case, this audience are his *amici*, among others, Maecenas and Octavian (76-91).

Horace describes this evolutionary pinnacle on which he situates himself, his *Sermones* and its audience in purely aesthetic terms, but a mere glance at the previous satires reminds us that the evolution was also moral. The aesthetic standards of Maecenas's circle are inseparable from the moral purity of its members, much like those of the crowds are inseparable from their vices. Horace, therefore, writes for the moral elite who inhabit the same ethical/aesthetical pinnacle as himself; being subject to Nature's limits, only they are actually able to understand and appreciate the limits that confine his poetry. These men also happen to be at the social and political apex, which here emerges as a place well within Nature's limits, so the natural order of things where the political supremacy in the state is the prerogative of the morally superior

---

[133] Gowers (2003:75).

citizens appears restored. The particular ideological value of Horace's approach in *Sermones* 1 lies, in my opinion, in the manner, by now familiar, in which the 'human realm' is articulated as reserved only for those who are able to accept and share in the values and standards approved by the politically dominant section of society. Because Horace ensured in *Sermones* that he provided each of the aesthetic concepts he and his *amici* approved of with a moral and indeed a political equivalent, one has to either accept or reject *Sermones* as a whole package. To reject either aspect of *Sermones* was to reject the *fines* that the true human satirist perceives and obeys in his life and in the composition of his verse, outside of which there is no 'right' (*rectum*) and no humanity. So, while criticism or acceptance of *Sermones* was an option for every reader, in the act of the former one would situate himself within the subhuman realm, or among Gold's 'internal audience,' while in the act of the latter, one would immediately progress into the human realm inhabited by Horace and society's leaders, or among Gold's 'authorial' audience.

The first satire of Book 2, which is retrospective in that it looks back on the first book,[134] takes this line of argument to its logical conclusion. Here we find Horace's *amicus* Octavian actually exercising the authority given to him by his understanding of Nature's 'proper limits.' Horace opens this poem by complaining to his interlocutor, the eminent jurist C. Trebatius Testa, about two groups of his critics. The first group thinks he is "too savage" in his satire and that he "strains the work beyond lawful bounds" (*Sunt quibus in satura videar nimis acer et ultra legem tendere opus,* 1-2), while the second think he is too "gutless" (*sine nervis*), arguing that verses such as his could be written a thousand a day (3-4).[135] Trebatius takes the expression *ultra legem* to be a reference to what we might term the law of libel while Horace — because he goes on to defend his habit of versification mainly in literary terms — is usually seen as having meant the phrase as a reference to a generic or to stylistic principles.[136] By now, it is reasonably clear that

---

[134] See M. Labate (2009), 'Horatian Sermo and Genres of Literature,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *Horace: Satires and Epistles*, Oxford, 102-121.

[135] For Trebatius, see R. A. Bauman (1985), *Lawyers in Transitional Politics*, Munich, p. 2. For the view that this discussion is also a dialogue between a father and a child (*pater optime*, 12; *puer*, 60) see P. Schrijvers (1993), 'Horace Moraliste,' in W. Ludwig, (ed.), *Horace, l'oeuvre et les imitations: un siècle d'interpretation*, Geneva, 41-90.

[136] Noticing that these lines can also be translated as "push the genre beyond the laws that govern it," Rudd, for example, observes that aesthetic principles are "cleverly confused with the law of libel"; N. Rudd (1966), *The Satires of Horace*, Cambridge, pp. 130-131. Accordingly, commentators define the first camp of Horace's critics depending

we should not be treating these as distinct concerns: Horace's critics criticise him and his poetry's aesthetics because they experience its ethics as libellous, much as they admire the author and the shabby aesthetics of a truly libellous work because they find their ethics refreshingly unthreatening.

Trebatius's advice for Horace is either to quit writing *(Quiescas,* 4) or to turn his attention to the exploits of Caesar (10-12). In this, Trebatius states, he would be following in the steps of Lucilius who wrote similar "panegyric satire" to Scipio (15-16). Horace refuses each suggestion (6-7, 12-15, 17-20) and goes on to explain why he must write, why he must write satire and why it is only the people who criticise him that need fear his verse (20-78).[137] In line 23, Trebatius recalls S.4 and the people who hate 'the poet' by cautioning Horace that satire is unpopular as it makes people uneasy and hateful. Horace's reply is a similar recollection: it is his nature, he tells Trebatius, which compels him to write poetry in such a spirit (24-39). So even if we choose, for argument's sake, to regard Horace as concerned here only with the defence of his poetry's aesthetics, the fact that he centres his defence on his character disposition (determined by his ethical upbringing) speaks of the same inseparability we encountered above. Horace now proceeds to describe the irresistible urge he has to write, as well as the dangers associated with such activity: "Whether peaceful age awaits me or death hovers round with sable wings…in Rome or, if chance so bid, in exile, whatever the colour of my life, write I must."[138] Trebatius expresses fear for Horace's physical and social life (60-62), and this prompts Horace to direct his defence by appealing to the precedent of Lucilius who wrote poetry in a pugnacious spirit without suffering any consequences (62-78). He also adds that, like Lucilius, he too has powerful friends to protect him (75-78). Protection or not, Trebatius objects in 82-83, the law takes precedence: "If a man writes ill verses against another, there is a right of action and redress by law" (*si mala condiderit in quem quis carmina, ius est iudiciumque*). Horace agrees: "To be sure in the case of

---

on the aspect they chose to emphasise. Clauss, for example, sees them to be the public at large which feared satiric verse (as described in 1.4.21ff), J. J. Clauss (1985), 'Allusion and Structure in Horace's Satire 2.1: The Callimachean Reponse,' *TAPhA* 115, 197-206, p. 197. Freudenburg, on the other hand, considers them to be ultrarefined Neoterics in whose opinion Horace's verse is too rugged (4.1-2), Freudenburg (1993:173-84). See also W. J. Tatum (1998), '*Ultra Legem*: Law and Literature in Horace, *Satires* II, 1,' *Mnemosyne* 51, 688-699.

[137] This poem is also seen as the earliest example of *recusatio* to Octavian; see Wimmel (1960:163).

[138] *Seu me tranquilia senectus/expectat seu mors atris circumvolat alis / dives, inops, Romae, seu fors ita iusserit/exsul, quisquis erit vitae scribam color*, 57-60.

ill verse. But what if man composes good verses, and Caesar's judgement approves?" (*Esto, si quis mala; sed bona si quis iudice condiderit laudatus Caesare*?) Should such poetry end up in court? Trebatius replies: "The case will be dismissed with a laugh, you will get off scot-free" (*Solventur risu tabulae, tu misus abibis*, 86).

It is true that *malum* could here mean both libellous poetry and that of bad quality: the situation in which Octavian acts a judge functions not only within the legal façade of the satire but also within the allusion to Callimachus's *Hymn of Apollo*. In this poem, Apollo acts as a judge and decides that Callimachus's short but finely crafted hymn is superior to the ecominum of epic proportions.[139] But the interlocutors share the understanding that poetry which is *malum* in regard to its aesthetics tends to be *malum* in regard to its ethical content, and thus truly libellous and rightly persecuted. Conversely, the *bona carmina,* which Horace writes, is well crafted in the Callimachean sense as well as of superior ethical content, which is why only the moral derelicts find it libellous. The law might not see this, but Caesar does. He understands 'the limits' and can thus discriminate between the good and bad, false and true, in terms of men, poetry, *libertas* and justice. The *auctoritas* which enforces his judgement not only goes beyond the laws but makes them laughable: the *tabulae* that crumble away from the strain of laughter (86) represent not only the 'charges' of the case, but the most sacred laws on which the charges were based, the XII *Tabulae* ("Twelve Tables") alluded to in lines 80-83.[140] The jurist Trebatius does not find the dissolution of this trial under the weight of Caesar's 'superior' judgement illegal, but in fact, suggests this outcome himself. He seems to regard as self-evident that Caesar's superior understanding of what constitutes 'good' poetry justifies the transgression of his *auctoritas* on the claims of jurisprudence. This is the same message we have often encountered in the previous chapter and this, in my mind at least, situates *Satire* 2.1, as well as the poems of Book 1, firmly within the framework of the ideology of humanisation.

This poem (S.2.1) also contains the famous passage in which Horace presents himself as Lucilius's successor in that he writes 'sincere' autobiographical poetry (30-34):

> Ille velut fidis arcane sodalibus olim
> credebat libris, neque si male cesserat usquam

---

[139] Clauss (1985:198).

[140] According to Fedeli (1994:552), Horace had precisely these tables in mind. See also Freudenburg (2001:107).

decurrens alio, neque si bene: quo fit ut omnis

votive pateat veluti descripta tabella

vita senses, sequor hunc.

He (Lucilius) in olden days would trust his secrets to his books, as if to faithful friends, never

turning elsewhere for recourse, whether things went well with him or ill, so it comes that the old

poet's whole life is open to view, as if painted on a votive tablet (trans. H. R. Fairclough, p. 129).

Whilst the issue of whether or not these claims should be taken at face value remains,
Lucilius does seem to have enjoyed a reputation as someone who did not hesitate to use his
personal life as material for his poetry.[141] In light of the previous argument, my first impulse
would be to say that Horace professes Lucilius's sincerity only as a way of deepening the divide
between them. Because Horace forged an inseparable alliance between the sincerity of both men
and their aesthetics, he reminds us here that his polished verse is sincere in that it reveals the
author as a true human, while the no-less sincere Lucilian verse reveals with its shabby aesthetics
something quite different. Horace's *persona,* as we saw, is human in that it is more discrete than
Lucilius's, and it does not consider sincerity as something dependent upon the sort of
indiscriminate self-revelation that often leads to the revelation of one's friend's secrets.[142] The
problem with such a conjecture is that in this poem Horace refers to Lucilius as a better man than
either he or Trebatius (29-30). Critics explain this sudden change of heart usually by recognising
in these lines Horace's genuine respect for Lucilius, his poetry and his poetic status.[143] This may
be so, but the question is why would Horace jeopardise his earlier ideological project with such
praise? There are several possibilities, but I believe this change of tune is best explained by
considering another change that characterises Book 2. Horace's human *persona* is for the most

---

[141] See also Cic. *De Or.* 2.25; A. La Pena (1979), *Fra teatro, poesia e politica romana*, Turin, pp. 113-115.
S. M. Goldberg (2005), *Constructing Literature in the Roman Republic: Poetry and its Reception,* Cambridge, p. 65.

[142] While older critics have often seen a portrayal of Lucilius as an utterly sincere "confessional poet" in these lines,
his resemblance here to the conventional caricature of a satirist as tattletale or gossipmonger is also acknowledged.
See, for example, G. Harrison (1987), 'The Confessions of Lucilius (Horace Sat. 2.1.30-34): A Defence of
Autobiographical Satire?,' *CA* 6, 38-51. Harrison observes that *arcana* ("secret") is a more pregnant word, that is, it
may also include the (potentially embarrassing) secrets of others to which Lucilius has been privy, p. 41.

[143] Tarrant, for example, suggests that Horace was eager to associate himself with Lucilius for all his faults of style,
because Lucilius was the sort of literary figure Horace aspired to be (2007:68).

part alive and well in the second book but much more vulnerable to critical attacks then it was previously. Here, Horace gives his critics a rather formidable voice that is very much capable of exposing the 'fissures' in his human mask and thus in the whole ideological structure of Book 1.

There is no need to mention here each individual attack. It will suffice to observe one, in S.2.7, which stands out as the most memorable and 'dangerous' in terms of its capacity to undermine the credibility of Horace's 'human' *persona*. This poem is set in Rome during the *Saturnalia*, when it was customary to allow slaves to speak their minds freely, and Horace's slave Davus uses the occasion to accuse Horace of inconsistency.[144] Nevertheless, as the poem progresses, Horace's inconsistency becomes 'exposed' by Davus as a mere symptom of his larger failure as a human being. Before Davus actually accuses Horace, he draws his examples of inconsistency from the behaviour of Priscus the senator who changes stripes every hour: in Rome he is an adulterer, in Athens a scholar (2.7.10-15). Eventually, Davus turns on Horace and his own inconsistencies. If not invited out by Maecenas, Davus claims, Horace poses as a self-sufficient sage praising his frugal meal, but once he receives an invitation, he runs to Maecenas like he is being chased (2.7.23-45). What such behaviour shows, Davus asserts further, is that Horace is in fact a slave who, as it happens, owns one too (79-80):

> Nempe
> tu, mihi qui imperitas, alii servis miser atque
> duceris ut nervis alienis mobile lignum.
> Quisnam igitur liber?

> Why you who lord it over me, are the wretched slave of another master, and you are moved like a wooden puppet by wires that others pull. Who then is free? (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 227).

Maecenas's patronage, his gifts and dinners are here nothing more than the price of Horace's very humanity. The image of a wooden puppet is a particularly potent symbol of dehumanisation: the piece of wood which in S.8 came to life in Maecenas's garden is portrayed here as deprived

---

[144] Consistency was a virtue commonly discussed in Stoic texts and it involved an unwavering commitment to one's professed moral principles, knowing who you were and staying that regardless of any dangers or temptations. This Stoic virtue preoccupied Horace quite a bit and the *Epistles* are permeated with passages dealing with this theme. See below, 165-171.

of moral fibre and thus alive only in so as far as it obeys the commands of the puppet master. It is interesting to observe that Davus does not so much object to this side of Horace as he does to Horace's pretence, or to his posing as a human being. A few lines earlier, Davus compares Horace to the parasite Mulvius, but says that Mulvius is a better man because he is honest about what and who he is (37-43):

> "Etenim fateor me," dixerit ille,
> "duci ventre levem, nasum nidore supinor.
> imbecillus, iners, si quid vis, adde popino.
> tu cum sis quod ego et fortasis nequior, ultro
> insectere velut melior verbisque decoris
> obvolvas vitium?."..."quid, si me stultior ipso
> quingentis empto drachmis deprenderis."

"Yes," he (Mulvius) would say, "'tis true that I'm a fickle creature, led by my stomach. I curl up my nose for a savoury smell. I'm weak, lazy and if you like to add, a toper. But you since you are just the same and maybe worse, would you presume to assail me, as though you were better man, and would you throw over your own vices a cloak of seemly words?."..."What if you are found to be a greater fool than even I, who cost you five hundred drachmas?" (trans. R. Fairclough, pp. 227-229).

Davus, therefore, explicitly attacks Horace's human *persona*, exposing it as "a cloak of seemly words," as an external human mask covering the subhuman parasite beneath. It is his dishonesty, perhaps his self-deceit, which makes Horace, in Davus's eyes, "a slave many times over" (*totiens servus*, 70).[145] Because Davus is not just another of Horace's jealous critics but an insider well placed to observe a side of Horace usually concealed from the wider public, his testimony has a somewhat greater potential to threaten the author's public image. Horace's *persona* does not conceal its unease with Davus's words; being unable to retaliate with a well-forged argument, it resorts to a threat of force (116-121). We have no way of knowing whether

---

[145] When parasites feature in the ancient plays, the parallels between them (ostensibly free men) and slaves (legally bound) are evident to the audience but not to the parasites, who even boast of their position. See Damon (1997:33); see also Bernstein (1987:37-61, 50-51).

Horace had Davus accuse him unfairly or actually allowed him to voice some unpleasant truths, but Horace's apparent readiness to raise suspicion in regard to the credibility of his human *persona* is significant to observe. Some years later, having published the first three books of *Odes,* Horace returns to this issue in *Epistles* and in the very first lines recalls and openly admits every single aspect of Davus's accusation.

<div align="center">

IV

</div>

<div align="center">

The Politics of Humanity in *Epistles* 1

</div>

> In the 'search for oneself,' in the search for 'sincere self expression,' one gropes, one finds some seeming verity. One says 'I am' this, that, or the other, and with the words scarcely uttered one ceases to be that thing. I began this search for the real in the book called *Personae*, casting off, as it were, complete masks of the self in each poem.
> Ezra Pound, *Vorticism.*

> If you have sold yourself then know that you have done so and do not cry over it.
> Be a slave and grovel in your beatings…
> Epictetus, 2.2.10-13.

Book 1 of *Epistles*, "Horace's strangest…and least talked about book,"[146] consists of 20 letters/poems in which Horace professes a desire to abandon his public role, recover his spiritual, physical and moral health and, most importantly, his freedom. *Epistles* were written after the publication of *Sermones* (1, 2) and *Odes* (1-3), most likely in 20 or 19 BC, by which time Horace had been a member of Maecenas's circle for some 15 years and in possession of his famous Sabine farm for about ten.[147] *Epistles* 1 are usually seen as related to *Sermones* in that they both use the same metre (dactylic hexameter) to present similar personal, social and philosophical concerns. There are also, of course, some pronounced differences between the two collections and their manner of dealing with these concerns, and the most important difference to note for my purposes is that the humanising process traced in *Sermones* is here portrayed as having gone the

---

[146] Johnson (1993:9).

[147] See P. L. Bowdich (2001), *Horace and the Gift Economy of Patronage*, Berkeley, p. 162.

opposite way. In *Epistles,* Horace demands a higher degree of autonomy from his patron and does so in terms that demolish the credibility of his *persona* in *Sermones* 1. Horace addresses the first epistle to Maecenas, and in its opening lines he recalls the first dedication he made to his patron (*Sermones* 1.1-3) and then continues with a metaphor drawn from the career of a slave, a gladiator (1.1-4):

> Prima dicte mihi, summa dicende Carmena,
>
> spectatum satis et donatum iam rude quaeris,
>
> Maecenas, iterum antiquo me includere ludo?
>
> non eadem est aetas, non mens.

> You of whom my earliest Muse has told, of whom my last shall tell, you Maecenas, seek to shut me up again in my old gladiatorial school, though well tested in the fray, and already presented with the wooden sword (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 251).

The gladiator: "crude, loathsome, doomed, lost (*importunus, obscaenus, damnatus, perditus*), was throughout Roman tradition a man utterly debased by fortune, a slave, a man altogether without worth and dignity (*dignitas*), almost without humanity."[148] By utilising the image of a gladiator, a man who was either a slave, a condemned criminal or someone who had virtually enslaved himself to a trainer by oath, Horace here casts his relationship with Maecenas in an entirely different mould. The ideology of *amicitia* has no place here; by claiming to have sufficiently compensated his master, having earned his "wooden sword" (*rude*) ― the sign of a job well done and the guarantor of freedom ― Horace 'exposes' his relationship with Maecenas as one of the most despised and, to the inferior party, most dehumanising sort, a relationship based on *utilitas* rather than on *virtus*.[149]

    We are certainly at liberty to regard this passage as an ironic metaphor, a humorously extreme depiction of Roman patronal relations, but I will opt below for a more literal reading and will do so for several reasons. For a start, the Horace of *Epistles* never allows his reader to forget or to brush aside this image, to be comfortable in the knowledge that the 'old Horace' he or she has grown accustomed to is having some lighthearted fun with his patron and audience. Such

---

[148] C. A. Barton (1993), *The Sorrows of the Ancient Romans: the Gladiator and the Monster*, Princeton, p. 1.

[149] This metaphor became popular with later poets, among others, Ovid, *Tr.* 4.8.24.

nostalgia for Horace's satiric or lyric *persona* obscures the fact that *Epistles* 1 engages in the systematic portrayal of Horace's past relationship with Maecenas in precisely such dehumanising terms. Immediately below, in line 8, Horace reinforces the image of the gladiator with that of an overworked animal and compares himself to an old horse (*senescentem*, 8). In the lines that follow, the metaphor continues, albeit in somewhat modified form; Horace alludes to a cheated lover, a boy under the care of his mother, and a labourer (20-23). All of them are dependants, subject to others, and slavery still looms large. The cheated lover recalls the "slave to love" (*servitum amoris*) often encountered in the elegists of the Augustan period,[150] the boy (*puer*) was often used to designate a slave, and several sources speak of the labourer's existence as slavish, in that the laborer is merely a tool in someone else's hands.[151] The opening lines of *Epistles* 1, in short, fully and irrevocably concede Davus's point.[152]

The Horace of *Epistles* 1 presents his past relationship with his patron as dehumanising and thus severely compromises the integrity of the 'human' *persona* of the first book of *Sermones*; he even recalls this book in the dedicatory lines of E.1 immediately before he 'reveals' that its *persona* was nothing more than a human mask disguising the subhuman slave. While we can never answer such a question with certainty, it is important to ask whether we are witnessing here the surfacing of the truth, the author's real view about the nature of his relationship with his patron, or merely a poetic problematicising of the issue, a stimulus for (misguided?) attempts to reach the man behind the poetic *personae*. My contention is that *Epistles* are indeed concerned with the truth of the matter and that Horace reveals himself in these poems on a very intimate level. This assertion does not depend on a reading of *Epistles* as straight autobiographical

---

[150] As a number of scholars have observed, the language of the *servitum amoris* ("slavery of love") featured by the elegists of the Augustan period overlaps with the language of patronage. Fitzgerald (2000:72); White (1993:87-91).

[151] According to the dominant conception, a citizen who attained human perfection as a member of his political society had to be liberated from hard manual labour; there are lower kinds of humanity to do this kind of work. For example, Plato's follower Heraclius Ponticus states, "Enjoyment and good living are reserved for free men, for this exalts and enhances the spirit. Labouring, on the other hand, is for slaves, and that is why their character deteriorates," Athenaeus 12, 512a. According to Aristotle, one should not work for another lest he dehumanise himself by becoming a tool in someone else's hands: "it is the condition of a free man not to live for the benefit of others," *Rhet.* 1367a 32-3.

[152] In this I am in agreement with Johnson, who has observed that in *Epistles* 1, the Horatian *personae* said the same things Davus had said, "more calmly and less savagely but as relentlessly and at times as incisively as Davus had said them" (1993:5).

documents; on the contrary, it is contingent on an appreciation of Horace's manipulation of his various *personae,* of his poetic 'deceptions' and his ways of obscuring the line between the real and the fictitious in life and literature. It also depends on appreciating that the issues Horace dealt with were issues of personal relevance; the nature of freedom and ways to preserve it within the institution of patronage were issues the historical Horace grappled with throughout his life; indeed, as Johnson observed:

> *Topoi* like freedom, independence and personal autonomy are too frequent to be mere literary conventions; they represent something crucial to Horace both as a poet and as a human being, something that in its frequency and urgency in the poems seems almost an obsession with him throughout his career.[153]

This is a truth few readers of Horace would dispute, but what obscures it, in my opinion, is the ever-present assumption that it was possible for Horace to reconcile his clientage and his freedom, and our habit of searching for the ways in which he did so. The 'reality' which Davus describes in S.2.7 and to which the Horace of *Epistles* 'admitted' was simple; the man sold himself to a rich master for money and "dinners" and thus made himself into a slave. This version of reality directly contradicts the one we encountered in *Sermones*, where Horace, a man of outstanding moral qualities, found favour with the top men in the state and went on to support them by being himself, a true morally free human instructing his fellow citizens on the right ways of living. These alternative realities are directly opposed, and they lack any middle ground that could allow for a reconciliation of sorts between freedom and clientage; either Horace was a virtuous 'true friend' who had no interest in benefiting from his relationship, or he was Davus's Horace. Commentators usually reject such clear polarities as simplistic and state that the reality of the situation was probably somewhere in between, because the Roman conception of *amicitia* was highly utilitarian, with 'gifts for services' being the socially and morally accepted model of friendship. There is much to support such a view and much of it, as we will see, comes from *Epistles*. Nevertheless, Horace's treatment of this issue in *Epistles,* his apparent attempts to reconcile or his claims to have reconciled the two, should be read while keeping in mind certain peculiarities of Horace's epistolary *persona* that makes such claims.

---

[153] Johnson (1993:59).

In the first lines of E.1, Horace suggests that he lacked freedom, or any sort of balance in his relationship with Maecenas that would perhaps justify him describing his situation in less bleak terms. Nevertheless, in the poems that follow, Horace outlines arguments that would suggest a much brighter and freer existence as an *amicus* of Maecenas, and so, if we wish to pass judgement on this issue, we have to decide which speaker of *Epistles* we trust and when. While it would appear that the only basis on which we could possibly make such a choice is our preconceived idea of Horace's personality and the extent of his freedom, the Horace of *Epistles* allowed an additional avenue and he did so by lying to us. I have dubbed *Epistles* as 'poetry of *dissimulatio*' for two reasons: firstly, because I believe that Horace constructed their main speaker as a duplicitous 'liar *persona*,' a dissimulating slave whom we have come to know as Davus's Horace. We have already met this *persona*: it admits its dehumanised past, but it also breaks away from it by claiming that this time Horace really is free and 'human.' Nevertheless, while on the surface Horace asks his readership to accept this *persona*'s overt claims that there is a clear break between his present humanity and past slavery, he persistently undermines these claims by employing various strategies and ultimately 'exposes' everything that testifies to this *persona*'s humanity as that which Davus labelled "seemly words." The second reason for my labelling *Epistles* as such is my belief that Horace made this whole genre complicit in his *persona*'s pretence: the *Epistles*, after all, are poems posing as letters. The 'pretence' of *Epistles* is, I believe, an inseparable part of its main *persona*'s *dissimulatio.* In the final poem, *Epistle* 20, Horace casts the whole of Book 1 in the figure of a slave and thus, I will argue, ends the *dissimulatio* of both the book and its main *persona*, the two entities which in this poem he separates.

Finally, I will argue that in *Epistles* Horace allows the reader insights into the man behind the poetic *persona*. The slavery of *Epistles* and its *persona* were meant to represents the author's admission about what he considered to be the true nature of his friendship with Maecenas. I base my view not on thinking that this bleaker version of reality is more realistic, harder to admit and thus necessarily true, but mostly on two curious and unique features of *Epistles*. The first is the all-encompassing nature of Horace's epistolary *persona.* This *persona*, unlike any other, transcends the genre it originally appeared in and affects all of Horace's poetic *personae*, past, present and future. This *persona* claims that Horace's past *personae* are the masks of a dissimulator while exposing itself as such, and then it projects its claims into the future by

announcing the continuation of Horace's poetic career in unaltered terms. This one *persona,* I will argue, Horace can never shed. The second feature is the complicity of *Epistles* in its *persona*'s *dissimulatio*. I believe that in *Epistle* 20 Horace portrays Book 1 and its *persona* as separate entities in order to remind us of a simple truth: the historical author can always disassociate himself from his poetic *persona* but he can *never* disassociate himself from his poetry. The poetry will always be traced back to him.

<div align="center">V</div>

<div align="center">**De-constructing the Human**</div>

Whilst the autobiographical slant of Horace's works in general tends to direct his gaze inwards, this appears to be particularly true of *Epistles*. In *Epistles* 1, Horace expresses to Maecenas his desire to search for the 'true' and 'appropriate': "So now I lay my verses down, and all my other games, to study what is true and appropriate, totally involved in that" (*nunc itaque et versus et cetera ludicra pono / quid verum atque decens, curo et rogo et omnis in hoc sum,* 10-12). *Decens* is merely Horace's rendering of Panaetius's *decorum*, signifying, we might recall, "an outer face of virtue," or the proper and 'fitting' manner in which one's humanity is put on display.[154] The achievement of *decorum* depended on intense self-scrutiny and self-knowledge, without which one was bound to deceive and self-deceive, and an epistle appears to be a well-chosen medium for such a project.[155] Until relatively recently, critics have focused their attention on the issue of whether the *Epistles* were real letters or not: older commentators have tended to regard the *Epistles* as personal communication between Horace and his addressees, but in recent years,

---

[154] The term *decens*, as McGann has observed, can at this time only point to the ethics of Panaetius and to what Cicero chose to render as *decorum*. M. J. McGann (1969), *Studies in Horace's First Book of Epistles*, Bruxelles, p. 41.

[155] In Cicero and Panaetius, the achievement of *decorum* is very much connected with self-knowledge; they thought that men should know themselves and act in accordance with that knowledge, using their own nature as a yardstick by which to judge the appropriateness of a contemplated pursuit. For epistolary self-search, see C. Edwards (1997), 'Self-Scrutiny and Self-Transformation in Seneca's Letters,' in *G&R* 44, 23-38, p. 24. See also R. Mayer (1994), *Horace: Epistles, Book 1*, Cambridge, p. 2; R. Earle (1999), *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers*, Aldershot; S. K. Stowers (1986), *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, Philadelphia, p. 39.

scholars generally accept the fictional and poetic nature of the *Epistles*.[156] Part of the answer as to why would Horace choose to cast his poetry in the form of a letter, as Mayer has observed, had to do with his professed intention to pursue a program of self-revelation.[157] The ancients regarded the letter as normal speech in a written medium and most often defined it as one half of a dialogue, or a surrogate to actual dialogue, stressing that in the letter one is meant to speak to an absent friend as though he were present.[158] They also recognised the letter as a particularly personal form, as an 'ego document' that expresses the character and personality of its writer particularly clearly.[159] The ancients considered the epistolary 'self' as more sincere than, for instance, the rhetorical *ethos*, and would often contrast these two forms of self-portrayal. Demetrius, for example, cautioned against letters resembling oratorical speech because "such letter writing is not merely absurd, it does not even obey the laws of friends, which demand that we should 'call a spade a spade,' as the proverb has it."[160]

By announcing in the first epistle his project of self-discovery, which the reader will supposedly be able to trace in the collection of 'letters' that follow, Horace explicitly and implicitly 'promises' that he will end the deceptions that might have characterised him in the past. He starts the collection by 'exposing' the falsity of the claim he made earlier in *Sermones,* that he is displaying himself "like on a votive tablet," and then goes on to assert that his

---

[156] Although the view that the whole collection was made up of 'pretend letters' was argued by Moriss as early as 1931. For a summary of views, see Mayer (1994:3); Bowdich (2001:164).

[157] "Clearly Horace did not feel that he had yet done with himself as a theme and the letter offered a fresh form in which to pursue the program of self-revelation," Mayer (1994:4).

[158] Dem. *De Eloc.* 223; Cic. *Ad. Fam.* 2.4.1, 12.30.1; Cic. *Ad. Att.* 8, 14.1, 9; Sen. *Ep.* 75; Lib. 2.58.

[159] Dem. *De Eloc.* 227: "The letter, like the dialogue, should abound in glimpses of character. It may be said that everybody reveals his own soul in his letters. In every other form of composition it is possible to discern the writer's character, but none so clearly as in the epistolary." Cic. *Ad Fam.* 16.16.2, "…you sent me the news in precisely the proper way. All of you was revealed to me in your letter" (*Te totum in litteris vidi*); Stowers (1986:39).

[160] Dem. *De Eloc*. 229. Commenting on Aristotle's letter to Antipater, Demetrius writes, "Who would in conversation with a friend so express himself as does Aristotle writing to Antipater…A man who conversed in such a fashion would seem not to be talking but to be making oratorical display," *De Eloc*. 225, 234. Also, Sen. *Ep*. 75.1-2, "You (Lucilius) have been complaining that my letters to you are rather carelessly written…I prefer that my letters should be just what my conversation should be…spontaneous and easy… for my letters have nothing strained and artificial about them… I would leave that sort of thing to the orator, and should be content to have conveyed my feelings toward you without having either embellished them or lowered their dignity."

epistolary *persona* will indeed do something of the sort, that it will, as Mish puts it: "unite his inner experience with a self-portrayal that looks outward."[161] Nevertheless, once we consider the form in which Horace delivers this claim, we are faced with the difficulty of accepting it at its face value. When Horace writes in a well-crafted *hexameter*, "So now I lay my verses down, and all my other games, to study what is true and appropriate," he is in danger of exposing the fictitious nature of this whole project. Some commentators assert that Horace only wishes to say that he is changing genre from the more poetic *Odes* to the more earnest philosophical form of the *Epistles*, as this would be consistent with the contrast already seen in the *Sermones* between *sermo* and 'real' poetry (S.1.4.39-44, 2.6.17). Nevertheless, given that Horace frequently uses *versus* in *Sermones* to designate satire,[162] the claim that he is abandoning *versus* (E.1.10) should be taken to mean all poetry.[163] Others have opted to say that the whole Book 1 of *Epistles* is "the longest and most involved *recusatio* that the poet ever addressed to Maecenas."[164] Such 'refusals' to write were frequent in Augustan poetry but, as forms of *recusationes,* the *Epistles* are unusual in that they ground their refusal by referring to a past debt made good, rather than by claiming inadequacy to the task, as is typical with this type of poetry.[165]

Ultimately, *Epistles* are some form of *recusatio*: despite his apparent refusal to write, Horace was in fact writing and did publish a book of poetry dedicated to Maecenas. In order to understand exactly what form, we would do well to remember that Horace presents his 'refusal' as the first and most crucial step in his quest to restore himself to humanity, to distance himself from his dehumanised past. By exposing the insincerity of this refusal, therefore, he puts in doubt

---

[161] G. Mish (1950), *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, London, p. 422. Even while accepting that the *Epistles* were not real letters, some scholars tend to regard them as valuable historical documents because they "scrutinise the pleasures, pains and problems of living against a standard represented by philosophy, and because the author's experience, more than anyone else's, undergoes that examination**,"** C. W. Macleod (1979), 'The Poetry of Ethics: Horace, Epistles,' *JRS* 69, 16-27, p. 27.

[162] *Serm.* 1.4.8, 1.10.1, 40-49, 61, 70. See McGann (1969:35).

[163] See McGann (1969:35); S. Harrison (1995), 'Poetry, Philosophy and Letter Writing in Horace, *Epistles* I,' in D. Innes, H. Hine, and C. Pelling (eds.), *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, Oxford, p. 51.

[164] Traina in K. Freudenburg (2002), 'Solus Sapiens Liber Est: Recommissioning Lyric in Epistles 1,' in T. Woodman and D. Feeney (eds.), *Traditions and Contexts in the Poetry of Horace*, Cambridge, 124-135, p. 125. Also Oliensis (1998:155).

[165] Bowdich (2001:162).

this very distance: if writing poetry to order was slavery before, it is slavery still. We are led to suspect, therefore, that the man writing is the same slave he always was. Seen from this angle, then, this unusual form of epistolary *recusatio* starts to appear as a rather typical *dissimulatio*, and Horace's epistolary 'human' *persona* is once again in danger of being exposed as a sum of 'seemly words,' hiding beneath them someone less than human. Furthermore, Horace's 'refusal' in E.1 is not only verbal but taken to the next level in that the poetry he writes is 'masked' by the consistent maintenance and repeated assertion of the framework of an epistolary exchange.[166] The author maintains the pretence of writing letters and thus makes this whole genre complicit in his *persona*'s *dissimulatio*; he uses, so to speak, the epistolary surface of these poems to provide his *persona* with a human face. However transparent, this surface provides Horace's 'refusal' with some degree of credibility; it 'hides' the poetry and with it, I would argue, the slave *writing* it. *Epistle* 20 confirms our suspicion as Horace casts the now complete volume of *Epistles* in the figure of a pretty slave raised in his household and anxious to run away and publish itself. It will become apparent below that *Epistle* 20 explicitly confirms that the *recusatio* of E.1 was in fact *dissimulatio* and that E.20 represents the end of it; Maecenas did get his poems, and this epistle tells us why and at what price.

A more detailed treatment of E.20 is best left for later, but at this point, we have to acknowledge the need to read Book 1 in light of this poem's revelation. Provided that *Epistles* are read in order, *Epistle* 20 would reveal to the reader that the book he/she has just finished reading is in some sense a slave and would thus invite a second reading in light of this knowledge. When Horace says the book is a slave, he also designates its primary voice as such; although he maintains, as we will see, the transparent fiction that his *persona* is a separate entity from his book, it is clear that by depriving his poetry of a human *persona*, he also deprives his poetic self of the same. *Epistle* 20 asks the readers to go back and read with an awareness that the primary

---

[166] As well as deploying standard formulae of salutation at beginning and end of the letters (eg. 1.8.1, 6.67, 10.1), Horace alludes to prior exchange with his correspondents through answers, requests or complaints (1.12). He also appears to expect answers or visits, and gives and seeks information (1.30, 5.30, 10.49, 15.25). The pretence of a real letter is further kept up by imitating the miscellaneous character of real correspondence, or by jumbling together unrelated topics, see R. Ferri (2007), 'The Epistles,' in S. Harrison (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Horace,* Cambridge, 121-133, pp. 122-123. Also A. W. Allen (1970), 'The Addresses of Horace's First Book of Epistles,' *Studies in Philology* 67, 255-266; A. W. Allen (1972), 'Horace's First Book of Epistles as Letters,' *CJ* 68, 119-133; A. De Pretis (2004), *Epistolarity in the First book of Horace's Epistles*, New Jersey.

voice of *Epistles* is a slave and thus to be weary of anything that might suggest otherwise, as that is more than likely a slave's *dissimulatio*. Horace does not demand sole reliance on *Epistle* 20 to justify such a reading since, as I already mentioned, throughout the *Epistles* he continuously undermines the credibility and indeed humanity of his epistolary human *persona* by other devices. By the time we arrive again at *Epistle* 20, we hardly even need its revelation to inform us that in the previous nineteen poems we have been addressed by a dissimulating slave.

We will leave the issue of the slavery of Horace's *persona* aside for a moment, and concentrate on that which testifies to its humanity. In lines 37-42 of the first epistle Horace states explicitly that the life of philosophical seclusion he has now chosen will humanise him, as it would humanise the worst of moral slaves or tame the fiercest of wild beasts:

> Invidus, iracundus, iners, vinosus, amator,
> nemo adeo ferus est, ut non mitescere possit
> si modo culturae patientem commodet aurem.
> Virtus est vitium fugere et sapientia prima
> stultitia caruisse.

> The slave to envy, anger, sloth, wine, lewdness ― no one is so savage a beast that he cannot be tamed, if only he lend to treatment a patient ear. To flee vice is the beginning of virtue, and to have got rid of folly is the beginning of wisdom (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 255).

In *Epistle* 2 we find Horace writing to Lollius Maximus, seeking to interest him in moral philosophy and virtuous living. Horace has been reading Homer and has come to the realisation that Homer is the best of moral teachers, as he provided in *Iliad* and *Odyssey* an abundance of examples of "foolish kings and men," who are slaves to love, rage, lust, as well as those, like Odysseus, who are characterised by self-control, intellect and reason (1-22). The difference between these became literally the difference between humans and animals on Circe's island of Aeaea where Odysseus's foolish company turned into pigs while he alone remained human (1.2.23-26):

> Sirenum voces et Circae pocula nosti;
> quae si cum sociis stultus cupidusque bibisset,

sub domina meretrice fuisset turpis et excors;

vixisset canis immundus vel amica luto sus.

You know about the Siren's song and Circe's potion, had he drunk like the others, so stupid and so eager, ruled by a whore, he'd become both brainless and foul, a dirty dog or a pig who loves the mud (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 265).

The metamorphosis, whilst induced by a potion, was nothing more than the pre-existent mental and moral state of these men manifesting on the surface. Horace urges Lollius to recognise the relevance of these lessons and choose a life of virtue: "Rule your passion," Horace tells him, "for unless it obeys, it gives commands. Check it with bridle — check it, I pray you, with chains" (*animum rege; qui nisi paret / imperat; hunc frensis, hunc tu compesce catena,* 62-63). The 'beast within' needs to be muzzled; the goal, once again, is being satisfied with 'enough,' being confined within the limits of Nature: "the covetous is ever in want," he tells Lollius, "aim at fixed limits for your desires" (*semper avarus eget; certum voto pete finem,* 56).

Horace has found his limits at a place well within, but this time the place is not in Rome and not with Maecenas. In *Epistle* 1, Horace made clear to Maecenas that should he stay in Rome and remain close to him, he stands little chance of moral recovery. In lines 76-93 he turns to the theme of inconsistency, the moral failure which, we might remember, Davus singled out as the chief symptom of his master's moral slavery. In *Epistles*, Horace becomes quite preoccupied with this particular failure and does not deny being once guilty of it.[167] From a Stoic point of view, this admission was the first step towards moral health, as the refusal to recognise one's situation clearly is guarantee that one will remain forever a moral slave and continue to live a life of random inconsistency.[168] The achievement of life-long consistency (*constantia*) was in Panaetius and Cicero central to *decorum* and, in accordance with his striving towards this goal, Horace aims for it and explicitly says to Maecenas why he cannot achieve it in Rome (1.101-105):

Insanire putas sollemnia me neque rides,

---

[167] The *Epistles* are permeated with passages dealing explicitly with this theme; see McGann (1969:13); Oliensis (1998:166). As Rudd has observed, "consistency, which in morals involves the integration of the personality…held a special interest for Horace," Rudd (1966:138).

[168] Bernstein (1987:54).

> nec medici credis nec curatoris egere
>
> a praetore dati, rerum tutela mearum
>
> cum sis et prave sectum stomacheris ob unguem
>
> de te pendentis, te respicientis amici.

> You think my madness is the usual thing, and neither laugh at me nor deem that I need a physician
> or a guardian assigned by the court, though you are keeper of my fortunes, and flare up at an ill
> pared nail of the friend who hangs upon you and looks to you in all (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 259).

The stark contrast of these lines with *Sermones* hardly needs any further comment: there
Maecenas saw and only cared about Horace's virtues, while here he tolerates his vices, sees and
only cares about the deceptive externals. Maecenas's 'pure' home of *Sermones* is in *Epistles* the
place that finds moral failures quite normal and acceptable. Consequently, Horace is forced to
leave it behind and seek moral health and sanity elsewhere.

Whilst in the *Sermones,* Maecenas's gardens were made into a figurative locus for the
pursuit of a good life, here, that role is assumed by the Sabine Farm. The farm allows Horace a
self-renewal of sorts, it 'restores him to himself' (*mihi me reddentis agelli*, 14.1). In *Epistle* 10,
Horace addresses Fuscus, a lover of city life, and repeats the association of his past life with
slavery. He describes his own preference for the country, comparing himself to a temple slave
who freed himself, fleeing from a diet of rich food (*liba, mellitae placentae*) to plain bread, a
taste of which now guides his attitudes towards worldly things (11-12). *Epistle* 16 sketches a
picture of the Sabine farm particularly well; it is a refuge for the nourishment of body and soul
(16.1-16), a place that sufficiently provides for all of Horace's needs. These needs are modest; he
is satisfied with a frugal meal and a nap by the stream (14.31-36), the simple pleasures which in
Epistle 5 he wishes to share with his friend Torquatus (1-4). In short, the Sabine farm allows
Horace to stay within 'Nature's bounds,' it provides him with the essential 'enough' and prevents
a craving for more. Rome and the Esquiline gardens are now outside these bounds and Horace is
within only by virtue of his exclusion from these places.

In *Epistle* 7, Horace stakes his claim to humanity in particularly strong terms. He
expresses to Maecenas his readiness to give him back all his gifts should he start to feel that these
are undermining his self-humanising efforts. In the opening lines, Horace defies Maecenas's wish
that he return to Rome (1-13) and then goes on to explore the relationship between *beneficia* and

amicitia through a series of exemplary tales dealing with a gift's potential to virtually enslave the recipient. It is sufficient to mention only the first of these stories, the famous tale about a little fox (or shrew mouse) who enters a bin of grain. Having eaten too much of the grain, this fox gets so fat that it is imprisoned by the size of its belly and cannot get out. Horace is aware that this image may potentially apply to him and thus asserts to Maecenas: "If challenged by this fable, I give up all…try me, whether I can restore your gifts and cheerfully too" (*hac ego si compellor imagine, cuncta resigno…inspice si possum donate reponere laetus*, 34, 39). We hardly need a stronger statement of Horace's determination to emancipate himself from his dependency of Maecenas and thus restore his freedom and humanity.

Nevertheless, it does not take long to suspect that something is not quite right with this picture and that our 'human' speaker is not what he seems. The first clue comes from the fact that Horace begins to utilise in *Epistles* the servile language of the fable. Unlike in *Sermones* where Horace's *persona* distanced from or counterbalanced the servile undertones of this language, in *Epistles* his *persona* takes full responsibility for utilising it and employs no distancing strategies. The first fable Horace narrates, in lines 70-76 of *Epistle* 1, is that of a wise fox and a lion, and it emerges from a hypothetical dialogue of the poet with the Roman people. Here, Horace explains why he has chosen a life of freedom outside Rome:

> Quodsi me pupulus Romanus forte roget, cur
> non ut porticibus sic iudiciis fruar isdem
> nec sequar aut fugiam quae diligit ipse vel odit:
> olim quod volpes aegroto cauta leoni
> respondit, referam: "quia me vestigia terrent,
> omnia te adversum spectantia, nulla retrorsum."
> belua multorum est capitum.

> If the Roman people should ever ask me why I do not share their opinions as I do their colonnades and pursue or run from what they themselves adore or hate I'll remember what the cautious fox told the sick lion and answer: "Because these footprints make me afraid, all of them going towards you, none coming back out." The beast has many heads (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 257).

This is one of several examples of fable in *Epistles* and, as Marchesi has noticed, Horace does not

make any effort to distance himself from it and instead treats it in an increasingly unmediated fashion.[169] Marchesi interprets this as a sign of Horace's growing confidence, of the personal stigma associated with his father's slavery receding deeper into the past.[170] She decided against following her argument to its logical conclusion, suggesting, that is, that the language of fable serves here, as it does elsewhere, to recall the servile past it seeks to repress. As I see no valid reason for avoiding such a suggestion, I would argue that the language of fable serves here the function which Marchesi identified as its typical one, and thus undermines the overt claims to humanity of Horace's epistolary *persona*.[171]

Another reason for thinking that we are witnessing here the slave's *dissimulatio* is the inconsistency of Horace's epistolary *persona*. In some poems, as in those observed above, Horace is a man dedicated to seclusion and philosophical improvement, but in others, he is more of a hedonistic debauch anxious to resume his poetic career. For example, whilst in *Epistle* 14 Horace is longing to leave Rome for his farm, chiding his bailiff's lust for wine, women and song, in *Epistle* 15 he is contemplating an excursion to the seaside, anticipating the company of women, rejuvenation and the reconstruction of his lyric *persona* with the help of a bottle of wine (19-21).[172] We could certainly regard this as Horace's play with the endless possibilities of literary self-presentation but, in light of the project he supposedly embarked on in E.1, we should probably view these inconsistencies as a portrayal of Horace's stumbling on his path towards *decorum*.[173] In *Epistle* 15, Horace openly admits to being guilty of such behavior, saying that,

---

[169] Marchesi (2005:322).

[170] Marchesi (2005:322).

[171] In *Epistle* 1.7, where Horace is most assertive in his declaration of independence, there are also the most reasons to suspect him. Bowdich has convincingly argued for viewing the *persona* of 1.7 as a "duplicitous speaker," a designation fitting from the very beginning of the poem where Horace calls himself "liar" (*mendax*, 2), "as if to underscore the potential for deceit possessed by any representation of the self in language," Bowdich (2001:182). *Epistle* 1.7 is also the poem in which Horace narrates the most fables; see, for example, E. Frankel (1957), *Horace*, Oxford, p. 336.

[172] "…the kind that will supply me with a stock of words and recommend me, a young man again, to a Lucanian girlfriend," *Ep.* 1.15.20-1; Oliensis (1998:166).

[173] It is exactly this is sort of behaviour that Panaetius and Cicero singled out as inimical to consistency, see *Off.* 1.111. In any case, it is precisely when it comes to the vice of inconsistency that life and theatre merge in ancient texts. The theatrical metaphor was regarded as the most suitable for representing failures in *constantia*. Most famously, Seneca stated in *Epistle* 120 that, "This is above all the sign of a foolish mind; it appears first in one form

when his means are modest, he is content with little, but should this change he easily praises and aspires to the life of the rich, thinking that only they live well (*bene vivere,* 45, 42-46).

This admission immediately follows the description of the *scurra* Maenius, a typical moral slave who labours just to satisfy his insatiable belly in which, Horace writes, he could fit the contents of an entire marketplace (15.26-35). Prior to supporting the claim by narrating his inconsistent behaviour, Horace adopts Maenius as an emblem of himself: "Such a man in truth am I" (*nimirum hic ego sum*, 42).[174] While one may choose to interpret such an admission in less than serious terms, as a pleasant little piece of poetic self-deprecation, we should observe how this undermines Horace's display of determination in E.1.7 not to allow the image of the big-bellied fox to apply to him and his apparent readiness to return to Maecenas all of his gifts. The big-bellied animal Horace identifies with here is of a different species but the connection is clear. In any case, we are starting to see here glimpses of Davus's Horace, as he displays and admits to precisely the type of behaviour Davus accused him of in S.2.7, seeing it as symptomatic of his moral slavery. This is not the first time he admits to it, but the fact that Horace admits it now, while on his Sabine farm which supposedly allowed him a life free from such vices, obliterates once again any distance between his dehumanised past and his supposed 'human' present.

The temptation to regard these and similar images as examples of Horatian irony arises from an often displayed confidence that in real life Horace was a type of client quite distinct from the sycophantic 'yes-men' he often caricatures. There are certainly some grounds for the belief that the ancients maintained a clear distinction between the honourable client and the self-serving parasite, and Horace has something to say on this issue in *Epistles* 17 and 18. These are paired poems in which Horace offers instruction in the art of winning and keeping a patron to two young men who are about to embark on their clientary careers. The subject of *Epistle* 1.17 purports to be "the right way to keep company with men more important than oneself" (*quo…pacto deceat maioribus uti*, *Epist.* 2). In lines 13-22, Horace stages a debate between the philosopher

---

and then in another and, which I judge worst of all, it is never like itself. Believe me, it is a great thing to play the role of one man. But nobody can act the part of a single person except the wise man: the rest of us slip from one character (*persona*) to another," 120.122.

[174] Horace goes even further in describing the extent of his dependence when he defends himself against the charge of ingratitude to Maecenas, saying "You've often praised my unassuming self, and I've called you 'king' (*rex*) and 'father'"(*rexque paterque, Epist.* 1.7.37). Here Horace is donning the mask of the parasite since 'king' (*rex*) is a common term used by comic parasites to flatter their patrons, like in Plautus's *Asin.* 919; Damon (1997:112-125).

Aristippus who associated with the rich and reaped the benefits of doing so, and an uncompromising Diogenes to whom such behaviour was a sign of moral slavery. In lines 13-14, Diogenes alludes to Aristippus's supposed gluttony by saying: "If Aristippus could learn to dine on turnip greens, he wouldn't mess around with princes" (*si pranderet holus patienter, regibus uti / nollet Aristippus*). Aristippus counters this claim by crediting Diogenes's supposed lack of social graces for his reluctance to associate with the rich: "If he who rebukes me knew how to mingle with princes, he would come to despise his dreadful vegetables" (*si sciret regibus uti / fastidiret holus qui me notat*, 14-15).

In line 17, Horace states his approval of Aristippus's ways: Diogenes posed as a self-sufficient sage but nevertheless depended on give-outs, while Aristippus openly pursued benefits for his services. "I play the *scurra* for my own benefit," Aristippus says, "to have a horse to carry me and a patron to feed me" (*scurror ipse mihi…equus ut me portet, alat rex*, 19-20). Aristippus's strength, Horace writes, was in adapting himself to every circumstance while remaining content whether he had a little or a lot (23-26). Scholars often observe that Aristippus's friendship with the elites validated Horace's own way of life; he appealed to Horace first and foremost because "he was capable of adapting himself to the situation, occasion and role, appropriately performing his part in every circumstance."[175] Aristippus's adaptability was not regarded as undignified, so it is thought that in emulating his ways, Horace maintained his moral freedom in his own encounters with the rich.[176] Johnson goes further and argues that Aristippus's adaptability was not only morally acceptable behaviour but *required* by *decorum*: "the capacity to shift, to take up and lay down public *persona* at the proper moment, as *decorum* requires, is a sign of versatility but also a sign of tolerance, acceptance of reality, common sense and even of humility."[177]

Nevertheless, the truth of such claims depends on whether we are talking about the 'human' individual utilising a variety of social *personae* to suitably express his/her inner

---

[175] D. L. 2.66. Adaptability, as long as it was becoming, has been encouraged in popular morality and was also accorded philosophical respectability by Marcus Aurelius and Aristo of Chios. See D. L. 7.160; *Med.* 4.1, 5.20; Mayer (1994:44).

[176] "Horace felt a kingship with Aristippus in the internal freedom that he maintained in his encounters with his powerful protector," Pohlenz in A. Traina (2009), 'Horace and Aristippus: The *Epistles* and the Art of Conuiuere,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies, Horace: Satires and Epistles*, 297-307, p. 307.

[177] Johnson (1993:104).

humanity or about the animal using them to more effectively deceive its social peers. Horace describes Aristippus as someone content with what he had (26), implying his moral freedom, and yet, by having him refer to himself as a "*scurra* for his own benefit," Horace still gives his readers cause to suspect that he belonged to the latter category; after all, if the *scurra* was in any sense morally free, he would no longer be a *scurra*. Indeed, in the ancient ethical treatises, the true *amicus* was characterised primarily by his/her selfless concern for the welfare of his friend, while the *scurra*'s opportunist self-centeredness made him incapable of engaging in true friendship and was often the chief indicator of his lack of humanity.[178] Aristippus's blunt admission of self-centeredness, therefore, is difficult to reconcile with his supposed moral freedom; it even recalls the *scurra* Mulvius of S.2.7 who in a characteristic display of the comic parasite's professional pride boasted of his inability or unwillingness to be a true friend.[179] As the epistle progresses, it starts to be apparent that Aristippus was less important to Horace as an exemplar of a morally free client than as an exemplar of a successful client who appeared as such. The advice Horace offers to Scaeva in the lines below comes across as a somewhat Machiavellian reformulation of the honourable principles exposed in *Sermones*: there, the truly honourable client is uninterested in gifts, whilst here the truly successful client *appears* as such (17.43-45):

> Coram rege sua de paupertate tacenes
> plus poscente ferent. Distat sumasne pudenter
> an rapias: atqui rerum, caput hoc erat, hic fons.

> Clients who don't tell their patrons how poor they are, get more than beggars do. And it is important to accept, not grab. That's the trick, the key to this whole business (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 365).

Horace reinforces this point with the image of a foolish, noisy animal: "If a crow could eat his meal in silence, he'd get more when he found food, and with far less bitterness and fuss" (*sed

---

[178] "Aristotle's definition of friendship — mutual good will and selfless regard for the other — continued to inform the literature regarding bonds between unequal partners," see Konstan (1995:334). For the *scurra*'s lack of humanity, see above, 29-31.

[179] Damon (1997:112-125).

tacitus pasci si posset coruus, haberet / plus dapis et rixae multo minus inuidiaeque, 50-51). A second example illustrates the unseemly behaviour of the client who accompanies his patron on a journey but complains at all times about the road, weather and his expenses. Horace compares him to a whore who wails at her pretended losses (52-57).

So, 'the right way' to keep company with powerful men, "the key to the whole business," is in maintaining the appearance of an honourable client: go after gifts but avoid appearing like you do; if you must be a whore, avoid being the wailing sort.[180] The advice Horace offers to Scaeva, in short, is to become the sort of *scurra* considered by the ethical treatises to be the more subtle and, to a superior party, the more dangerous sort.[181] We might also notice that the pose Horace advises, that of disinterest in benefiting from the relationship by not requesting and not complaining, is the 'human' pose of being content and satisfied (*satis*) with one's lot; a pose we know well from *Sermones*.[182] As for Aristippus, it is important to notice that Horace approved of his ways while advising his friend how to be a smart client rather than how to be a free client, or on how to profit from such a relationship while maintaining an aura of respectability by *appearing* free, morally or otherwise. For Aristippus to appear in this context as someone worthy of emulation indicates that he played *this* game well.

It is sometimes asserted that the virtue Aristippus and Horace aimed for in one's life and social relations resided in balance or in the mean between two extremes. Indeed, in line 9 of the following epistle (1.18), Horace writes: "Virtue is the mean between vices, remote from both extremes" (*virtus est medium vitiorum utrimque reductum*). In this epistle, Horace professes to advise his young friend Lollius on how to maintain the balance between servile compliance and wilful independence, but in actuality only goes on to demonstrate the impossibility of achieving it. As such this epistle goes a step further in showing that the *scurra* and the inferior *amicus* are the obverse and reverse of the same coin, and that the chief value of such and similar philosophical precepts lay in reinterpreting the moral compromises necessitated by their existence

---

[180] For a different view, see R. Kilpatrick (1986), *The Poetry of Friendship, Horace: Epistles 1*, Edmonton, p. 47.

[181] Cicero observed that flatterers and fakes who put on a pretense of virtue are far more dangerous than overt loudmouths; what distinguishes the flatterer from a true friend is not his manner of behaviour, but the level of insincerity behind it, *Lael.* 99.

[182] In E.17.1-5, Horace claimed to be speaking from experience: as Bowdich puts it, "An autobiographical subtext is not far beneath the surface…," P. L. Bowdich (1994), 'Horace's Poetics of Political Integrity: Epistle 1.18,' *AJP* 115, 409-426, p. 416.

as adaptability, versatility, "common sense or even humility."

Lollius, as Horace portrays him in *Epistle* 18, is a man of independent streak who tends to avoid friendship with the rich for fear of losing his independence. In the opening lines Horace states: "If I know you well, Lollius, being the most independent of men, you will be afraid to show the colours of a *scurra* when you have called yourself a friend" (*si bene te novi, metues liberrime Loll , / scurrantis speciem praebere, professus amicum*, 1-2). Lollius has an instinctive abhorrence of appearing as a *scurra* to someone to whom he has offered *amicitia* and "he fears the loss of identity, the loss of a distinct self."[183] This makes Lollius's insertion into the system of patronage problematic but Horace reassures him by making clear that the true *amicus* and *scurra* are polar opposites: "A wife in white is as different from a whore in brown as a real friend is from a parasitic fake" (*ut matrona meretrici dispar erit atque / discolor, infido scurrae distabit amicus,* 2-4). The *scurra* is the fearful and sycophantic 'yes-man' whose performance determines future invitations (10-14) and, because Lollius would avoid such a role like the plague, Horace offers him advice in a supposedly middle way between servile subservience and boorish outspokenness (39-40, 44-48):

> Nec tua laudabis studia aut aliena reprendes
> nec cum venari volet ille, poemata panges (39-40)
> …tu cede potentis amici.
> Lenibus imperiis quotiensque, educet in agros
> aeoliis onerata plagis iumenta canesque,
> surge et inhumanae senium depone Carmenae,
> cenes ut pariter pulmenta laboribus empta.

> Don't praise what interests you nor scorn what he enjoys, or sit around composing poems when he prefers to hunt…respect your friend's position, accept his light commands. So when he is going to the fields and takes his dogs, his asses laden with Aetolian nets, get up, lay aside your melancholy, unsocial Muse and earn your food by work as strenuous as his (trans. R. Fairclough, pp. 371-373).

One is hard pressed to find anything of a middle way in the behaviour advised here. A hunting expedition such as Horace envisages here was the standard example of a flatterer's willingness to

---

[183] Bowdich (1994:415).

follow his patron, while the short-term reward for his obedience ― food or dinner ― is another clear sign that the behaviour Horace advises here is that of a parasite.[184] A few lines below, Horace advises Lollius further on how to adapt himself to the pursuits and character of his *potens amicus*, and in doing so obscures even further the already hazy boundary between an inferior *amicus* and a *scurra* (86-90):

> Dulcis inexpertis cultura potentis amici:
> expertus metuet. tu, dum tua nauis in alto est,
> hoc age, ne mutata retrorsum te ferat aura.
> oderunt hilarem tristes tristemque iocosi,
> sedatum celeres, agiles nauumque remissi.

> Those who have never tried think it pleasant to court a friend in power: one who has tried dreads it. While your barque is on the deep, see to it lest the breeze shift and bare your back. The grave dislike the gay, the merry the grave, the quick the staid, the lazy the stirring man of action (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 375).

Horace reminds Lollius that courting the great is a strenuous task primarily because it requires one to adapt to the character of a powerful friend; it involves suppressing one's own personality in order to appear in a light the patron will find appealing. There is nothing respectable or 'free' about this type of adaptability; it is merely another name for *dissimulatio*, which in the extant ethical treatises was considered a sure mark of the parasite and flatterer.[185] Horace goes further and emphasises the theatrics of this process by advising Lollius to draw on his experiences in playing characters when staging plays with his brother (59-64):

> Quamuis nil extra numerum fecisse modumque
> curas, interdum nugaris rure paterno.
> artitur lintres exercitus, Actia pugna

---

[184] Plutarch, among others, provides an example from the realm of theory and both Longinus and Menander have a wealthy young man accompanied on such a trip by a parasite, *Mor.* 52b-c; Men. *Dyscolus* 39ff; Longinus, *Daphnis and Chloe* 4.11.

[185] Cic. *De Amic.* 93; Plut. *Mor.* 52b-d; Hunter (1985:484).

te duce per pueros hostili more refertur;

adversarius est frater, lacus Hadria, donec

alterutrum velox Victoria fronde coronet.

Yes I know you never lie or counterfeit emotions,but you play around at times, out on your

father's farm. Opposing sides divide the rowboats, and Actium is fought again: you lead your

slaves in battle order; your brother is the foe, your pond the Adriatic, till winged Victory arrives,

bringing one of you a leafy crown (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 373).

Horace here refers to Lollius and his brother re-enacting the battle of Actium, emphasising that the pretence involved in this process is of the same sort the client requires if he is to be successful in courting his patron. The world of patronal relations, Horace implies, is a world of make-believe, and it is up to the client to keep it as such if he wishes to benefit from the system.

Jaques Perret has referred to Epistles 17 and 18 as *ars parasitandi* ("a handbook for parasites") and quite rightly so, as the advice they offer to their addressees is indeed on how to sidle up to the rich and famous in a discreet fashion.[186] The task of cultivating the patron, these epistles make clear, involves engaging in behaviours that are clearly incompatible with the genuine independence and frankness that the ethical treatises considered a prerequisite for true friendship. What tends to obscure this picture is that Horace's *persona* purports to have insight into the 'right way' of keeping company with powerful men both practically and morally speaking, while in fact delivering advice that clearly sidelines moral considerations in favour of the practical. He appears concerned with teaching young men how to maintain *virtus* in the role of dependent friend, but in fact only gives advice on ways of profiting from the role; he establishes a clear divide between *amicus* and *scurra* only to reveal by his advice the impossibility of maintaining it. What obscures it, in short, is that Horace practices what he preaches and starts each poem with *dissimulatio,* or with the pretence necessary to maintain the theoretical divide between the inferior *amicus* and *scurra*. He then advises potential clients to maintain the divide between the two at the level of appearances; by knowing how to adopt an external demeanour of moral freedom and contentment while at the same time being likeable and providing entertaining company to one's powerful friend. Such advice clearly justifies the title of

---

[186] J. Perret (1959), *Horace*, Paris, p. 132; Damon (1997:137); Konstan (1995:340).

ars parasitandi for these poems, and the designation of parasite for the voice of experience behind them. This voice has already admitted to being a *scurra* in E.15 *(nimirum hic ego sum*, 15.42) and thus gave us an early warning that the virtuous teacher we are about to encounter might not be all he seems, and that he might indeed still be engaging in his old habit of *dissimulatio.*

In *Epistles*, Horace demolishes the credibility of the past literary versions of himself: the true human *amicus* of Maecenas has become Maecenas's slave in the very first lines of E.1. Horace adds credibility to this portrayal by starting also to demolish the humanity of his present epistolary *persona*, by constructing it as the mask of a dissimulator, as the human face over the slave whom we have come to know as Davus's Horace. As it strips away, this human face reveals itself as composed of theoretical and practical components: of convenient philosophical precepts backed by the correct social performance of the human role of the true *amicus*. I believe that Horace devised his epistolary *persona* in order to allow the reader a glimpse behind his public and literary face. He wished the reader to see him as a man aware of the moral compromises and various hypocrisies by which he paved his way to the social and poetic heights we find him at by 20 BC. The sum of these compromises, he felt acutely, had dehumanised him in the past and continued to do so in the present. I am well aware that the Horace of *Epistles* might be stripping away one mask only to present us with another, that in poetry the author's *dissimulatio,* in one form or another, never really ends. It is also possible that, in order to serve his artistic ends, Horace is here temporarily assuming the mask of a *scurra* over the true face of an *amicus,* rather than, as I argue, unmasking the *amicus* in order to reveal the true face of a *scurra*. My primary reasons for deciding against such a view are to be found in *Epistle* 20.

Epistle 20 is addressed to the now complete volume of *Epistles* which is cast in the figure of a pretty slave that wishes to run away from Horace. The book wishes to publish itself, to make a fortune in the world by prostituting itself with the help of the Sossi brothers, booksellers here cast as pimps (20.1-5).[187] While the mask appears to have been disposed of at this point, this is not the case, because Horace's *persona* continues with its *dissimulatio.* In this poem, Horace the author dissociates his *persona* from the actual book and its subhuman state by portraying it as a separate entity that, being wiser, freer and more self-sufficient, disapproves of it and its lowly motives. Nevertheless, like before, this *persona* starts to undermine almost immediately its own

---

[187] E. Oliensis (1995), 'Life after Publication: Horace, *Epistles* 1.20,' *Arethusa* 28, 209-224.

claims to moral freedom by using the language of fable. The *persona* warns the slave/book about the dangers of prostituting oneself to the public by evoking as a cautionary exemplum the fable of the ass and the driver (14-16):[188]

> Ridebit monitor non exauditus ut ille
> qui male parentem in rupes protrusit asellum
> iratus; quis enim invitum servare laboret?

> Your guardian, his good advices all wasted, will laugh like the man whose donkey baulked until he grew so angry he shoved it off the cliff. Why try to save a stubborn ass? (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 389).

By employing the language of fable, Horace obliterates any distinction in status between the interlocutors; he reveals that the slave is addressing another slave, or to put it more accurately, that the slave is talking to himself. *Dissimulatio* continues to the very end; Horace does not unmask his *persona* but allows it to be defeated and defied by the book-slave: the *persona* gives up his efforts, releases the slave and instructs him to tell the world *his* story (20). Let us now stop and ask: who is *he*? Whose story will be told? Horace's literary *persona* requested the story, so what reason do we have to think that that which follows will have any connection to a historical Horace? We have every reason to think this, because what follows is almost certainly historically accurate information about the author (21-8):

> Me libertino patre natum patre et in tenui re
> maiores pinnas nido extendisse loqueris
> ut quantum generi demas virtutibus addas;
> me primis urbis belli placuisse domique,
> corporis exigui, praecanum, solibus aptum,
> irasci celerem, tamen ut placabilis essem.
> forte meum siquis te percontabitur aeuum,
> me quater undenos sciat impleuisse Decembres,
> colllegam Lepidum quo dixit Lollius anno.

[188] *Aes.* 186; Marchesi (2005:322).

I was a freedman's son, and amid slender means spread wings too wide for my nest, thus adding to my merits what you take from my birth; say that I found favor both in war and peace with the foremost in the state; of small stature, gray before my time, fond of the sun, quick in temper, yet so as to be easily appeased. If one chance to inquire my age, let him know that I completed my forty-fourth December in the year when Lollius drew Lepidus for colleague (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 391).

Few have found reason to question the historical accuracy of the information contained in these lines; the man described here is the historical Horatius Flaccus, the poet and *amicus* of Maecenas. By inserting this piece of straightforward and for the most part widely known autobiographical information, Horace the author makes a point of identifying himself with the dissimulating slave *persona* that has requested his story be told. I believe this to be the first indication that the 'liar *persona*' of *Epistle* 1 was there to represent Horace the author. The second indication is that this *persona* clearly transcends its genre and its time in history: it irreversibly 'stains' Horace's past, present and future 'poetic selves.' It exposes a slavish past, itself as a slave, and in *Epistle* 20 announces the resumption of Horace's poetic career in unaltered 'slavish' terms. This, then, is the only permanent 'self' Horace has left us, the one he can never truly discard but only disguise by temporary human masks. The third and final indication has to do with the Book's own *dissimulatio*. By exposing Book 1 of *Epistles* as a slave anxious for publication, Horace ended its own *dissimulatio*; or its pretence to be a collection of personal and 'sincere' letters, while it was really a collection of poems intended for Maecenas. The Book's *dissimulatio* was a crucial component in the liar *persona*'s own pretence and yet quite separate from it, as *Epistle* 20 clearly shows. By maintaining this transparent fiction, Horace the author ensures that, even if we choose to disassociate him from his liar *persona,* we can never separate him or his 'story' from the slave that brought it to us, namely Book 1 of *Epistles*. To separate the author from this book, to disassociate him from the Book's slavish need to please the master, to be seen, read and admired, is to play the same game the author played when he disassociated his *persona* from it. This is a farce, Horace warns us, disguising the obvious fact that Maecenas requested his poems and he obeyed; he has Maecenas as a master because he himself obeys another master, his belly and all it represents. This is the truth, I believe, that Horace the author wished to communicate, doing all he possibly could to disallow us

from thinking it is someone else we are seeing in these verses. All he wished to do here, I contend, is to have his verse betray him, much like he had Lucilius betrayed by his, a decade or so earlier. We should grant it to him.

As to what prompted Horace to discredit the previous 'human' version of himself in *Epistles*, we can only speculate. One possibility is that *Epistles* 1 were still, in essence, self-promotion, a product of Horace's image management program rather than of a sudden urge for sincere self-revelation. Whether or not they were intended to do so, *Epistles* 1 would have demonstrated to Horace's inner circle that he possessed the central attribute necessary for disqualification from being considered a typical parasite. It is significant to note that in his apparently resigned acceptance of Davus's accusations, Horace was in fact disproving the gravest of Davus's charges: that of being a "slave many times over" (*totiens servus*), of being self-deceived about the true nature of his relationship with Maecenas. Self-deception was the most common mark of a parasite in ancient plays, where the parallels between parasites (ostensibly free men) and slaves (legally bound) were evident to other characters and the audience but never to the parasites themselves: they believed that they occupied an exalted status and would often even boast about it.[189] This particular trait made parasites into creatures of an even lower order than legal slaves, and for this reason Davus could compare Horace unfavourably to himself as well as to the unusually self-aware and blunt parasite Mulvius (S.2.7.37-43). In Davus's eyes, Mulvius's straightforward admission of his status and motives made him less of a slave and a superior creature to the one he accuses Horace of being. Nevertheless, *Epistles* 1 proves Davus wrong in that it shows that Horace was different from Mulvius, not by virtue of his inferior self-awareness but by virtue of his superior ability to wear the social mask demanded by the ideology of *amicitia*.

Romans, of course, understood the realities of the patronage system but disliked the idea of purchased friendships, and this was precisely what necessitated the ideology of *amicitia,* which emphasised genuine sentiment over social 'fakery' and moral equality over financial inequality. This ideology depended on the cooperation of both parties for its workings; in fact, the most suitable *amicus* for a rich Roman who could pay but who did not like to purchase friendships was a man who could take without thinking of himself as purchased. In this situation, both parties had an equal stake in maintaining the cover of the *amicitia* ideology over their

---

[189] Damon (1997:33); see also Bernstein (1987:37-61, 50-51).

relationship, and they did this through refinement and by politely avoiding discussing vulgar topics such as money and favours during their social interactions. Mulvius clearly does not appreciate the importance of such 'politeness,' and the Horace of *Epistles* advises against his ways; the smart parasite is a more refined creature who knows one should avoid Mulvius's brand of honesty and indeed everything else that might offend the sensibilities of the rich patron.[190] Nevertheless, Horace's encounter with Davus also indicates his awareness, and possibly his concern, that the convincing performance of the role of a respectable *amicus* can or will be interpreted as the sign of an actor being taken in by his own act, that in avoiding the role of a 'rude' parasite he risks being perceived as a typical self-deceived one. Sociologists refer to such individuals as "oversocialised," meaning someone: "so adept at responding to the communication of others that in doing so he reveals the absence of the self — or that he is unable to develop one."[191] In unequal relationships, this "face-grows-to-fit-the-mask" phenomenon begins at first with the need of a subordinate to act a role and continuously maintain standards of behaviour imposed by a dominant figure, but in time it can become difficult for this individual to hold a view of himself apart from that role.[192] The only self he or she can develop and truly possess is then fashioned by the role's demands: "since, presumably, the individual has no control over the roles imposed by powerful others, whatever personality integration takes place must bring the self into line with the imposed role."[193] It is possible that Horace was anxious to avoid the impression that his 'socialisation' in *Sermones* went to this same extreme, that the only self he now possessed was a self fashioned to suit the demands of his role as *amicus* of Maecenas. If Horace was in danger of being perceived as such, *Epistles* 1 would avert it; the apparent sincerity of the *Epistles* also acts as a display of self-awareness and commonsense, and thus demonstrates to all who care to know that Horatius Flaccus is 'enslaved' only by his own choice, not by his mask.

---

[190] For the importance of 'politeness' in Roman social encounters see, for example, J. Hall (2005), 'Cicero's *Fam.* 16.21: Roman Politeness and the Socialisation of Marcus Cicero the Younger,' in K. Welch and T. W. Hillard (eds.) *Roman Crossings: Theory and Practice in the Roman Republic*, 259-277.

[191] J. Bensman and R. Lilienfeld (1979), *Between Public and Private: The Lost Boundaries of the Self,* New York, p. 6. See also D. Wrong (1961) 'The Oversocialised Conception of Man in Modern Sociology,' in P. Coser and L. Rosenberg (eds.), *Sociological Theory,* 121-132.

[192] J. C. Scott (1990), *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts,* New Haven, p. 74.

[193] Scott (1990:74).

VI

Horace and the Ass's Ears

In *Epistle* 13 there is a motif which anticipates the book-slave of E.20. Horace addresses this epistle to a certain Vinius Asina whom he charged to bring some of his poems to Augustus. Horace advises Vinius to handle his task with care and, in doing so, he draws attention to Vinius's cognomen, Asina (13.6-9):

> Si te forte meae gravis uret sarcina chartae,
> abicito potius quam quo perferre iuberis
> clitellas ferus impingas Asinaeque paternum
> cognomen vertas in risum et fabula fias.

> If haply my book's burden galls you with its weight fling it from you rather than savagely dash down your pack where you are bidden to deliver it, and turn your father's name of Asina into a jest, and you become the talk of the town (trans. R. Fairclough, p. 335).

It has often been noticed that Horace here equates the cognomen Asina with an ass and that he uses other terms to associate Vinius with this beast of burden (*gravis, sarcina clitellas*),[194] as well as that he did something similar with his own cognomen Flaccus ("drop-eared") earlier in *Satire* 1.9. In this poem, the pest insists on following Horace along and, having realised he cannot get rid of him, Horace likens himself to an ass whose ears sag under a heavy burden: "Down drop my poor ears like a sulky donkey's when he has come under a load too heavy for his back" (*demitto auriculas, ut iniquae mentis asellus / cum gravis dorso subiit onos*, 20-21). Freudenburg has connected this image with S.2.1, when Trebatius advises Horace to write 'panegyric satire' to Caesar. Horace replied to Trebatius by saying: "Only at an auspicious moment will the words of a Flaccus find with Caesar entrance to an attentive ear" (*nisi dextro tempore, Flacci verba per attentam non ibunt Caesaris aurem,* 18-19). Freudenburg sees here the same pun as in S.1.9, except, he observes, that "the source of the drooping ears, that too heavy load, is Caesar and that

---

[194] A. S. Wilkins (1965), *The Epistles of Horace*, London, p. 171; Marchesi (2005:321).

crushing weight of his post-Actian self. Praising him, Horace suggests, is a burden too heavy for his satire's *asselus*."[195] Drooping ears, as Freudenburg has observed, are in Latin literature a symbol of flagging strength,[196] but we may also add that ass's ears are a symbol of slavery. The ancients often equated beasts of burden and slaves and the ass, being the most 'slavish' of all animals, was seen as particularly suitable for this purpose. Artemidorus, for example, wrote that in dreams animals used for humble tasks symbolise labourers and subalterns (4.56), and that a dream of having an ass's ears or head signifies slavery and misery (1.24). Perhaps then the Flaccus of *Sermones* and the Asina of *Epistles* should be considered against this background and connected to the rest of the imagery by which Horace connects slavery with clientage and writing poetry to order. Nevertheless, my reason for mentioning the possibility of such a connection has more to do with the next chapter than it has with this one, because the image of an ass's ears, sagging or otherwise, was of particular significance to the satirist next in line, Persius Flaccus. This man was inspired by Horace in all the right ways and it is to him that we now turn.

---

[195] Freudenburg (2001:97).

[196] Virg. *Georg.* 3.500; Freudenburg (2001:97).

Chapter Four

The Politics of Humanity and Self-Knowledge in Persius's *Satire* 1

All Satire…involves self-fashioning, usually in the sense of fashioning an effective self-image or
persona for the outside world, and sometimes in the deeper sense of fashioning, exploring and educating
an inner self to which, as poor old Polonius ironically says, one must be true.
K. Reckford, *Recognising Persius*.

…In the fell clutch of circumstance, I have not winced nor cried aloud;
under the bludgeoning of Chance, my head is bloodied but unbowed.
Beyond this place of wrath and tears, looms but the horror of the shade,
and yet the menace of the years finds and shall find me unafraid…
W. E. Henley, *Invictus*.

I

Introduction

The Roman satirist Persius Flaccus was born into an equestrian family towards the end of the
reign of Tiberius in AD 33, and died, as his biographer informs us, of stomach disease (*vitio
stomachi*) at a young age in AD 62, during the reign of Nero.[1] He wrote comparatively little (six
Satires, about six hundred and fifty lines), but his *Satires* brought something new to the genre in
that they were its only representatives to espouse a position based on the teachings of a particular
philosophical school, namely the Stoa. Some scholars regard Persius as a satirist who never quite
lived up to Lucilius, Horace or Juvenal, blaming for this either his early death[2] or his concern
with Stoic themes,[3] while others prefer to acknowledge Persius's youth and philosophical

---

[1] For bibliographical details, see W. S. Anderson (1961), 'Introduction,' in W. S. Mervin (trans.), *The Satires of
Persius*, Port Washington, 1-15.

[2] Some believe that he died before he could acquire a depth of human understanding comparable to his predecessors
Lucilius and Horace and his successor Juvenal. See, for example, Anderson (1961:11).

[3] Some critics believe that Persius was primarily a Stoic evangelist rather than a satirist and accordingly regard his
Satires as conventional versified Stoic dogma; see, for example, W. H. Semple (1961), 'The Poet Persius: Literary

partisanship without denying him the merit of a true satirist.[4] The latter group seems to feel that, like Horace, Persius was free to challenge the previously held ideas of what satire was, to make satire 'his own,' and at first sight it would appear that this challenge resulted in Persius's transforming satire into an even more inward and ironic genre. His melding of Stoicism, which in his day carried unmistakable anti-imperial connotations, with a genre which formally defined itself as an expression of 'free speech' should have, as Cucchiarelli has observed, secured Persius a reputation as a political dissident poet.[5] Nevertheless, it did not: Persius appears to have directed his Stoic doctrines to the ethical side of Roman society, criticising universal faults in human nature, and as a result his satires are not usually considered as either sharing the concerns of the traditional satiric genre[6] or of the Neronian 'Stoic opposition.'[7] Of course, the close link between moral and political criticism in imperial Rome needs to be kept in mind: especially during the time of Nero, art, literature and sexuality were seen as the court's chief preoccupations so that "critical comment on any of them ran the risk of being taken as an overall stricture of the

---

and Social Critic,' *BRL* 12, 157-174, "Persius was a young man…with a bent for sermonising… an impressive preacher with a reformist message," p. 159. More recently see R. Mayer (2005), 'Sleeping with the Enemy: Satire and Philosophy,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire*, Cambridge, 146-159, p. 156.

[4] P. Connor (1981), 'The Satires of Persius: A Stretch of Imagination,' *Ramus* 16, 55-77; A. Cucchiarelli (2005), 'Speaking From Silence: The Stoic Paradoxes of Persius's, in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire*, Cambridge, 62-80; K. J. Reckford (2009), *Recognising Persius*, Princeton: "To call Persius a Stoic is misleading. His poetry, though infused with Stoic concepts is not didactic…As satire, it asserts its own special autonomy, its own originality of exploration," p. 9.

[5] Cucchiarelli (2005:76).

[6] See, for example, J.C. Relihan (1989), 'The Confessions of Persius,' *ICS* 14, 145-167. Relihan observes that Persius's *persona,* like all post-Lucilian *personae,* is "not of a censor and critic, but of an ineffective censor and critic, who reveals why he is incapable of changing the world around him," p. 48. See also P. A. Miller (2004), *Latin Verse Satire: An Anthology and Critical Reader*, London, 2004, p. 14.

[7] Although Persius frequented the Stoic circles of such figures as Thrasea Paetus, who together with the majority of Persius's friends and teachers eventually came into direct conflict with Nero, Persius's satires are not usually considered as sharing the political concerns of this group. *Vit*. *Pers.* 30-1. For example, Anderson observed that in Persius, "One would never realise the political crisis in Rome or the militant opposition assumed by some Stoics; nor does the economical or social crisis emerge with any clarity," Anderson (1961:43); Mayer (2005:156). "His point of view is ethical, rather than political," M. Morford (1984), *Persius*, Boston, p. 2; Cucchiarelli (2005:62-80, 76).

authority in charge."[8] Be this as it may, it is certain that Persius neither singles out nor excludes anyone from the central accusation of *Satire* 1: in its climactic lines (120-121), Persius states that everyone in Rome has asses' ears.

The ass's ears of *Satire* 1 are recognised as those of the Phrygian King Midas who, in the mythical story narrated by Ovid, acquired them from Apollo as a punishment for his poor aesthetic judgment in preferring Pan's flute playing over Apollo's lyre (*Met*. 11.85.193). Being ashamed of his ears, Midas succeeded in hiding them, and the only person to know of their existence was his barber, who saw Midas's ears while shaving him. Over time, the barber found it increasingly difficult to keep his knowledge of Midas's ass's ears to himself. Finally, in order to relieve himself of the secret without incurring his king's anger, he dug a hole in a field and whispered his secret into it. Sometime later, reeds grew out of this hole and, as the wind swept through them, they whispered Midas's secret for all to hear. In lines 120-121 of *Satire* 1, Persius identified himself with Midas's barber and his own satire with the hole the barber had dug, and thus paradoxically expressed and suppressed 'the secret' that all Romans have asses' ears. Because *Satire* 1 is usually understood as being aimed at exploring the theme of how the decay of literature reflects the general moral decay of society, Persius's accusation has been interpreted as a condemnation of the Romans as aesthetically (and thus morally) corrupt: their ears, like the ears of Midas, are deaf to the music of Apollo and to true poetry.[9] Nevertheless, some further aspects of this charge can be noted, namely, in addition to referring to the literary/moral failings of Romans, the ass's ears can be interpreted as a motif intended to allude to the general

---

[8] "One could not sneeze in Neronian Rome," as Freudenburg has observed, "without being political"; see K. Freudenburg (2001), *Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal,* Cambridge, p. 11. For literature, art, and sexuality in Nero's court see, for example, Tac. *Ann*. 15.3. The quote is from V. Rudich (1997), *Dissidence and Literature under Nero: the Price of Rhetoricisation*, London, p. 11; see also pp. 207-209. Persius's moralistic denunciations would hardly pass unnoticed and, as Sullivan puts it, "it would require little intelligence or sensitivity on Nero's part to construe correctly the literary, moral and personal implications for himself of Persius's work," J. P. Sullivan (1985), *Literature and Politics in the Age of Nero***,** Ithaca, p. 109. For the possibility of more direct, although veiled, political criticism see, for example, J. P. Sullivan (1978), 'Ass's Ears and Attises: Persius and Nero,' *AJP* 99, 159-170.

[9] For example, J. C. Bramble (1974), *Persius and the Programmatic Satire: A Study in Form and Imagery*, Cambridge, pp. 135-139; R. A. Harvey (1981), *A Commentary on Persius,* Leiden, p. 51; G. Lee & W. Barr (1987), *The Satires of Persius*, Liverpool; C. S. Dessen (1996), *The Satires of Persius: Iunctura Callidus Acri*, London, p. 29; Miller (2004:198).

dehumanisation of Roman society and the resultant widespread practice of *dissimulatio.*

The Midas of Ovid's story was a human-animal hybrid who dissimulated himself as a full human by hiding his animal attributes, so Persius's charge can be interpreted as an accusation that the Romans are doing likewise.[10] According to Suetonius, Nero was convinced that everyone around him had hidden their true selves or "dissimulated their true vice and shrewdly covered it up,"[11] and our sources are full of anecdotes testifying to the prevalence of *dissimulatio* in Neronian Rome.[12] While the practice was sometimes justified and regarded as the mark of a human, as in Seneca's *De Ira*, another breed of Stoics such as Thrasea Paetus did not easily buy into such arguments. Thrasea refused to dissimulate his disgust over Nero's matricide, proceeded to walk out of the Senate and as a result paid the ultimate price: for Thrasea, as Rudich puts it, "the gap between the word and the act was becoming unbearable."[13]

Persius was not alive to witness the events surrounding Nero's matricide, but he had spent enough time with Thrasea and the other Neronian Stoics to perhaps come to share some of their

---

[10] It is interesting to note that this myth also features in several eastern European traditions where it often varies from the original in that the Roman emperor Trajan is the king of the story. See below, note 19. This story is often alluded to in contemporary Eastern European journalistic and political discourse, where to be equated with 'Trajan with the goat ears' is in fact to be accused of presenting a 'false front,' of hiding one's true face, intention or sentiment. Consequently, this remark is most often used in the political context to imply the government's hypocrisy or lack of transparency. I do not wish to suggest, of course, that this modern day usage somehow preserves a more original understanding of the myth, but simply that Persius was prompted by similar political considerations and had a similar accusation in mind when he chose the motif of the ass's ears in *Satire* 1.

[11] Suet. *Nero*, 29.

[12] For example, it is commonly said that theatrical performances with Nero playing the leading roles were not just cultural events. On these occasions, the behaviour of the audience would come under close scrutiny, and as Dio tells us, "Those who listened earnestly and cried loud hurrahs were praised and honoured, while the reminder were both disgraced and punished," Dio. 63.15.2-3. Also, Tacitus writes that the emperor's men would secretly and openly observe the expressions and reactions of the audience, *Ann.* 16.5.2-3. Those who refused to play the role and put on a show of enthusiasm could suffer grave consequences. Nevertheless, it is reported that Thrasea Paetus, together with the senator and future emperor Vespasian, refused to engage in what they must have considered cowardly and immoral behavior. Dio writes that during Nero's performance at the Juvenalia, Thrasea Paetus was the only one who refused to clap and cheer. All others faked enthusiasm and cheered, "Noble Caesar, Apollo, Augustus, the Pythian's only match! No one outdoes you, Caesar, we swear it by yourself," Dio. 61.20.4. See also S. Bartsch (1994), *Actors in the Audience: Theatricality and Doublespeak from Nero to Hadrian*, Harvard, pp. 5-12.

[13] V. Rudich (1993), *Political Dissidence Under Nero: The Price of Dissimulation*, London, p. 26.

attitudes in regards to this particular practice.[14] Nevertheless, I will not entirely step away from the aforementioned interpretations of the motif of the ass's ears, because it is my belief that Persius did not approach the practice of *dissimulatio* from a political perspective but from the perspective of Stoic ethics, perceiving it as a practice symptomatic of moral corruption in the wider sense, caused mostly by a lack of self-knowledge and a reliance on false external values. To Persius, everything situated 'outside oneself' was false because society itself had degenerated to such a degree that nothing of genuine value could be found there or relied upon. Society was dehumanised, and the only hope for a 'cure,' for one's ears to become human again, lay in turning inward.[15] I will argue that in his function as a Stoic preacher, Persius 'reveals' that all Romans have asses' ears to alert them to the symptoms of a moral disease they are unaware they suffer from and to direct them towards a cure.[16] Yet he does not truly believe that he will help anyone by doing so, because it is in the nature of this particular disease to reject the cure; people find such truths as he is offering offensive, and turn on those who deliver them precisely in order to avoid the required descent inward. This skepticism in regards to the effectiveness of his Stoic sermonising while nevertheless undertaking it is, in my opinion, precisely what makes this young Stoic into a satirist. A true Stoic would stay silent but Persius does not: he speaks his truth, slips into the role of a satirist (the barber) and in the process, I will argue, reveals to his readers some of the agony of his last days.

Satire 1 is cast in the form of a dialogue, and scholars are divided in regard to whether this dialogue is between Persius and a "friend,"[17] or whether we are seeing in *Satire* 1 an inner

---

[14] Two major Stoic influences on Persius were Annaeus Cornutus, who introduced Persius to Stoicism at the age of sixteen and who eventually became a victim of Neronian repression (*Vita*. 15ff), and Thrasea Paetus himself (*Vita*. 34ff).

[15] Scholars sometimes draw a link between Persius's ass's ears and Apuleius's *Metamorphoses*, in which the main character transforms into an ass. Both authors are seen as dealing with the animal-human boundary in order to communicate the same message: "Stubborn readers need egging forward," as Adington put it, "from their assinal form to their human and perfect shape," Adington in E. Gowers (2001), 'Apuleius and Persius,' in A. Kahane and A. Laird (eds.), *A Companion to the Prologue of Apuleius's Metamorphoses*, Oxford, 77-87, p. 78.

[16] Persius's contemporary and fellow Stoic Seneca displayed such concern when he advised his young friend Lucilius**:** "The awareness of sin is the beginning of wellbeing (*initium est salutis nototia peccati*)…for a man unconscious of sin does not wish to set it right," Sen. *Epist*. 28.9-10.

[17] See Dessen (1996:48-49); Harvey (1981:78); Lee and Barr (1987:100-101); W. Kissel (1990), *Aules Persius Flaccus Satiren*, Heidelberg, pp. 367-373.

debate within the author's self.[18] My view is that the latter is the case, and I will be referring to the two *personae* of *Satire* 1 as 'the Stoic' on the one hand and 'the poet' or 'the barber' on the other.[19] The poet *persona* exposes itself as a barber only in lines 120-121, that is, in the actual act of revealing the secret, but the preceding lines anticipate this revelation and hint at this *persona*'s true nature. From the very beginning, the debate between the poet and the Stoic centers on issues surrounding the legitimacy of writing poetry in contemporary Rome. The Stoic argues against writing for the corrupt Roman audience, seeing such a practice as symptomatic of the author's own moral corruption, while the poet makes the case for writing. As the poem progresses, it becomes evident that the poet/barber must write because he needs to expose the 'secret' of the Romans' asses' ears. Despite the Stoic's objections that such behavior is un-Stoic, the barber eventually triumphs, and by the end of the poem the 'secret' is out and the Stoic retreats to leave the barber as the sole *persona*. Persius's Stoic philosopher *persona* of *Satire* 1 is reminiscent of Horace's liar *persona* of *Epistles* 1 in that it is 'false' simply by virtue of existing; if the views it professes were reflective of the actual author's attitudes in regards to poetic production, the poetry we are now reading would never have been written. The very existence of this poetry exposes the irrelevance of the Stoic's maxims, but the poem takes us back in time, before the issue was settled in favour of writing, and it represents the (real or staged) introspection undertaken by the author so as to discover if and to what degree his Stoic maxims have been internalised.[20] The barber's triumph reveals that the Stoic *persona* had not penetrated below the author's skin; it exposes, I will argue, the author's own *dissimulatio*.

I say 'author' for one important reason. Provided that the biographical account of the author's death due to stomach disease can be trusted, the barber *persona* is not easily dissociated from Persius himself. According to some versions of the Midas myth, the barber becomes sick to the stomach under the strain of keeping his secret. This motif of the barber's disease is not in Ovid's version of the myth, but is certainly present in several more detailed versions compiled by

---

[18] For example, Relihan (1989:164); E. Gowers (1994), 'Persius and the Decoction of Nero,' in J. Elsner and J. Masters (eds.), *Reflections of Nero: Culture, History and Representation*, University of North Carolina, 113-150, p. 142.

[19] My view here approximates that of Reckford (2009:41), who argues that in *Satire* 1 Persius is "confronting his own very natural poetic ambitions with harsh Stoic realism."

[20] The debate of *Satire* 1 is comparable to Seneca's inner struggle described in *Ep*. 71.30: "I'm still urging myself to act in accordance with my own recommendations but my exhortations are not yet followed."

a number of scholars.[21] According to these versions, keeping the secret became for the barber not only a psychological burden but also a physical one: he is usually portrayed as becoming mortally ill and facing the choice of either relieving himself of his secret, or dying.[22] The symptoms of his illness are sometimes pallor and an inability to eat, yet the barber is most often described as becoming "swollen inside," or "almost bursting" with a "swollen belly."[23] After he screams his secret into the hole, the barber feels better, and his body recovers and deflates. It needs to be acknowledged, of course, that there is no reliable way of establishing with any certainty whether these details were later additions or, as I like to think, whether Ovid's version was an abbreviation of the myth of Midas current in Persius's time.[24] Nevertheless, in my mind at least, a reliance on these versions is justified by the long history of this motif's usage, dating as far back as Homer. The motif of the diseased stomach, as Hoffer has recently observed, has been the central item in a range of metaphors signifying internal suppression of emotion since at least the time of Homer, and by Cicero's time it had come to signify all things left unspoken in a politically oppressive environment.[25] We find this metaphor utilised in a similar manner by

---

[21] The survival of this myth in its various versions in Greece, the Balkans and much of Europe has been the subject of research by several folklorists; see W. Crooke (1910), 'King Midas and His Ass's Ears,' *Folklore* 22, 183-202; M. Vasemer (1938), 'Konig Trojan mit den Ziegenhoren,' *Zeitschrift fur Volkskunde* 46, 184-88; M. Boskovic-Stulli (1967), *Narodna Predaja o Vladarevoj Tajni,* Zagreb. In these versions, Trajan is usually the king of the story and the ass's ears are usually replaced with goat's ears, which some scholars consider to be an early variation on the ass's ears. It has been suggested that the story centered on Trajan primarily because 'Trajan' sounds similar to *tragos* (goat); see, for example, B. Schmidt (1877), *Griechische Marchen, Sagen und Volkslieder*, Leipzig, 224-225.

[22] Crooke (1910:185, 188); Boskovic-Stulli (1967: 214-229).

[23] For "skinny and pale," see Boskovic-Stulli (1967:214, 216). For more common symptoms of swelling, see pages 222-229. The motif of the barber's body being blown out of shape is extremely common and remains unchanged all over the world; Crooke, for example, noted the story of 'The Foot of Malik the Ra of Gilgit,' in which the servant's effort to keep his ruler's deformity a secret caused his belly "to swell day by day, owing to his keeping the knowledge to himself," Crooke (1910:193-195).

[24] If only out of considerations of space, Ovid often treated myths sparingly and incompletely; see J. Nizynska (2001), 'Marsyas's Howl: The Myth of Marsyas in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and Zbigniew Herbert's "Apollo and Marsyas",' *Comparative Literature* 53, 151-169, p. 154.

[25] For Cicero's usage of this motif in letters written during Caesar's dictatorship, see S. E. Hoffer (2007), 'Cicero's "Stomach": Political Indignation and the Use of Repeated Allusive Expressions in Cicero's Correspondence,' in R. Morello and A. D. Morrison (eds.), *Ancient Letters: Classical and Late Antique Epistolography*, Oxford, 87-106.

Persius's contemporary Seneca,[26] and as we will see, Persius's text itself offers additional clues that Persius was very much familiar with this metaphor.[27] I believe all of this suggests a high likelihood that Persius's use of this motif and of the barber *persona* might have been motivated and inspired by his own disease, and that the act of revealing the secret was in fact a poetic last shot at a cure.

I am not the first to suggest that Persius's disease might have cast a shadow on his later years and his poetry; Reckford's examination of *Satire* 3 reveals "truly horrifying" scenes of bodily decay, suffering and death, as well as "the author's unusual awareness of his own human brokenness and vulnerability."[28] Reckford also observes that Persius appears in this poem to be very much involved in the search for himself, or for his "health, sanity, wholeness, and personal integrity":[29]

> Persius (the man behind the masks) is not yet a "whole man." He is, in Stoic terms, a *proficiens,* not a *sapiens*: an advanced student, not an imperturbable sage. If some of his *personae*…embody something of the rational understanding and self-mastery that Persius has been at pains to acquire, yet other figures in his comic gallery…embody…the very real reluctance and resistance to the pain of growth (and decay) that Persius must often have felt within himself.

The *personae* of *Satire* 3, Reckford argues, are the internal voices of a man arguing with himself; he is ravaged by suffering, and longing for physical and mental health. In Stoicism, of course, mental health takes priority; physical health was one of those things that was 'preferred,' but never prioritised over the moral wellbeing that results from self-knowledge and resignation (even gratefulness) towards those aspects of life that cannot be controlled, such as one's ill fortune,

---

[26] In *De Ira* 1.4.2, Seneca speaks of suppressed anger as *stomachosus.*

[27] Also, the theme of 'inflated' and 'bloated' bellies is common in Persius's later satires; see W. T. Wehrle (1992), *The Satiric Voice: Program, Form and Meaning*, Olms-Weidmann, pp. 8-12, 20, 92-94.

[28] K. J. Reckford (1998), 'Reading the Sick Body: Decomposition and Morality in Persius's Third Satire,' *Arethusa* 31, 337-354. More recently, he expands on this argument; see Reckford (2009:93,151-209).

[29] Reckford (1998:351). For an earlier, similar argument that the voices of *Satire 3* represent Persius's division into "the whole man," his "higher nature," and "his lower nature," see A. E. Housman (1913), 'Notes on Persius,' *CQ* 7, 12-32, pp. 16-18.

physical suffering or death.[30] Like the Epicureans, the Stoics believed that death is 'nothing to us'; not to accept in good grace and with indifference the suffering caused by its inevitable approach was to the Stoics an irrational "quarrel with Nature."[31] Pain and illness were known to test the Stoic's ability and willingness to live up to the precepts of his creed; Dionysius of Heraclea was a Stoic until a painful illness made him unable to sustain the Stoic doctrine that happiness and virtue exist independently of pain; he abandoned the Stoia in favour of the Cynic school and became known as Dionysius the Turncoat (DL.7.166).

The account of Dionysius's apostasy reminds us that the proper Stoic response to disease and pain might have been too much to ask of a mere *proficiens*. Here, I intend to raise the possibility that the historical Persius struggled with these very issues and that this struggle informed much of the heated debate of the *personae* in *Satire* 1. These two *personae* represent, as mentioned above, Persius's inner voices: on the one hand a Stoic *sapiens,* armed with his precepts of indifference to and acceptance of the disease, and on the other the *proficiens* poet/barber whose imaginative self-diagnosis brings him into conflict with Stoic precepts and fuels his un-Stoic quest for the body's cure, rather than the mind's. Within the poetic world of *Satire* 1, in other words, Persius's disease was caused by the burden of his *dissimulatio* (seeing and knowing but staying silent about the disguised asses' ears that riddled Neronian Rome); the act of revealing the secret was the administering of the cure. This act was highly un-Stoic and even dehumanising, but it was an honest act: much as his predecessor admitted to his inner slavery at the end of *Epistles* 1, Persius admitted to his mortal dread at the end of *Satire* 1.

---

[30] The Stoics maintained that the virtuous person was *apathēs*, unfeeling (Diogenes 7.117), and that virtue requires *apatheia,* the absence of feeling or emotion. This was particularly important when it comes to death: resignation and acceptance of it is an important aspect of Stoic virtue. See, for example, *Epic*. 4.1.103-6: "God has brought you as a mortal to share in the festival of life" but one also has to understand that "…the festival has an end. Leave and depart like a grateful person, like a reverent person." See also Sen. *Benef*. 4.33f; P. A. Brunt (1975), 'Stoicism and Principate,' *PBSR* 43, 1-35, p. 11; J. Annas (1993), *The Morality of Happiness,* Oxford, p. 61.

[31] As Marcus Aurelius puts it: "To quarrel with circumstances is always to quarrel with Nature…To be a philosopher is…to wait with good grace for death…. Despise not death, smile rather at its coming; it is among the things that Nature wills," *Med*. 2.16-17, 9.3.

II

Satire 1: The Last Shot at a Cure

Satire 1 opens with a lamentation and the question (2), "Who will read this sort of thing?" (*quis leget haec*?). The second voice replies (2-3), "No one, two at best, as good as no one" (*nemo, Hercule, nemo, vel duo vel nemo*). The first voice appears quite affected by this pessimistic assessment and thinks this to be "a pitiful disgrace" (*turpe et miserabile*), but the second thinks otherwise because contemporary poetic standards and values are misaligned beyond repair (3-6). The second voice dismisses any concern for a popular audience and proceeds to question the validity and moral soundness of writing poetry in such a perverted society. As there is nothing in Rome that can give a true measure of what has value and what does not, he advises his interlocutor (7-8): "Don't go look outside yourself" (*nec te quaesiueris extra*) for "who is there in Rome who has not— if only I could say it?" (*nam Romae quis non — a, si fas dicere*?). At this point, he checks himself and leaves the thought unfinished. We can now identify these speakers by their respective concerns: the poet/barber opens the poem with his concern about the size of his audience, while the Stoic dismisses such concerns and denies the legitimacy of writing in contemporary Rome; he urges self-reflection and self-sufficiency as an alternative to misguided reliance on false external values. The gesture of restraining his speech in line 8 indicates the Stoic's preference for silence over speaking whatever he has in mind. We are left to assume that this unuttered line involves further criticism of the sort best left unspoken, perhaps because it is of a political nature and thus potentially dangerous.[32] The Stoic will clarify his reasons for staying silent as the poem progresses, but in lines 120-121 the Stoic is finaly defeated; he departs and leaves the barber unopposed in his resolve to scream the secret out into the ditch this poem will become.

The debate between the Stoic and poet/barber continues throughout the poem in more or less unaltered terms and they argue about such issues as poetic motivation and contemporary moral and literary standards (10-107). The Stoic continues his assault on contemporary poets,

---

[32] As Miller has observed, the question "*quis leget haec*?" now appears to be two-edged: on the one hand it asks who would want to read something like this, given the current state of literary taste, on the other it implies that caution needs to be exercised, because outright criticism can be dangerous, Miller (2004:198).

their poetry and their audience but moves easily from criticism of poetry and literary taste to outright criticism of the morals of society as a whole.[33] The poet/barber thinks the Stoic is too harsh and defends the legitimacy of producing poetry in contemporary society, as well as of finding acceptance and literary fame with contemporary audiences. Our first indication that the poet is sick, as well as our first clue as to the nature of his disease, comes relatively early in the poem, in the somewhat obscure lines 22-23. Obscurity is Persius's much-disliked trademark, and although it is his readers who are sometimes rebuked by modern critics for failing to understand him, usually it is he who is scorned for his failure to be understood.[34] In regard to lines 22-23, perhaps neither is to blame, because the key to understanding them might just lie in the neglected motif of the barber's stomach disease. We need to approach these lines by considering their wider context, or the scene of poetic recitation the Stoic describes in lines 15-21. This scene is most likely based on a similar one in Horace's *Ars Poetica*[35], and in it, the Stoic portrays his interlocutor as the morally compromised reciter (15-18):

> Scilicet haec populo pexusque togaque recenti
> et natalicia tandem cum sardonyche albus
> sede leges celsa, liquido cum plasmate guttur
> mobile conlueris, patranti fractus ocello

> You will read these things in public, perched on a lofty seat, all combed and in a fresh white toga, flashing that gemstone you finally got for your birthday. Once you have given your throat a good falsetto rinse, the voice wavers, the eye ejaculates (trans. K. Freudenburg, p. 163).

---

[33] For a treatment of this notion, see Seneca *Ep*. 114.1; Dessen (1996:23). The theme of *Satire* 1 is summarised by Dessen with Buffon's well-known observation, "Style is the man." Also Bramble (1974: 69); J. D. Sosin (1999), 'Lucretius, Seneca and Persius, 1.1-2,' *TAPA* 129, 281-299, p. 287.

[34] For a detailed survey of scholarship and of such dismissals, see Dessen (1996:1-6); Morford (1984:101). More recent discussions appear to have accepted that Persius was and always will be an obscure poet, and thus tend to be rather distrustful and to regard as 'suspect' any scholarly attempts at deciphering him. For example, Cucchiarelli holds that "any interpretation that would propose to uncomplicate an author so obviously enamoured of contradictions and short-circuiting of meaning, might well be regarded as suspect" (2005:62).

[35] Hor. *Ars*. *Poet*. 208-1. Here Horace treated what was to him the objectionable new style of flute playing. See also D. M. Hooley (2006), *Roman Satire*, Malden, p. 40; Freudenburg (2001:162).

In his poetry, Persius often equated poets, literally and physically, with the poems they wrote, their poetry reflecting their moral degeneracy and effeminacy and vice versa.[36] In this case as well, the dandified and sexualised appearance of the poet is a serious deviation from the masculine Roman norm, and the poetry he is preparing to recite is similarly lacking in the "rough solidity that Persius and Roman ideology prizes."[37] The Stoic emphasises the luxury of the poet's appearance to suggest his less-than-masculine qualities; his smart attire and ring are all signs of effeminacy.[38] Also, the calculated feminising of the performer's voice in that "falsetto rinse," as Freudenburg has observed, followed by *fractus* ("effeminate"), perhaps suggests that the poet has adjusted his voice to perform the part of a grief-stricken female.[39] In order to discern the significance of the expression "ejaculating eye" (*patranti…ocello*) Freudenburg draws attention to Horace's lines at *Ars* 428-430, where Horace describes the insincere reaction of the *adsentator* ("flatterer"), to the poetic recitation of his rich friend (*Ars*. 428-430):

> Clamabit enim "pulchre, bene, recte,"
> Pallescet super his, etiam stillabit amicis
> Ex oculis rorem, saliet, tundet pede terram.

> For he will call out "Fine! Good! Perfect!" He will change colour over them; he will even distill the dew from his friendly eyes, he will dance and thump the ground with his foot (trans. H. R. Fairclough, p. 485).

In this passage Horace deals with the standard topic of the insincerity of a client audience who, being too dependent on their wealthy patron, cannot afford to give honest criticism; consequently the audience puts on an act, pretending to be touched and impressed by the poet's performance.[40] In this scene, we may say, it is not the performer but the listeners that engage in

---

[36] Dessen (1996:23-38).

[37] Miller (2004:200); Bramble (1974:201); Harvey (1981:21-22).

[38] For a detailed examination of these motifs, see Harvey (1981:20-1); Hooley (1997), *The Knotted Thong: Structures of Mimesis in Persius*, Ann Arbour, p. 40.

[39] Freudenburg (2001:163).

[40] For the connection between bad criticism and false friendship, Persius also draws upon Horace's *Epistles* 2.3.419-428.

acting. While Persius treats this topic in lines 49-56, where he portrays the poet fooled by an insincere show of enthusiasm from his client audience,[41] in lines 15-18, we are seeing something different. I believe Freudenburg is right to suggest that Horace's 'drizzling the dew' is remembered in the 'orgasmic eye,' and that Persius uglifies it, perhaps to express an attitude of maximum disgust and to further add to the perversity of the whole scene.[42] But this deliberate uglification is not the only difference Persius is inviting us to spot; namely, unlike Horace, he is not concerned with portraying a scene of client insincerity. The imagery in *Satire* 1 (15-18) is centered solely on the reciter; his calculated appearance and performance suggest that the Stoic is anxious, for the time being at least, to take the focus off the audience and portray the reciter as the main performer.[43]

In the following lines, Persius describes the audience's reception of this poetry in terms of perverse sexuality (18-21):

> Tunc neque more probo uideas nec noce serena
> Ingentis trepidare Titos, cum carmina lumbum
> intrant et tremulo scalpuntur ubi utima uersu

> Then you can see sturdy citizens quiver in unseemly style and with unsteady voice as the poetry enters their loins and as their inmost parts are fretted by the trembling verse (trans. J. R. Jenkinson, p. 13).

The poetic scene is envisioned as a sexual penetration: the penetrating party being the poet and his poetry and the penetrated party being the Roman cultural elite attending the recitation.[44] Several reasons why Persius opted for such overtly pornographic imagery have been suggested; that most often proposed is that Persius wished to present the poet, his poetry and its consumers

---

[41] While Persius, indulging in his satiric freedom, dares call him a fool, the client audience does not have that luxury; they express themselves only indirectly, taunting their patron from behind his back, waggling their hands to resemble asses' ears (56-60). See also Reckford (1962:480); Freudenburg (2001:174-175).

[42] Freudenburg (2001:163-164); Harvey (1981:22); Miller (2004:201). Lucilius in his explicit eighth book imagines a similar metaphorical notion in reverse: an ejaculating penis breaking into tears, *fr*. 335W.

[43] Freudenburg (2001:163).

[44] Miller (2004:200).

as degraded and effeminised in the extreme.[45] It is also important to note that Roman authors used the metaphor of sexual penetration to suggest deceptive external appearances; it was applied to hypocrites who looked rugged and masculine but were corrupted within.[46] Such people were seen as worse than those who were effeminate in their appearance;[47] they were, in short, our classic dissimulating subhumans. This imagery also presents Persius's audience as spectators of an entirely different nature from those we saw earlier in Horace. While the audience in Horace's poetic scene were merely putting on a show of enthusiasm, Persius's audience is *genuinely* enjoying the performance. The Stoic describes this audience as trembling (*trepidare*) in their seats from the sexual and aesthetic pleasure they are receiving; the pleasure is so intense that it makes them literally incapable of hearing this poetry calmly. This is not a Horatian audience with counterfeit tears and emotion, but a genuinely and, as Freudenburg puts it, "artfully screwed" bunch.[48]

Keeping this point in mind, we now approach lines 22-23:[49]

> Tun, uetule, auriculis alienis colligis escas,
> auriculis[50] quibus et dicas cute perditus 'ohe'

---

[45] Bramble (1974:78-79); Harvey (1981: 21-22); Miller (2004:200-201).

[46] Juv. 2.9-19; Mart. 1.24, 1.96, 6.56; C. Edwards (1993), *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome*, Cambridge, p. 73.

[47] Edwards (1993:74).

[48] Freudenburg (2001:163).

[49] The following translation is in W. J. N. Rudd (1970), 'Persiana,' *CJ* 20, 282-288, p. 284.

[50] In scholarship, the *auriculis* in this line has often been seen as "undeniably clumsy," Bramble (1974: 80), and thus, following the lead of the nineteenth century scholar J. Madvig, scholars have most often chosen to replace altogether the second *auriculis* with *articulis* ('fingers'). The line is thus translated: "Are you, old man, composing for other's ears the sort of fare to which you, with your ruined joints and skin, would say 'no more of that?," Harvey (1981:23). For various other possibilities, see J. R. Jenkinson (1980), *Persius: The Satires*, Warminster, pp. 69-70. Lonely voices insist that the *articulis* replacement has neither textual nor grammatical foundation, but they appear to be seldom heard, as most recent translations tend to favour the *articulis* replacement; S. Morton Braund (2004), *Juvenal and Persius,* Cambridge, p. 50. Bramble (1974) does acknowledge that a marginal case could be made for retaining the second *auriculis* by appealing to the prominence of Persius's allusions to ears. He holds that the second *auriculis* might have been anticipating the climax towards which everything in the satire leads, that is, towards the final revelation in line 122, *auriculis asini quis non habet*? I think that Bramble is partly right here, except we are not forced to invoke emphasis alone in apology for the presence of this repetition. The above translation is in Rudd

Are you, you old man, collecting tidbits for other people's ears — ears to which you will also have to say "Hold on! (Enough)" when your body is blown out of shape? (trans. W. J. N. Rudd, p. 284).

In line 22, the Stoic describes the poetry the poet produces as "food for the audience's ears." These ears (*auriculae*) are in the diminutive, a form more vulgar than *auris* and more suggestive of the weakness and moral corruption of those feeding on these sounds. In Persius's later satires, as Reckford has observed, he uses the metaphor of 'little ears' to convey his attitude towards men who are too easily flattered; men with hungry or thirsty ears are the fools who trust in popular opinion rather than in self-knowledge.[51] The audience is clearly morally corrupted but the poet does not seem to mind; on the contrary, in order to earn their approval, he exploits their moral weakness by producing and reciting poetry calculated to suit the tastes of their hungry 'little ears.' The poet, as Reckford has noticed, is locked with his audience in a relationship where "both parties suffer from the symbiotic relationship of flatterers and flattered, false criticism and false creative standards."[52] Because he directs his creative energy primarily towards accommodating the tastes of his audience, putting on whatever act and uttering whichever lines his audience may demand and love, the poet appears here to be engaging in *dissimulatio*. This *dissimulatio* is implied rather than directly stated, but if we turn to *Satire* 4, where Persius presents these same issues in a dialogue between Socrates and the young politician Alcibiades, this becomes much clearer. Alcibiades appears as someone extremely popular with the masses (4.7-15),[53] but Socrates, who sees his darker side — his vanity, superficiality and hypocrisy —

(1970:284), who I believe made a good case for the retention of the second *auriculis*, arguing that they stand for 'audience.'

[51] For example, 4.50. Persius was not unique in this regard and Horace, among others, has also represented man's susceptibility to flattery with similar metaphors; see *Sat*. 2.5.32-3; *Epist*. 1.16.26. See also Cic. *Ad*. *Quint*. *fr*. 2.15; also Mart. 5.67.2; Amm. 19.12.5. Persius probably adopted the Horatian preference for diminutive *auricula*; see *Sat*. 2.5.32-33; K. J. Reckford (1962), 'Studies in Persius,' *Hermes* 90, 476-504, p. 479.

[52] Reckford (1962:479).

[53] He appears to possess a sort of charismatic presence which the mob cannot resist; he can silence them, for example, with a mere wave of the hand, Pers. *Sat*. 4.7. Persius dismisses them as *blando popello* (4.15); they 'allure' and 'charm' Alcibiades, much as he charms them. See Harvey (1981:111); P. Connor (1981), 'The Satires of Persius: A Stretch of the Imagination,' *Ramus* 16, 55-77, p. 58.

describes him as someone with an ugly wound in his groin disguised by a golden belt (4.43-40). While Alcibiades's golden belt deceives the masses, the masses also deceive Alcibiades or, at least, assist him in his own self-deception. Alcibiades sees their approval as proof that nothing is wrong with him, on the surface or below, and accordingly, he lashes out at Socrates: "If everyone thinks me a fine person, why shouldn't I believe them?" (*egregium cum me vicinia dicat, non credam*?). Alcibiades clearly prefers to view himself in the same light as his mob of flatterers who, while themselves deceived by Alcibiades's appearance, collaborate with his efforts to convince himself that he is deficiency-free and that no wound exists.[54] Because Alcibiades's *dissimulatio* (hiding of his wound) involves both deception and self-deception,[55] the advice Socrates gives him is not to uncover his wound, but to engage in sincere introspection in order to confront his real self (4.51-52): "Live by yourself [in your own house] and learn how barely you are furnished" (*tecum habita; noris qam sit tibi curta supellex*).[56] The injunction is, as Connor puts it, to "live with yourself: do not try to hide the truth; cope with the truth. The furniture inside you is skimpy and you had better realise that."[57]

The poet of *Satire* 1 and the Alcibiades of *Satire* 4 are clearly kindred souls in that they both refuse to turn inwards and instead prefer to "look for themselves outside themselves"; Alcibiades in the approval of the masses, the poet in the approval of his deprived audience. What they both 'find' is, inevitably, the false mask-like self of a dissimulator; being bereft of self-knowledge and self-deceived, they necessarily deceive the external world. The fundamental 'insincerity' of the poet's performance in lines 18-23 would have resonated with Persius's

---

[54] Interestingly, the view of *dissimulatio* as self-deception accords perfectly with that of Vasily Rudich, whose work belongs to the relatively new field of historical psychology. *Dissimulatio*, according to Rudich, was the result of conflicting mental forces and it "operated on the conscious level but also, if it became habitual, on the subconscious…on the one hand it was subject to pangs of conscience; on the other, to self-excuse through defense mechanisms," Rudich (1993:22-23). In his study, Rudich concentrates chiefly on the writings of Seneca, Lucan and Petronius and thus sidelines the very author in whose writings, I believe, he would likely find his greatest support.

[55] The tendency of men to believe flattery directed at them was often commented on in ancient sources; among others, Cicero wrote that: "flattery delights these men…they regard that empty speech as proof of their praiseworthiness…" Cic. *Lael*. 89, 97-98; Sen. *Tranq*. 1.16-17, 1.116; *Ep*. 59.11; *Be*. 5.7.4.

[56] The need for recognising one's own inner imperfections and thereby attaining true self-knowledge (a subject summarised by the well-known Greek proverb *gnothi seauton*, 'know yourself') is a prominent message in Persius and the chief subject of *Satire* 4. See Morford (1984:51-2); Relihan (1989:160-161).

[57] Connor (1981:62).

contemporaries, in particular when it came to members of Nero's literary circle.[58] The members of this circle were frequently rewarded for their participation with money and offices,[59] and these extra incentives, it seems, often awakened the inner artist in men who would otherwise have remained ignorant of their talent. Seneca's enemies accused him of starting to write more verse once Nero became interested in it,[60] while the future emperor Nerva, also a one-time member of the circle, appears in subsequent years to have lost his enthusiasm for writing poetry.[61] It is unlikely, as we will see below, that the Stoic had these men in mind when he portrayed the poet in such a way, but the ease of recognising them in these lines shows how easily Persius's ethical concerns and themes would have acquired a political dimension in contemporary Rome where such 'insincere' political/poetical practices were the norm. The same, as we will see below, is also true in regard to the ass's ears.

The poet in *Satire* 1 is not a Neronian opportunist, but someone closer to home. In line 23, the Stoic says to the poet that he will not be able to continue this game for long; he will become burdened by the effort of producing the poetry demanded by his pleasure-hungry audience and, having become inflated in his body, he will eventually have to say *Ohe* ("Enough!"). The phrase *cute perditus* is associated with dropsy, with a body being inflated and blown out of shape.[62] In the opinion of most commentators, Persius draws here on Horace's passage in *Sermones* where Tiresias urges Ulysses to flatter his patron (S. 2.5.96-98):

> Importunus amat laudari: donec 'ohe iam!'
> Ad caelum manibus sublatis dixerit urge,
> Crescentem tumidis infla sermonibus utrem.

> Does he bore you with his love of praise? Then ply him with it till with hands uplifted to heaven

---

[58] Nero's artistic enthusiasm was famous and among his various artistic activities, he also formed a literary circle that met after dinner, see Tac. *Ann*. 4.16; Suet. *Nero*, 30.

[59] The most prominent member of this circle was Lucan and his reward was premature quaestorship. Two future emperors, Aulus Vitellius and Titus, also shared Nero's enthusiasm and were accordingly rewarded, Suet. *Vit*. 11; *Tit*. 3; Sullivan (1978:163-166).

[60] Tac. *Ann*. 14.52.

[61] Mart. 8.70, 2ff.

[62] See, for example, Reckford (1962:480). Describing a frog which inflated itself in an attempt to rival a cow, Phaedrus (i. 24) says: *rirsus intendit cutem / maiore nisu*. Also see Rudd (1970:284).

he cry "enough!" and blow up the swelling bladder with turgid phrases (trans. H. R. Fairclough, p. 207).

So, it appears that Persius invites us once again to turn to Horace and to consider the relationship of poet and audience in terms of insincere flattery. If we accept this parallel, we can conclude that Persius accuses his interlocutor of catering to an audience (their ears) with flattery, which they enjoy. But, as before, Persius reverses the metaphor and makes the flatterer (the poet) the inflated one and the one to say "Enough!." This line is usually interpreted in terms of passive homosexuality,[63] but more can be said. In the lines that immediately follow (24-25), the poet replies: "What is the point of learning, unless the passion born within me, like the leavening of the hardy fig tree, bursts through my liver?" (*quo didicisse, nisi hoc fermentum et quae simul intus innata est rupto iecore exierit caprificus?*). The verb *fermentare* can mean 'to make swollen' and *fermentum* is often used to describe an internal swelling of emotions like rage and anxiety.[64] When the poet uses this word, he depicts, as has often been noticed, the urge to communicate his inspiration as something which swells inside him and distends him.[65] The representation of suppressed knowledge as a wild fig tree, which threatens to penetrate the poet's guts, is not coincidental. This tree was known for causing fissures in stones, and so its rupturing of the liver tends to suggest an irresistible and inevitable exit of things suppressed.[66] The liver itself has traditionally been taken as the seat of passions and emotions, suggesting that the suppressed knowledge is emotionally distressing.[67] The visible physical effects of this suppressed knowledge on the poet's body are also suggested. The swollen liver would perhaps make the poet's belly appear inflated, recalling the earlier *cute perditus*, or the poet's body becoming swollen from the weight of his performance. In the following line the Stoic acknowledges that the poet's body suffers and is sick as a result of this suppressed knowledge; in line 26 he says to him: "So that is the source of your pallor and exhaustion!" (*en pallor et senium!*). Most explicitly, in

---

[63] In short, it is claimed that Persius intended to indicate that the poet is destroyed in body by his vicious sexual habits, making him sexually deficient and unable to withstand the same physical pleasure he gives to the audience. See, for example, Bramble (1974: 86); Harvey (1981:23); Miller (2004:201).

[64] As in Plaut. *Merc*. 959.

[65] Bramble (1974:92); Harvey (1981:25).

[66] For wild fig trees splitting rocks, see Juvenal, *Sat*. 10.144.5; Harvey (1981:24-25).

[67] Miller (2004:201).

line 57, the Stoic mentions what are most likely further symptoms of this malady, describing the poet as having a "fat, hanging and protuberant belly" (*pinguis aqualiculus propenso sesquipede extet*).

So, the poet performs for his audience that poetry which they find extremely agreeable, but at the same time he is withholding something from them. That which he withholds and which, as the following lines indicate, is causing him considerable discomfort, is as yet left unspoken. This withholding from his audience of what he really wishes to say, while performing for them that which they wish to hear, represents another way in which the poet's performance could be considered *dissimulatio*. The descriptions of the poet's physical discomfort, originating mostly in the region of his belly, recalls the range of metaphors of physical illness current in Persius's time to represent the frustrated anger that comes from suppressing one's speech. The term *stomachus* is the most common item while others include indigestion (*bilis, concoquere, deuorare*) and, interestingly, bursting (*dirumpi*).[68] These metaphors, according to Hoffer:[69]

> …encapsulate… a sense of indignation at political events combined with impotence and suppression and the ensuing internal emotional suppression, the frustration that comes from no longer being able to express one's views and shape one's plans freely. The characteristic metaphor for this mood, indigestion, is an ailment of frustrated aggression redirected against the self.

On several occasions Cicero describes himself as becoming dyspeptic through resentment and repression; at one point he even "throws up" the cause of this illness; that is, he throws up digestive fluid, but the overlap between vomiting fluid and throwing off repressed anxieties is underlined.[70] After this, Cicero writes, he felt better, "like some god had healed him" (*Fam.* 14.7.1). Considering that Midas's barber will soon enter the scene, we may also be justified in associating this imagery with the post-Classical versions of Midas's myth reported by Crooke and Boskovic-Stulli. In these versions the barber's *dissimulatio*, or his fearful refusal to speak his mind, made him sick and inflated his belly, which forced him to eventually reveal his secret, if only to a ditch. In line 23, the Stoic indicates that the poet will not be able to physically endure

---

[68] Hoffer (2007:90).

[69] Hoffer (2007:88).

[70] Hoffer (2007:97-98).

his performance for much longer, and that he will end it with the resignation *Ohe*! This, I believe, is a prediction of what will eventuate in lines 120-121, where Midas's barber will speak out the 'secret' of all Romans having asses' ears.

The secret of the Romans' asses' ears, I believe, is what distends the poet's belly and makes him sick. The act of revealing his secret in 120-121 is here presented as the end of the poet's activity of pleasing the audience with his calculated, pleasure-giving words. Presumably, this act represents the opposite of *dissimulatio* and something the audience of 18-21 will no longer appreciate. Nevertheless, even though he predicts it, the Stoic disapproves of it: in line 25, he acknowledges that the poet's poor physical state is caused by his suppressed knowledge but shows no sympathy for him and says, "Disgraceful! Does knowing have so little worth unless you are known to know such things?"(*… o mores, usque adeone scire tuum nihil est nisi te scire hoc sciat alter*). The Stoic displays here the same attitude as in line 8 when he restrained his own speech; he demands silence because he regards the act of speaking out as incompatible with Stoic self-sufficiency, which here clearly involves being content with keeping one's knowledge to oneself. If we accept that this debate represents Persius's inner dialogue and thus acknowledge that the Stoic shared his body with a man he acknowledged as physically sick, we can see that his detachment and lack of sympathy for his own physical suffering is precisely what one would expect from a Stoic philosopher under these circumstances. He expects himself to bear his discomfort like a Stoic would.

From here on, the issue of poetic motivation takes centre stage, with the poet trying to persuade the Stoic by additional arguments why he should be allowed to speak up (write). In line 28 he refers to fame and popular praise: "But, it is splendid to be pointed out, to hear people say 'That's him!'"(*at pulchrum est dignito monstrari et dicer 'his est,'* 28). The Stoic, of course, is dismissive and has nothing but contempt for such motives, especially given the moral state of contemporary Romans. The poet also tells the Stoic that posthumous fame, to have one's words preserved, remembered and studied by schoolchildren (29, 40-43), is a legitimate reason to write. The Stoic remains uncompromising and similarly denounces all of these as false values and invalid (30-40, 44-62). In contemporary Roman society, he reminds the poet, true values are suffocated by a perversion of taste and insincere praise; both authors and audience are caught up in a system of mutual self-deception (44-62). The increasingly heated debate continues and, by line 107, the Stoic is on the defensive and searching for additional reasons for maintaining his

silence. Here for the first time he indicates that what the poet wishes to say is offensive to their audience and tells him (107-109): "But why must you scrub soft little ears with a truth that bites? Take care the doorways of the Great don't cool towards you" (*sed quid opus teneras mordaci radere vero auriculas? vide sis ne maiorum tibi forte limina frigescant*). The verb *radere* suggests a medical treatment, like a doctor cleaning an infected area of skin,[71] and the Stoic cautions the poet that his treatment will not be well received, that the gentle ears of the Romans are easily offended.[72] The poet now appears riddled with emotions and anger: he mentions an explicit prohibition of direct criticism in Neronian Rome and sarcastically equates it with a holy precinct that must remain undisturbed (113-114): "This is a holy place; piss outside, boys!"(*pueri, sacer est locus, extra meiite*). Here (114) it seems that the Stoic realises that he has lost the battle, for he retreats by saying simply: *discedo* ("I give up, I'm off"). The poet continues his rant unopposed, angrily lamenting the unfortunate times he lives in: Lucilius, indulging in republican freedom, could say whatever he wanted, while Horace, writing in the empire, only touched on vices: no names were mentioned and no pain inflicted (114-118). But where does all that leave him, he wonders (119-120): "And may I not mutter one word? Not anywhere, to myself, not even to a ditch?" (*me muttire nefas? nec clam? nec cum scrobe? nusquam? hic tamen infodiam*). The dangerous secret first announced in line 8 now comes out (120-121): "Yes ― here I will dig it in. I have seen the truth; I have seen it with my own eyes. O my book: who is there who has not the ears of an ass?" (*hic tamen infodiam hic tamen infodiam vidi, vidi ipse libelle: auriculas asini quis non habet?*)

The barber's act is highly un-Stoic in that he has clearly failed to bear his physical discomfort in the silent and dignified manner worthy of a Stoic. His prioritising of bodily health shows his inability to internalise the Stoic precepts and find in them any comfort for his physical suffering; his Stoicism is but a mask, a skin-deep external *persona*. In the story of Midas and his barber, the barber recovers his health after revealing his secret, but the author of this poem died of stomach disease shortly after he completed his *Satires*, just before his twenty-eighth birthday. Further support for the view that Persius's disease might have inspired his choice of the barber *persona* is found in the *Prologue,* which is in the form of a personal manifesto consisting of a modest fourteen lines. In the first seven lines, Persius rejects the traditional sources of divine

---

[71] For example, Reckford (1962:500).

[72] Pers. *Sat*. 1.108-109.

inspiration claimed in famous passages by Ennius and Hesiod (Hippocrene, Helicon, Parnassus and Pirene) and places his poetry on a somewhat lower level.[73] In the last seven lines, Persius develops the theme of poetic motivation and, in lines 10-11 he names, of all things, the "belly" as the only true motivating source for poetic undertaking. Persius writes: *magister artis ingenique lagitor venter, negatas artifex sequi voces* ("Doctor of Arts and Bestower of Genius, the Belly, that gifted searcher-out of words withheld"). A century ago, Leo conjectured that two Horatian passages inspired the two halves of the Prologue respectively; the first in *Sermones*, where Horace excludes himself from contemporary poets, and the second in *Epistles*, where he says hunger compelled him to write.[74] Nevertheless, because we know that Persius did not share Horace's need to be accepted in privileged patronage circles, it is usual to consider the 'belly' in the *Prologue* to be the source of poetic inspiration only in the servile Neronian client poets whom Persius attacks. To these scholars Persius's 'belly' is a "fashioner of speech denied by nature" (nature implying natural talent), suggesting that the belly's lower desires usually furnish a substitute for inspiration.[75] Others disagree and claim that these lines indeed reflect Persius's true ideals and that in them Persius counters airy ideas of poetry (the 'mists of Helicon') with the down-to-earth semi-pagan realism of the belly's urges.[76] For the reasons outlined above, my sympathies are clearly with the latter assessment.

As for the politics of the barber's revelation, we might remember that the Stoic accuses the Romans of literary and moral failings from the very first lines of *Satire* 1 and yet he withholds the accusation of them having asses' ears, creating the impression that perhaps this particular accusation is more offensive to the audience and potentially dangerous to the author. If current interpretations of this metaphor are to be accepted, Persius's 'dangerous truth,' as

---

[73] Hes. *Theog*. 1ff, *Anth. Palat*. 7.42. In his epic, Ennius related how he had dreamed that Homer appeared to him on Mt. Parnassus and told him that his soul had came to occupy the body of Ennius. See Lucretius, 1.117, Propertius, 3.3.1. The Muses were said to inhabit Hippocrene and the Parnassus sacred to Apollo, the Greek god and patron of poetry. Persius described himself as *semipaganus* (6), a controversial term that is usually translated as 'half rustic,' perhaps indicating that Persius intended to draw his inspiration from the everyday world of the common man, Freudenburg (2001:149-150). A parallel may perhaps be found in *Sat*. 5.14 where Persius's interlocutor tells him *verba toga sequeris* ("you follow the words of the common man [ordinarily dressed]"). See also Morford (1984:27).

[74] Hor. *Ser*. 1.4.39-40; *Epist*. 2.2.51-2; F. Leo (1910), 'Zum Text des Persius und Juvenal,' *Hermes* 45, 43-56, p. 48.

[75] C. Witke (1970), *Latin Satire: The Structure of Persuasion*, Leiden, p. 80; Dessen (1996:16); Harvey (1981.12).

[76] Reckford (1962:502); Relihan (1989:152).

scholars have often noted, is disappointedly mild and innocuous, perhaps a sort of private joke.[77] Nevertheless, by interpreting the asses' ears as symbolising *dissimulatio* we can see that Persius's treatment of this metaphor as a dangerous secret was no joke — far from it. Even though the practice of *dissimulatio* was fully recognised by Persius's contemporaries, it was indeed something of a secret, or at least a truth that could easily cause offence in certain circles. According to Dio, in AD 39 Titius Rufus was charged with "having declared that the Senate thought one way and voted another" and committed suicide before the trial was over.[78] Perhaps the Stoic recalled Rufus's example when he warned the barber not to scrape the easily offended "gentle ears" (*auriculas teneras*) of the "Great Romans." But even in the lines that follow 121, Persius continued to insist on the outspoken and political nature of his *Satires,* although he seems to have thought this would be perceived only by one or two of his ideal readers. These, Persius foresees, will be readers of Old Comedy, in particular, of the 'big three': Cratinus, Eupolis and Aristophanes (123-127). Old Comedy was known for its freedom of speech and the adjectives Persius attaches to these three greats are important: Cratinus astonishes the reader with his 'audacity,' Eupolis with his 'rage,' while Aristophanes is 'enormous.'[79] Neronian Rome, of course, would not tolerate the type of audacity associated with Old Comedy, but still, Persius insists that everything — all the naked truth, daring and rage the reader can find in the three greats of Attic Old Comedy — could also be found in his satire; it is all there, but, as Freudenburg puts it, "few can handle it. Maybe two, maybe none. Can you?"[80]

What sets the reader of Old Comedy apart from the rest is that he is the only one represented as having 'healthy' *aures* (ears) with which he can listen to Persius (125) while everyone else, as well as having asses' ears, is also endowed with the diminutive 'diseased' *auriculas*. The medical metaphor of diseased and healed ears recurs constantly in Persius's collection of poems; the diseased ears are always in the diminutive, signifying moral corruption, susceptibility to flattery and a lack of self-knowledge, while healthy ears signify the achievement

---

[77] For example, G. L. Hendrickson (1928), 'The First Satire of Persius,' *CP* 23, 97-112, pp. 101-102; Bramble (1974:131, 136-9); Relihan (1989:153); Cucchiarelli (2005:77).

[78] Dio. 59.18, 5.

[79] Pers. *Sat*. 1.123-127. See also Freudenburg (2001:181).

[80] Freudenburg (2001:82); Reckford (2009:10), "It requires the reader with openable ears, one that can accept the cleansing bite of strong satire, which diagnoses and operates upon our individual and social sickness…"

of moral health.[81] The road to cure usually leads inward; what is required is courageous introspection leading to self-knowledge and ultimately to true humanity.[82] Nevertheless, the problem, as Persius saw it, was that people were ready to do almost anything to avoid the required introspection: "No one hazards the climb down into oneself, no one" (*nemo in sese temptat descendere, nemo,* 4.23). Persius credits Stoic philosophy and his Stoic master Cornutus for "weeding his ears" in order "to plant the Stoic seed" (5.63) but, as important as philosophy is in the later satires, in *Satire* 1 Persius claimed that the cure for 'diseased ears' was Old Comedy and not Stoic philosophy. Persius describes the ears of the readers of Old Comedy as "well steamed" by the application of Old Comedy (126), which, as scholars have long recognised, also indicates the healing function of this genre.[83]

The statement that Old Comedy can benefit the morally diseased is sometimes taken as a joke; it is unlikely, it is held, that a Stoic moralist could seriously think the reading of Old Comedy could have a positive moral effect.[84] Ancient moralists indeed found much that was offensive and objectionable in Old Comedy,[85] but Persius appears very much aware of these objections. Having identified the reader of Old Comedy as his ideal reader, Persius states clearly that this does not include those who indulge in mockery of the "one-eyed man for being one-

---

[81] For individual examples, see Reckford (1962:476-504, 485, 498); Bramble (1974:153).

[82] For this theme in Persius, see R. G. Peterson (1973), 'The Unknown Self in the Fourth Satire of Persius,' *CJ* 68, 205-9; C. Littlewood (2002), '*Integer Ipse*? Self-Knowledge and Self-Representation in Persius *Satires* 4,' *Phoenix* 56, 56-83; J. Henderson (1993), 'Persius's Didactic Satire: The Pupil as Teacher,' *Ramus* 22, 123-148. For Stoic self-knowledge and self-scrutiny, see also C. Edwards (1997), 'Self-Scrutiny and Self-Transformation in Seneca's Letters,' *G&R* 44, 23-38; S. Bartsch (2006), *The Mirror of the Self: Sexuality, Self-Knowledge, and the Gaze in the Early Roman Empire,* Chicago, p. 7.

[83] The poems these readers are reading are described as *decoctius* ("boiled down," 1.125), a generally rare word in Latin but one that was used by Persius's near-contemporary Celsus in his *De Medicina* at least 79 times to describe medicines concentrated from various ingredients, some of which were used for ear inflammations; see Freudenburg (2001:182).

[84] Relihan (1989:157).

[85] Indeed, Aristophanes became proverbial as the author who made fun of serious things, Luc. *Pisc*. 25; *Bisc*. *Acc*. 33, and Plutarch assailed him for the use of extreme expressions, and for obscurity, depravity and vulgarity, Plut. *Mor*. 854a. Given these objections, it is sometimes thought that the ideal audience Persius imagines in *Satire* 1 is a "little ridiculous," Relihan (1989:157).

eyed," and of the Greeks for the silly shoes they wear.[86] His ideal reader does not point his fingers at others and instead, he implies, concerns himself with his own faults. Persius considered such people to be extremely rare; in *Satire* 4, for example, he adapted a parable of Aesop's by imagining men walking through life with a knapsack on their backs containing their faults; all men, Persius laments, can only see the next man's knapsack; none dares to look in his own.[87] Ironically, we can perhaps credit this very tendency for the fact that by the time Persius's biography was compiled, the received wisdom was that Persius's accusation was a later addition by Cornutus: what Persius really said, it was decided, was that Nero was the one with the ears of an ass.[88] But the readers of Old Comedy, as Persius describes them in *Satire* 1, would never opt for such convenient truths; they are more likely to stare at their own knapsack and thus more likely to recognise *themselves* as the targets of *Satire* 1. Only they would be able to recognise themselves as contributors to the mass *dissimulatio* of Neronian Rome and simultaneously see in *Satire* 1 politics and daring comparable to that of Old Comedy. They would see, in other words, that Persius's revelation is likely the same one that cost Titius Rufus his head.

The act of equating *Satire* 1 with Midas's barber's ditch is perhaps itself significant in terms of understanding the role Persius assigns to this poem. Depending on the version of Midas's myth, this act makes us readers into *listeners* of either the reeds that grew out of the ditch or, as is far more common, of the flutes which shepherds made out of these reeds and which were only able to play the words "the king has ass's ears."[89] In the Greco-Roman tradition, the

---

[86] Pers. *Sat*. 1.127-33.

[87] Pers. *Sat*. 4.22-24.

[88] The question of the *Vita*'s authorship has not been settled, but it is most often attributed to the grammarian M. Valerius Probus who wrote a few decades after Persius's death. The wealth of small autobiographical details indicates that it drew on an earlier authentic source; see Rudich (1993:278-9). For many years the view was that the accusation that all Romans had asses' ears had political overtones since, according to the *Vita Persii,* Persius originally wrote the more particular: *auriculus asini Mida rex habet* ("King Midas has the ears of an ass") *Vit*. *Pers*. 121. Fearing that this remark would be thought to apply to the Emperor Nero, Persius's friend and tutor Cornutus (it is said) substituted the more general formulation, accusing everyone of having asses' ears, *Vit*. *Pers*. 121; J. P. Sullivan (1978), 'Ass's Ears and Attises: Persius and Nero,' *AJP* 99, 159-170, pp. 159-161.

[89] In Ovid, the secret was exposed by the reeds that grew out of the ditch and were blown by the wind, but in other versions of the myth, the secret was exposed by the flutes that shepherds made from these reeds, Boskovic-Stulli (1967:28-34); Crooke (1910:185-198). This variation was probably known to Persius because, in Greek myth, the flute was invented by Pan who arrived at the idea by listening to the musical sounds made by the wind moving the

flute was an instrument of social disorder, a challenger of social harmony and hierarchy and a direct opposite to the harmony-inducing Apollo's lyre.[90] The myth usually seen as representing the opposition of flute and lyre is that of the musical contest between Apollo and the satyr Marsyas, which, in Fulgentius at least, is the very same contest Midas judged when he earned his ass's ears.[91] Marsyas challenged Apollo with the flute (*aulos*) and lost, and Apollo flayed him alive.[92] In this 'Greco-Phrygian' tradition of Marsyas, he is often depicted as a foolish and rightly punished challenger of the universal order,[93] but in the Roman world we encounter a conceptually different Marsyas.[94] In the Roman republican tradition, Marsyas was a daring artist who was more than fit to challenge Apollo and was defeated only by being cheated; the Romans placed his statue in the Forum, having regarded him as a wise satyr, a teacher of augury, the protector of *libertas* and one of the great benefactors and saviours of mankind.[95] With the outset of the

---

reeds backwards and forwards, see Ovid *Metam*. 1.691; Virg. *Ecloga* 2.31. Also, Lucretius sings, "Fond Zephyrs playing on the hollow reeds, first taught the peasant how to use a pipe." For more details, see T. L. Southgate (1908), 'The Evolution of the Flute,' *Proceedings of the Musical Association,* 34, 155-175, pp. 157-158.

[90] Plato allowed only the lyre and the cithara in his ideal state, while he saw the flute as suitable only for the fields and for the use of shepherds: "We are not innovating my friends, in preferring Apollo and the instrument of Apollo to Marsyas and his instrument," *Rep*. 3.399c-e. Aristotle thought the flute should be excluded from education because of its "exciting influence," *Pol.* 1341a. See also Plut. *Alcibiades*, 2. For Roman attitudes, see Cic. *Leg*. 2.22-39. Livy also writes of flute players being exiled from Rome, 9.30.5-10.

[91] L. G. Whitebread (1971), *Fulgentius the Mythographer*, Ohio, p. 93-96. Although originally they were quite distinct kinds of beings, later writers, especially the Roman poets, confound the Satyrs with the Pans and the Italian Fauns, and accordingly represent them with larger horns and goats' feet, Hor. *Carm*. 2.19.4; Prop. 3.15.34; Ov. *Met*. 1.193, 6.392, 14.637.

[92] For example, E. Finkelpearl (2009), 'Marsyas the Satyr and Apuleius of Madauros,' *Ramus* 38, 7-42, pp. 9-10.

[93] Plut. *Mor*. 713d; M. M. Colavito (1989), *The Pythagorean Intertext in Ovid's Metamorphoses*, New York. In modern times, this myth is often interpreted as representing "the conflict between the 'Apollonian' and 'Dionysiac' psychic dispositions, with one standing for reason, knowledge and discursive thought, the other for passion, disorder and mysticism," see E. Wyss (1996), *The Myth of Apollo and Marsyas in the Art of the Italian Renaissance: An Inquiry into the Meaning of Images,* London, pp. 26-27.

[94] Finkelpearl (2009:10).

[95] Diod. Sic. 3.58.3. Marsyas appears on Roman Republican coins together with Bacchus (=Liber Pater), Hercules and Dioscuri, as a protector of *libertas*, R. J. Rowland (1966), 'Numismatic Propaganda Under Cinna,' *TAPhA* 97, 407-419, p. 417. In the Roman Forum there was a statue of Marsyas as a wise old silenus, embodying this positive version of him, Pliny, N.H. 34.11, 24; Hor. *Sat*. 1.6.119-121. See also J. P. Small (1982), *Cacus and Marsyas in Etrusco-Roman Legend*, Princeton, p. 68; Finkelpearl (2009:9-11).

empire, scholars observe a transformation of the republican Marsyas from an "Italic figure of augury who warranted a statue in the Forum Romanorum to a Phrygian figure punished by Apollo."[96] In the temple of *Concordia,* Zeuxis's famous painting *Marsyas Religatus*[97] was displayed, and it probably served as a warning to those who might disturb the concord of the state established by Augustus, well known for his lifelong dedication to Apollo.[98] We know that Marsyas became a figure of relevance to imperial artists who struggled with the restrictions of the new order,[99] and we could perhaps view Persius's fashioning of his satire into a dissident sound of the flute against this background, by seeing it as Persius's way of asserting his satiric kinship with this rebellious satyr.[100] Perhaps we do not even need to evoke the figure of Marsyas to attach such significance to this act; it is just as possible that in burying his secret Persius was bringing satire back to its roots. According to Livy, the literary genre of satire originated in the Italian *ludi scaenici*, which contained drama, jokes and insults, all of which were accompanied by the tune of a flute.[101] Livy's understanding of *satura,* as Habinek observes*,* does not contradict at least one of

---

[96] Nizynska (2001:154, 163); P. B. Rawson (1987), *The Myth of Marsyas in the Roman Visual Arts: An Iconographic Study,* Oxford, pp. 3-16.

[97] Pliny, N.H. 35.66; Wyss (1996:29-30).

[98] Nizynska (2001:152, 159). For Apollo and Augustus see, for example, Suet. *Aug*. 70, 94.

[99] Ovid recounted the myth of Marsyas and Apollo twice: in *Metamorphoses* (6.383-400) and in *Fasti* (6. 649-710). The latter work was written in exile, into which he was sent due to his 'error' (perhaps mocking Augustus's association with Apollo) and the subsequent *Caesaris ira*, see *Tr*. 1.3.85, 3.11.17-18; *Pont*. 1.2.98, 3.7.39. In *Fasti*, the Marsyas myth is the climax of a long discussion about freedom of speech and an account of the return of exiled flute players (in Livy 9.30.5-10). The discussion of Marsyas's challenge to Apollo, as scholars observe, serves in Ovid to illuminate his complex negotiation of his own artistic autonomy in Augustan Rome; his "representation of undeserved suffering foreshadows his own fate and reflects the arbitrary use of power in the Rome of his time," see Nizynska (2001:163); C. E. Newlands (1995), *Playing With Time: Ovid and the Fasti,* Ithaca; D. E. Hill (2002), 'Ovid and Augustus,' in J. F. Miller, C. Damon and K. S. Myers (eds.), *Vertis in Usum: Studies in Honor of Edward Courtney*, Leipzig, 140-151, p. 151.

[100] For the possible connection of satyrs and satire, see V. Rimmell (2005), 'Petronius, Satire and the Novel,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire,* Cambridge, 160-173, p. 169.

[101] Livy, 7.2.4. In a further development, slave craftsmen were called upon to replace the rough insults of the youth and instead "perform satires crammed with metres, now when the song and the movement have been aligned with the flute player," 7.2.6-8. For excellent modern discussions of this aspect of satire see, T. Habinek (2005), 'Satire as Aristocratic Play,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire,* Cambridge, 177-191: "Satire, like all the ancient literary genres, belong to the history of practices as well as to the history of texts," p. 177.

the forms familiar to him — the Menippean satire,[102] which, to Michael Bakhtin at least, was the literary expression of a carnival, a political symbol for dissent and revolution, closely associated "with the freedom of Saturnalian laughter."[103] It is not necessary to observe this aspect of satire in greater detail but it is significant to notice that Persius, who once described himself as *semipaganus*,[104] utilised imagery which clearly situated his satire in the world of rustic gods, flutes, shepherds and dissident satyrs. This world was to Persius what Saturnalia was to Horace: a context in which the satirist could simultaneously unmask himself and the hypocritical world he inhabited. Persius unmasked the Romans, even though he knew they had absolutely no interest in seeing themselves as they truly were, in the same breath in which he disposed of his own Stoic mask. To those of us who choose to see in *Satire* 1 traces of Persius's final agony, the voice that triumphed was more 'human' than the Stoic mask, but to a Stoic *proficiens* this voice was in "quarrel with nature" and in danger of losing its human qualities (3. 8-9): "Gall (anger), swells inside me," Persius writes, "I explode! It sounds like the neighing from the stables of Arcady"[105] (*turgescit vitrea bilis*: *findor ut Arcadiae pecuaria rudere credas*).

F. Graf (2005),'Satire in the Ritual Context,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire,* Cambridge, 192-206. See also T. Habinek (2005b), *The World of Roman Song: From Ritualised Speech to Social Order*, Baltimore, pp. 142-157, 200-205.

[102] Habinek (2005:180).

[103] M. Bakhtin (1984), *Rabelais and his World*, Bloomington, p. 26; Rimmell (2005:165); A. T. Edwards (2002), 'Historicising the Popular Grotesque: Bakhtin's *Rabelias and His World* and Attic Old Comedy,' in R. B. Branham (ed.), *Bakhtin and the Classics*, Evanston, 26-55.

[104] Persius described himself in his Prologue as a *semipaganus* (line 6). This term is unique and controversial, as it may yield several meanings. Usually, however, it is translated as 'half-rustic'; see Witke (1970:84-85).

[105] Famous for its donkeys, Jenkinson (1980:79).

Conclusion

At the start of her book *Perceiving Animals*, Erica Fudge observed that "achieving human status has never been easy," and in the Roman world the struggle for this status appears to have been a particularly complex affair. Philosophers presented it in terms of a continual war between the rational and the sensual, the human and the bestial, while those with a flair for the politics of humanity insisted that the struggle was between individuals as well as within the individual. Cicero saw fit to divide these individuals into true humans and 'beasts' and to place all hope for the survival of the human community into the hands of the former. His brand of the politics of humanity portrayed the late republican struggles as a war between true and false humans, and this image made its presence felt for years after the final defeat of Cicero's cause. The first *princeps* and his allies were forced to prove that the Roman state had never been truer and the Romans never more human than they were under the *princeps's* rule, and this complex task was made easier by the majority's willingness to believe them and to collaborate in the effort of constructing the principate as a humanising institution. This effort ensured that the *nobiles'* continued existence as humans under the Caesars, as well as that a sufficient number of disobedient beasts remained on the social and political fringes, thus providing them with something to define themselves against. The masses of barbarians beyond the Empire's borders continued to aid this process, and by the closing decades of the fourth century, Roman citizens had become accustomed to using the word *civilis* in contradiction to *ferinus*, to regarding the barbarians as beasts that were actively seeking to destroy the rational order that Rome and the Caesars had imposed on humankind.[1]

The category of 'true human,' as it appears in this study, is an ideological construct, with the human invariably presented as a product of the political system of the day. To Plato and Aristotle, the true human was someone made in the Greek *polis*; the republican Romans saw him as forged on Italy's soil, warlike and intolerant of kings, while to the imperial *nobiles* he was a grateful and loyal subject to the *princeps*. The period of political transition from Republic to Empire allows us to observe the renegotiation of the boundaries of humanity in response to changing political and ideological needs; it allows us to see, in other words, that the 'true human' is indeed a product of the politics of humanity. These politics could conceive of the true human

---

[1] See L. S. Mazzolani (1967), *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought: From Walled City to Spiritual Commonwealth,* London, p. 195.

as owing his existence to his social and political context, but could equally well conceive of him as someone who stands apart and is self-sufficient. In his political theory, Cicero insisted that the true human cannot exist without the true state, and yet he fashioned himself as someone whose humanity remained untouched by the state's collapse. Seneca's politics of humanity involved the claim that humanity was possible only through unquestioned obedience to the *princeps,* but his humanising of *dissimulatio* emancipated the true human from his political circumstances and allowed him to survive even if the *princeps* turned into a tyrannical beast and the state he represented into a savage wasteland.

Horace and Persius both engaged in the politics of humanity but largely inverted the practice by including themselves among the targets, and they thus allow us to see the other side of the coin. Their willingness to admit their lack of humanity is really nothing more than a display of awareness that the image of the true human is largely artificial. Horace and Persius knew better than most that, as far as it applied to them, the true human was just a sum of 'fine words'; a mask composed of admirable attitudes and maxims but bearing scant relationship to reality. They suspected the same to be the case with the rest of the people and that the mask of the true human was an ill fit over the face of humanity, as they knew it. In the end, the only true humans in *Epistles* 1 and *Satire* 1 are the liars and the self-deceived who hide their 'slavery' or their asses' ears from themselves and from each other. By demolishing the 'true human' construct, Horace and Persius did not admit to their inhumanity**,** but rather to being 'only human,' and this is far more than either Cicero or Seneca could admit. Readers of Cicero's letters see a man often faced with his human frailty, while those of Seneca find him insisting repeatedly on his humble imperfections and his inability to reach the perfection of a sage. Yet, as far as I can see, the understanding of being 'only' human eludes them both; even in their most humble moments their humanity was always of the 'true' sort. The politics of humanity thrives on this delusion, which is itself necessitated by a profound anxiety to maintain the boundary that separates 'true humans' from the rest of brute creation. In this sense, the politics of humanity are essentially a politics of fear, effective only in so far as humans require reassurance that we do indeed belong on the 'human' side of the boundary.

Bibliography

Ancient Sources

Aristotle, *Politics*, trans. E. Barker, Oxford (1946).

Augustus, *Res Gestae*, trans. F. W. Shipley, London: Loeb Classical Library (1967).

Cicero, *De Re Publica*, trans. C. W. Keyes, London: Loeb Classical Library (1970).
_____ , *De Legibus*, trans. C. W. Keyes, London: Loeb Classical Library (1970).
_____ , *De Officiis*, trans. W. Miller, London: Loeb Classical Library (1968).
_____ , *Tusculan Disputations*, trans. J. E. King, London: Loeb Classical Library (1966).

Dio of Prusa, *Orations*, trans. J. W. Cahoon, Harvard (1961).

Horace, *Sermones* 1, trans. R. Fairclough, London: Loeb Classical Library (1966).
_____ , *Epistles* 1, trans. R. Fairclough, London: Loeb Classical Library (1966).

Persius, *Satires*, trans. J. R. Jenkinson, Warminster (1980).

Plato, *Republic*, trans. P. Shorey, Harvard (1999).

Sallust, *Bellum Catilinae*, trans. J. C. Rolfe, London: Loeb Classical Library (1971).

Seneca, *De Beneficiis,* trans. J. W. Basore, London: Loeb Classical Library (1963-70).
_____ , *De Clementia*, trans. J. W. Basore, London: Loeb Classical Library (1963-70).
_____ , *De Ira*, trans. J. W. Basore, London: Loeb Classical Library (1963-70).
_____ , *Ad Lucilium Epistulae Morales*, trans. R. M. Gumere, London (1971).

Tacitus, *Annals*, trans. J. Jackson, London: Loeb Classical Library (1962-63).

Velleius Paterculus, *Histories*, trans. F. W. Shipley, London: Loeb Classical Library (1967).

Modern Studies

Adcock, F. E. (1953), 'Greek and Macedonian Kingship,' *Proceedings of the British Academy* 39, 163-183.

Agamben, G. (2005), *State of Exception*, Chicago.

Aistin, J. L. (1971), 'Performative-Constantive,' in J. R. Searle (ed.), *Philosophy of Language*, Oxford, 13-22.

Alfőldi, A. (1971), *Der Vater des Vaterlandes in rőmischen Denken*, Darmstadt.

Allen, A. W. (1970), 'The Addresses of Horace's First Book of Epistles,' *Studies in Philology* 67, 255-66.

_____ . (1972), 'Horace's First Book of Epistles as Letters,' *CJ* 68, 119-33.

Allport, G. W. (1937), *Personality: a Psychological Interpretation*, New York.

Andersen, O. (2001), 'How Good Should an Orator Be?,' in C. W. Wotten (ed.), *The Orator in Action and Theory in Greece and Rome*, Leiden, 3-16.

Anderson, T. J. (1971), *Polis and Psyche: A Motif in Plato's Republic*, Stockholm.

Anderson, W. S. (1960), 'Imagery in the Satires of Horace and Juvenal,' *AJP* 81, 225-260.

_____ . (1961), 'Introduction,' in W. S. Mervin (trans.), *The Satires of Persius*, Port Washington, 1-15.

_____ . (1972), 'The Form, Purpose and Position of Horace's *Satire* 1.8,' *AJP* 93, 4-13.

_____ . (1974), 'Autobiography and Art in Horace,' in G. K. Galinsky (ed.), *Perspectives of Roman Poetry: A Classics Symposium*, Austin, 33-56.

_____ . (1982), *Essays on Roman Satire*, Princeton.

_____ . (1995), '*Horatius Liber,* Child and Freedman's Son,' *Arethusa* 28, 151-64.

Ando, C. (2000), *Imperial Ideology and Provincial Loyalty in the Roman Empire*, Berkeley.

Annas, J. (1981), *An Introduction to Plato's Republic*, Oxford.

_____ . (1993), *The Morality of Happiness,* Oxford.

Arena, V. (2007), 'Roman Political Invective' in W. Dominik and J. Hall (eds.), *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric*, Malden, 149-190.

Armstrong, D. (1989), *Horace*, Yale.

Asmis, E. (2005), 'A New Kind of Model: Cicero's Roman Constitution in *De Re Publica*,' *AJP* 126, 377-416.

Atherton, C. (1988), 'Hand over Fist: The Failure of Stoic Rhetoric,' *CQ* 38, 392-427.

Austin, M. (1981), *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest: A Selection of Ancient Sources,* Cambridge.

Baker, S. (1993), *Picturing the Beast: Animals, Identity and Representation*, Manchester.

Bakhtin, M. (1984), *Rabelais and his World*, Bloomington.

Baldry, H. C. (1965), *The Unity of Mankind in Greek Thought,* Cambridge.

Balot, R. K. (2006), *Greek Political Thought,* Oxford.

Barker, E. (1959), *The Political Thought of Plato and Aristotle,* New York.

Barton, C. A. (1996), *The Sorrows of the Ancient Romans: The Gladiator and the Monster*, Princeton.

_____ . (2001), *Roman Honour: The Fire in the Bones,* Berkeley.

Bartsch, S. (1994), *Actors in the Audience: Theatricality and Doublespeak from Nero to Hadrian*, Harvard.

_____ . (2006), *The Mirror of the Self: Sexuality, Self-Knowledge, and the Gaze in the Early Roman Empire*, Chicago.

Bauman, R. A. (1980), 'The "Leges Iudicorum Publicorum" and their Interpretation in the Republic, Principate and Later Empire,' *ANRW* II, 13, 103-233.

_____ . (1985), *Lawyers in Transitional Politics*, Munich.

_____ . (2000), *Human Rights in Ancient Rome*, London.

Bauman, Z. (2003), 'The Project of Humanity,' in P. Sheenan (ed.), *Becoming Human: New Perspectives on the Inhuman Condition*, 127-147.

Beare, W. (1939), 'Masks on the Roman Stage,' *CQ* 33, 139-146.

_____ . (1964), *The Roman Stage*, London.

Bell, A. J. E. (1997), 'Cicero and the Spectacle of Power,' *JRS* 87, 1-22.

Belliotti, R. A. (2009), *Roman Philosophy and the Good Life*, Lanham.

Bensman, J. and Lilienfeld, R. (1979), *Between Public and Private: The Lost Boundaries of the Self,* New York.

Beranger, J. (1953), 'Recherches sur l'aspect ideologique du principat,' *Schweizerische Beitrage zur Altertumswissenschaft* 6, 137-169.

_____ . (1975), *Principatus*, Geneva.

Bernstein, M. A. (1987), '"O Totiens Servus": Saturnalia and Servitude in Augustan Rome,' in R. von Hallberg (ed.), *Politics and Poetic Value*, Chicago and London, 37-61.

Bloomer, W. M. (1997), 'Schooling in *Persona*: Imagination and Subordination in Roman Education,' *CA* 16, 57-79.

Blösner, N. (2007), 'The City-Soul Analogy,' in G. R. F. Ferrari (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Plato's Republic,* Cambridge.

Bodéüs, R. (1999), 'The Natural Foundations of Right and Aristotelian Philosophy,' in R. C. Bartlett and S. D. Collins (eds.), *Action and Contemplation: Studies in the Moral and Political Thought of Aristotle*, New York, 69-99.

Bond, R. (2009), 'Horace's Political Journey,' in W. J. Dominik, J. Garthwaite and P. A. Roche (eds.) *Writing Politics in Imperial Rome*, Leiden, 133-152.

Boskovic-Stulli, M. (1967), *Narodna Predaja o Vladarevoj Tajni*, PhD diss., Zagreb: Institut za Narodnu Umjetnost.

Bowdich, P. L. (1994), 'Horace's Poetics of Political Integrity: Epistle 1.18,' *AJP* 115, 409-426.

_____ . (2001), *Horace and the Gift Economy of Patronage*, Berkeley.

Boyd, B. W. (1987), 'Virtus Effeminata and Sallust's Sempronia,' *TAPhA* 117, 183-201.

Boyle, A. J. (1997), *Tragic Seneca: An Essay in the Theatrical Tradition*, London.

_____ . (2006), *An Introduction to Roman Tragedy*, New York.

Bradley, K. (2000), 'Animalising the Slave: The Truth of Fiction,' *JRS* 90, 110-25.

Bradley, K. R. (1988), 'Roman Slavery and Roman Law,' *Historical Reflections*, 477-95.

Bramble, J. C. (1974), *Persius and the Programmatic Satire: A Study in Form and Imagery*, Cambridge.

Brantlinger, P. (1983), *Bread and Circuses: Theories of Mass Culture as Social Decay,* Cornell.

Briant, P. (2002), 'History and Ideology: The Greeks and "Persian Decadence",' in T. Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and Barbarians*, Edinburgh, 193-210.

Brink, C. O. (1982), *Horace on Poetry: Epistles book II: The Letters to Augustus and Florus*, Cambridge.

Brown, P. M. (1993), *Horace: Satires* 1, Warminster.

Brown, S. (1992), 'Death as Decoration: Scenes from the Arena on Roman Domestic Mosaics,' in A. Richlin (ed.), *Pornography and Representation in Greece and Rome*, Oxford.

Brunt, P. A. (1975), 'Stoicism and Principate,' *PBSR* 43, 1-35.

_____ . (1982), '*Nobilitas* and *Novitas,' JRS* 72, 1-17.

_____ . (1988), *The Fall of the Roman Republic and Related Essays*, Oxford**.**

Buckland, W. W. (1970), *The Roman Law of Slavery: The Condition of the Slave in Private Law from Augustus to Justinian,* Cambridge.

Burchell, D. (1998), 'Civic Personae: MacIntyre, Cicero, and Moral Personality,' *The History of Political Thought* 19, 101-118.

Campbell, D. (1972), *Greek Lyric Poetry: A Selection of Early Greek Lyric, Elegiac and Iambic Poetry,* Glasgow.

Cancik, H. (1998), 'Persona and Self in Stoic Philosophy,' in A.I. Baumgarten, J. Assmann, and G. G. Stroums (eds.), *Self, Soul and Body in Religious Experience,* Leiden, 335-346.

Carey, C. (1994), 'Rhetorical Means of Persuasion,' in I. Worthington (ed.), *Persuasion: Greek Rhetors in Action*, London, 26-45.

Cartledge, P. (2002), *The Greeks: A Portrait of Self and Others*, 2nd ed., Oxford.

Chamberlain, C. (1984), 'Why Aristotle Called Ethics Ethics: The Definition of *Ēthos* at Eudemian Ethics 2.2,' *Hermes* 112, 176-83.

_____ . (1985), 'From "Haunts" to "Character": the meaning of Ethos and its relation to Ethics,' *Helios* 11, 97-109.

Chaumartin, F. R. (1985), *Le* De Beneficiis *se Sénèque sa signification philosophique, politique et sociale*, Paris.

Cherry, R. D. (1998), '*Ethos* versus *Persona*,' *Written Communication* 15, 384-404.

Classen, C. J. (1986), 'Cicero's *orator perfectus*: ein *vir bonus dicendi peritus*?,' in S. Prete (ed.), *Commemoratio: Studi di filologia in ricordo di Riccardo Ribuoli*, Sassoferrato, 43-55.

Clauss, J. J. (1985), 'Allusion and Structure in Horace's Satire 2.1: The Callimachean Reponse,' *TAPhA* 115, 197-206.

Clay, D. (1990), 'Missing Persons, or the Selfless Greeks,' in W. J. Carroll, J. J. Furlong and C. S. Mann (eds.), *The Quest for the Individual: Roots of Western Civilization,* New York, 13-26.

Cody, J. (1976), *Horace and Callimachean Aesthetics*, *Collection Latomus* 147, Bruxelles.

Coffey, M. (1989), *Roman Satire*, Wiltshire.

Colavito, M. M. (1989), *The Pythagorean Intertext in Ovid's Metamorphoses*, New York.

Coleman, J. (2000), *A History of Political Thought: from Ancient Greece to Early Christianity*, Oxford.

Colish, M. L. (1985), *The Stoic Tradition from Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages*, Vol. 1, Leiden.

Combs, J. E. and Nimmo, D. (1992), *The New Propaganda: The Dictatorship of Palaver in Contemporary Politics*, New York.

Connolly, J. (2007), 'Virile Tongues: Rhetoric and Masculinity,' in W. Dominik and J. Hall (eds.), *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric*, Malden, 83-97.

Connolly, J. (2007b), *The State of Speech: Rhetoric and Political Thought in Ancient Rome*, Princeton.

Connor, P. (1981), 'The Satires of Persius: A Stretch of the Imagination,' *Ramus* 16, 55-77.

Connors, C. (1997), 'Field and Forum: Culture and Agriculture in Roman Rhetoric,' in W. Dominik (ed.), *Roman Eloquence, Rhetoric in Society and Literature*, London, 71-89.

Corbeill, A. (1996), *Controlling Laughter: Political Humour in the Late Roman Republic*, Princeton.

_____ . (2002), 'Ciceronian Invective' in J. M. May (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Cicero, Oratory and Rhetoric*, Leiden, 198-217.

_____ . (2002b), 'Political Movement: Walking and Ideology in Republican Rome,' in D. Fredrick (ed.), *The Roman Gaze*, Baltimore, 182-215.

_____ . (2004), *Nature Embodied: Gesture in Ancient Rome*, Princeton.

Corbett, P. (1986), *Scurra*, Edinburgh.

Cowan, E. (2008), '*Libertas* in the *Philippics*,' in T. Stevenson and M. Wilson (eds.), *Cicero's Philippics: History, Rhetoric and Ideology*, Auckland, 140-152.

Crooke, W. (1910), 'King Midas and His Ass's Ears,' *Folklore* 22, 183-202.

Cucchiarelli, A. (2005), 'Speaking From Silence: The Stoic Paradoxes of Persius,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire*, Cambridge, 62-80.

Cumming, R. D. (1969), *Human Nature and History: A Study of the Development of Liberal Political Thought,* Vol. 1, Chicago.

Dalzel, A. (1956), 'Maecenas and the Poets,' *Phoenix* 10, 151-162.

Damon, C. (1997), *The Mask of the Parasite: A Pathology of Roman Patronage*, Ann Arbor.

De Lacy, P. H. (1977), 'The Four Stoic Personae,' *ICS* 2, 163-172.

De Pretis, A. (2004), *Epistolarity in the First Book of Horace's Epistles*, New Jersey.

Dench, E. (2005), *Romulus's Asylum: Roman Identities from the Age of Alexander to the Age of Hadrian*, Oxford.

Dennett, D. (1976), 'Conditions of Personhood,' in A.O. Rorty (ed.), *The Identities of Persons (Identities),* Berkley, 175-96.

Dessen, C. (1996), *The Satires of Persius: Iunctura Callidius Acri*, 2nd ed., London.

Dierauer, U. (1977), *Tier und Mensch im Denken der Antike: Studien zur Tierpsychologie, Antrophologie und Ethic*, Amsterdam.

Dignas, B. (2002), *Economy of the Sacred in the Roman and Hellenistic Asia Minor*, Oxford.

Döbler, C. (1999), *Politische Agitation und Öffentlichkeit in der späten Republik*, Frankfurt am Main.

Doblhofer, E. (1966), *Die Augustuspanegyrik des Horaz in formalhistorischer Sicht,* Heidelberg.

Dominik, W. (1997), 'Style is the Man: Seneca, Tacitus and Quintilian's Cannon,' in W. Dominik (ed.), *Roman Eloquence: Rhetoric in Society and Literature*, London, p.50-68.

Douglas, M. (1975), *Implicit Meanings: Essays in Anthropology*, London.

Dover, K. J. (1974), *Greek Popular Morality in the Time of Plato and Aristotle,* Berkeley.

Dufalo, B. (2000), '*Satis/Satura*: Reconsidering the "Programmatic Intent" of Horace's *Satires* 1.1,' *CW* 93, 579-590.

Dugan, J. (2005), *Making a New Man: Ciceronian Self-Fashioning in the Rhetorical Works*, Oxford.

Duncan, A. (2006), *Performance and Identity in the Classical World*, Cambridge.

Dunkle, J. R. (1967), 'The Greek Tyrant and Roman Political Invective of the Late Republic,' *TAPhA* 98, 151-171.

_____ . (1971), 'The Rhetorical Tyrant in Roman Historiography: Sallust, Livy and Tacitus,' *CW* 65, 12-20.

DuQuesnay, I. M. Le M. (1984), 'Horace and Maecenas: The Propaganda Value of *Sermones* 1,' in T. Woodman and D. West (eds.), *Poetry and Politics in the Age of Augustus*, Cambridge, 19-57.

Durand, K. K. J. (2004), *Virtue: Essays in Ancient Philosophy*, Lanham.

Dyson, S. and Prior, R. (1995), 'Horace, Martial and Rome,' *Arethusa* 28, 245-64.

Earle, R. (1999), *Epistolary Selves: Letters and Letter-Writers*, Aldershot.

Eder, W. (1990), 'Augustus and the Power of Tradition: The Augustan Principate as Binding Link between Republic and Empire,' in K.A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (eds.), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate*, Berkeley, 71-122.

_____ . (2005), 'Augustus and the Power of Tradition,' in K. Galinsky (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, Austin, 13-32.

Edwards, A. T. (2002), 'Historicising the Popular Grotesque: Bakhtin's *Rabelias and His World* and Attic Old Comedy,' in R. B. Branham (ed.), *Bakhtin and the Classics*, Evanston, 26-55.

Edwards, C. (1993), *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome*, Cambridge.

_____ . (1997), 'Self-Scrutiny and Self-Transformation in Seneca's Letters,' *G&R* 44, 23-38.

_____ . (2002), 'Acting and Self-Actualisation in Imperial Rome: Some Death Scenes,' in P. Easterling and E. Hall (eds.), *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession*, Cambridge, 370-384.

Eisenhut, W. (1973), *Virtus Romana*, Munich.

Elliot, R. C. (1982), *The Literary Persona*, Chicago.

Ellul, J. (1965), *Propaganda,* New York.

Enenkel, K. A. E. (2005), 'The Propagation of *Fortitudo*: Gladiatorial Combats from ca. 85 BC to the Times of Trajan and their Reflection in Roman Literature,' in K. A. E. Enenkel and I. L. Pfeijffer (eds.), *The Manipulative Mode: Political Propaganda in Antiquity ─ a Collection of Case Studies*, Leiden and Boston, 275-93.

Engberg-Pedersen, T. (1996), 'Is there an Ethical Dimension to Aristotelian Rhetoric?,' in A. O. Rorty (ed.), *Essays on Aristotle's Rhetoric,* California, 116-141.

Enos, R. L. and Schnakenberg, K. R. (1994), 'Cicero Latinizes Hellenic *Ethos*,' in J. S. Baumlin and T. F. Baumlin (eds.), *Ethos*: *New Essays Rhetorical and Critical Theory*, Dallas, 191-206.

Ernout, A. & Meillet, A. (1960), *Dictionnaire etymologique de la langue latine* (4th ed.), Paris.

Everitt, A. (2006), *Augustus: The Life of Rome's First Emperor*, New York.

Eyben, E. (1991), 'Fathers and Sons,' in B. Rawson (ed.), *Marriage, Divorce and Children in Ancient Rome*, Oxford, 140-173.

Fantham, E. (1973), 'Ciceronian *Conciliare* and Aristotelian *Ethos*,' *Phoenix* 27, 262-275.

_____ . (2002), 'Orator and/et Actor' in P. Easterling and E. Hall (eds.), *Greek and Roman Actors: Aspects of an Ancient Profession*, Cambridge, 362-394.

_____ . (2004), *The Roman World of Cicero's De Oratore,* Oxford.

Fears, J. R. (1981), 'The Cult of Virtues and Roman Imperial Ideology,' *ANRW* II 17.2, 827-948.

Fedeli, P. (1994), *Q. Orazio Flacco:Le Opere II, Le Satire*, Rome.

Ferrary, J. (1995), 'The Statesman and the Law in the Political Philosophy of Cicero,' in A. Laks and M. Schofield (eds.), *Justice and Generosity: Studies in Hellenistic Social and Political Philosophy, Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium Hellenisticum,* Cambridge.

Ferri, R. (2007), 'The Epistles,' in S. Harrison (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to Horace,* Cambridge, 121-133.

Finkelpearl, E. (2009), 'Marsyas the Satyr and Apuleius of Madauros,' *Ramus* 38, 7-42.

Finley, M. I. (1980), *Ancient Slavery and Modern Ideology*, New York.

Finley, M. (1983), *Politics in the Ancient World,* Cambridge.

Fisher, N. R. E. (1993), *Slavery in Classical Greece*, London.

Fiske, G. C. (1920), *Lucilius and Horace: A Study in the Classical Theory of Imitation*, Madison.

Fitzgerald, W. (2000), *Slavery and the Roman Literary Imagination,* Cambridge.

Forsdyke, S. (2009), 'The Uses and Abuses of Tyranny,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Chichester, 231-246.

Foulkes, A. P. (1983), *Literature and Propaganda*, London.

Fowler, D. P. (1995), 'Horace and the Aesthetics of Politics,' in S. J. Harrison (ed.), *Homage to Horace: A Bimilleniary Celebration*, Oxford, 248-266.

Fox, M. (2007), *Cicero's Philosophy of History*, Oxford.

Frankel, E. (1957), *Horace*, Oxford.

Frankfurt, H. (1986), 'On Bullshit,' *Raritan* 6, 81-100.

Freudenburg, K. (1993), *The Walking Muse: Horace and the Theory of Satire,* Princeton.

_____ . (2001), *Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal,* Cambridge.

_____ . (2002), 'Solus Sapiens Liber Est: Recommissioning Lyric in Epistles 1,' in T. Woodman and D. Feeney (eds.), *Traditions and Contexts in the Poetry of Horace*, Cambridge, 124-135.

Fudge, E. (2002), *Perceiving Animals: Humans and Beasts in Early Modern English Culture,* Chicago.

Fudge, E. (2006), *Brutal Reasoning: Animals, Rationality and Humanity in Early Modern England*, London.

Gallant, T. (1991), *Risk and Survival in Ancient Greece: Reconstructing the Rural Domestic Economy,* Cambridge.

Garsney, P. (1996), *Ideas of Slavery from Aristotle to Augustine,* Cambridge.

Garsney, P. and Saller, A. (1987), *The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture*, Berkeley.

Geertz, C. (1973), 'Ideology as a Cultural System,' in *The Interpretation of Cultures: Selected Essays by Clifford Geertz,* New York, 193-233.

Gibbon, E. (1910), *The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, London.

Gildenhard, I. (2007), *Paideia Romana: Cicero's Tusculan Disputations*, Cambridge.

_____ . (2007b), 'Greek Auxilaries: Tragedy and Philosophy in Ciceronian Invective,' in J. Booth (ed.), *Cicero on the Attack: Invective and Subversion in the Orations and Beyond*,' Swansea, 149-183.

Gilhus, I. S. (2006), *Animals, Gods and Humans: Changing Attitudes to Animals in Greek, Roman and Early Christian Ideas*, London.

Gill, C. (1984), 'The Ethos/Pathos Distinction in Rhetorical and Literary Criticism,' *CQ* 34, 149-166.

_____ . (1988), 'Personhood and Personality: The Four-*Personae* Theory in Cicero, *De Officiis* I,' *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 6, 169-99.

_____ . (1994), 'Peace of Mind and Being Yourself: Panaetius to Plutarch,' *ANRW* II, 36, 4599-4640.

_____ . (1996), *Personality in Greek Epic, Tragedy and Philosophy: The Self in Dialogue*, Oxford.

_____ . (2006), *The Structured Self in Hellenistic and Roman Thought*, Oxford.

Goldberg, S. M. (2005), *Constructing Literature in the Roman Republic: Poetry and its Reception,* Cambridge.

Gotoff, H. (1993), 'Oratory: The Art of Illusion,' *HSCP* 95, 289-313.

Gold, B. (1994), 'Openings of Horace's Satires and Odes: Poet, Patron and Audience,' *YCS* 29, 161-185.

Gowers, E. (1994), 'Persius and the Decoction of Nero,' in J. Elsner and J. Masters (eds.), *Reflections of Nero: Culture, History and Representation*, North Carolina, 113-150.

_____ . (2001), 'Apuleius and Persius,' in A. Kahane and A. Laird (eds.), *A Companion to the Prologue of Apuleius's Metamorphoses*, Oxford, 77-87.

_____ . (2003), '*Fragments of Autobiography in Horace's Satires* 1,' *CA* 22, 55-91.

_____ . (2009), 'Horace, Satires 1.5: An Inconsequential Journey,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *Horace: Satires and Epistles*, Oxford, 156-180.

Graf, F. (2005),'Satire in the Ritual Context,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire,* Cambridge, 192-206.

Griffin, J. (1993), 'Horace in the Thirties,' in N. Rudd (ed.), *Horace 2000: A Celebration, Essays for the Bimillennium*, 1-22.

_____ . (1984), 'Augustus and the Poets: Caesar Qui Cogere Posset,' in F. Millar and E. Segal (eds.) *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects*, Oxford, 189-218.

Griffin, M. T. (1976), *Seneca: A Philosopher in Politics*, Oxford.

_____ . (2003), '*De Beneficiis* and Roman Society,' *JRS* 93, 92-113.

Grimaldi, W. M. A. (1990), 'The Auditor's Role in Aristotelian Rhetoric,' in R. L. Enos (ed.), *Oral and Written Communication: Historical Approaches*, Newbury Park, 66-91.

Gruen, E. (2005), 'Augustus and the Making of the Principate,' in K. Galinsky (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, Austin, 33-51.

Gunderson, E. (2000), *Staging Masculinity: The Rhetoric of Performance in the Roman World*, Michigan.

Guthrie, W. K. C. (1969), *A History of Greek Philosophy III*, Cambridge.

Habash, M. (1999), 'Priapus: A Portrait of Horace?,' *CJ* 94, 285-97.

Habinek, T. (2005), 'Satire as Aristocratic Play,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire,* Cambridge, 177-191.

_____ . (2005b), *The World of Roman Song: From Ritualised Speech to Social Order*, Baltimore, 142-157.

Hadot, P. (1995), *Philosophy as a Way of Life*: *Spiritual Exercises from Socrates to Foucault*, Oxford.

Hall, J. (2002), '*The Philippics*,' in J. M. May (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Cicero, Oratory and Rhetoric*, Leiden, 273-304.

_____ . (2005), 'Cicero's *Fam.* 16.21: Roman Politeness and the Socialisation of Marcus Cicero the Younger,' in K. Welch and T.W. Hillard (eds.) *Roman Crossings: Theory and Practice in the Roman Republic*, 259-277.

_____ . (2007), 'Oratorical Delivery and the Emotions: Theory and Practice,' in W. Dominik and J. Hall (eds.), *A Companion to Roman Rhetoric*, Malden, 218-234.

_____ . (2008), 'The Rhetorical Design and Success of Cicero's Twelfth *Philippic*,' in T. Stevenson and M. Wilson (eds.), *Cicero's Philippics, History, Rhetoric and Ideology*, Auckland, 282-304.

Halloran, M. S. (1982), 'Aristotle's Conception of *Ethos*, or If Not His, Somebody Else's,' *Rhetoric Review 1*, 58-63.

Hammer, D. (1998), *Roman Political Thought and the Modern Imagination*, Norman.

_____ . (2009), 'What is Politics in the Ancient World?,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought,* 20-35.

Hammond, M. (1965), 'The Sincerity of Augustus,' *HSCP* 69, 139-162.

Harrison, G. (1987), 'The Confessions of Lucilius (Horace Sat. 2.1.30-34): A Defence of Autobiographical Satire?,' *CA* 6, 38-51.

Harrison, S. J. (1995), 'Some Twentieth-century Views of Horace' in S. J. Harrison (ed.), *Homage to Horace: A Bimilleniary Celebration*, Oxford, 1-16.

_____ . (1995b), 'Poetry, Philosophy and Letter-Writing in Horace, *Epistles* I,' in D. Innes, H. Hine, and C. Pelling (eds.), *Ethics and Rhetoric: Classical Essays for Donald Russell on his Seventy-Fifth Birthday*, Oxford, 47-62.

Harvey, R. A. (1981), *A Commentary on Persius*, Leiden.

Häuber, R. C. (1990), 'Zur Topographie der Horti Maecenatis und der Horti Lamiani auf dem Esquilin nach Rom,' *Kölner Jahrbuch* 23, 11-107.

Heinze, R. (1928), 'Fides,' *Hermes* 64, 140-166.

Held, G. F. (1985), 'The Meaning of *Ethos* in the *Poetics*,' *Hermes* 113, 280-293.

Henderson, J. (1993), 'Persius's Didactic Satire: The Pupil as Teacher,' *Ramus* 22, 123-48.

_____ . (1999), *Writing Down Rome: Satire, Comedy and Other Offences in Latin Poetry*, Oxford.

Hendrickson, G. L. (1928), 'The First Satire of Persius,' *CPh* 23, 97-112.

Henry, D. and Henry, E. (1985), *The Mask of Power: Seneca's Tragedies and Imperial Rome,* Wiltshire.

Hesk, J. (1999), 'The Rhetoric of Anti-Rhetoric in Athenian Oratory,' in S. Goldhill and K. Osborne (eds.), *Performance Culture and Athenian Democracy*, 201-230.

Hill, D. E. (2002), 'Ovid and Augustus,' in J. F. Miller, C. Damon and K. S. Myers (eds.), *Vertis in Usum: Studies in Honor of Edward Courtney*, Leipzig, 140-151.

Hills, P. (2005), *Horace*, Liverpool.

Hitz, Z. (2009), 'Plato on the Sovereignty of Law,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Chichester, 367-381.

Hoffer, S. E. (2007), 'Cicero's "Stomach": Political Indignation and the Use of Repeated Allusive Expressions in Cicero's Correspondence,' in R. Morello and A. D. Morrison (eds.), *Ancient Letters: Classical and Late Antique Epistolography*, Oxford, 87-106.

Holzberg, N. (2009), *Horaz: Dichter und Werk*, Munchen.

Hooley, D. M. (1997), *The Knotted Thong: Structures of Mimesis in Persius*, Ann Arbour.

_____ . (2006), *Roman Satire*, Malden.

Horsfall, N. (1981), *Poets and Patron: Maecenas, Horace and the Georgics, Once More,* Sydney.

Housman, A. E. (1913), 'Notes on Persius,' *CQ* 7, 12-32.

Hubbard, T. K. (1981), 'The Structure and Programmatic Intent of Horace's First Satire,' *Latomus* 40, 305-21.

Hughes, J. J. (1994), 'Dramatic Ethos in Cicero's Later Rhetorical Works,' in J. S. Baumlin and T. F. Baumlin (eds.), *Ethos*: *New Essays Rhetorical and Critical Theory*, Dallas.

Hunter, R. L. (1985), 'Horace on Friendship and Free Speech (Epistles 1.18 and Satires 1.4),' *Hermes* 113, 480-490.

Hurwitz, M. S. (1993), 'Justice and the Metaphor of Medicine in Early Greek Thought,' in K. D. Irani and M. Silver (eds.), *Social Justice in the Ancient World*, Westport.

Hyde, M. J. (2004), 'Rhetorically, We Dwell,' in M. J. Hyde (ed.), *The Ethos of Rhetoric*, South Carolina, 13-28.

Inwood, B. (1992), 'Politics and Paradox in Seneca's *De Beneficiis,*' in *Justice and Generosity: Studies in Hellenistic Social and Political Philosophy, Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium Hellenisticum,* A. Laks & M. Schofield, 241-265.

_____ . (2005), *Reading Seneca: Stoic Philosophy at Rome*, Oxford.

Istinsky, H. U. (1940), 'Consensus universorum,' *Hermes* 75, 265-278.

Jenkinson, J. R. (1980), (trans. and ed.), *Persius: The Satires*, Warminster.

Johnson, N. (1984), 'Ethos and the Aims of Rhetoric,' in R. J. Connors, L. S. Ede and A. A. Lunsford (eds.), *Essays on Classical Rhetoric and Modern Discourse,* 98-114.

Johnson, T. and Dandeker, C. (1989), 'Patronage: Relation and System,' in A. Wallace Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society,* London, 219-243.

Johnson, W. R. (1993), *Horace and the Dialectic of Freedom: Readings in Epistles* 1, Ithaca and London.

Jones, A. H. M. (1970), *Augustus*, London.

Joshel, S. (1992), *Work, Identity and Legal Status at Rome: A Study of Occupational Inscriptions*.

Kahler, E. (1967), *The Tower and the Abyss,* New York.

Keane, C. (2002), 'Satiric Memories: Autobiography and the Construction of Genre,' in *CJ* 97, 215-231.

Kennedy, G. (1972), *The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World: 300 BC — AD 300*, Princeton.

_____ . (1994), *A New History of Classical Rhetoric,* Princeton.

Kerferd, G. B. (1983), 'Two Problems Concerning Impulse,' in W. W. Fortenbaugh, (ed.), *On Stoic and Peripatetic Ethics: The Work of Arius Didymus*, New Brunswick, 87-98.

Kiessling, A. and Heinze, R. (1961), *Q. Horatius Flaccus: Satiren*, Berlin.

Kilpatrick, R. (1986), *The Poetry of Friendship, Horace: Epistles 1*, Edmonton.

Kimmel, L. D. (1991), 'The Dialectical Convergence of Rhetoric and Ethics: The Imperative of Public Conversation,' in V. Aarons and W. A. Salomon (eds.), *Rhetoric and Ethics: Historical and Theoretical Perspectives*, Lewiston, 1-17.

Kissel, W. (1990), *Aules Persius Flaccus Satiren*, Heidelberg.

Kloft, H. (1970), *Liberalitas Principis*, Cologne.

Konstan, D. (1995), 'Patrons and Friends,' *CP* 90, 328-342.

_____ . (1995b), 'Introduction: Viewing Horace,' in *Arethusa* 28:2/3, 141-149.

Koster, S. (1980), *Die Invektive in der griechischen und römischen Literatur*, Meisenheim am Glan.

Krostenko, B.A. (2001), *Cicero, Catullus and the Language of Social Performance*, London.

La Pena, A. (1979), *Fra teatro, poesia e politica romana*, Turin.

Labate, M. (2009), 'Horatian Sermo and Genres of Literature,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *Horace: Satires and Epistles*, Oxford, 102-121.

Lacey, W. K. (1986), '*Patria Potestas*,' in B. Rawson (ed.), *The Family in Ancient Rome*, Oxford, 121-144.

Leach, E. W. (1971), 'Horace's *pater optimus* and Terence's Demea: Autobiographical Fiction and Comedy in *Serm.* 1.4,' *AJP* 92, 616-32.

Lee, G. & Barr, W. (1987), *The Satires of Persius*, Liverpool.

Lefèvre, E. (1966), 'Horaz und Maecenas,' *ANRW* 2.31.3, 1987-2029.

Lendon, J. E. (1997), *Empire of Honour: The Art of Government in the Roman World*, Oxford.

Leo, F. (1910), 'Zum Text des Persius und Juvenal,' *Hermes* 45, 43-56.

Lévy, C. (1998), 'Rhétorique et philosophie: la monstruosité politique chez Cicéron,' *Revue des Ětudes Latines* 76, 139-57.

Lind, L. R. (1972), 'Concept, Action and Character: The Reasons for Rome's Greatness,' *TAPhA*. 103, 235-283.

Littlewood, C. (2002), '*Integer Ipse*? Self-Knowledge and Self-Representation in Persius *Satires* 4,' *Phoenix* 56, 56-83.

Loewenstein, K. (1973), *The Governance of Rome,* Hague.

Long, A. A. (1991), 'Representation and the Self in Stoicism,' in S. Everson (ed.), *Companion to Ancient Thought 2: Psychology,* Cambridge, 102-120.

_____ . (1995), 'Cicero's Politics in De Officiis,' A. Laks and M. Schofield (eds.), *Justice and Generosity: Studies in Hellenistic Social and Political Philosophy Proceedings of the Sixth Symposium Hellenisticum,* Cambridge, 213-240.

_____ . (2006), *From Epicurus to Epictetus: Studies in Hellenistic and Roman Philosophy*, Oxford.

Lorenz, H. (2006), *The Brute Within: Appetitive Desire in Plato and Aristotle*, Oxford.

Lowrie, M. (2007), 'Horace and Augustus,' in S. Harrison (ed.) *Cambridge Companion to Horace,* Cambridge, 1-15.

Lyne, R. O. A. M. (1995), *Horace: Behind the Public Poetry*, Yale.

Mack, M. (1951-2), 'The Muse of Satire,' *Yale Review* 41, 80-92.

Macleod, C. W. (1979), 'The Poetry of Ethics: Horace, Epistles,' *JRS* 69, 16-27.

MacMullen, R. (1986), 'Personal Power in the Roman Empire,' *AJP* 107, 512-24.

_____ . (1988), *Corruption and the Decline of Rome*, New Haven.

Malina, B. J. and Neyrey, J. H. (1996), *Portraits of Paul: An Archaeology of Ancient Personality,* Louisville.

Manning, C. E. (1985), '*Liberalitas* ─ the Decline and Rehabilitation of a Virtue,' in *G&R* 32, 73-83.

_____ . (1989), 'Stoicism and Slavery in the Roman Empire,' *ANRW* 36, 3, 1518-1543.

Marchesi, I. (2005), 'Traces of a Freed Language: Horace, Petronius and the Rhetoric of Fable,' *CA* 24, 307-330.

Maric, L. (2006), 'The Good King and the Virtuous Noble: Ideology and Legitimacy in the Hellenistic Age,' *Classicum* 32, 2, 7-17.

May, J. M. (1988), *Trials of Character: The Eloquence of Ciceronian Ethos,* North Carolina.

_____ . (2002), 'Ciceronian Oratory in Context,' in J. M. May (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Cicero, Oratory and Rhetoric*, Leiden, 49-70.

May, J. M. and Wisse, J. (2001), *Cicero on the Ideal Orator*, Oxford.

Mayer, R. (1994), *Horace: Epistles, Book 1*, Cambridge.

_____ . (2005), 'Sleeping with the Enemy: Satire and Philosophy,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire,* Cambridge, 146-159.

Mayer, S. S. (2008), *Ancient Ethics: A Critical Introduction*, London.

Mazzolani, L. S. (1967), *The Idea of the City in Roman Thought: From Walled City to Spiritual Commonwealth*, London.

McDonnell, M. (2006), *Roman Manliness, Virtus and the Roman Republic*, Cambridge.

McGann, M. J. (1969), *Studies in Horace's First Book of Epistles*, Bruxelles.

McNeill, R. (2001), *Horace: Image, Identity and Audience*, Baltimore.

Merquior, J. (1979), *The Veil and the Mask: Essays on Culture and Ideology,* London.

Midgely, M. (1973), 'The Concept of Beastliness: Philosophy, Ethics and Animal Behaviour,' *Philosophy* 48, 111-135.

_____ . (1979), *Beast and Man: The Roots of Human Nature*, London.

Millar, F. (1977), *Emperor in the Roman World (32 BC-AD 337)*, Duckworth.

_____ . (1986), 'Politics, Persuasion and the People before the Social War (150-90 BC),' *JRS* 76, 1-11.

Miller, A. B. (1974), 'Aristotle on Habit (*ethos*) and Character (*eethos*): Implications for Rhetoric,' *Speech Monographs* 41, 309-316.

Miller, P. A. (2004), *Latin Verse Satire: An Anthology and Critical Reader*, London.

Millet, P. (1989), 'Patronage and Its Avoidance in Classical Athens,' in A. Wallace-Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society,* London, 15-48.

Mish, G. (1950), *A History of Autobiography in Antiquity*, London.

Mitchell, T. N. (1991), *Cicero: the Senior Statesman*, Yale.

Mitsis, P. (1994), 'Natural Law and Natural Right in Post-Aristotelian Philosophy: The Stoics and their Critics,' *ANRW* II, 36.7, 4812-4850.

Montagu, A. and Matson, F. (1983), *The Dehumanisation of Man*, New York.

Morford, M. (1984), *Persius*, Boston.

Morstein-Marx, R. (2004), *Mass Oratory and Political Power in the Late Roman Republic,* Cambridge.

Morton Braund, S. (1996), *The Roman Satirists and Their Masks,* London.

_____ . (2004), (trans. and ed.), *Juvenal and Persius,* Cambridge.

Mourtissen, H. (2001), *Plebs and Politics in the Late Roman Republic,* Cambridge.

Mulgan, R. G. (1977), *Aristotle's Political Theory: An Introduction for Students of Political Theory*, Oxford.

Myerson, G. (1994), *Rhetoric, Reason and Society: Rationality as Dialogue,* London.

Narducci, E. (2007), 'Orator and the Definition of the Ideal Orator,' in J. M. May (ed.), *Brill's Companion to Cicero, Oratory and Rhetoric*, Leiden, 427-443.

Newlands, C. E. (1995), *Playing With Time: Ovid and the Fasti,* Ithaca.

Nizynska, J. (2001), 'Marsyas' Howl: The Myth of Marsyas in Ovid's Metamorphoses and Zbigniew Herbert's Apollo and Marsyas,' *Comparative Literature* 53, 151-169.

Norena, C. F. (2009), 'The Ethics of Autocracy in the Roman World,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman Political Thought*, Chichester, 266-279.

North, H. F. (1966), 'Cannons and Hierarchies of the Cardinal Virtues in Greek and Latin Literature,' in L. Wallach (ed.), *The Classical Tradition: Literary and Historical Studies in Honour of Harry Caplan*, New York, 168-183.

Noske, B. (1989), *Humans and Other Animals: Beyond the Boundaries of Anthropology*, London.

Nybakken, O.E. (1939), 'Humanitas Romana,' *TAPhA* 70, 396-413.

Oliensis, E. (1995), 'Life after Publication: Horace, *Epistles* 1.20,' *Arethusa* 28, 209-224.

_____ . (1998), *Horace and the Rhetoric of Authority*, Cambridge.

Osgood, J. (2006), *Caesar's Legacy: Civil War and the Emergence of the Roman Empire*, Cambridge.

Pernot, L. (2005), *Rhetoric in Antiquity*, Washington.

Perret, J. (1959), *Horace*, Paris.

Peterson, R. G. (1973), 'The Unknown Self in the Fourth Satire of Persius,' *CJ* 68, 205-9.

Pina Polo, F. (1996), *Contra Arma Verbis: Der Redner vor dem Volk in der späten römischen Republic*, Stuttgart.

Pohlenz, M. (1964), *Die Stoia: Geschichte eine geistigen Bewegung*, 3rd edition, Gőttigen.

Potter, D. (1996), 'Performance, Power and Justice in the High Empire,' in W. Slater (ed.), *Roman Theater and Society*, E. Togo Salmon Papers, Ann Arbour, 129-59.

Powell, J. G. F. (1995), *Cicero the Philosopher,* Oxford.

_____ . (2007), 'Invective and the Orator: Ciceronian Theory and Practice,' in J. Booth (ed.), *Cicero on the Attack: Invective and Subversion in the Orations and Beyond,* Swansea, 1-25.

Pulju, T. (1994), '*Vir* and *Homo* in Cicero's *Pro Milone,'* LACUS *Forum* 19, 567-74.

Ramsey, A (1981), 'Rhetoric and the Ethics of Seeming,' *Rhetoric Society Quarterly* 11, 85-96.

Randall, J. H. (1962), *Aristotle*, Columbia.

Rawson, P. B. (1987), *The Myth of Marsyas in the Roman Visual Arts: An Iconographic Study,* Oxford.

Reckford, K. J. (1962), 'Studies in Persius,' *Hermes* 90, 476-504.

_____ . (1998), 'Reading the Sick Body: Decomposition and Morality in Persius' Third Satire,' *Arethusa* 31, 3, 337-354.

_____ . (2009), *Recognising Persius*, Princeton.

Redeker, R. (2007), *The New Face of Humanity*, Bethesda.

Reesor, M. (1951), 'The Indifferents in the Old and Middle Stoa,' *TAPhA* 82, 102-110.

Reiss, T. J. (2003), *Mirages of the Self: Patterns of Personhood in Ancient and Modern Europe*, Stanford.

Relihan, J.C. (1989), 'The Confessions of Persius,' *ICS* 14, 145-167.

Reydams-Schils, G. (1998), 'Roman and Stoic: The Self as a Mediator,' *Dionysius* 14, 35-62.

Reynolds, N. (1993), '*Ethos* as Location: New Sites for Understanding Discursive Authority,' *Rhetoric Review* 11, 325-338.

Richter, W. (1958), 'Seneca und Die Sclaven,' *Gymnasium* 65, 196-219.

Riggsby, A.M. (1999), *Crime and Community in Ciceronian Rome,* Austin.

Rimmell, V. (2005), 'Petronius, Satire and the Novel,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire,* Cambridge, 160-173.

Rist, J. M. (1996), 'Aristotle, the Value of Man and the Origin of Morality,' in J. M. Rist (ed.), *Man, Soul and Body: Essays in Ancient Thought from Plato to Dionysius,* Brookfield, 1-23.

Roller, M. B. (2001), *Constructing Autocracy: Aristocracy and Emperor in Julio-Claudian Rome*, Oxford.

Ronick, M. W. (1992), (ed.), *Cicero on Self-Realisation and Self-Fulfillment: Selections from his Philosophical Works,* Amherst.

Rowland, R. J. (1966), 'Numismatic Propaganda Under Cinna,' *TAPhA* 97, 407-419.

Rudd, N. (1966), *The Satires of Horace*, Cambridge.

_____ . (1976), *Lines of Enquiry: Studies in Latin Poetry,* Cambridge.

Rudd, W. J. N. (1970), 'Persiana,' *CJ* 20, 282-288.

Rudich, V. (1993), *Political Dissidence Under Nero: The Price of Dissimulation*, London.

_____ . (1997), *Dissidence and Literature under Nero: the Price of Rhetoricisation*, London.

Ruffell, A. (2003), 'Beyond Satire: Horace, Popular Invective and the Segregation of Literature,' *JRS* 93, 35-65.

Said, S. (2002), 'Greeks and Barbarians in Euripides' Tragedies: The End of Differences?,' in T. Harrison (ed.), *Greeks and Barbarians*, Edinburgh, 62-100.

Salisbury, J. E. (1997), 'Human Beasts and Bestial Humans in the Middle Ages,' in J. Ham and M. Senior (ed.), *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History*, New York and London, 10-21.

Saller, R. P. (1982), *Personal Patronage in the Early Empire*, Cambridge.

Santirocco, M. S. (1995), 'Horace and Augustan Ideology,' *Arethusa* 28, 225-243.

Schadewaldt, W. (1973), '*Humanitas Romana,' ANRW* I 4, 43-62.

Schlegel, C. (2000), 'Horace and His Fathers: *Satires* 1.4 and 1.6,' *AJP* 121, 93-119.

_____ . (2005), *Satire and the Threat of Speech*, Madison

Schmidt, B. (1877), *Griechische Marchen, Sagen und Volkslieder*, Leipzig.

Schmidt, E. A. (2002), *Zeit und Form:Dichtungen des Horaz*, Heidelberg.

Schofield, M. (1995), 'Cicero's Definition of *Res Publica*,' in J. G. F. Powel (ed.), *Cicero the Philosopher: Twelve Papers,* Oxford, 63-83.

_____ . (2003), 'Stoic Ethics,' in B. Inwood (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Stoics*, Cambridge, 233-256.

_____ . (2006), *Plato: Political Philosophy*, Oxford.

Scholtmeijer, M. (1997), 'What is "Human? Metaphysics and Zoontology in Flaubert and Kafka,' in J. Ham and M. Senior (eds.), *Animal Acts: Configuring the Human in Western History*, New York and London, 127-143.

Schrijvers, P. (1993), 'Horace Moraliste,' in W. Ludwig, (ed.), *Horace, l'oeuvre et les imitations: un siècle d'interpretation*, Geneva, 41-90.

Schultz, F. (1938), *Principles of Roman Law*, Oxford.

Schutrumpf, E. (1987), 'The Meaning of *Ethos* in the Poetics — a Reply,' *Hermes* 115, 175-181.

Schwinge, E. R. (1963), 'Zur Kunsttheorie des Horaz,' *Philologus* 107, 75-96.

Scivoletto, N. (1956), *Auli Persi Flacci Saturae*, Florence.

Scodel, R. (1987), 'Horace, Lucilius and Callemachean Pollemic,' *HSCP* 91, 199-215.

Scott, J. C. (1990), *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, Yale.

Seager, R. (1972), 'Cicero and the Word *Popularis*,' *CQ* 22, 328-338.

Semple, W. H. (1961), 'The Poet Persius: Literary and Social Critic,' *BRL* 12, 157-174.

Shackleton Bailey, D. R. (1986), '*Nobiles* and *Novi* Reconsidered,' *AJP* 107, 255-260.

Shapiro, S. O. (2005), *O Tempora! O Mores!: Cicero's Catilinarian Orations*, Oklahoma.

Shipley, G. (2000), *The Greek World After Alexander 223-30 BC,* London.

Shotter, D. (1991), *Augustus Caesar,* New York.

Sklenar, R. (1998), 'La Republique des Signes: Caesar, Cato and the Language of Sallustian Morality,' *TAPhA* 128, 205-220.

Small, J. P. (1982), *Cacus and Marsyas in Etrusco-Roman Legend*, Princeton.

Smith, C. R. and Hyde, M.J. (1991), 'Rethinking the Public: The Role of Emotion in Being-With-Others,' *Quarterly Journal of Speech* 77, 446-466.

Smyth, C. R. (2004), 'Ethos Dwells Pervasively: A Hermeneutic Reading of Aristotle on Credibility,' in M.J. Hyde (ed.), *The Ethos of Rhetoric*, South Carolina, 1-19.

Sorabji, R. (1993), *Animal Minds and Human Morals: The Origins of Western Debate,* Ithaca.

_____ . (2006), *Self: Ancient and Modern Insights about Individuality, Life and Death*, Oxford.

Sosin, J. D. (1999), 'Lucretius, Seneca and Persius, 1.1-2,' *TAPA* 129, 281-299.

Southgate, T. L. (1908), 'The Evolution of the Flute,' *Proceedings of the Musical Association* 34, 155-175.

Steel, C.E.W. (2001), *Cicero, Rhetoric and Empire*, Oxford.

_____ . (2006), *Roman Oratory*, Cambridge.

Steiner, G. (2005), *Anthropocentrism and its Discontents: The Moral Status of Animals in the History of Western Philosophy*, Pittsburgh.

Stevenson, T. R. (1992), 'The Ideal Benefactor and the Father Analogy in Greek and Roman Thought,' *CQ* 42, 421-436.

_____ . (2008), 'Tyrants, Kings and Fathers in the *Philippics,'* in T. Stevenson and M. Wilson (eds.), *Cicero's Philippics: History, Rhetoric and Ideology*, Auckland, 95-113.

_____ . (2009), 'Acceptance of the Title *Pater Patriae* in 2 BC,' *Antichton* 43, 97-108.

Stowers, S. K. (1986), *Letter Writing in Greco-Roman Antiquity*, Philadelphia.

Strauss, B. (1986), *Athens after the Peloponnesian War: Class, Faction and Policy 403-386 BC*, London.

Sullivan, J. P. (1978), 'Ass's Ears and Attises: Persius and Nero,' *AJP* 99, 159-170.

_____ . (1985), *Literature and Politics in the Age of Nero*, Ithaca.

Syme, R. (1939), *Roman Revolution,* Oxford.

_____ . (1989), *The Augustan Aristocracy*, Oxford.

Tabacco, R. (1985), 'Il tiranno nelle declamazioni de scuola in lingua Latina,' *Memorie dell'*
Accademia delle Scienze di Torino, Classe di Scienze morali, storiche e filologiche 9, 1-141.

Tapper, R. (1988), 'Animality, Humanity, Morality, Society,' in T. Ingold (ed.), *What is an*
Animal?, London, 47-62.

Tarrant, R. (2007), 'Horace and Roman Literary History,' in S. Harrison (ed.), *The Cambridge*
Companion to Horace, Cambridge, 63-76.

Tate, J. (1928), 'Horace and the Moral Function of Poetry,' *CQ* 22, 65-72.

Tatum, W. J. (1998), '*Ultra Legem*: Law and Literature in Horace, *Satires* II, 1,' *Mnemosyne* 51,
688-699.

Tatum, J. (2009), 'Roman Democracy ?,' in R. K. Balot (ed.), *A Companion to Greek and Roman*
Political Thought, Chichester, 214-227.

Taylor, P. A. (1999), 'Imaginative Writing and the Disclosure of the Self,' in *The Journal of*
Aesthetics and Art Criticism 57, 29-39.

Thill, A. (1979), 'Alter ab illo,' *Recherches sur l'imitation dans la poèsie personelle ă l'èpoque*
Augustèenne, Paris, 224-262.

Thomas, K. (1983), *Man and the Natural World: Changing Attitudes in England, 1500-1800,* London.

Thomas, Y. (1984), 'Vitae necisque potestas: Le pére, la cite, la mort,' *Du châtiment dans la cité: Supplices corporels et peine de mort dans le monde antique*, Rome.

Traina, A. (2009), 'Horace and Aristippus: The *Epistles* and the Art of Conuiuere,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies, Horace: Satires and Epistles*, 297-307.

Treggiari, S. (1969), *Roman Freedmen during the Late Republic*, Oxford.

Trigg, R. (1988), *Ideas of Human Nature: An Historical Introduction,* Oxford.

Turpin, W. (2009), 'The Epicurean Parasite: Horace *Satires* 1.1-3,' in K. Freudenburg (ed.), *Oxford Readings in Classical Studies, Horace: Satires and Epistles*, 122-137.

Vasemer, M. (1936), 'Konig Trojan mit den Ziegenhoren,' *Zeitschrift fur Volkskunde* 46, 184-88.

Veyne, P. (1976), *Bread and Circuses: Historical Sociology and Political Pluralism*, Harmondsworth.

Veyne, P. (1993), '*Humanitas*: Romans and Non-Romans,' in A. Giardina (ed.), *The Romans*, Chicago, 342-369.

Vidal-Naquet, P. (1986), *The Black Hunter*, Baltimore.

Vlastos, G. (1960), 'Slavery in Plato's Thought,' in M. Finley (ed.), *Slavery in Classical Antiquity: Views and Controversies*, Cambridge, 133-149.

Vogt, J. (1974), *Ancient Slavery and the Ideal of Man*, Oxford.

Von Premerstein, A. (1937), *Vom Werden und Wesen des Prinzipats,* Munich.

Voskuil, L. M. (2004), *Acting Naturally: Victorian Theatricality and Authenticity,* Virginia.

Walde, A. (1938), *Lateinisches Etymologisches Worterbuch*, Heidelburg.

Wallace-Hadrill, A. (1989), 'Patronage in Roman Society: From Republic to Empire,' in A. Wallace Hadrill (ed.), *Patronage in Ancient Society,* London, 63-88.

_____ . (1993), *Augustan Rome*, London.

_____ . (2005), 'Mutatas Formas: The Augustan Transformation of Roman Knowledge,' in K. Galinsky (ed.), *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Augustus*, Austin, 55-84.

Wehrill, F. (1944), 'Horaz und Kallimachos' *MH* 1, 69-76.

Wehrle, W. T. (1992), *The Satiric Voice: Program, Form and Meaning*, Olms-Weidmann.

Welch, K. (2005), '*Lux* and *Lumina* in Cicero's Rome: A Metaphor for the *Res Publica* and Her Leaders,' in K. Welch and T. W. Hillard (eds.), *Roman Crossings: Theory and Practice in the Roman Republic*, Swansea, 313-337.

Welch, K. E. (1990), *The Contemporary Reception of Classical Rhetoric: Appropriations of Ancient Discourse*, Hillsdale.

Welch, T. S. (2001), 'Est locus uni cuiqie suus: City and Status in Horace's *Satires* 1.8 and 1.9,' *CA* 20, 165-192.

White, P. (1993), *Promised Verse: Poets in the Society of Augustan Rome*, London.

_____ . (2007), 'Friendship, Patronage and Horatian Socio-Poetics,' in S. Harrison (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to Horace*, Cambridge, 195-206.

Whitebread, L. G. (1971), *Fulgentius the Mythographer*, Ohio.

Wikander, M. H. (2002), *Fangs of Malice: Hypocrisy, Sincerity and Acting*, Iowa.

Wilkins, A. S. (1965), *The Epistles of Horace*, London.

Williams, G. (1968), *Tradition and Originality in Roman Poetry*, Oxford.

_____ . (1982), 'Phases in the Political Patronage of Literature in Rome,' in B. K. Gold (ed.), *Literary and Artistic Patronage in Ancient Rome*, Austin, 3-27.

_____ . (1990), 'Did Maecenas Fall From Favor? Augustan Literary Patronage,' in K. A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (eds.), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and His Principate*, Berkeley, 258-275.

_____ . (1994), 'Public Policies, Private Affairs, and Strategies of Address in the Poetry of Horace,' *CW* 87, 395-408.

Wimmel, W. (1960), *Kallimachos in Rom: Die Nachfolge seines apologetischen Dichtens in der Augusteerzeit*, Wiesbaden.

Wirszubski, C. (1968), *Libertas as a Political Idea at Rome during the Late Republic and Early Principate*, Cambridge.

Wisse, J. (1989), *Ethos and Pathos from Aristotle to Cicero,* Amsterdam.

Witke, C. (1970), *Latin Satire: The Structure of Persuasion*, Leiden.

Wood, N. (1986), '*Populares* and *Circumcelliones*: The Vocabulary of "Fallen Man" in Cicero and St. Augustine,' *History of Political Thought* 7, 33-51.

_____ . (1988), *Cicero's Social and Political Thought*, Oxford.

Wright, M.R. (1995), 'Self-Love and Love of Humanity in *De Finibus* 3,' in J. G. F. Powel (ed.), *Cicero the Philosopher: Twelve Papers,* Oxford.

Wrong, D. (1961) 'The Oversocialised Conception of Man in Modern Sociology,' in P. Coser and L. Rosenberg (eds.), *Sociological Theory,* 121-132.

Wyss, E. (1996), *The Myth of Apollo and Marsyas in the Art of the Italian Renaissance: An Inquiry into the Meaning of Images,* London.

Yavetz, Z. (1984), 'The *Res Gestae* and Augustus's Public Image,' in F. Millar and E. Segal (eds.), *Caesar Augustus: Seven Aspects,* Oxford, 1-36.

_____ . (1990), 'The Personality of Augustus: Reflections on Syme's Roman Revolution,' in K.A. Raaflaub and M. Toher (eds.), *Between Republic and Empire: Interpretations of Augustus and his Principate*, Berkeley, 21-41.

Yvon, G. (1982), *Les esclaves en Greece ancienně*, Paris.

Zanker, P. (1988), *The Power of Images in the Age of Augustus,* Ann Arbour.

Zeitlin, M. (1997), *Rulers and Ruled: An Introduction to Classical Political Theory from Plato to the Federalists*, Toronto.

Zetzel, J. E. G. (1980), 'Horace's *Liber Sermonum*: The Structure of Ambiguity,' *Arethusa* 13, 59-77.