The Liber Amicus:

Studies in Horace *Sermones* I

Dissertation

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By

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Abstract

The goal of this dissertation is to re-evaluate the importance and function of the moral content of the first book of Horace’s Sermones. I contend that the moral content constitutes part of a pragmatic program that seeks to ameliorate the discord of first century Rome by utilizing the Roman concept of amicitia. Horace faces the problem of adapting satire, a poetic discourse of invective and moral policing to amicitia, which he achieves by adapting satire as part of a system of moral and dialogic pedagogy for both oneself and one’s friends. This reading places Horace’s first book of Sermones at the intersection of a number of Roman discourses: exemplarity, moral pedagogy, amicitia and libertas. Such a reading achieves three results: first, an appreciation of the importance and complexity of the moral content of the Sermones; second, a better understanding of Horace’s distinct contribution to Roman satire; and third an account of Horace’s reactions to the civil wars, as traditional Roman ways of viewing and understanding the world began to break down and new ways needed to be created.

In my first, introductory chapter, I sketch the critical problems of Horace’s first book and the scholarly responses to them, their limitations and the place of my own work, before outlining the main points of my methodology and argument. I then establish how the issues of the diatribe satires set the
foundation for the concerns of the rest of the *libellus*. In my second chapter, I turn to the programmatic satire, 1.4 to examine how this poem deals with the problem of the antithetical relationship between friendship and satire and then offers a solution of a Roman satire based on moral pedagogy engaged amongst and with friends coupled with the constant self-satire and moral correction of the satirical subject. My third chapter offers a reading of S. 1.5 and 1.6 that shows how various kinds of friendship work in a real world situation and how the focus the poet’s own life demonstrates the efficacy of Horace’s satiric program in the previous satire in his friendships with fellow poets like Vergil and most importantly with Maecenas.. My fourth chapter looks to the seventh satire of the first book as an antithetical example of the program of satire and friendship Horace has created thus far and a justification for Horace’s non-participation in Roman political life described in 1.6. In my concluding fifth chapter, I sum up the argument and give brief analyses of the anti-example of *sermo* in 1.8, of S. 1.9 as a test case of evaluating a potential new friend and then of S. 1.10 where both the moral and aesthetic values of the *Sermones* are developed and expressed in self-pedagogy and dialogic pedagogy, both of which are dependent on *amicitia*.
For my father, grandfather and godfather

John Warren Wright

John Joseph Bradley, Jr. †

And

John Francis Mahoney †
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My parents, John and Clare Wright, have always been exempla of love and support. Like Horace, I could not wish for better parents. Horace *Sermones*, in many ways a meditation on the relationship between fathers and sons, taught me much about my own relationship with my *pater optimus* and has been a good text to think with over the years. Thus, my father’s influence and moral pedagogy, like Horace’s own father, will be found all over these pages.

Finally, my grandfather, John J. Bradley Jr., was an important intellectual and educational influence on me for my entire life. Sadly, he did not live to see the completion of this dissertation, though he always maintained a keen interest in its arguments and progress and never let me give up, mindful of his regret at never finishing his own dissertation many years ago. So I dedicate this study to my grandfather, my late godfather and my own father, the three Johns who made me the scholar and man I am today.
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Chapter 1

Horace Sermones I: The Satirist and his Critics¹

In this dissertation I argue that we must begin to read Horace’s Sermones differently, specifically we must pay renewed attention to the effects and function of the moral content within the Liber Sermonum. Doing so confronts a long-standing problem in studies of the Sermones: What is the point of all this moral content? Is it parody, or something else entirely? In reading these poems with their moral content in mind and not just passing over that content as parody or mere superficiality we can see a powerful meditation on key Roman concepts: friendship (amicitia), the value and role of tradition and exemplarity (e.g. the mos maiorum) as well as the place of fathers and sons in passing on tradition, and finally the effectiveness of satira, Rome’s very own home-grown poetic genre, as a moral corrective force.² For Horace, the articulation of moral values and the process of moral education and correction happens both in self-reflection and in conversation

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¹ The text of Horace’s Sermones I cite in this dissertation is Klinger’s OCT (1959) with some modifications, as noted. For Lucilius I have used the text of Marx’s edition (1904), which I have supplemented with the editions of Krenkel (1970) as well as Warmington’s Loeb edition (1967). References to the scholia of Pseudo-Acro and Porphyrio on the Sermones are to Hauthal (1966).
² Cf. Quintilian 10.1.93, satira, quidem, tota nostra est.
and interaction amongst friends. That is to say that conversation (*sermo*) amongst friends reveals and grounds moral and ethical values and in turn works to improve the moral character of the friends who engage in it. My goal in this study is to see how Horace creates a *persona* that explores moral questions through different types of *exempla* and *exempla* that model different kinds of friendship. Though drawing lines around such a slippery figure as Horace’s poetic *persona* will be difficult, a careful reading of the poems and the issues they raise should shed light on how Horace envisioned *amicitia* as a concept and how he thought moral education could be conducted through it. In other words, I will show in this dissertation how the moral content of Horace’s *Liber Sermonum* is in fact a carefully constructed moral process of self-correction and moral education.

The need for such a reading that accounts for the ethical matters of the *Sermones* arises from the fact that much previous scholarship has either overlooked the moral and ethical content of Horace’s *Sermones* or outright dismissed it. By “moral” and “morality” I mean content that discusses or establishes standards of behavior, what actions are deemed “good” or “bad” in a given community or group. By “ethical” and “ethics” I mean the articulation of a set theory or system of

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3 Cf. Rudd (1966: 1) introducing the diatribe satires: “In the mid-twentieth century sermons are out of fashion. We submit with varying degrees of apathy to being told what to eat, how to dress, and where to spend our holidays, but if anyone presumes to lecture us on our moral character we regard it as the height of impertinence. This might seem to tell against any effort to revive interest in Horace's *Satires*, for although the collection contains several entertainment-pieces and some literary criticism its reputation must stand or fall by the diatribes, and the diatribes are essentially sermons.” See the more balanced judgment of Brown (1993: 11), who declared that “Horace's moral purpose in the book should be neither ignored nor exaggerated.” Scholars in the 1990s and early 2000s eschewed any exaggeration of the ethical material and opted for plain ignorance, if not derision in the case of Turpin (1998).
practices for behaving and engaging in a given community or group. For many scholars of Horace's satiric works, anything in these poems that we might label moral or ethical is not to be taken seriously. They argue that Horace's philosophical and ethical passages are sloppy and unruly, or that the persona is so self-incriminating that any moral arguments can be safely ignored as ironic posturing, while his stylistic arguments are deemed careful and coherent enough to guide our reading of the Liber Sermonum as a poetic manifesto, as if those arguments are lacking the same Horatian irony that suffuses all the poems! Indeed, one of the most difficult issues in reading and interpreting Horace is to figure out what to do at any given moment with is constant ironic posture. As Ruben Brower once noted, summing up the problem, “Horace can be convincingly serious only when it is certain that no one will take him quite seriously.” Recent scholars have argued that we should not be taking these moral concerns seriously at all. But Brower’s formulation begs some questions: what makes Horace convincingly serious? What criteria in the text determine when Horace doesn’t think anyone will really take him

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4 I adopt the meaning of “ethics” from Jenkins (1999: 2), who adapts the definitions of Jacques Derrida. Derrida argues that for a decision to be ethical it must pass through a moment of radical “undecidability” (an aporia) where a choice must be made between a set of equally possible decisions, without recourse to an outside set of ethics, such as Stoic ethics, Christian ethics and so forth. Jenkins takes “ethics” and “ethical” as I do to refer to ethical systems, which make up a larger system of “morality.” Hence what Derrida calls a truly ethical choice, Jenkins calls a “moral” choice. An implicit argument of this dissertation is that Horace presents us with an ethical system (self pedagogy and self criticism and free moral criticism amongst friends) in response to major moral problems (how then shall one act in a time of civil war, when Roman Republican institutions are failing?).

5 Over the years, scholars have identified Horace with strains of Academic philosophy, Cynicism, moderate Stoicism, Epicureanism and Aristotelian philosophy. See Rudd (1993) for a survey of these positions and further bibliography. For a recent assessment of Horace’s philosophical leanings, see the dissertation of Kemp (2006) and the essay of Moles (2007).

seriously? How do these elements work together to form a complex, poetic whole?

Far from dismissing concern for the moral content, as Zetzel’s citation of Brower seeks to do, it raises more questions.

A few representative comments from leading scholars on Roman satire will illustrate the ways in which the moral content has been marginalized over the years.

First, James Zetzel:

The purpose of these poems is not to expound philosophy or literary theory: it is to create a portrait of the speaker....whatever we feel the final aim of the poet is, it is surely not simple-minded moral or literary judgments.7

Certainly the moral judgments, as I hope to show, are not simple-minded, though Zetzel’s pejorative description here is typical of recent scholarly reaction to the moral content. Likewise Kirk Freudenburg:

Too often the Satires are regarded as entirely serious in their didactic intent, and Horace himself is accepted as a second Bion with an equally serious ethical mission, much in line with Augustus’s efforts at moral reform. The satirist’s overt ineptitude…argues against this approach.8

Implicit here is the idea that serious moral content cannot co-exist with neither humor and as a result is incompatible with so-called “low genres” such as iambos or satire. Most recently there is the assessment of Dan Hooley on 1.4:

Moral edification, or reminiscence of same, or even the moral force of satire’s criticisms, then, is not the point. Rather it is the making of a world in which such characters—glutton, lecher, dissolute heir, upright fathers, pious if somehow compromised sons—live. Our poem’s speaker is just such a son, being made up before our eyes, given one parent (for satire does not care for good mothers), a certain

8 Freudenburg (1993: 8).
education, a certain attitude and view of life. How artificial and selective it all is.\textsuperscript{9}

It may be responded that all morality is ultimately man-made and “artificial”—Horace himself says as much in S.1.3.111ff. Further, Hooley reverses the priorities of the \textit{Sermones}. Since moral education requires real life examples to be efficacious, it is more proper to say that the creation of a poetic world with various moral and immoral \textit{exempla} is a prerequisite of the moral edification that the \textit{Sermones} offer.

Though no one would deny that there is a productive ambiguity in Horace’s diction between moral and literary values, the assumption that the moral content is parodic or ironic has meant that the meta-poetic readings favored by more recent scholars of the \textit{Sermones} have often occluded and even effaced the potential of a reading of sincere moral elements in Horace’s satiric poetry.\textsuperscript{10} In short, there has been a collective critical choice to make Horace ironic only when it comes to morality and utterly serious when it comes to matters of style. This is especially strange given that Horatian satire, indeed all of extant Roman satire, declares that its aim is moral correction.\textsuperscript{11} Yet for scholars such as James Zetzel, Kirk Freudenburg and Ralph Rosen, moral content and humor are mutually exclusive.

I would offer two points to counter this assumption. First, the reader may recall Horace’s question at 1.1.24-25: \textit{quamquam ridentem dicere verum / quid vetat?}

\footnotesize
\textsuperscript{9} Hooley (2001).
\textsuperscript{10} Some contend also that there is no overt moral content after the diatribes. See Zetzel (1980: 62): “It should also be noticed that the public moral tone disappears almost entirely from the book at this point (i.e. 1.4).”
\textsuperscript{11} Horace S. 1.4.1ff, Persius 1, Juvenal 1.19ff. Notable here is how Juvenal, for example, starts with literary faults at an imaginary \textit{recitatio} and then expands the scope of his first satire to encompass the vast immorality he sees in the Rome of his day.
(but what prevents me from telling the truth while laughing?) and realize that for Horace, unlike his recent critics, humor and morality are *not* incompatible, even though he claims subsequently to be turning to serious matters (1.1.27: *sed tamen amoto quaeramus seria ludo*). Second, one need only watch a given episode of Jon Stewart’s *The Daily Show* or listen to the comedy of George Carlin, Bill Hicks or Louis C.K. to hear humor mixed with moral content.

In fact, ignoring the moral content of the satires is in fact quite out of step with our modern times and how art of various forms is received by today’s audiences. Morality is a key part of various modern art forms and criticism. For example, in recent years many popular television shows have featured protagonists described as “anti-heroes.” What makes an anti-hero is almost always expressed in moral terms: an ultimately “good” character who occasionally does bad things, or believes the ends justify the means (Jimmy McNulty of *The Wire*, Olivia Pope of *Scandal* or Raylan Givens of *Justified*), or a “bad” character who’s charming enough that the viewer overlooks their significant moral sins and faults (Tony Soprano of *The Sopranos*, Walter White of *Breaking Bad*, Boyd Crowder of *Justified*). And we need not get into the many ways in which morality is invoked in politics, by those on both the left *and* the right.¹²

Thus, the time seems ripe for a reading of the *Sermones* that focuses on the moral and ethical content their part in the pragmatic goals of Horace’s satiric project. In doing so, I have decided to focus on the first book of *Sermones* for three

¹² For a good recent, albeit legalistic, analysis of this in modern politics, see Greenwald (2007).
reasons. First, the majority of scholarship on the *Sermones* has focused on this first book, thus a response to the lacks in the scholarly tradition must contend with the first book as a starting point. Closely related to this point is the second reason, that a reading of *Sermones I* that takes account of *both* the moral and aesthetic content must perforce form the background of any reading of *Sermones II*, long recognized as a response to and evolution of *Sermones I*.13 Third, since the *Liber Sermonum* is *de facto* the foundational document of Roman satire, given our lamentable loss of all but fragments of Lucilius, it is especially important to strive for a fuller and more enriching reading of this book, not just for the later *Sermones II*, but for all subsequent Roman satire, like the works of Persius and Juvenal. While there is no transcendentally “correct” reading of the *Sermones* (or any other text for that matter), we should still account for all elements of Horace’s poetic project in our reception of it, and its application to further readings and ultimately to our own lives.

My method in this study is to seek out any possible coherence of Horace’s moral concepts and the language used to express them. Appeal is often made to contemporary authors, such as Caesar, Sallust and Cicero, and to cross-references in the other poems of *Sermones I*. While this reading is historicizing in one sense—seeing Horace as caught up in the intellectual foment of the Late Republic—it is also one that focuses on Horace’s reception in several stages: amongst his friends,

13 See Freudenburg (2001: 71-118). The opening poem of *Sermones II* explicitly presents itself as a response to putative criticisms of the first book, just as *S. 1.4* presents itself as a response to putative criticisms of the first three poems.
amongst later scholars and finally how it could be received by the interested modern reader. In this first introductory chapter I will outline the main lines of inquiry on the Liber Sermonum and what they lack and then the shape of this current project. Next, I consider the links between morality and friendship with some attention paid to Cicero’s in his late work the Laelius de Amicitia, as a background to Horace’s work on amicitia. Finally I will use the diatribes (S. 1.1-3) as a test case to argue for a coherent (and serious) thinking through of moral issues and how they set up problems and themes in the rest of the book, themes which we will follow through in the rest of the dissertation.

Some Modern Approaches to Horace’s Liber Sermonum

As background to the new approach to reading the Liber Sermonum offered in this dissertation, let us review the most notable previous ways of reading these poems. There are three main approaches—persona theory, aesthetic concerns, and historicism—all of which arose out of a need to justify reading the two books of Sermones as works of art in their own right, rather than poetic juvenilia that Horace had to work his way through in order to become a mature, lyric poet. A notable reflection of this attitude is the fact that in most editions of Horace’s works, such as the Oxford Classical Text, the Sermones are placed after the Odes and Epodes, even

14 This is perhaps a reflection of an ancient tendency to want to see a poet’s full development to their mature works, hence the ascription of various poems in the Appendix Vergiliana to the “young” Vergil. There is also an inherent critical disdain in the difference between the “higher” genre of lyric poetry and the “lower” genre of satire and iambic poetry.
though they are chronologically prior. Even the foremost Horatian critics of the 20th century, Eduard Fraenkel, apologetically hedged many of his aesthetic appreciations of the *Sermones*.\textsuperscript{15} To these early critics, the ramshackle and freewheeling nature of the *Sermones* was a far cry from the careful construction and artistry of the *Odes*, so admired by Friedrich Nietzsche.\textsuperscript{16} Kirk Freudenburg summed up this position well in 1993, describing “the well-worn assumption that Horace came into his own as a poet only later in life, with the publication of his *Odes*, and that the *Satires* are early, experimental works that fall short of the standards.....that were required of true poetry.”\textsuperscript{17}

In contrast to the dismissal of the *Sermones* as artistic failures, William S. Anderson argued in several essays during the 1950s and 60s that Horace's *Sermones* could be taken seriously as works of art.\textsuperscript{18} In redeeming these poems as something more than poetic training, Anderson used the contemporary work on English satire and *persona* theory by the critics Maynard Mack and Alvin Kernan.\textsuperscript{19} His introduction of *persona* theory to Roman satire produced the first efforts in what became a decades long study of the complexities and richness of Horace's *persona*.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{15} E.g. Fraenkel (1957: 81) on the end of S. 1.2: “the stormy ending of the poem, a prestissimo which somehow recalls (*no blasphemy is intended*) the typical finale of an act in a Mozart opera. In this finale there is not only a good strong brio and a sustained crescendo, but also some sinister polyphony.” Emphasis added.
\item \textsuperscript{16} Nietzsche (1889) from “What I owe the Ancients” in *Twilight of the Idols*: “To this day, no other poet has given me the same artistic delight that a Horatian ode gave me from the first. In certain languages that which Horace has achieved could not even be attempted.”
\item \textsuperscript{17} Freudenburg (1993: 126).
\item \textsuperscript{18} Now collected in Anderson (1982).
\item \textsuperscript{19} Mack (1951) and Kernan (1959).
\item \textsuperscript{20} See too Zetzel (1980) and the detailed study of Freudenburg (1993). Turpin (1998) argues that the *persona* is a parody. Freudenburg (2001) argues that the *persona* is meant to be a failed Lucilius.
\end{itemize}
The word *persona* is the Roman word for mask and so the satiric *persona* can be thought of as the character “Horace” our historical poet Horace portrays in the *Liber Sermonum*. In fact, these very aspects of the *persona* spearheaded a reversal in the critical fortunes of Horace’s *Sermones* by showing that underneath a seemingly carefree surface lay a carefully considered character portrait. The metaphor of the *persona* also hints at the importance of drama and the dramatization of life that will be important in our reading of the *libellus*.21

In recent years, however, the value of *persona* theory as a method for studying Roman satire has begun to wane. In introducing the *Cambridge Companion to Roman Satire* in 2005, Freudenburg remarked of *persona* theory, “this kind of study, by now, has perhaps gone on too long. Or, to put this more positively, the time is now ripe for it to be pushed farther and made to pay bigger dividends.”22 Ralph Rosen advanced this critique in 2007 in his book on ancient satire *Making Mockery*:

“But while “*persona* theory” has been highly successful in reminding readers that we need not *necessarily* hear a poet’s autobiography every time he speaks with his own voice in a poem, it actually does not fully *solve* the problem of how to interpret the satirist’s voice... “*persona* theory” does little to resolve the perennial problem of satire, namely, its fundamental didactic and moral claims.”23


21 On this aspect, see especially Batstone (2009a).


23 Rosen (2007: 220-222)
Thus, while *persona* theory has taught us much about *how* the satirist goes about his work and contributed to our fundamental artistic appreciation of the *Sermones*, it often does not address the moral content of the *Sermones* seriously, or attributes them to characterization of the *persona*. In doing so it keeps the pragmatic claims of satire at one remove. Further, all of the work in studying the craftsmanship of the satiric *persona* Horace presents in the *Liber Sermonum* has still not addressed questions of how this *persona* works with the moral content and how it engages it the stated pragmatic functions of satiric poetry. If it is all just parody, then what is the function of that parody? Is parody and moral content really mutually exclusive?24

There have been two notable recent efforts to push *persona* theory forward, both of which do so by expanding its reach. Freudenburg has argued that a better way to consider the Horatian *persona* is as an artistic object created by and founded in language and other readings, an “intertextual self” so to speak. This reading does much to advance the understanding and sophistication of *persona* theory when it comes to satire studies, but still does not consider the moral content of the

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24 Typically, three arguments are often adduced to dismiss the moral content as parodic. First, that Horace uses sloppy philosophical argumentation (Turpin: 1998 is the best distillation of this idea, but cf. Freudenburg (1993: 1-51) and Zetzel (1980)). But this assumes that only the truly doctrinaire student of philosophy can be morally serious. This is not an argument about morality *per se* but about orthodoxy. It does not *ipso facto* vitiate the moral message, and also presumes too much seriousness for a genre like satire. Others argue that since Horace’s *persona* (as well as the *personae* of Persius and Juvenal) is self-incriminating, then this undermines the seriousness of the moral content. Yet Horace tells us that no one is without faults, and his whole moral project is one of self-improvement. After all, satire needs faults in order to have something to satirize. Finally, there is the larger issue of the dismissal of moral content in Roman literature at large. On this, see Edwards (1993: 2), “scholars now tend to be embarrassed by Roman moralizing, which they dismiss as rhetorical and repetitive, a curious accretion to be ignored by those in pursuit of the real matter in Roman texts….an appreciation of the dynamics of Roman moralizing rhetoric is crucial to any understanding of these texts and their context.” Cf. Morgan (2007).
Sermones. William Batstone argues that we should consider the persona as a rhetorical concept of central importance in Roman culture. He contextualizes Horace’s persona work alongside similar efforts in Plautus, Cicero, Sallust and Catullus. More important for our present purposes, he specifically situates Horace’s persona in the moral content of the Sermones:

As the poem moves from political attacks of Old Comedy to the social criticism of Lucilius to New Comedy to Horace’s father to Horace alone muttering to himself and occasionally writing down his mutterings, the verse defends and enacts a focus on moral self-pedagogy. By defending this self-pedagogy in terms of a dramatic model, Horace stages self-pedagogy as a gap in consciousness that allows us both to be moral judges of ourselves and to be distant from our capacity to judge at the same time as we exercise that capacity.

This kind of approach seems the most promising in expanding our understanding of Horace’s ethical and moral ideas because it takes the moral content of the poems seriously and not as something to be explained away, and situates the persona within the pragmatic goals of the Sermones. Further, this reading also provides a pragmatic way of interpreting the persona as a tool everyone uses in the drama that is real life and lived experience, rather than just a rhetorical element of Roman personal poetry. We shall pursue the implications of this reading further in chapter 2 on S. 1.4.

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25 Freudenburg (2010).
26 Batstone (2009a: 225). It is from this essay that the present dissertation takes its start and inspiration, just as an earlier version on Livy took inspiration from Batstone (2009b).
The second line of inquiry into Roman satire and Horatian satire in particular is that of aesthetics and related concerns about generic identity. Like work on the persona, studies of Horace’s aesthetic principals started as a way to redeem the artistic quality of the Sermones from the criticisms of scholars who compared them unfavorably to the Odes. Kirk Freudenburg’s 1993 monograph The Walking Muse, jumpstarted this approach by exploring the complex debts to various ancient theory that lay behind Horace’s conception of satire. For scholars following in Freudenburg’s wake, the Sermones became as important a document of neo-Callimacheanism as Vergil’s contemporary Eclogues. Specifically, Horace’s neo-Callimacheanism was read as a way of improving and “slimming down” bloated Lucilian satire—such as the 104 line fifth poem of Sermones I remaking a poem of Lucilius’ that took up an entire book. The research of these scholars have shown us how Horace thought satire should be written, but not why Horace would choose to write satire as opposed to any number of poetic genres like epic, elegy or drama.

Closely linked with the aesthetic concerns are questions of genre, which marry aesthetic questions and historicizing questions and so serves as a bridge between these two lines of scholarship. Because satire is so slippery and messy a genre, it makes a good testing ground for classical and modern theories of genre. What makes the situation even trickier with Roman satire specifically is the fact that the primus inventor of the genre, the second century B.C. poet Lucilius, exists only in

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28 See in particular Scodel (1987) and Zetzel (2002). Freudenburg develops these ideas further in his 2001 monograph (Freudenburg 2001: 23-44).
discrete fragments.\textsuperscript{29} To get any good understanding of Roman satire as a genre, scholarly thinking goes, one would need a good understanding of Lucilius, especially since he figures in the programmatic statements of his extant poetic successors Horace, Persius and Juvenal. Further, satire \textit{qua} genre is first codified by Horace, from whom we get much of our information about what Lucilius did and who really defines what the earlier poet’s achievement was and what constitutes a genre that can include both Lucilius in all his myriad poses as well as Horace’s own work. In this sense, we can think of Horace as the St. Paul of Roman satire—the later genius figure who takes up, defines and expands the achievement of an earlier founder. This kind of scholarship, while revealing much about the complex genre of satire, risks reducing the \textit{Sermones} to a historical trace in the literary history of Rome’s own peculiar poetic genre.

Finally, Horace’s historical context in writing his satiric poetry, the transition from Republic to Empire in the 30s B.C. (the so-called triumviral period), has also made the \textit{Liber Sermonum} an important source for the history of that period. Ian DuQuesnay’s important article of 1984 is a seminal work for this approach, in which he read the \textit{Liber Sermonum} in light of its historical context for any propaganda value. Though it is reductive to regard the poems as mere propaganda (and it is questionable whether we can apply modern ideas of propaganda, informed by 1930s fascism and the Cold War of the 1950s through 1980s, can be applied to ancient Rome), DuQuesnay’s article is valuable for highlighting the many ways that

\textsuperscript{29} Cf. \textit{S. 1.10.48 inventore}, referring to Lucilius
Horace responds to the troubles and events of his own time. More recent articles, on poems like 1.5 and 1.7 try to extract what political ideas they can from the obfuscations of Horace’s memoir of his trip to Brundisium and the barbershop gossip of 1.7.

Other studies compare Horace to Lucilius and see in Horace’s quieter, tamer satire a diminished Lucilianism due to outside political factors. These factors include class (Lucilius the *eques* versus Horace the son of a freedman), faction (Lucilius as friend to Scipio; Horace as a veteran of Philippi on the Republican side) and social rank (Lucilius the wealthy *eques* and friend on equal terms to Scipio, compared to the putative client/patron relationship of Horace and Maecenas). Now one might respond that many of these differences are products of Horace’s literary *persona* rather than historical traces of the real Horace. After all, both Lucilius and Horace had the census of an *eques*, and any early political missteps are obviated by Horace’s friendship with Maecenas--clearly a sign his earlier military activity wasn’t a disqualifying line on his resumé. Other elements of this biography are really a product of modern scholarly imagination (there is nothing in the *Sermones* to suggest the friendship of Horace and Maecenas was not real and fulfilling).

33 The idea that Horace was more *cliens* than *amicus* is largely due to the biography of Suetonius (*Vita Horatii*), who describes how Horace insinuated himself into the friendship of both Maecenas and Augustus (*insinuatus*) and cites a letter of Augustus to Maecenas where the *princeps* characterizes Horace as a comic parasite: *veniet ergo ab ista parasitica mensa ad hanc regiam.*
Further, a development away from naming names like Lucilius is not *ipso facto* a poetic failing on Horace’s part. In between the time when Lucilius wrote and Horace’s own, naming names had taken on deadly consequences through the institution of proscriptions. Under the dictatorship of Sulla, to have one’s name on the white boards in the forum meant that one was not long for this earth. In 49 B.C., fears of a proscription accompanied the onset of the civil war between Pompey and Caesar. *Ita sullaturit animus eius et proscripturit iam diu* (already his mind has been thinking like Sulla and making proscriptions for a long time now) Cicero wrote of Pompey to his friend Atticus.34 Earlier in the same letter, Cicero recounts Pompey’s threats uttered in conversation: *quae minae municipiis, quae nominatim viris bonis, quae denique omnibus qui remansissent! quam crebro illud ‘Sulla potuit, ego non potero?’* (what threats to towns, to good men individually named, at last to all who remained. How often Pompey said “Sulla could do it, why can’t I?”). Caesar, in contrast, refused to name names and to imitate Sulla (*Ad Att. 9.7.C.1 Lucium Sullam, quem imitaturus non sum*). Further, Caesar eschews naming his opponents, except for his chief opponents at *B.C. 1.4*.35 What is more, Horace began writing the first book of satires shortly after a second round of official proscriptions instituted by the triumvirs Octavian, Antony and Lepidus. In such an atmosphere, *not* naming names might be considered something of a virtue.36

34 Cicero *Ad Att. 9.10.6.*
35 On this aspect of Caesar’s work, see Batstone and Damon (2006: 93-95).
36 I owe this paragraph to a suggestion of Will Batstone.
To review: the major questions asked of Horace’s *Sermones* in recent years have been ones of the *persona*, the aesthetic principles Horace espouses and the historical context in which he wrote. These are all historicizing in their own way: the *persona* question seeks to better understand a common element of Roman poetry of the first century B.C. (for example, Catullus, the elegists, Horace’s lyric poetry), likewise aesthetic questions often tie into concerns over the literary history of late Republican Roman literature and its continuous adaptation and play with Callimachean standards, while questions of historical context seek to untangle the complicated history of the second triumvirate for which we have scant contemporary sources. What all of these approaches leave out is a consideration of the moral content of the satires and what they have to tell us about Roman moral discourse and ideas. Even studies of Roman morality such as Catherine Edwards *The Politics of Immorality in Ancient Rome*, Myles McDonnell’s *Roman Manliness* and Teresa Morgan’s *Popular Morality in the Early Roman Empire* devote little if any attention to Roman satire and its moralizing claims.37

More recently, some scholars have begun to take the moral content seriously again, although in service of other questions. Catherine Schlegel’s 2005 study of Horace’s *Sermones* focuses on the concept of verbal violence and satire’s relationship with its audience. However, an implicit assumption of her entire thesis

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37 Edwards (1993), McDonnell (2006) and Morgan (2007). Corbeill (1996) looks at Roman political invective and while there are some overlaps with satire, his focus is on the work of Cicero.
is that the moral content of the *Liber Sermonum* is seriously meant.\(^{38}\) Further, the way she formulates her thesis is itself an ethical question, in how satire with its threatening and invective speech can make any kind of rapport with its putative audience. Around the same time, Jerome Kemp has argued in his 2006 dissertation and in a subsequent series of articles that we should be taking Horace’s philosophy more seriously than just parody.\(^{39}\) As Kemp puts it:

> The association of philosophical ideas, Horace’s deliberate manipulation of them – even if sometimes so as to appear casual – in the end serves to put forward an underlying philosophical doctrine; if anything, Horace’s apparently casual use of ethical doctrine, his humor, in fact, demonstrates a satirist who is very much in control of the moral content in his work, and who uses the instability and humour of satire to strengthen particular philosophical arguments and the underlying moral seriousness of the poems...the irony in the moralizing should not be regarded as undermining the moral content or making it practically worthless – if that were the case the irony would lose much of its effect.\(^{40}\)

While Kemp focuses on the philosophical content, which of course includes ethical philosophy, much of his work has been to combat and clear away the detritus of years of scholarship that has dismissed or ignored the moral and philosophical content. In other words, Kemp’s main contribution has been to show that the moral content is in fact seriously meant and that though not a doctrinaire follower of any particular school that Horace’s does seriously engage in philosophy. Starting from

\(^{38}\) Schlegel (2005). Cf. Keane’s review (2006b): “the book’s premise, more implied than articulated, that the *Satires* take basic ethical questions seriously.”

\(^{39}\) Kemp (2009) and (2010). Though I have not been able to get a hold of a copy of Kemp’s (2006) dissertation, I presume these two articles are adapted from it.

\(^{40}\) Kemp (2009: 5).
Kemp then we can take up the project of how the moral content functions in the
*Liber Sermonum* and what ethical principles, if any, we can take from these poems.

As mentioned earlier, the recent reading of S. 1.4 by William Batstone provides a promising starting point to reevaluate the moral content of the *Liber Sermonum* by means of analyzing Horace's *persona* not just as a function of poetic rhetoric but as mimetic of the drama of real life moral pedagogy.\(^{41}\) What is more, his idea of moral (self)-pedagogy addresses what Rosen sees as the main limitation of much *persona* work--its elision of satire's “fundamental didactic and moral claims”--since Batstone takes the moral content as a given in contrast to much recent scholarship that seeks to explain it away.\(^{42}\) As we have seen in this section, while readings of Horace's *Sermones* that focus on questions of *persona*, aesthetics and history have taught us a great deal about the rhetorical strategies of Horace and other poets, the genre of satire and the history of the second triumvirate, their common marginalization of the moral content is their main limitation.

One way we can think of how the *persona* works with the moral content is by looking at the way the text establishes a relationship with its reader. I start from a comment of Cicero to Atticus in the preface to the *De Amicitia* where Cicero says: 

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tota disputation est de amicitia, quam legens te ipse cognosces\]  

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\(^{41}\) See also Batstone (1993).

\(^{42}\) Rosen (2007: 222). Scholars have long debated whether there is one consistent *persona* in the first book or a variety of masks that the poet wears. While it is obvious that the speaker of S 1.1-7 is also not a wooden statue of Priapus (the speaker of 1.8), that poem seems to be the exception that proves the rule, not a sign that we should deny any consistency to the *persona* of the other nine satires, as Zetzel (1980) and Freudenburg (1993) do. Rather I find that the analysis of Anderson (1982: 13-49) of a consistent, largely Socratic (both the Socrates of Plato and the Socrates of Xenophon and later of the Cynics) persona for the *Satires* to be a convincing one. Thus, for the purposes of this dissertation, I will assume some consistency in the *persona* for *Sermones* I.
about friendship, and when you read it you will recognize yourself in it.)

The figures of Laelius and Scipio, the exemplary friendship central to the dialogue, are meant to stand in for Cicero and Atticus. Likewise one would imagine Horace would expect Maecenas to recognize something of himself in the *Liber Sermonum*. Yet the continuing reception of the *Sermones* is partly contingent upon the readers ability to see something valuable for their 21st century lived experience in the *Sermones*. Horace's self-exemplarity, expressed in the form of the poet’s *persona*, is an important part of this reception. Scholars have often noted that part of the appeal of the *Sermones* is found in the charming, albeit flawed, *persona* of the poet, but I contend that the close relationship that the text invites between reader and *persona* is part of the text's enduring value as well. It is an invitation to see Horace as model of things to both avoid and pursue. This depends upon the analogy each reader must make between Horace's artistically conceived and presented life and his or her own. This doesn't necessarily mean that the modern reader will follow all of Horace's suggestions, just as the text implies that Horace didn't always listen to his father. For example, the modern reader might follow Horace's advice on making

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43 Cicero, *De Amicitia* 5.
44 Hawtrey (1979) is a tentative attempt to explore Horace's self-exemplarity in the *Sermones* and *Epistles*. For more on self-exemplarity in a Roman context, using the example of Cicero see Dugan (2005) and Blom (2010: 287-324). See also Lowrie (2007) for Cicero and Augustus.
45 The reader might object here that the satirical worldview is one of distortion, caricature and exaggeration. At the risk of resorting to the old saw about the Horatian and Juvenalian forms of satire, I think this world view is more a mark of Juvenalian satire than Horatian. Further, much of the satiric punch in Juvenal's cartoonish Roman madhouse is derived from his insistence that this is what Rome is now really like and his writing is thus more real to life than Tacitus' historical works (cf. Juvenal 2.99-103 and Freudenburg (2001: 209-242).
and keeping friends in S. 1.3, while eschewing Horace’s counsel on appropriate sexual partners in S. 1.2.

We can press this point about the relationship between persona and reader further by looking for a moment to the first poem of the second book of Sermones. There, at 2.1.30-31, Horace famously notes that Lucilius entrusted his secrets to his books just as if they were faithful companions: Ille [i.e. Lucilius] velut fidis arcana sodalibus olim / credebat libris. This image is developed a bit in lines 32-34 where the result of Lucilius’ writing his arcana into his books is compared to putting one’s entirely life onto a votive tablet; implicit here is the analogy of the votiva tabella to the libri of line 31.47 We can read the comparison here between books and friends in corporeal terms, where the books and friends are both thought of as bodies: corpus as human body and corpus in the sense of “a body of work.” The implication of Lucilius putting all his secrets into his books, as if they were friends, is that his readership also gains access to his arcana and in that sense they become sodales of Lucilius too. What is more, if Lucilius pours everything about his life into his books, down to the arcana, then we can also read these books as artful representations of their author Lucilius, his life, and his experiences. In this sense the books become sodales or amici to their readers, again playing on the double sense of corpus as body of a person and body of written work. Andrea Cucchiarelli’s observation of the

46 On these lines, see most recently Freudenburg (2010: 273-276).
47 S. 2.1.32-34: quo fit ut omnis / votiva pateat veluti descripta tabella / vita senis.
importance and close relationship of the physical body of the satirist to the content of his poetry lends some support to this idea.\textsuperscript{48}

Given this background of Lucilian practice, I propose that we can venture an identification of the first book of \textit{Sermones} with Horace's body, that \textit{Sermones} I as a corpus of poems represents the corpus of an amicus or sodalis named "Horace."\textsuperscript{49} As Horace devotes his fictive arcana to his \textit{libellus} through the persona he creates, the cumulative effect is the construction of a fully realized persona,\textsuperscript{50} one that is easily relatable no matter the social status of the reader, since although the persona of Horace moves in the circles of power his own origins are much humbler.\textsuperscript{51} What I mean by this is that Horace, in adapting the techniques of personal poetry found in Lucilian satire, makes his \textit{libellus} into a sodalis for the reader. This literary sodalis can be thought of as the total literary and artistic effect of the persona of Horace embedded in the first book of \textit{Sermones}.\textsuperscript{52} The "friend" in this book, the "Horace" the reader meets, is really Horace as exemplary friend. This friend shows us the way to maintain a friendship that depends on of \textit{parrhesia} and frankness (\textit{libertas})

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\textsuperscript{48} Cucchiarelli (2001) and Barchiesi and Cucchiarelli (2005).
\textsuperscript{49} Cf. Zetzel (1980: 69): "Thus, as a whole, the book fulfills artistically the description of Lucilian satire in II.1.30ff, as a votive tablet setting forth a life; what Horace has done is to contract that real life...into a single book of short compass and simultaneous publication; an imagined life, not a true one."
\textsuperscript{50} Cf. Zetzel (1980: 68-69) particularly 69: "in a sense the book is a progressive revelation, a development of a persona and also a description of the speaker's progress from outside the circle of Maecenas to inside it."
\textsuperscript{51} The exact humility of those origins is still up for debate, but it certainly was not as humble as Horace portrays in the \textit{Sermones}. See Taylor (1925), Armstrong (1986), Lyne (1995: 1-11) and Williams (1995).
\textsuperscript{52} Thus, like other critics (e.g. Anderson (1982: 13-41) and Freudenburg (1993: 3-51), I regard the persona of \textit{Sermones} I as a great artistic achievement on Horace's part. Unlike these scholars, I see this achievement as being in service to larger moral and ethical goals.
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by granting the reader the opportunity to critique his own flaws, while at the same
time prompting moral self-reflection in imitation of Horace’s own constant self-
reflexion.⁵³

Horace’s self-exemplarity works on several levels. On the one hand, he presents himself as an exemplary friend. But he is not only a friend to the reader he is also as a friend to Maecenas. In fact, he presents the relationship between him and Maecenas, placed front and center at the book’s beginning, as an exemplary relationship. This is, after all, one of the points of S. 1.9. We may further say that the central mimetic structure of the book, the conversations that give the book its title of *Sermones*, lends more support to this idea. In this sense, the *Sermones* are mimetic conversations between Horace and Maecenas that together exemplify the *amicitia* between the two as well as the moral education that made that *amicitia* possible. The moral self-pedagogy the text proposes is modeled after Horace’s putative conversations with Maecenas, which can *at the same time* be read as conversations between Horace and his reader, just as the friendship of the textual Horace and the textual Maecenas can be thought of as exemplary of the literary friendship between the textual Horace and the reader, which in turn can be thought of as exemplary for the friendships between the reader and their own *sodales*.⁵⁴

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⁵⁴ Cf. Gold’s (1992: 162ff.) model of audiences for the *Sermones*. Scholars often figure the reader as an “over-hearer” of the putative conversations between Horace and Maecenas, but I think it is important to emphasize the “conversation model” at all the possible points of reception—Horace and Maecenas, Horace and interlocutor, Horace and the group of friends he’d address at a *recitatio* and Horace and his modern audience.
In this dissertation I will take it as a given that the moral content is meant seriously and that Horace means to investigate moral questions with his reader. From there I investigate its function in Horace’s text and how it links to the poet’s overarching concern with friendship. We shall see that the moral concerns Horace evinces in *Sermones* I tie into some important Roman cultural concerns: moral criticism and free speech amongst friends, the concept of *amicitia* itself and the use (and abuse) of exemplarity. While some attention will be paid to all the satires, the main focus will be on poems 4-7. In last section of this introduction I’ll consider how the diatribes try out a stern moralizing voice only to quickly problematize that voice in the third poem and introduce the idea of self-reflection and self-criticism as a necessary part of using satire amongst friends. In chapter 2 I will closely read poem 1.4 not as a program of aesthetic principles but as a pragmatic program of moral improvement in friendship. In chapter 3 I’ll examine how this program plays out in the fifth and sixth poems as Horace shows the reader various “roles” or *personae* that someone can take on in a relationship of *amicitia* with another person. In chapter 4 I will turn to poem 1.7 and show how it is an antithetical example to the preceding poems, emphasizing the importance of friendship by showing the deleterious effects of *otium*. In the concluding fifth chapter I’ll quickly look at the moral content of two of the last three poems: the test case of friendship in 1.9 with the Pest and finally how Horace makes his aesthetic self-pedagogy mirror his moral self-pedagogy and links both to friendship in the concluding poem 1.10. Before we start our reading of the *Liber Sermonum*, I want to briefly consider some background to the *libellus*, specifically the links of morality and *amicitia* in Roman thought.
Morality and Friendship in the Late Roman Republic

In Horace’s poetic imaginary, morality and friendship are closely linked. For example, Horace imagines in S. 1.4 that a friend (liber amicus 1.4.132) will help him correct his minor faults (1.4.130-133: mediocribus et quis / ignoscas vitiis teneor. Fortassis et istinc / largiter abstulerit longa aetas, liber amicus, / consilium proprium). His friends Vergil and Varius vouch for his good character to Maecenas (1.6.55: Vergilius, post hunc Varius, dixere quid essem), a man who judges potential friends by their character (1.6.63-64: qui turpi secernis honestum, / non patre praeclaro sed vita et pectore puro). And, of course, the entire book is addressed to Horace’s close friend Maecenas.

That morality and friendship are linked in Horace is no surprise given the larger cultural background in which he wrote. Romans not only privileged virtus (both in the sense of manliness and courage as well as in the sense of moral virtue) but framed many relationships in terms of amicitia, itself closely linked with moral concerns.55 There were also notable exemplary friends, such as Orestes and Pylades in myth,56 Scipio Africanus Minor and Laelius (as well as Lucilius himself!),57 and, in Horace’s lifetime, Cicero and Atticus. Further, we can see the importance of amicitia


56 Cf. Cicer de Amicitia 24: Qui clamores tota cavea nuper in hospitis et amici mei M. Pacuvi nova fabula! cum ignorantia rege, uter Orestes esset, Pylades Orestem se esse diceret, ut pro illo necaretur, Orestes autem, ita ut erat, Orestem se esse perseveraret. Stantes plaudebant in re ficta; quid arbitramur in vera facturos fuisse?
for the Romans with a quick survey of examples from some writers contemporaneous with Horace.

Julius Caesar in his *Bellum Civile* sees the breakdown of his friendship with Pompey as a key cause of the war and blames that breakdown on his (Caesar’s) enemies, which were originally Pompey’s enemies.\(^58\) Horace himself sees that civil war in terms of *amicitia*, talking of the *gravis amicitias* of the protagonists in his civil war Ode to Pollio (C. 2.1).\(^59\) Here we have *amicitia* as a political concept. In Sallust’s *Bellum Catilinae*, Catiline declares himself ready to undertake his plans because of his confidence in the friendship of his fellow conspirators, a more social view of friendship.\(^60\) In his later *Bellum Jugurthinum*, Sallust has Adherbal frame his initial speech to the senate at *BJ* 14 in terms of friendship, using *amicitia* and related terms 10 times in his speech where *amicitia*, where friendship is framed as diplomatic relations.\(^61\) Adherbal fears that it will be private friendships cultivated by Jugurtha that prove his undoing: *Tantum illud vereor, ne quos privata amicitia lugurthae parum cognita transversos agat* (I fear only this, lest private friendship with Jugurtha that not recognized by you is turning some people against me).\(^62\)

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\(^{58}\) *Caesar BC 1.4*: *Ipse Pompeius, ab inimicis Caesaris incitatus, et quod neminem dignitate secum exaequari volebat, totum se ab eius amicitia averterat et cum communibus inimicis in gratiam redierat, quorum ipse maximam partem illo affinitatis tempore inuenxerat Caesari.*

\(^{59}\) *Horace C 2.1.3-4*: *gravisque / principium amicitias.*

\(^{60}\) *Sallust BC 20*: *simul quia vobis eadem, quae mihi, bona malaque esse intellexi; nam idem velle atque idem nolle, ea demum firma amicitia est.*

\(^{61}\) *Sallust BJ 14*, e.g. in *vestra amicitia exercitum divitiis munimenta regni me habiturum; Ceteri reges aut bello victi in amicitiam a vobis recepti sunt aut in suis dubiis rebus societatem vestram appetiverunt; Nationes ne an reges, qui omnes familiae nostrae ob vestram amicitiam infesti sunt.*

The most important discussion of friendship prior to Horace’s Liber Sermonum, is the Laelius de Amicitia of Cicero, one of his latest philosophical works.\textsuperscript{63} The goals of this work are cogently described by G.B. Conte:

“The novelty of Cicero’s approach consists in the effort to enlarge the social basis of friendship beyond the restricted circle of the nobilitas. Such values as virtus and probitas, which are recognized by large segments of the population, are established as the foundations of friendship. But the friendship promoted by the Laelius is not only a political friendship; throughout the work one notes a desperate need for sincere relations, which Cicero, who was caught in the grip of conventions imposed by public life, may have been able to enjoy only with Atticus.\textsuperscript{64}"

Both Cicero’s De Amicitia and Horace’s Sermones seek to promote friendship in everyday life, not in philosophical abstractions, as a salve to the discord Rome had suffered.\textsuperscript{65} That is to say, both texts propose a pragmatic goal of using amicitia as a fulfilling and constructive relationship that can build community and enable its participants to morally improve themselves and their friends.\textsuperscript{66}

In several parts of the text, Cicero links together moral concerns and friendship. In section 20 of the text, Cicero notes the importance of virtus (in the moral sense) to friendship: \textit{sed haec ipsa virtus amicitiam et gignit et continet nec}

\textsuperscript{63} It is also the basis of further philosophical works on friendship in the Western tradition. See especially Derrida (1997). A useful introduction to the text is Powell (1990). On the historical context of its composition see Bringmann (1971: 206-228 and 268-70) and Heldmann (1976).

\textsuperscript{64} Conte (1994: 195).

\textsuperscript{65} Cf. De Amicitia 18: \textit{nos autem ea quae sunt in usu vitaeque communi, non ea quae finguntur aut optantur, spectare debemus;} De Amicitia 21 (on virtus): \textit{iam virtutem ex consuetudine vitae sermonisque nostri interpretemur nec eam, ut quidam docti, verborum magnificentia metiamur;} and De Amicitia 38: \textit{sed loquimur de iis amicis qui ante oculos sunt, quos vidimus aut de quibus memoriam accepiimus, quos novit vita communis.}

\textsuperscript{66} See Habinek (1990) for an exploration of this idea in the De Amicitia. Leach (1993) is a frustratingly dense look at how Lacanian ideas on absence and desire are interwoven into the dialogue.
sine virtute amicitia esse ullo pacto potest. (but this very virtus both produces friendship and preserves it and without virtus, there is no friendship at all).\textsuperscript{67} In section 30, Laelius confirms that this was indeed the origin of his friendship with Scipio: *sed ego admiratione quadam virtutis eius, ille vicissim opinione fortasse non nulla, quam de meis moribus habebat, me dilexit* (but I loved him because of a certain admiration of his virtus and he in turn loved me perhaps because of some opinion he held about my character).\textsuperscript{68} Laelius restates his position again at section 48:

> Cum autem contrahat amicitiam, ut supra dixi, si qua significatio virtutis eluceat, ad quam se similis animus applicet et adiungat, id cum contigit, amor exoriatur necesse est

*Since, however, as I said before, virtue binds friendship together, if some certain signifier of virtue should shine out, to which a similar spirit can attach and adjust itself, then when that happens it is necessary that love arise.*\textsuperscript{69}

Finally, in section 83, Cicero gives us a glimpse at how friendship can aid in moral development:

> virtutum amicitia adiutrix a natura data est, non vitiorum comes, ut, quoniam solitaria non posset virtus ad ea, quae summa sunt, pervenire, coniuncta et consociata cum altera perveniret,

*Friendship was given by nature as a handmaid to virtue, not as a companion of vices, since virtue cannot achieve its highest aims on its own, but arrives at them conjoined and associated with another.*\textsuperscript{70}

\textsuperscript{67} Cf. *De Amicitia* 29 on how *virtus* moves the *animus* towards friendship and esteem: *quid mirum est, si animi hominum moveantur, cum eorum, quibuscum usu conjuncti esse possunt, virtutem et bonitatem perspicere videantur?* See too *De Amicitia* 104: *Vos autem hortor ut ita virtutem locetis, sine qua amicitia esse non potest.*

\textsuperscript{68} Cf. *De Amicitia* 102: *virtutem enim amavi illius viri.*

\textsuperscript{69} Cf. *De Amicitia* 100: *Virtus, virtus, inquam, C. Fanni, et tu, Q. Muci, et conciliat amicitias et conservat.*

\textsuperscript{70} Cf. *De Amicitia* 84: *Quod cum optimum maximumque sit, si id volumus adipisci, virtutis opera danda est, sine qua nec amicitiam neque ullam rem expetendum consequi possimus; ea vero neglecta qui se amicos habere arbitrantur, tum se denique errasse sentiunt, cum eos gravis aliquis casus experiri cogit.*
Cicero’s text, however, elevates this kind of virtuous friendship above everyday friendships, a sort of middle ground between the philosophically ideal friendships and the more quotidian friendships. Horace’s development from Cicero is to show how even every day friendships, outside of the ideals of a philosophical dialogue, can also partake in moral development. The expression of this in a “low” genre like satire, in other words, democratizes the moral utility of friendship that Cicero describes in the Laelius. In the next and last section of this chapter we will see how Horace shows both a need for an ethical form of amicitia and how that might be possible in a satiric mode.

**The Diatribes**

In this final section, I want to look to the diatribes of the first book (S. 1.1-3) to see how Horace envisions first a moral purpose for his satiric project and then how that purpose can be reconciled with amicitia and free criticism amongst friends. We will look briefly at the moral arguments of the first two poems and then devote most attention to the problems of moral self-reflection and criticism amongst friends raised in the third poem. We will also look to see how themes that become important later in the Sermones first arise here in the diatribes: the role of friendship, the role of fathers and finally the process of moral self-pedagogy that is dramatized at various points in the diatribe satires.

The first poem starts off as a diatribe against mempsimoria—the desire to change one's lot in life—and then shifts to become one against avaritia—the greed
that fuels *mempsimoria*. Horace attacks the greed and excess of various nameless figures, combating an idea that someone is worth only as much wealth as they possess (1.62: *quai tanti quantum habeas sis*). Where does all this striving and greed get the *avarus* (greedy man)? Alone and hated by everyone, his family included. Horace imagines a situation where an *avarus* lies ill while everyone around him hopes he dies (1.80-87):

> at si condoluit temptatum frigore corpus
> aut alius casus lecto te adflxit, habes qui
> adsideat, fomenta paret, medicum roget, ut te
> suscitet ac reddat gnatis carisque propinquis?
> non uxor salvum te volt, non filius; omnes
> vicini oderunt, noti, pueri atque puellae.
miraris, cum tu argento post omnia ponas,
si nemo praestet, quem non merearis, amore?

*But if the body is pained, attacked by cold or some other cause fixes you to your bed, do you have someone who will be by your side, prepare medicines, ask the doctor that they resuscitate you and restore you to your near and dear ones? But your wife doesn’t wish you to be healthy, nor your son; all your neighbors hate you, your acquaintances, boys and girls. Do you wonder why, when you put everything else after money, if nobody stands out who loves you, which you did not ever earn?*

Horace presents a situation where the *avarus* is cut off from any and every kind of affection. Rather than *amicitia* or *amor* there is *odium* (*vicini oderunt*) and the *avarus* has not earned any love (*amor*), which lies at the root of *ami-citia*. Notably

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71 The shift in subjects at line 20 has vexed critics for many years. Zetzel (1980: 70) citing Palmer (1883: 113) declares that “Despite the quantity of scholarly agonies, the break in the argument at line 20 is still as evident as it was to Palmer: ‘there are in reality two subjects, discontent and avarice, but Horace tries to treat them as one and the suture is apparent.’” I have always thought the link was clearly apparent—*avaritia* is the cause of *mempsimoria*—and so find myself in agreement with Eduard Fraenkel who notes “the real reason why men are never contented with their own lot [*mempsimoria*] lies in their *pleonexia*. It is *avaritia* that is at the bottom of the misguided yearning after other men’s lot”: Fraenkel (1957: 91), with an extended quotation of Haupt’s original German in the footnotes, since even in 1957 his text was quite hard to find.
absent here too is any real friends (amici); the closest word to amicus is carus at 1.83. Instead the avarus has lost out on mere acquaintances (noti) or neighbors (vicini). The lack of sympathy from any family member (uxor, filius or gnatis) a fortiori precludes the possibility of friendship for our hypothetical avarus. After all, as Horace goes on to say, to teach such a man to join or hold onto friends would be a fool’s errand, like teaching an ass to respond to reins. It is important to note here that not only is our hypothetical avarus cut off from friendship, but also from any kind of paternal relationship with his son, who hates him. In short, Horace’s avarus cuts himself off from two important methods of moral improvement in the Sermones—the relationship between fathers and sons and conversations between friends.

Horace argues that the solution to the problem of mempsimoria is to attempt a life that is blessed (beatus). Such a life is ultimately one that is founded in moderation (1.105-107):

Est inter Tanain quiddam socerum Viselli.  
Est modus in rebus, sunt certi denique fines,  
Quos ultra citraque nequit consistere rectum

There is a certain range between Tanais and Visellius’ father in law. There is a middle ground in affairs, there are certain boundaries beyond and short of which right living is not able to stand.

The middle ground or aurea mediocritas is a famous Horatian motif, which extends throughout the Sermones as well as his later work the Odes and Epistles. Horace stresses moderation instead of excess, but this moderation is not just in regards to

72 1.88-91: an si cognatos, nullo natura labore / quos tibi dat, retinere velis servareque amicos, / infelix operam perdas, ut siquis asellum / in campo doceat parentem currere frenis?

31
wealth and its acquisition, but also sexual matters (as in 1.2), criticism (1.3) and poetic composition (1.4 and 1.5). Part of Horace’s moral self-pedagogy is finding these limits (fines) in one’s own life. That is to say there aren’t just set boundaries where a rule is set and then followed, but since Horace criticizes excess in several different spheres of activity, finding these fines is a continuous experiential activity of moral exploration and learning.

Let us unpack this a bit, since this has important implications to how we consider the moral content of Horace’s Sermones. Most readers of the diatribes pick out key moral messages from Horace’s sermons here: typically, don’t be greedy (S 1.1), be careful in sexual matters (S 1.2) and be temperate and equitable (S. 1.3). On the other hand, the disagreement about what these messages really are and how they create an argumentative structure to the diatribes hint that such in nuce summaries of the diatribes miss the point. Rather than give the reader moral praecepta, Horace presents the reader with the process of how we arrive at such praecepta. This is a morality of doing, not saying.

How does this work in practice in S. 1.1? Let us consider the goal Horace sets out at the poem’s beginning and end: to live a life that is blessed (beatus) which he identifies at the end with a life that is satis (1.1.117-19):

    Inde fit ut raro, qui se vixisse beatum
    Dicat et exacto contentus tempore vita
    Cedat uti conviva satur, reperire queamus.

73 See, for example, the scholarly debate on the structure of S. 1.1, discussed in note 71 above on page 29.
Thus it happens that we are rarely able to find someone who says they have lived a blessed life and who depart from life, when their time is up, content, just as a satisfied dinner guest leaves the feast.

How do we figure out what is *satis*, that is, what makes us *satur* and thus, *beatus*? Horace speaks throughout the poem of specific boundaries, such as at 1.1.105-107, quoted above. We can also consider the natural *finis* of hunger at 1.1.49-53 with the dialogue about how much grain one needs to satisfy, or of thirst in the following discussion at 1.1.54-60. In both cases the body provides the limit (how much one’s stomach can hold of grain or water), while human *avaritia* grasps after more—eating from an entire granary or drinking from an entire river rather than a small fountain. It is one thing to just say “life a content life, satisfied with what you have.” Horace is more interested in figuring out just how much is enough? When can we really say we’re satisfied?\footnote{Dufallo (2000) approaches this question from a meta-poetic angle.}

Horace says it is rare we find someone who actually listens to where nature’s limits are, what their own bodies tell them. In other words, people have some real trouble figuring out what is *satis*. Horace, in the diatribes, shows us a process by which we may figure out where these limits are. It is a process that depends on self-reflection (figuring out exactly how much our body can take) and lived experience, learning from mistakes, both one’s own and those of others. The poem enacts this self-reflection in two ways. First forcing the reader to question his or her relationship to the *tu* figure that functions as Horace’s interlocutor in the poem. Are
we, the modern readers, really implicated in such *avaritiae*. Second, the other *exempla* of the poem, like Ummidius, or the Athenian miser, show us how we can learn from other’s mistakes. In sum, rather than some moral such as “don’t be an *avarus*”, the heart of the poem’s moral content is the moral *process* it begins to limn here, which Horace will further develop over the next three poems.

Horace shows us more about how this process works in the second poem. The theme is excess, not unlike the first poem, but Horace shows its workings through spending and frugality (1.2.1-22), then in dress and body odor and finally various sexual situations. As Horace tells us at 1.22.28, which is really the theme of the whole poem if not all three diatribes, *nil medium est* (there is no middle ground) for people. So we see the process of finding limits in various walks of life, while mocking those who engage in excessive behavior and find unhappiness and sorrow because of it. The process that poem seeks to inculcate is how one attempts to find this middle ground. One development from the first poem is that in this one Horace’s *persona* comes on stage as a character in his own poem rather than just a narrative voice. Three other developments we see here are the role of fathers, the role of praise and blame in determining action and the dramatization of the self-reflection necessary to finding out where nature’s limits lie. Let us take these developments in order.

While Horace’s *persona* is more of a disembodied voice in the first poem, we find out more about him in the second poem. For example, we learn about what Horace looks for in a woman (1.2.120ff) and his own pet fantasy (ibid), as well as ways in which this could wrong, with the farcical *in flagrante delicto* escape Horace
imagines at the poem’s conclusion. This fleshed out personality makes Horace’s self-exemplarity more effective—we can learn from his own preferences (go for the easy girls) and from some potential mistakes the poet engaged in during his youth (*dperendi miserum est; Fabio vel iudice vincam*—1.2.134: its wretched to be caught—even with Fabius judging I could prove that!)

Father figures also take a greater role in this poem. Take the role of Fufidius. This figure is a money lender who targets youths who have recently taken up the *toga virilis* and remain under the scrutiny of their fathers (*sub patribus duris tironum* 1.2.17). Fufidius becomes a kind of test for these youths: will they pay attention to their fathers’ lessons of frugality, or become spendthrifts. Fufidius is thus a threat to this system of paternal guidance, preying upon kids who are probably not ready to swim without a cork (cf. the comments of Horace’s father at 1.4.119-120: *simul ac duraverit aetas / membra animumque tuum, nabis sine cortice*). All the same, Fufidius is himself an example of the extremes of behavior Horace highlights at the beginning of 1.2—despite his prodigious loan business, Fufidius lives an excessively ascetic lifestyle, as Horace tells us at 1.2.19ff:

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Hic? Vix credere possis
Quam sibi non sit amicus, ita ut pater ille, Terenti
Fabula quem miserum gnato vixisse fugato
Inducit, non se peius cruciaverit atque hic.
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This guy? You’d scarcely believe how he is not a friend to himself, just as that father whom the play of Terence portrays as living a wretched existence after his son fled, this character doesn’t torment himself as badly as this man (Fufidius) does.

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75 This has been a major subplot in my relationship with my father since at least 2003.
There is much to unpack here. First, there is the Horatian irony in portraying Fufidius, a man who seeks to corrupt men away from their father’s guidance in fiscal matters, compared to a character from a play who is himself a father. We might also note that it was excessive criticism of the title character (the self tormentor, Menedemus) about his son’s fiscal prudence that drove his son away in the first place, which makes the irony even more pointed. Fufidius lives just like the father of the play who was angry at his son for engaging in the very behavior that allows Fufidius to make his livelihood. Third, we can see here the blurring of the lines between drama (i.e. the plays of Plautus and Terence) and real life, which will become a concern later in 1.4 (see chapter 2 below). In this case we can posit that Horace assumes as common cultural currency that his readers are familiar with the father figures often seen in Roman comedy—s stern moralists who ultimately have the best interests of their wayward sons at heart (one must be a wayward son to eventually have the experience to become a stern paternal moralist). From that base, Horace can go on to sketch more nuanced portraits for his satire. Besides the sketch of Fufidius here that relies on the comparison to the protagonist of Terence’s *Heauton Timorumenos*, there is of course the portrait of Horace’s own father that derives some elements from the character of Demea from Terence’s *Adelphoe*. We will deal with that portrait more fully in chapter 2 in our discussion of S. 1.4. For now we can say that for Horace, the comic stage can be as illustrative of life and its

76 For example, I later learned that some of my father’s drinking escapades in the Air Force in the mid 60s (in Michigan and later Southeast Asia) rivaled my own in college and in Rome. My father and I share a weakness for vodka and neither of us consumes much alcohol anymore.
foibles as lived experience or Horace’s own *Sermones*. In fact, it is the putative shared experience between Horace and his readers of Roman comedy, Roman literature and real life that allows the pragmatic program of the *Sermones* to have any effectiveness as a process of moral education and self-improvement.

A further development is the problem of praise and blame in determining how to act. The opening of the poem deals with various kinds of inconsistent actions, and finally Horace boils down the reason for such inconsistency at line 1.2.11: *laudatur ab his, culpatur ab illis*. The same actions, in other words, are susceptible of both praise and blame. If each individual action contains the same potential for either response, how then shall we act?

This line and the questions it raises put the problem of satire as blame poetry front and center. What is satire’s role in influencing action? What gives the satirist the *auctoritas* to justify listening to what he or she has to say about moral or ethical matters? And what is the role of the audience, who is neither the target of the satirist’s praise or blame, but is expected to learn from these? What are the criteria of praise and blame for Horace? While we need not detain ourselves with these questions right now, these are recurring problems throughout the *Sermones*. What Horace will argue for is that the shared experience between friends provides a cultural common ground for this kind of ethical discussion, and that limiting the use of satiric discourse between friends establishes its *auctoritas*. A friend is someone that you’d be automatically be inclined to trust and give credence to their moral advice.
Finally, there's the dramatization of the kind of moral self-reflection and self-pedagogy that forms the heart of the moral concerns of Horace's *Sermones*. With typical Horatian cheek, this drama is enacted between a horny man and his exasperated penis. We find this at lines 1.2.68ff, as Villius sits frustrated outside of the bedroom of Fausta, the daughter of Sulla:

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huic si muttonis verbis mala tanta videnti
diceret haec animus 'quid vis tibi? numquid ego a te
magno prognatum deposco consule cunnun
velatumque stola, mea cum conferbuit ira?'
quid responderet? 'magno patre nata puella est.'
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*Imagine if the spirit of his penis should address this man (Villius) contemplating such maladies with these words: “what do you want? Have I ever asked you for pussy descended from some great consul, dressed in a matron’s robe, whenever my blood is running?” What would he respond? “But her dad’s such a big shot!”*  

Here we may make two points. First, there is the dramatization of self-reflection we have here. The comedy of course comes from the fact that a man is talking to his penis. For Kirk Freudenburg this vitiates any potential moral edification: “no matter how earnestly the satirist may seem to intend the lesson at hand, one cannot escape the fact that he has here presented the picture of a man arguing with his own penis.”

77 Granted, Horace has done this and its quite funny. Yet far from occluding any moral point, this small dialogue is of a piece with the moral processes Horace has shown us in the previous poem. Recall in that poem that the limits one searched for, besides an appropriate *satis* of wealth, were for hunger and thirst. One’s body is

what can explain the limits of such natural desires. Likewise when it comes to sex, it makes sense that the penis is the very organ that can explain what satisfies it (the actual act of coitus) rather than any other accoutrements of honors the partner in the sexual act might have. Seeking to satisfy one’s own lust with the daughter of a big shot consul or dictator like Sulla and his daughter Fausta, is as silly and perhaps as dangerous as slaking one’s thirst in a raging river like the Aufidus (cf. S. 1.1.56-60).

The second point concerns the very point at issue between Villius and his member: the paternity of the desired erotic object here. Villius is very much concerned with who Fausta’s daddy is—her paternity adds a certain frisson to the sexual congress he had planned. Like greed, sexual desire and equitability, this kind of concern is a common one amongst humans, as Horace shows us later in S. 1.6.

There, the question of paternity (e.g. 1.6.29 quo patre natus) is the first perquisite of any potential political career—does the candidate’s lineage entitle him to the vote of the populus and honores they can provide. When we think of these two passages together, the paraklausithyron of 1.2.68ff and the paternity concerns of the first half of 1.6, the silliness of the question “who’s your father” emerges in greater clarity. Reading 1.6 we are reminded of Villius’ concern over paternity in sexual matters, which adds a lascivious undertone to the questioning in 1.6. Reading 1.2 with 1.6 in mind we see how the political concern of a candidate’s lineage is such an obsession as to spill over into sexual matters, where even one’s potential sexual partners are evaluated as if they are political candidates. Ultimately, reading the two passages
together shows how the miscegenation of politics and sex can appear especially foolish.

The elements we have been tracing so far in the diatribes, paternity, dramatization, and the process of searching for limits or fines occur too in the last of the diatribes. The last kind of excess we see in these first three poems is the excess of criticism, especially amongst friends. The third poem takes the development of the speaking persona in these poems a step further, as an interlocutor finally asks “what about you, do you have no vices?” (1.3.19-20: quid tu? / nullane habes vitia?). Yes, perhaps lesser ones, the poet answers (1.3.20: immo alia et fortasse minora). It is stupid, Horace goes on to note, to attack the vices of others while paying no attention to one’s own (1.3.24 stultus et improbus hic amor est dinusque notari). After all, Horace reminds us, as you’re looking at other people’s faults, they’re looking back at yours (1.3.27-28: at tibi contra / evenit, inquirant vitia ut tua rursus et illi). In short, moral self-reflection is required if one thinks that one can credibly advise friends on their own moral failings.

If we all have faults, we shouldn’t be so excited to attack the faults of others, Horace says. After all, how can one make friends if one is constantly policing the morality of others? What Horace is attacking here is an excess of satire—Horace’s own satiric vice is appropriately a moderate one, as he tells us in 1.4.139-140, hoc est mediocribus illis ex vitiis unum. Horace’s solution to the problems of satiric excess is to provide a space for moral correction and moral policing amongst

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78 Cf. 1.4.130-131: mediocribus et quis / ignoscas vitiis teneor.
friends, but utilizing more moderate language. Here the *fines* of criticism are the bounds of *amicitia*. How, for example, to identify a hothead amongst a group of friends? Should his friends call him *iracundior* (1.3.29) and dismiss him, or *simplex* and *fortis* (1.3.52)? Perhaps he is better thought of as *caldior* or *acris* (1.3.53). This method, which Horace compares to the way lovers overlook the bodily faults of their beloved, makes and retains friends (1.3.53-54: *opinor / haec res et iungit iunctos et servat amicos*).

While the lover provides one comparison to how friends should evaluate and discuss one another’s faults, fatherhood is the other and perhaps more important comparison. Prefiguring the connections between paternity and friendship Horace will outline in 1.4 (Horace’s father’s moral guidance and education provides the model for how Horace can be a friend to himself in moral affairs and in turn a friend to others), Horace enjoins his readers in 1.3 to criticize and evaluate the faults of others like fathers look to the faults of their own sons. Thus we get a number of examples of pet nicknames fathers give their children to occlude their physical defects at 1.3.43ff. Horace prefaces these examples by wishing we could make errors in friendship like this (overlooking faults) and that such an error can be thought of as a *virtus* in and of itself (1.3.41-42: *vellem in amicitia sic erraremus, et isti / errori nomen virtus posuisset honestum*). We ought to feel no disgust with a friend’s defects, just as a father does not find disgust with a child’s defects (1.3.43-44: *at pater, ut gnati, sic nos debemus amici / si quod sit vitium non fastidire*).

So, just as Horace finds euphemistic terms for faults of personality (e.g. *simplex* or *acrior*, or *caldior* to describe a hothead or *iracundus*), so he shows how
fathers do the same thing for physical faults. Does a son have crossed eyes? Call him Strabo. Someone barely able to stand is nicknamed Scaurus. A bald man will be nicknamed Calvus. The role of fathers here is two fold, in fact. First, as I have noted above, it serves as an important model in how friends may treat each other and criticize each other’s faults as necessary. Second, such paternal nicknames as we see here were important features of the Roman political scene since all of Horace’s examples here are famous Roman *cognomina*. Pompey’s father had the cognomen Strabo, as did one of Julius Caesar’s distant relatives. Marcus Aemilius *Scaurus* was a contemporary of Sulla and Marius as well as *princeps senatus* in the late first century. There is also Catullus’ friend Calvus (cf. *C. 50*). Lucius Calpurnius Piso Frugi (cf. 1.3.49: *parcius hic vivit: frugi dicatur*) was a tribune of 90 B.C. This Frugi might be the same as the like-named praetor of Sicily in 74 B.C., who opposed most of Verres’ edicts.\(^79\) In sum, as in 1.2, the role of fathers in moral criticism and education serves as an important parallel and model for Horace in 1.3.

Finally, we should consider Horace’s Lucretian pastiche at 1.3.99ff. Here Horace gives an anthropological explanation for how justice and injustice were discovered and codified amongst men through the invention of language. What is important for our purposes here is how Horace gives at least a quasi philosophical explanation for how one can bridge the internal dialogue and search for limits that occurs between one’s mind and body (e.g. the talking penis of 1.2, figuring out how hungry or thirsty one really is in 1.1) to the search for limits that forms the basis of

\(^79\) Cf. Cicero *In Verrem* 2.1.119.
moral criticism between friends and colleagues in 1.3, 1.4 and beyond. While nature can tell us about the limits of bodily desires, it cannot, as Horace tells us, determine what is just and not just (1.3.113-114: \textit{nec natura potest iusto secernere iniquum, / dividit ut bona diversis, fugienda petendis}). To figure this out requires the use of language and ultimately ratio, the faculty that can give grades to various crimes and demonstrate that swiping some vegetables is not on the same level as sacrilege (1.3.115ff). Thus there are two moral stages Horace describes here—figuring out personal limits to ensure one is \textit{satis} and then how those personal limits bump up against the personal limits of others. The former requires self-reflection. The latter builds upon the self reflection one needs to find personal limits and adds language and ultimately conversation or \textit{sermo}, to continue the moral process of living a \textit{beatus} life where one is \textit{contentus}, that is, \textit{satis/satur}.

Like Cicero in the \textit{De Amicitia}, Horace is concerned with moral issues in everyday life, not as philosophical abstractions. Hence his antipathy to the Stoic position that all sins are equal which forms the conclusion of 1.3. This is a form of moral extremism. Hence the portrait of the Stoic extremist at the end of S. 1.3 who is separated from friends like the \textit{avarus} of 1.1. Boys tweak the philosopher's beard (1.3.133-4: \textit{vellunt tibi barbam / lascivi pueri}), a whole crowd of them jostles at the philosopher (1.3.135: \textit{urgeris turba circum te stante}). Horace has his own dear friends (1.3.139-140 \textit{dulces...amici}) while the philosopher has only the escort (the meaning of \textit{stipator}) of inept Crispinus and no friends at all.\textsuperscript{80} Crispinus himself is a

\textsuperscript{80} 1.3.138-139: \textit{neque te quisquam stipator ineptum praeter Crispinum sectabitur.}
figure of excess at 1.1.120ff, where Horace uses his difference from the excess of examples Crispinus would use (*Crispini scrinia*) as a way to enact closure in his first poem. He will reappear as a bloated poet of excess in the early lines of *S. 1.4* as we will see in the next chapter.

To sum up this brief survey of the diatribes: we have seen Horace attack excess of various kinds (money, sex and criticism) and propose that the way to live a blessed (*beatus*) life is to live within the *fines* that nature provides. Finding those *fines* is a continuous process of moral self-pedagogy and growth, enacted by one self or amongst friends. We have also seen how Horace bases this exploration of the process of moral self pedagogy in common human concerns (money, sex, friendship), while making use of important elements in one’s lived existence—the role of fathers in moral education, the role of friends in living a *beatus* and moral life and finally the relationship between real life and life as presented artistically and mimetically on stage, as in Roman comedy, or in literature like Horace’s *Sermones*.

In the next poem Horace will argue against poetic excess as he proposes a poeticized form of moral self-pedagogy in which lies the value and meaning of his poetic project. A reading of *S. 1.4* will show us how Horace further develops the themes and elements we’ve been tracing in the diatribe poems into his own poetic achievement.
Chapter 2

Pugnantia secum? Friendship and Satire in Triumviral Rome in Sermones 1.4

As the first overtly programmatic poem in the Liber Sermonum (the other being, by common scholarly consensus, 1.10), S. 1.4 is often read as a guide to interpreting the Liber Sermonum as a whole. 81 For much recent scholarship, 1.4 is the key text in their investigations into the generic identity of Horace’s satire, since Horace, after all, de facto invents the genre of satire as a distinct poetic genre (though he credits Lucilius as its primus inventor), as well as for those readers who study the poetic principles Horace espouses and puts into action. 82 Thus for so many issues—Horatian aesthetics, satire’s generic identity, how to read the Liber Sermonum, the problems of satire’s reception, satires place in Roman thought and literature—S. 1.4 is a foundational text.

Yet for all its importance, Horace’s Sermones and specifically 1.4 itself has been a persistent puzzle for scholars, not least because Horace upends our

81 For a thoughtful introduction to programmatic poetry as a concept see Batstone (2007).
expectations about what satire, or even his satire, should or ought to be, whether we come back to Horace from reading Juvenal and Persius or Roman readers came to Horace after reading their Lucilius. Among the problems this poem presents are the following: Horace claims to writes in the tradition of Lucilius, marked by *a libertas* evoking classical Athenian *parrhesia* (*Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae...hinc onis pendet Lucilius, hosce secutus, 1.4.1 and 6*), but these poems have sparse *nominatim* invective and even then those whom Horace names are often of little importance or deceased, while most of the *vitia* that Horace points out (*notare*) are personal foibles at worst, rather than outright *crimina*--far from the kind of satire that Horace tells us Lucilius wrote and the poets of Athenian Old Comedy. 83 Further, Horace’s genealogy of satire from old comedy has been dismissed as shoddy literary history, or at best overly simplistic since it ignores much else of not only Old Comedy but also Lucilian satire by focusing only on *nominatim* abuse as the defining feature of these poetic genres. 84 Finally, Horace claims, in hexameter verse no less, that he’s not even really writing poetry at all midway through the poem. What kind of poetic program are we to extrapolate from a satiric poem that doesn’t live up to the satiric history it presents, confuses that very history in retelling it, and then claims its not even a poem at all?

84 Leo (1889) and Brink (1963) blame Varro for Horace’s mistaken literary history here. See too Rudd (1966: 88-89) Hooley (2001). In contrast, Cucchiarelli (2001: 15-55) takes the claim seriously and investigates the implications of it in reading S 1.5 with its many allusions to Aristophanes’ *Frogs*. Cucchiarelli’s ideas are further developed by Sommerstein (2011).
Scholars such as Kirk Freudenburg and James Zetzel have read this poem’s programmatic content as a way to call into question the sincerity of the ethical material and goals of the Satires, arguing that 1.4 that is really a complex stylistic program for writing good poetry with no real regard for moral questions or practical ethics. Where Horace’s vocabulary embraces both poetic and ethical readings, as it often does, these readers privilege the poetic over the ethical and poetic values over moral ones. What is more, they figure the poem as a response to the diatribes that precede it and their strategies of moral pedagogy: they contend that the first three poems are a parody of moralizers and moralizing diatribes against which the fourth satires defines Horace’s satiric project with its’ extended argument about the history of satiric poetry and the technique to write it properly.85 In this reading, the diatribes become a sort of road not taken for Horatian satire, evoking the diatribes of Bion of Borysthenes rather than the refined, Callimachean satire that 1.4 endorses.86 In contrast, we have seen in the previous chapter how the first three poems are essential in laying out the issues with satire, moral pedagogy and friendship that the rest of the libellus takes up.

This meta-poetic reading has proven to be influential in the scholarship of recent years.87 But a full account of the value and meaning of the ambiguity in

87 Turpin (1998), DuFallo (2000) and Hooley (2001) are the most notable readings in this tradition. Ferris-Hill’s (2011) reading of S. 1.9 is also dependent on Freudenburg’s conclusions. However, see
Horace’s language between ethical and poetic values must take into account Horace’s morality and ethics as well as his poetics and recognize. Yet it is ethics that have been given the shortest shrift in scholarship on the *Sermones* for the past 25 years. In order to challenge the dominant readings of the *Sermones* and argue for the importance of ethics and ethical friendship in Horace’s *Satires*, as well as the moral pedagogy behind it, we too must look to 1.4 and carefully unpack Horace’s ideas and arguments about the moral content of his poetry rather than the form of its expression. After all, it is not the form of Horace’s poetry that his interlocutor objects to, but its content. A re-reading of S. 1.4 with the moral content in mind will allow us to pursue new readings of the remaining poems of the first book of *Sermones*.

While I don’t deny that Horace is often concerned with poetic theory in his corpus (especially in S. 1.10 in the *Liber Sermonum*), I don’t believe it is as important an issue in 1.4 as other readers of Horace’s satiric program have argued. Rather, Horace asks how invective, even if it has ethical intentions, can preserve bonds of amicitia rather than endanger them, picking up a problem that was introduced in the previous poem. Indeed, given the context of the *Satires* in a world rent by a series of civil wars, in which Horace himself was a participant, such a combination of recently the work of Jerome Kemp (2009, 2010a and 2010b) who argues, as I do, that reading the moral content as parodic is too limited.

88 Cf. Schlegel (2005:3-18). For the importance of friendship in the *Sermones* see too Classen (1973), Hunter (1985), Welch (2008) and Gowers (2009c). The dialogic reading of Sharland (2010) lends itself to the importance of friendship as well, since the importance of conversation in dialogue in the moral diatribes presupposes a dialogue between amici (e.g. Horace and Maecenas, cf. 1.1.1 Qui fit Maecenas) aiming at moral correction. On the problem of the addressee in the *Satires* see Muecke (1990) and chapter 4 below.

89 See above, chapter 2.
satiric invective and friendship seems impossible. The fact that the satiric impulse is common to everyone, as Horace shows us in this poem, only increases the difficulty of combining *satura* and *amicitia*.

My concern, then, is the function that Horatian satire envisions for itself in the world, the way it hopes to have an effect on its Roman readership. I argue here that Horace proposes a form of satire that recognizes the satiric impulse in everyone as a way to create a common bond between the satirist and his audience and seeks to put satire in the *service* of friendship rather than in opposition to it based upon that shared satiric impulse and the shared moral failings that everyone has (which includes that satiric impulse). Horace achieves this by making satire first a form of moral self-pedagogy that prepares one to engage in dialogical moral pedagogy and criticism with friends, as William Batstone has recently and cogently argued in a reading of *S. 1.4*. Building on his work, I contend that the co-existence of notionally the incompatible ideas of *amicitia* and satiric invective in Horace's *Liber Sermonum* rely heavily on the ethics defined and refined by this self-pedagogy, as well as the *exempla* such self-pedagogy (like all Roman pedagogy, as well as Roman satire) employs.

This chapter is taken up with a close reading of the fourth satire and how it responds to the problems Horace raised in the diatribes, discussed in the previous chapter on the diatribes. In this reading, 1.4 builds upon the concerns with self-

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90 *Cf.* Freundenburg (1993: 52-108) on the seemingly impossible combination in Horace's satiric theory of the iambic idea and Aristotelian liberal jest as an aesthetic parallel to the pragmatic one I discuss here.

reflection, criticism amongst friends, the role of fathers and the relationship between life and art that we saw in the diatribes discussed in the last chapter. In this chapter, I will closely read the poem in five parts, following the movements of Horace’s argument. We will begin a consideration of Lucilius’ achievement as Horace sees it, then what Horace himself claims to do. Next we will turn to the relationship between Horace’s satiric poetry and real lived experience. This will bring us to a discussion of Horace’s intended audience for the *Sermones* and the place of friendship in Horace’s satiric project. Finally we will look to the figure of Horace’s father and the influence he had on both his son and his son’s poetic and moral project.

**The Achievement of Lucilius (1.4.1-13)**

At the beginning of S. 1.4, Horace offers a genealogy of literary satire, just as Persius and Juvenal will later do in their first satires. This genealogy serves as a foil by which Horace can more clearly define his own innovation in the genre of satire: self-satire as a vehicle for ethical improvement, itself meant to keep and preserve friends as Horace says in the previous poem (1.3.54): *haec res iungit iunctos et servat amicos* (this thing joins friends and once joined keeps them that way). Since it is a foil, we can expect Horace to distort and twist the story around a bit, making satire’s generic history fit his own ends. Horace differentiates the role and aims of his satire as opposed to Lucilius’, in particular the shift from the public branding (*notare*) of Lucilian satire, to the pedagogical branding of Horace’s father and finally into the self- reflexive form of Horatian satire that uses its targets as *exempla* for the
purposes of ethical formation. \textsuperscript{92} This presentation entails, for example, emphasizing one aspect of the work of the ancient comic poets and Lucilius work, that is, public shaming. This overlooks the much more varied content found in the surviving works of these poets.

Since satire had no Greek equivalent, nor a firmly defined generic territory or theory, Horace, had little choice but to identify the kind of poetry he was writing by explicitly pointing to what Lucilius had written (as opposed to the work of Varro, Ennius or Pacuvius). \textsuperscript{93} Given the lack of a set theory of satire before Horace, it would seem that up until Horace, \textit{satura} more likely referred to a mixture of poetic content and meters (hence the metaphor of the \textit{lanx satira} or mixed sausage) rather than invective content and tone. Although little can be gleaned from the meager remains of Ennius and Pacuvius’ \textit{Saturae}, the earliest works with that title, it seems that these were collections of miscellaneous poems rather than invective verse; the protean genre was defined by its very chaos and lack of analogous genres with which it could be compared. \textsuperscript{94} What is more, it is often forgotten that Lucilius did not settle on the hexameter until after writing several books of poetry in various meters and that the content of his 30 books cover myriad topics besides invective. If anything, given the fact that his version of satire’s literary history and the other generic reflections of 1.4, 1.10 and 2.1 dominate later ancient accounts of satire \textit{qua}

\textsuperscript{92} Of course, when I say “Lucilian” terms I really mean Lucilius, \textit{as we know him from what Horace writes about him}. In other words, our sense of the “Lucilian” style is derived more from the reception of Lucilius, then his actual fragments (whose content is far more varied than his reception would indicate. Cf. Coffey (1976: 35-61)).

\textsuperscript{93} Quintilian \textit{IO 10.1.93 satira quidem tota nostra est; satire at least is totally ours. See too Classen (1988).}

\textsuperscript{94} Coffey (1976:24-32).
genre as well as most modern analysis of Lucilius' fragments, Horace could be considered the St. Paul of Roman satire. In other words, Lucilius' corpus awaited a later poet to define it as a genre and set out its limits. Such definition of course also entails suppression—much of Lucilius' subject matter is left out of the portrait of the avenging, courageous satirist we get a glimpse of here, in S. 1.10 and also S. 2.1, not to mention the biting (literally) Lucilius Persius 1 and avenging charioteer of Juvenal S. 1.95

The focus, however, in this genealogy is the pragmatic effect of the earlier poetic models of Horace, what they sought to accomplish in the real world. They aren’t just writing poetry, they are engaging in a specific kind of writing (describi,...notabant) meant for both moral pedagogy (don’t be like these fures, moechi and sicarii) and to publicly stigmatize bad behavior and those who do bad things. This is not just any old poetry, but poetry that does something, that seeks to define and enforce moral qualities and social norms. Just as epic poetry claims a function of remembrance of great deeds, so too satire claims a function as the remembrance of bad deeds, in order to morally guide the reader or listener away from such bad examples. It is the function of satire that Horace is concerned with in S. 1.4 and that will also be our concern for this chapter.

The goal of this first section of the poem is to explicate how Horace uses the foil of his poetic predecessors in the beginning of the satire to lay the foundation for

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his own pragmatic satiric program, which he describes as the poem continues. One thing I will insist upon throughout is that far from a negative move or a political retreat given the discord of Horace’s day his adaptation of Lucilian satire as part of a project of moral self-pedagogy is a positive contribution to the genre of satire. More than that, this adaptation is the defining moment in the satiric genre such as it is, where Horace divides the Lucilianus character of the earlier poet’s work with the more self-probing and self-searching project he embarks on.\footnote{Those who, like me, have been Jesuit educated will find many similarities between Horace’s satiric project and the daily examen of a Jesuit, along with the thirty day Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius of Loyola, designed not just as moral self-pedagogy, but as a way of discerning God’s role for one in the world. See especially Modras on Ignatian humanism (2004: especially 1-51).} In this section we will be concerned with how Horace exemplifies Lucilius as generic forebear and what Lucilius’ poetry is meant to do and how that contributes to our reading of what Horace’s poetry means to do.

Horace starts his first programmatic poem by going back to some earlier examples of poetry in the satiric mode: the work of the old Athenian comic poets, Eupolis, Cratinus and Aristophanes.\footnote{On links between Old Comedy and archaic iambos see Rosen (1988) and later Rosen (2007). On links between Horatian Satire and Old Comedy see Cucchiarelli (2002), whose conclusions are pushed further by Sommerstein (2011).} This is an appropriate source for Horace’s Satires, in that this poem begins like a comic parabasis, where Horace critiques his poetic rivals and defines his own poetic project partway into their project of moral development and didaxis. Horace notes that these poets had a public, censorial function (S.1.4.1-5):

\begin{verbatim}
Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae
atque alii, quorum comoedia prisca virorum est,
siquis erat dignus describi, quod malus ac fur,
\end{verbatim}
quod moechus foret aut sicarius aut alioqui famous, multa cum libertate notabant.

Eupolis and Cratinus and Aristophanes the poets
And the others, who were the masters of old comedy,
If there was anyone worthy to be noted down, because he was a bad man or a thief; because he was an adulterer or a murderer or infamous in some way, they were branding him with great liberty.

Aristophanes and his contemporaries only went after deserving targets (dignus), which implies an ethical consensus between author and audience, or at least the creation of such a consensus, one that was expressed in the identification of figures as malus, fur, moechus or sicarius and in the public castigation of such figures on the comic stage. These plays were put on as public performances before the citizens of Athens during the dramatic competitions that were part of the festival of the Greater Dionysia. More importantly, this criticism was done with great liberty (multa cum libertate notabant; they were noting them down with much freedom). These poets were, for Horace, the primary inspiration for Lucilius (hinc omnis pendent Lucilius 1.4.6; Lucilius totally depends upon these poets), who changed only their meters and rhythms (mutatis tantum pedibus numeris 1.4.7), but not their function of moral police work and moral pedagogy.

Why does Horace begin with these ancient Athenian poets? For many readers this has all seemed to be sloppy literary history, another example of Horace

98 Cf. Cicero, De Re Publica 4.11 (apud Aug. CD 2.9), where Scipio remarks about the demagogues Cleon and Hyperbolus “eius modi cives a censore melius est quam a poeta notari.”
99 On Horace’s (mis-)representation of Lucilius, cf. Fraenkel’s (1957: 127-128) remarks on S. 1.4: “[1.4] also reflects the narrow view which at this initial stage [Horace] took of the essential character of the satires of Lucilius. He had not yet discovered that ὀνομαστὶ κομμένων, though a striking feature, was by no means the most significant or the most valuable feature in the work of Lucilius.
playing the part of the *doctor ineptus*. While it may be sloppy literary history, this is only a partial analysis, since it does not take the next step of analyzing how this literary history (erroneous though it may be) functions as part of the inner logic of the poem. Kirk Freudenburg gets a bit closer to the mark, I believe, in saying that here Horace is “staging theorization,” though for him this is just another aspect of Horace’s parodic technique. Yet again, this analysis doesn’t account for how this literary history works with the rest of the poem, and how Horace uses it to better distinguish his own achievement. We must ask why Horace would make such an error and how it fits into the larger argument he is making in this poem.

Horace quickly shifts from literary history into a stylistic polemic, much of which foreshadows what we will find in 1.10. Here, Horace engages in some preemptive Callimacheanism; he displays his Alexandrian *bona-fides* by attacking Lucilius for his over-production and stylistic carelessness. That is the aesthetic reading. A moral reading of these same lines would argue that Horace believes Lucilius to engage in another type of excess, the moral *vitium* that has linked together the previous 3 diatribe poems (1.4.9-13):  

```plaintext
nam fuit hoc vitiosus: in hora saepe ducentos,
ut magnum, versus dictabat stans pede in uno;
cum fluoret lutilentus, erat quod tollere velles;
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100 Freudenburg (2001: 18).
101 On the use of (neo-)Callimachean aesthetics in these stylistic polemics, see Scodel (1987).
102 There are some other possibilities beyond those described here: in describing Lucilius as *durus componere versus* (1.4.8), Horace engages in a strategy of later poets describing earlier poets like Ennius and Lucilius as archaic and unpolished. See, for example, the elegists’ comments on Ennius: Propertius 4.1.61, *Ennii hirsuta cingat sua dicta corona* and Ovid’s comment on the *Annales* at *Trist.* 2.259: *nihil est hirsutius illis.* Cf. Hinds (1998: 63-74). Puelma Piwonka (1949) argues that Lucilius himself adopted Callimachean aesthetics; this is countered by Bagordo (2001).
garrulus atque piger scribendi ferre laborem, scribendi recte: nam ut multum, nil moror.

For he was faulty in this way: often in an hour he’d stand on one foot dictating 200 verses as if this was some great thing. When he was flowing on muddily, there was stuff that you’d wish to remove. He was a chatterbox and too lazy to bear the labor of writing, of writing well that is. That he wrote a lot, I won’t deny.

In opposition to the chatterbox Lucilius, Horace, when faced with a challenge to compete in total poetic output from a certain Crispinus responds that he speaks only rarely and even then with just a few words. Against the great invective onslaught of Lucilius’ verse (in hora saepe ducentos / ut magnum, versus dictabat stans pede in uno, 1.4.9-10; often in one hour he used to dictate two hundred verses standing on one foot, as if it was a great achievement; flueret lutulentus, he used to flow muddily 1.4.11; garrulus, talkative 1.4.12) we find the taciturn, ironic (for such is the needling force of ut magnum in line 10) and Callimachean Horace. This is a Horace who has learned the lessons of the diatribes and maintains moderation in all areas of his life, including his poetry.

It seems that it is the excess of Lucilius (erat quod tollere velles 1.4.11--, there was a stuff that you’d wish to remove) is a moral vitium that impedes the putative function of his satire to educate and correct. As often, the aesthetic and the moral co-exist in Horace’s language. Specifically, in this passage, we are meant to recall the muddy river of S. 1.1.56-60. The focus is on Lucilian excess, that Lucilius wrote a lot

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103 1.4.17-18: di bene fecerunt, inopis me quodque pusilli / finixerunt animi, raro et perpauca loquentis. Perpauca, as we’ll see in S. 1.6, makes Horace a kindred spirit with Maecenas (1.6.60-61): respondes, ut tuus est mos, / pauca.
(nam ut multum, nil moror 1.4.13—that he wrote a lot, I won’t deny) but more as a display of his own talent (in hora saepe ducentos / ut magnum, versus dictabat stans pede in uno, 1.4.9-10: often in a hour he’d dictate two hundred lines standing on one foot, as if this was some great thing). Instead of a moral purpose like the Athenian poets, Lucilius is more interested in his own self-promotion. This too is a distortion of course, since the Athenian poets were also interested in self-promotion, an important function of the comic *parabasis*. Horace creates a contrast here in his literary history—the moral interests of the Athenian poets occlude their self-promotion, while the self-promotion of Lucilius occludes the moral interests of his work, such as they are.

**Horace’s version of satire and the fears of the audience (1.4.14-38)**

Once Horace has established Lucilius’ achievement at the poem’s beginning, he turns towards defining his own contribution to the genre in contradistinction to Lucilius and his imitators. Such an imitator quickly emerges in the figure of Crispinus, who earlier appeared at the end of the first poem. The same aesthetic and moral *vitium* of quantity over quality also affects Horace’s would be challenger, Crispinus (1.4.13-21):

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ecce,
Crispinus minimo me provocat 'accipe, si vis, accipiam tabulas; detur nobis locus, hora, custodes; videamus, uter plus scribere possit.'
di bene fecerunt, inopis me quodque pusilli finxerunt animi, raro et perpauca loquentis;
at tu conclusas hircinis follibus auras
usque laborantis, dum ferrum molliat ignis,
ut mavis, imitare.
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Behold, Crispinus challenges me at long stakes: “Accept, if you want, and I will accept tablets too. Let a place, hour and judges be provided; let us see which of the two of us is able to write more.” Ah, the gods did well making me with a small and weak intellect, that speaks only a few things and that infrequently, whereas you prefer to imitate winds enclosed in goat-skin bellows, forever straining while the fire softens the iron.

While Lucilius cannot bear the labor of writing well, Crispinus has no *modus* to his labor in the comparison with the bellows (*usque laborantis*). The laconic Horace shies away from competition (a theme that reappears at 1.10.37ff). Like Lucilius, there is no real function or purpose to Crispinus’ poetic effort. It is all about quantity (*uter plus scribere posit*) and doubtless there’d be much you’d want to remove from Crispinus’ effort, just as with Lucilius. Further, like Lucilius’ dictation on one foot, Crispinus’ poetry is all about self-promotion and nothing else. There was a public function for the poetry of Athenian old Comedy, as Horace’s literary history goes and, for at least some of his poetry, also for Lucilius. But Lucilius had much that was useless and Crispinus offers nothing useful in his poetry, only the solipsistic display of his own *ingenium*.

Thus, satiric poetry has a public, moralizing function in the literary history we read here. There is, however, another issue with this kind of poetry: the fear and hatred of its potential audience (1.4.24-33)

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quod sunt quos genus hoc minime iuvat, utpote pluris culpari dignos. quemvis media eligere turba: aut ob avaritiam aut misera ambitione laborat. hic nuptarum insanit amoribus, hic puerorum: hunc capit argenti splendor; stupet Albius aere; hic mutat merces surgente a sole ad eum, quo...
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vespertina tepet regio, quin per mala praeceps
fertur uti pulvis collectus turbine, nequid
summa deperdat metuens aut ampliet ut rem.
omnes hi metuunt versus, odere poetas.

Because there are those whom this kind of poetry delights least, seeing as many of them are worthy of censure. Choose whomever you want from the middle of the crowd: This one suffers either because of avarice or wretched ambition, that one is insane with love for new brides, that one with love of boys; the splendor of silver captures that one, Albius is stupefied by bronze; this one trades his wares from the rising sun to that place, warmed by the rays of the evening sun—why he’s carried headlong through evils just as dust collected up in a whirlwind, fearing lest he loses something from his capital or that he doesn’t add to it. All of these men fear poetry and hate poets.

The men Horace chooses from the crowd could have walked out of the diatribe satires. The merchant recalls, in expanded form, one of the vignettes that opened the first satire, where the figures of lines 26 and 28 would have also found a home.

Meanwhile the besotted fellows of line 27 would fit in well with the libidinous figures of S 1.2. They are exemplary in two ways—illustrative of different common vices in Rome and also of typical satiric targets that we’ve already seen in the diatribes. Horace, of course, should not be too surprised that everyone (omnes) fears and hates satire, since the first line of S. 1.1 (Qui fit, Maecenas, ut nemo...), with its similar totalizing vocabulary, opens up a wide swath of potential targets for Horatian satire—if Horace was actually writing like Lucilius or the old comic poets,
as his putative critics fear. Further, we saw earlier in our discussion of 1.2, how Horace raises the issues of how the blame of satiric discourse can affect action.¹⁰⁴

This problem, the role of blame poetry and satiric discourse in inhibiting action, is worth exploring a bit. It is easy to take these lines as capturing criticism both of some of the kind of poetry Lucilius wrote and what Horace is writing. That is to say, Horace has at this point only differentiated himself from Lucilius in terms of poetic style in Callimachean terms, but still claims to be writing the same kind of poetry as Lucilius did in imitation of the old comic poets. Horace’s goal in this passage is to present the common reception of satiric verse as a foil so that he may better describe his poetic content and how that differs from what Lucilius wrote. The way Horace answers the fears of his audience is through a satire that is self-satire and moral self-pedagogy. The target is more likely to be Horace himself than some member of his reading or listening audience. At this point, however, the shadow interlocutor thinks that Horace is writing Lucilian satire and so the fears of the genre that this interlocutor expresses draw upon the vocabulary Horace used earlier in his literary history of satire. Dignus recurs here as in line 3, while culpari intensifies the force of describi in line 3 and notabant in line 5 with the added notion of blame.

While fear has taken the forefront here, the vocabulary of fear has been a feature of the diatribe poems as well. Words for fearing (timor, metus and the like) occur 14 times in the first four poems alone. In the first poem, for example, fear is a

¹⁰⁴ See above pages 36-37.
primary motivator for the avaricious man who is the target of the poem’s satire. At 1.1.41-42, the satiric target fearfully buries his money in the ground (*quid iuvat immensum te argenti pondus et auri / furtim defossa timidum deponere terra*: What pleasure is there for you in digging up the earth and fearfully burying an immense weight of gold and silver in the ground?) and at line 76 Horace imagines this kind of greedy man half awake from fear during the night, lest someone rob him (*an vigilare metu exanimem*). At line 93 Horace tells his interlocutor to “fear poverty less” (*pauperiem metuas minus*) and then a few lines later tells the story of the rich man Ummidius who fears he might be oppressed by poverty (1.1.98-99 *ne se penuria victus / opprimeret, metuebat*). In the second poem, we see a different kind of fear, the fear of a bad reputation, which is the same fear Horace confronts in 1.4. At 1.2.4-5, a man fears to be called prodigal is excessively frugal and won’t help anyone (*contra hic, ne prodigus esse / dicatur metuens, inopi dare nolit amico*). In 1.3, Horace tells us in his Lucretius pastiche on the origins of man that laws were created from fear of injustice (*iura inventa metu iniusti fateare nescesse est* 1.3.111). In the present poem, the fear of the satirist and his poetry animates the opposing interlocutors Horace tangles with in 1.4. Fear, then, creates the need for morality and laws, it also drives people’s behavior based on the actions of report and rumor (cf. the passive *dicatur* at 1.2.5), but it also makes them fear that same report and rumor expressed in satiric poetry. In short, Horace presents us with a potential ethical system based on fear, but it is a system that is imperfect in that seems to harm friendships or even inhibit their creation (think again of the man who won’t even help his friend in 1.2.5ff). Fear as a tool for enforcing good behavior is antithetical to Horatian ethics
and its basis in friendship and is thus rejected as a basis for ethics just as Lucilian aesthetics are rejected as a basis for Horace’s poetic output.

One of the key poetic evolutions that Horace describes in this poem is the shift between naming satiric targets as a means of public shaming before a large audience to naming satiric targets as a way to form someone’s ethical character by means of *exempla* in a smaller-scale personal relationship, such as that between a father and son, two friends, or just with one’s own self.\(^{105}\) The lack of interest in the public shaming of specific individuals, like the comic abuse of Aristophanes, is demonstrated by the use of the indefinite pronoun *quemvis* in *Quemvis media eligē turba* at line 1.4.25. Indeed, *quemvis* includes an invitation to the reader with the “you” marked by –*vis*, an early sign of the self-reflexive nature of the *Liber Sermonum*. Horace then proceeds to list various *exempla* of various vices—*avaritia*, *ambitio* and *nuptarum aut puerorum amores*. It is notable that there is only one name here, Albius, amongst these *exempla* and even that name is just a recollection of an Albius from the poet’s child-hood, the son of whom Horace’s father pointed out in the poet’s youth as an *exemplum* of vice (1.4.109: *nonne vides Albi ut male vivat filius*; don’t you see how badly the son of Albius lives?).\(^ {106}\) For Horace, as we will see in the course of this poem, what is important about satire isn’t the naming or public shaming, but rather the mechanics of how one constructs a collection of *exempla* for one’s own formation as a good moral person and friend. It is the process of moral

\(^{105}\) Cf. Graf (2005) on how the satiric impulse was expressed in various social practices in the Roman Republic.

\(^{106}\) Porphyrio (ad loc.) seems to conflate both Albi into one person: Albium, quem infra quoque male viventem ostendit.
formation that matters rather than a freewheeling exercise in onamasti komodein.

Thus the imperative “choose whomever you want” (quamvis elige) addressed to the reader/shadowy interlocutor: the concern is not with naming a specific example of avarice, lust or ambition but with the very process of naming and creating an exemplum and the value and meaning of that process and the moral edification it is supposed to provide and enable.

In responding to the fear of satire he sees in his potential audience, Horace takes the opportunity to show another way his poetry has progressed from Lucilian satire, beyond just the application of Callimachean stylistics. The skeletal dialogue between a shadow interlocutor and the poet allows Horace to differentiate his satiric goals from Lucilius’.107 While Horace assumes his audience will misread his intentions by assuming the poetry will show strict adherence to what Lucilius did in terms of content, Horace corrects this misconception by both articulating a moral and ethical goal to his poetry that he claims Lucilius’ lacked, and by enacting that goal in the context of amicitia, the conversations and relationships between two friends trying to be better people while drawing upon their lived experience, as opposed to the more public setting of Lucilius and the Old Comic poets.

107 Freudenburg (1993: 52-108), in a discussion on these lines and some of the ideas about humor behind them, where he argues that Horace differentiates between two theories of laughter, that of the scurra (the figure that the interlocutor imagines) and the Aristotelian idea of the “liberal jest” which he then proceeds to combine together (cf. Hunter (1985: 486-490)). Freudenburg approaches this on purely stylistic grounds, I want to push this theoretical difference further into practice by asking what the ethical and moral ends of this laughter is, not, as Freudenburg does, what it tells us about poetic and political libertas. Further, I don’t believe, with Freudenburg (1993), (2001:15-71) or Turpin (1998), that Horace represents himself as a scurra here (nor is there much evidence at all that we should identify Horace with some similar figures such as the lout who pees on the couch at 1.3.90 as Armstrong (1964:37-41) and Freudenburg (2001: 22-23) are inclined to do), but is instead at pains to dissociate himself from that figure. On the scurra see Corbett (1986), especially 44-69.
Though there is a consistent ethical function to satiric poetry, as Horace sees it, there is a shift of libertas in Horace from the parrhesia of the Old Comic poets to the more Aristotelian idea of the liberal jest from the Nicomachean Ethics and the Epicurean ideal of libertas and moral criticism in the context of friendship that one sees in, for example, Philodemus. 108 Recent scholar of Roman satire, inured to a view of Augustus that remains cynical to varying degrees (an intellectual inheritance from Ronald Syme’s seminal historical work on the period, The Roman Revolution) have interpreted Horace’s remarks about libertas as negative and that his satire on Rome is the very fact his satire is muzzled. 109 These interpretations, in some ways, depend on a assumed poetic biography of Horace: that he wasn’t ambitious or bold enough to innnovate upon his models when writing the Sermones as he was when he turned to the Odes, but would have slavishly emulated Lucilius if the political situation had allowed. These scholars, focusing only on the political implications of libertas (admittedly an important catchword in the 40s B.C.), 110 have continued to measure the Satires against Lucilius’ putative achievement and find Horace to be “failed” Roman satire. However, the scope and terms of that achievement are largely laid out for us by Horace himself, and as such we shouldn’t buy into it hook line and sinker, but instead question why Horace would present his achievement this way and what it tells us about his own poetic and ethical goals. It

108 Cf. Freudenburg (1993: 52-108). I don’t mean to claim Horace as a doctrinaire Epicurean, but to merely note some of the influences on his thought.
110 There is much literature on this important term. See the fundamental study of Wirszubski (1950) and Brunt (1988: 281-350). See now too Arena (2012) on the use of libertas in the political rhetoric of the late Republic.
is not a question of a failure to live up to the Lucilius the text constructs for us, but rather of the difference from the Lucilian model Horace posits here.

Further, I believe that scholars here have attributed to Horace a view of *libertas* that only emerges in the high empire, well after Horace’s death. Put another way, in this respect they make *Sermones* I “imperial literature” rather than “triumviral” or even “late republican.” However we chose between these latter two, the intellectual heritage of Roman Republican thought looms large here. In the Republic, the *libertas* was thought of thus:

*Libertas* at Rome and with regard to Romans is not an innate faculty or right of man, but the sum of civic rights granted by the laws of Rome; it consequently rests on those positive laws which determine its scope. This fundamental idea implies that *libertas* contains the notion of restraint which is inherent in every law. In fact, it is the notion of restraint and moderation that distinguishes *libertas* from *licentia*, whose salient feature is arbitrariness; and *libertas* untempered by moderation degenerates into *licentia*. True *libertas*, therefore, is by no means the unqualified power to do what one likes....*Libertas* is quite consistent with the dictates of the *disciplina Romana, mos maiorum, and instituta partum*, because it is conceived of as a right and a faculty, not of an isolated individual, but of the citizen in the organized community of the Roman state.111

Thus, rather than being a relatively new definition of *libertas*, Horace in fact works within the accepted concept of *libertas* in his own time as a way to position both his own exercise of *libertas* to Lucilius’ *licentia*. Given Horace’s focus on relations with others (figured as *amici*) and not just individual liberty, the *Sermones* fits not into the concern with *libertas* as personal liberty or freedom of speech against a

111 Wirszubski (1968: 7-8). Cf. the comment of Samuel Johnson reported by Boswell: “We are all agreed as to our own liberty: we would have as much of it as we can get; but we are not agreed as to the liberty of others: for in proportion as we take, other’s much lose.” On the tension between *libertas* and *licentia* in the *Sermones*, see Anderson (1982: 13-41).
totalitarian principate, but with the place of satire within the libertas or frankness, that one finds amongst friends, the basic social building block of a community. Aristophanes and his contemporaries put their productions on before the entire community. In contrast, Horatian satire is shared amongst his group of friends. Certainly the change of audience brings as much change to the exercise of libertas in satire as the change of time from democratic Athens to Horace’s own day. It is with a much more circumscribed idea of libertas, that exercised amongst friends, that Horace is interested in, not the libertas of the civis in relation to the res publica.

Horace next imagines a potential objection to satire (1.4.34-38):

'faenum habet in cornu, longe fuge; dummodo risum excutiat sibi, non hic cuiquam parcet amico et quodcumque semel chartis inleverit\textsuperscript{112}, omnis gestiet a furno redeuntis scire lacuque et pueros et anus.'

He has hay in his horn, run away! So long as he can strike up a laugh for himself he won’t spare himself, nor any friend and whatever he will have scrawled on his pages at the same time he’ll be itching for everyone returning from the bakers and the baths to know, slave-boys and old women alike.\textsuperscript{113}

\textsuperscript{112} Inleverit also has a sense of “daub” or anoint as well, so there may be another Callimachean reference here, an ironic, deflating twist on Callimachus’ prayer to the Graces in Aetia 1 (Fr. 7.13-14 Pf) ἐλέγοισι δ’ ἐνυψήσασθε λιπώςας χείρας ἐμοίς. Cf. Cat. 1.

\textsuperscript{113} Line 35 has a textual crux, whether there may be sibi non, non cuiquam (as Brown (1993) and Gowers (2012) print in their texts) or sibi, non hic cuiquam, as Klinger prints in his 1959 Teubner. The manuscripts all have the reading sibi, not sibi non. Gowers defends her reading on the basis that sibi non reflects the self-reflection of Horatian satire that is especially brought out in S. 1.9 (on which cf. Henderson (1999: 202-227). In contrast, I believe that the reading of Klinger and the manuscripts better fits the themes of this satire (the role of satire amongst friends) and it also neatly foreshadows the vignette recounted at S. 1.4.86-89, where the dinner guest, in order to strike up a laugh, mocks everyone including (after enough wine) his host (i.e. non hic cuiquam parcet amico). Notably, the scurra that Horace sketches in this scene does not attack himself.
For Horace’s shadow interlocutor, as he (mis)conceives satire, such poetry is only interested in raising a laugh and there is no moral or ethical content in it, or what little ethical content there may be is incidental at worst and subordinated at best to the primary goal of inciting laughter. What then is the value of the laughter from this kind of poetic invective? Is it only for the pleasure for the satirist himself and his audience, for raising a laugh, spreading rumors and gossip, and delighting in the shaming and mockery of others? Is there any interest in the moral development of either the satiric poet or his audience? Eliciting laughter for its own sake is the role of the scurra, who’s only interested in a laugh to get something for himself, even if it means the mockery of one’s friends (non hic cuiquam parcat amico 1.4.35; this man wouldn’t spare any friend)—a role that veers close to that of the parasitus.

This kind of satire, while it does have an ethical basis by which to judge and castigate others is ultimately, for Horace, not interested in ethical development, but rather in eliciting from its audience the pleasure that arises from judging others and mocking them. Such satire begs the question that another of Horace’s interlocutors poses in the previous satire at S. 1.3.19-20: quid tu? / nullane habes vitia? (what about you? You don’t have any faults?) Partiality of this sort, Horace goes on to say in his anecdote about Maenius at S. 1.3.21-24, is stupid, wrong and worthy to be

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114 The opening lines of S. 1.7 seem to echo this kind of satire: opinor omnibus et lippis notum et tonsoribus esse. The difference here is that Horace is not initiating the rumor himself, but repeating something already extremely well known, which would absolve him of the charges of a shadow interlocutor like that of 1.4.34-38.

115 A similar critique of humor used only for a laugh and not for some other end is found in Cato’s response to a passage in Cicero’s defense of Murena in 63 (Cato was one of the prosecutors), reported by Plutarch, "ὡς γελοιον, ὦ ἄνδρες ἐχομεν ὑπατον," (Comp. Dem. et Cic. 1.5), where γελοιον is a gloss on scurra. On parasites, see the study of Damon (1998).
branded (*dignusque notari, S. 1.3.24*). In other words this kind of satire earns the very rebuke that it presumes to hand out to others (cf. *dignus describi* at S. 1.4.3 and *culpari dignos* at S. 1.4.25). The satirist figure in S. 1.4.34-38 only wants to raise a laugh, not spur on moral development. This kind of ethically empty satire is attacked in S 1.3 and in S. 1.4 Horace figures this kind of satire as exactly what he is trying to move away from with his own work. Once again Horace is playing with different examples of satire, now diatribe, now Lucilius, and using them as foils to better define his own work and what it hopes to achieve. One deficiency we have seen so far is a deficiency of pragmatic efficacy. By pragmatic poetry I mean poetry that seeks to have a positive and ethical effect upon its reader. We might think of the public didactic role of Athenian old comedy in Horace’s schema as an illustrative parallel. In contrast to this kind of poetry, Horace’s Lucilius writes poetry that has ethical content but a lot of fluff around it, while these other nameless satirists have no ethical content at all and the laughter their satire elicits is tainted by its indifference to friends (*non hic cuiquam parcit amico*).

Let us review what we have seen so far in this poem. Horace has offered a literary history of satiric poetry, basing it upon Athenian old comedy and its putative imitator, the Roman Lucilius. Horace sees Lucilius as a poet of excess which vitiates any ethical value his work might have. Further, Horace must address the fears of his audience that satiric poetry is only out to attack people and raise a laugh. Such accusations implicitly deny an ethical value for satiric poetry, besides confusing satiric poetry with *all* poetic genres. After airing this potential objection, Horace prepares his response (*agedum, pauca accipe contra* 1.4.38; come now, hear
a few things in response) on two grounds: first that what he’s writing isn’t really poetry (which is, prima facie somewhat ridiculous) and second by reiterating the importance of amicitia in Horace’s satiric project. Let us now briefly turn to the first of these.

**Satire, Comedy and Real Life (1.4.39-62)**

Horace’s first response to his putative critics is to question whether what he’s writing is poetry at all and then to declare that his own *Sermones*, Lucilius’ poems and Roman comedy are not, in fact, poetry at all. At first such a declaration might take the reader aback—how is this not poetry? The ancient Roman reader (or rather, the ancient Roman likely listening to his slave reading to him or reading aloud) would have been even more confused since the poems would have been recited in the poetic rhythm of the dactylic hexameter. Horace foresees this confusion and quickly points out that it is not enough to put words in verse, there is a sort of ineffable sublimity to poetry too (S. 1.4.43-44: *ingenium cui sit, cui mens divinior atque os / magna sonaturum, des nominis huius honorem*; for whom there may be genius, a mind and mouth divine, about to sound great things, to that one you’d grant the honor of this name (i.e. poet)). What exactly then is Horace doing here in denying the status of poetry to his work, even with the subtle Callimacheanism he has displayed in the opening lines of this satire? At the very
least, Horace is forcing us, as readers to reconsider what we think poetry is and what poetry can achieve.¹¹⁶

As is typical of Horace, this passage is one of much complexity and irony, in that Horace first responds to his shadow interlocutor with a *reductio ad absurdum* to emphasize the mistaken view of poetry the shadow interlocutor takes, all the while obfuscating this point with what amounts to a subtle joke embedded in a discussion of metrics. In accusing Horace of only wanting to attack people and raise a laugh, the shadow interlocutor gives voice to a mistakenly narrow view of Roman satire and its content¹¹⁷ that provides a springboard for Horace to define his own kind of satire in the rest of the poem. Horace’s response to this is to show that the argument is based upon taking one feature of one genre of poetry and mistaking it for all poetry. Thus, if one can argue that satire and by extension all poetry is only about attack (as the shadow interlocutor believes) then just about any genre can be reduced to its one clichéd feature, so epic is just about war (S. 1.4.60-61, especially with the spondaic *belli* beginning line 61) and comedy is just about angry fathers (S. 1.4.48-49, *pater ardens / saevit*) and their prodigal sons (S. 1.4.49-52).¹¹⁸

Horace embeds these points in a digression about metrics. In an important article, Steven Oberhelman and David Armstrong explicate the theories of

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¹¹⁶ As should be clear throughout this dissertation, I find a greater confidence in the efficacy of Horace’s *Sermones* than Lowrie (2009: 63-122) finds in Horace’s other poems, where the potential efficacy of the poetry, its pragmatic power in other words, is regarded with diffidence and ambivalence.

¹¹⁷ A view that continues today in the consistent scholarly focus (adopted largely from this very poem) that Lucilius was solely a poet of comic and satiric invective.

¹¹⁸ Although this reduction does hit at the key element of Roman comedy Horace highlights in this poem and the previous diatribes, as discussed in chapter 1.
metathesis underlying this passage, which are largely drawn from the works of the Epicurean philosopher Philodemus. They argue that particularly in lines 56-62 Horace engages in some rather esoteric and ironic literary humor, where according to the theories of metathesis found in Philodemus, Horace’s lines (56-60) are in fact real poetry, while the quotation from Ennius (60-61), despite what Horace says in line 62, is not poetry according to those same theories.¹¹⁹

Even with this (admittedly quite subtle and only decipherable by the doctissimi) joke and the response to the question of content buried within, it remains to ask how these two strands, the aesthetic and the ethical, can be reconciled in this passage. Earlier Horace had said that it was the particular genus that aroused fear and suspicion (S. 1.4.24: quod sunt quos genus hoc minime iuvat; because there are those whom this kind [of poetry] delights least of all), not poetry itself (Horace at first refers to his writings as scripta at 1.4.23). But soon, in the sloppy argumentation of the shadow interlocutor this fear and suspicion of one feature of satire is expanded to fear and suspicion of all verses and poets (omnes hi metuunt versus, odere poetas, 1.4.33; all of these fear versus and they hate poets).

There has been a cognitive misstep here: at first there was the problem of marginalizing the complexity of the satiric genre by reducing it to just “attack.” Now the shadow interlocutor has compounded this problem by identifying satire with all poetry and satirists with all poets. But is it really poetry alone that they fear, that is the meter or special vocabulary which makes poetry “marked speech” that

arouses suspicion, or is it the content?\textsuperscript{120} The question and the debate that it opens up looks like a distraction, which Horace just about admits in lines 64-65 (\textit{nunc illud tantum quaeram meritone tibi sit / suspectum genus hoc scribendi}; for now I'll only ask whether this kind of writing is justly suspected by you or not). What then, is the point of this metrical digression? Why seemingly interrupt the debate while responding to the shadow interlocutor's points in this enigmatic way?\textsuperscript{121} What is the relation between the form and content of his poetry that Horace describes here?

I believe that the answer lies in the very reason Horace adduces to deny the status of poetry to his satires—that it too closely resembles real life and pure conversation, \textit{sermo merus} (1.4.48).\textsuperscript{122} \textit{Sermo}, indeed, should give the reader pause, since the collection itself is titled \textit{Sermones} and it is \textit{liber sermo} (\textit{liber} here meaning "free") with a \textit{liber amicus} (S.1.4.132) that fuels further ethical development.

Horace's poetry is self-consciously mimetic of conversation between friends; indeed this is evident from the colloquial tone of the first line of \textit{S. 1.1}, \textit{Qui fit}, \textit{Maecenas}, as well as the earthy vocabulary of the satires.\textsuperscript{123} As we will see later in the poem, this

\begin{flushright}
120 That such suspicion can be aroused by poetry or prose, especially literature that engages in praise and blame, can be seen from the passage of Sallust's \textit{BC}: \textit{quia plerique, quae delicta reprehenderis, malevolentia et invidia dicta putant} (Sallust, \textit{BC} 3).

121 An older generation of critics would have attacked Horace for a bad transition of thought here (as many frequently criticized the transition between \textit{memphimoria} and \textit{avaritia} in \textit{S 1.1}—e.g. Fraenkel (1957: 90-101). This only defers the question of a passage's function in a poem with an imposition of the critic's \textit{ingenium} (for such criticism always has the implication that the critic could have crafted the passage better).

122 And yet Horace makes this description poetic in his own way by adapting to a metaphor with wine by the use of \textit{merus}.

123 For example, one would not find \textit{cunnus} (as at \textit{S. 1.2.70} or \textit{S. 1.3.107}) in the hexameters of Vergil (though part of the humor of Juvenal lies in fitting such language into perfect Vergilian hexameters, e.g. Juv. \textit{S. 1.1.39 nunc via processus vetulae vesica beatae}). Lucilius also used earthy vocabulary (e.g. \textit{vetulae} 1066 M (=1039 Krenkel) and \textit{inbubinat} 1186 M (=1205 Krenkel), the latter a particularly blue
\end{flushright}
is an important aspect of Horace’s satiric project—the ethical formation accomplished by frank conversation between friends. To give the gravity to his verse that he demands of so-called “real” poetry at lines 43-46 would obfuscate this very aspect of Horatian satire, its mimesis of conversation.124 As I noted in my introduction, Horace means for his *liber Sermonum* to be its own “textual friend.”

Horace, by bringing into question what poetry can be, is trying to get us to rethink the role of poetry, specifically his poetry, in our lives. This is to bring poetry down to earth (the walking muse image) away from the pure song of, for example, Vergil’s Orpheus.125

Horace illustrates this point in lines 48-53 as he turns to the example of Roman comedy:

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'at pater ardens
saevit, quod meretrice nepos insanus amica
filius uxorem grandi cum dote recuset,
ebrius et, magnum quod dedecus, ambulet ante
noctem cum facibus.' numquid Pomponius istis
audiret leviora, pater si viveret?

'But the father burns with rage, because his nutty, spendthrift son has a prostitute as a girlfriend while he refuses a wife with a huge dowry; he's drunk and what's really a disgrace, he walks around in the day time with
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term for menstruation), which is one reason Horace lumps in Lucilius with his own “non-poetry” at S. 1.4.56-62.

124 Consider, for example, *mens divinior* Horace demands of real poetry at S. 1.4.43 and the treatment of the divine in the *Satires* as a whole: the angry, puffed up cheeks of Jupiter at S. 1.20-21 (*Iuppiter ambas / iratus buccas inflet*); the invocation of the Muse to recount the battle of *scurræe* at S. 1.5.50-54; the farting statue of Priapus of S. 1.8 or the thanks given to Apollo at S. 1.9.77 for saving Horace from an awkward social situation (on this last, one might further compare it with the account of Horace’s escape from Philippi at C. 2.7.13-16). Such depictions of the divine are far from the poetry of Vergil or of Horace’s lyric oeuvre.

125 Cf. Lowrie (2009: xii) and *passim.*
torches! Would Pomponius hear lighter rebukes than these, if his father were still alive?

The point of this passage is not just to weave in more from new comedy to further contribute to the “comic world” Horace creates. Rather, Horace uses this to illustrate the kind of colloquial language and material that his satires use, drawing upon the tensions between fathers and sons that are a trope of Roman comedy, which themselves are based on the of lived experience of sons and fathers, as I discussed in chapter one. While it is a poetic trope that Horace drew upon at S. 1.2.12-22, the effectiveness of the trope depends upon its relation to real life, to all the times audience members might remember fighting with their father’s about who they’re dating or how they’re spending their money, or whether they’re finished with their dissertation yet. Horace emphasizes the trope’s dependence upon lived experience by adding a name and reputation (albeit fictional)—the misadventures of the drunken, whoring son are not just some joke from the stage but (potentially) a real story. Thus, Horace’s Satires draws upon colloquial material, as well as language, in achieving its poetic goals. This vividness, not unlike Barthes’ reality effect, allows for better ethical formation than the gravity and

127 I have had so many lectures from my father on my own spendthrift habits that they constitute a small genre discourse unto themselves, which I have begun to parody in recent years as a way of coping with their frequency. My father always deploys the same arguments about saving, frugality, proper planning and so forth. What he leaves unmentioned is that he himself wasn’t as frugal when he was my age. His ringtone on his cell phone when I call is “It’s your son calling. He probably wants money.”
128 My father refers to this project as “my paper.” If only….
129 The identity of Pomponius, like many of the named targets in Horace, is shrouded in mystery. Du Quesnay (1984) 53-4 identifies this Pomponius as a proscribed supporter of Sextus Pompeius; Porphyrio (ad loc.) does not identify him at all.
elevation of epic poetry, just as it is easier to follow the example of something from one's own experience than the example of some high epic character.130

At the same time, this example both foreshadows the appearance of Horace's New Comic father later in the satire (famously based on Terence's Demea from the Adelphoi)131 and introduces the issue of the lack of self-satire that threatens to undermine the ethical and didactic authority of satiric poets or figures like the old comic poets, Lucilius, the raging father here, Caprius and Sulcius at S. 1.4.65-70 and even Horace pére himself. All are linked by this one vitium (in varying degrees) of their satiric methods—they don't turn the critical gaze, the pointing finger of satire on themselves, only others. Thus the laughter they arise lacks the self-reflection of Horatian laughter and this is why they become the objects of Horace's own satire.132

Without the authority granted by self reflection (again, recall the charge of S. 1.3.19-20: quid tu? / nullane habes vitia? What about you? You don't have any faults?), the laughter these figures like Caprius and Sulcius try to create has no real function, it is not morally edifying, it is an empty sort of pleasure. This reflection is triggered by the fact that the satiric impulse is present in everyone; in other words, we are always already the potential object of someone else's satire. Ultimately, this realization about the common satiric impulse is one thing that can serve to join and

130 Here I recall Bloom's (2002: 76-77) remark there is "no reader I've ever met [who] has preferred the hero Aeneas...to Dido.....and Turnus," or that Aeneas is a "virtuous cad...insufferable in his nobility."
132 This is also the source of the satire on Demea in the Adelphoe. This is not to say that Demea's moral ideas are silly or wrong, but rather that one reason his moral pedagogy is ineffective is because, like the interlocutor whom Horace attacks in S. 1.3, he does not consider his own faults (cf. S. 1.3.20: nullane habes vitia?). His own ethical blindness ultimately impairs his ability to know just what his son has been up to.
maintain friends (cf. S. 1.3.54 *haec res et iungit iunctos et servat amicos*), the subject of the next section of the satire. We are always already satiric targets, but also satiric subjects, and this unifying feature of lived experience can serve to bind people together in a common project of moral improvement.

Before moving on from this section, the introduction of comic fathers compels us to reflect a bit more on the relationship between our literary and cultural imagination and our real lived experience. What I mean by this is that in retelling our experiences, even in interpreting them for ourselves, we contextualize them and narrate them in a framework that is constructed from other experiences and our reading books, viewing movies and television shows and listening to music.\(^\text{133}\) This is a basic point of reception, of how we read and experience literature and other art. In the case of Horace’s father, it becomes difficult if not impossible to distinguish where the biographical information of Horace’s father ends and the artistic expression and poeticizing of that biography, drawing upon the character of Demea, begins.\(^\text{134}\) Thus, in forcing the reader to question what poetry really is and whether Horace is writing it, Horace also compels the reader to examine not only the role of poetry in their own life, but how that life is already in


\(^{134}\) Cf. Anderson (1982: 50-73). A more personal example of this phenomenon: when describing my father for other people, I have found that a quick (if inevitably distorting) description of his personality is “Andy Sipowicz without the alcoholism” (the protagonist of the 1990s drama *NYPD Blue*). My father and I share a deep love of the police procedural in literature (Ed McBain’s 87th Precinct series), cinema (Dirty Harry Callahan, Bullitt) and television (Law and Order, NCIS). In the latter, Leroy Jethro Gibbs (played by Mark Harmon) has always seemed to me to be a combination of my father and dissertation advisor.
some way poeticized, embedded in a narrative and interpreted through various cultural symbols.

**Satire and Friendship (1.4.63-103)**

After this digression into the poetic nature (or lack thereof) of his *Satires*, Horace returns to the real point at issue—whether the content of satire and the dynamics of that kind of poetry is, in fact, worthy of suspicion (*mertione tibi sit / suspectum genus hoc scribendi*, 1.4.64-65). This allows Horace to explore the issues of satire and friendship that were raised in his third satire, in particular to show how his version of (self-)satire helps rather than harms friendships, unlike the other kinds of satire which won’t spare friends and fails to provide moral guidance or education.

Horace develops his idea of friendly criticism in S. 1.4 as he responds to the suspicions of his potential audience for satire. But can satire and friendship really co-exist? How can Lucilian satire or Aristophanic *parrhesia* adjust to Roman *amicitia* in the 40s and 30s B.C.? Horace begins answering these questions by citing another pair of satirists (-manque?) who lack the self-reflexive satiric impulse of Horace (S. 1.4.65-70):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Sulcius}^{136} \text{ acer} \\
\text{ambulat et Caprius, rauci male cunque libellis,} \\
magnus uterque timor latronibus; at bene siquis
\end{align*}
\]

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135 In this context, it is notable that Horace doesn’t mention Lucilius as a friend, most famously to Scipio Africanus and Gaius Laelius (the friendship of the latter two is central to the discussion of friendship in Cicero’s *De Amicitia*) until S. 2.1.

136 While Klinger prints *Sulgius*, I follow Gowers in printing *Sulcius*.
et vivat puris manibus, contemnat utrumque.
ut sis tu similis Caeli Birrique latronum,
non ego sim Capri neque Sulgi: cur metuas me?

Fierce Sulgius and Caprius walk around, terribly hoarse with their little books and a great fear to robbers, but if anyone lives well with pure hands, he condemns both. Even if you were like the robbers Caelius and Birrus, I’m not like Caprius nor Sulgius, why do you fear me?

The immediate source of the satire on these figures is the fact that they do not stigmatize their own moral flaws, only those of others; they lack the ethical self-reflection that Horace shows us later in the poem, just as Maenius at S. 1.3.21ff. The poet is being a bit more sly here and this passage is redolent with Horatian irony—in the midst of disclaiming that he emulates the censorial actions of a Sulcius or a Caprius who go around broadcasting the names of criminals, Horace proceeds to in fact do so, citing the robbers Caelius and Birrus. Horace goes on to note that, unlike Sulcius and Caprius roaming the streets, he does not publicize his works at all, but keeps them only for friends and even then only when asked. To recite in public shows a lack of sense (inanis / hoc iuvat 1.4.76-77; this delights the stupid), a declaration that cuts Horace and his audience of friends off from the vulgus (1.4.72) and figures them instead as a group of docti amici (cf. 1.10.87).

137 Once again these figures are unknown. Porphyrio (ad loc.) identifies them as delatores et causidici, though attributing his source to an anonymous tradition (traduntur) does not inspire confidence in the identification. Ullman (1917), Rudd (1956) and Freudenburg (1993: 118) believe them to be fellow satirists. However, given the nature of Horace’s names in the Satires (if not dead, then of no consequence or most likely made up), Radermacher’s (1935: 81) theory seems to be the most likely, that both names are a play on the Greek συκοφάντης, “informer” but literally “fig-revealer.” There were two types of figs known as the ficus sulca and capriificus. Cf. Gowers (2012 ad loc).


139 A roster of some of his notable friends can be found at S. 1.10.81-87. Three of them—Vergil, Varius and Maecenas—will appear in the subsequent poem.
criticism is enacted amongst friends and kept within that circle. Further, we may contrast the adjective rauci with Horace's self-description of 1.4.18, raro et perpaucarequentis (speaking rarely and very briefly): Horace’s taciturnity is a far cry from the constant shouting of these two figures that renders them hoarse. Horace argues that this kind of moral criticism can include those outside the circle of friends, such as the fools and spendthrifts Horace and Maecenas observe as they walk together in Rome. At the same time, criticism of others is balanced by self-criticism and the moderate (or, more cynically, euphemistic) criticism of friends.

The other problem with Sulcius and Caprius is that their satire, besides lacking the self-reflexive aspect of Horatian satire, depends upon fear for its ethical efficacy. The two are a great fear to bandits, Horace says (magnus uterque timor latronibus 1.4.67). Horace thinks that any fear that his interlocutor might have of him and his own poetry (cur metuas me? 1.4.70) depends on a mistaken similarity between Horace’s work and the work of Sulcius and Caprius (non ego sim Capri neque Sulci 1.4.70, sc. similis from 1.4.69). Far from depending or even inciting fear, Horace restricts publication of his efforts (no bookshops for him: nulla taberna meos habeat neque pila libellos 1.4.71); his efforts are only for his friends and even then, under compulsion (nec recito cuiquam nisis amicis idque coactus 1.4.73). As earlier in the poem, Horace makes use of a useful antithesis of a satiric poetics based upon fear, exemplified by Sulcius and Caprius, and one based on friendship: the two informers strike fear into their audience, while Horace is reluctant or even afraid to perform his work for his audience.
There is another failed type of satire that breaks the bonds of amicitia when applied indiscriminately with harsher criticism than what Horace prescribes above in this poem or in 1.3. Such a kind is elaborated in lines 75-103, where Horace tackles the question he introduced earlier—the problem of the co-existence of satire and friendship in the same discourse. Ties of amicitia presume that the criticism leveled will be euphemistic and moderate, though still frank (liber), at least in Horace’s ethical system. There is always the risk, however, of getting too frank and harsh, which would then threaten to replace amicitia with inimicitia. As this section of the poem begins, the shadow interlocutor restates his charges from earlier: that Horace qua satirist delights in causing pain (laedere gaudes, 1.4.78). What had earlier been framed as exciting empty laughter (inanis in that no moral development arises from it, even though the mockery is based on attacking immorality), risum excutiat, now becomes pain and outright harm (laedere). The shadow interlocutor goes on to note that this harm is intentional on the poet’s part (et hoc studio pravus facis S. 1.4.79; you do this with zeal and depravity). Indeed, pravus hints that satire can be much more than just the moderate vice Horace claims it is towards the close of the poem.

Horace responds to the charge by painting himself as the victim of the very harm the shadow interlocutor decries—that one of his friends has harmed him

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140 Laedere is also used in contexts of betrayal, such as Varus’ objections to Juba’s murder of prisoners who had surrendered to Varus at Caesar B.C. 2.44 (Varus suam fidem ab eo laedi quereretur), or the false oaths of Horace’s lover at Epode 15.3 (cum tu, magnorum numen laesura deorum). This use is eventually extended into a legal term for treason under the empire, e.g. laedere majestatem populi Romani (Seneca Controv. 4.25.13). We may have such a context here, since Horace’s response to the charge of his interlocutor is to assume that he has been betrayed by a friend (est auctor quis denique eorum / vixi cum quibus?, S. 1.4.80-81).
(petitum 1.4.79) all for the sake of a laugh (captat risus hominum 1.4.83), which Horace himself has been criticizing thus far in the poem. Such criticism should be addressed to a friend face to face with frankness (libertas), if it is not then that criticism exposes its source as an inimicus and no real friend at all (hic niger est, hunc tu, Romane, caveto, S. 1.4.85; this man is black, avoid that man, Roman). Thus Horace neatly turns the tables on his interlocutor and uses the charge to remonstrate the nameless friend whom Horace suspects potentially may have concocted this charge. Horace thus defends himself by demonstrating how such a putative “friend” isn’t really one at all since he attacks Horace anonymously and reverses the charges. This attack, like those of Caprius and Sulcius is reduced to empty and immoral (in that it has no care for moral edification) satire, a discourse that is pravus.

Horace illustrates the effects of this foreboding and unreflective satire by imagining a hypothetical convivium, the locus classicus for the expression and reaffirmation of ties of friendship. While at first glance such a scene would seem to assume clearly defined boundaries of amicitia and inimicitia (after all, you don’t invite your enemies to dinner), in this vignette those boundaries are confused again by the juxtaposition of a scene that presumes amicitia with the presence of the kind of loose, unreflective invective talk that serves to destabilize friendship. At this feast, those who appear to be friends don’t live up to that role (S. 1.4.86-91):

    saepe tribus lectis videas cenare quaternos,
    e quibus unus amet quavis aspergere cunctos

141 Unless, that is, you’re going to kill them. Quintus Sertorius learned this the hard way in 72 B.C.
praeter eum qui praebet aquam; post hunc quoque potus, condita cum verax aperit praecordia Liber: hic tibi comis et urbanus liberque videtur infesto nigris.

*Often you might see four men dining with only three couches and of those guests one who loves to cast aspersions any old way on everyone, except the host and later on even him as well, when truthful Liber (i.e. Bacchus) unseals the secrets of his heart. This character seems to you, you enemy of the black-hearted, agreeable, urbane and frank.*

The poet thus accuses his shadow interlocutor of hypocrisy, since he apparently finds the drunken antics of a *scurra* to be humorous, even though the *scurra* at this *convivium* does exactly what the shadow interlocutor objects to in his misconception of satiric poetry. *Liber*, here figured as Bacchus the god of wine, is a loaded term in this context. The invective the dinner guest spews is anything but *liber*; it is *licentia*. Recall earlier that for the Romans in this period *libertas* meant taking account of how your actions affected others, overstepping that meant a descent into *licentia*; liberty for the Romans was not a statement of radical individualism that it is for many Americans today: real *libertas* includes an element of reflection on the effect of one’s actions for the larger community of which someone is a part, whether this is on a small scale of a group of friends, or the larger scale of the *res publica*.

The other sense of *Liber* refers to the god Bacchus who unlocks secrets when one has drunk enough wine. The secret revealed to the reader and the other dinner guests in this case is the truth that the drunkard is no true friend at all, merely a *scurra* interested in raising a laugh. Unlike this dinner guest, any invective in Horace’s satire (what Porphyrio frequently calls the *amaritudo* of Horace’s *Sermones*) is aimed at people outside of the circle of Horace’s friends, while the
shadow interlocutor enjoys satire deployed within a circle of friends. In other words, the shadow interlocutor utterly misses the point once again, first mistaking one feature of satire as a feature of all poetry, now mistaking the proper arena and targets of full-on satiric criticism. This interlocutor presents a series of misread exempla of “satiric moments” throughout the poem, which provide opportunities for Horace to correct impressions of what he’s actually doing with his own satire.

The next vignette showcases something that is, to Horace, even worse: satiric invective disguised as the defense of a friend (S. 1.4.93-101):

mentio siquae
de Capitolini furtis iniecta Petilli
te coram fuerit, defendas, ut tuus est mos:
'me Capitolinus convictore usus amicoque
a puero est causaque mea permulta rogatus
fecit et incolmis laetor quod vivit in urbe;
sed tamen admiror, quo pacto iudicium illud
fugerit’: hic nigrae sucus lolliginis, haec est
aerugo mera;

If there is some mention is made of the thefts of Petillius Capitolinus142 while you are present, you’d defend him in your usual way “I have enjoyed the friendship and association of Capitolinus since my boyhood, he’s done very many things for me when I’ve asked him and I delight that he lives in the city safely. All the same I am amazed at how he was acquitted at trial. This is the ink of the black cuttlefish, this is pure poison.

142 Another phantom—Porphyrio (ad loc.) says he is so named because he stole coronae from the Capitoline and was later absolved by Caesar. If our scholiast is correct, then the stiletto Capitolinus friend uses here is extra sharp, in that he’s using his own praenomen against him. This makes it a twist on the discussion of praenomina at 1.3, discussed above in chapter 1.
Here the failed satirist figure maliciously buries his invective in the warm language of friendship (\textit{convictore, amico}). To all of this Petillius Capitolinus could respond with the shock of Horace at \textit{S. 1.4.79-82} that a friend has bitten him while absent (cf. \textit{absentem qui rodit amicum} \textit{S. 1.4.81}) and failed to defend him against the charges of others regarding his alleged thefts (cf. \textit{qui non defendit alio culpante} \textit{S. 1.4.82}). One imagines that the witty conclusion may have earned a laugh at the table, the laugh of the \textit{scurra}. Thus Horace turns the charge of his shadow interlocutor against him before firmly denying this particular \textit{vitium} from his own work (\textit{S. 1.4.101-103}):

\begin{quote}
\textit{quod vitium procul afore chartis,}
\textit{atque animo prius, ut siquid promittere de me}
\textit{possum aliud vere, promitto.}
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
This fault will be far off from my pages and spirit, just as it has in the past; if I am able to promise any other thing about myself truthfully, I promise this.
\end{quote}

Even if Horace's own satiric impulse is a problematic in its own peculiar ways (cf. \textit{S. 1.4.139-140}: \textit{hoc} (i.e. satire) \textit{est mediocribus illis / ex vitiis unum}), it is at least not compounded by the other vice of using it against friends when that kind of \textit{aerugo mera} is best deployed against \textit{inimici}. For Horace, this added \textit{vitium} is solved by satirical self-reflection which he introduces in the final section of this satire. First, however, he shows us the origin of this kind of self-reflection by introducing the figure of his \textit{pater optimus}.

\textbf{Horace and his father: the development of Horatian self-satire (1.4.103-143)}

In this final, and justifiably famous section of \textit{S. 1.4}, Horace, moving beyond the \textit{exempla} he's used as foils throughout the poem, now clearly presents his own
innovations on Roman satire by adopting his father’s moral pedagogy while turning
its critical gaze primarily upon himself.143 This portrait of Horace pére works as a
counterbalancing satirical and ethical influence to the aesthetic and generic
influence of Lucilius. As Catherine Schlegel has argued, Horace uses his father to
displace Lucilius as an influence, ironically showing pietas towards his father where
other father and son relationships portrayed in the poem are tense and strained, as
we often see in Roman comedy.144

The poet begins by asking forgiveness for any way he may exceed the bounds
of frankness (liberius) and jocularity (iocosius),145 risks that any conversation
between friends might run. Next, he describes the moral education his father
provided for him (S. 1.4.105-126):

insuevit pater optimus hoc me,
ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quaeque notando.
cum me hortaretur, parce frugaliter atque
viverem uti contentus eo quod mi ipse parasset:
'nonne vides, Albi ut male vivat filius utque
Baius inops? magnum documentum, ne patriam rem
perdere quis velit.' a turpi meretricis amore
cum derreret: 'Scetani dissimilis sis.'

143 Cf. Fraenkel (1957:5), “No son ever set a finer monument to his father than Horace did in the
sixth satire of Book I...a reader who cannot afford the time to read it at leisure, and add to it Sat
1.4.105 ff., had better leave Horace alone.” For more on the background of Horace’s father see
Williams (1995). No single passage in all of Latin literature helped me understand the upbringing my
own pater optimus (a policeman for 33 years) provided better than Sat 1.4.105 ff. This was best
summed up by his best friend and fellow officer (as well as my godfather), who once said of raising
his own sons (in words very similar to Horace’s father), “they can go to school to learn all that fancy
stuff. What I can teach them are my values.” Both my father and godfather, like Horace’s, worked
very hard to provide for their sons the educational opportunities (attending prestigious schools in
the Boston area such as Boston College High School, Boston College, Holy Cross and Dartmouth) they
themselves were not able to enjoy.

144 Schlegel (2005: 38-58). While I agree with Schlegel’s reading of Horace’s father vs. Lucilius in S.
1.4, I do not think her argument applies to the figure of Maecenas in S. 1.6. See chapter 4 below.
145 cf. S. 1.1.23-25: praeterea ne sic ut qui iocularia ridens / percurram – quamquam ridentem dicere
verum / quid vetat?
ne sequerem moechas, concessa cum venere uti possem: 'deprensi non bella est fama Treboni' aiebat. 'sapiens, vitatu quidque petitu sit melius, causas reddet tibi; mi satis est, si traditum ab antiquis morem servare tuamque, dum custodis eges, vitam famamque tueri incolunem possum; simul ac duraverit aetas membra animumque tuum, nabis sine cortice.' sic me formabat puerum dictis et, sive iubebat ut facerem quid, 'habes auctorem, quo facias hoc' unum ex iudicibus selectis obiciebat, sive vetabat, 'an hoc inhonestum et inutil factu necne sit, addubites, flagret rumore malo cum hic atque ille?'

The best father accustomed me to this by noting each vice by exempla so that I might steer clear of them. When he would exhort me to live frugally and sparingly, content with that which he himself had prepared for me he’d say, “don’t you see how badly the son of Albius lives and how Baius is dirt poor? A great document lest anyone should wish to waste their patrimony.” When he would deter me from the shameful love of a prostitute, “May you be unlike Scetanus.” So that I wouldn’t chase after adulterous affairs when I could have an appropriate romance he used to say, “the reputation of Trebonius since he was caught in adultery is not good.” Moreover, “a wise man can give you reasons about what you should avoid and what you should seek. Its enough for me if I am able to preserve the morality handed down from our ancestors and keep your life and reputation safe as long as you need a guardian. At the same time that age has hardened your limbs and spirit you will swim without a cork.” Thus he was forming my boyhood with words and if he was commanding that I do something he’d say “you have an authority for doing this” holding up one from the select jurymen.” Or if he was forbidding me to do something he’d say “do you doubt this is a dishonest and useless thing to do when this and that fellow are ablaze with bad rumours?

After spending much of the poem exploring the kinds of satire he is not writing (public castigation of vice and slyly vicious backbiting of absent friends), even if he
adopts the poetic form of Lucilian satire, Horace finally turns to the form and inspiration of his own satire of moral self-pedagogy, his father. Besides inspiring the pedagogical aspects of Horace’s satire, his father is also a median figure in both Horace’s literary history of satire (being the inspiration for Horace to follow Lucilius) and in the history of the function of satire from the critical pointing of the old comic poets to the critical pointing at oneself of Horace’s Satires. As such there is much here to unpack.

First is the transition from the action of “marking” (notare, cf. notando in S. 1.4.106) vitia publicly, a la Aristophanes, in the hopes of raising a laugh and exhorting the “marked” man of improving his behavior and the audience to avoid such behavior, all the way to marking others in the manner of Horace pére, where the criticism is done privately for another person’s ethical benefit (in this case, the young Horace) rather in a public forum than to convince the target to stop his or her immorality via invective and mockery. Indeed, as Horace describes his childhood, it would seem that these targets had no idea they were the objects of the elder Horace’s satire—this satiric criticism was kept between father and son rather than broadcast throughout the city like the hoarse Caprius or Sulcius (S. 1.4.65-66). The writing metaphor remains as Horace’s father marks down examples of different vices so Horace can avoid them (ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quaeque notando S. 1.4.106). These exempla are also documenta to advise Horace, by reflecting on the actions and the attendant reputations of the various figures his father points out.

The word documenta points the reader to the practical application of Horace’s father’s method—where the observation of human foibles and actions in
lived experience allows one to construct an ethical system by the collection and subsequent employment of quotidian personal exempla, a humbler version of the Roman practice of drawing lessons from history and oratory such as Cicero recalls doing in his youth in the Pro Archia.\textsuperscript{146} In other words, Horace’s Satires spur ethical learning by exempla just as history or oratory or any example of Roman literature might be expected do, but the Satires do not provide ready-to-use exempla of putatively real figures, as in a work of oratory or history like Livy’s Ab Urbe Condita or the later collection of Valerius Maximus. Instead, these nobodies and empty names notionally drawn from Horace’s personal history are examples of exempla, designed to show the reader how to make his own as part of his personal history and ethical development. In fact the real origin of all these exempla illustrate this point, since while Horace presents them as drawn from childhood memories of his father’s moral education, they are broad types that, sometimes with fictive names, that not only resemble earlier targets of the first three diatribe satires but are also found bundled up in figures like the filius of 1.4.50, who both wasted his patrimony and carries around with a prostitute instead of seeking a respectable marriage (meretrice nepos insanus amica, S. 1.4.49).

Creating one’s own exempla for the purposes of moral self-pedagogy is as simple as pointing a person out to oneself and judging the moral value of their action. In other words, one only needs to harness the satiric impulse common to everyone. What goes into the opprobrium of a bad action (as judged by a satirist

\textsuperscript{146} Cicero, Pro Archia 14:
figure) and conversely the approval of a good action, along with the workings of the
rumores mali or bella fama that the communication of these judgments entail, are at
the heart of the questions Horace explores in this poem. In our present passage, the
fama or infamia arising from a given action is at first passed from father to son in
the poet’s youth and later (presumably) amongst Horace and his various friends,
though he claims that he more often keeps these reflections to himself (S. 1.4.137-
138 haec ego mecum / compressis agito labris).

The exempla in this passage, whether positive like the select jurymen\(^{147}\) or
negative like the son of Albius, Baius or Scetanus fit into a coherent matrix of moral
values that Horace’s father seeks to pass onto his son. What determines the valence
of these moral terms and upon what authority are they grounded? For the young
Horace, it would be auctoritas of a Roman paterfamilias. But to what authority does
Horace’s father appeal to in making these moral judgments about Baius’ poverty or
Scetanius’ love life? The traditions handed down by his ancestors (mi satis est, si /
__________________________
\(^{147}\) These were jurymen for the quaestiones perpetuae selected by the praetor urbanus each year
from the senators, equites and tribuni aerarii. Gowers (2012: ad loc.) notes that Horace’s father
would have pointed them out as positive models because they were of higher social classes which
Horace would be able to attain with his father’s wealth, though his father’s freedman status would
have prevented him (for a sensible survey of the question of Horace’s father’s social class see
Williams (1995)). To this we may add Brown’s (1993: 137) simpler suggestion that Horace’s father
would have chosen these men as models because such jurymen were expected to be of exceptional
character, citing Cic. Pro Cluentio 121: praetors urbani qui iurati debent optimum quemque in lectos
iudices referre.

In fact, however, Pro Cluentio 121 muddies the waters even further, since Cicero goes on to
say that the fact that a given judge had been marked for ignominy by the censors did not necessarily
disqualify him from serving on such a jury (numquam sibi ad eam rem censoriam ignominiam
impedimento esse oportere duxerunt). Thus, for Cicero in the Pro Cluentio this question of appeal to
moral authority is answered fairly cynically, in that the authority is ultimately left open to whomever
has the more persuasive case—the censors, the urban praetor, the Roman people (cf. Pro Cluentio
121 populi Romani suffragis saepenumber censorias subscriptas esse sublatas) or Cicero himself, who
later boasted about pulling the wool over the judges eyes in regards to Cluentius’s character (neither
Cluentius nor the accuser, his mother Sassia were beacons of moral rectitude), reported by Quintilian
I.0. 2.17.21 (se tenebras offudisse iudicibus in causa Cluenti glorius est).
traditum ab antiquis morem servare 1.4.116-117), in other words, the mos maiorum: a historical discourse which was the authority Romans appealed to in order to ground the values of moral ideas and terms.

For Horace himself, living in the turbulent 30s B.C. and a veteran of one of the many civil conflicts that the first century B.C., the mos maiorum no longer seemed the stable system of meaning that it was purported to be. After all, both sides in the civil war between Pompey and Caesar claimed that they followed mos maiorum, while their opponents did not.\(^ \text{148}\) In seeking some kind of stability upon which to ground the values of a system of ethics, Horace turns to amicitia instead of past tradition.\(^ \text{149}\) For his father it is tradition, what our ancestors have handed down (traditum ab antiquis morem, S. 1.4.117) and which he will in turn pass down to his son. This is a good Roman answer, appropriate for a freedman with high ambitions for his talented offspring. Yet after decades of civil war, the auctoritas of this moral tradition was understandably called into question.

In addition to considering how moral values are defined, Horace also pays attention to how these moral judgments are communicated. Horace’s father often uses the infama of others as a warning (e.g. describing the son of Albius as a magnum documentum at 1.4.110 and flagret rumore malo of 1.4.125). The

\(^ {148}\) See for example Caesar BC 1.6, where in describing the departure of the Pompeians from Rome, notes that all human and divine laws were mixed up (omnia divina humanaque iura permiscentur, cf. Sallust BC 12 divina et humana permiscua), since the departing magistrates did not follow ritual precedent.

\(^ {149}\) In contrast to someone like Livy, who recognizes the problems historical tradition poses in his own time, but seeks to revitalize that tradition instead of turning away from it.
transmission of *fama* is reliant on *sermo*.\textsuperscript{150} Preexistent *fama* and *rumor* justify the satiric pointing of Horace's father in the case of the anonymous *hic atque ille* of 1.4.126, while the *sermo* of father and son reaffirms the *fama* of Albius, Baius and Scetanus. For Horace then, all moral values and the terms used to describe them depend on some kind of dialogue, whether between him and his father, him and Maecenas or in the crowd responding to the oration of a Roman notable in the Forum.

However, as Horace explains why his father’s moral pedagogy was so effective, an surprising element appears (S. 1.4.126-129):

\begin{verbatim}
avidos vicinum funus ut aegros
exanimat mortisque metu sibi parcere cogit,
sic teneros animos aliena opprobria saepe
absterent vitii.
\end{verbatim}

\emph{Just as a funeral next store scares the sick gluttons and compels them by a fear of death to take better care of themselves, thus another's shame often deters tender spirits from vices.}

Again it is the shame and disapproval (opprobria) that fuels the moral exemplarity of Horace's father, as well as fear (metu), the same *vitium* that Horace decried in moral invective earlier in the poem. Horace illustrates this by another example—the fat men scared into getting into shape when they see their neighbour's funeral. While in the example of glutton it is the fear of death, for the young Horace it is fear of opprobrium, that you will be the object of someone else's satire. The mention of

\textsuperscript{150} In this context, consider the source of the vignette recounted in S. 1.7 (1.7.2-3: \emph{opinor omnibus et lippis notum et torsoribus esse}).
fear here and its place in satire brings the reader back to the initial objections of Horace’s shadow interlocutor at 1.4.33, that they fear the verses of poets, mistaking one feature of one kind of poetry for all of poetry.

So how does one overcome this fear, or at least manage it when it comes to friends? All of the other satiric examples Horace has contrasted his own work against in this poem create fear for others, fear in audience members that they would be named. Certainly this would make for a tense recitatio at Maecenas’ house if Horace wrote satire like that. In resolving this obstacle to satire and friendship, Horace has two solutions. First is the realization that just as we all have a satiric impulse, so we are always already potentially the objects of someone else’s satire, just as they can be the objects of our satire. This satiric impulse, as he says at the end of the satire, makes us all Jews (S. 1.4.142: nam multo plures sumus; for we are many by far), thus if the shadow interlocutor continues to object, Horace and his crowd will force him into their number, since the interlocutor has his own satiric impulse he is unaware of (S. 1.4.142-143: ac veluti te / ludaei cogemus in hanc concedere turbam). Even the interlocutor can benefit from Horatian self-reflection.

The other solution is the adoption of moral self-pedagogy, of self-satire. Horace accomplished this by essentially making his father his super-ego, that voice

\[\text{\textsuperscript{151}}\text{ Cf. T.S. Eliot’s remarks on criticism in “Tradition and the Individual Talent”: “we might remind ourselves that criticism is as inevitable as breathing.” (Eliot 1920: 48). Though he is referring specifically to literary criticism, I believe Eliot’s remarks are à propos to Horace’s remarks on satiric criticism (which of course includes Horace’s literary criticism of Lucilius, as well as Lucilius’ criticism of figures like Accius (cf. Horace S. 1.10.53 nil comis tragic mi mutat Lucilius Acci?). Porphyrio (ad loc.) says that Lucilius criticized Accius primarily in Book 3 as well as 9 and 10.}\]
in his head that compels him to moral self-surveillance in a continuing quest to
better himself ethically and morally. This is, in effect, to admit the inevitability of
the fear of satiric invective and *infamia*, but to moderate it by aiming it at oneself
instead of others. Although is father’s education saved him from the most
dangerous faults (*S*. 1.4.129-130: *ex hoc ego sanus ab illis, perniciem quaecumque
*ferunt*), various minor faults remain, which he hopes his friends will forgive (*S*.
1.4.130-131: *mediocribus et quis / ignoscas vitiis teneor*). It is to better himself and
hopefully escape from even these minor faults that he continues to rely on his
satirical impulse as one of several different ways (including the passage of time,
*longa aetas*, or a frank friend, *liber amicus*, *S*. 1.4.132) to hone his personal ethics.
Further, he can hope that his friends will forgive him his faults precisely because he
has engaged in the self-satire necessary to recognize he still has them, unlike his
predecessors, including his own father. This is why, despite the debt Horace owes
his father, to which he returns in *S*. 1.6, he still satirizes his father by portraying him
like the *senex iratus* or New and Roman comedy, who, like Demea in Terence’s
*Adelphoe*, does not look to his own faults and flaws and turns to fear as he seeks to
mold his son’s character.\(^{152}\)

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\(^{152}\) Cf. Leach (1971), Anderson (1982: 53-56) and Armstrong (1989: 2-4). The main intertext here is
Terence’s *Adelphoe* 414-417, where Demea explains to the slave Syrus how he provided a moral
education for his son in the same way (based on *exempla*) as Horace *pére*. While Leach (1971) and
many critics following her (e.g. Freudenburg (1993: 1-51) find Horace’s father to be solely a figure of
fun, a doddering old moralist, this assumes a slavish devotion to a literary model—poetic behavior
that Horace displays nowhere else. Besides, unlike Demea, Horace *pére* did not raise a son who fled
at the first sign of trouble, or beats up a pimp to get what he wanted. Like Maenius in *S*. 1.3 and the
various other satiric figures in *S*. 1.4, Demea’s sons also overlook their own faults. Thus, Horace is a
success story in that his father’s moral education allowed him to recognize his own shortcomings and
work to improve them.
There are, however, limitations to the ethical utility of this kind of satire. It is, as Horace notes, a *vitium*, though a minor one (*hoc est mediocribus illis / ex vitiis unum*, *S. 1.4.139-140*). Yet paradoxically it is the vice that helps him to overcome his other vices and by which he can help others, both through frank conversation (*liber sermo*) and through his *Liber Sermonum*, by showing others how to replicate the system of moral-self pedagogy he has relied upon.

This is a real innovation on Roman satire that Horace achieves: by finding a way to turn the aims of satire and the fears it creates inwards, while revitalizing the cognitive and ethical use of exemplarity in this kind of poetry by freeing it from Roman history and yoking it instead to lived experience and friendship. At *S. 1.4.133-139* he describes how he uses his own satiric impulse:

> neque enim, cum lectulus aut me porticus exceptit, desum mihi. 'rectius hoc est; hoc faciens vivam melius; sic dulcis amicis occurram; hoc quidam non belle: numquid ego illi inprudens olim faciam simile?′ haec ego mecum compressis agito labris; ubi quid datur oti, inludo chartis.

*Nor indeed, when I’m in bed or when I go out for a walk do I fail myself: “this is more right; doing this I will live better, acting thus I’ll be better in dealing with my friends; that certainly wasn’t a nice thing: could I ever thoughtlessly do something like that?” I constantly put these thoughts to myself with sealed lips and when I have any free time, I play around with my notebook.*

Once again, there is much to unpack here. First we may note that unlike Lucilius, the Old Comic poets or even his own father, Horace’s satiric activity is not described

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153 On the dangers of relying on Roman history for *exempla* in Horace’s time, see Chapter 5 on *S. 1.7 below.*
using *notare* (even though he’ll write his thoughts down in his notebooks later).

Horace’s satiric pointing is a mental activity that he keeps to himself (*compressis labris*) and even then the written results of these observations are dismissed as little more than Catullan *nugae*.

Horace has already declared that he rarely recites his work and even then only to friends and only when they force him to. Horace is not interested in publicly branding malefactors, but in improving himself and his friends. Despite the focus on the poet’s own self, this isn’t entirely a solipsistic endeavor, since Horace provides a blue print to his readers of how to accomplish this themselves. In this sense the *Liber Sermonum* can also be a *Liber Amicus*—a free speaking friend that is also a book (punning on the sense of *liber*).

This blue print is the creation of *exempla* through satiric pointing and criticism, but kept to and meant for oneself; this is satire adapted to a system of moral self-pedagogy. There is no clearer evidence in the satire that these various names are simulacra of *exempla* designed to show how *exempla* are made than the fact that Horace stops naming names completely after line 114, and reduces this pointing to the very gesture itself by relying on demonstratives: *hic atque ille*

1.4.126; *rectius hoc est* 1.4.134; *hoc faciens* 1.4.135; *hoc quidam non belle* 1.4.136; *illi...faciam simile*, 1.4.137. This final movement completes the Horace’s remarkable exposition of how to make use of the satiric impulse as part of *amicitia*, the central question that forms the backbone of this satire. A discourse ultimately derived from

155 S. 1.4.73-74: *nec recito cuiquam nisi amicis, idque coactus, / non ubivis coramve quibuslibet.*
the Old Comic poets, through Lucilius, to Horace’s father, to Horace himself, adapted by Horace and finally passed onto the reader.

Let’s draw together the various threads we have been following throughout this satire. *S*. 1.4 articulates via a series of foils the version of Roman satire that Horace presents to his readers, not the public criticism and invective of Lucilius, though Horace adopts his poetic form, but a form of moral self-pedagogy that bases its moral values in *amicitia*, a self pedagogy which Horace claims he adapted from his father’s earlier moral education. This is expressed in intertwining historical accounts: the literary history of satire, the personal history of Horace as a moral subject and the methodological history of how Horace crafted his system of moral self-pedagogy based on the ethical formation provided by his father. Finally, rather than reading this innovation as forced upon Horace by the political necessity of decreased *libertas* during the 30s B.C. and the rule of the second triumvirate, we should read this as a positive virtue (even if relying on a modest vice) in navigating the muddied ethical waters of triumviral Rome as traditional ways of grounding moral values were destabilizing in the transition from Republic to Empire.

The subjective nature of the *exempla* in Horace’s *Sermones*, in that they are selected and created by the satirist *persona* himself from his lived experience for his own improvement, are a key part of the *personal* self-satire that is a hallmark of Horatian *sermo*. As John Henderson writes in his study of *S*. 1.9, “we know that whatever else, Satire satirizes the satirist.”156 While Henderson finds self-satire a

feature of the entire genre, I would argue that even if Horace did not actually innovate the self-critical poetic pose as part of satire, he represents it as such in S. 1.4. The solipsistic genius of Horace’s revisionist kind of satire in his first book offers a new way of using satire in a more personal and self-fulfilling way than policing public morality through the performance of humorous invective.

As I have stressed, Horace’s reconciliation of satire and friendship depends upon the fact that there is a satiric impulse in everyone. Just as we (quietly or not) point out different people as objects of satire and negative exempla to spur our own moral development, others are doing the same to us. Indeed, Horace warns the reader of this fact at several points of the libellus, such as S. 1.1.69-70: quid rides? Mutato nomine de te / fibula narratur (why are you laughing? Change the name and the story is told about you!); or at S. 1.3.27-28: at tibi contra / evenit, inquirant vitia ut tua rurus et illi (but it turns out that for you, conversely, others are checking out your vices too). On the one hand, this realization can intensify the sense of internal shame that is tied to Horace’s reflexive self-satire (cf. S. 1.4.136-137, numquid ego illi / imprudens olim faciam simile?). On the other hand, the reader can use the realization that he may become the object of another’s satire (whether it be the Lucilian mode of public branding or the Horatian mode of moral self-guidance) because of some vitium has or misdeed he has committed to engage in greater self-awareness of his own shortcomings and work to correct them. The result of this self-satire and self-reflection is to become a better friend to others, especially so one can help them with their own moral development.
Chapter 3

The Program in Action: S. 1.5 and 1.6

The diatribe satires, and to an extent 1.4 as well, treat a series of questions such as with what grounds and with what terms is one to evaluate a given action, how can amicitia and satire’s generic identity as blame poetry be reconciled, and how to go about creating one’s own array of ethical exempla as part of the process of moral self-pedagogy. In this chapter we will turn to the following two poems, S. 1.5 and 1.6 to see how this program works in action.

In S. 1.5 that Horace offers the reader a real-life example of how thinking through these questions can work by displaying several different kinds of amicitia: that of the courtier, the dinner companion and the fellow literary artist, while also noting his own personal failings and ways to improve. For many years, scholars have noted the importance of friendship to the journey Horace recounts in 1.5.157

From the goal of Maecenas’ diplomatic mission (1.5.27-29: huc venturus erat Maecenas optimus atque / Cocceius....aversos soliti conponere amicos...At this place excellent Maecenas was going to arrive and Cocceius, both accustomed to

reconciling estranged friends), to Horace’s exclamation about the joys of friendship when Vergil and others arrive (1.5.44: *nil ego contulerim iucundo sanus amico*: as long as I’m healthy I’d compare nothing to a pleasant friend) and finally the sadness at the departure of Varius (1.5.93: *flentibus hinc Varius discedit maestus amicis*: from here sad Varius departed from his weeping friends), 1.5 shows Horatian friendship in action. Now in S. 1.6 Horace focuses on one particular relationship, his friendship with Maecenas, and reveals that underneath the portrait of the courtier presented in S. 1.5 lays a much more complex and egalitarian relationship between the poet and his patron.

In the first major section of this chapter, I will describe the various kinds of friendship limned in S. 1.5, as well as the ways in which Horace shows us how he carries on his program of self-improvement in ways great and small. In the second section I will examine Horace’s detailed portrayal of his friendship with Maecenas: how it started, how it works and how Horace situates that friendship in the larger political and ethical contexts of Roman aristocratic and republican ideology. Together these two poems show Horace’s ideas of friendship, ethics, exemplarity and satire in action and when read together with S. 1.4 they form a potent counter-example to the *odium* suffusing the lawsuit and litigants of S. 1.7.

**S. 1.5: Friendship on the Open Road**

As I noted above, the importance of friendship to S. 1.5 is not a new idea. Nor is it a new idea that 1.5 puts the program in 1.4 into action. Yet as I have suggested a different, pragmatic program for S. 1.4 in the previous chapter, consequently our
assessment of that program put into action in the present poem must change too.

On the other hand, an important trend in scholarship on this poem in the last 20 years criticizes the poem for what it pointedly leaves out—any details about the actual diplomatic mission Maecenas is engaged upon—and proceeds to theorize why Horace would have done so.\footnote{158} To situate my reading of the poem in this chapter, let us dive a bit deeper into the prior reception of this poem.

\textit{Earlier work on S. 1.5}

Scholars interested in Horace’s stylistic ideas and his meta-poetics read 1.5 in order to find out how Horace puts into practice the aesthetic principles he described in \textit{S. 1.4}, often by means of comparison with the fragments of Lucilius’ own fragmentary journey narrative. For these readers of \textit{S. 1.5}, the poem is effectively an exercise in stylistic \textit{aemulatio} between the neo-Callimacheanism of the \textit{iter Brundisium} of Horace and its model, the more freewheeling \textit{iter Sicilium} of Lucilius, which was in the earlier poet’s third book according to the scholia of Porphyrio; 1.5 is the kind of satire Lucilius would write if he were alive in the 30s B.C. and equipped with Horace’s aesthetic principles.\footnote{159}

Others look for political implications in the poem’s reticence and its oblique references to political events involving important men like Maecenas. I believe, however, that this latter trend of criticism on \textit{S. 1.5} is inherently limited by its

\footnote{159 \textit{S. 1.10.68-71}: \textit{si foret hoc nostrum fato delapsus in aevum, detereret sibi multa, recideret omne quod ultra/ perfectum traheretur, et in versu faciendo / saepe caput scaberet vivos et roderet unguis.}}
obsession with what Horace largely leaves out—the political mission to reconcile Antony and Octavian—instead of what Horace actually writes about: the experience of a journey made with dear friends.\textsuperscript{160} There are a few problems with this political approach. First, it is not clear which conference Horace writes about. There are three likely candidates. First, the treaty of Brundisium in 40 B.C.; but this is probably too early for Horace to have entered the retinue of Maecenas. A better chronological fit is a conference in Athens in 38 B.C., and Brundisium was the traditional point of departure for those wanting to sail to Athens. Finally there is the treaty of Tarentum in 37 B.C., though the conference would have been at Brundisium if the inhabitants of that town had allowed Antony to land his ships there. Ultimately, I believe that this question of what particular conference or journey Horace writes about in 1.5 is an interpretive dead end. As the ancient historians tell us, Maecenas had to patch up the relationship between Antony and Octavian several times. This historical fact, as well as the inconclusive details about which conference Horace is talking about, led Herbert Mussorillo S.J. to label the journey a “poetic fiction” in 1955.\textsuperscript{161}

While this is a sensible way out of the problem, the very fact that there are multiple possibilities for the diplomatic missions that S. 1.5 could recount may be part of the point Horace makes in the poem about political amicitia. After all, how strong could the ties of amicitia be between Antony and Octavian if Maecenas and

\textsuperscript{160} While almost all scholars will admit that friendship is an important theme in 1.5 (cf. for example, Welch (2008: 47ff), only Classen (1973) has given detail attention to this element of 1.5 as it relates to the overall meaning of the poem and its place in the \textit{libellus}.

\textsuperscript{161} Mussorillo (1955). Cf. the response of Anderson’s (1956).
others constantly had to rush in to patch things up? Certainly the friendship
between Antony and Octavian looks tenuous indeed when compared to the strong
ties of friendship enjoyed between Horace and Maecenas, as well as Horace and
Vergil, Horace and Varius and so on.\footnote{My focus on friendship in S. 1.5 in this chapter aims to build on the work of Classen (1973) who identifies Epicurean friendship as the key theme of this satire. I would emphasize the contrast Horace makes between his friendship and that of Antony and Octavian, which starts to critique the political valence of amicitia as it celebrates an Epicurean form of amicitia, as well as the dynamics of exemplarity that Horace uses to make this point. Cf. Reckford (1999). On amicitia in its political sense, see the analysis of Bruuut (1998: 351-381).} It was a fragile friendship that was
maintained by marriage ties and mutual displays of power. Thus, like the earlier
amicitia between Pompey and Caesar, the breakdown of this friendship would likely
mean another round of civil war. In Horace’s iam satis est of 1.5.13, we may hear
something of the frustration with the political situation of constant civil war that
begins the later C. 1.2, iam satis.

Second, while scholars have argued that Horace presents a sort of muzzled
version of polemical Lucilian satire in S. 1.5, they also contend that Horace based 1.5
on a specific poem of Lucilius, the iter Sicilium of his third book, as Porphyrio
reports. Yet, meager though the fragments of this satire are, there appears to be no
indication of any political concerns—the narrative concerns the misadventures of a
journey Lucilius took to Sicily.\footnote{If Warmington (1938: 30) is correct that Lucilius 3 is in fact addressed to a friend of Lucilius, then the amicitia that implies may be another tie to Horace’s remake of Lucilius 3.} In fact, as the fragments are currently arranged, Lucilius’ third book comes as a departure from the political themes which dominate
the first two books: the concilium deorum on Lupus’ fate in Book 1 and the lawsuit
between Scaevola and Albucius in Book 2. What this would mean, if true, is that
Horace may have in fact have put political matters (however obliquely) into his own journey satire that were absent from Lucilius’.

Ultimately, what is lacking here is a real accounting of the power of friendship in S. 1.5, how that fits into the themes in the previous four satires and by extension how this fits into the rest of the book. Rather than a concern over what is not in the poem and the formulation of reasons why this may be so, I want to look at what this satire does say and how it fits into the larger themes of the *Liber Sermonum* that I have been arguing for in this dissertation. Thus in this section I will focus on the role of friendship and the types of friendship Horace describes on his journey.

*Types of friendship on the Road to Brundisium*

There are four types of friendship that Horace shows us in S. 1.5: the half-friendship of the *comes*, the literary friendship between Horace and other poets like Vergil and Varius, the courtier friendship between Horace and Maecenas and finally the political friendship between Antony and Octavian that forms the backdrop of the poem. I will close this section by considering the relationship between the kind of friendship Horace advocates for in the *Liber Sermonum* and the dangerous, foreboding friendship of the two triumvirs.

We can dispense with the first type, the *comites*, as quickly as Horace does. I begin with these unnamed fellow travelers in order to better distinguish the bonds of *amicitia* Horace enjoys with his named fellow travelers like Maecenas, Varius and Vergil from the bonds with these unnamed people who are just “going along” with
the satirist. Our poet begins his journey from Rome to Brundisium without his friends (and here I accept the idea of Gowers that Heliodorus may refer to a “companion guidebook”) but instead within a group of unnamed companions (comites). If in fact the Heliodorus here refers to the poet Heliodorus’ Italica Theamata (and not the a cryptogram for Apollodorus, the rhetorician of Octavian) Horace has a guidebook for travel, but not for moral improvement. As an hexameter poem, the Theamata can’t “talk back” to Horace, nor even provide a mimesis of conversations like the Liber Sermonum claims to do. Further, there is no sermo to be had here with the other comites who are Horace’s would be dining companions (cenantis....comites 1.5.8-9), nor the warm feelings of friendship we see later on in the poem. These comites, dining companions and Heliodorus, do not appear again in the poem and the closest Horace gets to sermo before meeting Maecenas at Anxur is the croaking of frogs and the exchange of the boatmen loading up the ferry in lines 1.5.12ff.

As many commentators have noted, the beginning of the poem is rich in literary allusion and is a good starting point to discuss literary friendship in S. 1.5. At the poem’s beginning we are drawn into a subtly epic atmosphere (to which I shall return below) with Horace’s adaptation of Odyssey 9, where Horace’s opening line, Egressum magna me accepit Aricia Roma / hospitio modico evokes the start of Odysseus’ tale of his wanderings to the Phaeceans, Ἰλιόθεν με φέρων ἄνεμος

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165 On this figure see Frank (1920) and Gowers (2012: ad loc.).
166 Though, to be fair, any opportunity for sermo is precluded by Horace’s stomach troubles at 1.5.7ff.
167 The most recent and thorough treatment of this aspect of 1.5 is the essay of Welch (2008).
While the quotation itself brings to mind ideas of travel and hospitality, what immediately follows this line of Homer is a bit more troubling: Odysseus’ declaration that upon arriving in Ismarus he sacked the city and slew all the men (9.40: ἔνθα δ’ ἐγὼ πόλιν ἐπραθον, ὄλεσα δ’ αὐτούς.) Thus Horace leaves the war and conflict filled journey of Odysseus unsaid but still kept in mind if we recognize the allusion here. Instead Horace refers to hospitality and the experience of being a guest, hospitico modico. Horace thus occludes the warlike follow up to Odysseus opening words with a word, hospitico, which summarizes the key theme of the Odyssey, the guest-host relationship or xenia.

Xenia is a form of friendship and one we will deal with in more detail in our discussion of 1.7. For now we can remember that it is because their ancestors are guest-friends Diomedes and Glaucos eschew fighting each other in Iliad 6. In other words, Horace occludes an epic and Homeric concern, war, and replaces it with ideas of friendship and hospitality, his own pointed concern in Sermones I. Horace’s citations of Homer are often more pointed and meaningful than mere “epic parody” or elaborate recusationes. They are in fact important intertextual resonances for the themes Horace wants to focus on in his satires, especially, as here, friendship.

Horace juxtaposes this epic diction with frequent echoes from Vergil’s Eclogues, both as a way to memorialize his friendship with Vergil, which is one of the exemplary friendships in 1.5, but also because friendship and fellowship are also important themes in the Eclogues, though Vergil seems to be more pessimistic than
Horace about the ability of friendship to stand up to the ruinous discord and enmity of the triumviral period. Indeed, the pessimism in the Eclogues is also imported into Horace’s poem, where it contributes to the unsettling mood of discord at the margins of Horace’s poetic horizon just as the negotium of civil discord and land confiscations lurks at the margins of Vergil’s pastoral otium. Unlike in Vergil, however, the power of friendship amongst Maecenas, Vergil, Varius is presented as a positive alternative to the fragile and thus potentially destructive “friendship” between Octavian and Antony. It was, of course, other breakdowns in amicitia—Caesar and Pompey, Brutus and Caesar, Brutus and Antony—that led to the presence of impii milites and the land confiscations that afflict Vergil’s pastoral landscape.

Now the allusions to the Eclogues I consider here have been noted before by scholars such as C.A. van Rooy and Michael Putnam, among others.¹⁷⁰ Likewise many scholars have recognized much of the diction I analyze here constitute epic references.¹⁷¹ Yet much like the Homeric references in Satire 1.7 they are typically read as pastiche, parody, mere tonal shifts or as a way for Horace to present a recusatio for writing epic.¹⁷² That is, there is often little concern as to why Horace would have chosen the specific Homeric passages that he did, or what happens when we read the original Homeric passage against Horace’s re-deployment of it in

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¹⁷² Schlegel (2006: 59ff.)
his satire. While I would agree that the vocabulary I consider here is broadly epic, I want to emphasize the specific epic context—war—which it evokes. It is not enough to say Horace draws on epic language here and that it contributes to the style and feel of the satire, but we must also consider why Horace chose the specific epic references he did and how that contributes to the overall theme of the satire, not just its meta-poetics.

As we move on in the satire, matters already get a bit rough for Horace as the bad water at one location brings on a mild bout of diarrhea, which leads Horace to declare war on his stomach (ventri/indico bellum). The enjambment, I believe, contributes to the unexpected juxtaposition of a formal declaration like indico bellum, where indico evokes a public decree of war, like the rite of the fetial priesthood. While Horace deals with his gastric distress, his companions or comites dine. Horace's word choice here, comites, literally “those who go with somebody” may be intended to signal a distinction between those who merely accompany him, who may be but acquaintances of his, as opposed to the amici, in the full sense of the term that join the party at 1.5.27ff. Further, comites adds to the general martial undertone of these lines, as a comes is someone who accompanies a Roman magistrate to his province (which could often include some warfare, such as Cicero’s military actions in Cilicia in 51 B.C.). We might think here of Catullus 10 as a comparison, where the poet has recently returned from being a comes in Bithynia. Horace undertakes his war against his belly by denying it food—there may be then

\footnote{Exception: Schlegel (ibidem), though I do not agree that we have a moment of \textit{recusatio} in this poem.}
some irony in using *comes* here, in that Horace’s companions don’t actually participate in his gastronomical warfare, but still eat to their hearts content, which leaves Horace “ill at ease” (*haud animo aequo*).

The martial vocabulary continues with *inducere...umbras*, where *inducere* can be often used for leading an army somewhere, which would render the sense something like night, as a sort of *dux*, leading an army of *umbrae*. *Signa*, here metaphorically referring the constellations in the sky, also brings to mind the use of military standards. We have here a cumulative effect of military diction which ironically underlines the *peace* mission Horace is setting out on, as a *comes* to the official Maecenas, who was in charge of watching over Italy while Octavian was off at war.\(^{174}\) We may also want to read *ingerere* in this way, though instead of spears and such we instead get *convicia*. The notion of words as weapons is another undercurrent of Horace’s satires.\(^{175}\)

Besides the epic diction, as other scholars have noted, there is an undercurrent of bucolic themes in this satire as well, notable by the appearance of the poet Vergil in the poem. Once the war imagery has begun to fade, what we are left with is the traveling party on a boat, making a journey through the Pompentine marshes. Such a setting is not bucolic in the traditional sense, though it seems to share a few features with Tityrus’ landscape as Meliboeus sees it at *Ec* 1.46ff. (although bare rocks and a marsh with slimy reeds overspread the fields, *quamvis*...)

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\(^{174}\) It is worth noting that both Ps. Acro and Porphyrio record that Agrippa, who was the military guru on Octavian’s side, came on the journey as well.

\(^{175}\) This is the major concern of Schlegel’s study (2006).
lapis omnia nudus / limosoque palus obducat pascua iunco). As Horace tries to sleep, the boatman makes it difficult to do so with his off-key singing. The song is a bucolic song, indeed an amoebean song, with traditional bucolic themes and motifs. First, we have the communion of nature, in the form of the mosquitoes (culices) and the frogs (ranaeque palustres) somewhat in tune with the singing of the sailor. Both are off-key, appropriate to a satirical slant to bucolic. The theme of the song too is important, the absentem amicam, the absent girlfriend, which is also the theme of Gallus’ lament in Eclogue 10. We may too have another evocation of Eclogue 1, in which Meliboeus finds Tityrus is teaching the woods to resound fair Amaryllis. In Horace we have the frogs and gnats, in addition to the singing boatman, banishing sleep with their raucous song. What perhaps seals the intertextuality with Vergil’s Eclogues here is the other singer who joins in, nauta atque viator / certatim, and again the enjambment lends emphasis to certatim. This kind of song, where two singers compete and sing in turn is exactly the type of singing that typifies the bucolic landscape, as we see in such Eclogues as 3, 5 and 7. Finally, perhaps with the “iam satis est” we may have not just a self-reflexive nod to satire itself (cf. the end of Satire 1.1), but also an evocation of the end of Eclogue 10 (Haec sat erit, divae).

Despite the bucolic imagery, war language and martial undertones are never far away. Horace combines both the bucolic and the martial themes in lines 22-23 when a particularly annoyed traveler (cerebrosus 1.5.21), leaps out of the boat to awake the boatman who has overslept. Notable here is the traveler’s choice of

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176 The presence of the frog chorus also brings to mind the parallels with Aristophanes’ Frogs and the journey across the river Styx. See above.
weapon, a stick from a willow tree \textit{(saligno fuste)}. The willow tree is a frequent part of the pastoral landscape of Vergil’s \textit{Eclogues}. In the first poem, the \textit{locus amoenus} that Meliboeus imagines Tityrus living in features Hyblaean bees feeding off the blooms of the willows \textit{(Ec. 1.54)}, while Meliboeus in contrast will be forced to feed his flock bitter willows \textit{(salices amaras, 1.78)} in exile. In the third Eclogue, the \textit{salix} features as an element in the landscape in scenes of love (Galatea hiding in the willows at 3.65) and in pasturage (willow is sweet to the breeding flocks, 3.83). In the fifth eclogue, the \textit{salix} is regarded as a typical part of the landscape in a comparison of Mopsus’ singing versus that of Amnytas (5.16). Finally, in the tenth Eclogue, the \textit{locus amoenus} Gallus imagines himself and his lover Lycoris reclining in notably includes the willow \textit{(mecum inter salices lenta sub vite iaceret 10.40)}. While it is a commonplace of Eclogue scholarship that the real Roman world with all its disorder and discord lurks around the edges of the Eclogues, Horace has recreated that world in the Pomptine marshes, and in fact emphasizes this danger by turning a normal feature of the \textit{loci amoeni} of Vergil’s pastoral landscape into a weapon of anger, at the hands of the irate traveler. All it takes is anger to overturn the bucolic equilibrium that depends on fellowship and friendship. In Horace’s hands, a feature of bucolic \textit{otium} becomes a weapon.

What then is the importance of bringing the \textit{Eclogues} into the \textit{Sermones}? Partly I think it may be due to the thematic contrasts we see in at least two eclogues, the first and the ninth, that contrast between the warlike world outside the pastoral “bubble”, represented by our \textit{impius miles} and the \textit{barbarus} \textit{(Ec. 1.70-71)} or the \textit{possessor agelli} of Ec. 9.3, in addition to the \textit{tela martia} of 9.12. In both poems the
contrast is the potential of fellowship and friendship between the two speakers, which Vergil represents as a (temporary at best) *remedium* against the encroachments of the harsh reality of the Roman world of the triumvirate. In Eclogue 1, it is the offer of food and shelter, *hospitium*, that effects a moving conclusion. Moreover, Lycidas in *Eclogue* 9 attempts to brighten Menalcas’ day in a poem that is a dialectic on the power of song to help and heal in the face of misfortune, though Menalcas is constantly resistant to Lycidas offer. What is important to note for our purposes here is the opposition Vergil creates between war/politics and friendship/otium. This, I contend, is an opposition Horace adopts in 1.5, which also fits in with his thematics of friendship in the personal sense as opposed to the political friendship of Antony and Octavian. The interaction with the *Eclogues* here, as well as Vergil’s appearance later in the poem, signals a literary friendship Horace enjoys with the pastoral poet. This shouldn’t be taken as something excluding actual *amicitia*, but as a form of expression of *amicitia*, just as Horatian *sermo* can express bonds of *amicitia* with its concern for moral formation and improvement.

There is another example of bucolic elements later on in the poem, at the dinner entertainment of the two *scurrae*, where both Horace and Vergil are present. Whatever political resonances the reader may see in the two *scurrae*, Sarmentus and Messius Circius, there are still bucolic motifs contained in this battle.\(^{177}\) The tension

of conflict and bucolic *otium* is brought back to the fore with the epic invocation with which Horace begins this duel (1.5.51ff): *nunc mihi paucis / Sarmenti scurrae pugnam Messique Cicirri / Musa, velim memores*. Horace then cheekily calls the conflict a *litis*, which may look ahead to the murderous litigation of S. 1.7. The insults of the two *scurrae* recall the exchange of insults between Menalcaš and Damoetas at the beginning of *Eclogue* 3—both sets of insults may have their origin in Italian (Atellan) slapstick humor. The clearest bucolic reference in this dinner entertainment is the invitation Sarmentus extends to Messius to dance the shepherd Cyclops (*pastorem saltaret uti Cyclopa rogabat* 1.5.63)—a part Messius is perfect for because of his deformities. This reference is perhaps the cleverest of all the bucolic references so far, since while it does refer to bucolic themes, it in fact extends back beyond Vergil’s *Eclogues* to Theocritus’ *Idylls*, specifically *Idyll* 11, the song of the love sick Cyclops, which Vergil largely adapted as the song of Corydon in his second *Eclogue*. The pastoral Cyclops then brings in a range of references, from Vergil to Theocritus and once again the theme of love, desire and the absent lover, which was the theme both of Theocritus’ Cyclops’ song and the song of Vergil’s Corydon.¹⁷⁸

Using various evocations of Vergil’s *Eclogues*, Horace is able to recreate, with the occasional twist, the tension between friendship in the bucolic landscape and the violence, which threatens that friendship and bucolic paradise in which it is found, a tension that suffuses Vergil’s poems. Vergil likely replied to this tribute on Horace’s part by adapting an epic-style line that Horace used to describe a kitchen

¹⁷⁸ It may be worth noting that Theocritus addresses *Idyll* 11 to his friend, the physician Nicias.
fire (1.5.73-74: nam vaga per veterem dilapso flamma culinam / Volcano summum properabat lambere tectum) to describe the destruction of Troy in Aeneid 2.310-12. This tension forms an effective background for his comparison of personal and political friendships in 1.5, both by the importation of the mood of the Eclogues and as a testament to the friendship between the two poets.

The next type of friendship illustrated in S. 1.5 is what we may call the friendship of the courtier, the type of friendship between a lesser and greater man that is most memorably portrayed before Horace in a fragment of Ennius’ Annales (268-286 Sk.). In this passage, the consul of 217, Cn. Servilius, retreats from the public to talk with his unnamed friend, who provides Servilius with guidance and pleasing conversation after the consul has fulfilled his public duties. Ennius describes the qualities of this friend thus (278-285 Sk.):

Ingenium quo nulla malum sententia suadet
Vt faceret facinus leuis aut mala: doctus, fidelis,
Suavis homo, iucundus, suo contentus, beatus,
Scitus, secunda loquens in tempore, commodus, uerbum
Paucum, multa tenens antiqua, sepulta uetustas
Quae facit, et mores ueteresque nouosque tenantem
Multorum ueterum leges diuomque hominumque
Prudentem qui dicta loquiue tacereue posset:

The kind of man whom no opinion lightly considered or bad can persuade to do wrong; learned, faithful, a charming man, pleasant, content with his own lot, prosperous, knowlegable, saying the right thing at the right time, useful, a man of few words, knowing many old things buried by antiquity, who knows customs old and new, knowing

179 We may compare this passage with Horace’s account of Lucilius, Scipio and Laelius at S. 2.1.71ff: quin ubi se a volgo et scaena in secreta remorant / virtus Scipiadae et mitis sapientia Lael, / nugari cum illo et discincti ludere, donec / decoqueretur holus, soliti.
the laws of many old things and of gods and men. He shrewdly knows when he is able to speak or keep quiet.

There are several qualities that Ennius’ “Good Friend” shares with Horace in the Sermones. As a Callimachean poet, Horace can claim to be doctus, even if his persona in the Sermones is sometimes a doctor ineptus. Horace declares that he lives a suavius life at 1.6.130 and S. 1.4.1.135, Horace hopes that his moral self-pedagogy will make him pleasing or charming (dulcis) to his friends. At S. 1.3.63ff. Horace tells us how Maecenas indulges Horace barging in on him with some conversation or another (quovis sermone 1.3.65), one of the minor vices that Horatian friendship and its attendant moral pedagogy is designed to correct. As we shall see in S. 1.6, Maecenas is a man of few words (cf. Ennius’ verbum paucum with S. 1.6.60-61 respondes, ut tuus est mos, / pauc), just as Horace was at their first meeting (1.6.56 singultim pauc locutus). Finally, Horace knowing how to keep quiet is, as scholars have noted, a key feature of this poem. As Ellen Oliensis notes “rather than expose his friend’s secrets, the satirist literally defaces himself.”

How is Horace’s friendship with Maecenas portrayed in S. 1.5? Not unlike that of Ennius’ Good Friend, accompanying the great man wherever he goes and ready to join him in various activities after Maecenas completes his official duties,

181 Lewis and Short ssv.
182 Indeed, later works of Horace show a much keener sense for the right moment. Ep. 1.13 is all about finding the right moment to give a volume of poetry to Augustus.
which in this poem are a diplomatic mission to reunite the triumvirs. From the
context of S. 1.5.48ff, we can see that Maecenas may have wanted Horace to play ball
with him,\footnote{Cf. S. 2.6.48-49 where they do play together, as well as Horace's own ball playing at S. 1.6.126.} though Horace must decline along with Vergil due to illness. Horace
also is a much happier dinner guest with Maecenas at the meal where they enjoy the
entertainment of the Scurrae. We can imagine too that Horace would have
discussed trifles with Maecenas, like he describes at S. 2.6.42-46:

\begin{verbatim}
dumtaxat ad hoc, quem tollere raeda
vellet iter faciens et cui concredere nugas
hoc genus: 'hora quota est?" 'Thraex est Gallina Syro par?"' 'matutina parum cautos iam frigora mordent',
et quae rimosa bene deponuntur in aure.
\end{verbatim}

And yet up to this point I'm the one who he wishes to have
with him in his carriage when making a journey and to
whom he entrusts trifles of this kind: "What time is it? Is
the Thracian chicken up to beating Syrus? Frosty
mornings bite at those who aren't careful enough;" and
whatever else it's safe to drop into a leaky ear.

In short, Horace is there for Maecenas as a friend for all sorts of quotidian
experiences but not political affairs. Horace's reluctance to engage in politics will be
addressed in the following two poems. He follows along with the great man like the
other poets Varius and Vergil, members of a retinue with no official function on this
trip.

The question remains, however, if there is no shortage of shared experiences
between Horace, Maecenas and their other friends, why does Horace select this
particular trip as his subject? What does Horatian friendship mean for the

\footnote{Cf. S. 2.6.48-49 where they do play together, as well as Horace's own ball playing at S. 1.6.126.}
triumvirate? This is a good segue to a discussion of the political friendship between Antony and Octavian that forms the backdrop to the entire poem. Horace presents both the problems that make them aversi amici (1.5.29) and the method of their reconciliation in terms of his poetics of amicitia and moral correction, thus showing us a pragmatic example of the efficacy of his program described in S. 1.4.

Political alliances were often described as amicitia in ancient Rome, though this should not mislead modern readers into believing that amicitia was only “a weapon of politics, not a sentiment based on congeniality” as Ronald Syme wrote in The Roman Revolution. While this may likely be true in the case of Antony and Octavian in the 30s B.C. (and I would argue that Horace would agree that Syme’s cynical definition fit the triumvirs), the poverty of this definition is palpable when we consider the friendship of Horace and Maecenas inside and outside Horace’s textual corpus, never mind the friendship of Cicero and Atticus. The problem with this particular friendship, and thus the urgency of Maecenas’ diplomatic mission, is that it was the last effective barrier against another round of civil wars, now that Caesar and Pompey’s war was over ten years in the past, Brutus and Cassius slain at Philippi and Sextus Pompeius soon to be defeated, or recently defeated, by the time the Sermones were published in about 35 B.C.

Horace only tells us that they are aversi, but does not go into detail why.

From other sources we know that during such periods (and there were several, after

\footnote{Reckford (1999: 530-532) imagines a possible context of composition for Horace that depends upon his friendship with the other travelers, a recollection of a shared journey and all the misadventures therein.}

\footnote{Syme (1939: 157). See my discussion above in chapter 1, pp. 23-28.}
all there are 3 historical candidates as to which trip Horace may be recounting in this poem) Antony and Octavian would accuse each other of various moral misdeeds. Antony’s drunkenness was well known, most vividly in Cicero’s 2nd Philippic and the attacks on Antony for his wine bibbing were enough to drive the triumvir to write a treatise on it, *De Sua Ebriatate*, according to the testimony of Pliny the Elder.\(^{187}\) Octavian criticized Antony for his adulterous relationship with Cleopatra (Antony was at the time married to Octavian’s sister Octavia). Antony responded with his own charges of adultery, as Suetonius reports (*Divus Augustus* 69):


Mark Antony accused him of marrying Livia too hastily and of leading an ex-consul’s wife from the dining room to the bedroom before the man’s eyes, and returning her blushing and with her hair in disorder. He also claimed Augustus divorced Scribonia because she showed resentment of a rival’s influence over him too openly; and that his friends pandered to him, denuding wives and young women, just like Toranius, the slave-dealer, and inspecting them as though they were up for sale. He also wrote familiarly to Augustus, when they were not yet openly antagonistic or hostile to each other: “What’s changed you? Because I’m rutting with Cleopatra? She’s my wife. After nine years is it

\(^{187}\) See Cicero, *Phil.* 2.63, 77, 81 and 101 for his attacks on Antony’s drunkenness. For *De Sua Ebriatate* see Pliny *NH* 14.28.147-148.
news? Do you rut only with Livia? May you be strong if, by the time you read this, you’ve not had Tertulla or Terentilla, or Rufilla, or Salvia Titisenia, or the whole lot of them together! What matter where or whom you pleasure?’

The context of these charges is a passage where Suetonius not only acknowledges Augustus’ sexual indiscretions, but also notes his friends did as well, while brushing them aside as the products of a calculated policy of ferreting out the plans of the princeps’ enemies, rather than from lust.188

Given this background, we can surmise that the invective and moral mudslinging going on between the triumvirs was antithetical to the criticism between friends that Horace advocates in the *Sermones*. This is an especially dangerous series of invective exchange since it threatens not just *odium* but outright civil discord. I suggest that Horace focuses so much on his literary friendship with Vergil and his friendship with Maecenas precisely to show a positive example to the triumvirs. After all, Maecenas and Cocceius have been sent on a diplomatic mission (*missi magnis de rebus uterque / legati 1.5.28-29*) precisely because they are accustomed to reconciling friends (*aversos soliti componere amicos 1.5.29*).

Maecenas is an apt envoy for such a mission—enjoying the friendship that he does with Octavian makes him specially equipped to heal the tattered friendship of Octavian and Antony. Further, Cocceius was friends with both Antony and Octavian,

188 Suetonius, *Divus Augustus* 69: *Adulteria quidem exercuisse ne amici quidem negant, excusantes sane non libidine, sed ratione commissa, quo facilius consilia adversariorum per cuitusque mulieres exquereret*. I suggest that we may have here an example of the kind of friendly criticism Horace advocates in S. 1.3 in action.
making him a perfect mediating figure between Maecenas, the friend of Octavian and Capito the friend of Antony (1.5.33: *Antoni, non ut magis alter, amicus*). The impression Horace gives here is that perhaps, by the example of the warm friendships Antony enjoys with Fonteius Capito and Octavian with Maecenas, not to mention the relationships of Maecenas with Horace, Vergil and Varius, the rift between Antony and Octavian might be healed and their opportunistic political friendship might achieve the level of friendship that the *legati* and their entourages enjoy. In other words, real Horatian friendship is seen as a therapeutic idea that can help the rifts arising from friendship made for political calculations, as a positive example that Antony and Octavian can learn from, as well as other Roman grandees.

**Sermones 1.6: The friendship of Horace and Maecenas**

*S. 1.6* continues to put the program of *S. 1.4* in action by narrowing the focus to the friendship he enjoys with Maecenas with a much more detailed view of that friendship than what we saw in *S. 1.5*, where Horace accompanied Maecenas on his journey, but didn’t do much else with him due to illness. It also brings back the figure of Horace’s father and how his formation of his son has made Horace the man and friend he is for Maecenas and others. With both of these figures, Maecenas and Horace *pére*, we get a warmly crafted portrait of two major influences upon Horace

１８９ Cf. Appian *Bellum Civile* 5.7.64: σφίσι δ’ αὐτοῖς προσελόμενοι Κοκκήτου μὲν ὡς οίκείον ἁμφοῖν.

１９０ 1.5.48-49: *lusum it Maecenas, dormitum ego Vergilusque; / namque pilis inimicam et ludere crudis.*
and how he has become the poet, man and friend he presents himself to be in the *Sermones*.

The context of this portrait is the traditional Roman cultural formation of a father educating his son in *virtus* and ethics to become good Roman men and serve the Republic. In S. 1.4 we saw that Horace’s father provided him with the basis of the system of moral self-pedagogy that allowed him to be the kind of friend to Maecenas and others that we see in the subsequent satires. What some may read as a limitation or failure to live up to Lucilian satire is for Horace a positive virtue of self-satire and self-criticism, one that is admittedly not free of vice (*hoc est mediocribus illis / ex vitiis unum* S. 1.4.139-140; this is one of those moderate vices). This is itself a key feature of what we might call “Horatian anthropology”: nobody’s perfect, as Horace notes in S. 1.3.68-69:

*Nam vitiis nemo sine nascitur: optimus ille est,*  
*Qui minimis urgetur.*

*For no one is born without faults: that one is best who is pressed by the fewest.*

As we will see in the course of this chapter, though Maecenas is described as *optimus* in S. 1.5.27 and not even he is above Horace’s frank and honest criticism. This is, in fact, one of the things that makes Horace such a good friend and not the flatterer that ancient texts on friendship warn against.\(^{191}\)

In the first part of this section, I’ll explore how Horace aligns his critique of Roman aristocratic competition with the concerns in the rest of the book. Next, I’ll

\(^{191}\) E.g. Plutarch’s *How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend* and Cicero, *De Amicitia* 89 ff.
demonstrate how Horace’s recollections of his father in this poem act as one form of critique towards Maecenas’ elitism, subdued as it is—Horace gains admission to Maecenas’ circle while his own father wouldn’t, yet without his father Horace wouldn’t have been become the kind of man fit to be part of Maecenas’ circle of friends in the first place. In pursuing that reading, I’ll also explore the implications of this reading of S. 1.6 and how it forces us to reconsider Maecenas’s role in the poem and the entire *libellus*, which entails countering the assumptions of many scholars that Maecenas could not possibly be the target of any of the satirical criticism in the *Liber Sermonum*.

*Horace as novus homo: Politics and friendship in the Second Triumvirate*

In his Brundisium satire, one way that the bonds of friendship between Horace and his friends are strengthened is in their shared laughter at the follies and vices of others, whether it is the farcical dinner entertainment of the *scurrae*, or an overly ambitious municipal official they come across at Fundi (S. 1.5.34-36):

> Fundos Aufidio Lusco praetore libenter linquimus, insani ridentes praemia scribae, praetextam et latum clavum prunaeque vatillum.

> *We gladly left Fundi, where Aufidius Luscus was praetor, and we laugh at the regalia of this nutty scribe, his bordered toga, its broad stripe and his pan of charcoal.*

This portrait of political ambition in the *municipia* outside of Rome, and the ridiculousness Horace attributes to it point ahead to the concerns of S. 1.6 and its criticism of ambition and aristocratic competition. The suburban scribe looks to the example of the praetors at Rome to puff himself up in his little hamlet with the
insignia that office holders at Rome wore. Horace may laugh at the foolish ambition of Luscus, but that laughter may reflect back uncomfortably on to Horace himself, since he too had a post as a *scriba* after his return from Philippi and he too, in his younger days, had been something of an ambitious climber himself thanks to the efforts of his father to provide him with a top notch education in Rome and later Athens.

Ambition, like that of Luscus or the younger Horace, is the subject of S. 1.6 where Horace contrasts the dreams his father had for him as a youth and the education he provided him, with the freedom Horace’s current apolitical lifestyle affords him. The exemplarity of the Roman aristocracy suffuses this poem, with its frequent references to famous historical Romans such as Decius, Valerius and Tullius, as well as the exemplary relationship between Roman fathers and sons figured in the relationship between Horace and his father. Horace stages for us in S. 1.6 a confrontation between the discourse of exemplarity and moral self-pedagogy that he has used in his own self formation with the exemplarity most other Romans were accustomed to using in the social formation of Romans who would earn *gloria* in serving the Republic by means of their *virtus*. While Horace make much of this contrast, we should take a moment to pause and review how Roman *nobiles* used exemplarity as a tool of social formation as a background to our discussion of Horace’s critique of it.

192 It is worth noting that at this time Maecenas often served as *de facto* praetor in Rome while Octavian was busy elsewhere. Horace would doubtless remark that Luscus would have done better to emulate the subtle and quiet exercise of power Maecenas engaged in during the 30s.
For Roman aristocrats, the development of *virtus* depended on the transmission of exempla found in the *mos maiorum*. These *exempla* were written down in histories, employed in speeches and preserved with statues, inscriptions and monuments throughout the Forum and the city of Rome. In contrast, for Horace, *virtus* is acquired not from emulating any *res gestae* of his father or grandfather but from his father’s protective and pedagogical role as a *custos* (Greek *pedagogus*) to the young Horace. Horace argues that *virtus* is acquired through a process of moral pedagogy (father to son) that develops into moral self-pedagogy, which is aided by the intervention of *liberi amici*. In this system, the exempla one uses of things to emulate and avoid are one’s own, not drawn from the common treasury of famous Romans of times gone by. It is largely an experiential exemplarity, not historical.

Now for many Romans *nobiles*, the most important set of *exempla* they had to emulate were the ancestors of their own *gens*. There were a few different ways they would encounter these *exempla*. The most notable way was at a funeral for a deceased family member. Polybius provides us with a memorable description of such a funeral, where actors wore *imagines* or masks of dead ancestors as they accompany the corpse and speeches are given recounting not only the deeds of the deceased, but also the deeds of his ancestors. The effect of these recollections of *res gestae*, as Polybius tells us, is that “young men are thus inspired to endure every
suffering for the public welfare in the hope of winning the glory that attends on brave men.”\textsuperscript{193}

When not being used as part of a funeral, the *imagines* were kept at home in special cabinets.\textsuperscript{194} Also kept at home, if not in some written record at least handed down orally through the generations, were the histories important Roman families kept about the exploits of their own ancestors. Such histories were often tendentious and were itself a form of competition with other aristocrats. For example, in making his family history into a written work of history, Fabius Pictor promoted the deeds of his kinsman Fabius Maximus Cunctator over those of the latter’s rival Marcellus and the efficacy of Pictor’s emphasis on the actions of Cunctator are reflected in Livy’s account of the second Punic war where Maximus plays a much greater part in the narrative than Marcellus.

While members of the various blue blood families in Rome could rely on the illustrious histories of their own ancestors to find *exempla* to emulate, the situation was much trickier for the *novus homo* or new man. While the *novus homo* who was fortunate and determined enough to reach the consulate not only ennobled his family forever but also provided a ready *exemplum* for his descendants, in struggling to reach the top of the *cursus honorum* they had to rely on other *exempla* since they lacked famous ancestors. The response of *novi homines* like Cato the Elder and Cicero was to treat all famous Romans as potential *exemplum* for emulation;\textsuperscript{195} in

\textsuperscript{193} Polybius 6.54 (W.R. Paton translation, (1922-27)).
\textsuperscript{194} On the *imagines* see Flower (1996).
\textsuperscript{195} Blom (2010:35-60).
Cicero’s case he frequently had recourse to the *exemplum* of Cato the Elder in his own life and he once flippantly pointed out to Cato the Younger that he did a much better job of emulating the Censor than Cato himself.\(^{196}\)

Since a *novus homo* could boast no *imagines* and ancestral *exempla* of his own they would turn to the history of the entire *populus Romanus* to find *exempla*, which they could then deploy in oratory or in their own historiography. Cato the Elder used his own historiographical efforts to argue for a radical use of *exempla*, where the focus was not on the *person*, but the *deed*, or *res gesta*. Cato famously did not name any generals or soldiers in his *Origines*. We can see this adaptation of Cato’s most clearly in his fragment on a heroic military tribune, preserved by Aulus Gellius (3.7).\(^{197}\) In Cato’s account, the tribune leads a force of 400 men to take a hill and engage the Carthaginians, allowing the rest of the army to escape. After the tribune’s success, and the death of all 400 soldiers, Cato remarks that while Leonidas, who performed a similar feat at Thermopylae with his 300 Spartans was widely praised and remembered in statuary, pictures and most notably Herodotus’ history, this nameless tribune earned *parva laus* for his deed at the time, and later commemoration in Cato’s *Origines*. Cato’s argument here is that the deed, and its benefit to the *res publica* and the *populus Romanus* is important, not the agent of that deed. It is actions that one is really emulating (or avoiding), not people.

\(^{196}\) Cicero, *Pro Murena* 66. Cf. Syme (1939: 25) on Cato “Upright and austere, a ferocious defender of his own class, a hard drinker and an astute politician.....not inferior to the great ancestor whom he emulated almost to a parody, Cato the Censor.”

\(^{197}\) Gellius 3.7=Cato fr. 83 Peter.
Cicero, who never wrote a work of history proper himself, demonstrated his command of exemplarity primarily in his oratory, which was, after all, his main claim to fame in advancing his political career.\textsuperscript{198} We also see Cicero’s command of this Roman discourse in his philosophical and rhetorical works. Besides Cato the Elder, Cicero cited no shortage of famous \textit{exempla} as part of his self-fashioning. In the \textit{De Amicitia} for example, the friendship of Laelius and Scipio is itself an \textit{exemplum} for the friendship Cicero enjoys with Atticus, for whom he wrote the treatise.

Thus, the young Roman, like the student Horace, could expect to be met with \textit{exempla} at home with the \textit{imagines}, in the Forum in oratory, statuary and monuments and in school in written histories. The deeds of his ancestors and other famous Romans were constantly put before him, both as spurs to virtue, as Polybius saw it, and (in some cases) as acts to studiously avoid emulating.\textsuperscript{199} The young Horace, packed off to Rome to have the same education any senator’s son would (\textit{docendum / artis quas doceat quivis eques atque senator / semet prognatos 1.6.76-78}; to be taught by those arts which any knight or senator would teach his own children) would have lived and breathed this discourse of exemplarity, an important element in the formation of good young Romans ready to serve the Republic.

\begin{quote}
\textsuperscript{198} Though on Cicero’s use of exemplarity in the rhetorical works see Dugan (2005) esp. 142-250.
\textsuperscript{199} In the first century B.C., for example, Sulla served as a very uncomfortable example. For Pompey, who fought for Sulla in the 80s, the dictator was a potential model for reforming a state in crisis (Cicero quotes him as saying “\textit{Sulla potuit, ego non potero?” at \textit{Ad Att.} 9.10.2). For Caesar, who fled Sulla’s wrath in his youth, the example of Sulla was not to be imitated (\textit{Ad Atticum} 9.7C: \textit{temptemus hoc modo si possimus omnium voluntates recuperare et diuturna victoria uti, quoniam reliqui crudelitate odium effugere non potuerunt neque victoriam diutius tenere praeter unum L. Sullam, quem imitaturus non sum.})
\end{quote}
And yet, after Philippi Horace ends up rejecting all of this. A possible reason for this rejection is offered in the following satire, where the rhetorical abuse of this discourse twists *exempla* away from character formation and towards arguing for the death of others. Seen this way, Horace’s system of *exempla* in service of moral self-pedagogy is itself a conservative return to what he sees as the basic function of *exempla* in Roman life. To make this case he must show us first how *exempla* have been misused in the Rome of the first century B.C., both as part of the play of *ambitio* and *gloria* in aristocratic competition (1.6) and in the rhetoric of the law courts and senate that called for state sponsored murder of political opponents (1.7).

Here in S. 1.6 Horace tackles *gloria* and how the pursuit of *gloria* in the political system of the Roman Republic rests on the judgment of the voting populace. While in 1.1, the approbation or disdain of the people was dismissed by the negative *exemplum* of the rich miser at Athens (ut quidam memoratur Athenis / sordidus ac dives, populi contemnere voces / sic solitus: ‘populus me sibilat, at mihi plaudo’ 1.64-66; just as a certain rich and miserly man is remembered at Athens, he was thus accustomed to disdain the calls of the people saying “the people hiss at me, but I applaud myself) in 1.6 it is Horace himself who casts aspersions on the judgment of the populace (iudice quo nosti, populo, qui stultus honores / saepe dat indignis et famae servit ineptus 1.6.15-16). We can partially adjust for this shift in terms of the changing criteria for evaluating actions that Horace criticizes in 1.6: in the eyes of the people, evaluating someone amounts to asking “who’s their daddy?” The *populus* can recognize and denounce *avaritia*, but they’re stupefied by *ambitio* and family histories, as Horace shows at 1.6.30, audit continuo ‘quis homo hic est? quo
"patre natus?" (he immediately hears 'who is this man? From what father is he born?').

The crowd’s criterion for awarding honores, according to Horace, is the family history and ancestry of the candidates. The ideology of Roman history is married to that of Roman aristocratic competition, where a family’s past success and resulting fama ensure honores and the potential for more and even greater fama in the rivalry of the nobiles. Horace argues that this is a misuse of exemplarity in two ways. First it ignores the actions and the moral character those actions reveal of a given candidate and replaces them with the luster of his ancestor’s achievements (and moral character). Second, it serves to perpetuate a system of evaluating action and people that goes by the fama of the gens (family) over the virtus of the individual. For a moment, Horace plays the part of the novus homo, criticizing the absurd importance birth held with the electorate over innate virtus just as Cicero and Cato the Elder had in their time. Having got a glimpse of the elder Cato we’ll see him loom over the poem again in Horace’s description of his father’s care.

Horace offers the contrast advocated by the novi homines, where the importance of birth is much reduced to merely being freeborn, while the importance of virtus in all its senses is proportionally increased (1.6.7-11):

> cum referre negas quali sit quisque parente natus, dum ingenuus, persuades hoc tibi vere, ante potestatem Tulli atque ignobile regnum multis saepe viros nullis maioribus ortos et vixisse probos amplis et honoribus auctos;
When you deny that it matters, what kind of parent anyone is born from, so long as he is freeborn, you persuade yourself of this truly, since before the kingship of Tullius and ignoble sovereignty. Often many men born from no ancestors lived honest lives and were adorned with offices.

In making the typical novus homo argument, Horace’s slips in a hint of the most recent novus homo. In potestatem Tulli we see first Servius Tullius, born of a slave and raised in the house of Tarquinius Priscus before becoming king himself, but also the power of Cicero, exercised regally in condemning the Catilinarian conspirators to death and as a result accused of regnum by Clodius, who taunted Cicero in a parody of Cicero’s first Catilinarian oration “quo usque hunc regem feremus; how long are we going to endure this king?”

This particular argument from the history of all of Rome rather than from a particular gens also partakes in the moralizing rhetorical move we often see in Latin writers (popularized by the elder Cato) of contrasting a decadent present with a golden past. Here Horace contrasts the misuse of exempla enslaved to family history instead of virtus with the golden age of Roman life where virtus earned one renown and promotion, not noble lineage.

We might think for a moment too back to the talking penis of 1.2, discussed earlier in chapter 1. Paternity is there too an issue, where the paternity of Fausta (as daughter of Sulla) is an important motivating factor in Villius’ erotic escapades, to the dismissal of other, more important factors that his own penis thinks about. Likewise here, paternity is elevated to the be all end all factor in selecting Roman

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200 Gowers (2012: 223). The quote from Clodius is from Cicero Ad Att. 1.16.10. On Cicero’s rhetorical justifications for killing the conspirators, see the end of chapter 5.
201 Livy’s praefatio is a good example of this topos that is contemporary with Horace.
magistrates, as opposed to their moral and ethical qualities. The typical novus homo argument works here in a political context as well as in a slightly twisted form in the sexual realm as well at 1.2.64ff.

This misuse of exempla is also an error in how one evaluates someone. In S. 1.3.69-72 Horace gives us a glimpse of how one should judge friends based on their faults and virtues:

\begin{quote}
Amicus dulcis, ut aequum est,  
Cum mea compenset vitiis bona, pluribus hisce  
(si modo plura mihi bona sunt) inclinet, amari  
si volet: hac lege in trutina ponetur eadem.
\end{quote}

\textit{A sweet friend, as is equitable, when he weighs my good points against my faults, will incline towards the former which are greater in number (if indeed my good points are greater in number), if he wishes to be loved. By this law his own good points will be set on the same scale.}

The populus too scrutinizes potential political candidates, but rather than weighing their potential faults against their virtues, they rely only on who their ancestors are. This misses the point: they're not really evaluating the candidate himself, but his history. In fact, Horace says, someone who wants to be considered good looking, gets more scrutiny than a political candidate (1.6.30-33):

\begin{quote}
Ut si qui aegrotet quo morbo Barrus, haberi  
Et cupiat formosus, eat quacumque, puellis  
Iniciat curam quarendi singula, quali  
Sit facie, sura, quali pede, dente, capillo
\end{quote}

\textit{Just as if someone should be sick with that same disease Barrus has and desires to be considered beautiful, wherever he goes he incites a care in the girls of seeking out every single detail: what kind of face and calves he has, what kind of feet, teeth and hair...}
While the girls take the time to examine the superficial qualities of Barrus himself, the Roman people only cares about paternity (1.6.34-37):

> Sic qui promittit civis, urbem sibi curae,  
> Imperium fore et Italiam, delubra deorum,  
> Quo patre sit natus, num ignota matre inhonestus,  
> Omnis mortalis curare et quarere cogit.

*Thus one who promises that the citizens and city the empire and Italy as well as the temples of the gods will be a care for himself, compels every mortal to care and seek out from what father he was born from and whether or not he might be disgraced by an unknown mother.*

Here we begin to see the problems with the *populus Romanus* that leads Horace to label them as *stultus* (1.6.14) and *ineptus* (1.6.16) and describe them as gazing stupidly at inscriptions and busts (1.6.17 *qui stupet in titulis et imaginibus*). Notable here too is the comparison between elections and physical beauty and love that Horace draws here between Barrus and other candidates, as he did in 1.2. In both cases, the judgment that focuses only on paternity is deficient, based on past history rather than the person himself (or herself, when it comes to the bedroom). Horace contrasts this omission of moral character with the careful moral scrutiny that Maecenas uses in selecting his friends.¹⁰²

Lest we start to get the idea that Horace will go all the way with the *novus homo* birth vs. *virtus* argument and argue for a political role for himself in triumviral Rome, he steps back from politics by declaring that a political career is against his nature, even if he wasn’t already barred by his father’s status (1.6.20-24):

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¹⁰² We see Horace put this in action in S.1.9. See chapter 6.
censorque moveret
Appius, ingenuo si non essem patre natus:
vel merito, quoniam in propria non pelle quiessem.
sed fulgende trahit constrictos Gloria curru
non minus ignotos generosis.

And the Censor Appius would strike me from the senate rolls, if I were not the son of a free-born father, and with merit, since I would not be resting in my own skin. But glory drags the highborn and the unknown together with her shining chariot.

Yet even in distancing himself from political activity Horace recognizes that political life and the competition for gloria and honores isn’t so much an active choice available to all to accept or refuse, but part of one’s inborn nature (propria pelle). This is emphasized by the subservient position men take in the next lines to Gloria in her (triumphal?) chariot. Ambitio does not know or care for status or high birth (non minus ignotos generosis) but is a universal human vitium, just like the desires for money and sex Horace dealt with in the first two poems, and the problem of anger Horace treats in the third (cf. 1.3.76 denique, quatenus excidi penitus vitium irae; at last, insofar as the vice of anger can’t be cut out completely). As we’ll see in this poem, Horace, like Sallust before him, was not free from ambitio in his youth, driven by his father’s dreams for him.

What is more, in renouncing a political career, Horace promotes a different criterion of judging someone than the populus uses in selecting political candidates. The fama of Horace’s father does not matter to Maecenas, whereas Horace’s virtus does matter. In other words, whereas the populus Romanus votes for candidates more for their familial fama instead of their innate virtus, Horace has advanced to his position in life as Maecenas’ friend precisely because of his virtus, though his
father’s *infamia*, due to his status as a *libertinus*, would have been an insurmountable bar to a political career. In fact, his father’s putative *infamia* (which Horace will complicate later in the poem, since it is his father’s moral pedagogy that has ensured Horace’s success as a friend of Maecenas) serves to highlight Horace’s *virtus* all the more. Horace has enough *ingenium* and *virtus* to overcome the disability his father’s status burdens him with. Nevertheless, Horace has chosen the realm of *amicitia*, by becoming a friend to a great man like Maecenas, rather than engaging in aristocratic competition by trying to become a great man himself in the political sphere.

As Horace has said, the *populus Romanus* devotes its attention to the high-born aristocrat who can boast rich and glorious family histories. He goes on to show us, however, that this isn’t the only way to get attention in the Forum:

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sic qui promittit civis, urbem sibi curae,
imperium fore et Italiam, delubra deorum,
quo patre sit natus, num ignota matre inhonestus,
omnis mortalis curare et quaerere cogit.
'tune, Syri Damae aut Dionysi filius, audes
deicere de saxo civis aut tradere Cadmo?'
'at Novius collega gradu post me sedet uno;
namque est ille, pater quod erat meus.' 
hoc tibi Paulus et Messalla videris? At hic, si plaustra ducenta
concurrant Foro tria funera magna, sonabit
cornua quod vincatque tubas; saltem tenet hoc nos.
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*Thus a citizen who promises that the city will be a care for him, the empire and Italy and the temples of the gods too forces all mortals too care and ask from what father's he's born or whether he's disgraced by an unknown mother. “Do you, the son of a Syrian Dama or Dionysius, dare to throw a citizen from the rock or hand him over to Cadmus?” “But my colleague Novius sits one row behind me; for he is what my father was.” “Do you think that makes you a Paulus or Messalla?” But this guy here, if two hundred wagons and three great funeral processions clashed in the Forum, he'll make enough noise to conquer*
the noise of the horns and trumpets. By this, at least, he holds our attention.

The other way to get attention is just to be a loudmouth or demagogue. That’ll obviate questions of birth and ancestral res gestae by drowning them out any questions of paternity. But this kind of loud display isn’t in Horace’s nature either. As we saw in 1.4, Horace isn’t one for public recitations (vulgo recitare timentis 1.4.23 fearing to recite to the people), nor publicizing his books at all (cum mea nemo scripa legat; since nobody reads my books 1.4.22-23; nulla taberna meos habeat neque pila lilbellos, no shop or pillar carries my poetry books 1.4.71).

Horace’s own quiet nature, which marks his meeting with Maecenas (ut veni coram, singultim paucus locutus; when I came face to face with you, I spoke a few words, haltingly 1.6.56) combined with the freedman status of his father, are enough to keep him out of politics altogether.

As the poem continues, with characteristic irony Horace shifts the language and concepts of Roman aristocratic competition to the sphere of friendship. While his father’s status is prima facie an obstacle to advancement, Horace offers a different lineage, an ethical lineage of friends who have approved and improved his character. Horace’s exempla in this case are his fellow poets Varius and Vergil, who earlier told Maecenas of their new friend Horace (optimus olim / Vergilius, post hunc Varius, dixere quid essem 1.6.54-55 At one point the best man, Vergil, and after him Varius, said what I was). There is a sense of ethical development here from what we saw in S. 1.5, where the candidiores Vergil and Varius are dear friends of Horace, while Maecenas seems a bit more distant. As good friends all around, each helps to
improve the character of others as part of that friendship, as Philodemus, the teacher of Vergil and Varius advised in his own work on friendship. Horace advances enough in his moral self-pedagogy that Vergil endorses Horace based upon his character. As often in the *Sermones*, there is ambivalence here between morality and aesthetics, as we have in the same pair (Vergil and Horace) one poet vouching for another poet’s literary talent as well as one friend vouching for another friend’s moral worth.

The *honos* that the judgment of Vergil, Varius and Maecenas of his *virtus* has achieved for Horace is the friendship of Maecenas rather than political office. Again setting himself off from the *vulgus*, Horace endorses this as real greatness and Maecenas’ judgment over that of the *populus*, precisely because Maecenas evaluates personal worth just as *novi homines* like Cato and Cicero argued for (1.6.62-64):

> magnum hoc ego duco, quod placui tibi, qui turpi secernis honestum non patre praeclaro, sed vita et pectore puro.

*I consider this a great thing because I pleased you, who distinguish the honest from the shameful, not from famous forebears but from their lived experience and pure heart.*

Further, in contrast to the prospective office holder, who promises to care for the city, the Empire and Italy (*urbem sibi curae / imperium fore et Italiam, delubra deorum* 1.6.34045) only to hear questions of his ancestry, Horace offers a *curriculum vitae* of moral rectitude (1.6.65-70):

> atqui si vitii mediocribus ac mea paucis mendosa est natura, alioqui recta, velut si egregio inspersos reprendas corpore naevos, si neque avaritiam neque sordes nec mala lustra.
obiciet vere quisquam mihi, purus et insons, 
ut me collaudem, si et vivo carus amicus,

*And if my nature, though marred by a few moderate vices, is otherwise sound, just as if you’d criticize moles here and there on an outstanding body, if no one can truly throw the charge at me of avarice, nor meanness, nor going to whorehouses, so that I may praise myself as pure and innocent, if I live dear to my friends...*

Yet while the criteria that allow advancement in Roman political life and the circle of Maecenas’ friends differ, both *cursus* lead to increased *invidia* (1.6.45-48):

*Nunc ad me redeo libertinò patre natum*  
*Quem rodunt omnes libertinò patre natum*  
*nunc, quia sim tibi, Maecenas, convictor, at olim,*  
*quod mihi pareret legio Romana tribuno.*

*Now to return to me, born of a freedman father, whom all carp at because I’m born from a freedman father, now because I’m your friend, but once because a Roman legion obeyed me as tribune.*

*Omnes,* a typical satirical over-exaggeration like the *nemo* that starts the last poem addressed to Maecenas (S. 1.1), cannot be friends of Horace—they resemble the figure of 1.4.81 who criticizes his friend behind his back, both use *rodere* (*absentem qui rodit amicum* 1.4.81). Those kinds of people Horace keeps far off (*hic niger est, hunc tu, Romane, caveto* 1.4.85), just as Maecenas keeps *ambitio* far off (*prava / ambitione procul* 1.6.51-52).

In the opening lines of S. 1.6, Horace further explores his idea of *amicitia* in both theory and practice by comparing it to the striving and competition of a Roman political career. This comparison serves to highlight the value of Horatian friendship and its *libertas* from the cares and burdens of a political career (to which we shall return at the end of this chapter and the end of the poem), while also
exploring why Horace, despite his upbringing, rejected this kind of life. Let us now turn our attention to Horace’s upbringing and the reappearance of his father.

*Horace's Father and the snobbery of Maecenas*

After this mission statement on friendship, there is a typical Horatian twist. Though Maecenas evaluated Horace on his own innate *virtus*, Horace tells us that who his father was still mattered after all, since it was the careful attentions of his father that formed his character and protected it when he was young (1.6.71-87):

```latex
Causa fuit pater his, qui macro pauper agello
noluit in Flavi ludum me mittere, magni
quo pueri magnis e centurionibus orti
laevo suspensi loculos tabulamque lacerto
ibant octonos referentes idibus aeris,
sed puerum est ausus Romam portare docendum
artis quas doceat quivis eques atque senator
semet prognatos. vestem servosque sequentis,
in magno ut populo, siqui vidisset, avita
ex re praeberei sumptus mihi crederet illos.
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*The cause of this is my father, who, though a poor man with a meager farm, did not wish to send me to Flavius' school, where the big boys born from big bad centurions used to go, with their packs and wax tablets slung over their left arm, bearing their eight cent fee on the Ides. Instead he dared to carry off his son to Rome to be taught those things which any knight or senator teaches his offspring. If anyone had seen my outfit and the slaves following after me (like you do in the big city), they'd believe these things were provided for me from a great ancestral estate.*

Just as his father was important for his success as a *Maecenatis amicus*, his father also provided him the education of any elite Roman youth. Horace *père* also functions in this passage as a symbol of Horatian *sermo* and its creation and
subversion of expectations as well as its capacity to re-describe and prompt re-reading. His riches and efforts give Horace the appearance of nobility (ex re praeberti sumptus mihi crederet illos 1.6.80), despite his lowly origins. The father himself goes about as a slave, a pedagogus, despite his freedman status. He clearly has ambitious dreams for his son, despite his protestations that any career Horace chose would be fine. Finally, Horace’s father’s emulation of Roman aristocracy and his vicarious ambitio in the form of his son, place the elder Horace between the poet Horace’s withdrawal from politics and Maecenas’ vague place within Roman political life. He is also the explanation for Horace’s political career in that his father’s big plans led Horace to Philippi.

There is another way in which Horace’s father bestrides both an Epicurean style withdrawal from politics and the political mindset of the Roman nobilis. Horace goes on to describe his father’s role as his custos (1.6.81-84):

ipse mihi custos incorruptissimus omnis
circum doctores aderat. quid multa? pudicum,
qui primus virtutis honos, servavit ab omni
non solum facto, verum opprobrio quoque turpi

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203 In contrast, my father forbade me from becoming a policeman like him. Cop, priest and fire fighter (colloquially the classic Irish trio of occupations) were the three taboo careers in my family.

204 Contrast this with Schlegel (2005: 38-58) who argues that Horace uses his father as a way to displace the influence of Lucilius in 1.4 and Maecenas in 1.6 in making Horace the poet and friend that he presents himself as. While I agree that Horace’s father provides his with an inspiration for moral-self pedagogy and satire that can be read to displace the influence of Lucilius, I find her parallel argument for a displacement of Maecenas unconvincing. It rests on reading the timing of Horace’s entry into Maecenas’ circle (1.6.61-62 nono post mense iubesque / esse in amicorum numero), as mirroring pregnancy rather than any other number of reasons, such as diplomatic missions like the trip to Brundisium or political responsibilities (or time for Horace’s moral development). Further, as I argue in the chapter, Horace’s father serves as a figure whose moral pedagogy prepares Horace to be a good friend to Maecenas. In other words, in 1.6, Horace’s father is a necessary prerequisite for Horace’s friendship with Maecenas, rather than a displacement of Maecenas’ influence.
My father himself, a most incorruptible guardian, would go around to all my teachers. What more to say? He kept me uncorrupted, which is the first honor of virtus, not only from every shameful deed, but even from shameful reproach as well.

In his close attention and prominent role in Horace’s education, Horace père resembles the novus homo par excellence, Cato the Elder. Some extracts from the 20th chapter of Plutarch’s life of Cato Maior will illustrate the connections. Cato took it a step further than Horace’s father and handled every aspect of his son’s education himself, not even trusting a slave to teach him as many other Romans did (Plutarch, Cato Maior 20.3-5):

επει δ’ ἠξίως συνιέναι, παραλαβὼν αὐτὸς ἑδίδασκε γράμματα. καίτοι χαρέντα δοῦλον εἶχε γραμματιστήν ὅνομα Χίλωνα, πολλοὺς διδάσκοντα παιδας· οὐκ ἠξίου δὲ τοῦ υἱόν, ὡς φησιν αὐτὸς, ὑπὸ δοῦλου κακὸς ἀκουεῖν ἢ τοῦ ὄντος ἀνατείνεσθαι μανθάνοντα βράδιον, οὐδὲ γε μαθήματος τηλικούτου [τῶ] δοῦλον χάριν ὄφελειν, ἀλλ’ αὐτὸς μὲν ἦν γραμματιστής, αὐτὸς δὲ νομοδιδάκτης, αὐτὸς δὲ γυμναστής, οὐ μόνον ἀκοντίζειν οὐδ’ ὀπλομαχεῖν οὐδ’ ἵππευειν διδάσκον τοῦ υἱόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ τῇ χειρὶ πῦξ παίειν καὶ καῦμα καὶ ψιχὸς ἀνέχεσθαι καὶ τὰ δυνόδη καὶ τραχύνοντα τοῦ ποταμοῦ διανηχόμενον ἀποβιάζεσθαι. καὶ τὰς ἱστορίας δὲ συγγράψαι φησιν αὐτὸς ἱδία χειρὶ καὶ μεγάλους γράμμασιν, ὅπως οὐκοθεν υπάρχοι τῷ παιδὶ πρὸς ἐμπειρίαν τῶν παλαιῶν καὶ πατρίων ὄφελεσθαι

As soon as the boy showed signs of understanding, his father took him under his own charge and taught him to read, although he had an accomplished slave, Chilo by name, who was a school-teacher, and taught many boys. Still, Cato thought it not right, as he tells us himself, that his son should be scolded by a slave, or have his ears tweaked when he was slow to learn, still less that he should be indebted to his slave for such a priceless thing as education. He was therefore himself not only the boys’ reading-teacher, but his tutor in law, and his athletic trainer, and he taught his son not merely to hurl the javelin and fight in armour and ride the horse, but also to box, to endure heat

205 Though Plutarch is writing much later and in Greek, I presume that he is relying upon Roman sources, not the least of which would be Cato’s own writings.
and cold, and to swim lustily through the eddies and billows of the Tiber. His History of Rome, as he tells us himself, he wrote out with his own hand and in large characters, that his son might have in his own home an aid to acquaintance with his country's ancient traditions.  

Horace himself imitates Cato in using his writings, the Liber Sermonum as a didactic tool, just as Cato’s Origines was meant to be for his son. In this case the intended audience is first Horace’s circle of friends, including Vergil, Varius and Maecenas, as Horace lists at the end of S. 1.10. Beyond this audience is the modern audience of readers, who can continue to apply the lessons of Horatian moral self-pedagogy despite not reading the poems in their original Roman context.

What is more, just as the moral education Horace receives from his father is fitted to his own experience, by citing exempla from the daily life experienced by father and son, Horace’s moral self-pedagogy is meant to be adjusted to the reader’s lived experience, from which she will draw exempla for her own moral development. This pedagogical adaptability is another technique of Cato’s, which he used in response to his son’s own physical, rather than ethical, limitations (Plutarch Cato Maior 20.6):

οὔτω δὲ καλὸν ἔργον εἰς ἀρετὴν τῷ Κάτωνι πλάττοντι καὶ δημιουργοῦντι τὸν υἱὸν, ἐπεὶ τὰ τῆς προθυμίας ἢν ἀμέμπτα καὶ δὲ εὐφράταν ὑπῆκουν ἡ ψυχή, τὸ δὲ σῶμα μαλακώτερον ἠφαίνετο τοῦ πονεῖν, ἐπανῆκεν αὐτῷ τὸ σύντονον ἄγαν καὶ κεκολασμένον τῆς διαίτης.

So Cato wrought at the fair task of moulding and fashioning his son to virtue, finding his zeal blameless, and his spirit answering to his good natural parts. But since his body was rather too delicate to endure

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206 Translation from Perrin (1914: 361-363).
207 S. 1.10.81ff.
much hardship, he relaxed somewhat in his favour the excessive rigidity and austerity of his own mode of life.208

Cato’s son went on to have a glorious military career under Aemilius Paulus in the war against Perseus. The younger Cato and Horace both found themselves in battle in Macedonia, though the result was much better for Cato than the poet. While Cato’s son achieved the career his father wanted, unlike Horace, the poet can still say of his father, as Plutarch did of Cato (Cato Maior 20.8):

ή μὲν οὖν περὶ τὸν υἱὸν ἐπιμέλεια τοῦ Κάτωνος ἄξιον ἔσχε τέλος.

Thus Cato’s careful attention to the education of his son bore worthy fruit.209

In Horace’s case, the fruit is his friendship with Maecenas. Rather than just a typical relationship of poet and patron, Horace portrays his friendship with Maecenas as a more egalitarian one that is based upon honesty and frankness. Horace is a liber amicus who doesn’t let the difference in rank between himself and his patron influence how he treats and interacts with his friend.210

208 Translation from Perrin (1914: 363-365).
209 Translation from Perrin (1914: 365).
210 Habinek (1990) makes the interesting argument based upon Cicero’s De Amicitia and the “good friend” passage from Ennius’ Annales, as well as some letters of Cicero, that Roman grandees would value precisely this kind of friendship because the difference in rank would allow greater libertas in making criticism. While an attractive argument, I do not think Habinek musters enough evidence for this phenomenon in the De Amicitia or as a wide spread cultural dynamic in the Roman Republic, though I believe an argument could be made for the specific case of Horace and Maecenas.
Horace the liber amicus: Maecenas as addressee

In this section I want to attempt a kind of reading that many previous readers of *Sermones* I have found too shocking to consider: that Maecenas is the primary addressee of the poems and that Horace’s satiric voice, warts and all, is meant to be a *liber amicus* to Maecenas (among others) and aid in his moral development. In fact, as I contend in the remainder of this chapter, it is Horace’s role as a *liber amicus* that stands out as the key feature of his relationship to Maecenas. Instead of a sycophantic hanger-on, such as the other dinner guests at Nasidienus’ part in S. 2.8, Horace offers a friendship that transcends any differences in status and can claim to help improve Maecenas’ life, just as Horace is a friend to himself. Our concern first will be just how Horace’s father’s status and his role as Horace’s *custos* relates to his friendship with Maecenas.

Many readers of the *Sermones* are reluctant to believe that Maecenas is the main addressee of any of the poems, especially the diatribes, or that Maecenas is addressed as the kind of person who would need any moral correction. It seems unthinkable to such readers, that Horace would address his patron in such a way.

Kirk Freudenburg sums up the problem thus, in discussing S. 1.1:

> Scholars have often puzzled over the poet’s one-word dedication to his patron as a narratological conundrum, wondering just how we are to think of Maecenas as the poem’s addressee and principal audience when so much of what follows brings to mind the deictic trappings of diatribe, with its fictional hearers and interlocutors. How can the two settings work together? Are we to imagine that the speaker rants for Maecenas alone
(hard to imagine), or perhaps among a select group of friends, with Maecenas front and center?211

While scholars recognize that a rich man like Maecenas is a plausible target of a poem on *avaritia*, there has been a general reluctance to follow this line of thought to its logical conclusion that he is in fact the addressee the entire way through S. 1.1, if not the entire book. It is, as Gowers notes, “a touchy subject for a profiteer of the proscriptions, rich as Lydian Croesus, as are adultery and friendship.”212 Barbara Gold has offered one solution to the problem by positing multiple audience levels in the *Sermones* and *Odes*: the primary addressee (Maecenas), the internal audience (the straw men in the diatribes) the authorial audience (Horace’s circle of poetic friends like Vergil and Varius and any other first century B.C. readers) and the actual audience (modern readers). Gold finds interpretive richness in the intersections and interactions of these four levels.213 I would add that these levels are constantly intersecting—Maecenas can be both the primary addressee and a member of the authorial audience. Further, any reader is in danger of being included as part of the internal audience, as Horace warns us at S.1.1.69-70: *quid rides? Mutato nomine de te / fabula narratur*: why are you laughing? If the name is changed the joke’s on you!214

212 Gowers (2012: 60).
214 Cf. Freudenburg (2001: 15) on this line, “do we run for cover by reminding ourselves that the speaker is a zealot and a know-it-all, or, even easier, that he has someone else in mind? Maybe he means his addressee, Maecenas, or the ictive audience inside the poem. Or how about the poem’s first-century-BCE “intended” readers? Could he possibly really mean me?” As the quote makes clear,
There may be a distinction between the poet’s address to Maecenas and its implicit address to its non-Maecenas reading audience (just as there is a distinction in didactic poetry between the addressee, like Hesiod’s Perses or Lucretius’ Memmius, and the actual reader), since there will always be more potential readers of the *Liber Sermonum* than just Maecenas. But it may be more productive to think how these potential audience positions overlap rather than distinguish x number of potential audiences. Perhaps, then, Gold’s multiple audience levels are overthinking the problem. For one, it is not clear in the poems that the responses of interlocutors in the diatribes are *necessarily* separate from Maecenas himself. In other words, to distinguish Maecenas himself from whoever it is that says something like *quid mi igitur suades? Ut vivam Naevius aut sic / ut Nomentanus* (1.1.101-102: so what are you persuading me to do? That I should live like Naevius or like Nomentanus) is a function of the reader’s reception, not something inherent in the poem’s Latin. In short, when Horace says *quid rides? Mutato nomine de te / fabula narratur* it is as much a warning to Maecenas, who may have imagined himself off the hook after the initial dedicatory line, as much as it is for us, the reading audience. It forces both Maecenas and us to ask the question Horace asks of himself at the end of 1.4: *numquid ego illi imprudens olim faciam simile* (1.4.136-7: I wouldn’t thoughtlessly at some point do something like *that* would I?). Thus, Horatian self-pedagogy quietly starts its work right as the *libellus* begins.

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there is so much possible movement between Gold’s audience levels that I am not sure it has much value as a heuristic tool.
Again, it is not too much of a leap to think of Maecenas as more implicated in the criticisms of the Sermones than scholars have usually allowed. Yes, Maecenas, like Vergil, is described as optimus (1.5.31), but as Horace says earlier in 1.3.68-9, nobody is born without faults, the best of us is that one who is oppressed by the fewest (nam vitis nemo sine nascitur: optimus ille est / qui minimis urgetur). Nobody in the Sermones is perfect, whether Horace, Maecenas, Vergil or the reader himself. What happens, then, if we take Maecenas seriously as someone who has faults that Horace, via the Sermones (thought of as both the text itself and as the conversations with Maecenas it claims to imitate)? What is it that Horace would seek to correct? In the diatribes it would be the problems of avaritia and adultery (Maecenas was well known to posterity as a voluptuary).\footnote{E.g. Juvenal 1.66 et multum referens de Maecenate supino.} In S. 1.6, I contend, it is Maecenas’ subtle elitism that recognizes Horace as a worthy friend, yet would disbar Horace pére because of his status as a libertinus, though he otherwise possesses the same qualities as his son.\footnote{Harrison (1965).}

Horace begins the poem by highlighting Maecenas’ own blue blood (1.6.1ff):

Non quia, Maecenas, Lydorum quidquid Etruscos incoluit finis, nemo generosior est te, nec quod avus tibi maternus fuit atque paternus olim qui magnis legionibus imperitarent, ut plerique solent, naso suspendis adunco ignotos, ut me libertino patre natum.

\textit{Not because, Maecenas, no one of whatever Lydians dwell in Etruscan territory is higher born than you, nor because your maternal and paternal grandfathers once commanded great legions do you, as many are}
accustomed to do, hold up your nose at the lowly born, 
like me who was born from a freedman father.

Maecenas is famously described in C 1.1. as descended from kings (Maecenas atavis edite regibus C. 1.1.1). In 1.6, Maecenas is hailed as the most high-born of the Etruscans (nemo generosior est te 1.6.2), whose ancestors commanded great armies. For his part, Horace commanded one legion (1.6.48), a satiric and deflating comparison with someone in Maecenas’ family history.217

Recently Emily Gowers has suggested that part of these opening lines might be a criticism of Maecenas for getting “sucked into the contemporary fashion for genealogy, like those members of the Roman elite who traced their families back to Aeneas’ Trojan companions.”218 She goes on to suggest that the idea of L.A. Mackay might be worthy of renewed attention: that the scriba Maecenas in Sallust Hist. fr. III 83 M, who was present at the dinner party where Sertorius met his end might be related to Maecenas, perhaps even his father.219 If this is true, this is an added barb to the criticism in 1.6, where Horace could justifiably say, like the figure at line 41 “see? I am now what your father was before me!” (cf. 1.6.41: namque est ille, pater quod erat meus: for that man is what my father was).220

Nevertheless, the heart of the critique Horace supplies in this poem is not against ambitio but rather with the obsession with status that fuels ambitio. Even if Maecenas doesn’t turn up his nose at the sons of freedmen like Horace, he still has

217 S. 1.6.3-4 nec quod avus tibi maternus fuit atque paternus / olim qui magnis legionibus imperitarent.
219 MacKay (1942).
one standard: his friends must be freeborn (1.6.7-8: referre negas quali sit quisque parente / natus, dum ingenuus; you deny that it matters from what kind of parent someone was born, as long as he’s freeborn). It is this very standard that Horace criticizes and seeks to correct in Maecenas. The only difference between Horace and his father is one of status; if Horace is esteemed by Maecenas for the very qualities his father possessed and instilled in Horace, why should his father’s status as a former slave debar Horace pére from being a friend to Maecenas, were he still alive? 

It is Horace’s skill in conversation, his *sermo* and the moral development found in *sermo* that makes him such a good friend to Maecenas and others. Since the *Sermones* have a broadly ethical end, it is this ethical conversation (and its poetic mimesis) that attracts Maecenas to Horace as both friend and poet. For an early glimpse of how their friendship works, let us return to S. 1.3 where Maecenas is forgiving of Horace when the poet barges in on his great friend reading (1.3.63-66):

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simplicior quis et est, qualem me saepe libenter obtulerim tibi, Maecenas, ut forte legentem aut tacitum inpellat quovis sermone: 'molestus, communi sensu plane caret' inquimus.
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*Or someone is rather simple, as I’ve often freely shown myself to you, Maecenas, when I perhaps interrupt you reading quietly with some conversation or another. “He’s troublesome and clearly lacks any social grace!” we say.*

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221 On the various questions surrounding the status of Horace’s father see the important article of Williams (1995). Williams argues, rightly I believe, that Horace’s father may have been a slave for a brief period as a result of the Social Wars and Horace has exaggerated this for poetic purposes.
In the context of S. 1.3’s plea for tolerance this makes Maecenas an exemplum of the very quality Horace is writing about. This scene also acts as a sort of in nuce representation of the persona of the Sermones and his relation to Maecenas because it is often with sermo that Horace bothers Maecenas quietly reading. The topics can be varied (quovis), just as the topics of the different poems of the Liber Sermonum are varied. Horace also here exploits the tension between a putative audience (whether a modern audience reading the libellus or Maecenas himself) reading a book silently and the orality of which the Sermones claim to be a mimesis. We could even go so far as to imagine that such a moment of interruption was the (fictive) “performative context” of S. 1.3. In other words, there is a rich ambivalence in the Horatian use of sermo where here it can mean both some conversation or some rough draft of one of the poems that makes up the Liber Sermonum.

Though Horace presents himself as a chatterbox interrupting a quietly reading Maecenas, saepe libenter tells us that Horatian sermo isn’t always molestus or troublesome for Maecenas—why would Horace keep striking up conversations with Maecenas if his friend and patron had already expressed disdain and distaste for chats with his Venusian friend? The vitium of Horace this passage describes is rather his sense of timing, the social grace (communi sensu) that dictates when it is appropriate to talk with Maecenas and when he’s too busy. That such a vitium can be corrected is seen in the very next poem where Horace criticizes poets who just go off and read their poetry wherever and whenever (1.4.76-78):

222 On silent reading in antiquity, a vexed debate, see Gavrilov (1997), Burnyest (1997) and Johnson (2000) with further bibliography.
This delights the stupid, who don’t consider whether they do this with any sense or whether they should do it at a different time.

Sine sensu recalls sensu caret from 1.3.66. What we have here is a development in Horace’s thinking from the casual interrupter of 1.3 to the more discerning poet and friend of 1.4. This link depends upon the ambivalence in Horace’s Sermones of sermo meaning conversation (cf. quovis sermo 1.3.65) and sermo as poetry. Thanks to Maecenas’ tolerance and his ethical influence, Horace has acquired more tact, a trait he tries to pass on as part of S. 1.4.

When comparing these passages from S. 1.3 and 1.6 we see that Horace and Maecenas possess a mutually beneficial ethical friendship, where Maecenas (as well as Vergil and Varius) have worked to correct some of Horace’s minor faults (mediocria vitia). In return Horace offers the same to Maecenas, seeking first to correct his friend’s snobbish attitude as well as his ambiguous political position (which we will deal with in the following section). The reticence Horace displays about performing his poetry/conversation throughout 1.4 can be read as an influence of the taciturnity of Maecenas (cf. tacitum 1.3.65). This reticence is evident at the first meeting of the two (1.6.56-64):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ut veni coram, singultim pauc\textsuperscript{a} locutus} - \\
\text{infans namque pudor prohibebat plura profari} - \\
\text{non ego me claro natum patre, non ego circum} \\
\text{me Satureiano vectari rura caballo,} \\
\text{sed quod eram narro. respondes, ut tuus est mos, pauc\textsuperscript{a}; abeo, et revocas nono post mense iubesque} \\
\text{esse in amicorum numero. magnum hoc ego duco,}
\end{align*}
\]
quod placui tibi, qui turpi secernis honestum
non patre praecarlo, sed vita et pectore puro.

When I came face to face with you, I spoke a few words haltingly—for an infant’s same restricted me from saying more—that I wasn’t born from a famous father, nor did I ride around my estate on a Tarentine nag, but I told you what I was. You responded, just as is your custom, with a few words. I went away and you called me back after nine months and bid me to be in the number of your friends. I consider this a great thing because I pleased you, who discern the honest from the base not because of a famous father but from a pure life and heart.

Prima facie the laconic nature of both Horace’s and Maecenas’ conversation is something that links them at first. We have already seen, however, that Horace’s halting speech here is not so much an innate quality but due to his nervousness at meeting the great man, emphasized by the “exaggerated alliteration [which] suggests a diffident stammer” that is “almost a reversion to the p-sounds of baby talk.”

There is more to unpack in this passage. Horace gives us a concrete sense of development under Maecenas’ influence, where he starts as an infans and after nine months becomes a full-fledged friend of Maecenas. This metaphor puts the development in physical terms, while the actual development of Horace has been social and ethical, as we saw from the earlier comparison of 1.3 and 1.4. Maecenas, who apparently is a great judge of character (cf. 1.6.63 qui turpi secernis honestum) is able to judge Horace both from his honest appraisal of his own life, the

224 Cf. Henderson’s (1999: 184) idea of a “gestation period”, where Vergil acts as a “midwife.” Yet I read this as only a metaphor, not grounds to equate a parental role of Maecenas with Horace pére like Schlegel (2005: 38-58).
recommendation of Vergil and Varius and the face to face meeting he has with the poet. That Horace has lived well enough to please Maecenas is his great achievement (magnum hoc ego duco / quod placui tibi 1.6.63-64) and it is due to his moral (self)-pedagogy. Maecenas, as his friend, can further contribute to this project (cf. 1.4.132 liber amicus), while Horace in turn can be a liber amicus to Maecenas himself.

It is in Horace's appraisal of Maecenas as a judge of character (1.6.63-64 qui turpis secernis honestum / non patre praeclaro, sed vita et pectore puro) that becomes a wedge that Horace uses to drive open an inconsistency in Maecenas' behavior which gives him an opportunity to be that liber amicus whose sermo can serve an ethical goal. Earlier in 1.6, Horace remarked that Maecenas' one main qualification for his friends was that they were freeborn, while here it is a pure life and heart (vita et pectore puro 1.6.64). The rank of one's father doesn't matter at all (non patre praeclaro). This leaves the reader (and Maecenas) with an implicit question—if at the beginning of the poem Maecenas' requirement of being free-born would disbar Horace's father from being a friend to the Etruscan magnate, wouldn't the pure heart and life of Horace's father overcome that obstacle?

After all, as Horace goes on to tell us, his moral excellence (if not moral perfection) secured his friendship with Maecenas. Shouldn't the same be true of Horace père? This is, I believe, the implicit argument Horace makes by attributing this moral excellence to his father (causa fuit pater his 1.6.71: my father was the

225 Cf. 1.6.65-66 si vitii mediocribus ac mea paucis mendosa est natura, alioquin.
cause of this). The moral pedagogy of his father inspired the moral self-pedagogy Horace presented in 1.4, where that project is described in a way to inspire emulation by the reader for their own moral improvement. Here his father’s activity as a moral custos ensures Maecenas’ friendship while also giving Horace a model to be a liber amicus to Maecenas. As Horace’s father was a friend to him, so Horace is a friend to himself and also a friend to Maecenas, a chain of imitation that can go on ad infinitum from friend to friend, reader to reader. His friendship with Maecenas, however, is a two-way street: just as Maecenas can work on Horace’s mediocria vitia, Horace himself can work on those of Maecenas.

In order to correct Maecenas’ classist attitude, Horace argues that his father would have been and could have been a good friend to Maecenas too, if only Maecenas would get over his elitism. This is an idea suggested by E.L. Harrison in 1965, but little referenced in modern scholarship. In resorting to the tried and true novus homo argument that one’s inner character mattered much more than their family lineage, Horace elegantly treats personal amicitia in political terms in arguing for a pursuit of amicitia over ambitio. The benefits of this life form the poem’s conclusion.

After providing us with another loving account of his father Horace re-emphasizes his devotion to his father and contentment with the life his father’s sacrifices and lessons have provided him (1.6.89-97):

   nil me paeniteat sanum patris huius, eoque
   non, ut magna dolo factum negat esse suo pars,

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226 Harrison (1965).
When I’m in my right mind, having this kind of father is no regret for me, nor would I thus defend myself in the same way as many do, who deny that its their own fault that they don’t have freeborn and famous parents. My words and thoughts are a long way off from theirs. For if nature bade us to travel back over the past from a certain year and to chose other parents as suited one’s own pride, content with my own, and I wouldn’t choose for myself those distinguished by fasces and magisterial seats.

We have seen something like this situation before, of course (1.1.15-18):

Si quis deus ‘en ego’ dicat
‘iam faciam quod vultis: eris tu, qui modo miles,
Mercator; tu, consultus modo, rusticus: hinc vos,
Vos hinc mutatis discedite partibus.

If some god should say “hey, here I am, now I’ll make you what you want; you who are now a soldier will be a merchant, you now a lawyer will be a country squire—you here, you there, now go forth with your occupations changed!

The two situations start from the same assumptions—that some divinity will provide those who are dissatisfied with their lot in life with a choice to change their situation. In S. 1.1 the motives of those to whom the god offers this choice are revealed to be tainted by avaritia, a desire for riches. It is a similar situation with the opportunity in S. 1.6, since changing one’s parents to nobles and thus engaging in the traditional exercises of Roman exemplarity is a result of a desire for gloria that leads to ambitio. Whereas the refusal to accept Jupiter’s offer in S. 1.1 is seen as a form of madness, since the men are choosing to continue in their unhappiness,
Horace’s refusal is presented as a positive in 1.6, since his happiness is predicated on continuing his comfortable, if politically obscure existence, as an *eques*. His father’s status as a *libertinus* is a shield against the demands of a political life since it ensures Horace’s *libertas* (freedom from) the *negotium* and *onus* of public life.

What are we to make of this call-back? Horace has certainly gone through more self-reflection than the dissatisfied men Jupiter approaches in the first diatribe. Two very different ethical situations underlay the two refusals. For those discontented with their lot because of *avaritia* it is madness to refuse, and that madness is rooted in *avaritia*. For Horace it would be madness to accept, a madness rooted in *cupido gloriae* and *ambitio*. Further, as the series of exempla that open 1.1. shows, there is not even much of a change desired: the alternative careers each man imagines contain the same things that bother them in their current jobs. There is, however, a key difference for Horace: the burdens of living a public life as a Roman politician, were he to follow the career the education in his youth prepared him for.

Horace lists these inconveniences at 1.6.100-111

nam mihi continuo maior quaerenda foret res
atque salutandi plures, ducendus et unus
et comes alter, uti ne solus rusve peregre<ve>
exirem, plures calones atque caballi
pascendi, ducenda petorrita. nunc mihi curto
ire licet mulo vel si libet usque Tarentum,
mantica cui lumbos onere ulceret atque eques armos.
Obiecet nemo sordis mihi quas tibi, Tilli,
cum Tiburte via praetorem quinque secuntur
te pueri, lasanum portantes oenophorumque.
hoc ego commodius quam tu, praecclare senator,
milibus atque aliis vivo.
Indeed, immediately I’d have to seek out more resources, and make more morning salutations, one or two companions would have to accompany me so that I don’t go to the country or abroad by myself; I’d have to feed more grooms and nags and have wagons trailing after me. Now I can go wherever I’d like on a gelded mule, even to Tarentum. The mule’s hindquarters would be sore from the load and the front legs from the rider. Nobody can charge me with meanness as they do with you, Tillius, when even though you’re a praetor, five slaves follow you on the Tiburtine road carrying your chamber pot and your wine carrier. Because of this I live more comfortably than you, famous senator, and in many other ways too.

Horace figures this kind of life as excess: one doesn’t really need all of this for life and living but it is the sine qua non for living a public life and commanding the attention of the public (think back to the loud mouth of 1.6.42ff, who can drown out great processions and funerals). In comparison, Horace’s life as an eques poet, possessing a sinecure as a scriba, offers the proper modus in rebus. He still helps the res publica as part of the staff of apparitores, but is freed from any other public ambition beyond that.\footnote{Not that apparitores were free from ambition of climbing up in their own class. See Gowers (2009b) and Nichols (2009).}

We end the poem and the chapter with Horace’s description of his typical day in the city (1.6.111-114):

\begin{quote}
\begin{verse}
quacumque libido est, 
incedo solus, percontor quanti holus ac far, 
fallacem circum vespertinumque pererro 
saepe forum, adsisto divinis, \\
Wherever I want to go, I walk there alone. I enquire how much the vegetables and meal cost; I wander around the cheating Circus and, at evening time, often the Forum; I stand by the fortune tellers
\end{verse}
\end{quote}
In *quacumque libido est*, Horace’s freedom to go where he wants implicitly contrasts with the *officium* of the Roman politician. In going alone, Horace forgoes the entourage a magistrate would take with him. The intensive inquiries (with the force of the prefix *per-* in *percontor*) about vegetables and grain are a satiric refraction of the importance of the food supply to those in charge in the city of Rome. Sextus Pompey’s activity in the seas off of Italy often threatened the grain supply by interdicting shipments from Sicily. The price of the grain (*quanti holus ac far*) would fluctuate depending on Pompey’s activities. Later, Horace walks around the Forum not during the day, but after everyone’s gone home. But like any magistrate, he takes his time to pay attention to religion, except for Horace its not augury or *haruspices*, but fortune-tellers.

When Horace returns home it is to an Epicurean simplicity—what he has is *satis* (1.6.114-118):

```latex
inde domum me
ad porri et ciceris refero laganique catinum;
cena ministratur pueris tribus et lapis albus
pocula cum cyatho duo sustinet, adstat echinus
vilis, cum patera guttus, Campana supellex.
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*Then I betake myself back home to a dish of leek and pea minestrone. The meal is prepared and served by three slave boys and a white stone holds up two cups and a ladle and next to them is a cheap salt-cellar and an oil flask and its saucer of Campanian ware.*

Horace isn’t so impoverished to not have his own slaves at home. The important part of this image, however, isn’t the simple meal, but the image of the two cups on the table. Horace has a place always set for a friend—Maecenas. What I suggest we
have here is a satiric form of the kind of poetic invitation we see in C. 1.20 (1.20.1-8):

Vile potabis modicis Sabinum
cantharis, Graeca quod ego ipse testa
conditum levi, datus in theatro
cum tibi plausus,

clare Maecenas eques, ut paterni
fluminis ripae simul et iocosa
redderet laudes tibi Vaticani
montis imago.

_You will drink common Sabine wine in modest cups, wine which I sealed up and set down in a Greek jar myself, when you, Maecenas famous eques, received applause in the theatre, thus the banks of your paternal river and the joyous echo of the Vatican hill returns your praise._

Again we have a contrast between a role in public life (_datus in theatro / cum tibi plausus_) and Horace’s modest but enjoyable lifestyle, his Sabine wine metonymy for the Sabine farm Maecenas granted him. _Clare_ Maecenas and his applause and praise (_laudes_) contrast with _vile Sabinum_ and _modicis cantharis_ just as Horace’s twilight ambling in the Forum contrasts with the diurnal _officia_ of a praetor. Unlike Maecenas, who played ball in S. 1.5 while Horace retired with Vergil, Horace avoids sport in the Campus (_fugio campum lusumque trigonem_ 1.6.126).

Horace can also sleep in; he doesn’t have to wake up early the next day and go to the statue of Marsyas in the Forum—a statue right by the praetor’s tribunal. Instead, Horace can wake up around 10 A.M. and then walk a bit or read and write quietly—the quiet writing of satire echoing Horace’s quiet daily satire in 1.4.137ff, _haec ego mecum compressis agito labris)._ What is more, the threat of rising early in
the morning, and the Marsyas’ statues location in the Forum—again, by a tribunal where the *praetor* would hear *litis*, such as in S. 1.7—bring to mind once again the *mempsimoria exempla* of 1.1, in this case the lawyer who gets roused by a client at the crack of dawn.

Horace concludes by denouncing *ambitio* and restating his satisfaction with his own father and *maiores*(1.6.128ff):

> haec est 
> vita solutorum misera 
> ambitione gravique; 
> his me consolor 
> victurum suavius ac si 
> quaestor avus pater atque 
> meus patruusque fiisset.

>This is a life free from wretched and burdensome ambition, with these things I console myself that I’m going to live more pleasantly than if my grandfather, father and uncle had all been quaestors.

In the end, Horace’ *libertinus* father, even though he restricts Horace’s political career, in fact frees Horace from all the burdens such a career could bring. The civic *libertas* of his father has become Horace’s *libertas* from politics. By removing himself from political life after his disastrous experience at Philippi, Horace also frees himself from ambition. In this he is like Sallust, who denounced the ambition that even threatened to corrupt him in his own youthful political career (*inter tanta vitia imbecilla aetas ambitione corrupta tenebatur* B.C. 3), the same ambition that kept him from writing history as a way to serve the *res publica* (*a quo incepto studioque me ambitio mala detinuerat, eodem regressus statiu res gestas populi Romani carptim...perscribere* B.C. 4).

Despite all this, Horace describes himself as content with his ancestry. In closing with his *maiores* who disbar him from a political life Horace shows us how
this frees him for a more relaxed one where he can focus on being a friend to
Maecenas and others. S. 1.5 and 1.6 show us the benefits of Horace’s program of
amicitia and moral self-pedagogy in action by showing the reader a poeticized form
of Horace’s lived experience as a friend to Vergil, Varius, Maecenas and others. The
political reticence of 1.5 and the critique of ambitio in 1.6 also show us a Horace
reluctant to engage in politics. In the next poem, Horace will give us a horrific
glimpse back to the anarchy of the late 40s and the proscriptions as his reasons for
avoiding politics altogether as a conscious choice, not a response to his historical
situation.
Chapter 4

Sermones 1.7: The Anti-Example of Odium

S. 1.7 has enjoyed scant critical approval over the years. Questions about the poem dwell upon its political allegiances (why Brutus?), its aesthetic mis-match with the rest of the *libellus* (why did Horace include it?) and what the poem’s goal might be (all this for a bad pun?).228 These kinds of inquiries follow upon the traditional two paths of Horatian scholarship: politics and aesthetics. All are really asking the same thing: how does this poem fit with the rest of the book? This will be our inquiry as well, albeit with a different focus: to see how 1.7 fits with the thematic reading of *Sermones* I we have been arguing for thus far. Our task will be to explore how a poem that deals in *odium* (1.7.6) and *discordia* (1.7.15) fits with the concern of *amicitia* and moral improvement that we have been tracing in the

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228 Politics: DuQuesnay (1984: 36-38) and Gowers (2002). Reception: Henderson (1998: 78): “Most commentary has obediently taken up the work of be-littling that the poem represents and in its work of representation incites. Anything to get rid of the damned thing.” The nadir of its reception was the judgment of John Dryden ([1693] 1923: 95) in the late seventeenth century, who dismissed the poem as “garbage.” Eduard Fraenkel (1957: 119) admired its poetic technique, but ultimately considered the poem as a “Nichtigkeiten” (Latin *nugae*), the kind of trivial poem “Horace was looking for when he had decided to fill up his book of satires by the insertion of additional pieces.” Niall Rudd (1966: 66-67) deemed it an anticlimactic failure, noting that “having paid for a ringside seat we feel like demanding our money back.” P. Michael Brown in his commentary (1993: 165) declares it “the shortest, slightest and in many eyes least satisfactory of the satires...perhaps included as a make-weight.” In contrast to this modern critical disapproval, Porphyrio (*ad* 1.7.32-25), one of Horace’s earliest critical readers, found the concluding pun funny, declaring it an *urbanissimus iocus.*
preceeding poems. We shall see that how the poem doesn’t deal with friendship provides a more fulfilling reading of 1.7 as part of the *libellus* than explorations of Horace’s political guilt over fighting for Brutus at Philippi or as an aesthetic counter-point to real, elegant Horatian satire.

In pursuing an answer to this question, we will interrogate several aspects of the poem by means of a close reading. After a brief review of earlier readings of this poem, we will first consider for whom this poem is meant. Second, how the two litigants characterized and how those characterizations evoke the Roman civil wars to which Horatian friendship is figured as a response. Next we will examine the different ways Horace conceptualizes the conflict of the lawsuit, from law court invective to Homeric epic to gladiatorial spectacle. As part of our examination of the Homeric retelling in the poem’s middle, we will also want to question why Horace, surely one of the more studious authors in antiquity, diverts so much from Homer in evoking Diomedes and Glaucus. Next, as the court case proper begins, we’ll consider how the two litigants blend into one another, each evoking qualities of the other, itself emblematic of civil war as Roman fights Roman. And finally, the appearance of Brutus and the concluding pun will provoke an analysis of the role of Roman history and historical practice in the formation of Romans in contrast to the formation of Horace by his father in the previous poem.

As I have been arguing throughout this dissertation, the primary concern of the *libellus* is *amicitia*, conceived as a mutually beneficial ethical relationship. If this is the case, why would Horace include a poem where friendship is so notably absent? The poem’s subject matter comes as something of a shock after the warm
accounts of Horace’s friends in 1.5 and his friendship with Maecenas in 1.6, where Horace played with mixing the language of Horatian friendship with Roman political competition and advancement. Further, 1.5, though shadowed by the threat of *Discordia* due to the putative mission Maecenas had embarked upon, was (as I argued) a consideration of different kinds of friendship in triumviral Rome: literary, courtly and political. Both of these poems were demonstrations of the pragmatic program of Horatian *amicitia* explored in my chapter on S. 1.4. All of these poems, S. 1.4-6, are comprised of various *exempla* to demonstrate the efficacy of Horace’s idea of friendship, as well as the limitations of other kinds of relationship and other kinds of satire.

Yet when we turn to 1.7, not only is friendship entirely absent from the poem but *Discordia* lies at its literal center. How, then, do we reconcile this poem to the ones that have preceded it? It is the contention of this chapter that 1.7 offers a counter-example to the *amicitia* and use of satire which Horace has advocated in poems 4, 5 and 6 by which the value of Horatian *amicitia* can stand out more distinctly, as well as providing, by means of a negative exempla, a way in which Horatian friendship can solve conflict.

**Some Earlier Readings**

A brief review of some recent ways of reading the poem will serve to pinpoint the poem’s problems of audience and purpose in this poem as well as the limitations of the proposed solutions to these problems. As with other reviews of earlier readings in this dissertation, prior scholarship on this poem is most often
broadly historicizing, whether on questions of aesthetics in the late first century B.C. or the poems of Horace in response to the historical events of his time. And as with other earlier readings, both approaches have their own limitations, as both omit serious consideration of the ethical material of the *Sermones*.

Some critics read 1.7 as a poem that demonstrates Horace’s aesthetic ideals as part of his continuing polemic against Lucilius,\(^{229}\) so that Horace implicitly writes against the so-called *fautores Lucili*, like the critics he addresses in S. 1.10.\(^{230}\) These scholars note in support of this position that 1.7 likely has a Lucilian precedent, the lawsuit between Scaevola and Albucius that may have been in the earlier poet’s second book,\(^{231}\) and thus 1.7 may, like 1.5, serve as a way to update Lucilian satire for Horace’s own time. Further, the punch line of Persius’ outburst that closes the poem seems to fulfill one of Horace’s stylistic principles from S. 1.10.14-15: 
*ridiculum acri / fortius et melius magnas plerumque secat res* (laughter cuts great matters stronger and better than harshness).\(^{232}\) Critics like Emily Gowers thus see Persius and Rex employing styles of discourse that are opposed to genial Horatian *sermo*. In commenting on Persius’ *sermonis amari*, for example, Gowers notes that this quality “contrasts with Horace’s professed satirical style.”\(^{233}\)

Yet it is unclear how the lawsuit is a *magna res* at all, except in the eyes of those involved. Certainly the fact that Persius’ exposition of the case at 1.7.22 ff

\(^{230}\) On the *fautores* see Freudenburg (2001: 15-44 and 66-71).
\(^{231}\) So Warmington: W55-93= Marx 57-93.
\(^{232}\) Cf. permagna negotia 1.7.4. See further van Rooy (1971) and Hegyi (2009: 424ff) on the relationship between 1.7 and the stylistic principles of 1.10.
earns nothing but laughter from the court (*ridetur ab omni / conventu* 1.7.22-3; he’s laughed at by all convened) undermines any seriousness or magnitude to the lawsuit. It seems to be instead a way for Persius and Rex to continue a long-existing feud. Nor is the laughter that arises anything like the Horatian laughter we see elsewhere in *Sermones* I—it prompts no self-reflection or self-criticism on Persius’ part. If anything, the silliness that surrounds the lawsuit has its own dangers here: it doesn’t cut through the affair so much as threaten to cut the necks of its participants.

Furthermore, it is not clear that *amaritudo* is necessarily a stylistic trait that is antithetical to Horatian aesthetics. Porphyrio, for example, frequently uses *amaritudo* to describe Horace’s style in the *Sermones*, e.g. *ad* 1.3.40, 1.4.21, 1.4.52 and 1.4.74-75. In addition, both Porphyrio and Pseudo-Acro explain the origins of S. 1.7 as arising from a quarrel (*iurgia*) between Horace and Rupilius Rex who were serving together under Brutus. Rupilius’ anger was aroused, according to both Porphyrio and Ps.-Acro by the *amaritudo* of Horace’s poetic style (Por. *Ad* 1.7: *Propter quoad amaritudinem stili poeta in eum* (i.e. Rupilius) *strinxit*; Ps.-Acro *ad* 1.7: *ob quod amaritudinem sui stili in eum constrinxit*). In other words, the scholiasts see this poem as a demonstration of Horace’s own *amaritudo* and its consequences.

Another critical approach, though not necessarily mutually exclusive with an aesthetic reading,\(^{234}\) is the familiar one of ferreting out the politics of Horatian satire, which would mean that Horace is addressing not just Maecenas and his

\(^{234}\) Gowers (2002) encompasses both perspectives in its reading of 1.7.
friends, but also (implicitly) the political forces that Maecenas associates with; Octavian and Agrippa foremost amongst them. These critics read Horace as taking a more direct approach to Roman politics, even if it is through the retelling of a frivolous and likely fictional lawsuit. Yet, when read as a political statement, however oblique, the poem raises some uncomfortable political questions for these scholars. Why would Horace relate some minor event that happened years before the poem was published? Why would he make such a gauche joke regarding the death of Julius Caesar the poem’s punch line? Emily Gowers has argued that 1.7 is “where Horace finally lances the boil of his past and lets the ‘pus and poison’ contained in its opening metaphors to come oozing out” while John Henderson sees the poem as “satire that sounds robustly independent and Republican, but satire that comes from sources close to the junta, and tells you it does, plays for approval from on high.” In other words, they argue that Horace writes 1.7 as a way to reclaim Lucilian (read Republican) satire for the triumvirate and to defend

235 Kraggerud (1979), DuQuesnay (1984: 36-38), Henderson (1998: 73-107), Gowers (2002). The scholia identify Rupilius Rex as a proscribed former praetor who fled to Brutus and served with Horace. They identify Persius only by his epithet *hybrida* as born from a Greek mother and Roman father, or vice versa. Neither identification is very secure, based as they are almost entirely on what is given in the poem, though Cicero does mention a tax collector in Bithynia named P. Rupilius at *Fam*. 13.9.2. That Rex, whoever he was, was part of Brutus’ *comites* is confirmed by the context of *excepto Rege* at 1.7.25.


his own role on the outskirts of the triumvirate despite his association with Brutus in the late 40s B.C.\textsuperscript{238}

Henderson also proposes that Horace is speaking to and for the Republican side as well; those who fought at Philippi and survived that battle but hadn’t yet received the same pardon from the so-called “military junta” as Horace (a possible example of such a figure would be Pompeius, the addressee of \textit{C. 2.7} in the later \textit{Odes}). Henderson sees the silent role of Brutus in the poem and the poem itself as a Roman precursor to the “silent protests of political dissidents in the 20\textsuperscript{th} century,” a way for Horace to subtly and silently protest at the more restricted \textit{libertas} satire is faced with under the triumvirate.\textsuperscript{239} But such an anachronistic reading seems more of a \textit{cri de coeur} for late 20\textsuperscript{th} century political concerns than for a satirist finding his way in an unstable Roman society.\textsuperscript{240} For his part, Ian DuQuesnay, who reads the whole poem as a belated hatchet job on Brutus, argues that such a crass joke on Horace’s part concerning Caesar’s murder would send a message to other former

\textsuperscript{238} These claims are based upon the foundational historicizing reading of Du Quesnay (1984). Cf. too Freudenburg (1993: 109-184) on the possible Pompeian ties of Horace’s named opponents in \textit{Sermones I}.

\textsuperscript{239} Henderson (1998: 75). This idea is pushed further by Freudenburg (2001: 15-124) in his analysis of Horace’s \textit{Sermones I} and II. Such a definition of \textit{libertas} is anachronistic for the conditions of \textit{Sermones I}’s initial publication in 35 B.C., since it assumes that Octavian’s attitude to poetry was that of the Augustus who banished Ovid for \textit{a carmen et error}. See Feeney (1992) for a sober account of the issues of free speech and literature under Augustus, especially a development from tolerance in the 20s B.C. to greater intolerance in Ovid’s time.

\textsuperscript{240} See Henderson (1998: 8 n. 1), who is at least up front about his anachronism: “the essays in this book belong to their world too. They try to think what and how Rome may have been; but thinking (with) Rome is also a way to relate, if not cope, with the one-world we live in and our representations of the unspeakable,” referring to civil discord in, among other locales, Northern Ireland, Rwanda, Bosnia and Iraq. Cf. Zetzel’s (1998) witty (and parodic) review: What H. blindly accepts, in fact, is an anachronistic definition of “Rome” as the ruling elite of the city itself, a group of people, at least in the first century BCE, at least as despotic to their subjects as any emperor could ever dream of being.”
Republicans that “if Horace, the freedman’s son, could find such complete acceptance, there was hope for the others.”241 It could be read then not as a complaint against the reduced *libertas* of the second triumvirate so much as a sign of poetic *libertas* that Horace enjoyed, safely ensconced in the new regime as he was thanks to his friendship with Maecenas, himself a close friend of Octavian. In short, Horace (at least in Henderson’s view) has ably walked the fine line of both defending his past conduct to Octavian and Maecenas while also quietly maintaining those old allegiances and signaling to his former partisans that Octavian was tolerant of political *vitia* like fighting for the self-styled liberators, Brutus and Cassius.

What both of these readings have left out, as have many recent readings of *Sermones* I, is any consideration of ethical content or how the poem fits thematically with the rest of the book. Given the concerns of this dissertation, we could and should ask different questions of this poem. How, for example, does S. 1.7 fit with the concerns with *amicitia* and moral development? What is being satirized here (*notare*) and why should it be known (*notum*) to those seeking moral (self-) improvement rather than just the *lippi* and the *tonsores*? It is perhaps too reductive to try and figure out which side Horace takes between Octavian et al. and Brutus, even if we agree with Henderson and say both. If the poem cogently offers readings supportive of both or neither side, this indicates that picking sides is not necessarily the point of the poem: rather the point may be the reflection of what exactly goes

into picking sides, and how Roman *amicitia* can affect that choice.\(^{242}\) Nevertheless, Henderson’s detection of both triumviral and Republican politics in this poem point us in a more profitable direction, to argue that the poem is political in the broadest sense, that it questions assumptions about aristocratic competition, the Roman ideology of *virtus*, and Roman history that underwrite both sides. Such a reading must perforce include morality and ethics, the very topics most often left out or elided in analyses of the *persona* of Horace as a comic *doctor ineptus* in *Sermones* I.

What is more, the act of a modern reader or scholar choosing sides doesn’t have to be limited to political sides, but also to picking an aesthetic or political reading, as if the two were mutually exclusive. In fact, the figures of 1.7 can be counter-exempla to both Horace’s own style and Horace’s own political goals and use of *amicitia*, forming a sort of photographic negative to help us see the positive aspects of Horace’s pragmatic program. That is to say, my argument attempts to overcome the limitation of a solely political or aesthetic reading. It is well known that Horace’s vocabulary works in multiple ways: for example, literary terms can easily slide into moral and ethical terms and vice versa. Likewise with politics and aesthetics. Horace’s readers are always trying to choose sides in some way—for or

\(^{242}\) See, as one notable example, Pollio writing to Cicero in 43 about his considerations about whether to side with Pompey and Caesar in the civil war (*Ad fam.* 10.31.2): *cum vero non liceret mihi nullius partis esse, quia utrubique magnos inimicos habebam, ea castra fugi, in quibus plane tutum me ab insidiis inimici sciebam non futurum; compulsus eo, quo minime volebam, ne in extremis essem [plane], pericula non dubitantur adii. Caesarem vero, quod me in tanta fortuna modo cognitum vetustissimorum familiarium loco habuit, dilexi summa cum pietate et fide.*
against Augustus; political or aesthetic concerns. This, I think, rather misses Horace's point. It's not that we as readers much choose sides, but rather we must see how both sides come together to form a complex and fulfilling whole that comments upon issues of Roman identity and ethics.

**Down at the Barbershop**

As the poem begins, Horace tells us that he believes the story he is about to retell is well known to the bleary-eyed and the barbers (opinor omnibus et lippis notum et tonsoribus esse). Why these figures? Let's start with lippis. Scholarly consensus, following the work of Andrea Cucchiarelli, sees the word as referring to either moral blindness or political blindness. *Lippus* is a key word in the *Sermones*, we have seen it before referring to those who are blind to their own faults, whether ethical (1.3.25 cum tua pervideas oculis mala lippus inunctis; why, when you look at your own faults you do so with eyes smeared with ointment) or aesthetic (1.1.120 Crispini scrinia lippi the files of bleary-eyed Crispinus). Further, the term is applied to the poet himself when he applies medication to his eyes as Maecenas arrives to meet him on the road to Brundisium (1.5.30-31 hic oculis ego nigra meis collyria lippus / illinere, here I, afflicted by conjunctivitis, smear my eyes with ointment). On one level, using *lippis* here may be a way to tell the reader that this story is so widely known that even those who don't pay close attention to

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243 Lucilius and his poetry can also inhabit both sides of this debate. See Anderson (1963).
245 Cf. 1.5.49 namque pila lippis inimicum et ludere crudis.
current or recent events know of it. On the other hand, it can signify that Horace points out (notare) a vitium that inheres closely to core Roman values such as competition, virtus and the value of history and exempla. Lippis here would signify that such values are often un-examined and so the lippi would be missing the real point of the story, just as the lippus in 1.3.25 is blind to his own faults, or how Crispinus in 1.1.120 peering “too myopically over his documents.” That is to say, the lippi pay attention only to the joke and not to the ethical point that Horace uses the joke to make. If we define lippis by its prior appearances in the libellus as well as the present poem, then the subsequent story is both one that is both widely known in some circles, including Horace as a fellow sufferer of the lippi, even if they have missed the real purpose of the tale. Thus lippis is a rhetorical move to spark the reader’s curiosity, to get him to open his eyes. Since the story is in fact unique to Horace and not widely known at all this would support a reading of this line as a rhetorical move. It is a story that while known to some (notum) also merits the satirist’s move of notare to make it even more widely known and to uncover the ethical value of the tale.

Besides the lippi, there are the barbers, the tonsores. Gowers has argued that the reference here evokes barbers as potential tyrannicides, such as the barber of Dionysius of Syracuse, as well as barbers as gossip-mongers. If we follow the latter explanation we find again a similar ambivalence as with lippis. Previous references to gossip-mongers, such as the interlocutor’s charge in 1.4.36-38, paint

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them in a bad light as failed satirists, poets that show no discrimination in what they talk about or to whom they speak to:

\[
\text{et quodcumque semel chartis inleverit, omnis gestiet a furno redeuntis scire lacuque}
\text{et pueros et anus.}'
\]

*And whatever he’s scribbled on his parchment he’s eager for all the slaves and old women to know as they’re returning from the well or bakery.*

Likewise later at 1.4.74-77, where Horace castigates poets who perform their work whenever and wherever, again with no discrimination:

\[
\text{non ubivis coramve quibuslibet. in medio qui scripta foro recitent, sunt multi quique lavantes: suave locus voci resonat conclusus. inanis hoc iuvat…}
\]

*[I don’t just recite my poems] anywhere or to anyone. There are those who recite their writings in the middle of the Forum and many who do so in the baths (how pleasantly the enclosed space echoes the voice!)—this delights the stupid.*

Horace believes that the story he’s going to tell is already known to *lippi* and *tonsores* and in stating this belief the poet makes use of figures who have been castigated elsewhere in the *Sermones*. These figures include those who do not pay attention to their own *vitia* while content to point out the *vitia* of others, as well as those who use *sermo* as a weapon to hurt and maim and get a laugh.\(^{248}\) There remains the problem of what benefit or use Horace’s reader, embarking on an ethical project of moral (self)-pedagogy guided by the poet, is to get from this story. What can we learn from this nugatory gossip?

\(^{248}\) Cf. Schlegel (2005: 77-80).
Dramatis Personae

After describing the first audience of his story, the *lippi* and *tonsores*, Horace introduces the story itself and its protagonists. There is much to unpack here: first, how they relate to each other as both foes and complements of the other. Further, how their characterization and rhetoric collapse into each other, whereby Persius and Rex are polar opposites of Maecenas and Horace, *inimici* in contrast to *amici*. As we shall see, it becomes difficult to distinguish Persius and Rex as their characteristics blend into each other and as Horace keeps offering parallel illustrative contexts for their feud. Finally, I will examine how the subterranean forces of civil war are evoked early in the poem as we are introduced to our antagonists. These forces that will finally erupt at the poem’s end as Persius requests that Brutus behead Rex.

Rex is the first character we hear of (1.7.1 *Proscripti Regis Rupili*) and we immediately learn that he is one of the proscribed.249 Yet the real subject of the clause in 1.7.1-2 is Persius himself and how he avenged himself (*ultus*) against the pus and venom (*pus atque venenum*) of the proscribed Rupilius. These two lines contain two charged political terms. First there is *proscripti*, that most wretched word in the Latin language according to Cicero,250 which evokes not only the

249 On the proscriptions, see the work of Hinard (1985).
250 *miserrimum nomen illud* Cicero *de Dom.* 43.
proscriptions of the second triumvirate that claimed the life of Cicero, but also the earlier ones of Sulla, an *exemplum* that haunted subsequent civil wars. Julius Caesar was careful to assert that he would *not* follow Sulla’s example in victory, while Cicero feared Pompey was all too ready to follow the example of Sulla, whom he’d fought for as a young man in his youth, when he was known as the *adulescentulus carnifex*.

*Proscribere*, derived from *scribere* (to write) also recalls the same activity of *notabare* in the *Sermones*. In S. 1.4, figures like Aristophanes and by extension Lucilius (1.4.6 *hinc omnis pendet Lucilius*, Lucilius depends entirely on these poets) mark down malefactors with much freedom (1.4.3-5):

> siquis erat dignus describi, quod malus ac fur, quod moechus foret aut sicarius aut alioqui famosus, multa cum libertate notabant.

*If there was anyone worthy to be written down, because he was a villain or a thief, because he was an adulterer or a murderer or infamous for some other thing, they were noting him down with much freedom.*

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251 Scholars like Gowers (2002: 149) often assume Horace was amongst the proscribed (cf. too Henderson (1998: 11-35), based on Hinard (1985: esp. 473-475). Ultimately this assertion primarily rests upon a scholion to *Epist*. 2.2.41 (*cum aliis proscriptus est*). While I am skeptical that Horace was actually proscribed, it does not matter for my argument whether he was or not.

252 *Ad Att*. 9.7C.1: *reliqui crudelitate odium effugere non potuerunt neque victoriam diutius tenere prater unum L. Sullam, quem imitaturus non sum*; since others because of their cruelty were not able to escape hatred nor hold onto a more lasting victory, except for L. Sulla alone, whom I am not going to emulate. Cf. page 18ff. below on the language of *victoria* and *odium* in this passage and the present poem.

253 The source of the nickname is Valerius Maximus 6.2.8, quoting Helvius of Formiae. On Cicero’s fears, see *Ad Att*. 9.10.6: *ita sullaturit animus eius et proscripturit iam diu*; already for a long time now his [Pompey’s] spirit has thought like Sulla and desires proscriptions; cf. Pompey’s exclamation, quoted by Cicero at 9.10.2 *Sulla potuit, ego non potero?* Sulla could do it, why can’t I?). *Sullaturio* appears to be a neologism of Cicero’s own creation, according to Quintilian 8.3.32 (*Nec a uerbis modo sed ab nominibus quoque deriuata sunt quaedam, ut a Cicerone ‘sullaturit’*). Here a historical name stands in for a particular kind of action (i.e. Sulla=proscription) just as in 1.7, at least in Persius’ mind, the name Brutus stands for tyrannicide.
Here *notare* is glossed by *describere* in 1.4.3, to mark down or define. *Describere* and *notare* here denote writing down someone’s name so that others know of their immorality or misdeeds. It is an action that creates infamy. *Proscribere* is a step further, where someone’s name is written down so that others may hunt those unlucky enough to have their names marked down and kill them for a monetary reward.

There is thus an uncomfortable relationship established in these opening lines between *proscribere*, marking down to kill, and *notare*, marking down to create infamy and (in the present context) become a target for satire. A passage from Macrobius, retelling a tale contemporary with Horace’s time of writing, brings out this connection further (*Saturnalia* 2.4.21):

> Pollio, cum fescenninos in eum Augustus scripsisset, ait: at ego taceo. non est enim facile in eum scribere qui potest proscribere.

> *Pollio, when Augustus had written Fescinnine verses against him, said “but I myself am silent; after all, it is not easy to write against someone who is able to proscribe.*

In this anecdote, the playwright, historian and friend of Horace (he is the addressee of C. 2.1) Asinius Pollio finds himself on the receiving end of invective verse from Octavian, the future Augustus (and also a future friend of Horace). Pollio refuses to respond in kind because of the extreme power difference between the two men: both can satirize the other in verse, but only Octavian can write in such a way as to physically harm Pollio by proscribing him.\(^{254}\) We shall see how Persius attempts to

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\(^{254}\) See now Lowrie (2009: vii-ix) on this passage, particularly the role of writing within it.
make use of this dynamic at the poem’s conclusion by demanding Rex’s head after he’s been the target of Rex’s invective. Pollio fears any invective he writes in response may cost him his head; that fear is realized in the conclusion to Horace’s poem. Though the two litigants are not *dispar*, as Pollio and Octavian are in Macrobius’ anecdote, here the satirist figure (Rex) is not just feared, as in 1.4, he is exposed to the danger of death and execution.

The other loaded word in these opening lines, one that belongs more to the stage of the civil wars contemporary with Horace, is *ultus*. This is a term that evokes pious and just retribution for murder, such as the case of Octavian and his vow of a temple to Mars Ultor before taking on Brutus and Cassius at the battle of Philippi in 42 B.C. In his declining years, Augustus recorded this early war with the conspirators with the same term, *ultus: qui parentem meum [interfecer]un[t, eo]s in exilium expuli iudiciis legitimis ultus eorum [fa]cin[us] (RGDA 2).*255 The young Octavian avenged his adoptive father’s death, Persius on the other hand avenges himself against the malice and venom (*pus atque venenum* 1.7.1) of his opponent, which is revealed at the poem’s conclusion to be the invective with which Rex responds to Persius’ initial speech in court, the *Italo aceto* (Italian vinegar) of 1.7.32.

Thus Rex. Let us turn to his opponent, Persius. As we have seen, though mentioned first, the introduction of Rex is subordinated to that of Persius. *Pus atque venenum* is the object of *ultus*, Persius is the subject of the verb, while *Rupili* here is a

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255 I cite the text of the RGDA from the edition of Cooley (2009).
possessive genitive. We are first told that Persius is a *hybrida* or half-breed.²⁵⁶ Later Horace calls him a *Graecus* (1.7.32 *at Graecus, postquam est Italo perfusus aceto*; but the Greek, after he’d been doused in Italian vinegar). Other *hybridae* in Roman history include Tarquinius Superbus, who is implicitly invoked in the poem’s conclusion along with Caesar, was a *hybrida* himself even as a Roman king: a man of Greek and Etruscan descent (his grandfather was Demeratus of Corinth, while his father was Lucuomo of Tarquinia and his mother the Etruscan Tanaquil).²⁵⁷ So in the one sense of the word (half-breed) Tarquin is *hybrida*, but he is also *hybrida* in the term’s evocations of savagery and *hubris*, the kind of behavior that led to Cicero’s co-consul C. Antonius receiving the agnomen Hybrid, as Pliny the Elder reports.²⁵⁸ This sense of *hybrida* can also be applied to Persius, who savagely demands the head of Rex at the poem’s conclusion, evoking the Greek word ὕβρις.²⁵⁹

Subsequently we learn that Persius is rich (*dives* 1.7.4) and has business interests (*permagna negotia*) in Asia Minor at Clazomenae (1.7.4-5). He is also *confidens* (cocksure) and *tumidus* (puffed up, swollen, enraged, angry): the latter reminds us of the raging river of 1.1.58, while foreshadowing the invective Persius will unleash against Rex later in the poem (1.7.26-27: *ruebat / flumen ut hibernum*, he was rushing on like a winter river), that Horace describes as a flooded winter

²⁵⁶ In contrast to the Praenestine Rex.
²⁵⁷ Livy 1.34.
river, one that is, in other words, *tumidus*. *Tumidus* also evokes the swollen/muddy river aesthetic image that Horace uses to describe Lucilian satire in Callimachean terms (1.4.11 *cum fluueret lutulentus* since he was flowing muddily). As Gowers notes this link is maintained with the description of Persius as a *durus homo* (1.7.6), just as Lucilius in 1.4.8 was *durus componere versus*.

Thus Persius is a counter-exemplum to Horace in his potential for rage (rage is identified as a vice at 1.3.76 *vitium irae*) and in his un-Callimachean style.

*Tumidus*, as with many words in Horace, is able to play with both meanings at once. Further, rage (*ira*) was itself a concept invoked in relation to the civil wars by several Roman authors. For example, we see at Caesar, B.C. 1.8:

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semper se rei publicae commoda privatis necessitudinibus habuisse potiora. Caesarem quoque pro sua dignitate debere et studium et iracundiam suam rei publicae dimittere neque adeo graviter irasci inimicis, ut cum illis nocere se speret, rei publicae noceat
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*Caesar said he had always held the needs of the republic ahead of his own interests. Also that it was for Caesar's own dignitas that he ought to set aside his zeal and wrath for the good of the Republic and not to get too angry at his enemies lest he harm the republic along with those enemies he hoped to harm.*

Here Caesar admits he has grounds to be angry at his enemies for affronting his *dignitas*, but such personal anger must take second place to the good of the Republic. Caesar is careful to distance himself from *ira* as well as *crudelitas*, preferring instead *misericordia* and *liberalitas* (cf. *Ad Att*. 9.7C.1). The anger that

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260 1.1.58: *cum ripa simul avulses ferat Auffidus acer.*
underlies the proscriptions, Octavian’s revenge against the tyrannicides and even Caesar’s struggle against Pompey (much as he seeks to deny it in the *Bellum Civile*) propels Persius and Rex. Such anger is as absent from Horace’s *persona* in the *Sermones* as the swollen river style of Persius is from Horace’s own style in the *libellus*. The Callimacheanism of 1.7 is demonstrated by Horace as he contains within 35 lines two court room speeches, one of which rushes on like a winter river (Persius: 1.7.26-7 *ruebat / flumen ut hibernum*) and the other that flows with much salt (Rex: 1.7.28 *salso multoque fluenti*).261

The last bit we learn about Persius in the poem’s opening lines is about his own sharp tongue (1.7.7 *adeo sermonis amari*). This kind of bitterness is found only in one other place in *Sermones* I, the *amaras historias* of the money-lender Ruso in the third poem (1.3.88-89: *amaras / porrecto iugulo historias captivus ut audit*; the captive has to bare his throat and listen to his [Ruso’s] bitter histories). Persius’ wit is sharp enough that he can conquer a Sisenna and a Barrus by a long shot, figures who are otherwise unknown but who, based upon the context of the poem, are *scurrae* or the kind of failed satirists Horace derides elsewhere in *Sermones* I, such as Caprius and Sulcius at S. 1.4.65-70. The analogy Horace uses for how much Persius’ sharp wit can outstrip Sissenas and Barruses is with white horses (1.7.8 *ut equis praecurreret albis*), which are known for their speed according to the

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261 The use of *salo* to describe Rex’s speech prefigures Horace’s description of the effect of Lucilius’ poetry in 1.10, that he wiped down the city with much salt (1.10.3-4: *quod sale multo / urbem defricuit*).
This analogy tells us two more things about Persius. First, as Gowers notes that white horses “proverbially pulled royal, divine and triumphal chariots.” If we follow Gower’s point that white horses are royal horses, then Persius is something of a rex himself. Second, if Sisenna and Barrus are failed satirists and Persius beats them at their own game (if we read this comment ironically), this implies that Persius himself is a failed satirist too, one worse than those two figures. Again, he emerges as a counter-exemplum to Horace the satirist.

Persius also has a troublesome lawsuit against Rupilius Rex (1.7.5 etiam lites cum Rege molestas), the subject of the present poem. Both litigants seem to possess some degree of odium, though Rex does not possess as much as Persius (1.7.6 atque odio qui posset vincere Regem and who was able to conquer to conquer Rex in hatred). The vocabulary here is once again suggestive of civil discord. To illustrate how, let’s return for a moment to Caesar’s letter after Corfinium (ad Att. 9.7C): reliqui crudelitate odium effugere non potuerunt neque victoriam diutius tenere prater unum L. Sullam, quem imitaturus non sum; since others because of their cruelty were not able to escape hatred nor hold onto a more lasting victory, except for L. Sulla alone, whom I am not going to emulate). Just as we saw earlier with ira, Caesar is at pains to avoid problems of earlier civil conflicts, especially that of Sulla. In particular, Caesar wishes to escape from odium, which is presented in this letter as a problem: how can one gain victory in civil war (victoria) and also escape hatred (odium). Such a problem does not seem to concern Persius or Rex. Whereas Caesar

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262 Brown (1993: 166), translating the comment of Ps. Acro ad loc.
wishes to separate victory and hatred, Persius combine the two and in fact competes against Rex in hatred. Like proscripti and ultus in the opening two lines, the language of Roman civil war emerges here to color the lawsuit as a civil war. This is another part of the counter-example: rather than friendship, Persius excels in odium. In fact, the poem precludes any possibility for friendship, since Rex possesses odium as well as part of the competition.

We have already seen that Rex has been proscribed. We learn later in the poem that like Persius he is durus (1.7.29-30: durus / vindexiator et invictus a tough and unconquered vine-dresser). We also learn that he hails from Praeneste (1.7.28 Praenestinus). At 1.7.9 Horace says he’s about to return to Rex (ad Regem redeo) and yet never does. Rex is not the subject of his own clause until 1.7.28 (Praenestinus). In fact, the name Rex never appears in the nominative throughout the poem, instead appearing only in oblique cases: the genitive (1.7.1, plus Rupili in 1.7.19), the ablative (1.7.5, 1.7.25) and the accusative (1.7.6, 1.7.10 and 1.7.35). In contrast Persius appears in the nominative four times (1.7.1, 1.7.4, 1.7.22 and 1.7.33). What is more, whereas Persius earns his own description at the poem’s start (1.7.4-5 Persius hic permagna negotia dives habebat Clazomenis; this Persius was a rich man and he used to have big business interests at Clazomenae), any description of Rex, until his torrent of invective at the poem’s conclusion, is refracted through Persius: Persius avenges himself against Rex’s malice and poison (1.7.1-2 Proscripti Regis Rupili pus atque venenum / hybrida quo pacto sit Persius ultus); Persius has a troublesome lawsuit with Rex (etiam lites cum Rege molestas); he can conquer Rex in hatred (1.7.6 odio qui posset vincere Regem) and that the two litigants are evenly
matched (1.7.19 Rupili et Persi par pugnat). Over the course of the poem anything we learn about Rex is tied to Persius, even when Rex is finally the subject of his own clause it is to describe his invective against Persius during the trial before Brutus. Rex never stands alone.

As I have been arguing in this section, the feud that Horace presents to us here provides a perspective on the civil wars in Rome, through its evocations of the language of civil war. With that discord as background, it is unsurprising that there is a marked lack of friendship in this poem, unlike the rest of the libellus. We can see in other texts that friendship and its opposite, inimicitia, often appear as contributing factors to conflict. For example, Caesar blamed inimicitia for impelling his opponents to war at B.C. 1.4. Cato was incited to oppose Caesar by old hatreds and losses at the polls (B.C. 1.4 Catonem veteres inimicitiae Caesaris incitant et dolor repulsae). Later Caesar presents Pompey's opposition as a renunciation of prior friendship. It was Caesar's enemies, who were in fact originally Pompey's enemies, who drove Pompey against Caesar, playing upon Pompey's desire that no one equal his dignitas (B.C. 1.4):

Ipse Pompeius ab inimicis Caesaris incitatus, et quod neminem dignitate secum exaequari volebat, totum se ab eius amicitia averterat et cum communibus inimicis in gratiam redierat, quorum ipse maximam partem illo adfinitatis tempore iniunxerat Caesari.

Pompey himself was incited by the enemies of Caesar and because he was wishing that no man be equal to himself in dignitas. He removed himself entirely from the friendship of Caesar and returned into favor with their common enemies, the greatest part of which he himself had imposed upon Caesar during the time of their alliance.
Horace himself, writing of the civil wars later in the *Odes*, will ironically refer to the *gravisque / principum amicitias* (C. 2.1.3-4, the weighty friendships of the leaders). Horace, it seems, is interested in the play of friendship and hatred that characterizes Roman civil war and the lawsuit of Persius and Rex allows him to explore that in relation to his own friendship with Maecenas (as a pointed counter-example). Now that the characters have been brought on stage, let us turn to how Horace characterizes the conflict beyond the vocabulary of civil war. We shall return to the match up of Persius and Rex after a brief Homeric digression.

**Echoes of the *Iliad* in the arena of the courtroom**

From characterization, we now turn to the shifting descriptions of the lawsuit and the different ways Horace asks us to understand the conflict by means of different analogies. Over the course of the poem the lawsuit is compared to civil war, Homeric epic, gladiatorial spectacle and the rhetorical battles of other lawsuits. Our goal in this section will be to see what emerges from this mish-mash of different kinds of conflict and how it continues the evocation of civil war in the poem’s opening lines and the contrast with Horatian *amicitia*. This will allow us both to further support our claim that the poem gives civil war and discord as a counter-example to Horatian friendship and then set up how, as part of this theme, the two protagonists blend into each other as the court case begins.

At the poem’s beginning, as we saw above, we read that Persius avenged himself (*ultus*) against the malice of Rex. *Ultus*, as we saw earlier, brings to mind the
civil discord of the late 40s B.C., as Octavian swore to avenge his father and vowed a
temple to Mars Ultor (which he finally completed in 2 B.C.) before the battle of
Philippi against Brutus and Cassius. Discord in fact lies near the actual center of the
poem’s 35 lines (1.7.15 *Discordia*). Further, the poem shows an escalation from
*molestas* in 1.7.5 (troublesome) to *odium* 1.7.6 (*odio qui posset vincere Regem*), to the
realization no settlement can be reached (1.7.9-10 *postquam nihil inter utrumque
convenit*) and finally to war in 1.7.11 (*quibus adversum bellum incidit*). Let us
examine each of these terms in turn to see how and why Horace creates this deadly
progression of *molestus* to *odium* and finally to *bellum*.

*Molestus* first appears in S. 1.3, where it was first applied to Horace himself at
1.3.65, as he describes how he bothers Maecenas, one of the *mediocriter vitium* that
he hopes Maecenas can forgive. The term is used by the interlocutor as they cast an
unflattering light on Horace’s annoyance, *molestus / communi sensu plane caret*
(1.3.65-66: he’s troublesome and he clearly lacks common sense). At 1.6.99 it
describes the troublesome burden Horace would have to bear were he to attempt a
climb up the *cursus honorum: nollem onus haud umquam solitus portare molestum* (I
wouldn’t want to carry a troublesome burden I’m not accustomed to). The other
two uses of the adjective are here in S. 1.7, first describing the lawsuit at 1.7.5 (*lites
cum Rege molestas;* a troublesome lawsuit with Rex) and then describing both
Persius and Rex by implication at 1.7.10 (*omnes...molesti*). Based upon the other
uses of the term in *Sermones* I, *molestus* denotes something that annoys but not
something *gravis* (severe, heavy). To describe the lawsuit as a *lites molestae* tells us
its not a life and death struggle worthy of a Hector or an Achilles. The fact that the
assembled court laughs at Persius when he sets out the case confirms this (1.7.22-23: *Persius exponit causam; ridetur ab omni / conventu*; Persius lays out the case, he’s laughed at by the whole assembly). Far from an epic struggle, the audience treats it as a big joke.

Horace presents something laughable and annoying, but it quickly escalates into hatred and war. There is a quick development from *molestas* in line 5 to *odio* in line 6. The gap between annoying and hatred suggests that *odium* was the motivation all along, that the annoyance of a *lites molestae* is a symptom but not a cause of *odium*. This is supported by the fact that Persius defines himself by his *odium* (1.7.6 *odio qui posset vincere Regem*), and that *odium* fuels the lawsuit and his vengeance (*ultus* 1.7.2). *Odium* could by itself be a motive to bring someone to trial: in *ad Atticum* 1.16.2 Cicero tells us that Q. Hortensius was compelled by hatred to quickly bring Clodius to trial for sacrilege in regards to the infamous affair of the Bona Dea in 61 B.C (*ductus odio properavit rem deducere in iudicium*).264 The lawsuit may be just troublesome, but it seems just another stage in a long-term feud between Rex and Persius.

From *odium* the conflict escalates further to *bellum* in line 11. This development is already foreshadowed by the language of war, such as *vincere* in 1.7.6, the verb linked with the ablative *odio* in a description of Persius. But *bellum*,

264 The same letter (*ad Att. 1.16.10*) also contains another, albeit less deadly, pun on Rex in the context of a trial: Clodius taunts Cicero (note the pointed quo usque, recalling *In Cat. 1.1*) ‘quousque’ *inquit ‘hunc regem feremus?’ ‘how long are we going to endure this king?’ while Cicero replies: ‘regem appellas’ inquam, ‘cum Rex tuo mentionem nullam fecerit?’ ‘you mention a king’ I said ‘although Rex [a dead relative] made no mention of you [in his will].’ Cicero goes onto explain that Clodius had already spent much of the inheritance he’d expected: *ille autem Regis hereditatem spe devorarat.*
used here, is in fact a catachresis. It does not describe how the court case actually proceeds; instead bringing the trial beyond its courtroom setting to the battlefield. Again this indicates that the lites here is symptomatic of something larger, an feud fueled by hatred that drives Persius to conquer a king (Rex). Horace tells us that no resolution could be reached in this particular conflict (1.7.9-10 postquam nihil inter utrumque convenit) and that very lack of resolution becomes an image of war, war that can only end in death. Such a situation arises, as Horace tells us, in those who come face to face in war (1.7.10-11 hoc etenim sunt omnes iure molesti / quo fortæ, quibus adversum bellum incidit; since all those who are troublesome are quite rightly like those heroes afflicted by head on war). The use of iure is curious—for a moment legal and martial imagery co-exist uncomfortably, where a court case is intense enough to be a war, yet that war is one that follows laws (iure), even if those laws provide no possibility of resolution beyond death for one of the participants. Yet Horace doesn't specify what the ius in question is, in fact he provides us with two possibilities depending on whether the combatants are full of virtus, like Hector and Achilles or dispar like Diomedes and Glaucus.

We can unpack the use of fortæ some more. As the setting moves from the courtroom to the battlefield, suddenly our merely annoying protagonists are elevated to mock heroic status: figures that were molesti now becomes fortæ. Schlegel argues that “the poem demonstrates the implicit thesis that molesti and fortæ are in the end equivalent.”

I am not entirely sure this is the case, though

\[265\] Schlegel (2005: 83).
Schlegel is right to note that “the epic parody mocks and illustrates the unheroic nature of the poem’s two protagonists, but it has the equal effect of reducing Hector and Achilles to another tiresome quarreling pair.” Horace here presumes some similarity as well as difference and that difference is the (normal) lack of the danger of death in a court case. The epic parody may serve to deflate the duel of Hector and Achilles, as scholars have noted, but it also highlights the catachresis of bellum in 1.7, by juxtaposing an annoying trial (lites molestas) with a duel to the death. The gap between a troublesome lawsuit and a duel to the death forces the reader to ask how they got there in the first place.

The lack of conflict resolution is not the only connection at work here. Achilles fought Hector in Iliad 22 to avenge the death of his close companion Patroclus. Like the resolution of the conflict of Diomedes and Glaucus, Horace occludes one cause (ultio) for another (ira capitalis), referring to the wrath that drove Achilles need for revenge after Hector killed Patroclus. In other words, the duel is an ultio (act of vengeance) just as the trial between Persius and Rex (1.7.2 Persius ultus). The odium of Persius and Rex becomes the ira capitalis (deadly wrath) of Achilles and Hector, a wrath that can only be resolved by death (1.7.14 ut ultima divideret mors so that only a final death could divide them). Though the parody can work to deflate the conflict of Hector and Achilles through comparison to Persius and Rex, the comparison can work the other way as well. Something

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266 Schlegel (2005: 82).
deadly is at work here that a *lites molestas* can be easily translated into an epic sphere as *ira capitalis*.

Let us take a moment here to sum up the movements we have seen so far in the poem. First there was the sequence of *durus* to *odio* to *vincere* (1.7.6 *durus homo atque odio qui posset vincere Regem*; a harsh man and one who could conquer Rex in hatred). Next was the movement from *molesti* to *fortes* to *bellum* and finally that of *animosum* to *ira* and finally to *mors*. There is also an escalation between these three movements as we go from conquest to war and finally to death. I contend that Horace is interested in much more than just a lawsuit here if a mere annoying court case to slip so easily into the language of epic poetry and the weighty terminology of Roman civil war. Persius and Rex are, I suggest, representative of the problems with *virtus* that many Late Republican authors wrestled with such as Sallust and Livy.

*Virtus* first appears midway through the poem at line 14. Immediately we see that *virtus* is a problem for Horace. This is evident from the first epic comparison. What unites both pairs, Hector and Achilles and Persius and Rex, Horace goes on to tell us, is *summa virtus: non aliam ob causam nisi quod virtus in utroque / summa fuit* (1.7.15-16, because of no other cause except the fact that there was the highest *virtus* in both). As Schlegel notes: “the narrative succeeds in undermining *virtus* as a virtue; for what is its value if all it can achieve is death?”

This is, however, too reductive and fails to capture the problems of the complexity of

\[267\] Schlegel (2005: 82).
the term *virtus* that Horace wrestles with here, as did Caesar and Sallust. For these writers, *virtus* is both the ultimate Roman value but also one that contains its own dangers. This problem comes out most clearly in Sallust, particularly the famous *synkrisis* of Caesar and Cato from Sallust’s *Bellum Catilinae*. There the equality of their *virtus* is complicated by the antithetical nature of the ways in which their *virtus* is expressed.

This passage in Sallust has been much discussed over the years. For our purposes, the key passage is here (Sallust *BC* 53.6-54.1):

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sed memoria mea ingenti virtute, divorsis moribus
fuere viri duo, M. Cato et C. Caesar .... iis genus aetas
eloquentia prope aequalia fuere, magnitudo animi par,
item gloria, sed alia alii.
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But in my memory there were two men of enormous virtue though different ways of life, Marcus Cato and Gaius Caesar their lineage, age and eloquence were nearly equal, as was their greatness of spirit and likewise their glory, but in other respects they were different.

As William Batstone has cogently argued, the virtues which Caesar exemplifies *(beneficia ac munificentia; mansuetudo et misericordia; dare, sublevare, ignoscere; miseris perfugium and facilites)* contrast and even conflict with Cato’s *(integritas vitae; severitas; nihil largiri; malis pernicies and constantia)*. In fact, Cato’s virtutes force the reader to go back and review Caesar’s in a different light; for example Cato’s *integritas* makes Caesar’s *beneficia ac munificentia* look like bribery. Further,

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“the Catonian virtues....generally undermine Caesarian virtues by reference to absolute ethics (integritas, malis) or by reference to intention (nihil largiri, constantia), which is essentially ethical.” The cumulative effect is, as Batstone states, that Sallust

Reveals in his antitheses a fragmentation of varying dimensions which is the result of virtues themselves in conflict with each other and an underlying conceptual failure which produces an opposition between the traditional Roman virtues of action and the traditional intellectual categories by which those virtues are known, named and understood.

For Sallust, the problem is an intellectual one, where the complexity of the concept of virtus allowed for competing descriptions of different actions. One result, with Cato and Caesar, is that their equality in virtus, though in different kinds, eventually led to war. This is where Horace picks up the problem. His concern is not so much with the problems of defining virtus or how to relate intellectual ideas of virtus to individual actions, but rather the problems inherent in the Roman concept virtus that can lead to irreconcilable conflict. In short, Horace is showing the problem of virtus in action.

In the first half of the poem Horace has contextualized the lawsuit in several different ways: as an act of vengeance (ultio), as an annoyance (lites molestas) and as an epic battle (adversum bellum). Linking the comparison between Persius and Rex is both the concept of vengeance (Persius against Rex's malice, Achilles for Hector's

271 Batstone (2010a).
272 Batstone (2010b).
slaying of Patroclus) and the bad feelings between the opponents, the *odium* of Persius and Rex and the *ira capitalis* of Hector and Achilles. Civil war, lawsuits, epic duels; they all begin to run together just as Persius and Rex seem to early in the poem. *Molesti* becomes *fortes*, *odium* becomes *ira capitalis* and two businessmen become mock-epic warriors. Indeed, we have here a foreshadowing of the lawsuit’s result: it is not a *lites molestae* after all, but one with *ira capitalis* that will only be resolved by death (*ut ultima divideret mors*), just as the feud between Hector and Achilles.

**Mis-Remembering Homer**

Hector and Achilles are not the only Homeric pair that Horace trots out in the poem. The kind of conflict that links the two pairs, equal combatants driven by vengeance and/or anger and hatred, is subsequently contrasted to the abortive combat of Diomedes and Glaucus from *Iliad VI*. While Homer gives no indication of whether Diomedes and Glaucus are unequal when they meet,²⁷³ Horace assumes an inequality between the combatants to contrast with his protagonists and Hector and Achilles (1.7.15-18):

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duo si Discordia vexet inertis
    aut si disparibus bellum incidat, ut Diomedi
cum Lycio Glauco, discedat pigrior, ultro
muneribus missis
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²⁷³ Schlegel (2005: 84) “an assumption never tested when they meet.” Their meeting does follow upon Diomedes’ *aristeia* in *Iliad V* where he’s assisted by Athena. Yet upon meeting Glaucus and being unsure of his identity, Diomedes says he’ll not fight against immortals (despite having tangled with Aphrodite and Ares in Book V), *Iliad* 6.128-129 εἰ δὲ τὶς ἀθανάτων γε κατ’ οὐρανοῦ εἰλήλουθας,
/ οὐκ ἂν ἔγγυε θεοῖσιν ἐποιερανίσι μαχοίμην.
If Discord should trouble two cowardly fighters, or if battle should fall upon unequal combatants, just as the battle of Diomedes with Lycian Glaucus, the lazier fighter departs, willingly sending unsolicited gifts.

Horace gives two possible reasons for a peaceful outcome in a conflict: either the combatants are lazy (inertes) or they are unequal (disparibus). Both would indicate a lack of virtus. Neither Glaucus nor Diomedes are lazy in Homer, in fact this is another untested assumption since they do not in fact fight. Instead, they leave each other exchanging gifts and Diomedes declares that he can kill other Trojans and Glaucus can battle other Greeks. Nor, in terms of battle prowess, are the two dispare in Homer since, again, their fighting skills are not put to the test against each other. Nor is Glaucus dull, dispirited, lazy or reluctant (all meanings of piger) in Homer. Horace has erred here in describing the two as if they’d actually fought at some time or another. In other words, he is reading conflict into a Homeric scene where conflict is peacefully averted.

Of course Glaucus and Diomedes are unequal in one way, the exchange of gifts that renews and confirms their familial xenia, where Glaucus gives away his gold armor for Diomedes’ bronze armor. Homer explains the unequal exchange by saying Zeus stole away Glaucus’ wits (Iliad 6.234 ἔνθ’ αὖτε Γλαύκῳ Κρονίδης φρένας ἐξέλετο Ζεύς). Henderson sees Horace as entering a “classic locus conclamatus of Homeric scholarship, the evaluation of Glaucus’ exchange of arms
with Diomedes.” Yet it is not clear why is a *locus conclamatus* at all, since the Homeric text clearly states that the agency behind Glaucus’ bad exchange was Zeus himself, though this can just mean that there was no other rational explanation for why Glaucus made a bad deal. Glaucus and Diomedes do not abandon their duel because Glaucus is so much weaker than Diomedes but because of family history.

Horace describes Glaucus as *pigrior*, which also doesn’t match Homer’s account. In *Sermones* I this adjective is used 3 other times. At 1.4.12 Horace claims Lucilius is reluctant (*piger*) to bear the labor of writing well (1.4.12-13 *piger scribendi ferre laborem, / scribendi recti*). The sailor who works the barge Horace takes at the beginning of his trip in 1.5 is *piger* as he falls asleep (1.5.19 *nauta piger saxo religat stertitque supinus*). Notably unreluctant and not lazy at all is the Pest of 1.9, who assures Horace at 1.9.19 that he’s not lazy and can follow Horace wherever he’s going (1.9.19 *nil habeo quod agam et non sum piger, usque sequar te*). Based on these other uses we can surmise that Glaucus, to Horace, is thought to be reluctant to fight and so gives gifts willingly (*ultro* 1.7.17). This seems to be a more positive use of *piger*, in contrast to how Horace uses it of Lucilius in 1.4, another example of Horace redefining terms over the course of *Sermones* I, as with *notare* in S. 1.4 and, as we will see below, with friendship from Homer to his own time. At the very least, this quality of Glaucus ensures his own survival. Gowers notes that Horace himself has a lazy and indolent lifestyle and could be *piger* himself, in contrast to the Pest of

274 Both Ps. Acro and Porphyrio seem to believe that Horace retells the story of Diomedes and Glaucus accurately, though this may be because of unfamiliarity with the text of Homer. Porphyrio at least notes that Horace derives it from Iliad 6, “*quod apud Homerum in Zeta Iliados legitur.*”

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1.9. Perhaps a version of Horace himself hides behind Glaucus as an example of a piger and dispar combatant who prefers peace and friendship to bellum and odium.

In Homer it is not due to any disparity in battle prowess that Diomedes and Glaucus decline to fight. It is time now to look at the original passage in Homer, where Diomedes declares the two won’t fight after hearing Glaucus’ family history (Iliad 6.215-231):

"See now, you are my guest friend from far in the time of our fathers. Brilliant Oineus once was host to Bellerophontes. The blameless, in his halls, and twenty days he detained him, And these two gave to each other fine gifts in token of friendship. Oineus gave his guest a war belt bright with the red dye, Bellerophontes a golden and double-handled drinking-cup, A thing I left behind in my house when I came on my journey.

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275 Gowers (2012: 288). Some take this description to refer instead to Maecenas.
276 Cf. Horace's self-description at Epodes 1.16, inbellis ac firmus parum.
Tydeus though, I cannot remember, since I was little
When he left me, that time the people of the Achaians perished
in Thebes. Therefore I am your friend and host in the heart of Argos;
you are mine in Lykia, when I come to your country.
Let us avoid each other’s spears, even in the close fighting.
There are plenty of Trojans and famed companions in battle for me
To kill, whom the god sends me, or those I run down with my swift feet,
Many Achaians for you to slaughter, if you can do it.
But let us exchange our armour, so that these others may know ho we
claim to be guests and friends from the days of our fathers.” 277

Critics of this satire often ignore the context of the original Homeric passage and
label it as epic parody and leave it at that, not examining its function in the text.278
In contrast, Catherine Schlegel attempts to delve into the parody and finds that "the
satire puts reason over passion, denying conflict its glory and insisting on the
possibility of reasonable compromise, including compensation to the stronger
party." 279 But as I argued above, to Horace it is only a lack of virtus, being iners or
piger, that resolves conflict. The problem is not gloria but virtus.

In Homer’s text, it is xenia, a kind of guest-friendship, that resolves the
conflict before it can begins. 280 As I have noted in using boldface above in my
citation and translation of the Homeric text, xenia is a key feature of this passage
and exactly what Horace leaves out of his retelling. The vocabulary of xenia is not
only key to the whole speech of Diomedes, it is also the key motivating factor of the
exchange of armor itself. The meaning of the exchange is both to reaffirm the

277 Translation from Lattimore (1951: 159).
a “bloated and self-indulgent aside.”
279 Schlegel (2005: 84).
ancestral ties of *xenia* and so that other warriors will know that Glaucus and Diomede are guest-friends of long standing (*Iliad* 6.230ff. ὄφρα καὶ οἶδε / γνῶσιν ὅτι ξένοι πατρώιοι εὐχόμεθ’ εἶναι). What is more, it is the fact that Diomede and Glaucus *do* have ties of *xenia* that ends up averting a contest of arms and turning it into a exchange of arms, even if the exchange itself is uneven. The vocabulary of *xenia* suffuses the passage so much that we may justifiably wonder why so careful a reader as Horace purposefully omitted it completely from his retelling of it. Though *xenia* is not Roman *amicitia*, it espouses similar values of family, history and community just as Roman *amicitia* does. Since friendship is the key theme in *Sermones* I, from the goal of 1.4’s moral self-pedagogy, to the experience of friendship in 1.5 and 1.6, it seems strange that Horace would not try to connect these two concepts in some way and leave *xenia* out completely.

While there is no direct conceptual connection, nevertheless the gap between Homer’s account and Horace’s does speak to the concerns of the satire. Further, in utilizing the historical development of the concept, Horace ties this poem together with the developmental pattern in other parts of the *libellus*. These patterns range from Horace’s moral development, the aesthetic development of Horace’s satiric style to the development here from *xenia* to *amicitia*. Just as in S. 1.4 where there is a development from the *notare* of Aristophanes and Old Comedy with its place in democratic Athens, to the *notare* of Lucilius as an expression of *libertas* to the *notare* of Horace’s father and his moral pedagogy to the *notare* of Horace in service to moral *self*-pedagogy, Horace helps us see a development from Homeric *xenia* to
Roman friendship. In Homer, family history between Diomedes and Glaucus allows the two warriors to depart the battlefield with guest-friendship. Homeric xenia links heroes through family history and is at its heart a system of ensuring hospitality throughout the ancient world. It builds community, binds families through memory and history and, in this case, resolves conflict before it can begin. Between Homeric xenia and Horatian amicitia lie the reflections and theories of Plato and Aristotle as well as Epicurus, Philodemus and Cicero. Though much separates xenia from amicitia, both speak to similar concerns: the preservation of life, community and family. None of these worry Rex and Persius, nor Horace's Glaucus and Diomedes.

Friendship starts on the battlefield in Homer’s account and that friendship arises because of the historical force behind xenia, in its recollection of the ties of hospitality between Glaucus’ ancestor and Diomedes. This historical force can serve as a useful counterpoint to the historical force Persius tries to bring to bear at the end of the poem. In searching through their family histories in Homer, Glaucus and Diomedes find a reason not to fight and to depart as friends, albeit unequal ones due to the armor exchange. Diomedes declares that his ancestor Oineus entertained Glaucus’ ancestor Bellerophon and that fact bars them from fighting and entitles the one to a hospitable reception at the other's house and vice versa. In short, history here works to prevent conflict and death rather than to continue it. This puts it in opposition to Persius’ pun that does try to continue the death and conflict of Roman discordia. What is more, it ensures the potential that the connections xenia fosters will continue amongst the descendants of Glaucus and Diomedes. Xenia thus fosters
community, reconciliation and peace. It is not a value that finds a place in 1.7, just as friendship does not find a place. Now let us return to Rex and Persius and see how the two begin to blend into each other as the trial itself begins.

**Mirror Images**

In this section we return to the trial between Persius and Rex. We will consider the final two ways Horace has us understand the conflict, a gladiatorial match and an actual court case, then analyze the rhetoric of both Persius and Rex as they present their cases. Finally we will examine how the rhetoric of the litigants here, combined with their earlier characterization in the poem’s first eight lines, makes the two blend into each other so that they become mirror images and complements of each other.

After the Homeric digression, Horace returns to the court case and begins his narrative of it (1.7.18-21):

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Bruto praetore tenente
ditem Asiam, Rupili et Persi par pugnat, uti non conpositum melius cum Bitho Bacchius. in ius acres procurrunt, magnum spectaculum uterque.
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*When Brutus was holding rich Asia as praetor, the fight of Rupilius and Persius was equal, so that not even the fight of Bithus with Bacchius was better arranged. Both fierce men run forward into the court, both a great spectacle.*

From Homer we return to the Roman world of the late 40s B.C. Brutus evokes civil war once again because he fought against Caesar, was pardoned by Caesar and then killed Caesar, making him the target of Octavian’s *ultio*. Brutus’ official role as *de facto* praetor makes him the judge of this lawsuit at an assizes court (1.7.18-19
Bruto praetore tenente ditem Asian; when Brutus was praetor holding rich Asia). I say *de facto* since, though the senate granted him *maius imperium* in 43, this was cancelled when he was condemned with Cassius by the *lex Pedia de interfectoribus Caesaris* and his subsequent proscription. Rex was part of Brutus’ staff, as Horace tells us in 1.7.24-25: *stellasque salubres apellat comites excepto Rege* (he names Brutus’ companions health-giving stars, with Rex excepted).

After naming Brutus, Horace gives us two more analogies to help readers understand the trial. Like the earlier comparison of a trial and an epic duel, the vocabulary of this passage blends the two together. The litigants are described as *acres* as they run (*procurrunt*) into court (*ius*); here again is the language of competition. Yet this is mixed with legal language, reflecting the actual issue at hand, a lawsuit (*lis*). Immediately following Horace describes both figures as *magnum spectaculum* (great spectacle). Again we have the language of competition, but this time of gladiatorial combat, evoked by the earlier analogy to Bithus and Bacchius in 1.7.20. The gladiatorial imagery is foreshadowed by *muneribus missis* in 1.7.18. In Homeric terms they refer to the exchange of armor that Glaucus and Diomedes enact. A *munus* can also refer to a gladiatorial contest, while *missis* evokes a specific type of gladiatorial contest, a *munus sine missione*: a gladiatorial contest where each combatant was expected to die. This itself recalls the earlier analogy of Hector and Achilles, where only death can separate the combatants (1.7.13: *ut ultima divideret mors*).

Throughout the poem Horace describes the lawsuit in several different ways, but not as a lawsuit. Instead *ius* and *iure* blend into descriptions of epic duels and
bellum. Nor does the actual account of the trial venture into technical legal
description. Instead Horace represents two different examples of legal speeches:

encomium and invective. (1.7.22-31):

Persius exponit causam; ridetur ab omni
conventu; laudat Brutum laudatque cohortem,
solem Asiae Brutum appellat stellasque salubris
appellat comites excepto Rege; Canem illum,
invisum agricolis sidus, venisse: ruebat
flumen ut hibernum, fertur quo rara securis.
tum Praenestinus salso multoque fluenti
expressa arbusto regerit convicia, durus
vindemiator et invictus, cui saepe viator
cessisset magna compellans voce cuculum.

Persius lays out the case, he is laughed at by the whole court. He praises
Brutas and his companions, calling Brutus the sun of Asia and naming
his companions beneficial stars, except Rex, who he calls the dog star
which has arrived, that star hateful to farmers: just as a winter river
rushes on and is borne where the ax rarely travels. Then the
Praenestine flowing on with much abuse pressed from the vineyard
gives his retort to Persius, a tough and unconquered vine
dresser, to whom the a passer-by taunting him with cries of “cuckoo” would have
often given in.

Horace never does tell us what the lawsuit is about, but the reaction of the court to
Persius’ summary of it is telling. It seems probable that this case, whatever it
claimed to be about, was really a way for Persius and Rex to continue their odium
and in the arena of the courtroom. The odium is not dependent on a legal case, it
could also be exercised on the battlefield or the gladiatorial arena as Horace’s
analogies indicate. Speech just happens to be the weapon chosen for this particular
duel instead of swords. By now we should see that the lis (lawsuit) isn’t really the
point as much as the odium of the two litigants and the lack of friendship it implies.
Persius’ speech here, reported indirectly, comes off as a pastiche of Hellenistic encomium, for example calling Brutus the *solem Asiae*. Most commentators draw comparisons to the hymn Duris of Samos composed for Demetrius Poliorcetes, preserved at Athenaeus 6.253e, as well as the *Caesaris astrum* of Vergil’s *Eclogue* 9.47-49.\(^{281}\) His invective against Rex inverts this kind of encomium, describing Rex as the Dog star, Sirius (*Canem illum / invisum agriculis sidus*), the rising of which signals a period of heat and drought for farmers, hence *invisum agricolis*. Brutus is described like a Hellenistic king in terms of the benefits and fertility he can bring to Asia with his companions (called *stellasque salubris*), while the King in question (Rex) is described in the opposite terms, as a star that promotes infertility and is harmful to farmer’s crops. This idea is also implied by Horace’s description of Rex’s speech as flowing with much wit, *salso multoque fluenti* (as *salsus* can mean both salty and witty), since salt water is also inimical to agricultural production. Unlike his account of Persius’ oration, Horace does not include any detail about the *content* of Rex’s speech, in keeping with the poem’s tendency to characterize Persius and his actions in greater detail than Rex.

Though only Persius makes use of encomium, both figures deploy invective against the other. This recourse to the same kind of rhetoric is another way in which the two begin to blend into each other. Even the descriptions of their rhetoric collapse the two together. Persius’ invective flows on like a winter river (1.7.26-27 *ruebat / flumen ut hibernum*), while Rex’s flows with much salt (1.7.28 *salso*).

\(^{281}\) Cf. Athenaeus 6.253e especially the reference to Demetrius as a star: *Σεμνόν, ὁθι φαίνεθ', οἱ φίλοι πάντες κύκλω, ἐν μέσοις δ’ αὐτός, ὤμοιος ὡσπερ οἱ φίλοι μὲν ἄστερες, ἡλίος δ’ ἐκείνος.*
multoque fluenti) and is enough to drench Persius (1.7.32 at Graecus, postquam est Italo perfusus aceto). Both descriptions paint the protagonists as anti-Callimachean, in contrast to Horace’s Callimacheanism. Horace’s own Alexandrian bona fides are established by compressing these speeches (cf. 1.7.29 expressa arbusto regerit convicia he retorted with invective pressed from the vineyard) into 6 lines for Persius and 4 for Rex.

It is not only in their rhetoric that the two resemble each other. At one point it appears that Italus Rex (1.7.32) is paired against Graecus Persius (ibid). Elsewhere Persius is a hybrida. We have already seen the multiplicity of meanings within that term. This sets up one contrast between the two: a half Greek and an Italian. Yet at the poem’s conclusion the Graecus Persius deploys the rhetoric of Roman history and exemplarity to defeat his Praenestinus opponent Rex. Finally we see that Rex cedes to no one’s invective (hence invictus), whether Persius in Asia Minor or a passer-by who mocks Rex for pruning his vines too late in the year (1.7.30-31: cui saepe viator / cessisset magna compellans voce cuculum, to whom a passer-by would have conceded victory when he called out “Cuckoo” in a great voice). This undermines Persius’ pretensions to conquer a king in hatred (1.7.6 odio qui posset vincere Regem).

Beyond their rhetoric, Persius and Rex are characterized by their even match-up, such as at 1.7.19-20 (uti non compositum melius cum Bitho Bacchius—so

\[282\] Cf. 1.7.6 vincere Regem.

\[283\] Gowers (2012: 260) cites Pliny HN 18.2.49 who explains that vine-dressers were taunted for doing their work too slow, since vines had to be pruned before the cuckoo arrived.
that not even the match of Bithus versus Bacchius was better arranged). Not only are they evenly matched in their conflict, their characteristics also blend into each other, augmented by the fact that Horace only describes Rex in relation to Persius. The word rex itself, besides being a taboo word in Rome, was a term of abuse in Late Republican politics—Cicero for example was called the first foreign king (peregrinus rex) since the Tarquins. There are further meanings to the word: a rex can also be just a particularly rich or fortunate person; this is the force of reges at S. 1.2.86, regibus hic mos est (this is the custom for kings/the rich), where Horace is describing how rich people purchase a horse. By this definition Persius is a rex himself (1.7.4: hic permagna negotia dives habebat; this rich man used to have big business interests), supported by the reference to equis albis, traditionally royal horses as I noted earlier. The slippage of language in the pun—Rex as a type of leader, Rex as the name of a litigant and Rex as a rich person—could in fact work against Persius; someday the logic behind his pun can rebound against him and knock his head off too.

Both Persius and Rex, then, are reges due to their wealth and both possess some degree of hatred (odium). Most descriptions of Rex are linked to Persius and

284 On the taboo nature of the word rex see Dunkle (1967: 157). For puns on the cognomen Rex in the late Republic see Matthews (1973).
285 Pro Sulla 7.22.
286 This admittedly makes a few assumptions about Rex that are not found explicitly in the poem. One, it presumes he is rich enough to have dealings with Persius (business or otherwise) that could potentially spark a lawsuit. Further, his presence on Brutus’ staff presupposes at least the status of an eques, which also earned Horace command of a legion (1.6.48). Hinard (1985: 512 n. 114) identifies Rupilius as a praetor who fled with Brutus in 43 after he was proscribed. Cicero (ad Fam. 13.9.2) refers to a P. Rupilius, who was a publicanus or tax collector in Bithynia. Whatever his role before Philippi, it more than likely provided him with a comfortable, if not substantial income.
thus serve to sketch Persius’ character as much as his own. Both are acres (fierce) at line 21 when they come into the court, and they fight on equal terms (1.7.19 par pugnat). Both are molesti (1.7.10). Horace also uses metaphors of liquid to describe the rhetoric of both litigants. The reason for this lack of difference between the two litigants is due, I suggest, to the odium that characterizes both of them. This odium is itself part of their competition with each other: Persius could conquer Rex in hatred, but Rex himself is invictus. Their lawsuit is now a Homeric duel, now a gladiatorial bout, now a pair of competing invective speeches. In fact, this lack of difference is another symptom of civil war, where Romans fight against friends, brothers and kinsmen, not the “other” such as Gauls or Parthians. 287 Civil war also leads to an instability of terms, where competing sides try to claim important terms for their own ideological goals. This is a problem we saw earlier with the virtutes of Cato and Caesar. It is also at issue in defining libertas as a Caesar did, or as Brutus did after assassinating Caesar. Brutus claimed to have done so in the name of libertas and minted coins with the freedman’s cap as a image. Finally we see this instability with the descriptors in this poem, where fortés becomes molesti and then acres as the ways Horace tries to describe the conflict shift. Nor is the significance of Brutus himself stable, as we shall see, since his personal history and family history allow for multiple uses and abuses of history, both by Brutus himself and by Persius.

Further, the very fact that he was proscribed implies that he must have had some wealth to attract the attention of the triumvirs at all.

287 Cf. Horace C. 2.1.31-32 auditumque Medis / Hesperiae sonitum ruinae? as well as C. 1.2.21-22 audiet civis acuisse ferrum, / quo graves Persae melius perirent.
Brutus the King-slayer

To conclude our re-reading of S. 1.7, I want to turn at last to the infamous concluding pun and how it involves Brutus in the conflict, as Persius begs Brutus to lop off his opponent’s head. We will examine first how this uses and abuses history and then how it engages with the role of Brutus in ancient and recent Roman history during the late 40s B.C. The pun, as does much of the poem, plays with the subterranean forces of civil discord as well as the instability that that discord brings. Brutus here shifts between his own status as a tyrant slayer and his ancestor whom he emulates, the Lucius Junius Brutus who expelled the Tarquins.

After the retort of Rex, Persius lets loose his final response, which finally answers the implied question quo pacto at the beginning of the satire:

At Graecus, postquam est Italo perfusus aceto
Persius exclamat ‘per magnos, Brute, deos te
Oro, qui reges consueris tollere, cur non
Hunc regem iugulas? Operum hoc, mihi crede, tuorum est.

*Now the Greek Persius, after he’d been doused in Italian vinegar, exclaims ‘by the great gods, Brutus, I beg you, who are accustomed to getting rid of kings, why don’t you slit the throat of this king here? Believe me, this is the kind of job you do!*

Here we have the deployment of a classic Roman historical exemplum: Persius orders Brutus to live up not only to his family name and get rid of Rex but also to emulate his own recent act of killing Caesar, a would-be rex in the eyes of his opponents. It is also a historical exemplum with a moral purpose, the notional resistance of tyranny.

*In employing such a powerful historical exemplum, Persius brings all sorts of historical pressure to bear. First there is the religious aspect, as Persius prays by 204*
the great gods (*magnos deos*) that Brutus accomplishes what he asks for, a plea that brings to bear a moral imperative, that one must please the gods. Further, implicit in *consueris* is the notion of custom, which itself implies historical precedent or *mos*—Brutus has already taken care of one “king” in Julius Caesar, so it should be no problem to off a real “Rex.” Persius declares one act as a custom that can be repeated. Finally there is the pressure of family history implicit in the very name Brutus. For Brutus to prove he is a “real Brutus” he must perform a task historically associated with his family name. Indeed it was a connection that Brutus sought to cultivate by returning to his original name, Marcus Junius Brutus, instead of his adoptive name of Q. Caepio Brutus. Where family history averted conflict between Glaucus and Diomedes, now family history, which has already made Caepio Brutus into a Junius Brutus is being mustered to engineer the death of Persius’ opponent. Persius is not so much abusing Roman history, as seeking to capitalize on Brutus’ *own abuse* of Roman history in making himself a Junius Brutus again to lend authority and justification to his murder of Caesar. In doing so, he has made such an act his job, hence *tuorum operum*.

Though I’m well aware that there’s nothing funnier than a joke explained, analyzing this one repays the effort invested. Is the joke really just a way that allowed Horace to satirize “Brutus’ monarchical pretensions and regal prerogatives”? That is to say, is Brutus really the butt of the joke here, the real target of Horace’s satire? Or is it rather the assumptions that go into ideas of *summa*

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288 Thanks to Ronald Fletcher (no relation to Richard Fletcher) for giving me that line.
virtus and the exemplum Persius deploys at the end of the poem that Horace satirizes? In order to explain the joke and Brutus’ place within it we must first turn to the background of the conspiracy against Caesar in 44 B.C. Cassius and others sought to include Brutus in the conspiracy, though he was reluctant. To counter that reluctance they began a campaign to induce him to join by reminding him of his family history. Cassius Dio and Plutarch both record how Cassius and the others made use of this history to get Brutus to join their campaign.

The passages in both writers are similar, but we will focus on Cassius Dio because he preserves some details absent from Plutarch’s account. Cassius Dio records at 44.12:290

Γράμματά τε γάρ, τῇ ὁμωνυμίᾳ αὐτοῦ τῇ πρὸς τὸν πάνυ Βρούτου τὸν τοὺς Ταρκυνίους καταλύσαντα καταχρώμενοι, πολλὰ ἐξετίθεσαν, φημίζοντες αὐτὸν φευγὼν ἀπόγονον ἐκεῖνον εἶναι· ἀμφοτέρους γὰρ τοὺς παίδας, τοὺς μόνους οἱ γενομένους, μειράκια ἕτε όντας ἀπέκτεινε, καὶ οὐδὲ ἔγγονον ὑπελίπετο. οὐ μὴν ἅλλα τούτο τε οἱ πολλοί, ὅπως ὡς καὶ γένει προσήκων αὐτῷ ἐς ὁμοίότροπα ἐργα προσαχθεῖ, ἐπλάττοντο, καὶ συνεχῶς ἀνεκάλουν αὐτὸν, “ὡς Βρούτε Βρούτε” ἐκβούντες, καὶ προσπεπλέγοντες ὅτι “Βρούτου χρήζουμεν”, καὶ τέλος τῇ τε τοῦ παλαιοῦ Βρούτου εἰκόνι ἐπέγραψαν “εἴθε έξης”, καὶ τῷ τούτου βήματι (ἐστρατήγη γὰρ καὶ βήμα καὶ τὸ τοιοῦτον ὀνομάζεται ἐφ’ οὗ τις ἰξόμενος δικάζει) ὅτι “καθεῦδεις ὡς Βρούτε” καὶ “Βρούτος οὐκ εἴ”.

Making the most of his having the same name as the great Brutus who overthrew the Tarquins, they scattered broadcast many pamphlets, declaring that he was not truly that man’s descendant; for the older Brutus had put to death both his sons, the only ones he had, when they

290 Cf. Plutarch Brutus 9: Βρούτου δὲ πολλοί μὲν λόγοι παρὰ τῶν συνήθων, πολλαῖς δὲ φήμαις καὶ γράμμασιν ἐξεκαλοῦντο καὶ παρώρμων ἐπὶ τὴν πράξιν οἱ πολίται, τῷ μὲν γὰρ ἀνδρίατι τὸν προπάτορος Βρούτου, τοῦτος καταλύσαντος τὴν τῶν βασιλέων αρχὴν, ἐπέγραψον ἰδθ’ οὖν ἒν τούτῳ Βρούτος*, καὶ ἰδθ’ οὖν ἐς Βρούτος* τὸ δ’ αὐτοῦ Βρούτου βήμα στρατηγικῷς εὐρίσκετο μεθ’ ἡμέραν ἀνάπλων γραμμάτων τοιούτων ἑδροί,” εἰς Βρούτος καθεῦδεις*, καὶ ἐδροί Βρούτος αἴθησις*.

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were mere lads, and left no offspring whatever. Nevertheless, the majority pretended to accept such a relationship, in order that Brutus, as a kinsman of that famous man, might be induced to perform deeds as great. They kept continually calling upon him, shouting out “Brutus, Brutus!” and adding further “we need a Brutus.” Finally, on the statue of the early Brutus they wrote, “would that thou were living!” and upon the tribunal of the living Brutus (for he was praetor at the time and this is the name given to the seat on which the praetor sits in judgement) “Brutus, thou sleepest” and “thou art not Brutus” (translation by Foster).

In Dio’s account it is specifically the genealogy of Brutus that is important. First the fellow conspirators deny that Brutus could possibly be related to that famous Brutus, which would have the effect of inciting Brutus to prove, by emulating his ancestor that he really was a Brutus. Such a charge was made more plausible by the fact Brutus spent his younger days under the name Q. Caepio Brutus, having been adopted by his maternal uncle. Next they imply that Brutus is indolent and refusing to live up to his family name and that he is instead sleeping. In short, Cassius and the others created a situation where Brutus could only respond to their taunts and prove his lineage by killing a Roman “king,” in this case Caesar, despite the latter’s protestations that he was no king at all. The implication is that if Brutus cannot live up to the example of his ancestor, then he is no Brutus at all and thus would lose his standing and honor amongst the other nobiles, his peers in aristocratic

291 Cary (1916: 327).
292 Suetonius Divus Julius 79.2: Caesarem se, non regem, esse responderit.
competition. The challenge of Cassius and his co-conspirators is in fact an affront to Brutus’ *dignitas*, one which can only be answered by killing Caesar.\textsuperscript{293}

Though both Plutarch and Dio are writing much later, much the same kind of rhetoric was in play when Brutus was still alive. We find as an offhand remark in Cicero’s first *Philippic* rather full throated praise of his contemporary Brutus via comparison with his famous ancestor, who expelled the Tarquins: (*Phil*. 1.13):

*Fuerit ille L. Brutus qui et ipse dominatu regio rem publicam liberavit et ad similem virtutem et simile factum stirpem iam prope in quingentesimum annum propagavit*

*There was that Lucius Brutus who freed the Republic from regal domination and who produced descendants of similar virtue and similar deeds now after nearly 500 years.*

Likewise in the second *Philippic* (*Phil*. 2.26):

*Etenim si auctores ad liberandam patriam desiderarentur illis actoribus, Brutos ego impellerem, quorum uterque L. Bruti imaginem cotidie videret, alter etiam Ahalae?*

*And indeed, if authorities for liberating the fatherland are desired for these actors, why would I instigate the Brutii, the one of whom saw every day at home the imago of Lucius Brutus and also the imago of Servilius Ahala?*

Such praise and recitation of family history and family exemplarity for the Junii are especially notable since Brutus had been adopted by his maternal uncle of the *gens Servilia*, a *gens* also known for repressing *regnum* through Servilius Ahala.\textsuperscript{294} It is late in his life, when the “times demanded a Brutus” that Brutus, and his supporters

\textsuperscript{293} Brutus also had family ties to the Servilii through his mother and the uncle who adopted him. C. Servilius Ahala had killed Sp. Maelius in 439 because the latter was aiming at *regnum*. Cf. Cicero *In Cat*. I.3 and Livy 4.14.

\textsuperscript{294} Cicero refers to him as Caepio Brutus in *Ad Atticum* 2.24, written in the year 59 B.C.
such as Cicero, embrace and promote this historical connection to the Brutus who expelled the Tarquins. In rising to the historical moment and taking up the dagger to kill Caesar, the Brutus of the first century B.C. drops the “role” of a Servilius Caepio and becomes once again, a Brutus by following the *exemplum* of his ancestor. It is not unlike Gaius Octavius Thurinus becoming Gaius Julius Caesar Octavianus, *divi filius*. It is quintessential display of Roman *pietas*, but it is also a *pietas*, as Persius sees it, that finds justification for killing in family (and Roman) history.\(^{295}\)

It is this rhetoric of paternity, history and aristocratic competition that Persius taps into with his concluding pun. Brutus can only be a Brutus by getting rid of kings, and so Persius’ pun attempts to lock Brutus (once again) into a historical trajectory that is only resolved by the death of a “king.” There is also, however, an element of competition embedded in the pun, which fits in with the various examples of competition Horace provides throughout the poem. The ideology of aristocratic competition did not just push Roman *nobiles* to emulate their ancestors, but to *surpass* them as well.\(^{296}\) Persius thus presents Brutus with an opportunity to surpass that original Brutus, who only got rid of one king. Yet the mere fact that Brutus has already killed one “king”, Caesar, is reason enough for it to become *mos*, custom, as Persius says (1.7.34 *qui reges consueris tollere*). It is not so much that Brutus should surpass his ancestor (though I believe that Horace implies this) but

\[^{295}\text{There is also the injunction to Brutus in the eponymous dialogue of Cicero (}Brutus\text{ 331)} \text{ te tua frui virtute cupimus, tibi optamus eam rem publicam in qua duorum generum amplissorum renovare memoriam atque augere possis. Scholars still debate whether these lines are enjoining Brutus to be a be tyrannicide and kill Caesar, or to emulate the }\text{ virtus of the gens Brutii and Servilii in a more general way. See Narducci (1997: 99-101, esp. n. 8 for a review of the scholarship on this question) and Dugan (2005: 243-248)}\]

that Brutus has a *mos* with which he may justify killing Rupilius Rex. Certainly, if he killed two kings, no one would question Brutus’ paternity again. He would instead become the Brutus by which all the other Brutii are measured, the true opponent of kings and tyrants everywhere.297

It is not only the rhetoric of paternity and family history which the passages from Plutarch, Dio and Horace’s poem engage with, but also the peculiarly Roman use of history, where a Roman speaker could appeal to the Roman past in order to justify any action, including state sanctioned murder. For a clear and notable example of this particularly deadly use of Roman exemplarity, let us turn to the first Catilinarian oration of Cicero, which also refers to the actions of Servilius Ahala. In this oration Cicero faces the challenge of impressing upon his audience, the Roman senate, the gravity of the threat Catiline’s conspiracy presents, while reassuring that same audience that he has the situation well under control.298 Cicero’s main resource in suppressing the conspiracy is his use of the so-called *Senatus consultum ultimum*, which Cicero had obtained on the 21st of October. He delivered the first Catilinarian oration on around the 8th or 9th of November, 20 days later.299 He attempts to defuse any potential controversy by encouraging Catiline to flee the city

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297 *Contra Gowers* (2012: 262) who believes that “Brutus is caricatured as a victim of his ancestry, pre-programmed to liberate Rome from kings.” Given the way Roman aristocratic competition works, Brutus is no more a victim than any other Roman *nobilis* expected to live up to the expectations of family and family history (and this would include Horace and his father’s expectations as well). The difference is that Brutus’ historical imperative happens to be murderous in this reading. But even that is not necessarily true—Brutus did not *kill* Tarquin, he only expelled him.

298 On the ethos Cicero creates in response to these challenges, see Batstone (1994).

299 Cf. *In Cat.* 1.2: *At vero no vicesimum iam diem patimur hebescere aciem horum auctoritatis*, where the *auctoritas* is founded in the *SCU*, as the following sentence makes clear.
and join his army in Etruria, but Cicero does also note that in times of danger to the republic not even the *SCU* is needed—private citizens would kill dangerous citizens and be held up as heroes for doing so!


*Didn’t that most noble man, Publius Scipio, the pontifex maximus, as a private citizen kill Tiberius Gracchus who was weakening the state of the republic just a little bit, yet we as consuls will endure Catiline and his desire to destroy the world with slaughter and fires? For I pass over the excessively old example, the fact that Gaius Servilius Ahala killed Spurius Maelius with his own hand, when the latter was eager for revolution. There was, there was once that virtue in this republic, that strong men would punish dangerous citizens with harsher punishments than they would the most bitter foreign enemy.*

When it comes to the use of the *SCU* itself, Cicero has yet more historical examples to draw upon (*In Cat* 1.2):

Habemus senatus consultum in te, Catilina, vehemens et grave....decrevit quondam senatus uti L. Opimius consul videret ne quid res publica detrimenti caperet: nox nulla intercessit: interfectus est propter quasdam seditionum suspiciions C. Gracchus, clarissimo patre, avo, maioribus, occisus est cum liberis M. Fulvius consularis. Simili senatus consulto C. Mario et L. Valerio consulibus est permissa res publica: num unum diem postea L. Saturninum tribunum plebis et C. Servilium praetorem mors ac rei publicae poena remorata est?

*We have a senatus consultum against you, Catiline, vehement and severe.....once the senate decreed that Lucius Opimius the consul should see to it that the republic not take any harm. No night intervened, Gaius Gracchus, born from a most famous father, grandfather and ancestors, was killed on account of certain suspicions of sedition and so was Marcus Fulvius, a man of consular rank, along with his children. The republic was entrusted to Gaius Marius and Lucius Valerius the consuls*
by a similar senatus consultum; did death and the punishment of the republic await Lucius Saturninus, the tribune of the plebs and Gaius Servilius the praetor even one day?

The key point here is that Cicero, like Persius in S 1.7, finds that recourse to the past, to Roman history, is a perfectly legitimate justification for killing someone, whether they be a “civis perniciosus” or a man with an unfortunate cognomen like Rex that can easily be rhetorically figured as a “civis perniciosus.”

And yet, amongst all this rhetoric and history, it is crucial to note that Persius offers a misreading of Roman history in this exemplum, which makes his final pun an abuse of history. Lucius Junius Brutus did not kill Lucius Tarquinius Superbus, but only expelled him and his family from the city, which eventually led to a series of wars as Tarquin sought aid from other cities in Italy to take back his throne. Brutus did kill his own sons for aiding Tarquin, but not Tarquin himself. The mere fact that Brutus killed Caesar rather than exiling him means he has already surpassed his ancestor since he left Caesar no chance to start another war to reclaim his standing in Rome. Besides the Brutii, Brutus is also asked to live up to his Servilian ancestors, like Servilius Ahala who slew Spurius Maelius when the latter aimed at regnum in the early days of the Republic. The job of offing kings is thus Brutus’ not only from his recent action of killing Caesar, but from his mother’s side (Servilia) and his father’s (Junius Brutus). For Persius then, history is something he can turn to his own ends just as Brutus had done in reclaiming his identity as a Junius Brutus as he

became Brutus the liberator. Persius turns Brutus’ own (ab)use of history against him.

This then is the real power of Persius’ pun: in its misreading of history and the motivation behind its deployment, Persius’ *exemplum* reveals the cutthroat rhetoric of aristocratic competition and civil war that permeated Rome in the late 40s and 30s BC. More than that it looks at the abuses to which Roman history and the *mos maiorum* could be put: the mustering of historical examples to justify murder, to make murder a political virtue for a Roman. The real punch of Horace’s satire in this poem is to point up the extremity of this murderous kind of rhetoric and use of history by putting it into a ridiculous situation—a frivolous, even laughable (1.7.22-3 *ridetur ab omni conventu*) lawsuit—where Horace continuously defers telling his audience just what the whole fracas is even about. 1.7 is not just a *nuga* or makeweight. In fact, Horace includes this brief poem in the *libellus* to demonstrate exactly the kind of ruinous Roman morality and exemplarity that he opposes, to which he offers his own exemplarity of friendship and moral self-pedagogy as an alternative. *Sermones* 1.7 offers the mirror image of Horace’s efforts in the first book, a world where exemplarity is turned to murderous ends and *amicitia* is markedly absent.

After six poems on morality, *amicitia* and exemplarity Horace offers his readers a vision of what has gone wrong as a justification for adopting his own version of exemplarity, freed from the demands and imperatives of Roman history and aristocratic competition, which can instead be used for moral self-improvement. Moreover, for Horace this recollection of his all too brief political and military career
offers a glimpse of a road not taken, a crossroads where the exemplarity of his father’s pedagogy threatened to become the exemplarity of Roman aristocratic competition that justified killing one’s enemies and reading Roman history as a series of violent acts that condoned and even encouraged further violence. It is up to the reader to follow the poet’s example and leave this kind of moral calculus and abuse of history and exemplarity behind and to embrace the more ethically enriching exemplarity of friendship and amicitia.
Chapter 5

Concluding Conversations: S. 1.9 and 1.10

The primary argument of this dissertation is that it is time to start reading the Sermones. Much previous work, learned and cogent as it has been, has focused on the aesthetic and the generic with historicizing readings. We have learned much about Horace’s exacting aesthetic principles, the careful work that goes in to constructing his persona and the generic work that goes into constructing his own kind of Horatian satire in contrast to the work of his predecessor Lucilius and whatever other examples of satiric verse between the two that have been lost to us. Many of these readings, as I described in my introductory chapter, acknowledge the moral content of the satires, but set them aside as not worthy of concern. For many of these scholars it is the moralizing that runs throughout the satires that led to their comparative unpopularity next to the Odes, which in turn required readings that championed the value of the Sermones by emphasizing the complexity of Horace’s artistic principles and how he makes use of them in the first book of Sermones.

301 For example, Varro of Atax, mentioned by Horace as an earlier practitioner at S. 1.10.46. There is also the testimonium of Cicero’s correspondent Gaius Trebonius about versiculi he composed in 43 B.C. against an unnamed target whom scholars presume to be Marcus Antonius (Ad Fam. 12.16).
While not denying the complexity and value of Horace’s generic and aesthetic ideas, my contention has been that reading the *Sermones* with their moral content in mind reveals just as much complexity in thinking about morality and ethics as other scholars have found tracing Horace’s aesthetic principles. Horace is concerned with the place of satire as both a genre of literature and as a pragmatic discourse in Roman society that seeks to police behavior.\(^{302}\) Further, as I discussed in my first chapter, Horace is interested in the *process* of moral education rather than setting out specific moral *praecipita* in these poems. Far from the kind of sermonizing of the modern street corner preacher that scholars such as Zetzel and Turpin use to dismiss serious study of the moral content,\(^{303}\) close study of this moral content has revealed a thoughtful meditation on how Roman morality works to help a given subject find his place in Roman society. Horace does this by interrogating key Roman cultural concepts like exemplarity, *libertas* and *amicitia* as well as how moral traditions are passed on and how young Romans are molded and socialized into Roman men. Further, as I showed in chapter 1, Horace makes use of common cultural touchstones such as the comic stage, relationships between friends and between fathers and sons, to show his moral process at work.

Rather than starting from abstract and even abstruse philosophical ideas, Horace starts from these central concepts in every day Roman life to give us the

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\(^{302}\) Habilnek (2005), Graf (2005).

\(^{303}\) Zetzel (1980), Turpin (1998). As a student at the Ohio State University for the past several years, I have encountered no shortage of these figures on campus, especially as the weather warms up. I have found that they are louder and coarser than the street preachers of Boston.
reader a way of thinking about living a good, moral life that starts from the
quotidian realities of lived experience: fortune tellers, wet dreams, waiting on
friends to arrive for dinner, bursting in on our friends reading, dealing with people
we’d rather avoid, stomach troubles and even the resulting flatulence. These
Sermones are earthy, lived in, far from the elitist meditations on friendship in a work
like Cicero’s *Laelius de Amicitia*. This is precisely what gives them its authority in
the eyes of the reader for thinking through moral problems: by doing so in terms
and images that everyone can understand and relate to.

To conclude this dissertation, I want to look at two of the final poems: 1.9
with its annoying would-be addition to the circle of Maecenas and 1.10 with its focus
on aesthetics and poetic principles. At first glance, it would seem that with the
possible exception of 1.9, there is little to see about friendship in these poems, just
as with 1.7. Certainly scholars have not recognized friendship at work here as they
have in the fifth poem or the sixth, nor morality as they have in the diatribes.
However, as I have argued for the importance of morality and friendship in reading
the Liber Sermonum, and since the book is, like the Eclogues, a unified series of
closely linked poems, it behooves us to test this argument on the remaining three
poems to see if they fit in with these thematic elements, if at all. How does
friendship and morality fit in? How do these poems fit in with what has come
before? Let’s take each of them in turn.

In the manner of S. 1.5 and the end of S. 1.6, the ninth poem plunge the reader into another “day in the life” of Horace, as he walks through the city (ibam forte via sacra, sicut meus est mos 1.9.1) thinking about this, that and the other (nescio quid meditans nugarum, totus in illis 1.9.2). This echoes to two other self-portrayals we’ve seen from Horace in the libellus. First, it recalls his wanderings around Rome and the Forum at evening time in S. 1.6 where Horace inquires with the fortune tellers, checks vegetable prices and picks up some simple food for his evening repast (1.6.113-116). Second, this beginning reminds us of how Horace describes his own self-pedagogy walking around Rome at 1.4.133-137. In that passage, Horace describes how he never fails to be a friend to himself (neque enim, cum lectulus aut me / porticus exceptit, desum mihi 1.4.133-134), while he constantly checks his own behavior by the observation of others: “I couldn’t do something like that, could I?” our intrepid (self) satirist asks himself (numquid ego illi / inprudens olim faciam simile? 1.4.136-137). We could say then, that as we meet Horace walking on the Via Sacra, that he is already in a satiric frame of mind, running through these quick moral judgments and self-reflections in his head, as he is wont to do (sicut meus est mos 1.9.1). Further, these opening lines and their recollection of earlier moments with our narrating poet emphasize the return to Horace as subject of the poetry after the anecdote of 1.7 and the speaking Priapus of 1.8.

Suddenly, in the midst of his constitutional and his satiric reflections, Horace is accosted by the figure of the social-climbing Pest. This figure is looking for an “in"
to the circle of Maecenas’ friends and the poem becomes a comic anecdote of how our erstwhile poet Horace just can’t seem to escape this social menace. Horace’s presentation of the Pest and his ambition-laden sermo allows for a demonstration of the type of scrutiny necessary for someone working with the system of Horatian morality and friendship described earlier in the libellus to judge a good potential friend. In other words, the type of evaluation that Horace went through with Vergil, Varius and eventually Maecenas is now presented for the reader to judge, putting them in a role analogous to the two poets and/or Maecenas. After all, the bore expects Horace to act for him as Vergil did for Horace.

Appropriately, given the title of the libellus, all of these evaluations happen through conversation (sermo), even if it is a limited one such as in S. 1.6, where Horace says little (singultim paqua locutus 1.6.56) and Maecenas even less (respondes, ut tuus est mos / paqua 1.6.60-61). The goal for the reader in this poem is to scrutinize the conversation of the Pest, recalling what he has learned from the previous poems and to make a judgment about the worth of this potential friend to join Horace, Maecenas and others. In the ninth poem, that scrutiny becomes one of inner character—after all we learn nothing at all about the physical description of

304 S.1.6.54-55: optimus olim / Vergilius, post hunc Varius dixere, quid essem.
305 Ferris-Hill (2011) argues that we should read the bore as Lucilius himself, seeking to supplant Horace as a friend to Maecenas—the great patron should support the original article, not a pale imitation like Horace. However, Ferris-Hill’s evidence to identify the bore as the earlier poet is meager at best. Further, her entire argument depends upon the validity of the earlier arguments of Freudenburg (2001: 15-58) that Lucilius is everywhere in Sermones I. Here, Ferris-Hill really runs into trouble, since the foundation Freudenburg provides for her own argument rests upon its own unexamined assumptions, such as a monolithic view of Lucilius' achievement and its reception, as well as a monomaniacal concern on Horace’s part with issues of aesthetics and genre without concern for morality and ethics.
the bore. In fact, we don’t even learn his name.\footnote{Des nomen quodlibet illi, Horace might say.} In this section we will consider how the Pest recalls various other negative exemplary figures in the \textit{libellus} and also how Horace tries to recall some of these figures in his quest to shake the Pest.\footnote{There is also, I believe, another type of scrutiny that Horace wants us to recall. In terms of the structure of the \textit{libellus}, 1.9 matches up with 1.2, the second poem against the penultimate poem. Both describe the kind of scrutiny necessary for the selection of a companion. In the second poem it is an erotic companion and so the scrutiny required is superficial, requiring an examination of the body of a potential lover, not unlike selecting a racing horse (1.2.80-92). Inner character, questions of \textit{virtus}, \textit{animus} and the like don’t matter. Besides, Horace tells us at the end, you can make up whatever back-story and name you want in the heat of the moment (\textit{do nomen quodlibet illi} 1.2.126). In this reading, 1.6.65-67 serves as a kind of meeting point of these two kinds of scrutiny of body and character. There Horace describes his own character after his interview with Maecenas: \textit{atqui si vittis mediocribus ac mea paucis / mendosa est natura, alioqui recta, velut si / egregio inspersos rependas corpore naevos}. Here \textit{natura} refers to Horace’s inner nature, which Vergil, Varus and later Horace himself would have revealed to Maecenas through conversation. But Horace compares this with the scrutiny applied to one’s body with \textit{egregio corpore}. The analogy brings us back to 1.2, while the evaluation of character through \textit{sermo} looks ahead to 1.9.} This allows us to see both how Horace’s experiences in the rest of the \textit{libellus} contribute to his behavior in this poem as well as how our reading of those same experiences contributes to our own reading and judgment of the pest. In other words, the way we as readers evaluate the bore as a potential friend rests upon our own careful study of the rest of the \textit{libellus} and what it has taught us as readers about morality and ethics. Let us see how this works in practice by following along with the poem’s narrative.\footnote{Here, Henderson’s (1999: 202-227) careful cross-referencing in his reading of 1.9 serves as a useful guide.}

The Pest greets Horace with the presumptive greeting of one who is already friends, “\textit{dulcissime rerum}” (1.9.4).\footnote{Cf. Gowers (2012: \textit{ad loc.}).} Yet according to our poet, the man is only known to him by name (\textit{notus mihi nomine tantum} 1.9.3), as opposed to the familiarity that Aristius Fuscus has with the pest (\textit{illum qui pulchre nosset} 1.9.61-62).
Horace’s response is the somewhat colder (in comparison) *suaviter, ut nunc est...et cupio omnia quae vis* (Pleasantly, as its going now, and I wish you to have everything you’d like, 1.9.5). Horace’s reply is more formally polite, yet ironically entraps him, since Horace and his access to Maecenas is very much what the Pest wants. The Pest takes literally what Horace meant as a polite idiom.

Horace attempts to escape the pest by changing the pace of his walk (*ire modo ocius, interdum consistere* 1.9.9), the type of inconsistency of character he lambastes in Tigellius at the beginning of the third poem.310 Next Horace wishes he suffered more from anger, also decried in the third poem as a *vitium*.311 Finally, he tries to beg off from talking to the Pest by saying he must visit a friend unknown to the man clinging to our poet like a shadow (*non tibi notum* 1.9.17). But the Pest sees through all this and presses on even stronger, determined to follow Horace all over the city. After all, unfamiliarity did not stop the Pest from accosting Horace as he did, certainly he would not worry about any effrontery in accompanying the poet to see a sick friend.

As the Pest gets to the point of his self-presentation to Horace at line 1.9.20, he presents a view of friendship that sees it as a kind of competition, pitting himself against Viscus and Varius (1.9.21-22 *si bene me novi, non Viscum pluris amicum, / non Variums facies*). Viscus and his brother will appear amongst Horace’s ideal audience of his friends at 1.10.81ff, while we have already seen Varius in the group on the road to Brundisium and as the poet who, along with Vergil, introduced

310 1.3.9-11: *saepe velut qui / currebat fugiens hostem, persaepe velut qui / lunonis sacra ferret.*
311 1.3.76: *vitium irae.*
Horace to Maecenas and he too is one of Horace’s ideal reading audience of friends mentioned in 1.10. The Pest’s attitude towards these two friends of Horace is the kind of thing, the striving and competition Horace criticized in 1.1, which its series of comparative adjectives and adverbs in making judgments (*potior* 1.1.7, *ditior* 1.1.40, *amplus* 1.1.54, *plenior* 1.1.57 *melius* 1.1.97, and the concatenation of comparatives at the conclusion with *potius*, 1.1.109, *distentius*, 1.1.110, *maiori* 1.1.111, *pauperiorum* 1.1.111, *locupletior* 1.1.113, and *amplus* 1.1.121).*^{312} Such competition is far from Horatian friendship, as we saw in Horace’s comparison of his friendship with Maecenas with a Roman life of aristocratic competition in S. 1.6.

Next the bore says how fast he can write verses and how many he can write (1.9.23-24: *nam quis me scribere pluris / aut citius possit versus*). Here we see the comparatives again, as the bore argues that his amount and his speed will rate him hire than Horace’s friend Varius, a friend Horace has already spoken quite highly of in poems 1.5 and 1.6. Further, Horace criticizes this kind of poetic composition based upon quantity over quality in the person of Lucilius at 1.4.9-13 and will criticize it again at 1.10.60-61. In fact the bore comes off not unlike the poetaster Crispinus of 1.4.14-21 with his demands of a poetic competition judged on quantity. Finally, based on the criticisms of Hermogenes Tigellius that Horace levels at 1.3.1ff, 1.4.72 and 1.10 *passim*, the Pest’s citation of the Sardinian singer as a comparison to his own vocal ability is surely not the best way to win Horace’s esteem. The Pest prides himself on the very excess Horace castigated in a number of areas (wealth,

appetite, sex, poetry, criticism) in the first four poems, demonstrating his incompatibility with Horace's circle of friends and their values.

As their walk goes on, Horace next presents the *sermo* of the bore as something potentially deadly at 1.9.29-34:

\[
\text{confice; namque instat fatum mihi triste, Sabella quod puero cecinit divina mota anus urna:}
\text{“hunc neque dira venena nec hosticus auferet ensis nec laterum dolor aut tussis nec tarda podagra: garrulus hunc quando consumet cumque: loquaces, si sapiat, vitet, simul atque adoleverit aetas.”}
\]

*Finish me off! For a grim fate now stands over me, which an old Sabine woman told me as a boy, shaking her prophetic urn: neither dire poison nor an enemy sword will carry this one off, nor painful pleurisy or a cough, nor slow gout: but someday a chatterbox will do him in. Let him avoid the talkative, if he’s wise, when his age matures.*

The fatal potential of *sermo* presented here recalls the characterization of satiric Horatian *sermo* as a potentially mild vice at 1.4.139-140 (*hoc est mediocribus illis ex vitiis unum*), amplified into a potentially deadly *vitium* in the garrulous Pest. Again, excess comes into play here, as the Pest takes the vehicle of Horatian moral pedagogy and drives it to extremes, to the point where it endangers Horace himself. In fact, the old woman’s directive to Horace to avoid chatterboxes gives us a new perspective on Horace’s friendship with Maecenas—the laconic great man and his friendship is of no danger to Horace at all, compared with the Pest.\(^{313}\)

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\(^{313}\) Of course, the contrast between the taciturn Maecenas and the chattering Pest shows how inapt the Pest would be as a friend to Maecenas. It is, in effect, a negative image of the friendship between Horace himself and Maecenas.
Next the Pest presses on with his misconception of Horatian *amicitia* as friendship with a competitive aspect. This is an unsurprising viewpoint for a man who thinks in comparatives. He asks how Horace stands with Maecenas (1.9.43 *Maecenas quomodo tecum?*) and declares how smartly Maecenas has used his luck (*nemo dexterous fortuna est usus* 1.9.45). This too is a misreading of Horatian friendship. As Horace said several times in 1.6, luck has nothing to do with the friendship he enjoys with Maecenas. Further, the Pest’s assessment of Maecenas would seem to label Maecenas himself a social climber in the mold of the Pest: the Etruscan Maecenas was smart enough to link himself to his friend Octavian early on in the era of the second triumvirate.

Next, the Pest goes on to say that with his help, Horace can surpass everyone else in the circle of Maecenas (1.9.47-48: *dispeream ni / summosses omnis*). This sparks a correction from Horace, who proceeds to describe what the group of friends around Maecenas really acts like (1.9.48-52):

'non isto vivimus illic,
quo tu rere, modo; domus hac nec purior ulla est
nec magis his aliena malis; nil mi officit, inquam,
ditior hic aut est quia doctior; est locus uni
cuique suus.'

*We don’t live there in that manner, in that way you think; no household is purer or further removed from those evils. It doesn’t bother me at all, I say, if someone is richer or more learned than me: every single one has his own place.*

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314 S. 1.6.52-54: *felicem dicere non hoc / me possim, casu quod te sortitus amicum / nulla etemim mihi te fors obtulit.*
The Pest has completely misread how Horatian friendship works in Horace’s own experience and so Horace undertakes to correct his error. He starts by adapting the comparative language of the Pest (purior and magis) to praise Maecenas’ circle of friends. They are far off (aliena) from the evils (malis) of competition. Then he goes on to say he could care less about thinking in such comparative terms, since comparing his wealth (ditior) or learning (doctior) to that of his friends doesn’t interest him. Horace rejects the kind of judgment that works by comparison just as we saw in 1.1. Further, Horace’s description of each person having their own place (est ics uni / cuique suus) prefigures the arrangement of poetic genres amongst friends that led to Horace trying satire (1.10.40-45). The Pest, whose conceptions depend on comparison and competition, can’t believe Horace’s description (1.9.52: magnum narras, vix credibile). Horace insists on its truth (1.9.52-53 atqui / sic habet). The Pest’s incredulity is another sign he is not fit to be a member of this group of friends around Maecenas.

Horace’s corrections result in another comparative out of the Pest as he declares that Horace kindles his desire even more (1.9.53-54: accendis, quare cupiam magis illi / proximus est). When the Pest later says he won’t fail himself (1.9.56 haud mihi dero) it is not in the ethical sense of Horatian self-pedagogy, as at 1.4.133-134 (neque enim....desum mihi), but a reassurance that he will not desist in his striving and competing to become Maecenas’ friend, even Maecenas’ best friend. It is the commitment of the avarus of S. 1.1, always striving to get ahead. Horace responds with some cutting irony, that Maecenas can easily be befriended and so guards approaches to him carefully. This comment serves to make Horace
analogous to Varius and Vergil in S. 1.6, evaluating Horace before bringing him to meet Maecenas himself.

The Pest then tries to figure out how he can get access to Maecenas, going through all his different options besides tagging along with Horace in perpetuity (1.9.57-59):

Muneribus servos corrumpam; non hodie si
Exclusus fuero, desistam; tempora quaram;
Occuram in triviis; deducam.

*I will corrupt his slaves with gifts, if I will be kept outside today, I won’t stop; I’ll seek out opportunities; I’ll run into him at crossroads; I’ll escort him along.*

The buttonholing of Maecenas that the Pest promises to do here (*occuram in triviis*) recalls what scholars like Zetzel, Freudenburg and others imagine Horace doing to Maecenas in S. 1.1.315 Whether we accept this reading of Horace’s earliest *persona* work or not, in the structure of the *libellus*, Horace the character has evolved well beyond this into the contented and quietly self-effacing friend of Maecenas. That is to say, by this point in the *libellus*, we should imagine that Horace’s own process of moral self-pedagogy has evolved to the point that even if we, as readers, see a reflection of the *persona* of the diatribes in the Pest,316 Horace himself has done the work of self-pedagogy and self-satire to evolve beyond that. The Pest, on the other

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315 Zetzel (1980: 69) “In the context of these specific verses, we are forced to imagine our philosopher buttonholing the great man in the street, attempting to gain his attention—and perhaps his patronage.” Cf. Freudenburg (2001:21) “Is the performance, rather, to be imagined as a public harangue set along a busy street?” This kind of reading criticized by Oliensis (1998: 18).

hand, seems to lack the self-awareness and capacity for self-satire that has allowed Horace to correct his own *vitia*. After all, the Pest can’t recognize his own excesses, nor Horace’s irony. This reluctance for self-satire is perhaps symbolized by the Pest’s decision to avoid his court case to pursue a friendship with Maecenas.

At long last the Pest is finally undone by his competitive nature, as his attempts to get at Maecenas lead him to skip out on his trial. Earlier he had asked Horace to support him in a lawsuit, a request which which Horace refuses (1.9.38-39 ‘*si me amas*’ *inquit* ‘*paulum hic ades.*’ *inteream si* / *aut valeo stare aut novi civilia iura*). We saw in 1.7 how lawsuits and courts are places where friendship has a hard time existing. Instead there is *odium*, as between Persius and Rex. As a location, a law court contrasts then with the home, whether that of Maecenas with its circle of friends, or Horace’s own home at the end of 1.6, where he has the table set for Maecenas to join him for dinner, if he wants. The Pest judges that the possibility of becoming a friend to Maecenas is worth the risk of skipping out on his court date and follows Horace anyway (1.9.40-41: ‘*dubius sum quid faciam*’ *inquit* / ‘*tene relinquam an rem.*’ ‘*me, sodes.*’ ‘*non faciam*’ *ille*).

This decision comes back to haunt the Pest at the poem’s conclusion. In mirroring scenes, first Horace is approached by his own friend Aristius Fuscus (who also knows the Pest), who doesn’t let Horace escape so easily from the Pest. Next, the Pest’s opponent comes storming onto the scene, shouting and letting loose some invective at his opponent (1.9.75 ‘*quo tu turpissime?*’). He gets Horace to stand as a witness in the case, allowing Horace to get some measure revenge on the Pest. In fact, the arrival of the opponent provides an element of ring composition to the
entire poem. Just as the pest grabs Horace’s hand to get his attention at the poem’s beginning (arreptaque manu 1.9.4), so the litigant grabs a hold of Horace’s ear (oppono auriculam 1.9.77).

Now as Tadeusz Mazurek has pointed out, this is not really an escape for Horace. Apollo doesn’t really save our poet, since he’s still stuck with the Pest by standing as a witness for the Pest’s opponent.317 This is true, but we might pause to consider how Horace’s trip to the law courts links S. 1.9 with 1.7. By bringing courts and lawsuits into the picture, Horace reminds us of the seventh poem, with its hatred, lawsuits and absence of friendship. Rapit in ius of 1.9.77 recalls the in ius / acres procurrunt of 1.7.19-20, while clamor utrimque: / undique concursus in 1.9.77-78 recalls the magnum spectaculum uterque of 1.7.20. Both lawsuits end up as loud spectacle. By taking the Pest to court and serving as a witness for his opponent, Horace firmly rejects any potential friendship with the Pest.

The figure of the Pest, I conclude, provides a test case for Horatian sermo as a moral and ethical tool. In following along with the Pest’s conversation, we are able to judge his character and see how it is incompatible with Horatian friendship. Many of the Pest’s statements can be traced back elsewhere in the libellus to negative exempla or ideas. Further, the poem also allows the readers to see the progress in Horace’s own moral self-pedagogy over the course of the entire libellus. Finally, the re-appearance of courts and lawsuits recalls the absence of friendship in 1.7 and emphasizes the unsuitability of the Pest for Horace’s (and Maecenas’)

friendship, while allowing Horace to vent his anger (cf. 1.9.11-12 o te, Bolane, cerebri / felicem! and 1.9.66 meum iecur urere bilis) at the pest who ruined his day.

1.10: Friendship and Aesthetic Self-Pedagogy

At last we turn to our final sermo, an at times defensive conversation about Horace’s relationship with Lucilius and Horace’s own place in the poetic scene of his time, the 30s B.C. As with 1.7 and 1.8, it is tricky to see at first how friendship and ethics factor into this poem, primarily a discussion of aesthetics. For many readers of Horace, if we take as an axiom the ambivalence and tension in Horace’s diction between ethics and aesthetics, then in 1.10 the balance comes down quite firmly onto the side of aesthetics as 1.4 did with ethics. Here, Horace returns to criticisms of Lucilius’ writing style--picking up a discussion begun at 1.4.6-13—and its clever and often ironic re-workings of Callimachus’ poetic apologia in Iambus 13.318 In ending this dissertation, I want to point out two features of this poem. First, to show that the ambivalence and tension between morality and aesthetics persists in this poem too, since here Horace presents a system of aesthetic self-pedagogy to match the moral self-pedagogy of 1.4. Second, to demonstrate that friendship is as important a factor in formulating Horace’s poetic judgments in 1.10 as it is in formulating moral judgments in 1.3.

First, let's look at the beginning of the poem, where Horace picks up the thread of his criticisms of Lucilius that he left aside from S. 1.4. As Horace recommends at S. 1.3.69ff, he weighs Lucilius' faults of composition against the practical virtues of his work, in rubbing down the city with salt (*quod sale multo / urbem defricuit, charta laudatur eadem* 1.10.3-4). As Horace goes on to say, the virtues can't just make all the faults go away. He cites the parallel of the mimes of Laberius; from the context of these lines those mimes might be funny and entertaining to its audience, but that doesn't make it good poetry. As the poem continues, Horace goes on to answer the points of the nameless Lucilius fan who takes the role of his interlocutor in this poem, such as the fact that Lucilius had a great artistic achievement in mixing Greek and Latin in his poetry.

Horace ultimately turns to a similar argument he made in S. 1.4 concerning the activity and value of satiric criticism. There, Horace argued that everyone has faults (*quamvis media elige turba* 1.4.25) while also pointing out that everyone has a satiric impulse (developing on his argument of 1.3). In 1.4, Horace used these observations to make a case for the role of satire for moral self-improvement (using one vice to root out others) and for helping friends in this same moral improvement.

Now in S. 1.10, turning to aesthetic faults rather than moral ones, Horace uses the

319 Freudenburg (1993: 109-184) and (2001: 66-71) tends to take these *fautores Lucili* as real figures outside the text without any real evidence beyond the *scholia* to support this assertion (beyond an ambiguous citation at (2001:67) of the spurious opening lines of S. 1.10). I believe that Horace uses these Lucilius fans as a rhetorical construct in creating some generic space for his own poetry, there is no need to take an extra step and attempt to identify real figures behind these claims, as Freudenburg (1993) devotes much time to doing.

320 Horace had already offered a response of a kind to this point at the end of S. 1.9. *Sic servavit Apollo* (1.9.78) alludes to Homer, *Il. 20.443* (τὸν δ' ἐξήρανας ἀπόλλων), by means of Lucilius Book 6 (267-8W=231-2 M), who quoted the original Greek.
same argument. Doesn’t Homer have faults, Horace asks (*age, quaeso / tu nihil in magnus doctus reprehendis Homero? 1.10.51-52*), in effect saying that if even great Homer nods, then *a fortiori* so too must all the poets who came after him. Horace goes on to say that even Lucilius himself criticized other poets, such as Accius and his tragedies or Ennius and his epic *Annales*. What is most important here, Horace says, is that Lucilius himself never pretended he was any better than these other poets (*cum de se loquitur non ut maiore reprensis* 1.10.55). Likewise, we have already seen that Horace does not hold himself above any moral criticism, nor does Horace anywhere in the *Sermones* say that his own poetry is above criticism.

When Horace does remark about potential criticism of his own poetic efforts (to jump ahead in the poem for a moment) a distinction is made between those whose criticisms are worth listening to (i.e. the audience of his friends) and those whose criticism doesn’t affect him. The *cimex Pantiliius* (1.10.78) doesn’t bother him, nor does the criticism of the absent Demetrius (*absentem Demetrius* 1.10.79). Horace’s description of these two potential critics refers back to points about absentee criticism in 1.4, revealing the shallowness of their potential attacks. *Cimex*, a louse or bed-bug, recalls the biting (*rodere*) of criticism that Horace decries at 1.4.81, those carping at absent friends, a critique that also includes the *absentem* Demetrius, who won’t level his criticisms to Horace face to face. Citing the *exemplum* of the actress Arbuscula, Horace says that its enough if the knights

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321 1.10.53-54: *nil comis tragici mutat Lucilius Acci? Non ridet versus Enni gravitate minores?* The *concilium deorum* of Lucilius’ first book might be an example of the latter.
323 *Rodere* is also used of those who criticize Horace’s lineage at 1.6.46.
(eques) applaud him. After all, as we shall see below, most if not all of the members of Horace’s preferred audience of friends are of the rank of eques (e.g. Vergil and Maecenas).

To rejoin the main thread of the poem, at 1.10.67-74 Horace gives some practical advice on writing poetry. As often in the Sermones, Horace makes use of Lucilius as a foil and object of critique in order to better define his own achievement:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{sed ille,} \\
\text{si foret hoc nostrum fato delapsus in aevum,} \\
\text{detereret sibi multa, recideret omne quod ultra} \\
\text{perfectum traheretur, et in versu faciendo} \\
\text{saepe caput scaberet vivos et roderet unguis.} \\
\text{saepe stilum vertas, iterum quae digna legi sint} \\
\text{scripturus, neque te ut miretur turba labores,} \\
\text{contentus paucis lectoribus.}
\end{align*}
\]

But that one [Lucilius], if he should, by means of fate, fall into our own time, he'd be editing a lot of his own work, he would be cutting away everything which was dragging the work away from perfection, and while writing verse he'd often be scratching his head and biting his nails to the quick. You should often invert your pen and use the eraser if you’re going to write things worth reading and re-reading, nor you labor in order that the crowd might admire your works, but instead be content with a limited audience.

Horace’s idea here, that Lucilius would write like Horace if he lived in Horace’s own time, re-states an idea we’ve seen elsewhere in the book: that different times call for different standards and ideas, whether of ethics, aesthetics or even the role of satire as a discourse and genre. There is a development from the public shaming and

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324 1.10.76: nam satis est quitem mihi plaudere.
censuring of the Athenian comic poets, to the Republican *eques* Lucilius and finally to Horace himself and his satire of moral self-pedagogy. Just so there is a development from the free-wheeling, improvisatory nature of Lucilius’ work that we see at 1.10.60-61, “*amet scripsisse ducentos/ante cibum versus, totidem cenatus*” who loved to write two hundred verses before dinner and as many afterwards” to the careful writing, editing and re-writing of Horace. A Lucilius writing in the 30s B.C. would end up looking...a lot like Horace apparently. His concentration would reveal itself physically in bitten fingernails and a constant tic of scratching his head.\(^{326}\)

There would also be greater self-reflection in Lucilius’ work, if the great poet would become a better self-editor.\(^{327}\) That is to say, Lucilius, in his composition, would take on the obsessive self-revision and self-editing that Horace applies to both his moral and aesthetic development. This concentration, with its fingernail biting and head scratching, arises from *aesthetic* self-pedagogy, the counter-part to the Horatian moral self-pedagogy described in 1.4 and mirrors the filing away of bad verses from poetry and *vitia* from a someone’s *animus*. The links between both kinds of self-pedagogy are found in Horace’s vocabulary which links this aesthetic process to the moral process earlier in the *libellus*. *Detereret* (“to rub away, to wear way”) implies constant writing and reworking, seeking perfection (*perfectum* 1.10.70), especially with Horace’s use of the imperfect subjunctive here. It also slyly

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\(^{325}\) Cf. 1.4.9-10: *in hora saepe ducentos, ut magnum, versus dictabat stans pede in uno.*

\(^{326}\) The present author can relate to both of these symptoms of writing.

\(^{327}\) Recall 1.4.11 *cum flueret lentulus, erat quod tollere velles.* Cf. 1.10.50-51 *at dixi fluere hunc lutulentum, saepe ferentem / plura quidem tollenda relinquendis.*
recalls *cum deterreret* from 1.4.112, (“when he [Horace’s father] would deter me), where Horace describes his father’s moral pedagogy that he later adapted into his own moral self-pedagogy. The dative reflexive pronoun *sibi* emphasizes the self-reflective nature of writing satire in Horace’s time and in Horace’s manner.

*Recideret* (“cut away, prune) recalls S. 1.3.123 *falce recisurum*, where Horace refers to cutting away minor offenses and *vitia* with a pruning hook (*falce*). *Roderet* (“biting”) also recalls two earlier uses of the verb, first at 1.4.81 (*absentem qui rodit*) where Horace criticizes satiric invective against absent friends;328 later in 1.6.46 concerning the criticism Horace faces over his lineage (*quem rodunt omnes libertino patre natum*; who all criticize as born from a freed-man father). Here it is turned inward, against one self, in service of producing better poetry.

As we finally turn to Horace’s ideal audience, the one whose criticisms he actually cares about, we see how friendship too affects Horace’s poetic ideas. The reference to the crowd as an undesirable audience recalls Horace’s aversion to seeing his poetry in the book stalls in Rome, where the sweaty hands of some Tigellius could snatch them up and read them at 1.4.71-72 (*nulla taberna meos habeat neque pila libellos, / quis manus insudet vulgi Hermogenisque Tigelli*, where *vulgi* corresponds to *turba* at 1.10.73).329 Likewise, the reference to a small audience (1.10.74 *contentus paucis lectoribus*) also recalls an image from 1.4: Horace’s reluctance to recite his poetry at all, especially at 1.4.73: *nec recito cuiquam*

328 Cf. 1.3.21: *Maenius absentem Novium cum carperet.*
329 For Tigellius as the antithesis of a good reader, cf. 1.10.17-18 (*quos neque pulcher / Hermogenes umquam legit*) and 1.10.90-91 (*Demetri, teque, Tigelli, / discipularum inter iubeo plorare cathedras*).
**nisi amicus idque coactus** (Nor do I recite to anyone except my friends and even then I have to be compelled). We see next at 1.10.81-88, that for Horace, his *paucus lectoribus* are in fact his own friends, just as we saw earlier at in S. 1.4:

\[
\text{Plotius et Varius, Maecenas Vergiliusque, Valgius et probet haec Octavius optimus atque Fuscus et haec utinam Visorum laudet uterque ambitione relegata. te dicere possum, Pollio, te, Messalla, tuo cum fratre, simulque vos, Bibule et Servi, simul his te, candide Furni, conpluris alios, doctos ego quos et amicos prudens praetereo,}
\]

*I hope that Plotius and Varius, Maecenas and Vergil approve these poems, and excellent Octavius, and I wish that Fuscus and both of the Viscii brothers would praise these writings. With all ambition set aside, I am able to praise you, Pollio and you, Messalla, along with your brother, and at the same time you, Bibulus and Servius, and at the same time as all these guys you too, shining Furnius, and many others too, learned people and friends too whom I prudently pass over.*

Horace's intended audience is his friends. We've seen Plotius, Varius, Maecenas and Vergil before as friends of Horace as they all accompanied our poet on his journey to Brundisium in 1.5 (1.5.40-41: *Plotius et Varius Sinuessae Vergiliusque / occurunt*; cf. 1.5.31 for Maecenas met at Anxur: *interea Maecenas advenit*), while Vergil and Varius introduced Horace to Maecenas and vouched for his character in 1.6 (1.6.55: *Vergilius, post hunc Varius dixere, quid essem*), so fittingly they are named first. The rest are the friends Horace is willing to give his work a reading, even if he has to be forced to. His friends provide him with aesthetic pedagogy and advice (which we may assume that Horace reciprocates as a good friend), which Horace applies in
self-editing and re-writing. Moral advice and literary advice merge here and share the same images.330

Many of these friends are of course fellow poets as we saw at 1.10.40-45. Pollio is a writer of tragedies (1.10.42-43 Pollio regum / facta canid pede ter percusso), Varius of epic (1.10.43-44 forte epose acer / ut nemu Varius ducit) and Vergil in pastoral (1.10.44-45 molle atque facetum / Vergilio adnuerunt gaudentes rure Camenae). When Horace wants to find his own generic place, he does so based on how it relates to the work of his poetic friends and counter parts. Epic, tragedy and pastoral are already handled, so Horace tries his hand at something different, satire, which had not been really done well since Lucilius (1.10.46-47 experto frustra Varrone Atacino / atque quidusdam aliis). Even Horace’s generic positioning depend on friendship in 1.10. After all, as he remarked to the Pest in 1.9, everyone has their own place in this group of friends (est locus uni / cuique suus 1.9.51-52).

In concluding this brief reading of the Liber Sermonum’s final poem, I have striven to demonstrate two things. First, how moral self-pedagogy finds its reflection in the aesthetic self-pedagogy of 1.10 and how friendship is an important element in both pedagogical systems. In moral-self pedagogy the goal is to become a better friend and then to help others be better people, while accepting their own frank advice in turn. In aesthetic self-pedagogy this is transferred to the literary critical sphere, but the same principles are in place and even the same vocabulary

330 Anderson (2010) considers how lines like this form the backbone of the putative “circle of Maecenas” which is perhaps more fittingly called “the circle of Horace.”
and diction, as scholars have noted. This balance between moral and aesthetic valence in vocabulary extends to the central ideas of the book.

In fact, what S. 1.10 achieves is a complete marriage between the moral and the aesthetic, as Horace shows us that moral and aesthetic self-reflection and self-pedagogy rely upon the same methods and even vocabulary, as in this poem. The marriage of ethics and style is not a new idea for Horace, it is a venerable one in Roman culture. The most famous expression of this is Cato the Elder’s definition of a good orator: *vir bonus dicendi peritus*.331 In short, in pairing together 1.4 and 1.10 as programmatic satires, as many scholars do, we must recognize that the moral and the aesthetic are also paired together and a full appreciation of the *Liber Sermonum* depends upon taking both into account. A good stylist is a good and moral person. Or rather, to become a good stylist requires becoming a good moral person, a continuous progress of self-reflection and self-pedagogy, which may be assisted by one’s friends.332

As we have seen in this chapter, friendship and morality remain important conceptual and thematic elements throughout the entire book, even if not as overt a theme as in, for example, S. 1.5. We have seen too how they influence even the aesthetic and literary critical elements of the *libellus* in 1.10. In concluding my own

331 The quote is from Quintilian *I.O.* 12.1.1: *Sit ergo nobis orator quem constituimus is qui a M. Catone finitur vir bonus dicendi peritus*.

332 Cf. Schlegel (2005: 49-50): “The conception he [Horace] develops of his own satire as ethically motivated, a conception that establishes the pedigree for the motivation and gives an account of the source of his satiric ethos as one that cannot be separated from the person(a) of the poet himself. As Horace tells the tale, he cannot produce harmful speech; his account binds speech to character and makes them inseparable, so that speech is merely a symptom of character.”
little book, I’d like to briefly think about the idea of *sermo* or conversation both as a moral tool in the satires (as in 1.9) and in light of the fact that the book itself is a mimetic object of various conversations.

A guiding assumption of this dissertation has been that the poems present themselves as a *mimesis* of a series of conversations that is itself meant to be a conversation between book and reader. Just as character is revealed and improved through *sermo* as we saw in 1.4, 1.6 and 1.9, so too the book itself converses with the reader and through that conversation thinks through how to define and judge moral qualities and how to then adapt that into a system of moral self-pedagogy and improvement based on daily lived experience.\(^{333}\) A book like this, which we could describe using a pun (which I suppose the Horace who wrote 1.7 would appreciate) like *liber amicus* (the book which is a friend / a friend who speaks frankly), requires re-reading and study to assemble cross references, to see the myriad and complex ways in which the poems link together and to learn and put into practice Horatian moral-self pedagogy. Fittingly, Juvenal referred to Horace in his first programmatic satire with the phrase *Venusina lucerna*, where Venusina denotes Horace’s hometown (cf. S. 2.1.35) and *lucerna*, as William Anderson cogently suggested many years ago, denotes careful nightly study.\(^{334}\) Horace required such reading for all the meaning of the *libellus* to emerge.

\(^{333}\) A good modern poetic illustration of what I mean is Wallace Stevens’ (1947) poem “the House was Quiet and the World was Calm”: “The house was quiet and the world was calm / the reader became the book; and summer night / was like the conscious being of the book / the house was quiet and the world was calm. / The words were spoken as if there was no book, / except that the reader leaned above the page.” I owe this idea to Will Batstone. Cf. Batstone (2006).

The concluding line of the book "i, puer, atque meo citus haec subscribe libello" (1.10.92: "Go, boy, and quickly write this at the end of my book") forcefully declares closure like the last line of S. 1.5, while still leaving revision and rereading quite open. To say *subscribe*, "to write underneath of below," implies that it is an addition to an already (notionally) completed work. It is also one last conversational *mimesis*, the author not addressing the reader with the didactic *tu* (and its oblique cases) as in the diatribes or 1.4, but his young scribe and research assistant. It thus both fits in with the self-presentation of the book as conversations (it is the *Liber Sermonum* and Horace famously does not use the word *satura* until the beginning of his *second* book of conversations at 2.1.1) and encourages re-reading: every time we get to the end we've learned something new about the book and ourselves we can add (subscribe) to our experience of the *Liber Sermonum* and how it can serve us in living our own lives as good and ethical ones.

So to where have we come in our reading of the *Sermones*? Earlier I noted that there are three main trends in modern scholarship on the *Sermones*: work on the persona, work on aesthetics and finally the historicizing questions of genre and the political and historical context in which Horace wrote. What I have tried to do with this project is to push forward study of the moral and ethical material of Horace’s *Liber Sermonum*, which ties together all three of these approaches and is yet often ignored by them all. In terms of the *persona*, we have seen from the diatribes on how Horace uses the *persona* as a pragmatic tool, representing the

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335 Lewis & Short s.v. *subscribe*. 
drama of lived experience as well as moral self-pedagogy; how that *persona*
devolves as the poems themselves develop in the *libellus* and how that *persona* can
be a model for the readers’s own moral growth and encounters with others. In
terms of aesthetics we have seen in this chapter how the moral and the aesthetic are
important parts of a whole for Horace, not just in the ambivalence between moral
and aesthetic meanings for words, but in how a morally good poet is a requirement
for aesthetically good poetry. Finally, in terms of history I have striven to situate
Horace more in a late republican context and using other late republican authors to
illuminate Horace’s thought, rather than see Horace as prefiguring imperial
literature and Augustan literature in the early 30s B.C. Further, investigating
Horace’s moral concerns in the *Sermones* provides a useful stepping stone in the
history of Roman moral thought from the concerns and assumptions of the late
Republic to the concerns and assumptions of the Augustan period and beyond.

I emphasize that it is moral processes that we should be concerned with in
the *Sermones*: not the exposition of moral *praecptae*, but rather how we formulate
those *praecptae*, how we live with them and how we pass them on to others. In this
reading, the inconsistencies and mistakes that the *persona* makes in the moral
arguments of, for example, the diatribes, are not signs of a *doctor inemptus*, but
necessary and expected bumps along the road of moral (self) edification. Everyone
makes mistakes in their moral careers and nobody, as Horace reminds us, is perfect,
least of all the poet himself. Nor does Horace ask us to be perfect readers—just
thoughtful and attentive ones, ready to learn from Horace’s mistakes and our own.
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