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TRACES OF DISSENT:
PERSIUS AND THE SATIRE OF NERO'S GOLDEN AGE

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate
School of The Ohio State University

By

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*****

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ABSTRACT

While Horace's *Sermones* play a prominent role in Persius' *Satires*, other poetic voices filter into these poems that have gone unnoticed. They are fundamental to the way Persius negotiates a place for his satires both inside the traditions of formal verse satire and invective, and in opposition to the Neronian literary climate. Nero's presence in Persius' satires is cued by external poetic voices that figure into the way in which Persius formulates the problem of writing under Nero. It is no coincidence that these voices issue from poems where Persius refers to the practices of poetic composition, the prologue and *Satires* 3 and 5. I focus my study on these poems.

Studies of the prologue fail to recognize how Persius' choice of the choliambic meter figures into the makeup of his persona as a poetic outsider. I demonstrate how, in adopting this meter, Persius taps into the *ethos* of the meter's creator, Hipponax, who also asserted his poetic independence. This claim to poetic independence factors into the prologue where Persius condemns the Neronian literary scene, beholden to Nero's Alexandrian tastes.

Scholars have generally overlooked the role the pastoral world plays in Persius' third satire. The ingratiatory *Eclogues* of Calpurnius Siculus offer an
example of how pastoral under Nero becomes a vehicle for disseminating Neronian Golden Age propaganda. Persius' third satire responds to this "Calpurnian" pastoral voice.

In the fifth satire, Persius dismisses trite literary motifs of tragedy, the poetic tradition most actively re-appropriated by Nero, the emperor-performer in the late 50s and 60s A.D. I argue that Persius draws upon his own more overtly "political" voices from S. 1 and S. 3 to criticize contemporary tragedy for its enslavement to Nero's literary tastes.

I show that Nero's patronage of literature posed a considerable problem for Persius, and an excellent opportunity for satire. The difficulties of writing under Nero is a problem that Persius returns to repeatedly. Apart from the Horatian voice featured throughout Persius' poems, other voices filter into his satires which figure into the ways he responds to the contemporary literary scene.
To my mother and the memory of my father
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INTRODUCTION

The Roman satiric poet Aules Persius Flaccus ("Persius") died of a stomach disorder on November 24, A.D. 62, ten days shy of his twenty-eighth birthday. What we know about his life largely depends on his Vita attributed to the first century grammarian Probus. According to this brief account, if it can be trusted, Persius was a Roman knight, connected by birth and marriage to some of the most eminent men at Rome. While he was a young boy, his father died, as did his step-father. At the age of sixteen, he began studying under Annaeus Cornutus, a prominent teacher of Stoicism, and remained devoted to him thereafter. A shy and gentle man devoted to his mother, sister, and aunt, Persius also associated with leading poets of the day, particularly the lyric poet Caesius Bassus, the dedicatee of his sixth satire. Bassus' lyrics, which Quintilian ranks as second to those of Horace, no longer survive. We are also told that Persius was a friend of the poet Lucan, once a close associate of Nero, whose epic on the civil war between Caesar and Pompey is commonly believed to have caused his rift with the emperor that subsequently led to his death. Late in life, Persius is said to have known Seneca but to have been unimpressed by his talent.
Persius’ six satires and fourteen line choliambic prologue are the rather curious legacy he has left to us. Often faulted for their obscure metaphors and density of expression, these poems are among the most difficult (if not at times the most impenetrable) in all of Roman poetry. Yet, he tells us in these poems that they are to be read as “satire” in the tradition(s) of Lucilius and Horace, a debt he acknowledges explicitly at the end of his first satire and “intertextually” in his nearly every line. We know from his *Vita*, for example, that Persius turned to satire upon reading the tenth book of Lucilius. It is unfortunate that for us Lucilius exists as an ample collection of fragments, the bulk of which derive not from Book 10, but from his earlier Books 26-30. Thus any attempts to trace Persius’ direct dependence on Lucilius, a dependence considered crucial by his earliest commentators, can only be speculative and incomplete. Despite the difficulties we encounter in reckoning with Lucilius, we are fortunate to have the complete corpus of Horace, a collection that includes two books of satiric poetry, the *Sermones*. In a recent book, Daniel Hooley has demonstrated well how prominently Horace’s *Sermones* and *Epistles* figure into Persius’ poems and how Persius’ relationship to his model shapes the way we “make sense” of Persius’ own attempt at satire.¹ Hooley’s book is an excellent study but is perhaps wanting in its consideration of the political import of the Horatian voices interwoven into the texture of Persius’ poems. In this study, I hope to demonstrate that Persius’ debt to Horace reflects something that was taking place in Nero’s
Rome where the literary interests of the emperor exerted a powerful influence on contemporary poets. Nero prided himself on his poetic talents, and we know that he composed a poem called the Troica, an epic modeled on the Iliad in which he made Paris the hero of the Trojans. He is also said to have written a poem to be accompanied by the lyre entitled either The Bacchantes or Attis. Stage productions were especially appealing to the emperor. In the poetic festivals he instituted during his reign, dramatic presentations were regularly featured, and, we are told that Nero himself even performed various roles on the stage.

It is widely recognized that the Neronian regime self-consciously attempted to pattern itself on the principate of Augustus, even adopting the Golden Age ideology that found its clearest articulation in Vergil. Similarly, the literary renaissance that was fostered by Nero witnessed the revival of literary genres essentially dormant since the time of Augustus. Their reemergence under Nero is commonly attributed to the larger “Augustan” aims of Nero himself: lyric and epic were composed by Caesius Bassus and Lucan respectively. Seneca applied himself to tragedy, a genre that had last flourished under Augustus in the works of Varius Rufus, Asinius Pollio, and Ovid. Pastoral poetry, exemplified under Nero by the Einsiedeln Eclogues (possibly by the work of two separate poets) and the Eclogues of Calpurnius Siculus, betray obvious debts to Vergil in nearly every line.
Given these clear correspondences and the sheer concentration of such "Augustan" re-inventions in the Neronian Age, we might be tempted to see Persius' poems as the Neronian parallel to Horace's *Sermones*. But when we look at Persius' poems, we find that the poet adopts his Horatian guise to a far different end, not conforming to Neronian literary habits and beliefs, but taking aim at those neo-Augustan enterprises by posing as one of them, a non-compliant imposter satirizing the Neronian appropriation of Augustan models.

While Horace's *Sermones* admittedly play a prominent role in Persius' *Satires*, there are other poetic voices that filter into these poems that, I believe, not only have gone largely unnoticed, but are fundamental to the way Persius negotiates a place for his book of satires both inside the related traditions of formal verse satire and invective (especially iambic), and in opposition to the Neronian literary climate of his day. J. P. Sullivan has been at the forefront of calling attention to anti-Neronian innuendo in Persius, particularly in his first satire where Persius targets the Alexandrian affectations of contemporary verse that seem to have accorded with Nero's own aesthetic tastes. Some have contended, along with Persius' scholiasts, that the poetic examples that Persius cites in this poem may actually have been lifted from Nero's own poetry. Persius' first satire is a likely place for such criticism since it is here that he addresses most explicitly the difficulties of writing in the literary environment that surrounds him. And it is this
"programmatic" poem that has received the most scholarly attention. Yet, as I will show, Nero's presence is felt elsewhere in Persius' book of satires, cued by external poetic voices that figure into the way in which Persius formulates the problem of writing under an emperor-littérateauer whose tastes were so readily adopted, imitated, and enshrined as unassailable. It is perhaps no coincidence that these voices issue most prominently from the poems where Persius refers specifically to the practices of poetic composition, the prologue and *Satires* 3 and 5. It is therefore on these poems and their hidden voices that I will focus my study in the pages that follow, devoting one chapter to each poem.

Despite the role Nero is commonly thought to play in Persius' programmatic first satire, I will only touch upon this poem in terms of its relationship to the poems I will be addressing. I omit a lengthy discussion of this poem primarily on the grounds that its political import and intertextual forays have already been subjected to considerable study. The brief discussion of the poem that I offer in these pages I add as my own modest contribution.

I begin my study where the book itself begins. Persius' choliambic prologue can be classified as a "programmatic" poem since it is here that Persius rejects the hackneyed tropes of poetic inspiration and portrays himself as a poetic outsider, a pose largely dependent on Persius' identification of himself as a "half-rustic" (*semipaganus*). Although much scholarly attention has been devoted to this poem, these studies have failed to recognize how
Persius' choice of the choliambic meter also figures into the makeup of this persona. In my first chapter, I will demonstrate how in adopting this meter, Persius taps into the ethos of the meter's creator, the sixth-century Greek iambic poet Hipponax. From the meager scraps that survive of Hipponax' poetry, we can discern that he felt compelled to assert his own independent poetic voice. This claim to poetic independence factors into Persius' prologue where, as we shall see, Persius condemns the Neronian literary scene which was beholden to the emperor's Alexandrian tastes. Here, as Persius tells the story, an endless array of hack poets jockey for financial and political gain by mimicking the same poetic models. This, I will argue, has something to do with the problem of writing under Nero. The prologue thus sets the stage for the different ways this issue gets reformulated later in Persius' book of satires.

Of all of Persius' poems, the third satire has probably received the least scholarly attention, especially regarding its political content. The little that has been said mainly focuses on connections with Horace, S. 2.3 and difficulties in assigning voices to specific, self-consistent speakers at different points in the poem. Although this poem's debt to Horace, S. 2.3 has been thoroughly studied, scholars have overlooked the prominent role the pastoral world plays in the poem, a role, as I will argue, that shapes the way we read S. 3. Given Nero's appropriation of literary enterprises marked as "Augustan" and the eagerness with which poets promoted these enterprises as an avenue for their own political and financial advancement, it need not
surprise us that pastoral poetry saw a revival in the mid-to-late 50s A.D. and that it was linked to the ideology of a new Golden Age promulgated in the early days of Nero's reign. The ingratiatory Eclogues of Calpurnius Siculus offer a clear example of how pastoral under Nero becomes a vehicle for disseminating Neronian Golden Age propaganda. And it is specifically this "Calpurnian" pastoral voice that I will show filters into Persius' third satire bringing with it an ideology and literary agenda to be parodied and rejected. Persius' third satire, as I will argue, can thus be seen as an indictment of Neronian ideology and its attendant pressure to actively promote Nero as a bringer of enlightenment and a new Golden Age.

In the fifth satire, Persius again dismisses trite literary motifs, not from tradition generally, but from tragedy, the poetic tradition most actively re-appropriated by Nero, the emperor-performer in the 50s and 60s A.D. Here, we find ourselves in the familiar world of the prologue. While others have shown that this poem owes much to Horace, S. 2.7 and to the Thyestes of Seneca, no one has recognized that Persius also draws upon his own "programmatic" voices from earlier in his collection, notably the voices, along with several tell-tale images, from S. 1 and S. 3. These remembered moments, I will argue, color the poem with hues that filter in from poems that scholarship has deemed more overtly "political." Since Persius' fifth satire deals in first lines with contemporary literary practices, we should not be surprised that this poem recalls these earlier poems where Persius
similarly addressed the problems of writing in the Neronian literary climate. Persius' main target at the opening of this poem is tragedy. In his exposition on the Stoic notion of freedom, I will argue, Persius criticises the contemporary tragic scene for its compliant enslavement to the emperor's literary tastes.

From this study, I hope to show that Nero's patronage of literature actually posed a considerable problem for Persius, and an excellent opportunity for satire. This problem is central to his satiric project throughout the book, and not cleanly isolated to a few select moments in the prologue and S. 1. As I will demonstrate, the difficulties of writing under Nero is a problem that Persius returns to repeatedly in his book of satires, thus reflecting the extreme degree to which Nero influenced poetic composition at Rome. It is from this influence that Persius is at pains to distance himself in his book of satires. Apart from the strong Horatian voice that is featured throughout Persius' collection of poems, we shall calibrate our ears to detect yet other voices issuing from his satires, voices that respond to the literary scene in which Persius writes, addressing that scene with skepticism and a good deal of searing contempt.

2Dio, 62.20.


6See for instance the book length study of this poem by Bramble (1974).

7*Satires* 2, 4, and 6 will be excluded from this study since they do not address the problem of writing under Nero.
CHAPTER 1

PERSIUS’ PROLOGUE AND THE IAMBIC TRADITION

The little, fourteen-line poem with which Persius opens his book of satires is a peculiar opening for a book of Latin poems. Introductory poems such as this one typically provide some guide to the poet’s readers for how to approach the collection in hand. As “programmatic poems,” they account for the poet’s motives and poetic aims, usually with some allusions to poetic predecessors whose work has shaped the poet’s particular programme. Persius’ prologue lends itself to being read this way. Indeed, Persius’ prologue, probably more than any other such poem in classical literature, not only invites such consideration but perhaps, to be more precise, requires such an analysis.

nec fonte labra prolui caballino
nec in bicipiti somniasse Parnaso
memini, ut repente sic poeta prodirem.
Heliconidasque pallidamque Pirenen
illis remitto quorum imagines lambunt
hederae sequaces; ipse semipaganus
ad sacra vatum carmen adfero nostrum.

quis expedivit psittaco suum ‘chaere’
picamque docuit nostra verba conari?
magister artis ingenique largitor
venter, negatas artifex sequi voces.

10
quod si dolosi spes refulserit nummi,
corvos poetas et poetridas picas
cantare credas Pegaseium nectar.

"Not with the Nag's spring have I wet my lips
Nor remember dreaming on twin-peaked
Parnassus, that I suddenly appear thus as a poet.
Both the Daughters of Helicon and pale Pirene
Do I leave to those whose busts are lapped
By clinging ivy; I myself as a 'half-rustic'
Bring my song to the sacred rites of poets.

Who procured his own 'Hello!' from his parrot
And taught his magpie to attempt our speech?
That teacher of art and bestower of talent
The Belly, clever to mimic speech otherwise denied.
But if the prospect of a deceitful coin shines brightly,
Raven poets and magpie poetesses
You'd think were singing Pegasus' nectar."

Many scholars have examined this poem for the allusions to both Greek and
Latin models that Persius seems to be evoking here.¹ These studies are
worthwhile, and I will be making my own contributions to this discussion in
the pages that follow. What seems to be lacking in these analyses is an
examination of this poem on its own terms first, in isolation from the poems
that follow. I of course am not suggesting that the poems which follow are of
no consequence in considering the prologue. What I do suggest is that if this
poem were attached at the beginning of the collection as a prologue, the
reader of this collection would have read this poem as a prologue, thus
expecting it to provide the kind of programmatic mapping that a prologue
typically provides before venturing into the world of the poems that follow.
But does Persius' prologue function in this way?
The prologue is rather unusual in the way that it seemingly disorients rather than plots a programmatic trajectory. As a result, we are tempted to race ahead in the collection to make sense of the prologue on the basis of what follows. Yet, this would run counter to the ostensibly orienting function of such a poem. It seems to me that the question to be asked is: how does this prologue speak for itself before (only in retrospect) providing a map for reading what follows? To put this a different way: where do we find ourselves when suspended at that brief pause in reading situated between reading the last line of the prologue and the first line of S. 1, between Pegaseium nectar and O curas? Once we have grappled with this, we can then ask ourselves: where do we think we are headed? In what direction(s) does the prologue point us? Does it point us in a direction at all?

The answer to this last question is one which merits further consideration and, I think, partly lies in the very first line of the poem. From the outset, we are given no hint as to the generic type or shape of the collection which is to follow: Nec fonte labra prolui... The nec of course presupposes at least another still to come. Instead of explicitly pointing the way, the opening lines tell us where they do not point: nec...nec, in effect neither "x" nor "y." The poetry of Rome, up to the time of Persius, permeated as it was with Alexandrian allusiveness and tropes, is emphatically not the direction we are headed. These lines, then, do at least give some negative indication of what type of poetic project Persius has
embarked upon by defining itself in terms of what it is not: we are not on
Mount Parnassus nor are we on the banks of a clear-flowing spring. So,
where are we? Even a little later in the prologue when Persius refers to
himself with the puzzling epithet *semipaganus*, he thwarts any of our
attempts to orient ourselves. It seems fitting therefore that these opening
lines begin with *nec* since, despite Persius’ apparent posturing at defining his
poetry, we still have no clear sense of direction. Their purpose is to disorient
rather than to place and direct.

Indeed, I believe that perhaps the insecurity we feel here as readers is
partly the point of the prologue’s misdirection: these lines provoke
uneasiness while at the same time exposing the cause of our insecurity in
ourselves, in our own need to pin these poems (and the poet) down, as
“prologues” typically do. The anaphoric use of *nec* therefore admonishes us
for this tendency. Persius resists being categorized because his poetic project
announces itself as standing outside our hackneyed modes of categorization.
In fact, much has been said about the geographical discrepancy in line two of
the prologue: *nec in bicipiti somniasse Parnasso | memini*, (nor do I recall
dreaming on two-headed Parnassus). As commentators have pointed out,
Hesiod’s and Callimachus’ dreams to which Persius is here referring took
place on Mt. Helicon, not Mt. Parnassus. It seems, however, that perhaps the
uneasiness generated by this “confusion” may actually reflect our own
uncertainty as we grapple with the opening lines of the poem. This
ambiguity of poetic direction is subtly mirrored in the epithet of the mis-
identified Parnassus, *bicipiti*, which itself connotes the resistance to be
confined in one place.

To be sure, Persius claims that he will avoid triteness. This claim is
itself a common literary motif that can trace its lineage back to Callimachus.
The prologue to Callimachus' *Aetia* was the locus classicus for the rejection of
hackneyed types of poetry (*Aetia* I, fr.1.25-28Pf):

> πρὸς δὲ σεὶ καὶ τὸδ' ἄνωγα, τὰ μη πατέουσιν ἁμαξαί
> τὰ στείβειν, ἐτέρων ἱλαία ὑπὸ καθ' ὁμᾶ
> δίφρον ἐλὰν μὴ δ' οἴμου ἀνὰ πλατύν, ἀλλὰ κελεύθους
> ἀτρίπτολος, εἰ καὶ στείβοντέρην ἐλάσεις.'

“This too I bid you: tread a path which carriages do not trample; do not
drive your chariot upon the common tracks of others, nor along a wide
road, but on unworn paths, though your course be more narrow.”

This sentiment is found elsewhere in Callimachus (epigram 28.1-4Pf.):

> Ἐξθαίρω τὸ ποίημα τὸ κυκλικόν, οὐδὲ κελεύθω
> χαίρω, τὸσ' πολλοὺς οὐδὲ καὶ οὐδὲ φέρειν
> μισῶ καὶ περιφοιτῶν ἐρωμένον, οὐδὲ ἀπὸ κρήνης
> πίνω· σικχαίνω πάντα τὰ δημόσια.

“I hate the cyclic poem, nor do I take pleasure in the road which carries
many to and fro. I abhor, too, the roaming lover, and I drink not from
the spring; I loathe all common things.”

In his rejection of the well-worn themes of cyclic epic, Callimachus employs
the metaphor of the public spring, the common water source in a high-traffic,
urban locale, to represent his scorn for those poets who tap into the same
overused source of poetic inspiration. Persius, in the opening line of his
prologue, relocates Callimachus’ communal spring to the remote heights of
Parnassus, implying that Hippocrene, itself a hackneyed metaphor for poetic
inspiration, has now become the public water supply.

The motif also finds adherents among the Roman poets, notably
Horace in *Ode* 3.1.1: *odi profanum vulgus et arceo* (“I despise the common
crowd and keep them at a distance”). Vergil’s adaptation offers more of a
comparison with Persius (*Georgics*, 3.3-8):


cetera, quae vacuas tenuissent carmine mentes,
omnia iam vulgata: quis aut Eurysthea durum
aut inlaudati nescit Busiridis aras?
cui non dictus Hylas puer et Latonia Delos
Hippodameaque umeroque Pelops insignis eburno,
acer equis?

“Other themes, which had charmed with song idle minds, are now all
trite. Who knows not pitiless Eurystheus, or the altars of detested
Busiris? To whom has the story of the boy Hylas, of Latona’s Delos, of
Hippodame, and Pelops, famed for ivory shoulder, and fearless with
his steeds not been related?”

As in Persius, Vergil’s complaint is that “it is Callimachean themes that have
become commonplace.” After rejecting these hackneyed themes, Vergil then
proceeds to offer in their stead the metaphorical temple which will house
Octavian at its center (lines 13-ff). Vergil describes this temple in detail:
sculpted out of marble (*templum de marmore ponam*), it will rise along the
banks of the Mincius which flows through the poet’s native Mantua. It is
commonly believed that these lines clearly allude to some epic project,
undoubtedly the *Aeneid*. Despite their shared avoidance of triteness, Vergil
and Persius depart from one another in the manner in which Vergil indicates
a poetic trajectory in his prologue: after the *Georgics*, he will move on to epic. Persius, as we have seen, leaves his poetic direction ambiguous: in contrast to Vergil's sacred offering of the majestic poetic temple to Octavian, Persius is less specific about his humble poetic offering (*carmen nostrum*). He will observe his rites in an out of the way shrine that has no telling architectural features. Moreover, his offering is dedicated to no particular god and on the banks of no home-town, inspirational river.

In the opening lines of the prologue, Persius rejects divine inspiration and in so doing divorces himself from those who claim it as an impetus for their own poetry. For Persius, this divine apparatus is not what makes a poet, or at least a poet in his mode. Indeed, despite the ambiguity with which he cloaks his poetic direction, he does use these lines to fashion a poetic pose for himself. This pose is mainly derived from the self-deprecating epithet *semipaganus* with which Persius qualifies his inclusion among the conventional circle of poets. According to the scholiast on this passage, the word means something like "half-rustic." So Persius ostensibly portrays himself as an unsophisticated rube intruding upon the exclusive "rites of poets" (*sacra vatum*).

Yet, this qualification is in effect a backhanded swipe at these very poets. In referring to himself as *semipaganus*, Persius implicitly contrasts himself with these poets, emphasizing his own poetic autonomy in contrast to the externally infused stimulus (whether it be Propertius' Hippocrene, for
example, or Ennius' dream-visitation\textsuperscript{6}) professed by others. He discounts the formulaic process whereby one "suddenly" (\textit{repente}) emerges as a poet once having laid claim to the requisite sources of inspiration. Persius' aversion to this notion is underscored by the pejorative \textit{caballino}, employed to mock the proverbial spring of inspiration. He himself, on the other hand, implies that the poetry which he brings to the "rites" (\textit{sacra}) of poets is indeed something novel and unmistakeably of his own creation (\textit{ipse}) by clearly setting up a dichotomy between \textit{sacra vatim} and \textit{carmen nostrum}. Here, Persius again alludes to a literary commonplace to demonstrate his own departure from tradition: the notion of the "rites of poets" is itself a literary trope quite prominent in the Augustan poets.\textsuperscript{7}

But perhaps we have been looking at all of this from the wrong angle. Maybe we should not be merely looking at the words for our cue. The line seemingly opens as an iambic trimeter which, despite being a versatile meter for Roman poets, would, I think, seem an unexpected metrical form for the type of statement it expresses. Up until Persius' prologue, an iambic meter had not (as far as I can tell) been used for this type of poetic self-fashioning, and this metrical peculiarity in this context leaves us disoriented. Why then does Persius use the iamb for his prologue? We need to read to the end of the line to get reoriented: \textit{caballino}. The word's metrical shape (one short syllable followed by three long) identifies the meter as choliambic. The halting cadence of the choliambic meter with its final spondee is itself instructive.

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when grappling with Persius' poetic maneuvering in the prologue. The meter itself evokes its creator, the mid-sixth century Greek iambic poet Hipponax, whose verses were known for their stinging criticism. When the reader gets to the neologism *caballino*, several features conspire to bring Hipponax to mind: not only does this word deliberately slow down the line's cadence immediately signaling the Hipponactean meter of the poem, but with its equestrian connotations (*Hippo-nax*) and inherent sarcasm, it invites us to consider the role Hipponax may play in the prologue. As West has noted, Hipponax' "rough treatment of the cadence, normally the most strictly regulated part of any verse, may best be understood as a kind of deliberate metrical ribaldry, in keeping with [his] studied vulgarity." The dragging, limping effect of the choliambic meter was also a conscious attempt to distort the euphony of the rhythm to reflect both the poet's harsh tone and the ugliness of his subject matter. It was this very feature, the interrelationship in Hipponax between style and subject matter, that seems to have drawn Persius to the "limping" iambics of Hipponax. Although by Persius' time Hipponax' poetry had fallen out of favor, he still held interest, according to one scholar, "for the lexicographer and the pedant-poet."

But, is that the way we should construe the speaker of these lines? As a pedant? Are references to Hipponax in the prologue merely the games of an obscure poet alluding to an even more obscure Greek model? Persius' close friend was the the lyric poet Caesius Bassus, the addressee of Persius' sixth
satire and a learned metrician in his own right. Such a literary acquaintance as Bassus might have piqued Persius' interests in forgotten poets and obsolete meters. As we consider the remains of Hipponax's poetry and the testimonia about his life, we will understand why Persius found the Greek iambographer an appropriate model for the prologue. And we will, I hope, get past the idea of Persius' pedantry.

The poetry of Hipponax has largely been lost except for a meager collection of papyrus scraps and one and two line quotations which were preserved in the works of ancient and medieval grammarians and lexicographers. Aside from his identification as the founder of the choliambic meter, the little we know about his life has to a large degree been reconstructed from the fragments we have of his poems and gleaned from ancient testimonia. A native of the Ionian city of Ephesus, Hipponax was banished by the city's tyrants and relocated to nearby Clazomenae. Hipponax was an innovator. He took the iambic meter which had been used by his predecessor Archilochus for abusing his enemies and made it his own simply by slightly altering the meter. It seems that Hipponax's purpose in doing this was not only to be original, but also to make the dissonance of the line's cadence reflect his own brand of personal abuse which he inflicted on his own enemies. This criticism was aimed primarily at two sculptors, the brothers Boupalus and Athenis. According to sources on the life of Hipponax, the brothers fashioned a statue of Hipponax which became the object of laughter.
It is said that this likeness unflatteringly depicted the notoriously ugly features of the poet. Because of this, Hipponax directed his scathing verses at them which, so the story goes, drove them to suicide. Pliny the Elder’s version of these events is the fullest account:

"The face of Hipponax was notoriously ugly; on account of this they [Boupalus and Athenis] impudently exhibited a humorous likeness of him to a circle of laughing spectators. In anger at this Hipponax unsheathed such bitter verses that some believe he drove them to the noose."

This physical characterization of Hipponax likely derives from assessments of his poetic style. The harshness of his poetry, exemplified by its bitter criticism, coarse obscenity, and dissonant metrical cadence, is transferred to the physical appearance of the poet. Indeed, the words used to describe Hipponax’ ugliness (foeditas in Pliny the Elder, deformitas in Pseudo-Acron) are terms also generally associated with a coarse compositional style. The potency of Hipponax’ verses, indicated by the reports attributing the suicides of Boupalus and Athenis to Hipponax’ poems, thus seems directly connected to the ugliness of the poet and therefore the ugliness which defines his poetry. The image of the city which Hipponax affords us through his poems expresses this potency of his poetry. When we examine the poetic fragments of Hipponax, we see glimpses of the sordid Ionian society of his native
Ephesus which he creates and at which he regularly directs his criticism.\textsuperscript{15} The uglified construct of the city that Hipponax is so actively engaged in fashioning parallels Persius' similar treatment of Rome in his poems.

At the time Hipponax is writing, the Greek world witnessed the development of πόλεις. Hipponax' lurid description of Ephesus therefore appears to be an antithetical reaction to the civic enterprises of the tyrants of these πόλεις. As a counterpoise to the urban building projects proliferating at this period (e.g. the Temple of Artemis), Hipponax in response constructs his own uglified version of the city. The municipal monuments that glorify the city, and in turn the tyrant, stand in stark contrast to Hipponax' poetry.\textsuperscript{19} Hipponax' construction of the city largely depends on his own pose as an indigent, low-life in his poems.\textsuperscript{20} It is from this social position that he views the urban landscape rising before him, a pose adopted later by Juvenal in his satires. In fr. 32W, for example, the poet asks Hermes to provide a cloak and other protection against the elements:

\begin{verbatim}
'Ερμη, φίλη 'Ερμη, Μαιάδει, Κυλλήνιε,
ἐπεύξομαι τοι, κάρτα γὰρ κακῶς βιγώ
καὶ βαμβαλύζω...
δὸς χλαίναν ἤπτονακτί καὶ κυπασόσκου
καὶ σαμβαλίσκα κάσκερισκα καὶ χρυσοῦ
στατήρας ἔξηκοντα τούτέρου τοίχου.

"Hermes, dear Hermes, son of Maia, Cylenian, I pray to you, for I am shivering violently and terribly and my teeth are chattering...Give Hipponax a cloak, tunic, sandals, felt shoes and 60 gold staters on the other side."
\end{verbatim}

Similar claims of poverty are expressed at fr. 36W:
“Wealth—for he is exceedingly blind—never came into my house and said: ‘Hipponax, I’m giving you 30 minas of silver and much else besides.’ For he has a coward’s mind.”

Due to the fragmentary nature of fr. 104W, it is unclear what precisely is happening; nonetheless, it is evident that the poet has some encounter with a prostitute (10-51):

δακτύλως μεταστρέψας·
[λων δ’ αὐτὸν ἀσκαρίζοντα
[ν]ύν ἐν τῇ γαστρὶ λάξ ἐνώρουσα·
[λ]ίς μὴ δοκῇ με λασβαίνειν·
’Ἰδειν ἐπιβρύκων
’ Ἰησοῦν καταπλῆκεν·
ἐξέδυσα τὴν χλαίναν
πόλις περιψήσας·
τὴν] βύρνην ἐπάκτωσα
]. τὸ πῦρ κατακρύβας
βασικά] δὲ τὰς ἱνας
ἥλειφον τέστι δὲ οἱ ἤπνευσα Κροῖος·
[ν] Δασκυλέιος
[ξιωνελωι][]
[πολολε[]]
[λόγων καῖ][κικι[[]]
[ιουλλα commence]
[ανδροσου[[]
[τα] καθή[[]]
[ν]ουκουμεν[πρωκτο[[]]
[η] σημαίνον
[σε]λη πόρνη
[ε] ἀλην] ἕξορυξειαν[[]]
[ικι] ἐρευνή υἱόσου
[ζ] κατά κινήσην
[ν] κισκυπτιμεναρ[[]]
[ς]ιμου λοφοφράγγας[[]
[αιπαλούτ[ι.π.σ[[]]
[ζ] τατον δι[[]]
[ντεσινθε[[]]
[.] λαλα[[]]
[θλι] εἴ[[]]
[λός χοροί[[]]
[τα]ρα[[]που[[]]
"...bending back his fingers...and abundantly...him as he squirmed...I jumped on his stomach...so that he might not have a mind to curse me...gnashing my teeth...with legs apart...I took off my cloak...wiping my feet clean...I barred the door... covering the fire...and I anointed my nostrils with perfume...such as Croesus had...Daskyleion...stabbed ass-hole...giving a sign...prostitute...they dig out...island...at the smell of roasted fat...with shoulders broken off...feet-tripping...Slipping, he besought the seven-leafed cabbage which he used to offer in a pot to Pandora at the Thargelia in front of (?) the scapegoat...forehead and ribs."22

This poetic voice empowers the poet to create his own uglified construct of the city, a construct juxtaposed to the pólis emerging around him.

With the strange, often foreign vocabulary which permeates the fragments, Hipponax, departing from his poetic predecessors, creates a world not in which epic wars are waged on the mythic battlefield, but rather one in which highly obscene antics take place in stench-filled alleys.23 For Hipponax, the alley (λαύρη) embodies his city to such a degree that the activities that take place there generate the metaphors with which the poet comments on the inhabitants of his city (fr.61W): ἐκρωζεν ὁδὸς κυμινδὶς ἐν λαύρῃ (“[he?] squawked like a kymindis [a type of bird] in an alley”). We find a similar instance at fr. 155W: κατέπεν ὄσπερ κρεκύδειλος ἐν λαύρῃ (“drank like a lizard in an alley”). Elsewhere in Hipponax' poetry, the alley is used metaphorically to represent the anus (fr.92W):

ηὕδα δὲ λυδίζουσα: βασκ...κρολεα,
pυγιστὶ τὸν πυγεῶνα παρὶ
cαι μοι τὸν ὄρχῳ τῆς φαλ
κοράθῃ συνηλοίησεν ἄσπιερ φαρμακ

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“She spoke in Lydian: ‘Faskati krolel,’ in Ass-ish, ‘your ass...’ and my balls... she thrashed with a fig branch as though (I were a scapegoat)... fastened securely by forked pieces of wood(?)... and (I was caught?) between two torments... on the one side the fig branch... me, descending from above, (and on the other side my ass?) spattering with shit... and my ass-hole [Xaupql stank. Dung beetles came buzzing at the smell, more than fifty of them. Some attacked and struck down(?)..., others (whet their teeth?), and others falling upon the doors... of Pygela.”

In adopting this poetic voice, Hipponax lets us visit the city’s back-streets, taking us into the squalid slum he seems to know too well. Thus, it is perhaps not by chance that Boupalus’ and Athenis’ hideous likeness of Hipponax appropriately emblematizes Hipponax’ owned deformed construct of the πόλις (that they had some role in beautifying and aggrandizing) bluntly rendered into his unsettling choliambic meter. Indeed, the dissonance of the choliambic cadence seemed to ancient writers on style entirely appropriate to the themes of Hipponax’ poetry, and they were in the habit of explaining this deformation in blunt, bodily terms. In his On Style (301), Demetrius characterizes Hipponax as having “shattered the meter”:

καὶ ὀσπερ τὸ διαλελωμένον σχῆμα δεινότητα ποιεῖ, ὡς προλέεκται, οὕτω ποιῆσε ἡ διαλελωμένη δῶς σύνθεσις.
“And just as the disjointed form of speech produces a vigorous effect, as has already been said, so will disjointed composition (διαλεκμένη σύνθεσις) in general. The poetry of Hipponax provides an example. In his [i.e. Hipponax’s] desire to abuse his enemies he shattered the meter, making it lame instead of straightforward, and unrhythmical, i.e. suitable for vigorous abuse, since what is rhythmical and pleasing to the ear would be more suitable for words of praise (ἔγκωμιοις) instead of blame (ψόγοις).”

Although writing at least five hundred years after Hipponax, Demetrius’ assessment of the poet’s style provides us a means whereby we can ascertain some idea of how the ancients construed Hipponax’ relationship to the poetic tradition: he breaks from this tradition by refashioning a meter (i.e. “breaking it,” “abusing it,” “uglifying it”) in order to reflect aptly the ugly and abusive tone he attempts to create. For his poetry of abuse, a disconcerting rhythmical effect would fittingly express the harshness of his invective. The idea that theme and style should complement one another was prevalent in the ancient world and it is clearly at work already in Hipponax.

Due to the fragmentary nature of his poems, we are left to speculate about Hipponax’ own sense of his work using what little we have of his poems in addition to testimonia like that of Demetrius. It does seem clear that, based upon his creation of the choliambic meter, he did intend to carve his own niche in the tradition (if only to “break” the tradition). In addition to his metrical innovation, we can find clues in the fragments of his explicit
departure from his predecessors and contemporaries who continually displayed their indebtedness to Homer. Unlike his fellow iambographer Archilochus, for example, who readily adopts epic diction and themes, Hipponax for the most part avoids Homer.\(^{27}\) In referring to the Mnesiepes inscription, Brown notes that Archilochus underwent a poetic initiation whereby he received his lyre from the Muses.\(^{28}\) Archilochus' encounter with the Muses therefore situates his mode of iambus on a higher, quasi-Hesiodic stylistic level which "accords well with a tradition that saw the Parian iambicist as a 'Homeric' poet."\(^{29}\) According to an ancient account, Hipponax, too, had a poetic initiation scene but of a much different character: the poet met an old woman named Iambe doing her wash by the sea and disturbed the water in her trough. In her anger, she upbraided the poet: \(\alpha ν\eta\rho\omega\tau\iota\,\alpha\pi\epsilon\lambda\theta\varepsilon.\) \(\tau\nu\,\sigma\kappa\alpha\phi\eta\nu\,\alpha\nu\alpha\tau\rho\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\iota\varsigma\) (Sir, go away, you will upset the trough).\(^{30}\) This humble encounter clearly contrasts with the lofty scene of divine inspiration associated with Archilochus. Rather than a visit from the Hesiodic Muses who bathe in the pure waters of Heliconian springs, Hipponax' inspiration is derived from the reproach of an old hag washing wool in dirty salt water. Far from giving the poet a physical token of his lofty poetic vocation, she tells him to go away. An initiation scene involving salt water and a cantakerous old hag clearly entails poetry in a much different mode. Therefore, not only should we be cognizant of Hipponax' attempt to distance himself from the
Homeric tradition, but we must also remember that the meter that Hipponax “shatters” is not the dactylic hexameter but rather the meter of his iambic (yet Homeric) predecessor Archilochus.\(^{31}\)

Despite having no explicitly “Homeric” pretensions, Hipponax’ innovation with the iambus paradoxically does bring Homer to mind by way of the pseudo-Homeric *Margites*.\(^{32}\) Although surviving in a few meager fragments, the *Margites* seems to have been a mock-epic composed in both hexameters and trimeters. The poem takes its name from its central character Margites who was apparently a ludicrous simpleton much like Hipponax’ persona in his own poetry.\(^{33}\) In *Poetics* 1448b, Aristotle ascribes the *Margites* to Homer and credits Homer with developing the iambic meter for the satirical purposes of his poem:

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ēv ois kai to áμμόττον [iáμβείην] ἡλθε μέτρου, διὸ καὶ iáμβείην καλείται νῦν, ὅτι ἐν τῷ μέτρῳ τούτῳ iáμβείην ἀλλήλους. καὶ ἐγένοντο τῶν παλαιῶν οἱ μὲν ἥρωικόν οἱ δὲ iáμβην ποιηταί.
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“The appropriate meter was also here introduced; hence the measure is still called the iambic or lampooning measure, being that in which people lampooned one another. Thus the older poets were distinguished as writers of heroic or of lampooning verse.”

The development of a new metrical form to accord with a poem’s subject matter is, we have seen, a move also undertaken by Hipponax.\(^{34}\) It is impossible to know, however, if Hipponax saw the metrical innovation (if we believe Aristotle) of the *Margites* and its farcical main character as models
since the authorship and dating of the poem are in doubt. At the very least, we can say that the Margites (whether by Homer or not) and the fragments of Hipponax both deviate from the heroic world of the Iliad and the Odyssey.

Another Homeric passage is relevant to our discussion of Hipponax. In Iliad, 2.211-219, the poet introduces us to Thersites, the Greek warrior of less than favorable character:

"Now the rest has sat down, and were orderly in their places, but one man, Thersites of the endless speech, still scolded, who knew within his head many words, but disorderly; vain, and without decency, to quarrel with the princes with any word he thought might be amusing to the Argives. This was the ugliest man who came beneath Ilion. He was bandy-legged and went lame of one foot, with shoulders stooped and drawn together over his chest, and above this his skull went up to a point with the wool grown sparingly upon it."

There are clearly many features of this description that are reminiscent of what we know about Hipponax. His dissociation from the rest of the group (μοῦνος), his immoderate speech, his ugliness (αἰσχιστός), and above all his lameness (χωλός) are all attributes that are associated with Hipponax and his poetry. In providing comic relief for the Argives, Thersites evokes the role of the iambicist whose verses also aimed at eliciting laughter (γελοιόν). The similarities are striking, and it is tempting to speculate that Hipponax has
marked his departure from the Homeric tradition by deliberately fashioning himself (as well as his "ugly", "limping" meter) as a version of the least heroic figure in Homeric epic, Thersites.37

One fragment (fr. 128W), however, one of the longest fragments we have of Hipponax, surprisingly does display a conscious move in the direction of epic. But it is in this same fragment, written in dactylic hexameter, that we see the poet most explicitly attempting to distance himself from Homer. This passage, preserved in Athenaeus, is presented as an example of parody. In fact, Athenaeus remarks in this context that Hipponax was the founder of parody (εὔρετήν...τοῦ γένους):

Μούσα μοι Εὐρυμεδοντιάδεα τὴν ποινοχάρυβδιν,
τὴν ἐγγαστριμάχαιραν, δὲ έσθιει οὐ κατὰ κόσμον,
ἐννεφ, ὅπως ψηφιδί (κακὴ) κακῶν οἶτον διήταται
βουλῇ δημοσίῃ παρὰ δι’ ἀλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο.

"Tell me, Muse, of the son of Eurymendon, the sea swallower, the stomach carver, who eats in no orderly manner, so that through a baneful vote determined by the people he may die a wretched death along the shore of the unfruitful sea."

These lines mimic Homeric style to satirize a certain glutton named Eurymedon for his intemperate eating and drinking habits.38 The structure of the Muse-invocation, for example, follows Homeric models, particularly the opening of Odyssey 1.1 ("Ἀνδρα μοι ἐννεπε, Μούσα, πολύτροπον..., "Sing to me, Muse, the man of many wiles...") and the Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite (Μούσα μοι ἐννεπε ἔργα πολυχρώσου Ἀφροδίτης, "Sing to me, Muse, of the works of golden Aphrodite").39 The patronymic Εὐρυμεδοντιάδεα itself recalls Homeric convention, especially the invocation which opens the Iliad (Μήνιν
Sing, goddess, the wrath of Achilles, the son of Peleus”). Elaborate epithets (e.g. ἔγγαστρωμάχαιρον) are also evocative of Homer, particularly ποντοχάρυβδιν which specifically alludes to Charybdis of the Odyssey. In this fragment, such compounds clearly have parodic functions as their absurd connotations (“sea swallower”) attest. The iambicist has also appropriated Homeric formulas and traditional verse-endings for parodic effect: οὐ κατὰ κόσμον and παρὰ διὰ ἀλὸς ἀτρυγέτοιο. Hipponax’ parody of Homeric epic extends beyond the mimicking of formulas and diction. In fact, we have evidence elsewhere among the poetic fragments (74-77W) that Homer’s Odyssey was also likely the subject of Hipponactean parody. I believe that in such a parody as the lines quoted in Athenaeus, Hipponax does not merely mock the conventions of Homeric epic but more specifically contrasts his poetry and its themes with the heroic world found in Homer as well as with those poets who align themselves with the epic tradition.

A survey of the remains of Hipponax’ poetry demonstrates the degree to which this poet depicts a world far different from what we find in Homer. In his verses, we find graphic descriptions of sexual acts replete with excrement (frs. 79 and 92W), masturbation (fr. 78W), and even incest (frs. 12 and 70W). The world of Homer with its mythic heroes has no place in the world Hipponax creates in his poetry. Myth took center stage in the Homeric poems and maintained its place of prominence in the popular poetry.
immediately subsequent to Hipponax, namely the odes of Pindar and the theatrical productions of the fifth century. For a poet who aimed at representing a squalid, lower-class world of the πόλις, whose focus was on the sordid elements of society, the elevated themes and divine trappings of epic seemed ill-suited to his subject matter: the Zeus and Apollo of Homer gave way to Hermes, a god of thieves, erect phalluses, and con-artists who is featured prominently in the extant fragments of Hipponax.

Hipponax' depiction of these most unsavory aspects of society has been taken by some scholars as the likely cause of his apparent banishment from Ephesus to Clazomenae mentioned in the testimonia. Hipponax lived "in the age of the definitive consolidation of the polis, of the urban and civic space as opposed to rural dispersion." In this age, when civic buildings were being constructed in Pisistratus' Athens, for example, and an interest in public sanitation began to emerge, Hipponax made the λαύρη (or sewage-filled back alley) the center of his city. This subversive character of Hipponax' poetic project is nicely formulated by Miralles-Pòrtulas: "If cleaning the city...[is one of the] basic goals of the establishment of poleis, if tyrants bought the glory provided by Pindaric epinician..., we should not be surprised that Hipponax was exiled." This claim is based on the fact that the emergence of tyrannies coincided with the consolidation of cities. The tyrants and cities that Pindar
celebrated a generation after Hipponax can trace their origins to this age of urban construction. Hipponax' "civic" buildings are the brothel and the tavern.

From the preceding examination of his poetic fragments, we get an image of Hipponax as a maverick poet, grappling with the burden of the Homeric tradition. As we have already stated, the creation of the choliambic meter is itself an explicit claim both to innovation and poetic distancing (always already a parody of poetry of a higher kind). That the choliamb itself evokes its creator is demonstrated by other poets who also employ this meter to appropriate his poetic voice. Often when this meter is used, there is also an explicit reference to Hipponax. In the Roman poetic tradition before Persius, the sole surviving examples of choliambics are found in Catullus. Although Catullus does not make any explicit reference to the iambicist, he usually adopts an abusive tone in these poems which is very reminiscent of Hipponax. In the Greek tradition, Callimachus, for example, owes the concept of his book of iambics to Hipponax. The first four poems of this collection are written in the choliambic meter. In the opening poem, regarded as a programmatic poem, Callimachus brings Hipponax back from the grave to upbraid Callimachus' contemporaries for being envious and critical of one another. We confront Callimachus' Hipponax in the opening lines of the poem and immediately we get some sense of that Hipponactean voice that Callimachus intends to exploit in his poem:
"Listen to Hipponax, for indeed I have come from the place where they sell an ox for a penny, armed with iambic verses, which do not sing the feud with Boupalus, but... come, gather at the shrine outside the walls, where the old man who invented the ancient Panchaean Zeus babbles and scribbles his impious books."

Hipponax is forceful and direct, attributes we should expect from the iambicist. He tells his audience what to do (listen) and who he is. Indeed, Callimachus captures the spirit of Hipponax by having the poet refer to himself by name. The implication is that his very name should elicit some sort of reaction or certain expectations. He tells his listeners that he has arrived from Hades. Not a conjured apparition like those we might expect in a Homeric *nekuia*, he has come voluntarily, intruding into the world of the living to offer criticism. His interest in "small change and cheap food" is evocative of the base concerns of the lowly persona of the poet we know from Hipponax' fragments. It appears that Callimachus' Hipponax is still the potent poet of abuse, prepared to launch his iambic censure (φέρων ιαμβόν) yet with a modified direction (οὐ μάχην ἀείδοντα τὴν Βούπαλειον). Again, this departure from expected poetic themes is consistent with the poetically
innovative Hipponax and wholly appropriate for this meter. In refusing to sing about Boupalus, Callimachus' Hipponax reminds us that the meter was created precisely to attack rather than praise.

As Callimachus' poem and the rest of his collection continue, however, we can see that his iambi deviate further from the ethos we find in Hipponax' poetry. While Hipponax' iambics are harsh and construct the squalid underbelly of society, Callimachus' poems are "cool, smiling, rational."\(^{52}\) They aim at high, literary society, dispensing with Hipponax' coarse images and graphic scenarios, although approaching more elevated themes with a Hipponactean spin. The difference in time and locale, from sixth-century Ephesus to third-century Alexandria, has had a decided effect upon the typical Hipponactean mode. It has been both elevated and softened.\(^{53}\) Indeed, I would argue that what is at issue in Callimachus' lambus 1 is the recognition of the difference in time and place in terms of a poet's use of a predecessor. The specificity with which Callimachus localizes the setting of his opening poem (according to the Diegesis, the Sarapeum of Parmenio) seems to point in this very direction.\(^{54}\) Callimachus' Hipponax is an outsider from a different time and place. He has arrived from the underworld, yet his expressed appreciation for a bargain still identifies him as the low class buffoon from Ephesus. Nevertheless, he is aware that his new surroundings require a slightly modified iambic voice.
When we reflect back on his poetry, we recall that Hipponax also viewed himself as an outsider. He adopted the pose of an uncultivated dolt to emphasize the otherness of his undignified verses from the sublimity of the Homeric tradition. Since Hipponax' poems themselves were very specific about locating us in the back alley-ways of Ephesus, Callimachus' emphasis on "placing" Hipponax elsewhere and having him set his sights on higher "literary" targets demonstrates how the differences in time and place affect a poet's processing of his model(s). Callimachus appropriates Hipponax' pose as an outsider. With this pose, he makes himself a poetic outsider commenting on the contemporary poetic scene. Hipponax criticizes Callimachus' contemporaries, scholar-poets, for their incessant quarrelling.  
The audience of scholar-poets reminds us of Callimachus' critics addressed in the famous prologue to his *Aetia*. Like Hipponax, Callimachus here again casts himself as an outsider, departing from the epic tradition to stake his claim as an innovative poet writing in an entirely different mode.  
The need for a slightly modified Hipponactean voice is also prominent in the final poem of Callimachus' iambic collection where the poet is attacked by a literary critic. The point of his critic's attack seems to be Callimachus' tendency towards πολυβελετεα, or "generic versatility" in his poetry. The critic's attack is itself an example of the envy and quarrelling from which Hipponax in the first *Iambus* admonishes the scholar-poets of Alexandria to refrain. Hipponax reappears in *Iambus* 13, mentioned both by Callimachus'
critic (11-14) as well as by the poet himself (64-66). In his criticism of Callimachus, the unnamed critic seems to fault the poet for writing in choliambics though not competently imitating Hipponax to the letter. He cites the fact that Callimachus never visited Ephesus as the basis for his objection (11-14):

"... neither having mixed with the Ionians, nor having come to Ephesus, which is... Ephesus which inspires those who will write scasons skilfully."

As Kerkhecker puts it, "Callimachus, it seems, is blamed for using the Ephesian scason without serious research and proper preparation." It is noteworthy that it is Callimachus' critic who, while flouting the exhortation of Callimachus' Hipponax in *lambis* 1, takes on the character of the real Hipponax, turning "aggressive and insulting." At the end of the poem, Callimachus responds to his critic by showing how his notions of imitating Hipponax "fall short of the poet's [i.e. Callimachus'] moral concerns and his allegiance to the Hipponax of *lambus* I." Callimachus appropriates the very words of the critic at the end of the poem to use in his own defence, and in so doing, effectively dismisses the criticism leveled against him. In having his critic assume the role of the "real" Hipponax, Callimachus juxtaposes the "real" Hipponax to his own, thereby demonstrating the unsuitability of the pure Hipponactean mode for his *lambi* and the need for a different Hipponax,
the Hipponax of *lambus* 1. In concluding this poetic collection with an evocation of his Hipponax from the first poem, Callimachus reminds his audience that he is indeed, like his model, an innovative poet.60

Callimachus’ direct engagement with Hipponax can be regarded as a metaphor for the literary tradition whereby a dead poet of long ago still influences and shapes the poetic projects of his successors. This notion of a dead poet reaching out from beyond the grave (made literally the case in Callimachus’ *lambus* 1) has many other parallels in the literary productions of the Hellenistic period. It is in fact the portrayals of the potency and directness of Hipponax in addition to the one we find in Callimachus that also help in understanding the pressures of his literary legacy. As was mentioned previously, any attempt to write in choliambics seemed to necessitate adopting a Hipponactean surliness. That is, with the meter comes the poet; back from the dead. The converse is equally valid: to write about Hipponax found the poet writing choliambics. Besides *lambus* 1, the prime example of this is a sepulchral epigram by Theocritus (epigram 19):

> ὁ μουσοτοίος ἐνθάδ’ Ἰππώνας κεῖται.
> εἰ μὲν πονηρός, μὴ προσέρχεσθε τῷ τύμβῳ
> εἰ δ’ ἐσοὶ κρυγὴς τε καὶ παρὰ χρηστῶν,
> θαρσέων καθιζέω, κἂν θέλης ἀποβριζόν.

> “Here lies the poet Hipponax. If you are wicked, do not approach the tomb; but if you are honest and from good people, confidently sit down, and if you desire, take a nap.”

The standard meter of sepulchral epigram is *not* choliambic. Thus, the use of the choliambics in this sepulchral epigram has to do with representing the
"epigram" as a poem inspired by Hipponax himself. The mention of the poet's name, while expected in a sepulchral epigram, here also reflects nicely Hipponax' tendency in his poems to refer to himself in the third person. The characterization of Hipponax in this epigram largely coheres with the perception we have of the iambographer from his poetic fragments. In this Hipponactean context, the wicked who are warned to stay clear of the tomb bring to mind the familiar targets of Hipponax' criticism, Boupalus and Athenis. Honest people are invited to sit by the grave and nap. The admonition to the wicked to avoid approaching Hipponax' tomb connotes the unflagging capacity for abuse at the hands of the now deceased poet. The invective permeating his iambics suggests a personality "retaining such a high degree of potency that, even in death, it might encroach on the realm of the living." Yet, Hipponax' invective has undergone a transformation in the hands of Theocritus. In this epigram, there has been a shift not in terms of the potency of the criticism characteristic of Hipponax, but rather in terms of the focus of Hipponax' abuse. Theocritus' Hipponax is no longer the poet whose personal vendetta against Boupalus for his unflattering likeness takes center stage. Rather, in distinguishing the wicked (πονηρός) from the honest (κρήγυος) and good (χρηστῶν), the Hipponax of Theocritus' poem has ostensibly moved from the practice of targeting personal enemies to an
apparent emphasis on censuring general immorality. Thus, Theocritus’ Hipponax has evolved into a responsible moral critic, out for the common good.

In addition to Theocritus’ epigram, three poems from the *Palatine Anthology* also mention the possibility of arousing Hipponax from the dead. We notice in these epigrams, however, a shift away from the Theocritean (and Callimachean) image of Hipponax as a moral critic back to the traditional view of Hipponax waging his personal vendettas. In an epigram of Philip of Thessaloniki (AP 7.405) of a more common iambic variety published about A.D. 40, Hipponax is described as a sleeping wasp who nurtures his anger even in Hades:

> ο ξεινε, φεγγε τον χαλαζητη ταφον
> τον φρικτον ἵππωνακτος, ου τε χα τεφρα
> λαμβιδει θουλαλειον ε πτυγος,
> μη πως εγειρης σφηκα τον κομωμενον.
> δε ωυδ εν Ἠιδη νυν κεκοιμηκεν χολον
> σκαζουσι μετροις όρθα τοξευσας ἐπι.

“Stranger, flee from the grave with its hailstorm of verses, the frightful grave of Hipponax, whose very ashes utter invective to vent his hatred of Boupalus, lest somehow you arouse the sleeping wasp who has not even now in Hades put to sleep his anger, he who shot forth his words straight to the mark in limping meter.”

The comparison to a wasp can also be found in the epigram of Leonidas of Tarentum (AP 7.408) who lived during the first half of the third century B.C.:

> ἄτρειμα τον τύμβον παραμείβετε, μη τον ἐν ὑπνοι πικρον ἐγείρειτε σφικ' ἀναπαυόμενον
> ἄρτι γὰρ ἰππώνακτος ὁ καὶ τοκέων βασίας
> ἄρτι κεκοιμηται θυμος ἐν ἡμερι.
> ἀλλα προμηθήσασθε τὰ γάρ πεπουρωμένα κεῖνον
> βήματα πημαινέων οἴδε καὶ εἰν Ἠιδη.
"Go quietly past the tomb, lest you arouse the bitter wasp who is resting. For the wrath of Hipponax that snarled even at his parents has just been stilled in peace. But take care, since his fiery verses know how to injure even in Hades."

In his description of Hipponax' tomb, Alcaeus of Messene, who wrote around 200 B.C., plays up the harshness that had come to be associated with the poet (AP 7.536):

οὐδὲ θανὼν ὁ πρέσβυς ἐώς ἐπιτέτροφε τῦμβοι
βότρυν ἀπ’ οἴνοπθης ἡμεροι, ἀλλὰ βάτον
καὶ πυγίδιαν ἀχερδοῦ ἀποστύφουσαν ὀδίτων
χείλεα καὶ δίψει καρφαλέον φάρυγα.
ἀλλὰ τὶς Ἰππόνακτος ἐγὼ πάρα σημα νέιται,
εὐχέσθω κυώσειν εὐμενέστατα νέκιν.

"Even after his death the old man does not rear upon his tomb cultivated clusters of grapes from the vine, but brambles and the choking wild pear that constricts the lips of travellers and their throat parched with thirst. But whenever anyone goes past the tomb of Hipponax, let him pray that his corpse be kindly disposed and sleep."

In these epigrams, particularly those by Philip and Leonidas, Hipponax does have the power to emerge from Hades with all of the venom of a Fury to unleash his verses on the living. Hipponax' ghost (or possibly Hipponax himself) is a problematic figure and worthy of our consideration in terms of what it says about Hipponax as a literary model. It is evident from these examples that for a poet to evoke Hipponax is in effect to summon an angry demon from the underworld. Thus the poet himself runs the risk of seeming both a conjurer of dead men's ghosts as well as a dangerous, maligned outsider (along the lines of Canidia and Sagana in Horace, S. 1.8). For a poet to compose in the Hipponactean mode thus carries with it the stigma of his having a personal vendetta and a desire to inflict pain. In some cases, as we
saw in Callimachus' *Iambus* 1 for example, this stigma is converted into a more honest and respectable brand of moral censure. But aside from the specific kind of cultural critique that pervades Hipponax' poetry and which attracted later poets, we should not lose sight of the fact that part of his social criticism was fashioned as an implicit response to his literary predecessors. It has already been shown that Hipponax saw Homeric themes as wholly ill-suited to the voice he wanted to utter. Therefore, we should also view the poets who look to Hipponax as a literary model as always invoking his iconoclasm to reflect their own "independent" literary voice.

In addition to the theme of Hipponax' deathless ire, these epigrams also share another feature in common: these poems all associate the act of sleeping with Hipponax. At first, this may seem to just be a metaphor for the sleep of death, common in sepulchral epigrams. Yet, we do have a poet who expressly states that Hipponax appeared to him in a dream. The poems of the Hellenistic poet Herodas were heavily influenced by Hipponax. The remains of these poems provide vignettes that focus on the lower classes of society. Herodas' poems, written in the choliambic meter, typically depicted obscene situations. In Herodas' eighth Mimiamb, the speaker awakens the household and relates to one of the slaves the events that occurred in a dream. From what remains of the poem, it appears that Herodas "is clearly defending himself against critics and stating his belief that his work is worth while and
will receive recognition." There is some sort of athletic contest in which the speaker is victorious. This is followed by some dispute. The dream and the poem concludes with a reference to Hipponax (73-79):

`τὸ μὴν ἀεθλοῦν ὡς δόκειν ἐξ[ε]ὶν μοῦνος
πολλῶν τὸν ἄπουν κόρυκον πατησάντων,
κῇ τῷ γέροντι ἐὖν ἐπρήξα ὀρινθέντι,
...] κλέος, ναὶ Μοῦσαν, ἢ μὲ ἐπεκε ἂ[
.ἐγὼ ἐξ ἑαυτῶν, ἢ με δευτέρη γυν[.
...]μετ’ ἑπιπώνακτα τὸν παλαι[τ]ὰ κύλλ’ ἀείδειν Ζουθίδης τεμπουστ.

"However as I seemed alone to have the prize, though many trod the wind-less bag, and I shared with the old man in his anger,... by the Muse...my verses...fame from iambics,...a second...me after...Hipponax of old to sing limping songs to...sons of Xuthos."

It is likely that the old man mentioned in line 75 also refers to Hipponax. In his commentary on the poems of Herodas, Cunningham points out that dreams in poetry are the means whereby the poet generally expresses his literary goals. Given Herodas' interest in depicting sordid scenes from the lower levels of society, Hipponax' appearance in the dream is fitting. In Herodas' poem, we see the same characteristic anger that typified the deceased Hipponax in the sepulchral epigrams here associated with his dream-apparition. In those epigrams, the poet himself is at rest, and we are cautioned not to disturb his slumber. Theocritus slightly alters this motif by inviting the morally upstanding passerby to rest at the poet's tomb, implying that only the wicked have reason to fear a Hipponactean nightmare. For Herodas, when Hipponax appears in a dream, it seems he comes with his characteristic fury.
The dream of poetic inspiration can be found in a poem of Herodas’ contemporary, Callimachus, whose famous dream of his encounter with the Heliconian Muses influenced succeeding poets. Callimachus’ dream itself was based on Hesiod’s meeting with the Muses and likely served as the model for Ennius’ dream at the beginning of his Annales. Ennius departs from Callimachus by having Homer, not the Muses, appear in his dream. The appearance of Homer in Ennius’ dream and the subject matter of his speech reflect the lofty style and tone associated with the poet. For Ennius, dreaming of Homer entails the composing of epic replete with battles and the mythical heroes of the Romans. Yet, a dream of Hipponax is much different and, in its own way, rather more complex. Although his angry apparition clearly embodies the invective of his poetry, it also recalls Hipponax’ response to the Homeric tradition.

We have seen thus far how Persius’ predecessors put Hipponax to their own uses, and we have seen that certain patterns inhabit those uses from poet to poet. Let us return now to the prologue to see how all of this relates to Persius’ “resurrecting” Hipponax from the dead. First, as I have said, Persius’ adoption of the choliambic meter for this introductory poem is itself an allusion to Hipponax. But the Hipponactean coloring of the poem is evident in other ways. The metrical shape of the word caballino at the end of line one is not only the first, startling indicator that we are reading a poem in Hipponactean choliambics, but its meaning itself points in the direction of
Hipponax. This adjective, an apparent invention of Persius, is of course related to the word caballus, a riding or pack-horse. It implies disrespect for the venerable poetic spring (cf. Hipponax' briny wash-tub inspiration) and thus clearly betrays the poet's tone at the outset of the poem. In modifying fonte at the beginning of the line, these words are a periphrasis for Hippocrene, the proverbial spring of poetic inspiration on Mount Helicon. In myth, this spring emerged when the mythical, winged horse Pegasus struck the earth with its hoof. Thus with caballino, I believe, Persius makes a pun on Hipponax' own name (Hippocrene–Hipponax). Persius takes this further (thus doubling the difficulty of the pun, as well as the difficulty of my proving it) by using a sarcastic periphrasis for Hippocrene that employs an undignified, lumbering word (of his own creation) for horse.

This word play invites closer inspection of the word fonte as well. Although the initial inclination is to understand this to mean "spring," it is also the word for "source" including "literary source." If we were to understand fonte as such here in line one, the "Nag-horse source" that Persius refers to in this choliambic poem would evoke the equine-named inventor of the meter, Hipponax: instead of the trite poetic horse spring, Hippocrene, Persius derives his inspiration from Hipponax. Persius' evocation of Hipponax here in the opening line of his programmatic prologue where he rejects the hackneyed tropes of poetic inspiration is itself a Hipponactean move. In commenting on the potentially programmatic
significance of Hipponax, test. 21 Degani and defending its Hipponactean
authorship, Brown notes that Hipponax "seems to have ignored the
traditional apparatus of poetic inspiration and to have chosen to present an
encounter with the personification of his poetic form." In rejecting the
inspiration of Hippocrene, Persius alludes to Hipponax who, as we have seen
among the Hellenistic poets, was practically the personification of his poetic
form, the choliamb.

Yet, how is Hipponax important to Persius? Why is it significant to
think of Hipponax when we read Persius' prologue and the six satires that
follow? We can start to answer these questions by again considering the word
caballino. As stated above, Persius created this word and has infused it, I
believe, with poetic implications by way of the standard tale of the poet's
inspirational dreams and draughts. We are intended not only to think of
Hipponax, but also to think of him as a poetic innovator/iconoclast: we are
reminded that he is the founder of parody, able to debase the grandeur of
Homeric epic. He is also the inventor of the choliambic meter, with a taste
for "unusual words—which were sometimes possibly used as a metaphorical
play—which we find very difficult to understand and even to identify as
such." The word caballino, the word that connotes Hipponax, is itself a
parodic neologism, and thus it recalls something of Hipponax' manner of
innovation as a poet: just as Hipponax attempted to free himself from the
strictures of Homeric poetry that bound so many poets in his day, Persius attempts to free himself from the contemporary poetic scene that he paints as his prison in his “inspirational” prologue.

According to Persius’ prologue, the problem with the contemporary poetic scene is that it produces only one kind of sound, though always claiming that this is the stuff of grand inspiration. Even the language by which a poet claims to be unique and to offer something “new” has become hackneyed and outmoded. Thus Persius, like Hipponax, stands outside the scene and criticizes. Persius confronts the sounds that play around him and lets us hear them in a new way: as a crass “squawking” for cash. While Hipponax takes us into the sleazy activities occurring in the seedy alley-ways of his city, Persius’ similarly biting criticism is directed at what he sees openly taking place before him all over Rome, particularly at the decline in the quality of contemporary poetry. Hipponax’ poems were likely the cause for his exile from Ephesus. The subversive nature of his poetry also probably appealed to Persius who in the prologue alone, and as exemplified by the sarcastic caballino, intends to undermine the poetic establishment of his day.

The scathing abuse which typifies Hipponax’ poetry (and the iambics of Archilochus) belongs to a larger iambic tradition that proceeds from these early exemplars to Old Comedy and Callimachus, eventually extending into Roman poetry. The influence of Greek iambus at Rome can readily be seen in the satires of Lucilius where the poet’s harsh criticism of his enemies and
contemporary society are very much indebted to the Greek iambic tradition. As has been noted above, the deformity and hideousness which characterized Boupalus' statue of Hipponax reflect the harsh style and critical tone which characterize Hipponax' choliambics. Demetrius' characterization of Hipponax' poetic style as διαλεγμένη σύνθεσις (disjointed composition) could equally be applied to Persius' style which the satirist himself describes as iunctura acris (Sat. 5.14). Yet, the critical tone of Hipponax is itself built into, and taken as a piece with, the satires of Lucilius whose influence on Persius is more explicit. In the sepulchral epigram of Leonidas, Hipponax is likened to a snarling dog whose wrath ought to be avoided at all costs. Lucilius, too, was known for the potency of his critical attacks. Like the threatening growl of the Hipponactean hound, Lucilius' poems could, according to Persius (Sat. 1.114-15), deliver a fierce bite: secuit Lucilius urbem, te Lupe, te Muci, et genuinum fregit in illis (Lucilius sliced up the city, you Lupus, you Mucius, and broke his molar on them). As one scholar has recently observed, the poetry of Lucilius is characterized by "the steady presence (in hexameters) of a strong first-person voice, fond of vulgar expressions, and ready to criticize moral faults and, at times, to name names."

To push the comparison of the two poets further: any enemy of Scipio Aemilianus, particularly Lupus, becomes in a sense Lucilius' "Boupalus." The ferocity of Lucilius' attacks on his adversaries indeed has a very Hipponactean feel. In his thirtieth book where Lucilius seems to take on his
critics, we find a series of fragments of what appears to be the lament of one of Lucilius' victims. In fr. 1075W, the manner in which Lucilius' adversary addresses the poet gives some sense of the power of his abuse: *Nunc, Gai, quoniam incilans nos laedis vicissim* (Now, Gaius, since you in your turn lash us with your verbal abuse). Again, the image of the Hipponactean wasp comes to mind in frs. 1079-80W when the speaker likens Lucilius to a scorpion poised to sting: *hic, ut muscipulae tentae atque ut scorpios cauda sublata* (this man, like set mouse-traps, like a scorpion with his tail raised).

Another fragment from this context (fr. 1086W) suggests the penetrating criticism of Lucilius' poems: *et maledicendo in multis sermonibus differs* (and you cleave me in two reviling me in your many discourses). Just as Hipponax directs his harshest attacks on his "critic" Boupalus, so much so that they allegedly drove the sculptor to suicide, Lucilius also focuses his bitter invective against his critics, similarly resulting in their apparent bodily injury.

When examining the fragments of Lucilius, we do find further correspondences between the two poets. The obscenity featured so prominently in the poetic fragments of Hipponax is equally apparent in Lucilius' poetry. The lewd acts mentioned in fr. 1182W, for example, are very much akin to those found in Hipponax: *haec inbubinat at contra te inbulbitat <ille>* (She befouls you with her menstrual blood, but he on the other hand defiles you with his feces). This Hipponactean fondness for
obscene references to bodily functions recurs elsewhere in Lucilius (fr. 1183W): *perminxi lectum, inposui pedem pellibus labes* (I wet the bed and made stains on the skins). We also know for instance that in Book 26 of his *Satires*, Lucilius wrote a poem about a brothel (frs. 910-28W) which likely contained sexually explicit scenes. One fragment in particular (fr. 926W) gives us some sense of how lurid this poem probably was: *si vero das quod rogat et si suggeris suppus* (but if you grant what she asks, and you give it while on your back). Though from an unassigned fragment (fr. 1179W) yet an apparently similar context, the adjective *noctipugam* (nightly-poked slut) also suggests that Lucilius would have included sexually graphic material in this poem. Moreover, this adjective also demonstrates that Lucilius shared with Hipponax a penchant for unusual (often foreign) vocabulary and peculiar usages of words, and it is likely that both poets freely invented words to suit their needs.

Like Hipponax, Lucilius also engaged in epic parody. In the first book of his *Satires*, Lucilius parodies the epic motif of the divine council (*concilium deorum*) to expose the excesses of contemporary Rome. The scene is modelled on a similar episode in the first book of Ennius' *Annales*. In Lucilius' parody, the gods put on trial Lucius Cornelius Lentulus Lupus, censor and *princeps senatus* in 131 B.C., who had previously been convicted of extortion. In this parody, for example, the gods follow the protocol of the Roman senate and use the "mannerisms and clichés of contemporary earthly
rhetoric.® In Book 29, a series of fragments seems to describe a dinner party to which Lucilius attempts to gain admittance. In fr. 940W, Lucilius' exchange with an apparent doorkeeper appears to be modelled on Odysseus' exchange with Polyphemus in the ninth book of the Odyssey: *quis tu homo es? nemo sum homo* (What man are you? I am nobody).

As Van Rooy has pointed out, many scholars have compared Lucilius to Archilochus.®® This comparison is based not only on the fact that Lucilius, in his earliest books (26-29), uses the "Archilochean" trochaic and iambic meters, but also because he mentions Archilochus in one of his poems (fr. 786W): *metuo ut fieri possit; ergo antiquo ab Arciloco excido* (I fear that it's not possible; therefore, I disagree with Archilochus). While one cannot deny Archilochus' potential influence on Lucilius, the correspondences mentioned above compel us to consider as well Lucilius' indebtedness to the larger iambic tradition into which Hipponax figures prominently as well. In fact, the fourth-century grammarian Diomedes explicitly connects Lucilius with both Hipponax and Archilochus (GL 1, 485, 11-17 Keil): *iambus est carmen maledicum...cuius carminis praeципui scriptores apud Graecos Archilochus et Hipponax, apud Romanos Lucilius...* ("The *iambus* is a poem of abuse...and of this type of poem the principal writers among the Greeks are Archilochus and Hipponax and among the Romans Lucilius...").

With the allusions to Hipponax and other poets in the opening lines of the prologue, Persius, we have seen, disavows the hackneyed forms of poetic
inspiration and aligns his project with less conventional poetic models. Not only does his self-identification as semipaganus in line 6 represent Persius’ attempt to carve a unique niche for himself outside of that tradition, so too does his reference in lines 5-6 to the garlanded busts of poets: illis remitto quorum imagines lambunt | hederae sequaces. Here, he rejects strict adherence to always the same poetic models by implicitly contrasting himself to the clinging ivy. The image here of the sequacious ivy refers to the tendency in Persius’ day of his “hack poets” following the popular, well-worn themes that Persius rails against in this poem (and especially the next). But we should also be aware that only the most privileged citizens of Rome would have maintained the private libraries where these garlanded busts would have resided and that one library in particular would have stood out as the most “inspirational” of all. Persius describes the literary scene in Nero’s Rome where poetasters can thrive by composing obsequious poetic drivel for a wealthy patron with no artistic standards. Such a patron would be for Persius just the sort to have a statue-bedecked library. Thus, the clinging ivy in the prologue is also a metaphor for ingratiating pseudo-poets clinging to affluent patrons who will pay them for what they want to hear.

Nero’s patronage of the arts is well documented, and so, too, is his interest in Greek, particularly Alexandrian, poetry. Sullivan has noted that Nero was attracted to the Hellenistic model of royal patronage of the arts, replete with court poets and massive libraries. Surely, an emperor keen on
establishing a literary renaissance at Rome and who fancied himself as a first-rate poet and an incarnation of Apollo himself would have taken great pride in his library.\textsuperscript{89} It is therefore tempting to see in Persius' ivy-crowned busts an implicit reference to Nero whose library in the temple to Apollo on the Palatine would likely have been decorated with the busts of the standard canon of Alexandrian poetic models whose well-worn themes still appealed to the emperor. In addition, there are even more subtle ways in which this poem invites us to imagine Nero as Rome's artistic patron to whom poetasters cling (like ivy) in the hopes of advancement. Book three of Vergil's \textit{Georgics}, we have seen, is processed into Persius' description of his offering a gift at the \textit{vates'} rites and his rejection of commonplace themes (\textit{G.} 3.13-16):

\begin{verbatim}
et viridi in campo templum de marmore ponam
propter aquam, tardis ingens ubi flexibus errat
Mincius et tenera praetexit harundine ripas.
in medio mihi Caesar erit templumque tenebit.
\end{verbatim}

"and on the green plain I will set up a temple of marble beside the water, where great Mincius wanders in lazy windings and fringes his banks with slender reeds. In the midst I will have Caesar, and he shall possess the shrine."

As Richard Thomas has observed, Vergil's temple bears close resemblance to Pindar's architectural metaphor at the opening of \textit{Ol.} 6.1-3:\textsuperscript{90}

\begin{verbatim}
Χρυσάς υποστάσαντες εὑ-
teixeî προθύρῳ θαλάμου
κίονας ὡς ὅτε θαυματον μέγαρον
πάξομεν·
\end{verbatim}

"Like architects of a sumptuous palace, who set the golden columns under the portico wall, we shall build."
Later, in G. 3.46-50, encomium in the manner of Pindaric epinician is much more explicit when Vergil alludes to his future poetic project which will honor Octavian:

mox tamen ardentis accingar dicere pugnas
Caesaris et nomen fama tot ferre per annos,
Tithoni prima quot abest ab origine Caesar.

“Nevertheless, soon I will be equipped to speak of the fiery battles of Caesar, and to bear his name in story through as many years as Caesar is distant from the earliest beginning of Tithonus.”

The allusion to the Olympian palm (Olympiaeae...praemia palmae) in the following line further attests to the Pindaric tone of the passage. A Pindaric encomium much like Vergil’s praise of Augustus at the outset of Georgics 3 thus seems to be written into the prologue as the type of incessantly produced poetry to which Persius’ own “half-rustic” offering is opposed, and from which it derives much of its sense.

Yet, we ought to consider the role of Pindar in Persius’ prologue in more detail, for I believe that it touches on not only a certain kind of poetry that was actively produced in Nero’s Rome of the late fifties and early sixties A.D., but it may well touch on the active role Nero played in directing that production by forwarding himself to his public as a stage performer and an inspired lyric “champion.”91 The emperor’s desire to compete in the Greek games and to be hailed the champion of its chariot races and lyric contests is best known from Suetonius’ account of his Greek tour of A.D. 66 four years after Persius’ death. Suetonius relates that Nero visited the Isthmian and
Pythian games and even drove a ten-horse chariot at Olympia, thus allowing himself to be hailed victor in the games. Upon his return to Rome, Nero, clad in the regalia of his Olympian and Pythian triumphs, assumed the role of a Pindaric victor (Suet. Nero 25.1): 

\[
\text{in veste purpurea distinctaque stellis aureis chlamyde coronque capite gerens Olympiacam, dextra manu Pythiam, praeuente pompa ceterarum cum titulis, ubi et quos quo cantionum quoque fabularum argumento vicisset.}
\]

"He wore a purple robe and a Greek cloak adorned with stars of gold, bearing on his head the Olympic crown and in his right hand the Pythian, while the rest were carried before him with inscriptions telling where he had won them and against what competitors, and giving the titles of the songs and the subject of the plays."

In his account of Nero’s return from Greece, Dio mentions that the senators hailed the emperor as a victor: 'Ολυμπιονίκα οὖά. Πυθιονίκα οὖά. Αὔγουστε Ἀὔγουστε Νέρωνι τῷ Ἡράκλει (Hail, Olympian victor! Hail, Pythian victor! Augustus! Augustus! Hail to Nero, our Hercules!). Nero’s victories in the Greek games became such a source of pride for the emperor that Dio also relates the (perhaps apocryphal) story that Nero had Sulpicius Camerinus and his son executed on the grounds that their refusal to surrender their ancestral name, Pythicus, detracted from Nero’s victories in the Pythian games.

Although these incidents occurred after Persius’ death, Nero’s longstanding appreciation for Greek poetry and life-long penchant for chariot-racing likely would have made the poetry of Pindar particularly appealing to the emperor. Already at the Juvenalia of A.D. 59, games commemorating the shaving of Nero’s first beard at which the emperor publicly sang to the
cithara, Nero shows an interest in contests patterned after the Greek games which feature both athletic competition and musical performance. But it is the Neronia, the quinquennial contest established by Nero in A.D. 60, that is quite clearly modelled on the Greek athletic festivals. According to Suetonius, the festival included contests in music (*musicum*), gymnastics (*gymnicum*), and horse racing (*equestre*). Nero, in allowing the Vestal Virgins to come to the Neronia specifically adopted an Olympian custom which had permitted the priestesses of Demeter to attend the games.

Although Tacitus and Suetonius tell us that the emperor accepted the prizes for oratory and Latin poetry, we know from Vacca’s biography of Lucan that Lucan won a crown for his verse encomium of Nero, the *Laudes Neronis*.

At the outset of his epic, Lucan eulogizes Nero in a manner which, as Griffin has observed, is quite reminiscent of Vergil’s praise of Octavian in the *Georgics*. In stating that this part of the poem “fits the spirit of the *Laudes Neronis* delivered in 60,” Griffin hints at the possibility that these lines were the eulogy sung at the Neronia. Leaving speculation aside, Lucan’s encomium of Nero, the winner of the crown for poetry at these games, at the very least seems to have been reminiscent of the praise poetry associated with the major Greek athletic festivals. It is tempting, therefore, to see the ivy-garlanded busts of lines 5-6 of Persius’ prologue also as an oblique reference to Nero, the ivy-crowned “victor” of his own Greek games of A.D. 60. The real
“game” at the Neronia, therefore, is a contest for political and economic advancement: who can be that praise poet, that tendril of ivy, that “clings” to the emperor the most tenaciously.

There is further evidence that suggests that Pindar may subtly inhabit Persius’ prologue. After stating in line 7 that he will offer his song to the rites of poets, Persius devotes the second half of the poem to his critique of the contemporary literary scene. He criticizes the poetaster who mimics other poets solely for the purpose of satisfying his physical needs: just as pet birds with the inducement of food are trained to mimic human speech, so, too, does hunger motivate non-poets to compose poetry. In lines 8-14, he likens the mere imitation of these hack poets specifically to the squawking of parrots, magpies, and crows. For Persius, the belly, as teacher of skill (magister artis), teaches the hack poet the technique of writing seemingly inspired poetry; in its role as the bestower of talent (ingenium), the belly gives the poetaster the appearance of having real poetic talent which, by its very nature, cannot be taught or learned. The dichotomy between ars and ingenium teamed with bird imagery evokes a programmatic passage in Pindar’s second Olympian Ode (86-88) where the poet employs the image of an eagle to represent poetry generated by innate talent. In contrast, those poets who merely imitate the poetic techniques which they have learned from their predecessors are nothing more than chattering crows:

...οσφός ὁ πολλὰ εἰδὼς φυγόντες δὲ λάβροι
παγγλωσσία κόρακες ὡς ἀκράντα γαρνύων
Δίὸς πρὸς ὁρνίχα θείων.
"The wise man knows many things in his blood; the vulgar are taught. They will say anything. They clatter vainly like crows against the sacred bird of Zeus."

This image of the eagle is typically thought to refer to Pindar himself whose poetry exalts him above his contemporaries. Pindar is the wise man (σοφός) whom nature itself (φύσις) has invested with poetic ability. His poetic rivals, on the other hand, acquire their skill (τέχνη) by learning. In his seminal article on Persius, Reckford notes this allusion but relegates it to a brief footnote without attempting to analyze the significance of this reference.

Persius appropriates the Pindaric opposition between τέχνη and φύσις to similarly identify poets who lack innate poetic ability with squawking crows. Pindar addresses this dictotomy again at Ὅ. 9.100-2:

τὸ δὲ φυζον κράτιστον ἄπαν πολλοῖ δὲ διδακταῖς
ἀνθρώπων ἀρεταῖς κλέος
ἀφορισαν ἀρέσθαι.

"Best by nature is best; but many have striven before now to win by talents acquired through art the glory."

At Nemean 3.80-82, the Pindaric eagle soars in the upper reaches of the sky while the noisy jackdaws traverse the lower regions—a metaphor for the elevated poetry of the talented poet and the poor poetry of imitators.

ἐστι δ’ αἰετὸς ὁκὺς ἐν ποταμοῖς,
δέ ἠλαθεν αἰωνα, τηλόθε μεταμασιομένος.
δαφοινὸν ἁγραν ποσίν·
κραγέται δὲ κολοποὶ ταπεινά νέμονται.

"Among birds the eagle is swift. Pondering his prey from afar, he plummets suddenly to blood the spoil in his claws. Clamorous daws range the low spaces of the sky."
The scholiasts on this passage identify the chattering daws (birds notorious for mimicking) with Pindar's rivals, particularly Bacchylides whom Pindar elsewhere accuses of plagiarism.\(^{108}\) The characterization of poets as chattering birds is also a motif found in Theocritus 7.43-48 where Simichidas narrates his encounter with the goatherd Lycidas. In these lines which recall Hesiod's initiation by the Muses in the *Theogony*, Lycidas presents his olive stick to Simichidas as the gift of one poet to another:

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'τὰν τοι, ἔφα, κορύναν δωρύττομαι, οὔνεκεν ἔσσι
πὰν ἐπ’ ἀλαβεία πεπλασμένον ἐκ Δίος ἔρνος.
ὁς μοι καὶ τέκτων μέγ’ ἀπέχθεται δότις ἔρευνη
Ισον ὅρευς κορυφ’ τελέσαι δόμον ὕπομεδουτος,
καὶ Μοίσαν ὄρνιχες ὅσιοι ποτὶ Χίων ἄοιδον
ἀντία κοκκύζοντες ἔτωσια μοχθίζοντι.
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"He said, 'I will give you my stick, for you are a sapling whom Zeus has fashioned all for truth. For much I hate the builder who seeks to raise his house as high as the peak of Mount Oromedon, and much those cocks of the Muses who lose their toil with crowing against the bard of Chios.'"

Here, Theocritus likens poets who attempt to rival (and presumably imitate) Homer with crowing cocks.\(^{109}\)

In O. 2.87, Pindar employs the verb γνύσαοσθαι to describe the squawking of crows. The verb is also used by Theocritus in reference to birds (1.136): κῆς ὁρέων τοι σκώπες ἀνδόσι γαρύσαιντο (and from the mountains let the owls chatter to the nightingales).\(^{110}\) The earliest attestation of the verb occurs in the programmatic poetic initiation scene in Hesiod's *Theogony* where the poet claims the Heliconian Muses endowed him with poetic skill (26-28):
"Rustic shepherds, base objects of reproach, mere bellies, we know how to speak many lies that resemble the truth, but we know, when we wish, to utter true things."

It is of course this very episode that informs the Callimachean and Ennian programmatic passages that Persius collectively rejects in the opening lines of the prologue. Clearly, Pindar’s association of this Hesiodic verb with hack poets is ironic, for these poets receive no inspiration from the Muses. Since they merely imitate what they have learned from their predecessors, Pindar, in alluding to Hesiod, in effect gives them a dose of their own medicine.

In his prologue, Persius suggests that the belly (venter), the teacher of ars and the bestower of ingenium, provides the sole inspiration for pseudo-poets, so prevalent in Nero’s Rome, to compose poetry. In a literary climate completely devoid of any critical standard, where the sole aesthetic impulse to compose poetry is derived from the need to fill one’s belly, poetry filled with fawning praise is the guarantee of poetic success. The prominent role of the belly in Persius’ programmatic prologue seems a clear reference to the poetic initiation scene in the Theogony. In alluding to this scene, Persius recalls the distinction the Muses make between themselves and the rustic shepherds whom, they imply, are motivated by the concerns of the belly. For Persius, contemporary poets have completely blurred the distinction made by Hesiod’s Muses since the belly has now in fact become the sole Muse for these hack poets. In addition, the reference to these lines in Hesiod recall the Muses’
claim that they can tell falsehoods which appear true and speak the truth when they wish. In Nero’s Rome, the premium placed on flattering praise would encourage the ambitious poetaster to resort to extreme exaggeration in the hope of social and economic advancement. In a recent study, the belly has been identified with Nero “doling out crackers to a well-kept cluster of crow-poets...[t]heir ‘talent,’ for Persius, a mere knack for survival and nest-feathering.” While this is an very attractive identification, I think that we are also invited to see Nero as the target of these belly-inspired, flattering poems.

In further examining the Hesiodic parallel in Persius’ prologue, we might also wonder whether the identification of the rustics (ἀγραυλοι) as bellies may have some significance for the meaning of the word semipaganus. Hesiod’s rustics, as we have seen, were ignorant of divine poetic inspiration and motivated by their physical desires as represented by the belly. For Persius, the hack poet would naturally be called a “rustic” or paganus since, like Hesiod’s rustics, he, too, is solely motivated by his belly and thus uninspired by the Muses. Why then does Persius think of himself as “half-rustic?” If he is a semipaganus, he positions himself in a nebulous space situated between uninspired rustics who compose overwrought, obsequious poems to fill their bellies and non-rustics, presumably represented by the citified vates in tune with Callimachean traditions. The word thus becomes a means by which Persius identifies himself as a poetic outsider,
aligning himself with neither side of the poetic establishment. In considering this term, we should recall that Hipponax, in adopting the pose of a low-class buffoon, claimed an analogous role for himself. Therefore, the word’s indeterminacy parries any attempts to securely pin Persius down, thus allowing the poet to assert his (Hipponactean) self-fashioning as a poetic innovator.\textsuperscript{115}

It is worth returning to the Pindaric resonances in the prologue since he is featured rather prominently, albeit very allusively, in the poem. In the closing lines of the prologue, Persius again indicts the contemporary poetic scene where the prospect of financial gain encourages hack poets to compose excessively effusive, ingratiating poems (\textit{quod si dolosi spes refulserit nummi, 1 corvos poetas et poetridas picas 1 cantare credas Pegaseium nectar}). These poets employ the clichéd motifs and devices which, given the wretched state of poetic standards, are held in the highest esteem. The enticement of the monetary rewards that attend poetic composition has also been addressed in the poetry of Pindar. In \textit{P}. 11.41-42, for example, Pindar renders the nature of his poetic inspiration in terms of contractual obligation:

\begin{quote}
Μοῖσα, τὸ δὲ τεῦν, ἐἰ μισθοῖο συνέδειν παρέχειν φωνὴν υπάργυρον, ἄλλοτ' ἄλλα (χρῆ) ταρασσέμεν
\end{quote}

"Muse, it rests with you, if for hire you have contracted me to render my silvered voice, to stir one theme and another..."
Elsewhere (I. 2.6-8), Pindar seemingly implicates himself in the poetry-for-hire racket, harkening back to an earlier time when inspiration came not from the hope of financial reward but from the Muses:

> a Μοισσα γὰρ οὐ φιλοκγρῆς
> πω τὸτ’ ἵν οὐδ’ ἐργάτις
> οὐδ’ ἐπέρναντο γλυκεί-
> αἰ μελιφθόγγου ποτὶ Τερψιχόρας
> ἁργυρωθείσαι πρόσωπα μαλβακόφωνοι ἄοιδαι.

"The Muse in those days was not mercenary nor worked for hire, nor was the sweetness of Terpsichore’s honeyed singing for sale nor her songs with faces silvered over for their soft utterance."

It is poetry of this type, hymns of praise sold to the highest bidder, that Persius condemns in the prologue.

Many scholars have noted the intertextual echoes of Horace in Persius’ satires, yet a particular reference to Horace, Epistles 1.3 seems to have gone largely unnoticed. This is due in part to the role Pindar plays in the Horatian passage and the general tendency of most scholars in not recognizing Persius’ references to the Greek poet. In Ep. 1.3, Horace, addressing Florus, inquires about the literary activities of Augustus’ staff. In lines 9-25, he asks specifically about the literary pursuits of Titius, Celsus, and Florus. The verbal echoes of Persius’ prologue are evident:

> quid Titius, Romana brevi venturus in ora,
> Pindarici-fontis qui non expalluit haustus,
> fastidire lacus et rivos ausus apertos?
> ut valet? ut meminit nostri? fidibusne Latinis
> Thebanos aptare modos studet auspice Musa,
> an tragica desaevit et ampullatur in arte?
> quid mihi Celsus agit, monitus multumque monendus,
> privatas ut quaerat opes et tangere vitet
> scripta, Palatinus quaecumque receptit Apollo,
> ne, si forte suas repetitum venerit olim

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grex avium plumas, moveat cornicula risum
furtivis nudata coloribus? ipse quid audes?
quae circumvolitas agilis thyma? non tibi parvum
ingenium, non incultum est et turpiter hirtum:
seu linguam causis acuis seu civica iura
respondere paras seu condis amabile carmen;
prima feres hederae victries praemia.

"What of Titius, who will soon become the talk of Rome? He has had
the spirit to despise the tanks and open channels, and has not blenched
at drinking from the Pindaric font. How is he? Does he ever think of
me? Do the Muses smile on his efforts to fit the rhythms of Thebes to
the the Latin lyre, or does he rave and use bombastically resound in
tragic art? What is Celsus up to? He needs constant reminding to look
for resources within himself, and to keep his hands off the writings
received by Apollo within the Palatine temple; or else, when the flock
of birds return to reclaim their plumage, the poor little crow will be
stripped of the colors he stole and exposed to laughter. And what
exciting plans have you got? What beds of thyme are you buzzing
about about? Not that your talent is in any way small; nor is it coarse
or unpleasantly shaggy. Whether you sharpen your tongue for the
courts, or prepare to give an opinion on civil law, or build your lovely
songs, you will win first prize—the victor’s ivy."

In these lines, we see again the dichotomy between ars and ingenium. As
Mayer notes on the reference here to composing tragedy, artistic skill (ars) is
couched in more negative terms: "Horace’s tone here is lightly ironical, not so
much at Titius’ expense as because he believed that the Romans still fell short
of the stylistic standards of the Greek model." Later, Horace compliments
Florus on his abundant talent (ingenium) which, the poet believes, will result
in his being crowned victor. While ars and ingenium are mutually
dependent in Persius, the distinction in Horace does seem to remain valid.
We also find in this passage the Pindaric metaphor of the crow poet,
cornicula, which Pindar applied to the imitative tendencies of his rival
Bacchylides: Horace suggests that Celsus look to himself for inspiration and ought to avoid relying on the poets whose works were collected in the library in Apollo’s temple on the Palatine. The connection of the crow with Apollo’s temple is fitting since the crow was Apollo’s sacred bird. We remember that in Persius’ prologue the sequacious ivy crowning the busts of poets alludes to crow poets endlessly paying homage to the “Apollo” on the Palatine, Nero.

The reference to Pindar in these lines invites us to imagine Florus not only as a singer of Pindaric songs, but also as an ivy-crowned victor praised in the Pindaric style. In connecting this image with Persius’ prologue, we also recall the association of the ivy-garlanded busts with Nero’s interest in the Greek games celebrated by Pindar. The allusion to the Pindaric spring in line 10 (Pindarici fontis) should also remind us of the (Hipponactean) nag’s spring in the first line of the prologue and it is this contrast, between Pindar and Hipponax, that, I believe, inhabits Persius prologue as a whole.

As noted above, scholars have observed the contrast between Pindaric epinician and the iambic poetry of Hipponax. The former glorifies the city and celebrates its tyrant, whereas Hipponax’ poems, as argued above, construct a completely opposite image of the city. In Hipponax, the πόλις becomes the locus of squalor and sexual perversity. Indeed, in the passage from Demetrius quoted above where he discusses Hipponax’ poetic style, he draws a contrast between the dissonance of Hipponax’ abusive poetry (ψόγος)
and the pleasing rhythms of epinician (ἐγκυκλιαῖα). In fact, Pindar himself in the P. 2.52-6 distinguishes his poetry from the abusive poetry of Archilochus claiming that Archilochus' iambics are, as Rosen puts it, "generically (and ideologically) opposed to his own poetry of praise." Persius, I believe, makes the same distinction in the prologue. Given the current state of the literary scene, where hack poets endlessly clamor to outdo one another in flattering Nero, the only recourse is poetry in the mold of that scathing critic of the city, Hipponax. Persius not only engages directly with that aspect of Hipponactean verse, but, as we have seen, he also appropriates Hipponax' self-fashioning as a poetic outsider deviating from the literary establishment.

In this chapter, I have suggested that Persius' prologue, despite its disorienting effects, does provide a programmatic map for the poems that follow. Persius, in identifying himself as semipaganus in his prologue, adopts the pose of a poetic outsider who rejects the hackneyed tropes of poetic inspiration. Although, as I have shown, many other less conventional poetic models emerge throughout the prologue thus giving this poem its strange and disorienting shape, part of Persius' self-fashioning in this poem is derived from his use of the dissonant choliambic meter which itself evokes its creator, the iambic poet Hipponax. In employing this meter, Persius imports the Hipponactean ethos characterized not only by scathing criticism of an uglified construct of society, but also by the poet's need to break from
tradition and assert his own independent poetic voice. Like Hipponax who
dons the persona of a low life in his poems, Persius assumes the role of an
unsophisticated interloper with his humble offering at the "rites of poets" to
demonstrate his grappling with the pressures of the tradition. In fact, Persius'
offering (carmen adfero nostrum) is quite reminiscent of Callimachus'
Hipponax in lambus 1 (ἐπεαυ τιμίου) who has evolved from a poet of
personal vendettas (a characteristic of Hipponax still prominent among
Hellenistic poets) into a moral critic.

In specifically alluding to Hipponax, Persius condemns the
contemporary poetic scene in Nero’s Rome where the lack of critical aesthetic
standards and the enticement of financial reward prompt hack poets to
endlessly mimic the same poetic models. Nero’s own literary patronage also
draws poetasters to compose poems praising the emperor in the hopes of
advancement. In attacking these ingratiating poets, Persius borrows the
image of the mimicking birds from Pindar whose encomia stand in stark
contrast to the choliambics of Hipponax. In the following chapter, I will focus
on S. 3 where again other unexpected poetic voices figure prominently in the
poem. Here, too, Persius addresses the problem of writing poetry under Nero,
specifically the pressure to conform to the Neronian literary scene. But, in
the third satire, as we shall see, this problem is formulated as an
unwillingness to compose poetry promoting Neronian propaganda that taps
into Augustan Golden Age ideology.

For the implications of this term, see Witke (1962) 156.


Propertius seems particularly fond of alluding to the spring of inspiration; see for example 3.3.5-6 and also 3.1.6. See also Ovid, Met. 5.256ff.

Ennius, frr.2-11Sk. See Skutsch (1985) 147f. for an extensive discussion of Ennius' dream. See also Propertius' similar dream at 3.3.1f.

Vergil, G. 2.475-6; Horace, Odes 3.1.3; Propertius, 3.1.3 & 4.6.1ff; Ovid, Am. 3.8.23.

West (1982) 41.

See also Halpom, Ostwald, and Rosenmeyer (1980) 15: "Because the ending of this period was felt to be twisted out of shape, the choliamb was widely used for invective and satire."

Knox (1929) 329.

According to the Vita of Persius, Caesius Bassus was also responsible for the posthumous publication of Persius' poems (Vita, 8). For Caesius Bassus, see Courtney (1993) 351.

Hardie (1920), p. 98: "As a weapon this was rather a club or a cudgel than [Archilochus'] rapier."

In commenting on Horace, Epode 6.14, Pseudo-Acron states that Boupalus was a painter.

The metaphor of the poet unsheathing his poetic "sword" was later used by Roman satirists in referring to Lucilius: see Hor. S. 2.1.39-41 and Juv. 1.165-6.
NH, 36.4.12. See also Pseudo-Acron at Horace, Epode 6.14 (i.404 Keller).

For the notion that a poet's physical appearance was connected to his poetry, see Rosen (1990) 11n.2. See also Degani (1984) 21-4 and Brown (1997) 84.

Cf. Quintilian, 1.5.5; 8.3.48; 9.4.33; Cicero, De Oratore, 3.164.

It is worth noting that in the middle of the sixth century the Lydian potentate Croesus contributed extensively to the construction of the lavish Temple of Artemis at Ephesus. See Herodotus, 1.92. According to How and Wells (1912) 100, construction began about 550 B.C. This date coincides with Hipponax' floruit.


West (1974) 28-9; Brown (1997) 80ff. West particularly plays up Hipponax' persona as a "buffoon." Both cogently argue that Hipponax was clearly of a higher social standing than his "character" in his poems. See Rosen (1990) and (1988a) on the poet's persona as part of the convention of iambographic psogos. For the satirist adopting the persona of a low life, see Freudenburg (1993) 213-14.

See also fr. 34W & fr. 38W.

The references here and throughout Hipponax to the stomach, graphic sex, and the lower body in general invite comparison to Bakhtin's seminal work on the role of the carnival in Rabelais (1968). Such an analysis, however, falls outside the scope of this study.

Cf. Juv. 1.64: the quadrivium provides the satiric fodder for Juvenal's poems.

I have adapted translations of Hipponax from Gerber's Loeb translation of the Greek Iambic poets.

The lewd character of this fragment is very reminiscent of the later "Milesian Tales" which undoubtedly served as models for the inset narratives in Petronius (e.g. the Matron of Ephesus story) and Apuleius. Cf. Horace's wet dream in S. 1.5.83-5 where he imitates something much more explicit in Lucil. fr. 335W. For a possible Lucilian parallel of the Horatian passage, see Freudenburg (2001) 55n68. In the first century B.C., the Roman orator and historian Sisenna translated the original Fabula Milesiae of the second century Greek, Aristides of Miletus. Of Sisenna's work, only ten
fragments survive. Even in these meagre scraps, the graphic eroticism is evident (fr. 10): *ut eum penitus utero suo recepit* (as she received him deep in her canal). Perhaps Horace's reference in S. 1.7.7-8 to the scathing insults of an individual named Sisenna refers to the Roman writer of "Milesian Tales."

26 See Schenkeveld (1964) 64. For *compositio*/*συνθεσις* likened to a smooth statue, see Quintilian, *Inst.* 7pr.2.


29 Brown (1997) 84.


31 The distinction between the two iambics apparently existed in antiquity. According to Brown (1997) 82, Diphilus' *Sappho* portrayed Hipponax and Archilochus as rival lovers of the poetess.

32 See Forderer (1960) 41-5.

33 For Hipponax as a "buffoon," see West (1974) 28-9 and 142-3. West cites fr.78W where Hipponax apparently undergoes a ridiculous magic ritual as a cure for his impotence.

34 Lesky (1966) 89 hints at Hipponax as a possible author of the *Margites*.

35 For Hipponax as an Odysseus figure in connection with Thersites, see Rosen (1990) 19ff. See also Nagy (1979) 259-64.

36 For the prominent influence of *iambus* on Greek Old Comedy, see Rosen (1988c). In Hor. S. 1.4.34-5, the need to arouse laughter comes at the expense of one's friends and even one's self. For the Horatian passage, see Freudenburg (1993) 93.

37 For the possible relevance of the Iliadic Thersites to the history of satire, see Korus (1991) 95-110.

148; Fowler (1987) 42.

Odyssey, 12.104.

For the mock-epic qualities of these compounds, see West (1974) 148; Campbell (1983) 269-70; and Fowler (1987) 42.


Miralles-Pòrtulas (1988) 140.

Catullus, 8, 22, 31, 37, 39, 44, 59, and 60.

In the extant fragments, Hipponax regularly refers to himself in the third person. See frs. 32.4; 36.2; 37; 117.4W.


Cf. Hipponax, fr.44W.


For this idea, see Kerkhecker (1999) 15; Bing (1988b) 66-67.

On page 23, Kerkhecker (1999) briefly mentions Callimachus' topographical precision but really makes it of little consequence.

For the identification of Hipponax' audience in lambus 1 as scholar-poets, ποιηταὶ ἀξιὰ καὶ κριτικοὶ, see Kerkhecker (1999) 26. The Diegesis specifically refers to them as τοὺς φιλολόγους (VI 3).


Kerkhecker (1999) 255.
Kerkhecker (1999) 255.


Kerkhecker (1999) 269. He sees the Hipponax of Iambus 1 as the most important point of reference for Iambus 13 and clearly shows the links between the two poems. He, however, does not consider the role of the real Hipponax in Iambus 13 as prominently as I do.

Theocritus wrote epigrams about other poets and tended to adopt the meter typically associated with that particular poet. For examples of this in Theocritus, see Bing (1988a) 120n12.

The word κρήγυος is likely a word used by Hipponax himself. See Gow (1952) and Dover (1971) ad loc. Also Bing (1988b) 64.

Bing (1988b) 63. Also in reference to Hipponax, see Bing (1988b) 64: “an author so vivid as virtually to leap out of his grave.”

For the comparison of Greek iambicists to vicious animals, see Freudenburg (1993) 77.

For the role of the iambicist as a moral censor whose scathing and often obscene criticism morally edifies society, see Freudenburg (1993) 72-6. The potent criticism that these epigrammatists associate with Hipponax has a Roman counterpart in the satires of Lucilius and will be addressed below.

Cunningham (1971) 194.

For Hipponax’ role in this poem, see Nairn (1904) 101; Headlam (1922) 397; Cunningham (1971) 194.

Cunningham’s Loeb translation.

Cunningham (1971) 194.

Cunningham (1971) 195.

Some have argued that Herodas’ poem is a direct response to Callimachus. See Cunningham (1971) 194.

The line in question again runs as follows: ἀνθρωπ’, ἀπέλθε, τὴν σκάφην ἀνατρέψεις (Sir, go away, you will upset the trough).


Freudenburg (2001) 44.

In fr. 786W, Lucilius explicitly refers to Archilochus. Lucilius, fr. 779W is an imitation of Archilochus, fr. 128W. For the influence of the Greek iambic tradition on Lucilius, see Van Rooy (1966) 120, Coffey (1976) 56-7, and Freudenburg (1993) 54. Horace acknowledges his debt to the tradition in his Epodes, specifically alluding to Hipponax and Archilochus in Epode 6. For the influence of Greek iambus on the Epodes, see Mankin (1995) 6-9 and Dickie (1981) 195-203. See also Horace's reference to Archilochus in Ep. 1.19.23-34. For the influence of Greek iambus on Horace's Sermones, see Freudenburg (1993) 103-7. Ovid's abuse poem the Ibis is yet another example of the influence of the tradition at Rome. In lines 51-2 and 519-22, Ovid refers to Archilochus and Hipponax. For the role of Hipponax in Ovid's Ibis, see Rosen (1988d) 291-6. For the role of Hipponax and Archilochus in the poem, see Williams (1996) 102-3. Catullus refers to his poems as iambos at 36.5.

The Vita (51-3) mentions Persius' indebtedness to Lucilius.

For the image of Lucilius as a biting dog in Persius via Horace, S. 2.1, see Freudenburg (2001) 177-9 and 109-10. In his sixth epode where Horace specifically refers to the iambics of Archilochus and Hipponax, the poet likens his own attacks to those of a protective watchdog (1-8). See Porter (1987) 256: "it is a poem with a snarl." For a discussion of Horace's moral criticism in this poem, see Freudenburg (1993) 78-9; Mankin (1995) 136-42.

For "obscene moral criticism, the famous Lucilianus modus," see Freudenburg (2001) 25.

For such images in Hipponax, see for example frs. 57 and 73W. Verbs meaning "to urinate" and words for "urine" itself are prominent throughout Roman satire (cf. Hor. S. 1.2.44, 2.7.51-2; Pers. 6.73; Juv. 11.170) and are often closely associated with ejaculation. See Adams (1982) 142.

This is Warmington's translation of the word.

For a brief discussion of this episode, see Gratwick (1982) 169-70.


Barr (1987) 65: “it was the custom to place the busts of poets, living and dead, in libraries both public and private.”


For Nero as Apollo, see Sen. Apoc. 4.1; Calp. Ecl. 4. 87 and 159; Eins. Ecl. 1.37, 2.38; Luc. 1.48-59. See Manning (1975) 165-7 and Sullivan (1985) 56-8. For an argument against Nero’s self-fashioning as a sun-god, see Griffin (1984) 215-20.

Thomas (1988) 41: “[Pindar] may be the ultimate impulse,...but the image may have been developed at some length by Callimachus: Aet. inc. lib., fr. 118Pf.” For the Callimachean influences on Vergil’s temple, see Thomas (1983).


Nero had the games rescheduled so that he could be crowned victor at each festival in one year. See Suet. Nero 23. See also Griffin (1984) 161-3 and Bradley (1978) 140-1. For Nero as victor in these games, see Suet. Nero 24-25. Bradley (1978) 144: “It ought to be noted that driving a ten-horse team presupposes a high degree of proficiency.”


Dio, 62.20.5. The reference to Hercules, the mythical founder of the Olympic games, is also suggestive since he is a recurring figure throughout Pindar’s poems.

Dio, 62.18.2. See also Griffin (1984) 114.

For the Juvenalia, see Tac. *Ann.* 14.15. See also Griffin (1984) 43.


Suet. *Nero* 12.3.


For the garrulity of crows, see also Call. *Iamb.* 4.82.

Reckford (1962) 502n.1.

For a discussion of this opposition in Pindar, see Bowra (1953) 80-1. In Latin poetry where this dichotomy was formulated as a distinction between *ars* and *ingenium*, see also Commager (1962) 20-31. Pindar does not actually use the term *tékhνη* to refer to acquired poetic skill but the term conveys the idea.

For the eagle as the Pindaric representation of φύσις, see Commager (1962) 22.

Bowra (1953) 79-82.

For the identification of these birds with cocks, see Gow (1952) 143-4.

The σκόψψ, or little horned owl, is known to be a mimic; see Gow (1952) 29.

Cf. Lucilius, fr. 70W: *Vivite lurcones, comedones, vivite ventris!* ("Good living to you, you gluttons, you guzzlers, good living to you, you bellies!").

For false praise of the patron rather than the obsequious poet, see S. 1.48-62. For discussion of these lines, see Bramble (1974) 111 and Hooley (1997) 47-48. For the hope of gain as a motive for writing flattering praise, see Calpurnius Siculus, *Ecl.* 4.152-8. See also Williams (1978) 299-300.
Freudenburg (2001) 144.

For a general discussion of the Hesiod passage, see West (1966) 158-63.

In Calp. Ecl. 4.12-18, the pagus (village) is specifically associated with humble, unrefined poetry.


Reckford (1962) 502n. 1. Reckford mentions this passage in passing but does not elaborate on their significance in Persius.

Mayer (1994) 127. For the distinction between ars and ingenium, see also 129.

For the association of the crow/raven with Apollo, see Ovid, Met. 2.536-632. See also Keith (1992) 96. According to Keith (1992) 12, the crow was also connected with prophecy. See also Ovid, Fast. 2.249-52. The best example in the Greek tradition is Call. Hec. fr. 260.44-69Pf. See Hollis (1990) 252: Hollis notes that the earliest connection between bird and god occurs in Herodotus, 4.15 where Aristeas assumes the form of a raven to accompany Apollo. See also Call. H. 2.66 where Callimachus relates that Apollo led the Greek colonists to Libya in the guise of a raven.

Miralles-Pòrtulas (1988) 140.

Demetrius, On Style, 301.

Persius' third satire opens with a scene which the poem's first words suggest has become a regular occurrence: a night of drunken revelry followed by a late-morning hangover. Suddenly a voice interjects to criticize such dissolute living (1-7):

Nempe haec adsidue. iam clarum mane fenestras intrat et angustas extendit lumine rimas.
stertimus, indomitum quod despumare Falernum sufficiat, quinta dum linea tangitur umbra.
‘en quid agis? siccas insana canicula messes
iam dudum coquit et patula pecus omne sub ulmo est’
umus ait comitum.*

"It's always the same. Bright morning is already coming in the windows and extends the narrow slits with light. We snore what is sufficient to 'defrost' untameable Falernian, until the line is touched by the fifth shadow. 'What are you doing? The mad Dog-star has for some time been baking the fields dry and the whole herd lies under the spreading elm,' a companion says."

It is eleven in the morning on a warm, sunny day. The intense sun pierces through the shudders as "we" (stertimus) sleep off the effects of last night's Falernian binge. Despite the preponderance of first-person verbs in the first part of the poem, it is widely held that the satire targets a profligate young man in need of the moral edification provided by Stoic philosophy. In
addition to the poem’s narrator, the *comes*, too, marks the lateness of the hour in alluding to the blazing heat and the herd resting in the shade. As the narrative continues, the difficulty of assigning certain lines to specific speakers becomes much more complex as yet other voices break into the poem (7-21):

> verumne? itan? ocius adsit
> huc aliquis. nemon? turgescit vitrea bilis:
> findor, ut Arcadiae pecuaria rudere credas.
> iam liber et positis bicolor membrana capillis
> inque manus chartae nodosaque venit harundo.
> tum querimur crassus calamo quod pendeat umor.
> nigra sed infusa vanescit sepia lympha,
> dilutas querimur geminet quod fistula guttas.
> o miser inque dies ultra miser, hucine rerum
> venimus? a, cur non potius tenero columbo
> et similis regum pueris pappare minutum
> poscis et iratus mammæ lallare recusas?
> an tali studeam calamo? cui verba? quid istas
> succinis ambages? tibi luditur. effluis amens,
> contemnere.

“Really? Is it so? Someone come here quickly! Nobody? Vitreous bile begins to swell: I split so that you’d think the herds of Arcadia were braying. Now book, two-colored parchment with its hair removed, papyrus, and knotty reed come to hand. Then we complain that ink hangs thick from the reed. But with water added the black ink disappears; we complain that the writing reed doubles diluted drops. O wretch and more wretched every day, have we reached this point? Ah, why not, like a young bird or like the children of kings, rather demand your food mashed up or in your anger refuse your nanny’s lullaby? How could I work with such a writing reed? To whom do you direct these words? Why do you sing those evasions? You’re the one fooling around. You flow forth mindlessly; you’ll be hated.”

Most scholarly discussion of Persius’ third satire has dealt primarily with the problem of speakers throughout the poem but particularly in its opening lines.² It is clear from the scholarly effort expended in distinguishing the
poem's \textit{personae} that the tangle of voices that intrude into the poem presents a very real problem. Indeed, this pressing need to securely pin down speakers suggests that the act of "interpreting" the poem finds one in the very difficult and tendentious act of "knowing" who is speaking and when, and therefore it also says something about how we read, testifying to our own need as readers to keep the lines of communication clear and direct. It is not my intention here to offer another possible solution to the problem of the poem's speakers to make sense of all this apparent mess. Rather, we should be aware that all of this uncertainty is perhaps Persius' point, that is, a central feature of this poem's diagnostic work. But we should also be aware that the voices we have such trouble assigning are themselves part of an even greater nexus of \textit{external} poetic voices that intrude into and exert their pressure on this poem. Sometimes these remembered voices contain clues to help us "arrange" our reading. At other times, they simply compound our confusion by introducing new problems inside the old ones. In the pages that follow in this chapter, I will introduce several new remembered voices into the reading of Persius' third satire in order to further clarify and "arrange" the voices issuing from Persius' page, but also to complicate those voices by insisting that we hear inside them certain strange political overtones that scholars have generally failed to detect, especially in the poem's bucolic, "Calpurnian" opening.
My first point of reference is obvious and well established. Many have noted the correspondences of the opening of Persius’ poem with Horace, S. 2.3.1-16 where the Stoic Damasippus scolds Horace for his poetic inactivity:

‘Sic raro scribis ut toto non quater anno
membranam poscas, scriptorum quaque retexens,
iratus tibi quod vini somnique benignus
nil dignum sermone canas. quid fiet? at ipsis
Saturnalibus huc fugisti sobrius. ergo
dic aliquid dignum promissis: incipe. nil est.
culpantur frustra calami immeritisque laborat
iratis natus paries dis atque poetis.
atqui vultus erat multa et praeclera minantis,
si vacuum tepido cepisset villula tecto.
quorum pertinuit stipare Platona Menandro,
Eupolin Archilocho, comites educere tantos?
invidiam placare paras virtute relicta?
contemnere miser. vitanda est improba Siren
Desidia, aut quidquid vita meliore parasti
ponendum aequo animo.’

“’You write so infrequently that you ask for parchment not even four times in an entire year, unraveling what you have written, angry that full of wine and sleep you compose nothing worth talking about. What will happen? Sober during the Saturnalia, you fled here. Therefore, say something worthy of your promises: Start. Nothing. In vain the reed-pens are blamed and the blameless wall, created for angry gods and poets, suffers. And yet, there was a face promising many excellent things, if your little villa with its warm roof could have had some peace and quiet. Why did it concern you to pack Plato with Menander, Eupolis with Archilochus, to bring along such companions? Are you preparing to appease envy with virtue left behind? You will be despised, wretch! Sloth, the shameless Siren, must be avoided, or whatever you have achieved in the better part of your life must be set aside with an even-tempered mind.’”

As in Persius’ poem, here a voice breaks in to chide the poet for his failure to compose poetry, attributing this failure to Horace’s dereliction of virtue (virtute relicta). Given the unsettling effect of the various voices that
interject at the beginning of Persius' third satire, we are greatly indebted to Horace, S. 2.3 for providing some assistance in orienting ourselves as Persius' poem opens. Without Horace as a guide, our footing in Persius' poem would be all the more unstable. In lines 7-21, Persius' startled slacker, upon awakening, summons a slave and becomes filled with rage when none appears. In the lines that follow, lines clearly owing their debt to Horace's poem (with a good bit of Horace, S. 2.7 added into the mix), the roused slacker, sitting down to compose poetry after a night of excessive drinking, first complains about the ink (at first too thick, then too diluted) and, like the addressee of Horace, S. 2.3, faults the reed pen as the reason for his lack of poetic production. Most commentators agree that after the slacker offers these excuses, a voice interjects sarcastically mocking the slacker as a spoiled brat and attributing poetic inactivity to the slacker's dissolute living.

As the poem continues, this voice advises strict adherence to Stoic philosophy as the medicine to cure moral disease. Since the poem takes the form of a Stoic diatribe along the lines of Horace, S. 2.3 (and with the problem of speakers taking center stage in analyses of this part of the poem), most scholars, given the satire's overt Horatian setting, have overlooked the prominent role an external, yet quite unexpected poetic voice plays in these opening lines. This voice is most explicit in lines 5-6: siccas insana canicula messes iam dudum coquit et patula pecus omne sub ulmo est. These lines have no counterpart in Horace, S. 2.3 (or S. 2.7) and perhaps strike us as a bit
out of place in this poem since, with the flock under an outstretched tree, they evoke the bucolic setting typically associated with pastoral poetry (e.g. Vergil, Ecl. 1.1: Tityre, tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine fagi). Yet, I think that it might be better to consider this "pastoral voice" not so much as a competing, non-Horatian voice expressed in the poem but a bucolic rendering of that Horatian voice which chimes in with the Augustan Golden Age ideology that found its clearest articulation in Vergil's Eclogues. It is this ideology that becomes particularly relevant not only for Persius, who in fact found himself writing amid the flurry of propaganda celebrating the return of the Golden Age under Nero, but also for us as we grapple with this difficult poem. In the pages that follow, I argue that the pastoral textures of this poem imply Persius' criticism of Neronian Golden Age ideology that was itself heavily indebted to its Augustan model.

It has been suggested that the Horatian voice that filters into this poem enables Persius, much like Horace via Damasippus in S. 2.3, to target himself in this poem: Persius' interlocutor, like Horace's Damasippus, embodies a voice critical of Persius' poetic project, silent through the first two satires of the collection, but now compelled to express his dissatisfaction with Persius' brand of satire. Satire as he writes it would naturally fail to appeal to a reading audience, a view expressed in Persius, S. 1.2 ("quis leget haec?...nemo hercule. 'nemo?') and hinted at in the startled words of Persius' awakened slacker (ocius adsit | huc aliquis. nemon?). As one scholar has recently put it:
"Persius' friend is a serious and vigilant Stoic, disgusted at the poet, convinced that his 'work,' so-called, is anything but serious, vigilant, and Stoical. He has failed to write it straight and true, he claims." He suggests that through the intertext with S. 2.3, the Damasippus-speaker in Persius' poem also criticizes the "tyrant" in Persius himself, as well as in his reader(s), eager to point out the moral failings of others, and maliciously enjoying their suffering. While the Damasippus-voice of Horace, S. 2.3 is certainly prominent in Persius' poem, I nonetheless think that we need to respect the volume of other voices filtered into Persius' third satire, voices that target yet another tyrant, Nero himself.

In merely noting the bucolic feel of Persius, S. 3.5-6, Harvey and Barr cite the parallel with Vergil, Ecl. 2.8: nunc etiam pecudes umbras et frigora captant (Now even the herds seek the shade and cool places). While the echo of Vergil is evident, we can look to a more immediate model for the pastoral coloring of Persius' lines in the Eclogues of Persius' contemporary Calpurnius Siculus. And here, the precise nature of the imitation rates as something much more than a general bucolic "feel." In an unpublished manuscript on Persius' third satire, Kirk Freudenburg has recently shown the close correspondences between Persius' poem, Vergil, G. 1.293-8, and the opening of the first eclogue of Calpurnius. In Calpurnius' first eclogue, two shepherds, Ornytus and Corydon, seek protection from the blazing sun on a hot day (Ecl. 1.1-7):
Nondum *Solis* equos declinis mitigat *aestas*, quamvis et madidis incumbant prela racemis et *spument* rauco *ferventia musta* susurro. cernis ut ecce pater quas tradidit, Ornyte, vaccae molle *sub hirsuta* latus explicuere *genista*? nos quoque vicinis cur non succedimus umbris? torrida cur solo defendimus ora galero?

“Not yet does the waning summer lessen the horses of the Sun, although the wine-presses squeeze the wet grape clusters and the frothing must ferments with a hoarse whispering. Look, Ornytus, do you see how the cattle which our father handed over to us have sprawled out their soft flanks under the shaggy broom? Why don’t we also approach the neighboring shade? Why do we protect our sunburned faces with only a cap?”

While this poem shares many features in common with Persius’ third satire, Freudenburg mentions one point of departure: rather than urging Ornytus to get to work, Corydon asks his friend to join him in relaxing in the shade. As the highlighted points of contact indicate, the correspondences between these poems are not merely incidental. It is first necessary to note the more obvious points of contact before demonstrating the more significant parallels. As in Persius’ poem, the setting here is a scorching summer day. Like the herd that rests under the elm in Persius’ poem (*patula pecus omne sub ulmo est*), the cattle in Calpurnius’ eclogue recline among the broom to seek respite from the heat. But unlike the sun’s rays whose intensity is mitigated by the shudders separating Persius’ slacker from the outdoors, the sun in Calpurnius’ poem, though still intense, remains a fundamental part of the *locus amoenus* which in turn is an essential ingredient of the idyllic pastoral world. Though the rustics in Calpurnius’ poem seek out shade as a shelter
from the sun, as shepherds their world remains both the outdoors and the concomitant prolonged exposure to the sun to which their sunburned faces attest.

Not only is the sun prominently featured in the opening lines of both poems, but it is also closely associated with the new wine of late summer. In the idyllic world of Eclogue 1, the unseasonal heat of late summer is directly connected with the production of wine, entailing the crushing of grapes and their subsequent fermentation (*spument...ferventia musta*). Such agricultural productivity is typically celebrated in pastoral poetry as well as, more obviously, agricultural poetry.11 The opening of Persius’ poem on the other hand is an inversion of what we encounter in Calpurnius’ poem: sunlight barely filters into a closed-up room as the slacker sleeps off the after-effects of the now consumed wine (*stertimus, indomitum quod despumare Falernum | sufficiat*). In a sense, Persius’ slacker himself is the “cooking vat” where the new wine (*sapa, mustum*) boils down and “defroths.”12 The agricultural fertility represented by the active wine-press in Calpurnius contrasts with the slacker’s lack of poetic productivity (3.10-4), itself a condition of his “abundant” wine production *in himself*.

As Calpurnius’ poem continues, Ornytus suggests to Corydon that they seek refuge in a grove of pine and beech trees (8-12):

```latex
hoc potius, frater Corydon, nemus, antra petamus
ista patris Fauni, graciles ubi pinea denset
silva comas rapidoque caput levat obvia soli,
bullantes ubi fagus aquas radice sub ipsa
protegit et ramis errantibus implicat umbras.
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84
"Rather, brother Corydon, let us seek this grove, those caves of father Faunus, where the pine forest thickens its delicate foliage and lifts its head to meet the rapid sun, where the beech tree protects waters bubbling under the roots themselves and envelops the shade with its wandering branches."

Corydon agrees and proposes that they take up their pipes and play (13-18):

quo me cumque vocas, sequor, Ornyte; nam mea Leuce,
dum negat amplexus nocturnaque gaudia nobis,
pervia comigeri fecit sacraria Fauni.
prome igitur calamos et si qua recondita servas.
nec tibi defuerit mea fistula, quam mihi nuper
matura docilis compegit harundine Ladon.

"Wherever you call me, Ornytus, I follow; for my Leuce, as long as she denies me embraces and nighttime joys, she has made the shrine of horned Faunus accessible to me. Therefore, bring forth your reed-pipe and anything you keep stored up. My pipe will not fail you which skillful Ladon recently fashioned for me from a ripe reed."

In the pastoral world when the sun compels the cattle to rest in the shade, it also invites shepherds to seek the shade to play their songs. Similarly, the voice intruding at the opening of Persius' third satire specifically refers to the herd resting in the shade to rouse the slacker out of bed. Here, too, the slacker immediately sits down to write. Thus, in both poems this pastoral moment seems to mark the "appropriate" time for writing poetry.

We should remember, however, that despite the apparent suitability of the moment, Persius' slacker blames the ink and pen for the inability to write. Indeed, the issue of the suitability of the moment and the failure to compose poetry is also prominent at beginning of Horace, S. 2.3 where the poet escapes the crowds of the Saturnalia to seek the proper setting for writing, yet
ultimately fails to produce. In his third satire, Persius employs three different words for the slacker’s writing instrument (harundo...calamo...fistula). While calamus, “reed,” is the common word for “pen,” this passage is the first instance where the words harundo and fistula are used in this connection. In pastoral poetry, however, they are the standard words used for the reed-pipes played by the shepherds that typically populate the bucolic landscape. Indeed, the close proximity of these words in Persius, 3.11-4 and 19 mirrors their collocation in Calpurnius, Ecl. 1.16-18. But unlike the “faulty” pen in Persius’ poem, in Eclogue 1 Corydon’s reed-pipe is a guaranteed source for song (nec tibi defuerit mea fistula): with the shepherds taking their positions in the shade, the stage is set for the amoebean song we would naturally expect in such a poem.

The prominent role of the sun at the opening of both poems, I believe, reflects more than the need to create an idyllic setting, a setting clearly appropriate for Calpurnius’ pastoral world and counterpoised to the inactivity of Persius’ slacker. Indeed, it takes on a greater programmatic significance. Later in Calpurnius’ poem, the two shepherds happen upon an inscription carved into the bark of a beech tree. This inscription (33-88) which largely comprises the remainder of the poem relates the prophecy of Faunus who predicts the coming of a youth who will institute another Golden Age. This age will witness the return of peace and prosperity in conjunction with the administration of justice. Most scholars identify the youth in question as the
young Nero whose patronage Calpurnius' flattering verses seem to solicit.17

Given the eminent place accorded to the youth in this poem, we are encouraged, I think, to see the intense sun that prompts the two shepherds to turn to their reed-pipes and play as a reference to Rome's new Sun-emperor, Nero.18

The association of Nero with Apollo and the sun dates from the earliest days of Nero's reign. In Seneca's *Apocolocyntosis*, 4.1, a work clearly composed soon after Nero's accession, we already find this connection when Apollo compares himself to Nero:

Phoebus ait 'vincat mortalis tempora vitae
ille mihi similis vultu similisque decore
nec cantu nec voce minor. felicia lassis
saecula praestabit legumque silentia rumpet.
qualis discutiens fugientia Lucifer astra
aut qualis surgit redeuntibus Hesperus astris,
qualis, cum primum tenebris Aurora solutis
induxit rubicunda diem, Sol aspicit orbem
lucidus et primos a carcere concitat axes:
talis Caesar adest, talem iam Roma Neronem
aspiciet. flagrat nitidus fulgore remisso
vultus et adfuso cervix formosa capillo

"Phoebus said, 'let him who is similar to me in looks and grace nor inferior in singing and voice conquer the span of human life. He will provide prosperous ages to the wearied and shatter the silence of the laws. Just as the Morning-star scattering the fleeing stars or as the Evening-star rises when the stars return, just as the shining Sun, as soon as the reddish Dawn has dissolved the shadows and led in the day, looks upon the earth and first rouses his chariot: such a Caesar is at hand, such a Nero will Rome now look upon. His shining face glows with mild brightness and his fine neck with flowing hair.'"

Just prior to Apollo's speech, as the Fates spin out the life of Nero they marvel that the wool has changed to gold, thus portending a new Golden
Age: *mutatur vilis pretioso lana metallo, l *aurea formoso descendunt saecula filo* (the cheap wool is changed to precious metal, a Golden Age descends from the lovely thread). In Calpurnius' fourth eclogue, a "court" poem much like *Eclogue* 1, praise of a youthful "Caesar" closely identified with Apollo is also associated with the return of a Golden Age. Like the opening of the first eclogue, the setting is a hot day and shepherds seek the shade of a tree to perform their songs. Corydon tells Meliboeus about his desire to celebrate the Golden Age (5-8):

```
carmina iam dudum, non quae nemorale resultent, volvimus, o Meliboee; sed haec, quibus aurea possint saecula cantari, quibus et deus ipse canatur, qui populos urbesque regit pacemque togatam.
```

"For some time, Meliboeus, I have been considering poems, which do not sound of the woods but those with which the Golden Age is able to be praised, with which even the god himself may be praised, who rules the people and cities and a toga-clad peace."

Later in this same poem, Calpurnius links "Caesar" with Apollo (87-8): *me quoque facundo comitatis Apolline Caesar l respiciat* (May Caesar attended by eloquent Apollo consider me as well). As the poem concludes, Corydon explicitly identifies the emperor with Apollo when he asks Meliboeus to present his poems to the god on the Palatine (157-9):

```
at tu, si qua tamen non aspernanda putabis, fer, Meliboee, deo mea carmina: nam tibi fas est sacra Palatini penetralia visere Phoebi.
```

"But you, Meliboeus, if you nevertheless think that my poems should not be disdained, bring them to the god. For it is right for you to visit the holy sanctuary of Palatine Phoebus."
Aside from the identification of Caesar with Apollo and the heralding of a
new Golden Age (right down to the emperor's golden hair), there are other
evident parallels between Apollo's speech in the *Apocolocyntosis* and
Calpurnius' poems. In Seneca's poem, Nero is the anticipated restorer of
the laws, the enforcement of which Claudius had vested solely in himself.
The prophecy of Faunus in Calpurnius' first eclogue alludes to the return of
Themis, the goddess of justice, upon the renewal of the Golden Age (42-5):

```
aurea secura cum pace renascitur aetas
et redit ad terras tandem squalore situque
alma Themis posito iuvenemque beata sequuntur
saecula,
```

"With a secure peace, a Golden Age is reborn and at last gracious
Themis has thrown off her squalor and neglect and returns to the
earth and blessed ages follow the young man"

This sentiment is expressed more explicitly in lines 69-73 where Faunus
predicts the restoration of the former court system:

```
iam nec adumbrati faciem mercatus honoris
nec vacuos tacitus fasces et inane tribunal
accipiet consul; sed legibus omne reductis
ius aderit moremque fori vultumque priorem
reddet et afflictum melior deus aufert aevum.
```

"Now neither will the consul purchase the appearance of a fraudulent
office nor silently receive meaningless fasces and a worthless judgment
seat; but the laws shall be restored and justice will entirely be present
and a kinder god will return the former appearance of the forum and
will do away with a contemptible age."

Undoubtedly, Nero's restoration of the law was a key ingredient of the
propaganda attending the accession of the new emperor.
Yet, the sun imagery associated with Nero in Calpurnius' first eclogue and Seneca's poem merits further analysis. In Seneca's poem, Apollo explicitly likens the radiance emanating from Nero's face not only to the brightest stars in the morning and evening sky, but particularly to the rising sun. In comparing the rising sun to Nero, Seneca employs the typical motif of the sun traversing the sky in his horse-drawn chariot: Sol aspicit orbem | lucidus et primos a carcere concitat axes. We find the same image of the sun's chariot in the opening line of Calpurnius' first eclogue where the poet adopts this image to set the scene during the summer: Nondum Solis equos declinis mitigat aestas. The solar imagery associated with the promise of the young Nero that we find in Seneca can likely be attributed to the thematic propaganda circulating at the time. We know from Suetonius that the association of Nero with Apollo and the sun, a correlation befitting a man who prided himself on his poetic ability and skill with the chariot, was featured prominently during his reign: quia Apollinem cantu, Solem aurigando aequiperare existimaretur (since he was thought to be equal to Apollo in song and to the Sun in driving the chariot). Since Calpurnius' poems seem to match their propaganda so closely to that of Nero's early reign, we have good reason to believe, with the majority of scholars, that they date from this period and that Nero's presence both can and should be detected in the opening lines of Eclogue 1.
The correspondences between Calpurnius' poem and Persius' third satire also invite us to see Nero perhaps lurking behind the pastoral elements prominent in the opening of Persius' poem. The fiery Dog-star (*canicula*) whose intense rays barely peer into the dimly lit room of Persius' hungover slacker again evokes the presence of Nero, the self-fashioned sun-god. In Calpurnius' first eclogue, the agricultural fertility suggested by the active wine-presses seething under the blazing sun is a metaphor for poetic productivity since the richness of the bucolic landscape in effect becomes both the inspiration and subject matter for pastoral poetry. We have seen that the sun, too, provides inspiration both in providing the idyllic setting for composing pastoral poetry as well as in representing Nero whose patronage of poetry is well documented. Despite Corydon's stated confidence in the effectiveness of his pipe (*nec tibi defuerit mea fistula*), the shepherds never get around to playing their anticipated songs. Faunus' prophecy of a new Golden Age with its inherent flattery of Nero supersedes the amoebean song expected in this pastoral poem, thus attesting to the paramount status accorded to Nero in guiding poetic composition: Nero, as the sun, provides the inspiration as well as the subject matter for Calpurnius' ingratiatory eclogues. This is born out by the concluding lines of the poem (92-4) where the rustics eagerly abandon the song they initially had intended to sing in exchange for Faunus' verses:

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carmina, quae nobis deus obtulit ipse canenda,
dicamus teretique sonum modulemur avena:
forsitan Augustas feret haec Meliboeus ad aures.
```

91
"Let us recite the songs which the god himself offered to us to sing and let us play the sound on the smooth pipe: perhaps Meliboeus will bring these verses to Caesar's ears."

It is worth noting that the shepherds take up a song they are given to sing, merely "chiming in" with its "scripted" theme. The shepherds' hope that their newly adopted song may be brought to the attention of Nero apparently reflects Calpurnius' own desire for advancement through his praise of the emperor.

Although the shepherds never sing their song in *Eclogue 1*, its omission is not so much a failure on their part as it is their voluntary acceptance of Faunus' oracle as a superior substitute. In Persius, however, we find the opposite situation: Persius' slacker explicitly acknowledges his inability to compose poetry specifically attributing this failure to faulty "bucolic" writing instruments. Nonetheless, I think that the strong bucolic feel of the opening lines of this poem plays a critical role in fashioning our reception of the slacker's inability to write. The blazing sun that prompts poetic productivity in Calpurnius' first eclogue contrasts to the dimly lit room of Persius' late-sleeping slacker. Thus, in shutting out the sun's glare, the slacker avoids the poetic inspiration the sun provides for others, as connoted by the pastoral coloring of lines 5-6. Even when roused in the heat of the midday to take up pen and parchment, the slacker cannot put words to paper: the pastoral pipes of Calpurnius' sun-inspired shepherds (*calamus, fistula, harundo*) quite literally become the pens that fail the slacker. Even the runny
ink that dribbles from the reed-pen (nigra sed infusa vanescit sepia lympha) mirrors the difficulties the slacker faces in writing (effluis amens, contemnere). Thus, given the fact that the emperor was acclaimed as the sun presiding over a renewed Golden Age, does this imply that poetic inspiration can only come from the full "drying" exposure to the sun's rays? And if so, what kind of poetry does this inspiration entail? Does it necessarily imply poems along the lines of Calpurnius' obsequious verses? Or to put it another way, how do Calpurnius' poems, like Horace, S. 2.3, filter into the way we read these lines? Do they prompt us to consider the implications of writing under Nero?

For Calpurnius' rustics, as we have seen, the inspiration provided by the sun at the beginning of the poem is recalibrated as inspiration supplied by the young emperor. Given Nero's association with the sun, we need not be surprised that Persius' slacker is unable to write since it reflects, I think, Persius' own problem of writing poetry in the glare of this sun-emperor, a problem in turn recalling both Horace's writing difficulties and Damasippus' criticism in S. 2.3 yet given Persius' own Neronian twist. But I also think we can see this difficulty in another way. Like the slacker who shuts out the radiance of the sun, Persius may be seen as dodging the sun's rays by explicitly rejecting the idyllic, sun-drenched pastoral world in favor of poetry exposing the difficulties of writing under Nero. This is a man who stays in his darkened study, a student of philosophy and a satirist. Are these passions and
pursuits that can have any truck with Nero's image-making enterprise? In
his third satire, therefore, Persius asks this question, confronting the very idea
of an idyllic, sun-bathed Golden Age as celebrated in Calpurnius' eclogues
where, by definition, satire could not exist. Thus, the slacker's inability to
write poetry, such as the pastoral poetry implied by the interlocutor in lines 5-
6, may reflect Persius' own refusal to compose the propagandistic Golden Age
poetry with its attendant flattery of Nero. This engagement with the pastoral
world, explicitly as constructed by Calpurnius Siculus, recurs throughout
Persius' third satire.

The tangle of "problematic" voices that intrude at the beginning of
Persius' poem itself offers an initial contrast to the conventions of pastoral
poetry where the well-defined dialogue between rustics, such as we find in
Calpurnius' first eclogue, is typical. We can also look to Calpurnius' fourth
eclogue, a poem that similarly heralds the return of the Golden Age, for an
example of the amoebean singing contest with its verses alternating between
well-defined participants. In this poem, Meliboeus asks Corydon and
Amyntas to sing in alternating refrains (73-81):

incipe, nam faveo; sed prospice, ne tibi forte
tinnula tam fragili respiret fistula buxo,
quam resonare solet, si quando laudat Alexin.
hos potius, magis hos calamos sectare, canales
et preme, qui dignas cecinerunt consule silvas.
incipe, ne dubita. venit en et frater Amyntas:
cantibus iste tuis alterno succinet ore.
ducite, nec mora sit, vicibusque reducete carmen;
tuque prior, Corydon, tu proximus ibis, Amynta.
"Begin, for I favor you; but take care that your tinkling pipe not by chance breathe out from its slender boxwood in the same way it is accustomed to resound, whenever it praises Alexis. Rather pursue these reeds instead, and press the pipes which sang of the woods worthy of a consul. Begin and do not hesitate. Behold, even your brother Amyntas comes: he will answer your verses with his alternating singing. Draw out your song. Do not delay. In turns, return the song; You will go first, Corydon, and Amyntas, you second."

These lines not only betray their debt to Vergil's *Eclogues*, they also feature parallels with Persius' third satire. The verb that Calpurnius uses here to indicate the alternating singing of amoebbean verse, *succinet* ("sing along with"), typically refers to musical accompaniment. Yet, Persius also uses this verb in his third satire: *quid istas succinès ambies*. Persius' usage here has troubled scholars who have come up with explanations to resolve the difficulty. In fact, I think Persius draws attention to the word's curious presence here by juxtaposing it to *ambages*. We need not resort to inventing new definitions for this word to have it make sense in this passage since the word's primary meaning fits well with the bucolic feel of the satire's opening lines.

Indeed, the first reference to the pastoral world in the poem comes from the interlocutor who notes that the herd is resting in the shade to rouse the slacker from bed. A few lines later, it is presumably the same voice that chides the slacker for faulting the ink and pen for his inability to write. Here, this voice adopts language more applicable to amoebbean pastoral song to accuse the slacker for "chiming in with evasions" (*succinès ambies*). But what exactly are these evasions? And who is this interjecting voice whose
words are thick with the language and imagery of pastoral poetry? We have seen that this voice evokes the critical voice of Horace, S. 2.3 which Persius employs in his poem to offer criticism of his own satiric project. But we should also remember that we may read the slacker’s evasion of the sun’s rays as a rejection of obsequious poetry in the mode of Calpurnius’ effusive eclogues. Taken as such, the attendant difficulties he encounters in composing poetry are directly related to the problem of writing under the oppressive glare of Rome’s sun-emperor, Nero. In rousing the slacker to compose in the heat of midday, the interjecting “pastoral” voice that chides the poet seems to be pushing the slacker in the direction of bucolic poetry. We should remember that the rhetoric of the Neronian Golden Age has its precedent in similar propaganda which found its prime poetic exemplar in the *Eclogues* of Vergil, particularly his fourth eclogue. Thus, the pastoral voice that chimes in to scold the slacker represents the pressures in Nero’s Rome to compose bucolic poetry that would celebrate the return of the Golden Age, or at the very least poetry that praises the emperor. The bucolic coloring of the slacker’s anger upon being awakened seemingly mocks the voice’s implicit suggestion to write in a pastoral mode and represents the slacker’s own sarcastic attempt at conforming to contemporary poetic expectations: *findor, ut Arcadiae pecuaria rudere credas.*

Despite the problems encountered on this particular summer day, the slacker evidently has at some point gotten around to composing poetry; the
chiding question posed by the interjecting voice (quid istas succinis ambages?) tells us that. The slacker’s poetry is problematic, however, since it is ambages. As we shall see, the rejection of Neronian propaganda implied in ambages recurs throughout the poem as Persius puts his own negative spin on Nero’s restored Golden Age. Just as the oracle of Faunus in Calpurnius’ first eclogue takes the place of the anticipated song of Corydon and Omytus, as Persius’ third satire unfolds the poem that the slacker fails to write evolves into Persius’ poem about the dangers of dissolute living. In lines 35-43, for example, the references to the cruelty of savage tyrants testifies to the moral decrepitude of those who have abandoned virtue:

magne pater divum, saevos punire tyrannos
taur alia ratione velis, cum dira libido
moverit ingenium ferventi tincta veneno:
virtutem videant intabescantque relictam.
anne magis Siculi gemuerunt aera iuvenci
et magis auratis pendens laquearibus ensis
purpureas subter cervices terruit, “imus,
imus praecipites” quam si sibi dicat et intus
palleat infelix quod proxima nesciat uxor?

“Great father of the gods, with no other reason do you wish to punish savage tyrants, when dire lust tinged with seething venom has moved their temperament: let them see virtue and let them pine away for the things they have abandoned. Did the bronze of the Sicilian bull bellow more and sword hanging from gold panelled ceiling terrify more the purple necks beneath than if one said to himself ‘Headlong, deeper, deeper!’ and wretchedly grew pale inside at what his nearby wife should not know?”

In his unpublished analysis of Persius’ poem, Freudenburg has noted the correspondence between virtutem...relictam and Damasippus’ censure of Horace’s abandonment of virtue (virtute relictam) at Horace, S. 2.3.13, a parallel
enabling Persius to target himself in the poem. Here again, while scholars
have generally acknowledged that Persius’ third satire is indebted to S. 2.3,
they have overlooked the prominence of another Horatian model in Persius’
poem, namely Horace, Epistle, 1.2. Here, as in Persius’ third satire, an older,
more experienced voice offers advice to a young, apparently dissolute protégé
(puer, 68). In this poem, Horace advises the epistle’s addressee Lollius
Maximus that moral instruction is more clearly demonstrated by poetry,
particularly the moral paradigms found in Homer, than by the teachings of
philosophy. In lines 23-5, for instance, Horace alludes to Odysseus’ encounter
with Circe as an example of staying on task and curbing one’s desire:

Circae pocula nosti;
quae si cum sociis stultus cupidusque bibisset,
sub domina meretrice fuisset turpis et excors;

“You know about the cups of Circe; if in his foolishness and greed he
had downed these cups, he would have been foul and stupid under the
control of this whore.”

The danger of excess is a recurring theme in Horace’s poem, rendered most
succinctly in line 46: quod satis est cui contingit, nihil amplius optet (He who
has enough should not hope for more). Persius hints at this theme in his
poem by referring to the dire lust (dira libido) of savage tyrants who have
abandoned virtue. In lines 34-7, Horace similarly recommends that Lollius
dedicate himself to his studies lest he be tormented by envy or desire:

...et ni
posces ante diem librum cum lumine, si non
intendes animum studiis et rebus honestis,
invidia vel amore vigil torquebere.
"...and unless you send for a book and a lamp before dawn, unless you direct your mind at honorable aims and pursuits, while awake you will be tortured by envy or desire."

Persius adopts Horace’s image of the tortured insomniac in his description of the guilty conscience of the sleepless reprobate plagued by torments worse than the tortures of notoriously cruel tyrants (39-43).^32

Before continuing with the echoes of Horace, Ep. 1.2 in Persius’ poem, it is worth digressing briefly here to consider Persius’ allusions to these savage tyrants since their sudden appearance in these lines, I believe, contrasts with the celebration of the restored Golden Age that we find in Calpurnius’ eclogues. We have already seen in Eclogue 1 that Calpurnius hails the accession of Nero as the return of justice. But it also entails the restoration of peace and particularly the implementation of clementia (54-9):

\[
candida pax aderit; nec solum candida vultu,
qualis saepe fuit quae libera Marte professo,
quae domito procul hoste tamen grassantibus armis
publica diffudit tacito discordia ferro:
omne procul vitium simulatae cedere pads
iusit et insanos Clementia contudit enses.
\]

"Fair peace will come; not fair only in appearance, such as it often was when, free from declared warfare and with distant enemy subdued, with riotous weapons it nevertheless spread public discord with covert sword: Clemency has ordered every vice of a feigned peace to far off exile and has destroyed raging swords."

Calpurnius’ praise of the return of clemency under Nero stands in stark contrast to the brutal tortures of the tyrants Phaleris and Dionysius in Persius’ poem, tortures that in turn represent the torments inflicting a guilty conscience.
It is noteworthy that Persius alludes to these particular tyrants as models of severe punishment. Both ruled cities in Sicily, a locale associated with bucolic poetry. In the ingratiating fourth eclogue of Calpurnius Siculus, Corydon explains to Meliboeus the lineage of his pipe, describing among other things its powers to “tame savage bulls” (58-63):

\[
\text{quod si tu faveas trepido mihi, forsitan illos experiar calamos, here quos mihi doctus Iollas donavit dixitque: “truces haec fistula tauros conciliat: nostroque sonat dulcissima Fauno. Tityrus hanc habuit, cecinit qui primus in istis montibus Hyblaea modulabile carmen avena.”}
\]

“But if you should show favor to me in my nervous state, perhaps I could try out those pipes which skillful Iollas presented to me yesterday saying: ‘This pipe wins over fierce bulls: it sings the sweetest things to our Faunus. Tityrus owned this who in these hills was the first to sing his tuneful song on the Hyblaean pipe.’”

Calpurnius alludes to both Theocritus and Vergil in this passage as exemplars of the bucolic poetic tradition. Since antiquity, it has been widely assumed that Vergil identifies himself with Tityrus in his Eclogues.\(^3\)

The epithet attached to Tityrus’ pipe, Hyblaea, refers to a mountain in Sicily, the homeland of the inventor of pastoral poetry, Theocritus.\(^3\) Thus, Calpurnius is here demonstrating the indebtedness of Vergil’s pastoral poetry to Theocritus. In the opening lines of his sixth eclogue, where we find the most explicit instance of Vergil’s identification with Tityrus, Vergil, too, alludes to Sicily’s associations with bucolic poetry (1-5):
Prima Syracosio dignata est ludere versu
nostra nec erubuit silvas habitare Thalea.
cum canerem reges et proelia, Cynthius aurem
vellit et admonuit: "pastorem, Tityre, pinguis
pascere oportet ovis, deductum dicere carmen."

"My Muse first deemed it worthy to play in Syracusan (i.e. Sicilian)
verse and did not blush to inhabit the woods. When I used to sing of
kings and battles, the Cynthian plucked my ear and admonished me: 'A
shepherd, Tityrus, ought to feed sheep to be fat, yet sing a finely spun
song.'

We find a similar reference in the opening line of Vergil’s fourth eclogue that
further attests to Sicily’s importance to the genre: Sicelides Musae, paulo
maiora canamus (Sicilian Muses, let us sing of things of slightly greater
significance).

The association of Sicily with the pastoral world we find in Calpurnius
becomes something quite different in Persius. Unlike Calpurnius' shepherds
who hail the return of justice and clemency under the new emperor, Persius
alludes to Sicily as a quasi-bucolic space, a place "bellowing" with bulls
(gemuerunt...iuveni). But his also a sadistic civic scene famous for its tyrants
and their severe forms of punishment. The fierce bulls tamed by Tityrus'
melodious pipe in Calpurnius' fourth eclogue are horrifically translated into
the screams emanating from Phaleris' "bellowing" bull. Thus, in referring to
other, less idyllic associations of Sicily, Persius may hint at a less auspicious
take on Nero's Golden Age propaganda, perhaps even tempting us to see
Nero lurking behind the allusion to these savage tyrants.
Let us now return to the interjecting voice that upbraids Persius' slacker. After chiding the slacker for singing evasions, the voice employs the metaphor of the unfired pot to illustrate the slacker's need to avoid vice and be molded by philosophy (21-4):

\[
\text{sonat vitium percussa, maligne respondet viridi non cocta fidelia limo.}
\]
\[
\text{udum et molle lutum es, nunc nunc properandus et acri fingendus sine fine rota.}
\]

"The unbaked pot with its green mud is struck, sounds flawed, and responds only barely. You are moist and malleable clay, and now must be hastened and now must be shaped endlessly on the fierce wheel." 

Freudenburg has demonstrated how this metaphor recalls programmatic terms from Persius' first satire, particularly how the uncooked pot (non cocta fidelia) evokes the programmatic cooking imagery of aliquid decoctius at S. 1.125. In addition, following Reckford, he has also shown how the metaphor functions in equating the poet with the pot: the sound only grudgingly emitted by the struck pot (maligne respondet) very much resembles the rancor of the malevolent poet censured by the interlocutor. Since the interlocutor questions the "spiteful" motives of the poet, I think we are invited to see rota here not merely as the spinning wheel that shapes the poet but also as the instrument of torture connoting the poet's own ill-conceived "penchant for torturing victims in verse." Yet, the comparison of the slacker to an unbaked pot also accords well with the solar imagery that opens the poem where, in remaining indoors on a hot summer morning, the
slacker in effect remains "unbaked" by the sun's (Nero's) intense glare.

According to the interjecting pastoral voice, the object unaffected by the heat of the sun would indeed be flawed: like damp clay, the drunk slacker needs to be "fired" into a serviceable object. This molding metaphor, therefore, can be read as an inducement to conform to Neronian Golden Age propaganda.

Although this image of the molded pot also occurs in *Ars Poetica* 22 where it is associated with poetic composition (*currente rota cur urceus exit*), it also has another antecedent in Horace, *Epistle*, 1.2, a model surprisingly overlooked by most scholars. Despite Horace's emphasis on the moral value of poetry, the parallels with Persius' third satire, as we have already seen, are many. Horace, for example, uses the analogy of physical health to advocate the need for moral health, a theme prominent at the end of Persius' poem. In line 54, Horace prefaces a list of precepts to guard against moral sickness by comparing the mind to a jar: *sincerum est nisi vas, quodcumque infundis acescit* (Unless a jar is sound, whatever you pour in becomes sour). Like the unfired *fidelia* in Persius' poem, Horace's jar, too, is flawed. Towards the end of this epistle, Horace employs similar imagery to illustrate that moral instruction from an early age is the best precaution against moral sickness (67-70):

```
nunc adhibe puro
pectore vera puer, nunc te melioribus offer.
quo semel est imbuta recens servabit odorem
testa diu.
```
“Now, in your youth, listen eagerly to the truth with your pure heart and now offer yourself to your betters. A jar for a long time will preserve the odor with which it was once imbued when it was new.”

Horace’s claim that a well-made jar will retain some semblance of its earliest contents is adopted by the speaker in Persius’ poem who, in addition to likening the slacker to malleable clay, points out the slacker’s own early instruction in moral philosophy (52-62):

haut tibi inexpertum curvos deprehendere mores
quaque docet sapiens bracatis inlita Medis
porticus, insomnis quibus et detonsa iuventus
invigilat siliquis et grandi pasta polenta;
et tibi quae Samios diduxit littera ramos
surgentem dextro monstravit limite callem.
stertis adhuc laxumque caput conpage soluta
oscitat hesternum dissutis undique malis.
est aliquid quo tendis et in quod derigis arcum?
an passim sequeris corvos testaque lutoque,
securus quo pes ferat, atque ex tempore vivis?

“Hardly are you inexperienced in perceiving crooked habits and whatever the wise portico, painted with trousered Medes, teaches, with which a sleepless and shorn youth stays awake, having eaten pods and vast amounts of barley. And the letter which separates into Samian branches has shown to you the path rising with its right fork. Still you snore and your relaxed head on its loose joint yawns off yesterday with jaws unstitched on all sides. Do you have any ambition? Do you aim your bow at anything? Or do you pursue crows all over the place with a jar and with clay, not caring where your foot takes you and living on the spur of the moment?”

For the speaker, the slacker’s moral instruction at an early age at least has left a lasting impression and thus, along with his malleability, still offers some prospect for the slacker’s eventual moral improvement.
One passage from Horace’s epistle is especially reminiscent of Persius’ poem (27-37):

```
nos numerus sumus et fruges consumere nati,
  sponsi Penelopae nebulones Alcinoique
  in cute curanda plus aequo operata iuventus,
cui pulchrum fuit in medios dormire dies et
  ad strepitum citharae cessantem ducere somnum.
  ut iugulent hominem, surgunt de nocte latrones:
  ut te ipsum serves, non expergisceris? atqui
  si noles sanus, curres hydropicus; et ni
  posces ante diem librum cum lumine, si non
  intendes animum studiis et rebus honestis,
  invidia vel amore vigil torquebere.
```

“We are the group born to consume grain, the idling suitors of Penelope and the youths of Alcinous excessively engaged in caring for the body, for whom it was noble to sleep until noon and to admit delaying sleep at the sound of the lyre. Robbers rise at night to kill a man: do you not wake up to save yourself? Yet, if you don’t want to when you are healthy, you will run suffering from dropsy; and unless you send for a book and a lamp before dawn, unless you direct your mind at honorable aims and pursuits, while awake you will be tortured by envy or desire.”

The Homeric examples offered as potential images of Horace’s young, backsliding interlocutor, Lollius Maximus, again recall Persius’ late sleeping slacker who is roused from bed and scolded for self-indulgence. Horace’s exhortation to Lollius to rise before dawn to immerse himself in his books and his reference to consuming grain (fruges consumere) remind us of the example cited by the speaker in Persius’ poem of the barley-fed sleepless youth dedicated to his philosophical studies. He in turn contrasts with the slacker
who is unable to put pen to paper. The parallel is strengthened by Horace’s appeal to Lollius to “awaken” to save himself lest disinterest in moral improvement seize hold of him like a disease.

Horace emphasizes this correlation between physical and moral sickness a little later (46-53) where he asserts that the accumulation of wealth ultimately falls short of providing the well-being ensured by spiritual health:

quod satis est cui contingit, nihil amplius optet. non domus et fundus, non aeris acervus et auri aegroto domini deduxit corpore febres, non animo curas; valeat possessor oportet, si comportatis rebus bene cogitat uti. qui cupit aut metuit, iuvat illum sic domus et res ut lippum pictae tabulae, fomenta podagram, auriculas citharae collecta sorde dolentis.

“He who has enough should not hope for more. Neither a house nor a farm nor a pile of bronze and gold have ever turned away a fever from the sick body of its owner, nor cares from his mind. The possessor should have good health, if he knows how to use well the things he has brought together. And the man who desires and fears derives as much pleasure from his home and property as a man with swollen eyes from a portrait, gouty feet from bandages, or ears suffering from collected dirt from a lyre.”

Indeed, a few lines later (58-9), Horace warns against the dangers of envy that such wealth can induce, likening it in fact to the tortures of Sicilian tyrants that Persius alludes to in his poem: *invidia Siculi non invenere tyranni*! *maius tormentum* (Sicilian tyrants did not devise a greater torture than envy). For Horace, knowing what is “enough” stems from moral well-being which brings with it freedom from the cares which ultimately plague the
minds of those whose pursuit of wealth leads them along the path to moral decrepitude. As the concluding lines of this passage illustrate, though the symptoms of illness may be mitigated, the disease nonetheless remains. Persius employs this same correspondence between physical and moral disease in lines 63-6 of his third satire. Here, just after the speaker argues that strict adherence from an early age to the principles of philosophy may ward off moral degeneracy, he alludes analogously to the early medical precautions that may be taken to stave off the onset of disease:

elleborum frustra, cum iam cutis aegra tumebit,
poscentis videas; venienti occurite morbo,
et quid opus Cratero magnos promittere montis?
discite et, o miseri, causas cognoscite rerum.

"When sickly skin already swells, you would see them asking for hellebore in vain. Meet head-on the oncoming disease, and what need is there to promise vast mountains to Craterus? Wretched men, learn and understand the causes of things."

Horace’s plea to Lollius to wake up lest he be overtaken by dropsy (ut te ipsum servas, non expergisceris? atqui si noles sanus, curres hydropicus) is echoed in the speaker’s admonition to anticipate an oncoming illness. The reference here to hellebore implies that the swelling skin is again attributable to the effects of dropsy. In both poems, discounting the moral instruction from one’s early years, much like ignoring the early stages of a disease, has dire consequences.

Later in the third satire (88-106), Persius offers yet another grim scene of unheeded medical advice. A man consults his physician with various health
complaints yet ignores his instructions to remain in bed. He heads for the 
baths with a flask of wine and gradually succumbs to dropsy. Here, again, 
the implication is that the neglect of one's moral health, like the disregard for 
one's physical well-being, can come to a similar dismal end.

Persius' engagement with Horace's epistle seems initially perplexing 
since Horace encourages Lollius to look to poetry for his moral instruction. 
We should recall that for Persius, however, poetry under Nero poses its own 
difficulties. These difficulties are implied ironically in the words the speaker 
uses to chastize the idleness of Persius' slacker (an passim sequeris corvos 
testaque lutoque, securis quo pes ferat, atque ex tempore vivis?). The 
reference to following crows evokes Persius' prologue where the flattery of 
the emperor becomes the preoccupation of obsequious crow-poets (corvos 
poetas). In the prologue, Persius criticizes those ingratiating poets by likening 
them to the clinging ivy (hederae sequaces) that crowns the marble busts of 
poets. The speaker's accusation that the slacker spends his time chasing crows 
can be seen as ironic since the slacker's inability to write, as we recall, derives 
precisely from the unwillingness to compose the type of Golden Age 
propagandistic poetry that is suggested by the pastoral voice in the opening 
lines of the poem. The jar (testa) and clay (lutum) also evoke the imagery the 
speaker employs in pointing out the slacker's need to be properly molded, a 
metaphor, as we have seen, that can be taken (among other possibilities) to 
imply conforming to the Neronian propaganda machine. By bringing
together the prologue’s crow-poets and the speaker’s Horatian molding metaphor, Persius demonstrates the inherent problem of writing poetry under Nero in Horace’s exhortation to look to poetry for value. For Persius, Nero’s Golden Age applies the pressures of writing a certain type of poem that holds no value, moral or otherwise.

Not only does the molding metaphor recall the crow-poets of the prologue, it also evokes the sculpture metaphor in the programmatic first satire where Persius criticizes contemporary aesthetic tastes (63-5):

‘quid populi sermo est?’ quis enim nisi carmina molli nunc dum numero fluere, ut per leve severos effundat iunctura unguis?

‘“What does the public say?” What besides that poems now at last flow in soft rhythm, so that the juncture pours out critical finger nails over the smooth surface?”

The image is borrowed from marble working where the smoothness of marble was tested by running a finger-nail over its surface. In this passage, Persius expresses his contempt for the current literary standards propagated under Nero that measure a poem’s merit according to the fluidity of its metrical collocations. This indictment of the Neronian literary scene recurs in more detail later in 5.192-106 where Persius cites examples of the affectations of contemporary verse (92-7):

’sed numeris decor est et iunctura addita crudis.

cludere sic versum didicit “Berecyntius Attis” et “qui caeruleum dirimebat Nerea delphin,” sic “costam longo subduximus Appennino.”

“Arma virum”, nonne hoc spumosum et cortice pingui ut ramale vetus vegrandi subere coctum?”

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"But grace and juncture have been added to crude rhythms. Thus "Berecyntian Attis" learned to end the verse as did "the dolphin which divided blue Nereus," and thus "we removed a rib from the long Apennines." "Arms and the man," isn't this frothy and cooked in its thick bark like an old branch in its stunted cork."

The reference to *iunctura* here recalls its associations with sculpting in a similar poetic context earlier in the poem where, as we have seen, Persius scorns the poetic standards promulgated by the Neronian literary establishment. Just as the sculpting metaphor of Persius' first satire hints at the pressure to adhere to certain literary tastes prevalent under Nero, the proper molding of the slacker in S. 3 similarly implies writing poetry that conforms to Neronian propaganda. But there it is the poet himself, as judged by his harsh critic, who is "frothy" (*despumare*) and "spilling" (*effluis*). Moreover, the language employed by the speaker in his criticism of the *Aeneid* for failing to measure up to contemporary standards not only reminds us of Persius' slacker (*despumare; non cocta*) and the similar difficulties he faces in writing, but it also recalls the critical voice of Horace, S. 2.3 that filters into Persius' third satire to criticize Persius' satiric project.

We have seen that the correlation between physical and moral health prominent in Horace's epistle has a thematic parallel in Persius' third satire. In Persius' poem, the concluding vignette of the heedless patient succumbing in the baths echoes the description of Natta, apparently the paradigm of degenerate living (31-4):
non pudet ad morem distincti vivere Nattae.
    sed stuper hic vitio et fibris increvit opimum
    pingue, caret culpa, nescit quid perdat, et alto
demersus summa rursus non bullit in unda.

"You are not ashamed to live like dissolute Natta. But he is
benumbed by vice and thick fat grows on his entrails; he lacks any
sense of guilt and doesn't know what he loses and, sunk so deeply,
he doesn't send any bubbles back to the surface."

Like the reckless sick man who meets his demise in the baths, Natta,
enveloped in his thick fat is oblivious to shame. He is envisioned as
drowning in his own vice. This is an ironic image for a man whose name
may evoke the word for swim, natare. In contrast to Natta's bubbling that
dissipates the further he sinks in his own depravity, we are perhaps reminded
of the locus amoenus at the opening of Calpurnius' first eclogue (11-12)
replete with bubbling waters shaded by a sheltering beech: bullantes ubi fagus
a quas radice sub ipsa | protegit et ramis errantibus implicat umbras). Here,
Ornytus recommends that he and Corydon seek the shade of a beech tree to
mitigate the intense heat of the sun. The idyllic lushness associated with the
pastoral world of the Golden Age (pinea dense | silva) becomes in Persius' poem the dense fat that accumulates on a profligate like Natta. In fact, as
Casaubon suggested, Natta's name may derive from the Greek verb νάττω
which means "to press," "squeeze," or "stamp down." The verb also has the
definition "to stuff or cram full." While the latter definition certainly befits
Natta's apparent corpulence, I think that the idea of pressing inherent in the
first definition accords well when considered in light of Calpurnius.
We should recall that Calpurnius' first eclogue opens with a reference to the wine-presses active during the heat of late summer: *quamvis et madidis incumbant prela racemis / et spument raucos ferventia musta susurro.* Although Gowers sees the striking combination of "hoarse whispering" (*rauco...susrauro*) emitted by the fermenting must as a metaphor for opposition to Nero, I think that perhaps this image can be seen merely to reflect the increased productivity stimulated by Nero's own literary enthusiasm. The fermenting wine-must that inversely parallels the slacker's "defrothing" Falernian is initially *squeezed* out of the wine-presses. Though the crushed grapes release their juices, Persius' slacker cannot produce anything on his pages other than runny ink. As mentioned above, we are perhaps invited to see in the opening of Calpurnius' poem Nero overseeing the fertility of this new Golden Age as an incarnation of the sun. Persius plays with this idea in the opening of his third satire where he grapples with the pressures of writing poetry under this sun-emperor. The squeezing wine-presses that produce the juicy must (*spument...ferventia musta*) symbolizing in Calpurnius' poem the prosperity of the new regime become in Persius not only the defrothing slacker (*despumare*), but also the degenerate Natta, languishing in his own vice and burdened under the excessive weight of his own fat. At the end of the poem, it is Natta's doublet, the heedless bather swollen with dinner (*turgidas hic epulis*), who meets his grim end with wine flagon in hand. Like the wine-must, Natta himself almost seems to ferment,
though in his own vice as his bubbles scarcely percolate to the surface. The same image comes into play at the end of the poem, in the sick bather’s emitting “mephitic fumes” from his throat, implying that he is rotting from within. And when the heat of the bath sinks into his body, his teeth begin to chatter and his mouth to spew. He is a pot put on to boil.\textsuperscript{48} In both cases, the bubbling is far from the sweetly gurgling waters under Calpurnius’ idyllic shade tree. Reminiscent in fact of the historical representations of Nero, Natta is a corpulent, depraved figure whose very name evokes the pressures exerted by Nero already hinted at in Persius’ poem.\textsuperscript{49}

The frothing must in Calpurnius’ poem contrasts with the metaphor Persius uses to describe his satiric project in S. 1.125: \textit{aspice et haec, si forte aliquid decoctius audis} (Look at this as well, if perchance you have an ear for something more boiled down). In her study of how \textit{decoquere} is a suitable metaphor for describing Nero’s reign, Gowers has noted that the verb means “to boil down” and is typically associated with the practice of boiling down liquids to half or a third of their original volume.\textsuperscript{50} Pliny the Elder, for example, uses it to refer to boiling down must.\textsuperscript{51} Freudenburg has recently shown that the verb’s occurrence along with \textit{despumare} in Vergil, G. 1.295-6 to describe the late-night toils of a farmer’s wife (\textit{aut dulcis musti Volcano decoquit umorem \textit{et foliis undam trepidi despumat aëni}) is relevant to Persius’ late-sleeping slacker.\textsuperscript{52} But I think that it is also valuable not only to see how Persius uses a word associated with the boiling down of wine to
characterize his satires, but also how that same image pre-exists Persius’ *aliquid decoctius* metaphor as a symbol of the prosperity of Nero’s Golden Age in the opening scene of Calpurnius’ first eclogue. Persius thus may be seen to offer his “boiled down” satire as a rather distinct alternative to Calpurnius’ “frothy” and obsequious poems.

Persius’ third satire thus is a poem about choices. Indeed, Persius seems to draw attention to the choices that inhabit the poem by compelling the reader to assign to specific speakers lines that are, by all accounts, very difficult to follow from one speaker to the next. At a more obvious “didactic” level, he presents us with the choice of living a dissolute life or a moral life devoted to the study of philosophy as presented to the late-sleeping slacker by the interjecting “pastoral” voice. These alternatives are best exemplified in the passage where the speaker alludes to the slacker’s prior instruction in the tenets of Pythagorean philosophy (56-7): *et tibi quae Samios diduxit littera ramos* | *surgentem dextro monstravit limite callem.* As commentators have noted, the speaker refers to the Greek letter Υ which, as Isidore informs us, Pythagoras used to explain the choice between a good or bad life that we confront in youth. But this passage may also hint at another choice that, as we have seen, permeates the poem. In Calpurnius’ first eclogue, we recall that the anticipated singing between Corydon and Omytus is superseded by
the inscription etched onto the bark of a beech tree heralding the advent of a
new Golden Age (19-23), an inscription described in terms reminiscent of
Persius' unbaked jar (viridi non cocta fidelia limo):

et iam captatae pariter successimus umbrae,
sed quae nam sacra descripta est pagina fago,
quam modo nescio quis properanti falce notavit?
aspicis ut virides etiam nunc littera rimas
servet et aren ti n on dum se laxet hiatu?"

"And now together we come under the desired shade. But what is this
poem copied onto the sacred beech, which somebody with quick knife
has just written? Do you see how even now the letters preserve their
green clefts and do not yet expand with their dry slits?"

The correspondence between Persius' littera ramos and Calpurnius' littera
rimas (occurring at the same place in the line) is clear. Pythagoras' letter
represents the choice between a good or bad life which, set up as the contrast
between the scolding pastoral voice and dissolute late-sleeping slacker
throughout the poem, in turn mirrors the choice in the type of poetry one can
write. The verbal echo of Calpurnius' littera rimas in Persius' littera ramos
signals one of these poetic alternatives: ingratiatory poems like Calpurnius'
praise of Nero's Golden Age celebrated in the freshly carved etchings into the
beech tree. The other poetic option is Persius' brand of satire which indicts
the poetic pressures applied by Golden Age propaganda that precludes poetry
that does not toe the Neronian line. The slacker's two-colored parchment
(bicolor membrana) and doubling reed-pen (dilutas...geminet...fistula guttas)
also hint at the two alternatives facing him as he sits down to write. Just prior to sitting down to write, the slacker, like Pythagoras’ letter, splits in two (findor).

Aside from this critique of Golden Age propaganda, Persius also populates his third satire with individuals who epitomize the dangers of the prosperity that attends the return of the Golden Age. For Persius, such prosperity can ultimately lead to moral decadence. And thus Calpurnius’ Golden Age leaves room in its idyllic space for the criticism provided by satire. In fact, the need for satire is underscored by the dissolute characters in the poem whose overindulgence hints at satire’s derivation from satis/satur.

One obvious example of excess is the hungover slacker, glutted with Falernian. In his rebuke of the slacker (24-9), the voice preempts the slacker’s anticipated excuse that his wealth and connections make him exempt from self-improvement, asking him: hoc satis? Natta, too, laden with his dense fat (sed stupet hic vitio et fibris increvit opimum | pingue), and the feckless patient, stuffed full of his pre-bath dinner (turgidus hic epulis), offer other examples of vice that comes with excess, and happy excuses for that excess.

The laughing centurion who interjects in lines 78-87, however, is an altogether different case: his mockery of the pretensions of self-indulgent philosophers and the laughter he elicits at their expense are themselves reminiscent of satire:
‘quod sapio satis est mihi. non ego curo esse quod Arcesilas aerumnosique Solones obstipo capite et figentes lumine terram, murmura cum secum et rabiosa silentia rodunt atque exprorecto trutinantur verba labello, aegroti verteris meditantes somnia, gigni de nihil nihilum, in nihilum nil posse reverti. hoc est quod palles? cur quis non prandeat hoc est?’ his populus ridet, multumque torosa iuventus ingeminat tremulos naso crispante cachinnos.

"What I know/taste is enough for me. I don't care to be like Arcesilas and troubled Solons with head bent down and fixing the ground with my eyes, while they chew their mumblings and mad silences and weigh words on protruded lip, pondering the dreams of a sick old man that nothing can come from nothing and nothing return to nothing. Is that why you are pale? Is this why someone misses lunch?’ The populace laughs at his words, and the muscular youth redoubles the trembling guffaws with his wrinkled nose."

In contrast to the other characters in the poem, it seems that only the centurion knows what is enough. Indeed, he bears a striking resemblance to Horace who in Ep. 1.2, as we recall, cautions against the accumulation of wealth since it fails to secure the well-being provided by spiritual health (46):

*quod satis est* cui contingit, nihil amplius optet. The voice that urges the slacker to turn towards philosophy in fact becomes the centurion’s implicit target since his insistent exhortations to philosophical study are themselves the target of the centurion’s criticism, regarded by him as “extreme.” Thus, the centurion’s satiric criticism of philosophical excess hints at the larger issue of decadence, as represented by the other examples in the poem.

Apprehension about Nero’s restored Golden Age is not confined to Persius’ poems. In fact, we can find another example in pastoral poetry, the
second *Einsiedeln Eclogue* which, like Calpurnius' poems, dates from the early days of Nero's reign. Like Calpurnius' *Eclogues*, this poem refers to the restoration of peace and justice under Nero's newly restored Golden Age, though its somewhat cynical take on these propagandistic themes betrays skepticism about their validity. Despite apparent misgivings concerning the Golden Age that inhabit this poem, its cynicism is quite understated when compared to the later first *Einsiedeln Eclogue*, a poem of different authorship, where its effusive praise of Nero can only be regarded as sarcastic. Sullivan has noted the indebtedness of the second eclogue to Calpurnius' collection, particularly pointing out that its opening words (*quid tacitus, Mystes?*) echoes the opening of Calpurnius' political fourth eclogue (*quid tacitus, Corydon*), a poem that also heralds the return of the Golden Age under Nero. But as the eclogue unfolds, we get a strong sense that this poem's allusions to Calpurnius' poetry bring to light other, less promising features of Nero's Golden Age that Calpurnius' flattering eclogues overlook. Indeed, I believe it is valuable to consider how Persius' third satire marks a transition in grappling with Neronian Golden Age ideology. Written in the period between the second and the first *Einsiedeln Eclogue*, it both touches upon the doubts expressed in the second poem and prefigures the parody of Nero in the first. In a sense, Persius' third satire can be seen to anticipate the first *Einsiedeln Eclogue* by developing the parodic possibilities of bucolic poetry that are presented in full flower in the second *Einsiedeln Eclogue*.  

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In the opening lines of the more understated second Einsiedeln Eclogue, the doubts harbored about the new regime are epitomized in the anxiety plaguing the shepherd Mystes. This anxiety catches the eye of Glyceranus (1-3; 9):


My. quod minime reris, satias mea gaudia vexat.

"Gl. Why are you quiet, Mystes? My. Worries disturb my happiness: worry attends my meals, and rises more when I drink, and heavy anxiety takes delight in oppressing my joys...My. You scarcely realize that satiety troubles my happiness."

We are never explicitly told what troubles Mystes; after line 11, there seems to be a lacuna that likely would have related the shepherd’s curae. Nonetheless, it is evident from line 9 that his anxiety stems from the satiety that attends Golden Age prosperity. This is also implied a little later when Glyceranus again asks Mystes the reason for his silence (14): tu dic, quae sit tibi causa tacendi. Mystes immediately responds by listing the blessings that ensue from the return of the Golden Age, particularly stressing the restoration of justice and peace (21-29):

ergo num dubio pugnant discrimine nati
et negat huic aevi stolidum pecus aurea regna?
Saturni rediere dies Astraeaque virgo
tutaque in antiquos redierunt saecula mores.
condit secura totas spe messor aristas,
languescit senio Bacchus, pecus errat in herba,
 nec gladio metimus nec clausis oppida muris
bella tacenda parant; nullo iam noxia partu
femina quaecunque est hostem parit.
"Therefore, surely our youth don't fight with the outcome in doubt? The sluggish herd doesn't deny that this is a golden age, does it? The days of Saturn have returned and so, too, the Astraean maiden and a secure age has returned to old customs. With hope secure, the harvester stores up all of his corn ears; Bacchus/wine grows languid with old age; the herd wanders in the grass; neither do we harvest with sword nor do towns with closed walls prepare unspeakable wars; now there is no woman, injurious in begetting children, who gives birth to an enemy."

In Mystes' reply to Glyceranus' query, we can infer that the sense of satiety that attends Golden Age prosperity induces the moral decadence that we have seen alluded to in Persius' third satire in figures like Natta. As Sullivan has pointed out, "Too established a peace, too widespread a prosperity, would have its dangers too and could lead to moral decadence." Indeed, the satiety that troubles Mystes is echoed in the pun on Saturn's name: not only has the Saturnian Golden Age returned, but so too have the days of satiety (Saturn i dies) that bring their own problems.

The poem concludes with further references to the abundance produced by the earth in this new regime (35-38):

nunc tellus inculta novos parit ubere fetus,  
nunc ratibus tutis fera non irascitur unda;  
mordent frena tigres, subeunt iuga saeva leones:  
casta fave Lucina: tuus iam regnat Apollo!

"Now the earth uncultivated yields new produce with its fertility, now the fierce wave does not grow angry with boats that are safe; tigers chew their bits and lions undertake the cruel yoke: be favorable, chaste Lucina! Your Apollo now rules!"

The reference here to Apollo, as we have seen elsewhere, alludes to Nero's self-fashioning as the sun god. Yet, we may also note that the last line of the
poem is taken verbatim from Vergil, *Eccl.* 4.10 which, as we recall, celebrates the return of the Golden Age under Octavian. Actually, the poet of the second *Einsiedeln Eclogue* again borrows from Vergil’s poem imitating *Eccl.* 4.6 when he refers to the return of the Saturnian age and the Astraean maiden: *iam redit et Virgo, redeunt Saturnia regna* (Now the maiden also returns and the reign of Saturn). These echoes of Vergil’s poem do not merely illustrate the anonymous poet’s indebtedness to his pastoral predecessor. I think that there is more at stake here. In evoking the Golden Age of Vergil’s poem, the poet hints at the ultimate failure of the Golden Age instituted by Octavian that deteriorated from the excesses of succeeding generations. It is this transience of Golden Ages, which, though always vaunted as “eternal,” never last, that seems to filter into the poem and is embodied in the *curae* that vex Mystes.

Given the doubts this poet has with the idea of a renewed Golden Age as promoted by the new regime, why does the poet choose pastoral as the poetic mode to voice his concerns? As we have seen, to write pastoral under Nero entails voicing his Golden Age propaganda and thus praise of the emperor. But for this poet, as for his contemporary, Persius, it is this very interrelationship that makes pastoral the means through which he is able to express uncertainty about the viability of a restored Golden Age. Unlike the poet of the first *Einsiedeln Eclogue* whose sarcasm betrays his criticism of Nero, this earlier poet does not wholly reject the claims of Neronian
propaganda but rather tempers the optimism of Calpurnius' flattering poems. We need only look to the first eclogue to see how a poet ironically employs pastoral's associations with Golden Age rhetoric to praise Nero sarcastically. It is unlikely that anyone could have regarded this poet's exalting of Nero's poetic talents over that of Homer and Vergil with any seriousness.

In the preceding pages, I have examined the role that the pastoral world plays in Persius' third satire. As I have shown, its prominence invites us to consider Persius' poem against the backdrop of the Golden Age propaganda that was promulgated during Nero's reign. When viewed in this light, we can see Persius' poem as an indictment of this ideology with its attendant pressures to write poems that actively promote this propaganda. By Persius' day, the rhetoric of the Golden Age and its inherent connotations of agricultural fertility were fixtures of pastoral poetry. In addition, imperial propaganda and flattering appeals to patrons had long been connected with the genre. And it is these aspects of pastoral that Persius rejects in his third satire.

An integral part of this Golden Age propaganda was Nero's identification with the sun, a metaphor prominently featured in Seneca's Apocolocyntosis, Persius' poem, and in the first eclogue of Calpurnius Siculus. In Persius' third satire, the slacker's avoidance of the sun and his
subsequent inability to write may be taken to imply Persius' rejection of the Golden Age that is celebrated in the obsequious verses of Calpurnius. For Persius, Nero's Golden Age promotes only the type of poetry that praises the emperor. By drawing on Horace, Ep. 1.2 and the emphasis it places on the value of poetry, Persius calls into question the value of poetry along the lines of Calpurnius' ingratiating poems.

In addition to the pressures to write propagandistic poetry, Persius criticizes the notion of a restored Golden Age by hinting at the moral decadence that ensues from the overabundance typically associated with Golden Age prosperity. The sense of satiety and moral decline that result from this prosperity are also featured in the second Einsiedeln Eclogue where it is implied that they may factor together in bringing about the failure of Nero's Golden Age.

In the following chapter, we shall see that the non-compliant voice of S. 3 figures prominently in Persius' fifth satire where the pressure to conform to the Neronian literary scene again takes center stage. But unlike in S. 3 where the problem is formulated as the pressure to promote Neronian Golden Age propaganda, in S. 5 it is recast as the need to take up a literary genre of particular interest to Nero, tragedy. Much like in S. 3 where Persius rejects the pastoral mode for its attendant flattery of the emperor, in S. 5 he similarly dismisses the bombast of "Neronian" tragedy in favor of his distinctive, "boiled down" version of satire.
See Hooley (1997) 209n.14: in noting the difficulty in arranging the speakers of these lines, Hooley differs from Clausen, adopting the text used by Lee and Barr which puts the poem’s first three words in quotation marks, thereby assigning them to the *comes*. See also Wehrle (1992) 39: “The satire opens enigmatically—the initial statement, *nempe haec adsidue*, 1, defines no immediate dramatic context. Further, as we proceed with the satire, there arises a marked dilemma about the (various) voices which appear.”


For an analysis of Persius’ indebtedness to Horace here, see in particular Hooley (1997) 202-29.

For the slacker’s anger here directed at inattentive slaves, see Dessen (1968) 52.

For example, see Horace, S. 2.7.34-5: *nemon oleum feret ocius? ecquis.1 audit?* (“Will nobody quickly bring the lamp oil? Is anyone listening?”).

Freudenburg, unpublished manuscript on Persius, S. 3. In this manuscript, Freudenburg demonstrates how the Horatian voice of S. 2.3 has a self-diagnostic function in Persius’ poem.


Though the dating of Calpurnius Siculus has been a subject of debate, I side with the vast majority who date his poetry to Nero’s reign. For Calpurnius as a Neronian poet, see Mayer (1980) 175; Townend (1980) 166; Wiseman (1982); Sullivan (1985) 48n.61; Gowers (1994) 144-5. In her analysis of Persius’ third satire, Gowers does discuss Calpurnius Siculus but not as an influence on Persius’ poem. For a later, less persuasive dating, see Champlin (1978) 95 and Horsfall (1997) 166-96.

For agricultural productivity, see for example Vergil, Ecl. 2.19-22, 51-5; 4.18-25; 7.53-6.

For the boiling down of wine, see Gowers (1994) 133.

See Vergil, Ecl. 2.1-8.


For calamus, see Vergil, Ecl. 1.10; 5.2 and Calp. Ecl. 3.58; 4.23, 59, 76, 131; 6.10, 20. For fistula, see Vergil, Ecl. 2.37; 3.22-5; 7.24; 10.34 and Calp. Ecl. 2.31, 92; 4.26, 60, 74; 7.8. For harundo, see Vergil, Ecl. 6.8.

For similar bucolic settings for this type of pastoral song, see Theocritus, Id. 5.44-62 and 6. See also [Theoc.] Id. 8 and 9. In Latin pastoral, see Vergil, Ecl. 3.55-111 and Ecl. 7 and Calp. Ecl. 2 and 4.

Sullivan (1985) 51. "...Calpurnius Siculus, who may stand as one in place of many examples of the typical 'court' poetry of the period, that is to say, poetry one of whose prime aims is flattery of the emperor and whose motivation, besides fame, is social or political advancement and pecuniary reward."


For references to "Caesar" throughout the poem, see lines 87, 94, 97, 132, and 143.

It has been suggested that "Meliboeus" may actually be Seneca. For a brief discussion of this question, see Keene (1887) 12-14. See also Sullivan (1985) 48n.61.

Eden (1984) 78. For a similar view of Nero, see Seneca, De Clem. 1.1.4: legibus, quas ex situ ac tenebris in lucem evocavi (laws, which I summoned from their inactivity and the shadows into the light).

For a good analysis of the sun imagery associated with Nero and its prevalence in Neronian literature, see Gowers (1994), particularly 131: "Neronian literature, more than that of any other period in Rome, demands..."
to be read in the shadow, or rather, glare, of its ruler. The sun-king always penetrates the dark studies and rural retreats that confine Neronian writing."

23Eden (1984) 79: "The Morning Star, Lucifer 'bringer of light', and the Evening Star, Hesperus, are in fact the same planet, Venus, at opposite points of its solar orbit." For the common practice in Hellenistic ruler-cult of comparing a mortal with a star or the sun, see Eden (1984) 79. See also Horace, S. 1.7.24-5: solem Asiae Brutum appellat stellasque salubris | appellat comites (He calls Brutus the sun of Asia and calls his companions the stars of health).

24In his praise of Nero at the opening of his epic (1.47-50), Lucan also depicts Nero as mounting the chariot of the sun.


26For this connection, see Freudenburg, unpublished manuscript.

27This is akin to the praise of the Golden Age in Vergil's fourth eclogue where the poet explicitly tells us in the first line that he intends to embark upon a more elevated theme (Sicelides Musae, paulo maiora canamus). Like the inscription in Calpurnius' poem, this heralding of the Golden Age is not presented in the typical dialogue between shepherds but rather as a voice coming from elsewhere. This suggests that both poets deemed such a lofty theme as unsuited to the discourse between shepherds.

28The reference to Alexis, for example, alludes to Vergil's second eclogue where Corydon sings of his unrequited love for a boy of the same name. Calpurnius' phrase reducite carmen is similarly indebted to the deductum carmen of Vergil, Ecl. 6.5. In referring to pipes being worthy of a consul, Calpurnius alludes to Vergil, Ecl. 4.3: si canimus silvas, silvae sint consulae dignae. Here, Vergil indicates his shift to a loftier poetic mode to praise the coming of a Golden Age. Like Vergil's fourth eclogue, Calpurnius' poem also heralds the coming of a Golden Age.

29See OLD succino 1.

30The scholiast on this passage suggests that the verb implies soft murmuring: ut concinis, ita succinis, id est, submurmeras. Some take the verb as an allusion to the Cumaean Sibyl's utterings in Vergil, Aen. 6.98-9: Cumaeae Sibyllae | horrendas canit ambages. For this view, see Barr (1987) 104 and Kissel (1990) 392 who similarly see the verb as connoting murmuring.
For the notion of limiting one’s desires, see also line 56: *semper avarus eget: certum voto pete finem* (The greedy man is always lacking: seek a fixed limit to your wishes).

For the sleeplessness of Persius’ reprobate, see Harvey (1981) 90. In his note on *proxima uxor*, he argues that “the *infelix* suffers torment at night while lying wakeful beside his wife.”

For discussion of these lines, see Wiseman (1982) 58.


For a discussion of the pot metaphor in Persius as well as its antecedents in Plato and Lucretius, see Reckford (1998) 341-4.

Freudenburg, unpublished manuscript. For the poet as pot metaphor, see also Reckford (1998) 341-4.

Freudenburg, unpublished manuscript.

Kissel (1990) 397 and Reckford (1998) 342n.10 refer to these lines but make little of them.

For hellebore as a remedy for dropsy, see Harvey (1981) 95 and Barr (1987) 110.

For dropsy as the likely cause of this man’s demise, see Harvey (1981) 101 and Barr (1987) 115.


Calp. Ecl. 1.9-10.

Villeneuve (1918) 79. Villeneuve takes issue with Casaubon’s conjecture that Natta’s name comes from this Greek verb: “Casaubon suppose, sans preuves suffisantes, que c’est là un nom commun désignant ceux qui exercaient les métiers les plus humbles, en particulier les foulons et les corroyeurs.” Although I agree with Casaubon that Natta’s name may derive
from this verb, I do not really agree with his suggestion that we are to think of Natta as either a fuller or a leather dresser.

45See LS\(\nu\alpha\sigma\omega\) (Attic \(\nu\alpha\tau\tau\omega\)) II.

46Calp. Ecl. 1.2-3.


48For the sickly bather as a boiling pot, see Freudenburg, unpublished manuscript.

49For a possible connection between Nero and Natta, see Gowers (1994) 132.

50Gowers (1994) 133.


52Freudenburg, unpublished manuscript.


54For the Horatian flavor of these lines, see Hooley (1997) 219-22.

55For the date of this poem, see Sullivan (1985) 57. See also Scheda (1969) 65.


57For the authorship, dating, and parodic tone of the first Einsiedeln Eclogue, see Sullivan (1985) 56-9. He dates the poem to around late 64 or 65. See also Scheda (1969) 60-6 who dates the poem to 63 or 64. For the parodic tone of the praise of Nero in this poem, see also Korzeniewski (1971) 111: "Wird das Lob zu dick aufgetragen, so wirkt es komisch."

58Sullivan (1985) 56.

“The poem was probably written early in Nero’s reign as an indirect response to the optimistic flattery of Calpurnius and others, but there is no evidence for our assuming a political hostility in the writer.”

Eins. Ecl. 1. 45-49. For the other satirical elements of this poem, see Sullivan (1985) 57-9.

See Sullivan (1985) 59. For Calpurnius’ poems as encomia, see Rosenmeyer (1969) 123.
CHAPTER 3
FEASTS AND FREEDOM IN SATIRE 5

Satire 5 opens with Persius affecting a desire for a hundred mouths, the conventional sum sought by epic and tragic poets who need to say something exceptionally big. His teacher, Cornutus, quickly interjects to denounce such hackneyed poses as the bluster of high-flown poetry. Persius, he suggests, should stick to himself, and to the more modest aims of satire. Persius then proceeds to express his devotion and gratitude to his tutor before turning his attention at line 73 to the topic of freedom, a topic that fills out the remainder of the poem. Others have noted the debt this poem owes to Horace, S. 2.7 where Horace, like Persius in S. 5, addresses the notion that only the wise man is free. While acknowledging the prominence of Horace’s poem in Persius’ fifth satire, in the pages that follow I will take a different tack, showing how other voices, notably those of Persius’ first and third satires (and by extension the prologue), figure prominently into the way we read S. 5. I will show that Persius draws upon voices remembered from poems earlier in his libellus, in order to have us reconsider where those voices come from and how they are “dialogically” textured by further voices we were incapable of hearing before. Here in S. 5, he has us hear another voice, that of his
mentor, Cornutus, inside the one we had always taken as simply "his." This
dialogic turn on the part of Persius, not only within himself but within his
book, I will show, says something about our own inner voices.

Other voices filter into this poem as well. Persius' engagement with
tragedy at the opening of the poem, as we shall see, is yet another response to
an "Augustan" literary genre as it was promoted under Nero. Although
Persius devotes much of S. 5 to the issue of freedom, it is this poem's dialogue
with earlier poems in the libellus that allows us to hear Persius' lecture on
libertas in a deliberately political way, i.e. with specific reference to Neronian
literary tastes, and, by extension, to the problem of free speech under Nero.

With its opening words, Persius' fifth satire focuses our attention on
poets and the conventions of contemporary poetry. Although Persius does
concern himself in his third satire with the pressures of writing a certain type
of poetry under Nero, this is his most explicit engagement with the practices
of poetic composition since S. 1 (5.1-4):

Vatibus hie mos est, centum sibi poscere voces
centum ora et linguas optare in carmina centum,
fabula seu maesto ponatur hianda tragoedo,
volnera seu Parthi ducentis ab inguine ferrum.

"This is the custom of poets: to demand a hundred voices for
themselves and a hundred mouths and to ask for a hundred tongues
for their poems, whether a play is served to be gaped by a tragic actor or
wounds of a Parthian drawing a weapon from his groin."

At this point, Cornutus, Persius' tutor, interjects in order to steer his pupil
away from indulging himself in the "wide-mouthed" conventions of tragedy.
In demonstrating the unsuitability of such high-flown poetry for his pupil, Cornutus plays on the literary *topos* in the poem’s opening lines, with its overemphasis on mouths and tongues, and refashions it into a culinary metaphor where overblown poetry like tragedy appropriately requires a hundred mouths to “ingest.” Words connoting eating or cooking can be found in nearly every line (5.5-13):

‘quorum haec? aut quantas robusti carminis offas ingeris, ut par sit centeno gutture niti? grande locuturi nebulas Helicone legunto, si quibus aut Procnus aut si quibus olla Thyestae fervebit saepe insulso cenanda Glyconi. tu neque anhelanti, coquitur dum massa camino, folle premis ventos nec clauso murmure raucus nescio quid tecum grave corncaris inepte nec scloppo tumidas intendis rumpere buccas.

“‘What’s the point of all this? What gobbets of rich song do you ingest/heap up that you need a hundred gullets? Let those who are going to sing about grand themes gather mists from Helicon, if their pot of Procne or Thyestes will boil, often to be eaten by insipid Glycon. But, when the lump is cooked in the furnace, you do not squeeze wind from the exhalings bellows nor, hoarse from closed-up murmuring, do you crow something weighty foolishly to yourself nor extend your cheeks to burst with a pop.”

Cornutus reinterprets the frantic “mouthwork” that his pupil associates with drama: the drama that is served up (*ponatur*) for the gaping mouth of the tragic actor is also a meal for the tragic poet “feasting himself on the raw edible material of tragedy, in preparation for regurgitated recitation.” In addition to meaning “ingest,” I think it is also tempting to see *ingeris* here as connoting “to heap up,” suggesting that the poet also serves up his tragic verses as a feast to be gobbled down by his eager audience. The allusions to
Procne and Thyestes, whose myths had become the staple fare of the tragic stage in Rome, also figure into this metaphor, conjuring up the cannibalistic feasts of dismembered children associated with their respective myths. For Cornutus, tragic poets gulping down the "gobbets of rich song" (offas) are themselves no different than the cannibal-characters they put on the stage, senselessly swallowing boiled chunks of their own children. Indeed, the image of their mouths distended to the point of bursting further suggests maws crammed with food. Cornutus' disdain for this recurring poetic exercise is also signalled by the reference to the regular performance of these roles by Glycon, a tragic actor popular at the time (saepe insulso cenanda Glycon), who, though his very name implies sweetness, Cornutus suggests, lacks any real taste (insulso). In criticizing tragic poets, Cornutus also reminds Persius of his own indictment of the contemporary literary scene in the prologue both in alluding to Helicon and in similarly likening the bombastic style of these poets to the cawing of crows (cornicaris). The verbal play (cornicaris—Cornutus) also sets up the contrast in poetic styles.

As the poem develops, Cornutus insists that Persius concentrate his poetic talents on satire. He concludes his address to his pupil by once again employing the culinary metaphor which he uses to criticize tragedy (5.14-18):

```
verba togae sequeris iunctura callidus acri,
ore teres modico, pallentis radere mores
doctus et ingenuo culpam defigere ludo.
hinc trahe quae dicis mensasque relinque Mycenis
cum capite et pedibus plebeiaque prandia noris.'
```

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"'You, skilled at the harsh collocation of words and polished with a modest mouth, follow the words of the toga, knowing how both to pare away pallid morals and to nail down a fault in freeborn jesting. From this draw what you say and leave feasts with heads and feet to Mycenae and recognize a common lunch."

Cornutus explicitly contrasts Persius’ style with the high-flown strains of tragic poets. Unlike their tongues and gaping gullets that are eager to stuff and be stuffed with the topoi of tragedy, Persius’ mouth (ore) is refined and modest, embracing the diction of everyday speech. Rather than parade the horrific crimes of mythical characters on stage, his poems identify vice and aim at moral improvement; the act of paring away unhealthy morals is opposed to the swelling of mouths, crammed with tragic themes. Thus, Cornutus exhorts his pupil to dispense with the cannabalistic banquets of tragedy in favor of his own more modest fare of satire.

Cornutus’ words to Persius are themselves a topos, having antecedents both in Quirinus’ advice to Horace in S. 1.10.34-5 to eschew writing in Greek and in Apollo’s exhortation to Vergil in Ecl. 6.3-8 to avoid the grand themes of epic, whereby a voice interjects to steer the poet away from loftier strains of poetry. Yet, Cornutus’ criticism of the grandiose style of tragedy recalls a similar objection in the first satire where Persius scorns the contemporary craze for neoteric epic (especially retellings of the Trojan War myth) and the conventions of high inspiration. Here, Persius singles out the passion for tragedies of an ancient, archaizing stamp, such as those written by Accius and Pacuvius two-hundred years before his day (1.76-82).
est nunc Brisaei quem venosus liber Acci,
sunt quos Pacuviusque et verrucosa moretur
Antiopa aerumnis cor luctificable fulta.
hos pueris monitus patres infundere lippos
cum videas, quae risne unde haec sartago loquendi
venerit in linguas, unde istud dedecus in quo
trossulus exultat tibi per subsellia levis?

"Nowadays there are those who take interest in the veinous book of
Brisaean Accius and others in Pacuvius and his warty Antiope, 'her
mournful heart supported by tribulation.' When you see bleary-eyed
fathers pour this advice into their sons, do you ask from where this
frying-pan of speech entered their mouths, from where came that
disgrace in which your smooth dandy takes delight upon the
benches?"

As in S. 5, the critique of those who adopt the archaizing diction of tragedy is
couched in culinary terms, with fathers feeding their sons from a lexical
frying-pan (haec sartago loquendi \_ venerit in linguas) which they in turn
"feed" to their eagerly awaiting audience. The Stoic flavor of these lines
where language/learning is passed from father to son as a kind of dietary
regime is itself reminiscent of Cornutus' own "paternal" advice to Persius to
restrict himself to simpler meals.

A similar image occurs earlier in the first satire where Persius brings
onto his "stage" a fop, all decked-out in his best toga to recite to his expectant
audience his latest composition (1.13-23):

scribimus inclusi, numeros ille, hic pede liber,
grande aliquid quod pulmo animae praelargus anhelet.
silicet haec populo pexusque togaque recenti
et natalicia tandem cum sardonyche albus
sede leges celsa, liquido cum plasmate guttur
mobile conlueris, patranti fractus ocello.
tunc neque more probo videas nec voce serena
ingentis trepidare Titos, cum carmina lumbum

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intran et tremulo scalpuntur ubi intima versu.
tun, vetule, auriculis alienis colligis escas,
auriculis quibus et dicas cute perditus 'ohe'?

"In our rooms we write, this one poetry, that one prose, something
grand which lungs with abundant air can exhale. To be sure, these
things will you read to the populace from a lofty platform, combed and
white in a new toga and at last sporting a birthday sardonx, once you
have rinsed your movable throat with liquid modulation, languid
with orgasming eye. Then you would see burly Tituses get excited
neither in a seemly manner nor with steady voices when the poem
enters their loins and where their insides are tickled by the tremulous
verse. Are you, old man, gathering morsels for another's little ears,
little ears to which even you, with skin ruined, would say 'Stop!'?"

While others have noted the clear sexual imagery of this passage, we might
also consider how the culinary metaphor operates in these lines. We may
recall that in S. 5 Cornutus mocks the inflated poetic style of tragedy, likening
its production to wind escaping from puffing bellows (anhelanti... | folle
premis ventos), a metaphor that parallels the image here in S. 1 of the lung
exhaling its lofty theme (grande aliquid quod pulmo...anhelet). He also
represents the fustian themes of tragedy as not only a feast to be served to the
audience, but also a meal requiring the gaping maw (gutture) of the poet.
Here, too, there is an emphasis on the reciter's throat (guttur), painstakingly
readied to serve up his grand performance. And indeed his audience reacts
accordingly, "ingesting" his poem to the point that it elicits a response that I
believe prefigures the similar reaction of the depilated dandy later in the
poem served from the Accian and Pacuvian fryer. In fact, the recitation here
of carmina may suggest a dramatic recitation since tragedies (carmina) were
regularly presented in the form of public recitals. The food imagery is made
even more explicit as the narrator construes the practice of publicly reciting poetry as a process of feeding gobbets of food (escas) into the ears (auriculis) of the audience. Nonetheless, after a while even the poet realizes the ears of his listeners have had their full (ohe).

Shortly after exposing contemporary poetic recitations as a prurient display of vacuous literary (and physical) affectation, Persius criticizes similar practices at after-dinner poetic recitals (1.30-8):

```
ecce inter pocula quaerunt
Romulidae saturi quid dia poemata narrant.
hic aliquis, cui circum umeros hyacinthina laena est,
rancidulum quidam balba de nare locutus
Phyllidas, Hypsipylas, vatum et plorable siquid,
eliquat ac tenero subplantat verba palato.
adsensere viri: nunc non cinis ille poetae
felix? non levior cippus nunc inprimit ossa?
laudant convivae
```

"Look, while drinking their wine the effete Romans, sated from their dinner, ask what divine poetry has to say. Then someone, with a purple cloak about their shoulders, says some putrid bit through his lisping nose, dribbles out a Phyllis, a Hypsipyle, or some other tear-jerker of the poets, and trips out words from his smooth palate. The men approve: surely the ashes of the poet are now happy? Surely a lighter tomb-stone now rests on his bones? The dinner guests applaud."

Here, poetry and feasting are explicitly connected: the banquet guests are already stuffed (saturi) with dinner and wine yet crave the recitation of a trite melodrama for dessert. In fact, the mythological themes mentioned here (Phyllidas, Hypsipylas) suggest subject matter suitable for the tragic stage. The reference to the reciter's palate in effect equates his words (verba) to the now consumed meal, food to be savored by his fellow dinner guests. Bramble
has noted the prominence of the wine imagery used in this passage, pointing out that Persius applies "eliquat, a metaphor from wine straining, to the reciter, who decants another bottle—of poetry." The words (verba) tripping off the reciter's palate are eagerly consumed by his audience, banqueters (convivae), as we are again reminded, who approve (laudant) of the meal's final course.

We saw in the preceding chapter that in his first satire Persius indicts current literary enthusiasms by offering examples of the pretensions of contemporary versification (1.92-7):

```
'sed numeris decor est et iunctura addita crudis.
cludere sic versum didicit "Berecyntius Attis" et "qui caeruleum dirimebat Nerea delphin,"
sic "costam longo subduximus Appennino."
"Arma virum", nonne hoc spumosum et cortice pingui ut ramale vetus vegrandi subere coctum?
```

"But grace and juncture have been added to crude rhythms. Thus "Berecyntian Attis" learned to end the verse as did "the dolphin which divided blue Nereus," and thus "we removed a rib from the long Apennines." "Arms and the man," isn't this frothy and cooked in its thick bark like an old branch in its stunted cork."

The speaker criticises the Aeneid for being "frothy" and "cooked," terms prominently (and programmatically) featured at the opening of Persius' third satire. But we can also reconsider these terms in light of the culinary metaphor already configured in the poem and developed more explicitly in 5. 5. For the speaker in this passage, an advocate of the new style of epic of the late 50s and early 60s A.D., Vergil's Aeneid is merely overblown, cooked-up
froth, "undigestable" in terms of contemporary poetic standards. Persius, however, counters this claim, remarking that the samples of verse provided by the speaker are, in fact, mere foaming at the mouth (1.104-106):

\[
\text{summa delumbe } \text{saliva} \\
\text{hoc natat in } \text{labris} \text{ et in } \text{udo} \text{ est Maenas et Attis} \\
\text{nec pluteum caedit nec } \text{demorsos sapit} \text{ unguis.}
\]

"This feeble stuff swims on the surface of your saliva, on your lips and the Maenad and the Attis are in your spit; neither do they strike the back-board nor taste of bitten nails."

Once again, the equating of poetry with ingested matter is underscored by the reference to the taste of bitten nails (sapit), an image Persius borrows from Horace, S. 1.10.70-1 where it connotes the serious effort expended in poetic composition.15

As the first satire draws to a close, Persius identifies the sort of audience he wants for his poems, singling out those who are attracted to the spirit of Old Comedy (1.123-6):

\[
\text{audaci quicumque adflate Cratino} \\
\text{iratum Eupolidem praegrandi cum sene palles,} \\
\text{aspice et haec, si forte aliquid decoctius audis.} \\
\text{inde vaporata lector mihi ferveat aure.}
\]

"You, whoever are inspired by daring Cratinus and grow pale studying angered Eupolis and that grand old man Aristophanes, look at this as well, if perchance you have an ear for something more boiled down. With his ear heated by this, my reader would seethe."

As we saw in the previous chapter, Persius metaphorically employs a term associated with the boiling down of wine-must (decoctius) to characterize his satires as a boiled-down concoction. His caustic satiric brew, he tells us, is a
distilled version of the criticism associated with Old Comedy. But this imagery is also suggestive of the cooking metaphor we have seen elsewhere in the poem. Unlike the morsels (escas) that others gather to cram into the awaiting ears of their audience, Persius’ poems are applied to his reader’s ear as an “astringent, flavoursome concentrate” (ferveat).

By now it is clear that the metaphorical terminology that enlivens the literary critique at the beginning of S. 5, while certainly bold, is quite familiar from the programmatic imagery of S. 1. Yet here, that is to say in the “fiction” of S. 5, the mind behind the imagery is said to belong not to Persius but to his teacher, Cornutus. In fact, Cornutus not only adopts the cooking metaphor Persius uses to characterize his own poetry, but he employs it to criticize tragic poetry. In his criticism of tragedy, Cornutus refers to its overwrought and typically gruesome subject matter, particularly alluding to the cannibalistic feasts cooked up in plays on the Procne and Thyestes myths. Cornutus seems intent on reminding Persius of his own recipe for satire as he wrote it in S. 1: the furnace that “cooks” (coquitur) ore is stoked by bellows whose puffing, as we have seen, Cornutus likens to the turgid style of tragic poets. But the association of cooking here with poetry, I think, evokes Persius’ own “cooked down” poetic brew. Similarly, the stew-pots of Procne and Thyestes, seething with the “boiled down” limbs of children (olla...fervebit), bring to mind Persius’ desired reader, an admirer of Old Comedy who seethes (ferveat) as he aurally ingests Persius’ bracing concentrate.
What are the implications of the parallels Cornutus draws between the bluster of tragedy and the initial inspired thundering of his prized student? And how do we reconcile Persius' characterization of his own poems in S. 1 with Cornutus' advice to his student in the fifth satire? The echoes of the end of S. 1 in Cornutus' criticism prompt us to consider how Cornutus' influence on his student already inhabits that poem. Given Persius' professed indebtedness to his teacher in S. 5, the literary metaphors that Persius employs in S. 1 to condemn the current literary scene can be seen to bear Cornutus' stamp and suggest that Cornutus was there all along. Unlike the hack poets of S. 1 who are guided by contemporary literary tastes, Persius finds his inspiration in Cornutus. But Persius' appropriation of his teacher's literary metaphors is problematic. As mentioned above, Cornutus instructs Persius to avoid the bloated feasts of tragedy and instead partake of the more modest cuisine of satire (...mensasque relinque Mycenis 1 cum capite et pedibus plebeiaque prandia noris). Gowers has observed that the culinary distinction made here befits satire's own associations with satura. As we have seen, Persius metaphorically links poetry with food thereby demonstrating the insatiability of those who stuff themselves with overblown poetry. Yet, Cornutus' advice to his pupil recalls the last line of S. 1 where Persius belittles the aesthetic standards of the readership he rejects, suggesting that they find their amusement in the production of some light drama after lunch: his mane edictum, post prandia Callirhoen do (to them I
give the play-bill in the morning, and Callirhoe after lunch). In the lines that precede, Persius lists examples of the sort who would find such literature appealing, namely unrefined individuals whose lunches likely might be considered plebeia.

There is yet another puzzling contradiction. In his description of Persius’ style, Cornutus employs language that evokes typical descriptions of the Alexandrian affectations of the contemporary poetic scene that Persius criticizes in his prologue and first satire. In characterizing Persius’ style as ore teres medico (“polished with a modest mouth”), Cornutus not only contrasts Persius’ poems with the gaping mouths of tragedy (hianda), but he also aligns Persius and his aesthetic values with the neoteric school of poets which advocated stylistic refinement. Similarly, the term doctus, which Cornutus applies to Persius in the following verse, was itself a byword for those poets who aimed after the erudition of their Alexandrian models. Poetry of this sort which was ridiculed both in the prologue for its hackneyed topoi and in S. 1 for its metrical and verbal affectations was prominent in Nero’s Rome, encouraged by the emperor’s own taste for Alexandrianism.

How are we then to take these inconsistencies between the stylistic advice Cornutus offers in S. 5 and what Persius actually does in S. 1? Can it be that Persius just doesn’t seem to “get” what his teacher is driving at? But perhaps we are asking this question of the wrong person. Maybe these inconsistencies say something more about ourselves than they do about
Cornutus or even Persius. Perhaps these contradictions reveal something about our own need to pin Persius down, our own need to make Persius and his poems “work.” In a sense, the literary guidance which Cornutus offers Persius at the beginning of S. 5 places him in the role of Persius’ critic, denouncing the grandiosity of tragedy and approving Persius’ own attempts at satire. But with Cornutus’ criticism striking so close to home, Persius has his own criticism tossed back into his face, and in turn back into ours. To make matters even more complicated, we should note that the dialogue between Cornutus and Persius is itself staged, its own little drama between teacher and pupil played out on Persius’ page. How does that recalibrate how we consider Cornutus’ words? We might even throw into the mix the fact that Persius himself seems to have written a tragedy and it is possible that Cornutus did as well. But I think that all of this is Persius’ point. In trying to sort through Cornutus’ criticism of tragedy and how it may even apply to Persius’ own poetry, we fail to recognize how this act reflects our own practices of criticism.

But perhaps Persius touches upon the issue of criticism in another way to bring Cornutus’ criticism of tragedy into sharper focus. In S. 1, we recall that Persius aligns his poetry with the caustic tone associated with Old Comedy, alluding particularly to its unrestrained freedom to criticize publicly. Shortly before he makes this correlation in S. 1, Persius refers to his satiric predecessor Lucilius who, like the poets of Old Comedy, was also at liberty to
criticize publicly elite citizens of the community. Persius actually underscores this feature of Lucilius’ poems by mentioning his targets by name (114-5): secuit Lucilius urbem | te Lupe, te Muci, et genuinum fregit in illis (Lucilius sliced up the city, you Lupus, you Mucius, and broke his molar on them). In fact, two prominent targets of Lucilius’ poems were the tragedians Accius and Pacuvius.22 But do Persius’ poems really exhibit the same freedom that is a hallmark of Old Comedy and Lucilian satire? As I have demonstrated in the preceding chapters, Persius’ criticism is far from overt. Unlike the open abuse of Old Comedy and Lucilius, Persius’ criticism, particularly of Nero, is necessarily much more discreet.23 We know from Persius’ Vita that Cornutus apparently emended S. 1.121 from auriculas asini Mida rex habet (King Midas has the ears of an ass) to auriculas asini quis non habet (who doesn’t have the ears of an ass) to obviate Nero’s suspicion that Persius was referring to him.24 But even if this is true, the identification of Nero with Midas is still fairly subtle. So, too, if the scholiast can be believed, is the reference that possibly occurs at S. 1.93-102 where, in his list of examples of the affectations of contemporary verse, Persius allegedly quotes both line endings and entire hexameters actually composed by Nero.25

Trying to reconcile Persius’ satires with what he says at the end of S. 1 actually underscores how far removed Persianic satire is from the freedom he associates with Old Comedy and Lucilian satire. But, as we have already seen, criticism of the emperor could take many forms and inhabit genres as diverse
as bucolic (e.g. *Einsiedeln Eclogues*) and epic (Lucan). Another literary genre of the period, tragedy, is commonly read for political innuendo. For the Neronian period, (excepting the anonymous writer of the *Octavia*) Seneca stands as our sole surviving exemplar of tragic poetry. Tragedy was quite popular at the time and was particularly appealing to Nero himself. We know that Nero actually performed on stage, playing various dramatic roles ranging from Orestes, Oedipus, Hercules, and even Thyestes. There is even evidence that Nero wrote a tragedy of his own. In addition to Seneca, we have from this period the pseudo-Senecan *Octavia*, but we also know from Tacitus' *Dialogus* that Seneca's contemporary Curiatius Maternus composed a political drama that seems to have precipitated the downfall of the influential Vatinius. Lucan is also said to have composed a *Medea*. Given Nero's fervor for the stage, we may infer that the flourishing of tragedy during this period is indebted to the literary tastes and practices of the emperor. It is clear from all of this keen interest in tragedy, interest also implied in the opening of Persius' fifth satire, that here again Nero had tapped into yet another “Augustan” literary genre that contemporary poets saw as an avenue for social and political advancement. Under Augustus, we know that Asinius Pollio was actively engaged in composing tragedies and we even have a couple of lines from Ovid's *Medea*. But perhaps the most notable of these Augustan tragedians was Varius Rufus whose *Thyestes* of 29 B.C. is celebrated by Quintilian and Tacitus.
Given the ready appropriation by Neronian poets of literary genres marked as "Augustan" as a means of promoting Nero's renewed Golden Age ideology, it is possible that Seneca looked to Varius as a model for his own treatment of the Thyestes myth. The story of Thyestes, with its inherent indictment of the abuses of power, may have figured into a condemnation of Antony in Varius' play. Might a similar attack on tyranny be couched in Seneca's treatment of the myth? Of all of Seneca's tragedies, Sullivan has noted that the Thyestes "seems to contain the severest criticism of Nero." The character of Atreus, for instance, is depicted as a ruthless tyrant who is driven to unspeakable acts of crime with total disregard for his subjects. Throughout Seneca's play, we find not only references both to the instability of fortune and the threats that attend those in power, but also admonitions to rule justly.

On account of the play's loud moral condemnations of tyranny along with its several too-convenient resemblances in its characters and plot to what (we think) we know of Nero's own person and life (e.g. both featuring incestuous relations, the murder of relatives, scheming for succession to the throne, etc...), it is tempting to see a reference to Nero in Persius' re-casting of the Thyestes myth at the beginning of his fifth satire. In Cornutus' objections to the overwrought style and themes of tragedy, we see Persius again, as in S. 1, targeting the contemporary literary scene where poets
conform to a fashionable literary trend promoted by the emperor. This is a
trend that Seneca extends with his version of the Thyestes myth, but to a very
different, and far less compliant end.\textsuperscript{39}

The only evidence we have of a tragedy on the Thyestes theme during
this period is Seneca's play.\textsuperscript{40} And it is likely that Persius had Seneca's
version in mind when he wrote his fifth satire. Indeed, as one scholar has
shown, Persius' description of the pot seething with the remains of Thyestes' children (...\textit{si quibus olla Thyestae fervebit saepe insulso cenanda Glyconi}) is
indebted to the same image that recurs throughout Seneca's play:\textsuperscript{41}

\begin{quote}
\textit{Thy.} 59-60: \\
\textit{spument aena.}\\

"\textit{Now, the cauldrons are set over the flames and foam.}"
\end{quote}

\begin{quote}
1059-61: \\
\textit{et artus, corpora exanima amputans,}\\
in parva carpsi frusta et haec \textit{ferventibus}\\
demersi \textit{aenis}.\\

"\textit{...and chopping up their lifeless bodies, I tore their limbs into small pieces and immersed them into the seething cauldrons.}"
\end{quote}

In his allusion to Seneca's play, Persius has replaced Seneca's aena
(“cauldrons”) with a humble \textit{olla} (“pot”).\textsuperscript{42} Not only do Persius' lines betray
his debt to Seneca's tragedy in his fifth satire, they also evoke, as we have
seen, the language of his first satire as well. Seneca's seething cauldrons recall
the image of Persius “cooking down” his satiric brew of Old Comic aggression
to instill hot into his reader's “seething” ear (\textit{inde vaporata lector mihi ferveat aure}). But Seneca's foaming vessels are also reminiscent of the
interlocutor's criticism of the Aeneid in S. 1 as mere "cooked-up froth" (spumosum). For Cornutus, however, grandiose tragedies along the lines of Seneca's plays are as "frothy" as Thyestes' bubbling stew.

We seem to find ourselves grappling with yet another conundrum: while targeting the inflated style and outlandish subject matter of (Senecan) tragedy, epitomized by Thyestes' seething stew pots in S. 5, Persius also recalls the seething effects of his own "Old-Comic" poetry in S. 1. For Persius, the writing of tragedy implies conforming to yet another Neronian literary project. Yet, it shares with his own poetry a tendency towards veiled criticism of the emperor. It is in this nexus of allusions, both to tragedy and to the freedom of speech vaunted in Old Comedy (and Lucilian satire), that Persius addresses the problem of free-speech, libertas, under Nero.43

After Persius' lengthy introduction which is set up as a dialogue with Cornutus, the remainder of the poem is devoted to the issue of freedom, particularly the Stoic idea that only the wise man is truly free. But early on in the poem we are provided with clues that suggest that Persius' treatment of Stoic freedom to a large degree implies freedom of speech. The allusions to Seneca's Thyestes and its necessarily subtle criticism of Nero offer one example of contemporary problems of free speech. It is tempting to see Persius' reference to the Procne myth touching on this problem as well since it famously evokes the silencing of her sister Philomela, whose tongue was brutally removed by Tereus. It is this act that prompts Procne to cook up her
own child. We might also see the closed-up murmuring that Persius associates with tragic poets (*clauso murmure raucus*) at line 11 as perhaps hinting at their critical rumblings against Nero subtly cloaked in their verses.\(^{44}\)

Persius engages with the problem of free speech in a more straightforward manner later in the poem. In his response to Cornutus' admonition to avoid tragedy, Persius assures his teacher that his allusion to the hundred-mouth motif at the opening of the poem was not for the purposes of writing epic or tragedy, literary genres that were both especially appealing to Nero and to which even the emperor himself devoted his literary talents.\(^{45}\) Rather, Persius' demand for a hundred mouths arises from his need to articulate his feelings for his teacher. Persius' reply draws attention to both inexpressible thoughts hidden in the deep recesses of the heart as well as the distinction between falsehood and sincerity (5.19-29):

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non equidem hoc studeo, pullatis ut mihi nugis pagina turgescat dare pondus idonea fumo.
secrete loquimur, tibi nunc hortante Camena excutienda damus praecordia, quantaque nostrae pars tua sit, Cornute, animae, tibi, dulcis amice, ostendisse iuvat pulsa, dinoscerre caustus quid solidum crepet et pictae tectoria linguæ, hic ego centenas ausim deposcere fauces, ut quantum mihi te *sinuoso in pectore fixi* voce traham pura, totumque hoc verba resiognent quod *latet arcana non enarrabile fibra*.
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"Truly I do not aim at having my page swell with trifles dressed in mourning attire, suitable for giving weight to smoke. We speak in private. Now with the Muse's encouragement, I offer my heart to you to be examined, and it is pleasing, dear friend, to show you, how much of my soul is yours, Cornutus. Tap it, knowing how to discern what
sounds solid and knowing the plaster of a painted tongue. Here, I would dare to demand a hundred throats, so that I could draw out in a pure voice how much I fixed you in my sinuous heart and so that my words could unseal all of what lies hidden and unutterable in my secret fibers."

Rather than the grotesque feasts of tragedy, Cornutus, Persius tells us, is his poetic subject, locked deep inside and in need of expression. In the "privacy" of his poem (secrete loquimur), Persius can express his real and sincere gratitude to Cornutus who is himself adept at distinguishing falsehood from sincerity. Unlike the cloaked criticism of the emperor performed on Nero's stage, Persius can express his real feelings in his "drama," the "staged" dialogue with Cornutus in his poem.

But how likely is this touching "scene" of the young poet dutifully opening his soul to his mentor and exposing his deepest thoughts? The surprising reference to Camena in line 21 itself runs counter to the rejection of such hackneyed literary devices in the prologue, and thus it prompts us to reconsider the validity of what Persius says in these lines. We have already seen how Persius hints at the problem of free speech under Nero elsewhere in his collection, particularly in his reference to the enviable freedom of Old Comedy and Lucilius' poetry in S. 1. In that passage, Persius also had something he was longing to tell (1.119-21):

me muttire nefas? nec clam? nec cum scrobe? nusquam?
hic tamen infodiam. vidi, vidi ipse, libelle:
auriculas asini quis non habet?

"Is it wrong for me to whisper? Not even in secret? Not even in a ditch? Nowhere? Still, I'll bury it here. Little book, I've seen it, seen it with my own eyes: who does not have the ears of an ass?"
We should remember from Persius *Vita* that it was Cornutus who was said to have emended the last line lest it offend Nero. Nonetheless, it is clear that the problem of free speech, *libertas*, under Nero was a real issue for Persius. His little book (*libelle*), he contends, will be the the place where he can lay claim to the *libertas* enjoyed by Lucilius and the poets of Old Comedy. But we only catch glimpses of it, mere intimations of it peppered throughout his poems, like secrets spoken into a hole. In fact, Persius' own term for his collection, *libellus*, a diminutive of *liber* ("book"), in suggesting a pun on *liber* ("free") perhaps implies that his little book only provides him with a little *libertas*. Yet, in S. 5, in drawing attention to sincerity, secrecy, and inexpressibility, Persius hints at a larger problem where insincerity and repression are the norm.

The *libertas* associated with Lucilius and the poets of Old Comedy was a theme of enormous import in the first book of Horace's *Sermones*. In S. 1.4, a poem where Horace defends himself against his critics' charge that he takes pleasure in causing pain (*laedere gaude*), he begins by offering the poets of Old Comedy (the same poets Persius mentions in his first satire) and Lucilius' *Satires* as strong evidence in support of his own claim that their brand of criticism, empowered by free speech, is starkly different than his own (S. 1.4.1-8):

Eupolis atque Cratinus Aristophanesque poetae,
atque alii quorum comoedia prisca virorum est,
si quis erat dignus describi quod malus ac fur,
quod moechus foret aut sicarius aut alioqui

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famosus, multa cum libertate notabant.
hinc omnis pendet Lucilius, hosce secutus
mutatis tantum pedibus numerisque; facetus
emunctae naris, durus componere versus.

"The poets Eupolis, Cratinus, and Aristophanes and the other writers
of Old Comedy, if anyone was worthy of being exposed as a criminal
and a thief, as an adulterer or a murderer or notorious in other respects,
they used to point him out with their abundant free speech. Lucilius
entirely depends on them; he took them as his model only changing
their meters and rhythms. He was witty and had a refined nose,
though he was harsh in composing verses."

Horace's reference to Liber ("wine") in lines 86-90 (below) not only verbally
plays on etymological associations with libertas, but in discussing wine’s
power to unlock the inner recesses of the heart it advances (and/or draws
upon) a theory of satire that Persius later recalls in his address to Cornutus in
his fifth satire. There Persius offers his heart (praecordia) to be scrutinized
by Cornutus. We should remember that in the same passage Persius also
alludes to the ability of words to unseal what lies hidden deep within the poet
(VERBA RESIGNENT I QUOD LATET). But in S. 1.4 the "IN VINO VERITAS theory" of
satire belongs to Horace's critics, so he turns the tables on them by painting a
less flattering picture of the brand of satire they favor (S. 1.4.86-90):

saepe tribus lectis videas cenare quaternos
e quibus unus amet quavis aspergere cunctos
praeter eum qui praebet aquam; post hunc quoque potus,
condita cum verax aperit praecordia Liber
hic tibi comis et urbanus Liberque videtur.

"Often you can see four dining on each of the three couches and one of
them loves to cast aspersions on the rest, all except the host; afterwards,
when he is drunk, he even attacks him once truthful Liber opens the
inner recesses of his heart. This man seems to you to be amiable,
refined, and free!"
For Horace and his audience, Lucilius and the poets of Old Comedy enjoyed a level of *libertas* (*multa cum libertate*) that is not at all the same as the one available to the son of a freedman (S. 1.4.103-5):

liberius si
dixero quid, si forte iocosius, hoc mihi iuris
cum venia dabis. insuevit pater optimus hoc me...

“If I have said something too freely, if perchance I was joking around a little too much, you’ll have to forgive me. My noble father accustomed me to this.”

Indeed, for the next twenty lines, Horace portrays his father as a moral guide, advising his son to avoid vice and follow the path of virtue, a role that Persius remembers vividly and assigns to Cornutus, his father-figure, in his fifth satire.

While Horace alludes to the poets of Old Comedy at the beginning of his poem as enviable exemplars of the *libertas* to which his own poem cannot fully lay claim, later in the poem, Horace associates his poems with comedy, not Old, but New. After likening his own poems to prose, he draws a stylistic comparison between prose and comedy. Other than its rhythm, comedy is essentially no different than prose (*nisi quod pede certo \ differs sermoni, sermo merus*). Immediately, one of Horace’s critics interrupts asserting that a comedy’s subject matter distinguishes it from prose (S. 1.4.48-52):

\[\text{at pater ardens}\]
\[\text{saevit, quod meretrice nepos insanus amica}\]
\[\text{filius uxorem grandi cum dote recuset,}\]
\[\text{ebrius et, magnum quod dedecus, ambulet ante}\]
\[\text{noctem cum facibus.}\]
"But a father rages in his anger because his son the spendthrift in his madness for his beloved prostitute refuses to marry a wife with a large dowry and, what is a great source of shame, he drunkenly walks about with torches before nightfall."

The name of the young man (Pomponius) mentioned in Horace’s retort suggests that the comic scene described by Horace’s interjecting critic is likely drawn from Roman comedy. Given the reference to the libertas of Old Comedy in the opening lines of the poem, we might find it a bit peculiar that Horace chooses to incorporate allusions to the much tamer and more guarded Roman comic stage. The critic’s remark, I think, invites us to compare the more restrained humor of Roman comedy to the uninhibited freedom of Old Comedy to attack members of the community on stage. The point is driven home a few lines later where Horace juxtaposes his poems with those of Lucilius: his, ego quae nunc, | olim quae scripsit Lucilius). But are the poems that Horace writes really all that similar to Lucilius? The juxtaposition is actually quite surprising given Horace’s subtle suggestion in the poem that his “‘freedom to speak,’ would always look terribly pale in comparison to that of Lucilius.”

The allusion to Roman comedy in Horace’s poem has a counterpart in Persius’ fifth satire as well where we again encounter a spendthrift son whose love for a prostitute becomes a source of shame (5.161-74):

‘Dave, cito, hoc credas iubeo, finire dolores praeteritos meditor’ (crudum Chaeerestruus unguem adrodens ait haec). ‘an siccis dedecus obstem cognatis? an rem patriam rumore sinistro limen ad obscenum frangam, dum Chrysidis udas ebris aut fores exticta cum face canto?’
‘euge, puer, sapias, dis depellentibus agram percute.’ ‘sed censen plorabit, Dave, relicta?’
‘nugaris. solea, puer, obiurgabere rubra,
ne trepideare velis atque artos rodere casses.
nunc ferus et violens; at, si vocet, haut mora dicas
“quidnam igitur faciam? nec nunc, cum accesset et ultero supplicet, accedam?” si totus et integer illinc
exieras, nec nunc.’

‘Davus, I demand that you believe this: I plan to soon end my past troubles’ (Chaerestratus says, gnawing his nails raw). ‘Am I to bring shame to my sober relatives? Am I, to squander the family fortune at a disreputable establishment, incurring a bad reputation, while I sing drunkenly before the wet doors of Chrysis with my torch now extinguished?’ ‘Well done, my boy! Be wise and sacrifice a lamb to the gods who drive away ruin.’ ‘But, Davus, do you think she will cry when I leave her?’ ‘You are being foolish. You, my boy, will be chastized by her red sandal, lest you choose to get alarmed and gnaw at her tight net. Now you are wild and bold; but if she called, you would immediately say “What then am I to do? Not go now, even when she summons and begs me?” If you have left her completely and for good, not even now.’

As I have noted above, Persius’ references to tragedy at the beginning of his poem, particularly the Procne myth with its bubbling cauldrons, draw on the ending of his first satire where the association of his poems with Old Comedy actually underscores the unique problems he confronts writing satire under Nero. In his discussion of freedom in S. 5, Persius presents a lengthy dialogue between two characters straight from the Roman comic stage to demonstrate the notion of a lover’s enslavement to passion. While Persius’ passage (161-74) is indebted to the opening of Terence’s Eunuchus, itself derived from Menander’s play of the same name, others have noted that Persius’ lines, especially lines 165-6, owe much to Horace’s version of the same scene at S. 1.4: dum Chrysidis udas | ebrius ante fores extincta cum face canto. Our
recollections of Persius' allusions to Old Comedy at the end of his first satire come into play in these lines: taking his cue from Horace's poem where the stock episodes of the Roman comic stage are opposed to the free speech paraded in Old Comedy, Persius similarly imports into his poem a vignette from New Comedy that may also be seen as Persius' attempt to accentuate the vast distance separating him from the *libertas* of the poets of Old Comedy.

By now it is clear that Persius' engagement with the *libertas* question in S. 5 owes much to Horace's treatment of the same issue in S. 1.4, and that, just as in that earlier poem, the issue is not simply tacked onto the poem's second half. Rather, it is the central question put to us by the poem, prompted as a Horatian memory already in the interactions staged between Persius and his mentor in the poem's very first lines. There, after expressing his devotion to Cornutus, Persius reminisces about his formative early days under his tutor's wing. Like the lessons in virtue and *libertas* that Horace claims to have received from his father (*libertas*) in S. 1.4, Persius attributes his own moral salvation as well as his habits of speech (*iunctura acris, ore modico*, etc...) to the Stoic tenets instilled in him in his youth by Cornutus. Thus, inside the image of Cornutus are tell-tale tracings of another model pedagogue, Horace's father. But we can easily detect another image filtered into the poem, that of the chiding Damasippus character of S. 3. For here too we find references to the molding metaphor of S. 3 as well as traces of that poem's prominent bucolic imagery (5.34-44):
cumque iter ambiguum est et vitae nescius error diducit trepidas ramosa in compita mentes, me tibi supposui. teneros tu suscipis annos Socratico, Cornute, sinu. tum fallere sollers adposita intortos extendit regula mores et premitur ratione animus vincique laborat artificemque tuo ducit sub pollice voltum. tecum etenim longos memini consumere soles et tecum primas epulis decerpere noctes. unum opus et requiem pariter disponimus ambo atque verecunda laxamus seria mensa.

"And when the road is forked and error, ignorant of life, leads trembling minds on branching paths, I placed myself in your care. You took up my tender years, Cornutus, in your tender folds. Then, clever at deceiving, the ruler is applied and straightens out my twisted habits and my mind is pressed by reason and struggles to be conquered and under your thumb it admits artistic features. For with you I remember spending long days and harvesting the early hours of the evening dining with you. We both equally arrange our work and rest as one and we ease our serious concerns at our modest meal."

The forked road that Persius refers to in these lines evokes the Pythagorean letter of S. 3 which represents the choice between leading a virtuous or dissolute life: et tibi quae Samios diduxit littera ramosa | surgentem dextro monstravit limite callem (And the letter which separates into Samian branches has shown to you the path rising with its right fork). As I argued in the previous chapter, the choice between virtue and vice is reformulated in S. 3 as a choice between Persius' own brand of satire and poetry along the lines of pastoral that actively embraces Nero's Golden Age ideology. Given the prominent role tragedy plays at the opening of S. 5, it is tempting to see Persius as perhaps importing into the fifth satire his criticism of the Neronian literary scene with its endless clamoring of poets to conform to the poetic
tastes of the the emperor. We should recall that tragedy was particularly appealing to Nero, and thus Cornutus’ advice to his pupil at the opening of S. 5 to reject the bombastic trappings of tragedy can perhaps be read as an injunction to avoid enslavement to Neronian literary tastes. In recalling the molding metaphor of S. 3 where it may imply, among other things, conforming to Nero’s Golden Age ideology, Persius demonstrates that he has “taken another path” and been molded by Cornutus, not the Neronian propaganda machine. Unlike tragic poets who stuff their mouths with the grand feasts of tragedy and serve them up on Nero’s stage for their eagerly awaiting audience, Persius and Cornutus “consume” (consumere) their days together and have their own late-afternoon meal (epulis), “harvested” (decerpere) not from the bounty of Nero’s renewed Golden Age, but the pleasure of each other’s company over dinner (mensas).

Echoes of Persius’ third satire recur throughout S. 5. At line 52, Persius partly shifts his focus away from Cornutus and presents a diverse list of the various pursuits of men to contrast with his own (i.e. priamel). Persius “peppers” these lines with food imagery to suggest that, instead of the abundant tragic feasts of Neronian tragedy, Persius takes his poetic meal from the world of human passions and pursuits (cf. the quadrivium of Juvenal, 1.64). These are the ingredients of his satire (5.52-64):

\[
mille hominum species et rerum discolor usus;\\ velle suum cuique est nec voto vivitur uno.\\ mercibus hic Italis mutat sub sole recenti rugosum \textit{piper} et pallentis \textit{grana cumini},\\ hic \textit{satur} inriguo mavult \textit{turgescere} somno,\\\]

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hic campo indulget, hunc aea decoquit, ille
in venerem putris; sed cum lapidosa cheragra
fregerit articulos veteris ramalia fagi,
tunc crassos transisse dies lucemque palustrem
et sibi iam seri vitam ingemuere relictam.
at te nocturnis iuvat inpallescere chartis;
cultor enim iuvenum purgatas inseris aures
fruge Cleanthea.

“The appearances of men are many and their enjoyment of things is
diverse. Each one has his own wants nor do they live with only one
hope. This man under an eastern sun exchanges Italian merchandise
for wrinkled pepper and seeds of pale cumin; this man is stuffed and
prefers to swell in drunken sleep; this man indulges in sports, while
gambling cooks down this man, and that man is soft in sex. But when
stony arthritis shatters his fingers like the branches of an old beech
tree, then now that it is too late they lament to themselves that they
have spent their days in a thick, swampy fog and that their lives are
behind them. But you take delight in growing pale from the books you
read at night; for as a cultivator of youth, you purge their ears and sow
in them the fruit of Cleanthes.”

In an unpublished manuscript, Kirk Freudenburg has noted the intertextual
parallels between the regret these now aged individuals feel for their
squandered lives (vitam ingemuere relictam) and the guilty consciences that
Persius hopes will similarly plague wicked tyrants who have abandoned
virtue (virtutem...relicta, 3.38). Their guilt, we recall, amounts to a
punishment worse than the tortures of the Sicilian tyrant’s “bellowing bull”
gemuerunt, 3.39). 54

I think other parallels with S. 3 inhabit this passage as well. Among
the individuals included in Persius’ list, a list that brings to mind many stock
characters from the Roman comic stage, is a drunkard sleeping off his usual
binge. Here, it seems, we have again stumbled upon our slacker from S. 3
whom we found engaged in similar (in)activity at the opening of that poem. He, too, was sleeping off the after-effects of wine and, when roused from bed, “swelled” with anger (*turgescit vitrea bilis, 8*). How did he wind up in this poem? Other verbal echoes from S. 3 filter into this passage, enough, I believe, to suggest that we are right to think of that poem here. We are reminded that when he sat down with his two-colored parchment (*bicolor membrana*) and his clotting pens (*crassus calamo quod pendeat umor*) the slacker was unable to write. We recall that “his” inability to write (especially pastoral poems heralding the return of the Golden Age under Nero) was a major theme of Persius’ third satire. Indeed, the reference in the *priamel* of S. 5 to the branches of the old beech (*veteris ramalia fagi*) also remind us of the pastoral world of S. 3 (and the old “Vergilian” cork tree of S. 1: *cortice pingui ut ramale vetus vegrandi subere coctum*).

Thus, in his discourse on the diverse pursuits of men in S. 5, Persius inserts his slacker who, unlike poets under Nero, prefers his own path that deviates from the Neronian literary scene. If we choose to identify Persius with his slacker, we see that for Persius, Cornutus’ teaching provides its own fertile ground, nourished not by the alleged abundance of Nero’s Golden Age but by the fruits of Stoic doctrine: *cultur enim iuuenum purgatas inseris aures fruge Cleanthea*. In this list of the various pursuits of men, the mention of both purged ears and a “cooked down” gambler (*decoquit*) may actually hint
at Persius' own "pursuit," namely his own brand of poetry, a "boiled down" concentrate (aliquid decoctius), administered through the ear (vaporata...aure).

Persius’ priamel is likely indebted to Horace, S. 1.4. Early in that poem, Horace contrasts himself to a certain Fannius, a self-congratulatory poet reminiscent of the poets Persius himself targets in his first satire. Fannius is eager to recite his poems which, we are told, he keeps in their own storage case and he will even bring along a bust of himself for the performance. Horace’s poems, however, are of a different stamp, exposing the vice of the general populace (S. 1.4.26-33):

\[
\text{aut ob avaritiam aut misera ambitione laborat:} \\
\text{hic nuptarum insanit amoribus, hic puerorum;} \\
\text{hunc capit argenti splendor; stupet Albius aere;} \\
\text{hic mutat merces surgente a sole ad eum quo} \\
\text{vespertina tepet regio, quin per mala praeceps} \\
\text{fertur uti pulvis collectus turbine, ne quid} \\
\text{summa deperdat metuens aut ampliet ut rem:} \\
\text{omnes hi metuunt versus, odere poetas.}
\]

"Either on account of greed or wretched ambition he labors: this man is wild for affairs with married women; this man with boys; the gleam of silver captivates this man; Albius gazes at bronze; this man exchanges merchandise in the East where the evening climate is warm, and is carried headlong through difficulties like dust gathered by a whirlwind, fearing lest he lose his money or that he not increase his wealth. All of these men hate poetry and despise poets."

The parallels with Persius’ list are evident. We should remember that Horace offers his poem as his defense against accusations that he enjoys attacking people in his verses (laedere gaudes). He recognizes that his poems, unlike those of Fannius, are unpopular and for this reason fears reciting them.
publicly (cum mea nemo | scripta legat vulgo recitare timentis ob hanc rem, S. 1.4.22-3). Horace portrays himself in his poem as a poetic outsider. Persius adopts a similar pose both in his prologue and particularly in his first satire where he, like Horace, acknowledges his lack of a reading audience. It is this strong initial voice that, we have seen, filters not only into S. 3 where Persius rejects pastoral poetry and its attendant flattery of Nero, but then again into the fifth satire where Persius distances himself from the currently fashionable tragic mode. The intertextual resonances of S. 3 that introduce the slacker into Persius' fifth satire can thus be seen again to reflect Persius' aversion to write in yet another "Neronian" literary genre. In failing to satisfy Neronian literary tastes, Persius' poems, like those of Horace, let on that they are destined for very limited approval.

The question remains as to how the send up of Neronian literary tastes that begins the poem dovetails into Persius' lengthy disquisition on freedom that commences at line 73: libertate opus est (there is need of liberty). Scholars have noted the thematic discontinuity at this point in the poem but closer inspection suggests that the break is not that abrupt. Here, Persius attacks a concept of freedom, narrowly defined, that merely entitles a newly freed slave to a ticket for the corn-dole. For Persius, libertas, as we have seen, entails much more than this. As in S. 1, the free speech associated with Old Comedy and Lucilian satire is never outside its range of meaning. We recall that Cornutus plays a role in Persius' distancing of himself from the
Neronian literary scene which in turn reflects his own poetic freedom. As
the fifth satire continues, Persius addresses the Stoic tenet that only the wise
man is truly free, thereby offering to Cornutus a sample of the fruit of his
teaching labors. In his discourse on libertas, Persius ridicules the rather naive
notion of freedom entertained by a newly freed slave (5.82-92):

haec mera libertas, hoc nobis pillea donant.
'an quisquam est alius liber, nisi ducere vitam
cui licet ut libuit? licet ut volo vivere, non sum
liberior Bruto?' 'mendose colligis' inquit
Stoicus hic aurem mordac lotus aceto,
'hoc relicum accipio, "licet" illud et "ut volo" tolle.'
vindicata postquam meus a praetore recessi,
cur mihi non liceat, iussit quodcumque voluntas,
excepto siquid Masurius rubrica vetabit?'
disce, sed ira cadat naso rugosaque sanna,
dum veteres avias tibi de pulmone revello.

"This is true freedom, this our caps of freedom grant to us. 'Who is
free, unless he is allowed to live his life as he wishes? I'm able to live
as I wish; am I not freer than Brutus?' 'You conclude incorrectly' says
this Stoic with ear rinsed with biting vinegar, 'Take away that "able"
and "as I wish" and I grant the rest.' 'After I left the praetor's liberating-
rod as my own man, why can't I do whatever my free-will commands,
if it isn't something Masurius' book forbids?' Learn, but let your anger
and wrinkly grimace fall from your nose, while I tear aged
grandmothers from your lungs."

The words that remain, non sum liberior Brutus (I am not freer than Brutus),
are Persius' grim punchline. In disabusing the speaker of his illusory claim to
freedom, Persius enacts his denial of libertas by literally taking the speaker's
words away from him. Yet, Persius also removes the veteres avias ("aged
grandmothers") the slave has buried deep inside himself, a reference to his
"ingrained prejudices" that govern his thinking. Persius, we recall, is

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guided by a different old man stored deep in his soul, the Stoic voice of
Cornutus to which Persius owes his own freedom (quantum mihi te sinuoso
in pectore fixi, 5.27). Here, in the character of a Stoic with his well-rinsed ear,
Persius reminds us of the prominent role Cornutus played in his own Stoic
training, the theme that he sets out earlier in the poem. Persius' praise of his
teacher thus does not in fact come to an abrupt halt once he turns explicitly to
the subject of freedom. Indeed, not only does the apparent "break" itself
remind us of the iunctura acris that Cornutus urges his pupil to incorporate
into his poetic style, but Persius' treatment of libertas is actually a
demonstration of the Stoic orthodoxy inculcated by Cornutus and held up, it
seems, for his approval.

But perhaps the disorienting effects of this apparent break in the poem
say something about us: are the "aged grandmothers" of Persius' naive slave
any different than our own entrenched need for proportion and continuity?
We are reminded of S. 1.63-5 where, we have seen, current tastes favor
streamlined poems, smooth enough to pass the "finger-nail test" (ut per leve
severos I effundat iunctura unguis?). In applying our own critical nails to
Persius' poem, do we not also find ourselves enslaved to contemporary tastes
that have worked their way into our aesthetic judgment? In his discourse on
freedom, Persius, I believe, turns the tables on us. Our criticism of Persius'
poems for not measuring up to our poetic expectations is recast as our own
failure to measure up to his standards (5.104-9):
tibi recto vivere talo
ars dedit et veris speciem dinoscere calles,
ne qua subaerato mendosum tinniat auro?
quaeque sequenda forent quaeque evitanda vicissim,
illa prius creta, mox haec carbone notasti?
es modicus voti, presso lare, dulcis amicis?

"Has philosophy allowed you to live an upstanding life and are you skilled to distinguish the specious from the true, lest anything ring falsely with gold having bronze underneath? There are things you should follow and those in turn you should avoid: have you marked the former with chalk and the latter with coal? Are you modest in your needs? Your household thrifty? Are you kind to your friends?"

In subjecting us to his Stoic critique, Persius draws on his praise of Cornutus at the beginning of the poem (5.22-25):

quantaque nostrae
pars tua sit, Cornute, animae, tibi, dulcis amice,
ostendisse iuvat pulsa, dinoscere cautus
quid solidum crepet et pictae tectoria linguae.

"...and it is pleasing, dear friend, to show you, how much of my soul is yours, Cornutus. Tap it, knowing how to discern what sounds solid and knowing the plaster of a painted tongue."

In our readiness to criticize the poem's lack of cohesion, we find ourselves failing to measure up to Persius' own standard, Cornutus. Unlike Cornutus who probes the inner recesses of the heart discerning the false from the true, we look only to the surface. More akin to the naive slave, we fail to look inside Persius, and into ourselves, at our own inner prejudices.

Later, Persius draws our attention to this failure to look within in the image of the slave asserting his freedom as a matter of external trappings (e.g.
the wave of the praetor's wand and freedom-caps). Here, Persius points out that the freedom imparted by manumission is really only a delusion if the freed slave is still beholden to his master (5.124-31):

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'tiber ego.' undedatum hoc sumis, tot subdite rebus?
an domitum ignoras nisi quem vindicta relaxat?
'ı, puer, et strigiles Crispini ad balnea defer'
si increpuit, 'cessa nugator?', servitium acre
tei nihil inpellit nec quicquam extrinsecus intrat
quod nervos agitet; sed si intus et in iecore aegro
nascuntur domini, qui tu inpunitior exis
atque hic quem ad strigiles scutica et metus egit erilis?
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"'I am free.' How can you assume this when you are subject to so many things? Do you not know a master except the one whom the liberating-rod removes? If he shouts ‘Go, boy, and bring Crispinus’ scrapers to the baths. Are you delaying, idler?’, harsh servitude doesn’t compel you nor does anything enter from outside that goads your muscles. But if masters spring up inside you in your sickly liver, how do you come off more lightly than he whom the lash and the fear of his master led to the scrapers?"

In his reply to the slave, Persius again dismisses the superficial trappings of freedom on which the slave’s dubious claim to libertas is based. Rather Persius stresses the need to look inside ourselves since for him, true freedom, the freedom imparted by Cornutus’ Stoic instruction, comes from within. But it is also there, he cautions, that our inner tyrants (domini) reside and control our actions. Persius’ priamel earlier in the poem, where Cornutus’ adherence to Stoicism is juxtaposed to what Persius deems less constructive occupations, provides ready examples of those dominated by inner tyrants. This enslavement to inner masters, Persius suggests, is like a disease affecting the liver (iecore aegro) and in need of removal. The excising of these inner
tyrants is the painful surgery which this poem performs on its reader. It is this capability that sets his poems in opposition to the Neronian literary scene where poets and their audiences avidly glut themselves on the cannibal feasts of the tragic stage, taking “ingested” masters into themselves (cf. the opening “you are/speak whom you eat” metaphor). Much like the manumitted slave in Persius' fifth satire who remains subservient to the demands of his former master, the poets who comprise the Neronian literary establishment, unlike Persius, are in fact enslaved from within.

In the lines that follow the slave's bold claim, Persius elaborates on these internal masters (domini) by portraying them as personifications of various vices that exert their pressure on the moral slave. In Persius' dramatic depiction of a merchant's encounter with both Greed (Avaritia) and Luxury (Luxuria), we again find ourselves in the familiar territory of S. 3 (5.133-45):

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\texttt{mane piger stertis. 'surge' inquit Avaritia, 'eia surge.' negas. instat. 'surge' inquit. 'non queo.' 'surge.' 'et quid agam?' 'rogat! en saperdas advehe Ponto, castoreum, stuppas, hebenum, tus, lubrica Coa. tollre recens primus piper et sitiente camel. verte aliquid. iura.' 'sed Iuppiter audiet.' 'eheu, baro, regustatum digito terebrare salinum contentus perages, si vivere cum Iove tendis.' iam pueris pellem succinctus et oenophorum aptas. ocius ad naven! nihil obstat quin trabe vasta Aegaeeum rapias, ni solers Luxuria ante seductum moneat: 'quo deinde, insane, ruis, quo? quid tibi vis? calido sub pectore mascula bilis intumuit quam non extinxerit urna cicutae.}\
\]
"It's morning and you in your laziness snore. 'Get up' says Greed, 'Hey, get up.' You refuse. She persists. 'Get up,' she says. 'I can't.' 'Get up.' 'To do what?' 'He asks! Go and bring from Pontus bream, beaver oil, flax, ebony, incense, and sleek Coan silk. First unload the fresh pepper. Even while the camel still thirsts, trade something. Swear that it is of the finest quality.' 'But Jupiter will hear.' 'Ah, fool, you will live content to scrape out your empty salt cellar with your finger if you intend to live with Jove.' Now, all decked out you equip boys with skins and wine-vessels. Quickly, to the ship! Nothing stands in the way of your hurrying across the Aegean in your vast ship, unless sly Luxury takes you aside and offers her advice: 'Where are you rushing off to now, madman? Where? What are you aiming after? In your hot breast virile bile swells which an urn of hemlock could not quell.'

Persius' slacker returns, again snoring through the morning. We have already spied him earlier in the poem sleeping off a nightly binge, imagined as a regular occurrence in S. 3 (nempe haec adsidue). But this is a different morning, when he is rousted from bed not by a chiding "Damasippus," but by the unmistakable words of Greed and Luxury from within. In fact, the slacker's reply to the prodding of Avaritia (et quid agam?) actually finds him in the role of the moral chider of S. 3 (en quid agis?, 3.5). We recall that there the awakened slacker bolts out of bed only to find himself incapable of putting pen to paper. The exhortation to write in a pastoral mode elicits the sounds of Arcadia's cattle in distress: turgescit vitrea bilis: | findor, ut Arcadiae pecuaria rudere credas. But the roused sleeper of S. 5 has an altogether different response: though initially reluctant to get up, when lured by the prospect of wealth he eagerly heads for his ship. At this point Luxuria interjects, telling us that his frenzied zeal for riches swells within him, like the rage of the slacker of S. 3 (calido sub pectore mascula bilis | intumuit).
But why does Persius' slacker re-appear in this part of the poem where he must make a choice between competing vices? What is the point of our being made to think of the slacker of S. 3 here? We should recall that in the third satire Persius' slacker was faced with a choice of his own, the choice between a virtuous and dissolute life as epitomized by the letter of Pythagoras. This choice, we have seen, has an aesthetic alternative between "boiled down" Persianic satire and the luxuriant poems of Calpurnian pastoral. The slacker of S. 3 who rejects subservience to Neronian literary tastes can thus be seen as a foil to the moral slave in the fifth satire who, in his dalliance with both avarice and luxury, limits his choice between two competing forms of enslavement. The words that follow Luxuria's address, words which the moral slave appropriated from the chiding voice of the third satire, underscore the conflict that tears him apart (5.154-6):

en quid agis? *duplici in diversum scinderis hamo.*

huncine an hunc sequeris? subeas alternus oportet
ancipiti obsequio dominos, alternus obres.

"Well, what do you do? You are split in two by a two-pronged hook. Do you follow this one or that one? You must alternately undergo each master in turns in two-fold compliance and shirk them."

Again, we are reminded of the slacker at the beginning of S. 3 whose anger rends him in two (*findor*), a duplicity that reflects itself in the very words he puts on his page, in ink that is first clotted, then washed out—opposite extremes of bad script (cf. Avaritia's pulling one way, Luxuria the opposite).
As the poem continues, Persius offers his version of a scene from New Comedy to illustrate the mastery a mistress holds over her lover. After presenting examples of subservience to political ambition and superstition, Persius concludes his poem with laughter, as if it were the ending of one of the comedies he refers to shortly before he brings his satire to an end (5.189-91):

dixeris haec inter varicosos centuriones,  
continuo crassum ridet Pulfennius ingens  
et centum Graecos curto centusse licetur.

"If you say these things among varicose centurions, at once burly Pulfennius lets out a harsh laugh and bids a torn hundred-as note for a hundred Greeks."

But who is this Pulfennius and how are we to take his crass outburst? Others have noted that he bears a striking resemblance to the laughing centurion from the third satire. The centurion in that poem, we recall, played the role of a specifically "Horatian" satirist, mocking the affectations of philosophers to elicit laughter from his audience. He implicitly targets the philosophical voice that chides the slacker into conforming to Stoicism. And yet with Pulfennius, we sense that perhaps the joke is on him. He does remind us of the archetypal miles gloriosus who so often strutted across the Roman comic stage. Yet, this New Comic conclusion perhaps unsettles us, for it closes a poem where tragedy and comedy bring to mind the ending of the first satire and Persius' empty (?) boast that his poems are "boiled down" from the stuff of Old Comic libertas and Lucilian satire. As the successor to Old Comedy's
vaunted *libertas*, his brand of satire, later remembered in the stew pots of Procne and Thyestes in S. 5, induces his reader to seethe (*ferveat*). But we also recall that, in that earlier context, Persius draws attention to the fact that he is unable to express what he has to say (*me muttire nefas? nec clam? nec cum scrobe? nusquam?). He is forced to hide it in his book. This, he tells us, is the real joke: not solely what he has to say (that Rome lacks any literary standards), but also, I think, the way he is forced to say it, “burying” it in his little book (1.121-23):

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hoc ego opertum,  
hoc ridere meum, tam nil, nulla tibi vendo Iliade.  
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“This secret of mine, this joke, a mere trifle, I wouldn’t sell to you for any version of the *Iliad*.”

As at the end of S. 5, Persius’ philosophical satires are, as it were, on the auction-block. And once again there is a discrepancy between what the seller claims his book is worth and what the dullard buyers (us) are willing to pay. Persius is being ironic: his book is no trifle and certainly not a joke. Nonetheless, we are invited to think of Persius’ book as a trifling commodity at the end of the fifth satire. Unlike Persius who would not sell his *libellus* for the latest version of the *Iliad*, Pulfennius, we are told, is in fact in the market for Greek imports.

This “comic” conclusion to the poem is in dialogue with its “tragic” beginning, underscored by the repetition of derivatives of *centum* (*centuriones, centum, centusse*) which Anderson has noted plays on the
hundred-mouth motif in the poem's opening lines. Picking up on Anderson's observation, Hooley points out that the *centum Graecos* in the poem's last line are "at once 'these philosophers like Persius,' the hundred voices asked for at the poem's outset, and perhaps most centrally the multitude of poetic voices through which Persius' own finds expression."°

We have seen in this chapter how some of these hidden poetic voices work their way into this poem, ranging from New Comedy to Senecan tragedy. Yet, we have also noted how Persius' own non-compliant voice from his third satire filters into this poem as does the voice he "buries" in his *libellus* in S. 1. In both cases, these remembered voices recall the pressure to conform to Neronian literary tastes.

But it is not just this plurality of voices that "intertextually" inhabit the poem, but also the voices heard inside ourselves that Persius draws our attention to as we make our way through the poem. These are voices that we tend to ignore. And it is these unheeded inner voices that return as the poem comes to an end, embodied in Pulfennius. In discussing the end of the poem, Anderson notes that "Pulfennius exposes his own folly, his inability to perceive moral truths when they are presented to him in any form."° But I think Pulfennius' derisive outburst says more about us than about him. In dismissing him as some "boor," we fail to realize how that judgment reflects our own prejudices, our own willingness to laugh at someone else who "simply doesn't get it." Just as Pulfennius does not hear the voices that speak
to him in the poem, so, too, do we ignore the voices of the inner tyrants in ourselves, our "aged grandmothers" that shape our actions and responses. Persius, however, admits that he, too, has an inner voice of his own, but rather than a voice of enslavement, his is a "C omitan" voice grounded in Stoicism that deposes these inner masters and brings true freedom.
1 Most notably Hoole (1997) 64-121.

2 For variations of this motif, see Homer, Iliad 2.489; Ennius, Annales 469-70 Sk; Caecilius, fr. 121-3 W; Vergil, Aeneid 6.625; Ovid, Metamorphoses 8.533-4. Macrobius, Sat. 6.3.6 tells us that Hostius, an epic poet of the second century B.C., also adopted the motif: non si mihi linguae | centum atque ora sier totidem vocesque liquatae. Harvey (1981) 124: "Persius' statement that the hundred-mouth motif is used in tragedy lacks corroboration, and is probably an innovation made with 5ff. in mind."

3 For the culinary metaphor in these lines, see also Bramble (1974) 54-6 and Anderson (1982) 157-9.


5 See OLD insulsus 1. See also Harvey (1981) 127. Taking inergo as "to heap up" likely plays on the Stoic "pile" metaphor discussed at length in Freudenburg's unpublished manuscript on the poem.

6 For Greek and Roman stage productions of these myths, see Kissel (1990) 579-80.

7 OLD insulsus 1: "unsalted." The scholiast on line 9 notes Glycon's popularity and his manumission by Nero: Glycon tragoedus populo mire placuit et ideo a Nerone manumissus est.

8 Williams (1978) 309. Williams notes that Accius and Pacuvius were literary models who in Persius' day "became the conventional touchstone for an interest in archaizing." For the prevalence of archaism in oratory, see Seneca, Epistulae 114.13 and Quintilian, 10.43. For Accius and Pacuvius as models in the first century A.D., see also Martial 11.90 and Tacitus, Dialogus 20.5; 21.7.


10 In 5.5, however, the word hianda is typically construed as referring to the gaping mouth of the actor's mask, thus suggesting an actual stage performance. See Harvey (1981) 125 and Barr (1987) 129. For carmina as drama, see OLD carmen 2. See also Fantham (1982) 8-12. For Seneca's tragedies as carmina, see Griffin (1984) 151, Tarrant (1985) 12-13, and Sullivan (1985) 43 who attribute Nero's eventual resentment of Seneca to the latter's increased output of tragedies once the emperor had shown interest in writing.
For recitations at dinners, see Bramble (1974) 100.


14I have adopted Clausen’s punctuation of these lines. Others have assigned lines 96-7 to Persius, not his interlocutor, and add an exclamation point after Arma virum. In making Arma virum an exclamation, they make nonne...coctum? Persius’ verdict on the verses offered by his interlocutor. For the punctuation of these lines, see Harvey (1981) 44-5 and Bellandi (1988) 129-30.

15Bramble (1974) 130-1. Bramble notes that the reference to saliva and sapere “are direct and physical, centering the reader’s attention on the mouth...[which] is used for eating as well as poetic recitals...We have witnessed actual banquets, the consequences of gluttony for the gross poet-patron, and the degeneration of poetry to the status of food: a chain of associations now finally wound up by saliva and sapit.”

16See Relihan (1989) 155. He sees Persius’ reference to Old Comedy not as an allusion to the free speech enjoyed by the Old Comic poets but rather as “a call for an antiquary and a pedant, for only these read Old Comedy at this time.”

17Gowers (1993) 180. Gowers notes that the verb decequere is often associated with concentrated grape juice (sapa) which has the same root as sapere. Thus, as she points out, Persius’ poems are not only more “boiled-down,” but also “more flavoursome.”


21For Persius’ tragedy, see Vita, 44-5: scripserat in pueritia Flaccus etiam praetextam. Persius’ Vita, 19-20 also informs us that Cornutus was a tragic
poet though there are textual difficulties with the passage: *nam Cornutus illo tempore tragicus fuit sectae poeticae*. For an argument against Cornutus as a writer of tragedies, see Most (1989) 2044-6.

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22Lucilius attacked Accius in Books 3, 9, and 10; see also fr. 844W. Pacuvius was targeted in Book 26. For Pacuvius, see also frs. 665-8, 879, and 1261W.

23Wirszubski (1950) 159: “It was dangerous to publish books that would not please an emperor, or to pursue one’s studies in freedom.”

24Vita, 56-9.

25For an argument that these lines are indeed quoted from Nero’s own poetry, see Sullivan (1978) 159-70.

26For tragedy as a genre that traditionally contained hostile references to those in power at Rome, see Griffin (1984) 156. For the use of the Thyestes myth in particular, see MacMullen (1966) 36. Under Tiberius, for example, Mamercus Aemilius Scaurus had to take his own life because verses from his *Atreus* were construed as an attack upon the emperor. For this, see Tac. *Ann.* 6.29 and Dio, 58.24.4.


30Tac. *Dial.* 11.3: *ego autem sicut in causis agendis efficere aliquid et eniti fortasse possum, ita recitatione tragoeiarum. et ingredi famam auspicatus sum cum quidem in Nerone improbam et studiorum quoque sacra profanantem Vatini potentiam fregi* (I, however, am perhaps able to bring about and accomplish something in pleading cases, as well as in reciting tragedies. And I began to approach fame when indeed under Nero I shattered the shameful power of Vatinius which also profaned the sanctities of literary pursuits). See Sullivan (1985) 47.

31Morford (1972-3) 210: “Yet, all in all, the literature of the age cannot be considered apart from the tastes of the emperor.”

32Quint. 10.1.98; Tac. *Dial.* 12.6. Unfortunately, only one fragment survives from Varius’ play: *iam fero infandissima \ iam facere cogor* (Now I bear unspeakable things; unspeakable things I am now compelled to do). For


34Conte (1994) 417.


36Thy. 206-18.

37For the instability of power, see 608-22. For threats to power, see 446-470. For the chorus' guidance on how to properly rule, see 339-43.

38Sullivan (1985) 157n. 9: “The mythic material provided by the Pelopidae and the Atreidae seems to figure prominently in Neronian dramaturgy...[t]he gruesome concatenation of incestuous sexual connections, the sacrifice of children, the brutal murder of relatives and kin by marriage for the sake of success or succession, all vividly exemplified in the relations between Thyestes, Atreus, Agamemnon and Orestes...”

39Though we know from Dio that Nero played Thyestes on stage, the date of this performance may follow the writing of Persius' poems. Nevertheless, it is clear that Thyestes is precisely the type of grotesque subject that would have appealed to Nero's wild tastes. For Nero's performance of the role of Thyestes, see Dio 63.9.4; 63.23.6. See also Juvenal, 8.228.


41Giordano Rampioni (1983)104-7. See also lines 765-7: *haec veribus haerent viscera et lentis data l stillant caminis, illa flammatus latex l candente aeno iactat* (Their vital organs cling to the spits and given to the slow flames they drip, other parts the boiling water simmers in the cauldrons glowing from the heat).

42Kissel (1990) 580.

43Sullivan (1985) 147: “*Libertas* and the evils of post-Augustan autocracy were touchy subjects, unless carefully located in the never-never land of Greek
mythology, as in...Seneca's tragedies.” For libertas as the freedom from fear in Seneca's Thyestes, see Calder (1983) 189-90.

44Gowers (1994) 132 sees the hoarse whispering (rauco susurro) seething from the wine-must at the opening of Calpurnius' first eclogue as an indication of an anti-Neronian literary ferment.

45For the prospering of epic under Nero we need only look to Lucan's Bellum Civile. We also know that Nero wrote a Troica, an epic on the Trojan War. For epic in the Neronian period, see Griffin (1984) 153.

46It is worth noting that our word "libel" is derived from libellus.

47For the role of libertas in Horace, S. 1.4, see Freudenburg (2001) 44-51.

48For the influence of Terence's Adelphoe on these lines, see Leach (1971) 618-21. She notes that the role of the pater ardens that Horace's father plays in the poem closely parallels the character of Demea from Terence's comedy. For the role of fathers in Terence, see Fantham (1971) 970-998.

49Leach (1971) 629: "Moderate jesting is also the mark of new comedy." While not discounting Horace's negotiation of his relationship to Lucilius in the poem, in accounting for Horace's allusion to Terence in the poem she emphasizes the shared concerns of comedy and satire both in purity of diction and an interest in daily life.


51For Horatian parallels, see especially S. 1.2. See also S. 2.7 where Maecenas stands in as the "lover."

52For decerpere reflecting Golden Age prosperity, see Calp. Ecl. 5.7-8: ecce greges a monte remotos | cernis in aprico decerpere gramina campo (Look, you see the flocks have left the mountain and are grazing on the grasses in the sunny meadow). Persius' mention of the sun here also brings to mind the solar imagery associated with Nero that he addresses in his third satire.

53One might compare memories of Horace, S. 1.4 consistently brought into play in S. 1.10.

54Freudenburg, unpublished manuscript.

Freudenburg (2001) 49: "But that is the way it always was in Rome, and the way it would always be: libertas 'free speech' is equivalent to and only ever as good as one's libertas 'freedom.' Here again, the same word covers for the Romans what are for us two distinct (though intersecting) semantic territories."

Barr (1987) 144. See also Harvey (1981) 152.


Hooley (1997) 121.

Satire, traditionally, is a critical response to the world in which the poet finds himself. It makes sense, then, that the loud, brooding presence of the Neronian literary scene in Rome of the late 50s and early 60s A.D. should somehow make itself felt across the pages of Persius' "philosophical" satires. Nero's principate self-consciously adopted an Augustan pose. And thus the revival of literary genres marked as "Augustan" was central to Nero's literary renaissance, providing him with ready means for presenting himself to Rome as the bringer of her new Golden Age. The emperor's keen interest in poetry also created an environment where contemporary poets vied for political and financial advancement by producing works that were not only in tune with the emperor's own Alexandrian literary tastes, but that also actively promoted the emperor's political agenda.

In my first chapter, I have argued that it is this literary climate that Persius indicts in his choliambic prologue where he criticizes the tendencies of contemporary poets to imitate the same models and employ the same hackneyed *topoi* of poetic inspiration. In distancing himself from these poets, Persius adopts the pose of a poetic outsider with his own distinctive voice.
This pose is partly derived from his self-identification as a "half-rustic" (semipaganus). But, as I have demonstrated, it is also indebted to Persius' metrical and thematic allusions to Hipponax who similarly casts himself as a poetic outsider. The scanty remains of Hipponax' poetry suggest that he both frequently and loudly asserted his independence from the Homeric tradition. Although I have detected other non-iambic voices in the prologue, it is in evoking the dissonance, harshness, and ugliness of Hipponax that enables Persius to portray himself as being at odds with contemporary literary trends that advocated grand epic inspiration, smoothness, and polish. The uglified construct of the city that is also characteristic of Hipponax' poetry, we have seen, stands in stark contrast to Pindaric epinician that glorifies the tyrant and his τόλις. In condemning contemporary poetry that promotes a Neronian agenda, Persius, I believe, taps into this same dichotomy, adopting a Hipponactean voice to align his own poetry with Hipponax' own scathing criticisms against "the tyrant." This voice enables Persius to assert his poetic independence from the Neronian literary climate that surrounds him on all sides.

In addressing the difficulties of writing under Nero, the prologue, we have seen, provides a programmatic map for the way in which this problem recurs later in his libellus. At the very least, it announces the theme as "prominent" and "central" rather than simply one of many. But it also sets the stage for how remembered voices figure into the critical work of poems
where Persius distances himself from the contemporary literary scene. In my second chapter, for example, we saw the prominent role that bucolic poetry, specifically the pastoral voice of Calpurnius Siculus, plays in Persius’ third satire. Given the verbal parallels between S. 3 and Calpurnius’ obsequious first eclogue, Persius’ poem, as I have argued, can be seen as an adverse response to Neronian pastoral that was effectively a medium for promoting the Golden Age ideology appropriated from Augustan propaganda. Talk of a Golden Age restored under the auspices of a recently hailed Sun-king fueled the self-serving motives of sycophantic poets inspired by the prospect of social and monetary gain. With such a literary climate comes the pressure to promote a consistent ideology, and it this pressure, we have seen, that Persius grapples with in his third satire. Persius’ refusal to march in step is reflected in his slacker who, despite the prodding of the interjecting “pastoral” voice, is nonetheless unable to write under the “glare” of the Sun-emperor.

We have noted that S. 3 is a poem about choices, and that these choices are formulated within the “fiction” of the poem as the choice between living a dissolute life or a moral life devoted to the study of philosophy. But we have also seen that through the intertext with Calpurnius’ first eclogue the choice is configured as that between two poetic alternatives: ingratiable poems in the vein of Calpurnius’ Eclogues or Persius’ brand of satire that indicts the Neronian literary scene that promotes Golden Age rhetoric. Persius’ contempt for Neronian Golden Age propaganda is further
demonstrated by the examples of moral decadence with which he populates his third satire. Figures such as the corpulent Natta betoken the overabundance that ensues from Golden Age prosperity and results in moral degeneracy.

In my final chapter, we saw that Persius revisits in his fifth satire the familiar territory of the prologue by similarly sampling and dispensing with hackneyed literary topoi. His initial demand at the opening of S. 5 for the conventional hundred mouths of an epic bard prompts Cornutus to interject to steer his pupil away from the lofty pretensions of high-flown contemporary poetry. In again referring to specific contemporary literary practices, Persius has us reconsider certain of his own voices from within his libellus, not only from the prologue, but also from the first and third satires where he addresses the problem of writing in the Neronian literary climate. As in S. 3, distinct memories of which are cued throughout S. 5, Persius targets another Augustan literary genre that was actively promoted under Nero: tragedy. Persius employs a culinary metaphor in referring to the grand themes of tragedy at the opening of the poem that, we have seen, draws upon similar imagery in S. 1. There, Persius condemns the aesthetic standards at Rome where the populace gluts itself on a seemingly limitless supply of trifling poetry, held in high esteem for its symmetry and continuity.

Not only does Persius recall his own voices from poems earlier in the collection, he also explicitly has us consider Cornutus as a Stoic voice within
himself. This inward turn on the part of Persius, I believe, invites us to consider our own inner voices and what these voices ultimately reveal about us. In this "jagged" poem with its cracks and rough joinings, Persius addresses the notion of freedom. And it is here that he points out that we, much like the Neronian literary scene that is enslaved to the literary tastes of the emperor, are ourselves subservient to our own need for poetic proportion and cohesion.

In this dissertation, I have attempted to demonstrate that Nero's influence on the literary climate at Rome presented Persius with substantial material for satire, as well as certain difficulties in writing that satire. The poet's contempt for hack poets in the prologue and the first satire extends to other poems in the *libellus* where Persius targets the self-serving promotion of Neronian propaganda. While Horace remains an important model for Persius, we must pay heed to other voices that filter into his poems. Rather than dismiss often minuscule and difficult allusions as the willful obscurity of a pedant poet, we ought to give them ample room to maneuver and mean. For these voices, I hope to have shown, figure prominently into the way in which Persius responds to the literary climate from which he so avidly seeks to distance himself. They are at the heart of how his poems criticize and express themselves as "satire."
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