

CLAS 462: Roman Satire

Brian S. Hook
Office: NH 127B
Phone: 251-6294 (o) 421-9835 (c)
Office hour: TTh 3-4, and by appt.

Fall, 2009
TTh 8:00-9:15 (late start: 9:45)
NH 132
email: bshook@unca.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

Although the Romans looked to Greece for the models for nearly all their literary genres, of satire Quintilian says simply, *satura quidem tota nostra est* (10.1.93). What satire is, however, is very hard to characterize even on the basis of surviving models. Horace is usually a gentle mocker; Persius turns philosophical; Juvenal can be savage. All three cite Lucilius, the *inventor* of Roman satire, as their precedent – but he exists only in fragments. The very meaning of the word *satura* in Latin is unclear. To crown it all, Latin satire, especially verse satire, is notoriously difficult Latin. Such is our challenge this semester. We will study representative samples of satire in Latin, including the “Menippean” satire of Petronius, and we will read translations of each of the satirists. As we will come to see, *satura* seems to indicate “a mixed dish” of some sort, and we will study how satire mixes comedy, parody, philosophy, didacticism, rhetoric, and coarse invective to produce something that is “totally Roman.” The goals for this class are: 1) to master the Latin of several satires of Horace and Juvenal; 2) to gain proficiency in satirical Latin (syntax and vocabulary) generally; 3) to understand different approaches to satire – as personal space, as rhetoric, as drama, as moral instruction, as social commentary; 4) to acquire knowledge about the social and historical circumstances of the authors writing satire and of the satires they write; and 5) to become familiar with all the satirists in translation.

TEXTS

Required:

§*Latin Verse Satire*, ed. P. A. Miller (Routledge, 2005)

§*Petronius, Selections from the Satyricon* ed. G. Lawall, 3rd ed. (Bolchazy-Carducci, 1995)

§*Juvenal, Sixteen Satires*, trans. P. Green (Penguin 3rd edition 1999)

§*Horace, Satires and Epistles/Persius, Satires*, trans. N. Rudd (Viking/Penguin; Reissue edition (March 1982)

On reserve:

§Freudenburg, K. *Satires of Rome: Threatening Poses from Lucilius to Juvenal*. Cambridge, 2001.

Websites

§Latin texts for all authors are available online at: www.thelatinlibrary.com

Requirements of the course:

- 1. Preparation:** We are reading a reasonable amount in this course, but satire is a difficult form. At the beginning you should make a commitment to complete the assignments and to think about what you have read. I have set challenging but (I hope) reachable limits for each class. The reading will take about 2 hours a day every day, and I strongly encourage you to work together if you can. There can be no set limit on the time you spend digesting and contemplating and appropriating the material. The more it becomes a part of you, the more successful the class will be.
- 2. Attendance:** Attendance is absolutely necessary for a successful class; absences should not occur except in extraordinary circumstances, that is, in true emergencies. Two absences will not be penalized, but after that, the following penalties accrue: for your third absence, your course grade will fall by 2 points; for your fourth, by 4 points; for your fifth, by 7 points, for your sixth, by 10 points; at your seventh absence, you will fail the course. Documented legal or medical emergencies *may* be an exception. **If it snows:** Either classes will be cancelled or operate on a delayed snow schedule (you can find this out by calling the Snow Line (828) 259-3050) or they will operate on a normal schedule. If you cannot attend, try to notify me *prior* to missing class. Weather may or may not be a legitimate excuse; however, if you live remotely and you do not feel safe to drive, do not drive. I'll work with you. Tardiness is frowned upon, and if excessive or chronic (i.e. more than 30 minutes late, or late repeatedly) will affect your participation grade and may be counted as an absence.
- 3. Participation:** This class is both a translation and a discussion class, and it is vital that we share our ideas and talents with each other. Never be afraid to ask a question, offer a comment, take a stand on an issue, or disagree with the professor or anyone else. It is through free and lively exchange that we refine our skills and our views. Several guidelines can help govern this exchange: enter this class intending to learn a great deal; bring an open and critical mind; a sense of humor; an interest in people of other times and places; a willingness to offer your own ideas and to comment respectfully on the ideas of others. You will be assigned a grade on your participation, which necessarily involves your attendance and preparation.
- 4. Journal (Strongly recommended):** One of the difficult things about reading literature and writing about it is knowing which questions are really useful and which ones are not as useful. I recommend that each of you write out thoughts, ideas, responses, or, perhaps best, questions about the texts read each day. Keep this material

collected in one notebook, designated specifically for that purpose. Write as much as you can; include reasons why you have your ideas or why you are interested in your questions. Your questions can be factual, if you wish, but preferably they will be interpretive; I encourage you to collect material, if it helps you, into particular interpretive approaches (e.g. "Author/*Persona*"; "Moral Instruction"; "Food"; "Comedy"; etc. – see below). Bring your journal to class – it can provide the springboard for class discussions – and it is the source for your paper.

5. **WRITING:** You will have two writing assignments for this class. 1) **Translation review.** Because satire is a very colloquial and difficult genre, translations tend to differ quite a bit, each translator favoring different goals for his or her translation. I would like you to review three different translations of Horace or Juvenal, and evaluate the different strengths (or weaknesses) of each. Choose a single satire of one of those two authors, and read each translator's introduction and notes.

2) **Source Paper.** Rather than have you write an interpretive paper, based on a question of your choosing, I will ask you instead to choose a broad controversy in satire and collect passages significant for its interpretation and scholarly approaches to it. I am calling this a "Source Paper," since it is more an exercise in gathering material than in interpreting it. You should gather at least ten passages from the satires themselves and survey at least five different works of scholarship. You may choose one of the following controversial areas in satire to organize your collection: Satire as Autobiography, Author and *Persona*, Philosophy in Satire, Greek Precedents, Representation of Women in Satire, Satire as Literary Criticism, Satire Vs. Epic, Food in Satire, Sickness/Disease in Satire, Slaves and Slavery in Satire, Role of Lucilius in later satirists, Satire as Moral Instruction, Satire as "Serious Play," Satire and Nostalgia, Sex/Sexual Deviancy in Satire. If you have another subject area that interests you, please propose it.

6. **Translation:** Because there are more of you than can offer translations in class each day, or even each week, each of you is required to submit every Thursday a **typed** translation of the first 5+ lines of the assignment for that Thursday. Satiric sentences usually run on and end mid-line, so I will try to specify beforehand what you should turn in. If I do not, simply write out your translation up to the nearest pause (comma, semicolon) after the first five lines of that day's assignment. I will grade this assignment more on the apparent effort of the process (hence translations copied from others are discouraged) than on the refinement of the product. The ulterior goal is for me to help you with your translations. I do not, however, recommend that you write out *all* your translations.

7. We will have quizzes on vocabulary and factual material. There will be one take-home examination and a cumulative final. The final will include translation and discussion questions, and a general format of the final will be discussed in class prior to exam time. There will be one translation review (4-6 pages) and one "source paper" (5-10 pages) due during the semester. In addition to your written work, grades will be

given for your participation. Letter grades represent the following averages: 100-92.5=A, 92.5-90=A-, 90-87.5=B+, 87.5-82.5=B, 82.5-80=B-, 80-77.5=C+, 77.5-72.5=C, 72.5-70=C-, 70-67.5=D+, 67.5-60=D, 60-0=F

All of you will be held to the standards of academic honesty as described in the 2009-2010 catalog, which can be found on UNC-A's website as Catalog, under the heading "Academic Regulations and Procedures" and subheading "Student Responsibilities", where academic misconduct is discussed. A breach of academic honesty will result in, at the very least, the unacceptability of the work under question; and at the very most, expulsion from the university. A breakdown of the grade distribution appears thus:

quizzes	- 5%
take-home (due 10/15)	- 15%
translation review (due 11/5)	- 15%
source paper (due 11/24)	- 20%
final exam (12/8)	- 15%
preparation/participation	- 30%

WARNING! This class is rated R (Restricted; must be at least 17 to read and discuss Roman satire) for adult language, adult situations, and strong sexual content. Please be even more respectful of the sensibilities and modesty of others when discussing and interpreting this frequently racy material.

Syllabus: This syllabus is intended as a guide, not a straitjacket. You are responsible for every reading listed below, whether it is fully discussed in class or not. You are to read and prepare each passage thoroughly by the date beside which they appear.

Wk. I: 8/18: Intro to course: syllabus, material, assignments. Intro to satire. Horace *Sermones* I.1.1-19. For homework, read Miller's introduction in *Latin Verse Satire*; and Coffey's essay "The Roman Genre of Satire and Its Beginnings" in Miller, pp. 327-362.

8/20: Discussion and translation of Lucilius and the rest of Horace, *Serm.* I.1.

Wk. II:8/25: Horace *Sermones* I.4.1-44

8/27: Horace *Sermones* I.4.45-85 [Have the translation of Horace's *Sermones* I 1-5 and Freudenburg, pp. 27-44, read by this class.]

Wk. III: 9/1: Horace *Sermones*. I.4.86-143 (do as much as you can)

9/3: Horace *Sermones* I.9.1-37

Wk. IV: 9/8: Horace *Sermones* I.9.38-78

9/10: Horace *Sermones* I.10.1-35 [Have the translation of Horace's *Sermones* I 6-10 read by this class.]

Wk. V: 9/15: Horace *Sermones* I.10.36-92 (do as much as you can).

9/17: Horace *Sermones* II.1.1-46 [Have the translation of Horace's *Sermones* II read by this class.]

Wk. VI: 9/22: Horace *Sermones* II.1.47-86

9/24: Persius *Prologus* and *Sat.* I.1-62—I will translate for you in class

Wk. VII: 9/29: Persius 1.63-134—I will translate [Have the rest of Persius' *Satires* in translation and Freudenburg pp. 151-172 read by this class]

10/1: Summary of Horace and Persius. **Take-home exam given out in class.**

Wk. VIII: 10/6: Petronius, *Satyricon*

10/8: Petronius, *Satyricon*

Wk. IX: 10/13: **Fall Break**

10/15: Petronius, *Satyricon* **Take-home exam due**

Wk. X: 10/20: Juvenal, *Satire* I.1-50

10/22: Juvenal, *Satire* I.51-90 [Have Freudenburg pp. 209-242 read by this class]

Wk. XI: 10/27: Juvenal, *Satire* I.91-146

10/29: Juvenal, *Satire* I.147-171 [Have the translation of Juvenal *Satires* 1-5 read by this class.]

Wk. XII: 11/3: Juvenal, *Satire* III.1-57

11/5: Juvenal, *Satire* III.58-97 **Translation Review Due**

Wk. XIII: 11/10: Juvenal, *Satire* III.98-153 [Have the translation of Juvenal *Satires* 6-10 read by this class.]

11/12: Juvenal, *Satire* III.154-202

Wk. XIV: 11/17: Juvenal, *Satire* III.203-267 [Have the translation of Juvenal *Satires* 11-16 read by this class.]

11/19: Juvenal, *Satire* III.268-322

Wk. XV: 11/24: Juvenal, *Satire* IX—I will translate it for you **SOURCE PAPER DUE.**

11/26: **Thanksgiving Break**

Wk. XVI: 12/1: Juvenal, *Satire* X—I will translate as much as you want for you.

12/3: Last day of class; final remarks; preview of final

Final exam: Tuesday, December 8th, 8:00-10:30am