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**THE DIVISION OF LUCILIUS' FRAGMENTS,  
A PERSONAL OPINION OF THE TOPIC  
Satire in Lucilius' preserved fragmentary work<sup>1</sup>**

*Based on the reading of preserved fragments, the author deals with the question whether Lucilius wrote verses belonging to the genre of satire. According to the quantity of fragments (approximately 1,300) and the rare preservation of complete verses, the author suggests dividing the fragments into several groups. The author tried to find a literary criterion which takes into account the features typical of the genre of satire and is also understandable to contemporary readers. The presence of criticism has been chosen as such a criterion which, in the author's opinion, has been found along with satire from its beginnings to the present. It is one of the most typical features of satire. In the second part of the paper, the author presents a group of chosen satirical fragments which is divided according to the focus of the criticism.*

**Keywords:** C. Lucilius, Roman Verse Satire, Criticism, Dividing of Fragments, Topics of Criticism

When I started to deal with the person of Gaius Lucilius, I had to ask myself whether it is to read only Lucilius (without the context of other authors) and find out that his work is satire. Can the text itself show that Lucilius' work is satire? Therefore, I tried to thoroughly study the whole body of work Lucilius left us.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> This paper was written under the auspices of the *Centre for Interdisciplinary Research into Ancient Languages and Early Stages of Modern Languages* (research program MSM 0021622435) at Masaryk University, Brno, Czech Republic. The aim of this paper is to summarize the hitherto opinions on the origins of Roman verse satire and to present my own classification of Lucilius's fragments based on the text. The preserved material is systematically divided and fragments considered satirical are sorted into thematic groups.

<sup>2</sup> One of the scholars, who I have studied, and who inclines to this method with a slight

Only about 1,300 fragments from Lucilius' 30 books have been preserved.<sup>3</sup> Most fragments are composed of individual verses and only sometimes a larger unit appears. It was necessary to divide the available materials. I wanted to study satire so I had to find some satiric verses in these fragments. "We all have an intuitive sense of what satire is."<sup>4</sup> However, it is not easy to explain this "sense" — nowadays satire emphasizes an aggressive tone or voice rather than form.<sup>5</sup> Satire can be perceived in various ways: "as a particular kind of generic space, a place where certain unruly sides of ourselves come out [...] or [...] as the (first?) place where the poet's "I" gets to run with the possibilities of literary discourse."<sup>6</sup> D. Hooley's view of the ancient definition of satire is: "[...] Roman verse satires are hexameter poems composed in a certain conversational register that generally turn on some kind of criticism."<sup>7</sup>

This paper does not aim to exactly define the sense of satire. To be able to divide the fragmentary work in more detail, I focused on answering the following question: What must the satire of today contain to be considered satire? I also looked for such criteria as would correspond to ancient satire.

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tendency to formalism is M. Plaza: "My method is literary, and all my analyses take their beginning in close reading of a humorous passage (or several humorous passages). The method has a Formalist slant to it in that I take the original text themselves as my primary, and main, material." Plaza, Maria. 2006. *The Function of Humour in Roman Verse Satire. Laughing and Lying*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 5. J. Henderson also points out the necessity of reading the text thoroughly: "Reading Latin text is an adventure in cultural translation, and must proceed from the word go on the basis that we are not going to be in a position to 'read out' what they have to say — as if that could speak straight to us, meant for our ears." Henderson, John. 1999. *Writing Down Rome: Satire, Comedy, and other Offences in Latin Poetry*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, xii.

<sup>3</sup> The enclosed English fragments are numbered and quoted according to Warmington's edition. Warmington, Eric Herbert [ed.]. 1998. *Remains of Old Latin III: Lucilius. The Twelve Tables*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Hooley, Daniel M. 2007. *Roman Satire*. Malden, MA — Oxford — Carlton, Victoria: Blackwell Publishing Ltd, 1.

<sup>5</sup> Braund, Susan H. 1992. *Roman Verse Satire*. Greece & Rome, New Surveys in the Classics No. 23. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 57.

<sup>6</sup> D. M. Hooley (2007: 8).

<sup>7</sup> D. M. Hooley (2007: 3). We need to consider that in antiquity two types of satire were distinguished: Menippean satire (on Menippean satire in which poetry and prose are combined see Relihan, Joel C. 1993. *Ancient Menippean Satire*. Baltimore — London: The Johns Hopkins University Press; Bartoňková, Dagmar. 1973. *Smišný styl v antické literatuře*. Brno: Universita J. E. Purkyně v Brně) and Roman verse satire whose representative is Lucilius followed by Horace, Persius and Juvenal.

For the purposes of this paper I tended to divide the literary work according to its form and content. The need for form in today's satire disappeared a long time ago.<sup>8</sup> Satire can be recited, read, or performed on stage or TV. Therefore, content alone has been left for my research. Anything can become the subject of satire.<sup>9</sup> Satire is colourful, so it is comparable to farago or mishmash. I searched for a feature which would be typical of satire and which would be easily recognized as satire thanks to this feature. I also wanted to bring Lucilius closer to today's audience. For this reason the feature had to be understandable to the present world. That is why I chose criticism<sup>10</sup> as the basic feature to study the fragments.

Criticism is one of the typical features of satire. It makes satire sharp, restless and strong; it gets society angry and involved. The audience can't remain indifferent and has to take a stance. The satirist makes people think, sometimes forcing their own opinions to become the moral authority. "Satire calls us out, confronting us with some impression of our world and requiring us to place ourselves within the complex triangulation of poet-speaker, satirized target, audiences. Just where we placed ourselves is always tricky, entailing a decision that is not entirely voluntary, and satire makes us think about that fact too."<sup>11</sup> Criticism can be true, but it is almost always based on the emotions and personal feelings of the satiric *persona*<sup>12</sup> who is mostly identified with the poet himself. Criticism can turn on the speaker himself. Self-criticism appears in satire.

Criticism is understandable to today's audiences. It is all around us — criticizing political situations, neighbours, or the vanity of millionaires. Criticism has always been connected with human society. Specifically, general problems, as the author perceives them, seem to be criticised.

Criticism is the required element being typical to both ancient satire and as understandable to today's audiences. Criticism can be easily recognised (even if a longer text is not available) and it appears in different forms dur-

<sup>8</sup> S. Braund states that this happened in the Middle Ages. Braund S. H. (1992: 57).

<sup>9</sup> D. Hooley lists these topics concerning Lucilius: "horses, fish, Latin grammar, Homer, superstition, misers, sex(-ism) rhetoric, travel, autobiography, luxury and poverty, country living, defecation, law, friendship, literary criticism, gods, enemies, polemic, politics, gladiators, wanton women, gangrene, food, more food, drink and drunkenness, one good belch, and much else." D. M. Hooley (2007: 23).

<sup>10</sup> All authors of works on satire consider criticism one of the key features of satire.

<sup>11</sup> D. M. Hooley (2007: 10).

<sup>12</sup> M. Plaza mentions a nice and truthful summary concerning *persona* including the basic works. M. Plaza (2006: 22–23). On the basis of *persona*, S. Braund notices the similarity of satire and drama. S. H. Braund (1992: 2).

ing the whole development of satire (both hidden and open). Moreover, Lucilius introduced criticism into satire and so helped to create a new genre.

Modern scholars dealing with satire point out that humour cannot be omitted as a characteristic feature of satire. M. Plaza considers humour to be the most important feature of Roman verse satire. Humour in satire doesn't only make the criticism milder, but plays an important role.<sup>13</sup> In general, it can be said that satire is, in its own way, entertainment.<sup>14</sup> D. Hooley perceives criticism and satire as two key features of satiric genre, in which one of them prevails. "Most of us think of it in a vague sort of way as something funnily critical, or critically funny..."<sup>15</sup> N. Rudd adds preaching to these two key features. However, it is the least significant of the three and most authors do not consider it crucial.<sup>16</sup> Paradoxically the genre of satire which is not basically moralizing has become also the indicator of moral values throughout the centuries.<sup>17</sup> Some moralizing overtones or, one could say, a certain mission can be found in contemporary satire (particularly political). However, these are not the moral lessons of fables.

Thus, satire is more than criticism. Even if criticism is one of the cornerstones of satire, its role as entertainment and humour cannot be omitted.

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<sup>13</sup> It is both the means of expressing the main message and the entertaining element. M. Plaza (2006: 1–2). In her book, the author studies in detail the function of humour and its division into categories. In her opinion the humour typical for satire is the humour from below. M. Plaza (2006: 53).

<sup>14</sup> S. H. Braund in the preface of his book emphasizes (as well as M. Plaza) the strong element of humour and wit which appears in satires. In their opinion, the reason for omitting this important element is the fact that it is very difficult to understand other cultures so well to be able to tell whether something is funny or not. S. H. Braund (1992: 3).

<sup>15</sup> D. M. Hooley (2007: 1). Braund perceives playfulness and criticism as two graph axes which margin the genre. Satirists offer on one hand playfulness including humour, cunning and fun and on the other hand criticism as an offensive element which ranges from a furious attack on an individual to a mild general criticism of vices in society. S. H. Braund (1992: 4).

<sup>16</sup> "In this triple function preaching appears to have a less important status than the other two. For the poem which has its position somewhere along the line (entertainment) — (preaching) does not count as a satire." (Rudd, Niall. 1986. *Themes in Roman Satire*. Classical Life and Letters. London: Duckworth, 1.) It is highly possible that Lucilius' longest preserved fragment so called *virtus* fragment contains moral overtones.

<sup>17</sup> "Conceding a secondary rank to satire, criticism has essentially left the poems to speak themselves as (merely) literary artifacts with a portable 'moral' burden. And indeed there was a long period of time when satire was widely read in both Latin and translation as moral didactic by the educated classes." D. M. Hooley (2007: 7).

Moral preaching which is not so frequent (with the exceptions of some authors) is also a part of satire.

I studied fragments from the point of criticism whether they are critical or not at all. Most of the fragments contain a few grammatical peculiarities as the result of their preservation by grammarians. Having excluded these fragments from my study, a group of about 190 fragments remained. Some of these fragments apparently contain criticism; the others can be read differently in different contexts, especially a historical one. Thus, along with the group of verses evoking criticism, a group of fragments was created which are not critical at first sight, but have this feature in a wider context. The author of an edition may interpret the text as being critical, whereas another may disagree.

I divided the fragments into three groups: the largest one includes the fragments with grammar topics, another group is made of fragments containing criticism and so satiric in my opinion and, the last group is made up of the fragments with the sense of satire, because criticism was hidden. My division is certainly very subjective. However, I think even if it will not have crucial importance for the research of Lucilius' fragments, it will offer a new point of view of an author who is known but is not studied in detail by scholars.

Only about 3% of all the fragments contain traces of criticism. I divided them into a further groups (seven) in order to work with them more easily. I focused on the objects of criticism. The topics and objects of Roman satire were based on everyday life. And even if they are connected with their authors and their times, they are of value to us as well.

The group of fragments which is most easily recognized deals with **food**. Food is an excellent topic, because through it class, social codes, and personal habits can be examined.<sup>18</sup> Lucilius criticizes not only overeating (70 W),<sup>19</sup> but also food which is of a poor nature (126–129 W).<sup>20</sup> D. Hooley also draws attention to the pun of the word *satis*.<sup>21</sup>

18 “Eating is perfect for satire; utterly trivial yet the place where class, social codes, and personal habits come under scrutiny.” D. M. Hooley (2007: 21).

19 *Vivite lurcones, comedones, vivite ventris!* (“Good living to you, you gluttons, you guzzlers, good living to you, you bellies!”)

20 *Ostrea nulla fuit, non purpura, nulla peloris, asparagi nulli, nam mel regionibus illis incrustatus calix rutai caulis habetur.* (“There was no oyster, no purple fish, no sunset-shell, no asparaguses, ... for in those regions the dirt-coated pot and the stalk of rue are esteemed as honey-sweet.”)

21 “Satire’s favorite bad pun is *satis*; a moralizing ‘what’s enough’.” D. M. Hooley

A very important part of Lucilius' satires is the **attacking of enemies**. Personal enmity (109–110 W)<sup>22</sup> is blended with rivalry in the field of literature (723 W)<sup>23</sup> and with criticism of the enemies of Lucilius' friend — Scipio Aemilianus (440–2 W).<sup>24</sup> Sometimes the invective of the individuals was linked to a particular body part (354–5W),<sup>25</sup> which is also typical of satire. To some scholars, the body even represents the basis of metaphor of the genre itself.<sup>26</sup>

Lucilius also denounced **ordinary human characteristics**, such as parasitism (761–2 W),<sup>27</sup> over ambition (1145–51 W),<sup>28</sup> the use of wicked mannerisms or affectionate expressions which Lucilius connects with the

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(2007: 21). “To know what is ‘enough’, satis, is to know where the beginning and end are, where the center, the center of values, is.” D. M. Hooley (2007: 25).

22 *Broncus Bovillanus dente adverso eminulo hic est rhinoceros.* (“This jut-mouth of Bovillae, with his one little projecting tooth, is a very rhinoceros.”)

23 [...] *nisi portenta anguisque volucris ac pinnatos scribitis.* (“[...] unless you all write about portents and flying winged snakes.”)

24 *Lucius Cotta senex, crassi pater huius, Paceni magnus fuit trico nummarius, solvere nulli lentus* [...] (“The old man Lucius Cotta, my dear Pacenius, the father of this fat fellow, was a great trickster, a taker of bribes, pliant for paying no one [...]”)

25 [...] *quod deformis senex αρθριτικός ac podagrosus est, quod mancus miserque, exilis, ramite magno.* (“[...] because he is a deformed, rheumaticky, gouty old man, because he is a poor maimed lanky wretch with a big rupture.”)

26 “My sense is that all of satire is up to more than this, but there is release and relief in satire’s opening up to view and expression the body, in both its literal and (often deeply) metaphorical senses; hence the common medical notions of satire as relieving bile — and so, in part, the proliferation of bile, piss, pus etc. Satire centerstages the disfigured body: flawed, maimed, contorted, decaying. Let the body be seen in literature and its symbology ramifies, morphs. Decadent and decayed, it takes in everything from psychic implosion to the disintegrating ‘bodies’ of policy, culture, and society.” D. M. Hooley (2007: 8).

27 *Cocus non curat cauda insignem esse illam, dum pinguis siet: sic amici quaerunt animum, rem parasiti ac ditias.* (“A cook cares not that yonder bird is remarkable for his tail, provided that it is a fat bird. So do friends have eye to a man’s mind, and parasites to his wealth and money.”)

28 *Nunc vero a mani ad noctem, festo atque profesto totus item pariterque die populusque patresque iactare indu foro se omnes, decedere nusquam; ni se atque eidem studio omnes dedere et arti-verba dare ut caute possint, pugnare dolose, blanditia certare, bonum simulare virum se, insidias facere ut si hostes sint omnibus omnes.* (“But, as it is, from morning till night, on holiday and workday, the whole commons and the senators too, all alike go bustling about in the Forum and nowhere leave it; all give themselves over to one and the same interest and artifices — namely to be able to swindle with impunity, to fight cunningly, to strive, using soft words as weapons, to act the ‘fine fellow’, to lie in wait, as though all of them were enemies of all men.”)

longing of the criticized person to express themselves in a noble Greek way (14 W).<sup>29</sup>

Excessive **luxury and the misuse of money** (1194–95 W)<sup>30</sup> is another topic which the satirist deals with. As N. Rudd says, Lucilius does not criticize the fortune itself but its abuse leading to luxury.<sup>31</sup> Lucilius also mentions luxurious clothes (12 W).<sup>32</sup>

The topic of the next group of fragments is about **love** in different forms. One example demolishes the standard concept of mythological icons (567–73 W)<sup>33</sup> and another shows a woman who wants to be beautiful to all men except her husband or lover (534–35 W).<sup>34</sup> Lucilius doesn't avoid faithlessness and it is of interest to note that in Roman satire, no man was criticized for being unfaithful to his wife.<sup>35</sup> The question remains: What was the relationship of this old bachelor to women? It seems that one of Lucilius' books was named after his mistress. In his works, J. Henderson introduces Lucilius as an archetype of masculinity, the Man.<sup>36</sup>

29 [...] *'arutaenaeque' inquit, 'auales'*. (“[...] ‘and the term draw-liquids is used’ said he, ‘for water-basins.’”)

30 *Aurum atque ambitio specimen virtutis virique est. Tantum habeas, tantum ipse sies tantique habearis*. (“Gold and going the rounds for votes are a token of a man and his manliness. See that you hold so much, are yourself so much, and are held to be worth so much.”)

31 N. Rudd (1986: 129).

32 *Praetextae ac tunicae Lydorum opus sordidulum omne, [...]*. (“Bordened cloaks and underdress, all dirty mean workmanship of Lydians, [...]”)

33 *Num censes calliplocamon callisphyron ulla non licitum esse uterum atque etiam inguina tangere mammis, conpernem aut varam fuisse Amphitryonis acoetin Alcmenam atque alias, Helenam ipsam denique — nolo dicere: tute vide atque disyllabon elige quodvis — κορην eupatereiam aliquam rem insignem habuisse, verrucam, naevum, punctum, dentem eminulum unum?* (“Surely you don't believe that any woman with lovely curls and lovely ankles could not touch paunch and even groin with her breasts, and that Amphitryon's wife Alcmena could not have been knockkneed or bow-legged, and that other, even Helen herself, could not have been — I prefer not to say it; see to it yourself and choose any two-syllabled word you like — that a maiden begotten by a noble father could not have had a mark of note, a wart, a mole, a pock-mark, one little prominent tooth?”)

34 *Cum tecum est, quidvis satis est; visuri alieni sint homines, spiram, pallas, redimicula promit*. (“When she is with you, anything will do; should other men be coming to see her, she brings out her chin-ribbons, her mantles, her headbands.”)

35 “It is significant that in the whole of Roman satire no man is ever criticised for being false to his wife.” N. Rudd (1986: 205).

36 “L incarnates in his phallic brag that invariant and aggressive masculinity of bodily penetration which has been erected by modern scholars into the very condition of a normality in Roman culture. We are to know L as the epitome, that is, of the Male

A small but an interesting group represent the fragments criticizing **religion**, superstitions (524–9 W),<sup>37</sup> fears, or excessive reverence for pictures (746 W).<sup>38</sup>

The last — but not least — group is devoted to the author’s **self-criticism** (674, 929–30, 1077 W).<sup>39</sup> This is an important part of satires, a kind of author’s self-declaration and also one of the most often used types of humour in Roman satire.<sup>40</sup>

In his satires, Lucilius criticizes “common” things, qualities and people.<sup>41</sup> It is interesting that at the time when the Romans confront the Greeks as a higher culture and Rome becomes the most powerful state in the Mediterranean, Lucilius does not write about spectacular events but about “common” life. He indiscriminately criticises everything that he does not like, the criticism being deserved or not. He is an “ordinary” man who has also something to say in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

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— who rapes women, buggers boys, repels crones and pathetic adult males, and reviles all (else) in his cock-swagger.” J. Henderson (1999: 183).

37 *Terriculas, Lamias, Fauni quas Pompiliique instituere Numae, tremit has, hic omnia ponit. Ut pueri infantes credunt signa omnia aena vivere et esse homines, sic isti somnia ficta vera putant, credunt signis cor inesse in aenis. Pergula pictorum, veri nil, omnia ficta.* (“As for scarecrows and witches, which our Fauns and Numa Pompilius established — he trembles at them, and thinks them all-important. As baby children believe that all bronze statues are alive and are men, so these (superstitious grown-ups) think the fictions of dreams are real, and believe that bronze statues have a living heart inside. These things are a painters’ gallery, nothing real, alle make-believe.”)

38 *Quae pietas? Monogrammi quinque adducti; pietatem vocant!* (“What sort of kindness? Five sketches were brought in; and they call it kindness!”)

39 *Quidni? Et tu idem inlitteratum me atque idiotam diceres [...]* (“Why not? Besides, you again would say I was unlettered an a common fellow.”). *Amicos hodie cum inprobo illo audivimus Lucilio advocasse [...]* (“We have heard that he was invited some friends including that rascal Lucilius.”). *Omnes formonsi, fortes tibi, ego inprobis; esto [...]* (“In your view, all are well off in looks, well off in purse, but I am a villain. Granted.”).

40 “Not surprisingly, the mild variety, often in form of self-irony, is by far the most common in Roman satire, especially so in Horace...” M. Plaza (2006: 167).

41 I deliberately chose rather general fragments to be understandable to large audience. A lot of hints concerning the political situation and problems of that time occur in Lucilius’s work, but they are incomprehensible without a broader context. The fragment 650–651 W shows us e.g. that Lucilius refuses to be a tax collector in Asia – *publicanus*.