Gellérfi, Gergő

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Misogynistic musings: The Roman wives in Juvenal's *Satire 6*

Gergő Gellérfi
(University of Szeged)

Abstract

Expressions such as 'misogyny' and 'anti-feminist' appear again and again in papers dealing with Juvenal's almost 700-line-long *Satire* 6, where they are used not only to describe the text itself, but also its narrator and, in some cases, the poet himself. Accordingly, the misogynistic disposition of *Satire* 6 is a well-discussed feature of the poem. To (re)examine this question, I approach the text by focusing on the targets of the invective – that is, the women listed as deterrent examples for the addressee Postumus – and by comparing the Juvenalian narrator's attitude towards women to the treatment of homosexuals and foreigners in the *Satires* in order to prove that while *Satire* 6 has strong misogynistic features, the Juvenalian narrator cannot and should not be considered as a misogynistic character.

Keywords

Juvenal; satire; *Satire* 6; misogyny; misogamy; sexism

The concepts of misogyny and misogamy frequently occur in the research on Juvenal's longest, most well-known, and maybe most discussed satire. Scholars dealing with *Satire 6* repeatedly raise the question of whether the satire's narrator and his poetic speech is characterized by misogyny and/or misogamy?[1] The shift in the approach towards the text is well noticeable from the titles given to the poem by modern editors and scholars, which predominantly pointed at *women* as being the central subject of satire, but in more recent editions we also see references to *wives* and marriage.[2] In this paper, I deal with the problem of misogyny and/or misogamy, putting the poem into the context of the whole collection of satires based on my previous studies on Juvenal, especially on the so-to-say discriminative features of Juvenal's poems.

The almost 700-line-long poetic speech of *Satire 6* is addressed to a certain Postumus, who is preparing to marry, and can be summarized as follows: In our miserable times, it is impossible to find a chaste wife![3] An overabundance of various examples bolsters the argumentation of the extreme conservative narrator's dissuasion speech (or *logos apotreptikos*), but the strongest one precedes all of them in the prologue of the poem:[4] the virtue of *pudicitia* (the chastity) is irrevocably lost. This is expressed with an image which can be traced back to Hesiod: a deified concept, a goddess forsaking mankind for good.[5] The reference to the flight of this goddess, Pudicitia in an emphatic point of the poem renders *pudor*, or more precisely, the lack of *pudor*, as being the key motif of *Satire 6*.

The prologue is followed by presenting the dramaturgical frame of the satire: Postumus plans to marry, and the narrator tries to convince him that having a younger male lover or even committing suicide would be a better decision than tying the knot.[6] After briefly mentioning another groom-to-be, the narrator begins to present different female

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1 I am grateful to the anonymous reviewers of the first draft for their valuable comments which helped to improve the paper considerably.
The two most important texts on this question from the last decades are the articles of Braund (1992: pp. 71–86) and Watson (2008: pp. 269–296). For scholars dealing with the problem, see Braund (1992: p. 71, n. 1) and Watson (2008: p. 269, n. 1–3). On *Satire 6* in general, see the commentaries of Watson & Watson (2014) and Nadeau (2011).

2 Without aiming to be exhaustive: Mackail (1895): *Legend of Bad Women*; Davis (1913): *A Diatribe against the Women in Rome*; Ramsay (1928): *The Ways of Women*; Humphries (1958): *Against Women*; Rudd (1991): *Roman Wives*; Segura Ramos (1996): *Las mujeres romanas*; Kline (2001): *Don't Marry*.

3 As we can see e.g. in the rhetorical question raised at the first invocation of Postumus: *conuentum tamen et pactum et sponsalia nostra / tempestate paras iamque a tonsore magistro / pecteris et digito pignus fortasse dedisti? / certe sanus eras. uxorem, Postume, ducis?* "But you, in this age, prepare for a marriage, an agreement, a contract, already having your hair done by a master-barber, and maybe you already gave a pledge to her finger? You were sane-minded once. Postumus! Are you really taking a wife?" (Juv. 6.25–28).

4 On the prologue in detail see Gellérfi (2020a) and the papers cited there.

5 Juv. 6.19–20: *paulatim deinde ad superos Astraea recessit / hac comite, atque duae pariter fugere sorores.* "And after that, she [Pudicitia] slowly went back to the gods with Astraea, and the two sisters fled together."

6 Juv. 6.29–34: *dic qua Tisiphone, quibus exagitere colubris. / ferre potes dominam saluis tot restibus ullam, / cum pateant altae caligantesque fenestrae, / cum tibi uicinum se praebeat Aemilius pons? / aut si de multis nullus placet exitus, illud / nonne putas melius, quod tecum pusio dormit?* "Tell me, which Tisiphone drives you mad with her snakes? Could you endure a ruler lady with so much rope around, with those vertiginous windows open, with the Aemilian bridge in the nearby? Or if you don't like any of these different exits, wouldn't it be better to share your bed with a loverboy?"

characters as negative examples to the addressee of the satire. On the grounds of this extensive enumeration of guilty, sinful women, *Satire 6* was repeatedly interpreted as a kind of "Catalogue of Women", as if it were a Roman successor of the famous poem by Semonides of Amorgos, or the one attributed to Hesiod.[7] While it is true that this long elaboration of different female characters bears some similarities to the aforementioned catalogues, there are significant differences as well: the absence of repetitive elements, systematicness, and strict structure. The poem also diverts from the misogynistic poetry, since it passes in silence over the majority of typical subjects of the poems belonging to this literary tradition, as Braund thoroughly presents.[8]

Since the question of misogyny and misogamy should be approached through the "protagonists" of the satire, that is the women presented to Postumus in the narrator's argumentation, it is necessary to examine these characters. (60) The first ones are women who are involved in sexual affairs with the "stars" of their age: actors, musicians and so on – some of them are wives and they even give birth to illegitimate children. (82) The next character, Eppia went even further: although being a senator's wife, she fell in love with a gladiator, and left her family for Egypt. (114) She is followed by a woman of an even higher rank: Empress Messalina, who prostituted herself in a brothel. The next passage is also characterized by infidelity: (133) the rich wife, who can allow herself to be unfaithful because of the size of her dowry. She is followed by a (seemingly) innocent woman being sent away by her husband owing to her growing old. Then come three different so-to-say types who are not unfaithful (or at least we cannot say if they are): (149) the prodigal wife, (161) the arrogant wife, and (184) a much smaller problem – to quote Juvenal: "Some faults may be minor, yet too much for husbands to take"[9] – Grecomaniac wives who use Greek expressions during sexual encounters. Later, I will discuss the question of how these passages can be relevant in a satire on marital infidelity. From line 200, the narrator describes wives who rule every aspect of their husbands' life and the household, before leaving their consort for another. (231) They are followed by mothers-in-law who teach their daughters how to keep their affairs secret (and also help them to hide their liaisons), then – before presenting a quarrel between a faithful husband and an unfaithful wife from line 268 – we read about (246) wives who practice gladiatorial fights.

The enumeration then stops for a moment, giving its place to the 'second prologue' of the satire[10] that presents a positive example: the good-old-wives of the good-old-times. With a shocking contrast, this nostalgic turn to the past is followed by the most graphic section of the poem: (300) at first, we read about drunk wives having a lesbian orgy next to the altar of Pudicitia, and urinating on the goddess' statue, (314) then about the orgiastic rituals of Bona Dea ending in illicit sexual encounters with random men (or even a donkey). (349) A relatively poor wife then takes the stage who spends a lot of her limited wealth on various things, among others on presents for celebrated athletes (that

7 On authors interpreting the poem as a catalogue of women, see Braund (1992: p. 71, n. 1).

8 Braund (1992: pp. 72–73). For the animalistic analogies mentioned in her paper, see also Richlin (1984: pp. 70–71).

9 Juv. 6.183: *quaedam parua quidem, sed non toleranda maritis.*

10 See e.g. Anderson (1956: p. 74).

is a clear parallel with the first targets, the fans of contemporary "stars"). The longer of the Oxford Fragments that fits in this part of the poem (O1) also deals with the subject of unfaithful wives, (366) then we read about ones who commit adultery with eunuchs, (379) about some falling for musicians, (398) and about gossiping wives – and, of course, the first gossips mentioned are about adultery. Then comes another graphic scene: (413) a vicious wife leaves her guests for the bath in the night to be satisfied by the hands of a bath slave, before going back to the dinner and vomiting on the floor in her drunkenness. The dinner connects this passage to the next one (436) speaking about the intelligent wives who enter "the male preserve" – to quote Braund, who observes an indirect appearance of the topic of adultery here.[11]

Then the next passages refer directly to adultery: (457) the narrator warns Postumus about wives who make themselves beautiful only for their lovers, and not for their husbands, (474) then comes another vicious wife, who treats her slaves cruelly while preparing for a meeting with her lover, and does not even care about her husband. (511) This passage is followed by a much longer one dealing with superstitious women at least three of whom are connecting this section to the topic of adultery: one wants to be forgiven by a priest for having illicit sex during a holy period; a lover is promised to another wife by a diviner; yet another asks a seer about her relatives and her lover. (592) The penultimate subject of the satire is also related to adultery as in connection with the subject of abortifacients, the narrator mentions wives who give birth to illegitimate children. (610) The closing section tells about wives who gave and give charming potions and poison to their husbands, children, and other family members.

Watson criticizes one of Braund's arguments against the general misogynistic interpretation of *Satire 6* based on the latter passage. Braund highlights that Juvenal's narrator omits two specific female characters who could have been very easily attacked on moral levels, namely the witch and the prostitute, arguing that such women are (usually) not taken as wives, thus Postumus, the addressee of the *logos apotreptikos*, does not have to be dissuaded from them.[12] Watson however notes that this is only partially correct: while it is true that we do not see women like Horace's Canidia, Lucan's Erichtho, or Martial's *meretrices* among the examples presented to Postumus, Empress Messalina spends her nights working as a prostitute, and in the last section we read about wives who delve into practices that belong to the realm of witchcraft. This, however, does not weaken Braund's argumentation as these sections even strengthen the misogamic disposition of the poem, showing the wives of Rome – and even empresses – becoming (or at least behaving like) characters usually to be found at the edge of society.

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If we wanted to summarize the satire's subject in a few words, the most obvious answer would be the corruption of marriage. In order to find the poem's place in the context of the whole collection of satires, I would specify it a bit more: not simply the corruption

11 Braund (1992: p. 77).

12 Watson (2008: pp. 273–274), Braund (1992: p. 73).

of marriage, but of the Roman marriage as a crucial element of the idealized traditional Roman past. Regardless of which aspect of the decadence the narrator emphasizes, this idealized past is presented as being irrevocably lost, as we can see it from the flight of Pudicitia expressed in the prologue of this satire; from the Ninth Age of *Satire 13* that can be interpreted as a historical dead end being an age worse than the Age of Iron;[13] and also from the following cruel judgment in *Satire 1*: "Posterity will be unable to add anything to our morals, our offspring will do and desire the same; all depravity reached the peak."[14] All three texts present decay as a process: the spread of sins began after the deluge (see 1.81–86) and reached its peak "now" according to *Satire 1*; the decline of mankind began with the Silver Age, and reached its bottom "now" with the Ninth Age which is even worse than the Age of Iron; and the process that started with the flight of Pudicitia ends in the outright and irreversible corruption of marriage. This finality becomes manifest by the fact that despite marriage being a key element of this Roman past, the narrator argues not *for* but *against* marriage, since at this point (*nostra tempestate*, 25–26) the "true Roman marriage" is inconceivable.

The lamentation over the loss of this "true Romanness" motivates the repeated invocation of the 'good old times' in different contexts, generally in a sharp contrast with the decadence of contemporary society – as it is typical for the satirical and/or socio-critical literature to bring up the past as a positive example.[15] But the good old times are not necessarily *good* times in *Satire 6*: the circumstances presented in the peculiar Golden Age description of the prologue are far from ideal,[16] while the historical age he characterizes with high moral standards is the age of the Second Punic War. The Juvenalian narrator repeatedly finds the unblemished *Romanitas* and its accompanying morals and values among hard conditions, while prosperity leads to decadence[17] – and this process is closely intertwined with the defilement of traditional Roman religion.[18]

13 Juv. 13.28–30: *nona aetas agitur peioraque saecula ferri / temporibus, quorum sceleri non inuenit ipsa / nomen et a nullo posuit natura metallo.* "This is the Ninth Age, an era even worse than the Age of Iron. Nature herself could find no name for its wickedness, and there was no metal left to label it." On Juvenal's Ninth Age, see among others McGann (1968: pp. 508–514).

14 Juv. 1.147–149: *nil erit ulterius quod nostris moribus addat / posteritas, eadem facient cupientque minores, / omne in praecipiti uitium stetit.*

15 The idealized past itself is scarcely presented in the *Satires*, being almost exclusively characterized by its contemporary negative counterpoints. Cf. Gold (1998: p. 371) on the absence of the missing description of the perfect male body: "In his *Satires*, Juvenal seems constantly to be alluding to an ideal that is always missing but nonetheless present in the satirist's very obsession with its negative counterpoints."

16 Besides the more typical mythological Golden Age descriptions, Juvenal's Golden Age shows some connection with the "primitive age" of Lucretius, see Mason (1962: p. 41), Singleton (1972: p. 164), and Watson & Watson (2014: p. 79) among others.

17 For the latter, cf. e.g. Blake (2020: p. 21) in connection with the subject of marriage.

18 To mention just one example: in *Satire 11* concerning the relation of Rome and Jupiter, the narrator recalls memories of an age, when Jupiter's statues were made of clay and were not defiled (or violated) with gold. Juv. 11.114–116: *his monuit nos, / hanc rebus Latiis curam praestare solebat / fictilis et nullo uiolatus Iuppiter auro.* "Such was Jupiter's warning, such was the protection he offered Latium, when his clay statue was not defiled (or violated) with gold." The word *violatus* renders the golden decoration as a *sacrilegium*, a crime against the gods, while the mention of Jupiter's *bygone* protection underlines the loss of an element of the Roman past.

For the arch-conservative Juvenalian narrator, the corruption of Roman marriage is a key element of this process. According to this view, wedlock is the pedestal of society, and the base of this pedestal is marital fidelity. It is without any surprise that the main counterargument to Postumus' planned marriage is the prevalence of infidelity. Out of the 25 aforementioned sections of the dissuasion speech, infidelity appears directly in 17, and indirectly in other 3. In the context of marriage and marital infidelity, various other side topics appear and give opportunity for the invective. These subjects not only constantly strengthen the main argument of the satire (that is *DO NOT MARRY!*) but also represent other failures, crimes, and sins – that is to say the general characteristics of contemporary Rome – from the viewpoint of marriage and wives. *Satire 1* does so from the viewpoint of the poet looking for themes on the street, *Satire 3* does so from the viewpoint of a bitter old client, and *Satire 5* does so from the viewpoint of a humiliated dinner guest.

The other five sections of the enumeration also contain elements that contradict the role expected of a Roman wife or a Roman person generally by the speaker – the last of these, the poisoning wives do not even need an explanation. The prodigal wife buys a jewel with the connotation of incest that was a serious taboo in Rome, also belonging to a foreign culture with a foreign religion referred to in a sarcastic manner: "The barbarian Agrippa gave it as a gift to his incestuous sister, where barefoot kings celebrate the Sabbath holiday, and the ancient clemency lets the pigs grow old."[19] The arrogant wife is characterized by mentioning the story of Niobe, who lost all of her children through her own fault, thus becoming an archetype of wives who fail to fulfil their maternal duties. Wives who use Greek words during love-making are not only influenced by foreign cultures, but also invoke the concept of lust,[20] just as the following sentence in the description of wives who practice gladiatorial fights (and by doing so stepping out of their feminine role): "How could a helmeted woman be decent, who despises her very own sex? She loves to fight, but she wouldn't want to be a man, since we get so little pleasure!"[21] Thus the passage that at first glance describes a minor fault hides a much bigger sin (at least in the eyes of the speaker): their reason for preferring to be a woman is not their possible maternal role, but the greater level of pleasure experienced during sexual encounters. This is not only a strong indicator of their lust, but they also fall into the same category as a few others mentioned before: they neglect their traditional role in the society.[22]

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19 Juv. 6.157–160: *hunc dedit olim / barbarus incestae, dedit hunc Agrippa sorori, / obseruant ubi festa mero pede sabbata reges / et uetus indulget senibus clementia porcis.*

20 Juv. 6.191; 196–197: *concumbunt Graece.* [...] *quod enim non excitet inguen / uox blanda et nequam? digitos habet.* "They make love in Greek! [...] Whose loins wouldn't be warmed by a seductive and frivolous word like this? It caresses you."

21 Juv. 6.252–254: *quem praestare potest mulier galeata pudorem, / quae fugit a sexu? uires amat. haec tamen ipsa / uir nollet fieri; nam quantula nostra uoluptas.*

22 Other sections also refer to the dissolution of the traditional sexual and marital roles, see e.g. Johnson (1996: pp. 173–174) on lines 281–285: "she also means that their private and very un-Roman contract has dissolved the gender imparity that is inscribed in the traditional marriage, she means that he's no more of a male than she is, that she's as much of a male as he is..."

In his article titled *Juvenal 6: Misogyny or Misogamy?* Watson cuts the Gordian knot by presenting convincing arguments for this question being a false dilemma.[23] In my interpretation, it is without doubt that *Satire 6* can and should be understood as a misogamic poetic speech with a main argument as simple and clear as possible: "in our age, in our Rome, do not marry!". At the same time, it is also clear that *Satire 6* is not lacking misogynistic features – at least, depending on the definition, since, as with all forms of discrimination, misogyny can have varying definitions, and not all of them are applicable to the poetic speech of this satire. In her monograph titled *Down Girl*, Kate Manne labels the following 'standard' definition as a naïve conception: "misogyny is primarily a property of individual agents (typically, although not necessarily, men) who are prone to feel hatred, hostility, or other similar emotions toward any and every woman, or at least women generally, simply *because they are women*."[24] As we could see in the previous enumeration of the satire's targets, the invective against the women of *Satire 6* is not based on the fact that they are women, but it has a specific reason in every instance – of course, the issue of the narrator's reasons being warranted or his invective justified poses a separate set of questions. Manne, however, approaches the concept focusing on the social roles of women, stating that misogyny can originate in a "woman's perceived resistance to or violation of the norms and expectations that govern these social roles", later adding that misogyny does not need to "target women across the board; it may instead target women selectively – for example, those who are perceived as insubordinate, negligent, or out of order".[25] Similar definitions are expressed by other scholars; Berit Brogaard, for example, explains the concept as follows: "Misogyny involves hatred toward women or a type of woman for a particular reason. The reason is that the women the hatred is directed toward don't act in accordance with beliefs the misogynist has about how women should think and behave."[26] Based on the latter approaches, certain elements of the invective attacking women for neglecting the role expected from them by the society, or behaving as a Roman wife (or even a woman in general) must not behave according to the views shared by the narrator *are* misogynistic, but definitely not all of the narrator's arguments – for example, blaming wives for being cruel, committing adultery or even more serious crimes in the word's proper meaning (like poisoning their children) belongs to the realm of invective based on common moral sense without any misogynistic (or sexist) tone.

The question arises: do these utterances make the Juvenalian narrator a misogynistic speaker or even Juvenal a misogynistic poet? We can find some categorical opinions on this in the scholarship, for example, the one provided by R. P. Bond, stating that "Cato

23 Watson (2008).

24 Manne (2018: p. 32). For a similar definition, see Johnson (2000: p. 197): "Misogyny is a cultural attitude of hatred for females simply because they are female."

25 Manne (2018: pp. 49–50).

26 Brogaard (2015). Cf. also e.g. Smythe (2012): "Misogyny is a [...] personal and emotional prejudice, resulting in contempt, scorn and dismissiveness towards women who step outside the bounds sexism lays down as appropriate."

and Juvenal both belonged to the same misogynistic tradition",[27] while others are much more careful in this regard. Of course, it is fair to say that *Satire 6* itself is biased against women, but that does not mean that men do not get their share of reproach. To mention just two examples: in the description of the rich wife who can allow herself to be unfaithful because of the size of her dowry, the husband is equally corrupt, since – as the narrator emphasizes – he does not even care about the adultery committed by his wife, being interested only in her wealth; and after this passage Postumus is told about a husband who loves only the pretty face of his wife, sending her away when she starts to grow old.[28] The other passage follows the most sexually loaded scene of the satire, the one describing the orgiastic rituals of Bona Dea, potentially ending in animal sodomy. After this graphic scene, the narrator laments on the defilement of ritual traditions by men, referring directly to the scandal of Clodius Pulcher.[29] The narrator is also aware of the fact that it takes two to tango: he does not pass over the role of men in the widespread marital infidelity in silence. Words like *moechus* and *adulter* occur repeatedly in his speech; and, moreover, in the last words of the prologue when denoting adultery as being the oldest of all sins, Juvenal mentions seducing men instead of adulterous women,[30] which is a key argument against the satire's *purely* misogynistic reading, that is, only women are guilty in the corruption of Roman marriage according to the narrator.

Furthermore, even if the argumentation of *Satire 6* is biased against women, it is absolutely not true of the whole collection of satires. In the presentation of the crimes, culpable behaviour forms, social problems, and moral deficiencies of contemporary Rome, the satires display the members of both sexes in great number; however, males occur much more frequently as the targets of the Juvenalian invective. While their role is marginal in *Book Two* (that is in *Satire 6*), *Book One* focuses almost entirely on male sinners: in *Satires 2*, *3*, *4*, and *5* we can see hardly any reprehensible women, while in *Satire 1*, out of the 24 different targets of the main part of the poem, only three are women. Thus the first two books of the collection are in a balance from this aspect, while the latter ones concentrate predominantly on males.

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27 Bond (1979: p. 418), for his criticism see Richlin (2014: p. 64).

28 Juv. 6.136–137; 142–146: *'optima sed quare Caesennia teste marito?', / bis quingena dedit. tanti uocat ille pudicam* [...] / *'cur desiderio Bibulae Sertorius ardet?', / si uerum excutias, facies non uxor amatur. / tres rugae subeant et se cutis arida laxet, / fiant obscuri dentes oculique minores, / 'collige sarcinulas' dicet libertus 'et exi...'* "'Then why does her husband swear that Caesennia is the best?' She gave him ten thousand. That's the price of calling her chaste. [...] 'Why does Sertorius burn with love for Bibula?' If you beat the truth out of him – he doesn't love his wife, just her face. And when she'll have three wrinkles, her skin become lax and dry, her teeth darken, and her eyes shrink, a freedman will instruct her: 'Collect your stuff and leave!'"

29 Juv. 6.336–341; 345: *sed omnes / nouerunt Mauri atque Indi quae psaltria penem / maiorem quam sunt duo Caesaris Anticatones / illuc, testiculi sibi conscius unde fugit mus, / intulerit, ubi uelari pictura iubetur / quaecumque alterius sexus imitata figuras. /* [...] *sed nunc ad quas non Clodius aras?* "But every Indian and every Moor knows who was *that* lute-girl, who brought a penis longer than Caesar's two *Anticato*s together, into that place that even a mouse-guy avoids if he knows about his balls, where even the pictures have to be veiled if they portray a figure of the other sex. [...] But today which altar doesn't have a Clodius?"

30 Juv. 6.23–24: *omne aliud crimen mox ferrea protulit aetas: viderunt primos argentea saecula moechos.* "Every other crime was brought forth by the Age of Iron, but the Silver Age beheld the first adulterers."

At one point in *Book One*, in *Satire 2* Juvenal even introduces a female interlocutor named Laronia who attacks those men who leave behind their masculine role, also emphasizing that effeminate men commit things that women never would. She calls upon an unnamed man dealing with the infidelity of women: "...investigate men and not women first: they commit more sins, but they defend themselves in numbers behind their shields in the phalanx. What a great union of *molles*! You won't find an example so despicable in the members of our sex." She later points out that it is men and not women who take up roles of the other sex: "Do we ever plead cases? Do we study civil law? Do we ever disturb your courts with our turmoil?"[31] Laronia comes to the stage to attack these men for the very same reason, from which certain elements of the narratorial speech of *Satire 6* originate: men and women step out of the boundaries defined by their sex, at least in the eyes of the speaker.[32] Thus Laronia and the satirical narrator are two sides of the same coin, or more precisely two thorns of the same cactus, prickling everyone who does not fit into the sex roles of the nostalgically viewed and also oversimplified 'good old Roman society'.[33] Based on Manne's aforementioned definition, their arguments can be classified as being misogynistic – or misandric in the case of Laronia – but there is another modern concept (closely connected to misogyny), which defines them even more precisely, and that is sexism.[34]

The invective of *Satire 2* is aimed at men who take part in homosexual relations and take on feminine clothes or even roles, but the moral attack is not motivated by their sexual desires and habits themselves, but by the fact that they hide their true self, and also speak about morals or even reproaching promiscuous women in court, despite them being promiscuous themselves. Thus the key motif of this first half is hypocrisy, while in the second half we see similar topics to the ones appearing in *Satire 6*: the perversion of religious rituals, prominent Romans behaving inappropriately for someone in their position, the corruption of marriage,[35] and the export of decaying morals from Italy to other parts of the Empire – all of these accompanied with some elements that can be named as sexist, as was mentioned before. Thus we can draw a parallel between *Satires 2* and *6*, as the main subject (that is hypocrisy and marital infidelity) is accompanied with other recurring topics of the Juvenalian satires, and these invective elements are not

31 Juv. 2.44–48; 51–57: *respice primum / et scrutare uiros, faciunt nam plura; sed illos / defendit numerus iunctaeque umbone phalanges. / magna inter molles concordia. non erit ullum / exemplum in nostro tam detestabile sexu. /* [...] *numquid nos agimus causas, ciuilia iura / nouimus aut ullo strepitu fora uestra mouemus?*

32 The expectations towards a *vir* and a *matrona* in Rome are summarized by Blake (2020: pp. 17–20).

33 See also Johnson (1996: p. 172) on the Juvenalian narrator: "He longs (a reliable token of patriarchal *Unbehagen*) for the good old days, for a space-time long since vanished. He yearns for Rome when it was Rome still, when it was his Rome. He wants back into the world (that womb with a view) from which he was (he feels) ejected, a world where slaves were slaves and women were women and men were... men."

34 See e.g. the definition on the site of EIGE: "Sexism is linked to beliefs around the fundamental nature of women and men and the roles they should play in society." See also Manne (2018: pp. 79–80) on the difference between the sexism and misogyny: "sexist ideology will tend to discriminate *between* men and women, typically by alleging sex differences beyond what is known or could be known, and sometimes counter to our best current scientific evidence. Misogyny will typically differentiate between good women and *bad* ones, and punishes the latter."

35 See Gellérfi (2020b: pp. 95–98).

presented from a general viewpoint, but focus on a defined group of society: homosexuals and Roman wives.[36]

As we can see, homosexuals become the targets of Juvenalian invective from time to time, but it would be more than an overstatement to say that the narrator's judgment on the love-life of the Roman heterosexuals is flattering. Concerning women and men: without *Satire 6* surviving we could say that his poems *sometimes* target women, while keeping the biggest part of the reproach for men, but the longest of his poems balances the scale. The Juvenalian treatment of foreigners can be epitomized like this: while the satirical narrator repeatedly attacks foreigners, their role in the *Satires* is peripheral compared to the misconduct of Romans, and moreover, he repeatedly highlights the ill effect of Roman morals on the others.[37] And while it is true that some narratorial comments on these groups of people can be classified as xenophobic, homophobic, and misogynist, this fact in itself does not make these poems all-out attacks on foreigners, homosexuals, and women: the narrator uses the very same harsh, utterly satirical tone towards them as towards his other targets. In selecting his targets, the narrator is not discriminative at all: although he does not refrain from emphasizing the differences between certain groups of people (e.g. he refers to the skin-colour and other physical features of African people, to the differences between the male and the female body, or to the incongruence between Creticus' clothes and position), he attacks the crimes of men and women, heterosexuals and homosexuals, Romans and foreigners equally. He does not single out given groups as the main cause of decadence, having a negative opinion on the whole humanity he knows based on humankind's flaws, vices, and failures. Which is the definition of being a misanthrope.

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At the beginning of this paper, I mentioned that the modern titles given to *Satire 6* often focus on women instead of marriage or wives, e.g. *A Diatribe against the Women in Rome*. I would argue that a title like this misses the point. While it is true that this satire has misogynistic features based on sexist principles, the topic is dissuasion against marriage, not the crimes of women, or differentiating between *good* and *bad* women, and the satirical narrator is not biased against women in general, but speaks in the whole collection as a clear-cut misanthrope. If a title should be given to the poem, I would use a modified version of the title of an unpublished book from the 1930s: *Misogynistic Musings of a Misogamist Misanthrope*.[38]

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36 On *Satire 2* in general, see Nappa (1998) among others.

37 On the appearance of foreigners in the *Satires* see in detail Gellérfi (2019).

38 *Misanthropic Musings of a Misogamistic Misogynist* (1931).

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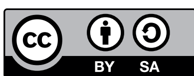
Dr Gergő Gellérfi PhD / gellerfigergo@gmail.com

Department of Classical Philology and Neo-Latin Studies
University of Szeged, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences
Egyetem u. 2, 6722 Szeged, Hungary



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