

## THREE CRUCES IN JUVENAL<sup>1</sup>

### 1. An Unlikely Change of Character? (5.141-5)

A. E. Housman has written that the context of Juvenal 5.140 is ‘the most obscure in Juvenal’ (xxxii). I am primarily concerned with the following five lines, but the entire passage (132-45), and its position in the poem, must also be examined.

Satire 5 depicts the sadistic dinner-party given by the wealthy Virro for a few rich friends and many poorer clients, including the addressee, Trebius. The bulk of the poem consists of a systematic comparison of the very different food, drink, and service offered, or in some cases not offered, to the two groups: these are conveniently listed by Braund (307-8). The description of the double meal is variegated by the speaker’s indignant interruptions, each one roughly twice as long as the one before: 76-9, 106-13, and 132-45.<sup>2</sup> The last of these, the longest and bitterest, is my topic. In it, the speaker addresses Trebius with some hypothetical remarks:

quadringenta tibi si quis deus aut similis dis  
 et melior fatis donaret homuncio, quantus  
 ex nihilo, quantus fieres Virronis amicus!  
 ‘da Trebio; pone ad Trebium. uis, frater, ab ipsis 135  
 ilibus?’ o nummi, uobis hunc praestat honorem,  
 uos estis frater. dominus tamen et domini rex  
 si uis tunc fieri, nullus tibi paruulus aula  
 luserit Aeneas nec filia dulcior illo.

---

<sup>1</sup> The texts I quote contain no novelties, but an independent selection of available choices, and my apparatus lists only variants pertinent to my argument. Editors and commentators consulted: G. A. Ruperti (Glasgow, 1825), C. F. Heinrich (Bonn, 1839), J. E. B. Mayor (London, 1877-78), A. Weidner (Leipzig, 1889<sup>2</sup>), L. Friedlaender (Leipzig, 1895), J. D. Duff (Cambridge, 1898), A. E. Housman (Cambridge, 1931<sup>2</sup>), U. Knoche (München, 1950), J. Ferguson (London, 1979), E. Courtney, *A Commentary on the Satires of Juvenal* (London, 1980), J. R. C. Martyn (Amsterdam, 1987), W. V. Clausen (Oxford, 1992<sup>2</sup>), S. M. Braund, *Juvenal, Satires I* (Cambridge, 1996), and J. A. Willis (Stuttgart and Leipzig, 1997). I also refer by surname to P. M. W. Tennant, “‘Uncle’ Virro and Trebius’ Offspring: The Relevance of Juvenal Satires 5, Lines 141-5”, *AC* 36 (1993) 83-9, which is essential reading for the first passage.

<sup>2</sup> Braund notes that the different courses ‘are dealt with more and more economically and elliptically as the poem accelerates to the crowning humiliation, that the humble clients never receive the main meat dish and are left still sitting there in hungry anticipation at the end of the poem’ (307). I would add that the increasing scale of the interruptions, which also appear at shorter intervals, reinforces the effect: as Trebius’ hopes for meat, for enjoyment, for anything at all, wither, the narrator’s sarcastic remarks take over.

[iucundum et carum sterilis facit uxor amicum.] 140  
 sed tua nunc Mycale pariat licet et pueros tres  
 in gremium patris fundat semel, ipse loquaci  
 gaudebit nido, uiridem thoraca iubebit  
 adferri minimasque nuces assemque rogatum,  
 ad mensam quotiens parasitus uenerit infans. 145

138 tunc PRFO : tu Φ : tum Housman 140 del. Jahn 141 tua ] sua Weidner

The structure of the argument is clear enough, at least through the disputed line 140. Trebius is both poor and childless. If he should ever become rich (132-137a), he would be invited to join Virro and the *reliqui Virrones*, to be treated as his verbal and culinary equal.<sup>3</sup> To judge from *domini rex* (137), he would even have some hope of surpassing Virro in power and influence and reversing the patron-client relationship. However, even then (*tunc*, 138), even if he were somehow to acquire the equestrian census (137b-140),<sup>4</sup> Trebius would still have to remain where he is, among the second-class guests, if he should cease to be childless.

So far, relatively plain sailing. Next come the difficult passage (141-5) that is my subject. Duff calls these lines ‘strikingly irrelevant’, Courtney, more cautiously, ‘not fully relevant’ (*ad* 137-45).<sup>5</sup> Ruperti, Heinrich, Friedlaender, and J. Adamietz (*Untersuchungen zu Juvenal* [Wiesbaden 1972], 111), among others, have argued that 141-5 are a continuation of 132-40 and describe the hypothetical rich Trebius, now courted by Virro through his children. However, after *tunc* in 138 meaning ‘if you become rich’, *nunc* in 141 must mean ‘as it is, as matters now stand’ (so Courtney).<sup>6</sup> The idea seems to be to add the fourth logical permutation of the two basic antitheses, rich : poor, and childless :

<sup>3</sup> The fact that the words and the food are mingled, that the friendly words are all concerned with the food, perfectly suits the theme of the satire.

<sup>4</sup> As a self-contained gnome, line 140 does not affect the structure, and may be deleted or not without affecting my argument.

<sup>5</sup> I suspect that Housman was thinking of them in particular when he called the context of 140 ‘obscure’, since the preceding lines are fairly straightforward.

<sup>6</sup> Duff and Tennant (85f) add other cogent objections, which I will not repeat here. Some editors (e.g. Knoche and Willis) prefer Φ’s *tu* to PRFO’s *tunc*, but the context (*dominus tamen et domini rex / si uis . . . fieri*) certainly describes the hypothetical rich Trebius, and it is difficult to read *nunc* in 141 as anything but a contrast, unless we allow worries about Virro’s motivation in 141-5 to distract us from the syntactical question. Housman prints *tunc* and recommends it over *tu* in the preface of his second edition (xlvi), but adds ‘except that the divergence points to *tum*’. Though it makes no difference to my

father. After it is established that Trebius is poor and childless, and two hypothetical cases are outlined, that he might become rich and remain childless (132-7a) or become rich and have children (137b-40), the only possibility left is that he remain poor and have children, and that is surely the situation that our lines (141-5) describe. One good reason to mention this, and to mention it last, is that it is by far the most likely change in his status, as well as the worst — indeed more more likely than not to occur, since he is already married, as *tua Mycale* (141) shows.<sup>7</sup> The four possibilities describe an arc, as it were, beginning with his current (fair-to-middling) situation, and continuing through three others, all hypothetical, one good, one middling, and one bad, described in that order, and each one not only worse but more likely than the one before.

The problem is to understand the apparent change in Virro's character. Why should he be so avuncular? It is no exaggeration to say that he otherwise shows not a single shred of human feeling in the entire poem. Like Crispinus in the previous satire, and in rather more detail, he is depicted as a *monstrum nulla uirtute redemptum / a uitiiis* (4.2-3).<sup>8</sup> Is Virro portrayed as genuinely and inconsistently kind to children, 'even at the cost of breaking the consistency of his character-sketch' (Highet)?<sup>9</sup> This is not only irrelevant, but disastrously detracts from the portrait of an unmitigated sadist. Is he mockingly kind to the children of one from whom he can get nothing (Braund)? This would preserve the consistency of his character, but difficulties abound. The scene is clearly Trebius' home, not Virro's: a party such as the one described in this satire, with thuggish waiters (*passim*) and pitched battles among the guests (26-9), is no place for children, and the language, particularly the description of the children as *loquaci . . . nido*, is more appropriate to their own cozy little home. We are told (76-9) that Virro and Trebius live a

---

argument, I wonder whether the pointed pairing with *nunc* might have inclined Juvenal to prefer *tunc* over the more euphonious *tum*.

<sup>7</sup> Of course, triplets are just about the least likely way for Trebius to fulfil the requirements of the *ius trium liberorum* and acquire enough heirs to cause even the greediest *captator* to lose hope. No doubt Juvenal chooses them because the suddenness of the financial catastrophe is so much more dramatic. If Trebius' heirs arrive one at a time in the usual way, it will only delay his arrival at the condition depicted in 141-5.

<sup>8</sup> Ferguson contends that the privileges of the *ius trium liberorum* would make Trebius a more attractive client. This is refuted in detail by Tennant (86 and note 11), whose arguments I will not repeat here.

long way apart: are we to believe that Virro would travel across town to give presents (sincerely or mockingly) to the children, when he will not even give the father a slice of chicken?<sup>10</sup>

The more one looks at the scene, the more difficult it is to believe that it includes both Virro and the children of Trebius, who would surely never have met. In fact, two nineteenth-century scholars have argued that one or the other of these has been misidentified. Weidner emends to *sua* . . . *Mycale*, making the lines describe Virro's relations with his own children rather than Trebius':

‘Der Klient wird nur geliebt, wenn seine Frau des Kindersegens entbehrt, dagegen bei seiner eigenen Frau (*sua Mycale*), bei der Frau des Patrons ist es etwas ganz anderes: da freut er sich des Kindersegens und weiß den zärtlichsten Vater zu spielen, da behalten Herz und Gemüt ihr Recht. . . . *Mycale* (Schnäuzchen?) ist jedenfalls eine komische Namensbildung für *uxor*.’

This is clever, if not very clearly explained,<sup>11</sup> and appears to remove the problem of Virro's motivation: even the beastliest patron might well love his own children. However, it also introduces several new problems. First, the use of *Mycale* as a general term for any wife — ‘his *Mycale*, not your *Mycale*’ — is unparalleled, and very odd. Second, the arrival of triplets, on which Juvenal lays so much stress, is now irrelevant. Why should Virro be any fonder (or less fond) of three children than of one? He is surely wealthy enough to make three children no more of a burden than one. Third, there is some difficulty in understanding the point of the last words of the passage (*parasitus* . . . *infans*). In the standard interpretation, Virro is training a second generation of Trebii as parasites. This is a nice touch — or rather an appropriately nasty one. However, if Virro treats his own children as parasites, that rather sours the charming scene, while also blunting the

<sup>9</sup> G. Highet, *Juvenal the Satirist: A Study* (Oxford, 1954), 145. Also: ‘If he would not even speak to the father, he certainly would not play with the children.’

<sup>10</sup> The anonymous referee suggests that the inconsistency may be intentional: ‘Of course, his visiting Trebius conflicts with how Trebius portrays him — but could there be a glimpse of the (dare I say it?) reality behind Trebius’ complaint here, that the patron actually does the bare minimum for a rather mercenary and unpleasant client, such as Trebius exposes himself to be, more and more, as the poem progresses?’ I find this intriguing, and would like to believe it — the characterization of Trebius is certainly sound —, but see no other evidence that Trebius underestimates the character of Virro.

contrast between his treatment of his family and his clients. For all these reasons, Weidner's interpretation must surely be rejected — as indeed it has been.

J. C. F. Manso also argues that the scene describes a father being kind to his own children rather than someone else's. However, he accomplishes this by making the opposite change, redefining the father as Trebius, dining at home with his wife and children:<sup>12</sup>

‘Aberraverunt a vera lectionis sanae et sincerae interpretatione Viri docti ad unum omnes, referentes *ipse* ad patronum Virronem, *nunc* ad repentinas versus 132 divitias, cum potius sub *ipse* intelligatur *pater* h. e. maritus Mycales idemque Virronis cliens, *nunc* autem ad praesentem pauperis clientis conditionem spectet, sensusque obvius et simplex hic sit: Noli sperare, poeta Trebium alloquitur, patronum tibi gratulaturum et munusculo aliquo laetitiam suam testaturum esse, si forte uxor tribus puerulis te uno partu beaverit. Pater Trebius his parvulis solus delectabitur, elegantiores vestes sumtibus suis conficiendas curabit, nuces, si blandientes ad mensam accesserint, iis ipse porrigere et numulos ad crepundia emenda e crumena sua praebere coactus erit. In his omnibus nil te juvabit Virronis liberalitas: nam (140) *Jucundum et carum sterilis facit uxor amicum.*’

Manso's interpretation is difficult, at best, since it requires us to make *ipse* in the apodosis refer back to *patris* in the protasis. This is just possible: ‘if *your* Mycale should give birth and pour three children into their *father's* lap, *he*’ — meaning the father, meaning you — ‘will rejoice in his chatty brood, etc.’ However, the shift from second person to third is very harsh, and it is more natural (grammatically, if not interpretatively) to understand *ipse* as referring to Virro.

Nevertheless, it seems to me that Manso's literary instincts are sounder than his grasp of the limits of Latin syntax, that his interpretation is entirely correct, and that the text should be emended to suit it. The only indication in the whole five-line passage that *ipse*

<sup>11</sup> He seems at first to be saying that *sua Mycale* is Trebius' wife, but his explanation goes on to make it clear that she must be Virro's.

<sup>12</sup> J. C. F. Manso, 1759-1826, *Vermischte Abhandlungen und Auflage* (Breslau, 1821), chapter X, ‘Observationes in D. Junii Juvenalis satiras’, 219-52, at 234. A. Serafini's interpretation (*Studio sulla Satira di Giovenale* [Florence, 1957], 199) is similar, though his words are slightly vague and he might plead narrative focalization: ‘Non so se con maggiore gentilezza si poteva esprimere, in si breve spazio, la gioia del padre per i bambini che gli rallegrano la casa con il loro lieto cinguetto: *ipse loquaci / gaudebit nido* (5, 142) . . . .’

is third person is the ending of the verbs in 143, *gaudebit* and *iubebit*, and a change of two letters will take care of that:

ipse loquaci  
**gaudebis** nido, uiridem thoraca **iubebis**  
 adferri, etc.

*Ipsa* (142) now refers not to an uncharacteristically (or mockingly) benevolent Virro but to Trebius himself as father of three, no longer invited out and reduced to playing the role of patron to his own children: since character runs in families, he will have three little parasites of his own to lord it over. That the unfortunate Trebius is voluntarily training the next generation of clients for Virro's children to mistreat is even more pathetic than if Virro were to do it himself. Finally, as Tennant (88f n 16) has established, the gifts are inexpensive but not mean (since they are just what a child will want) and perfectly suit a poverty-stricken but loving father.

Though double, the error posited would have been an easy one. Once either of the verbs in 143 had been corrupted, a scribe who realized that they were intended to match would have been as likely to correct the right one as the wrong one — perhaps more likely, given the abundance of third persons in the preceding context (*pariat, licet, fundat*) and the repeated use of *ipse* to refer to Virro (30, 37, 56, 86, 107, 114).<sup>13</sup>

## 2. Polishing a *Sententia* (8.121-6)

Advice for a prospective governor:

curandum in primis ne magna iniuria fiat  
 fortibus et miseris. tollas licet omne quod usquam est  
 auri atque argenti, scutum gladiumque relinques.  
 [et iaculum et galeam; spoliatis arma supersunt.]  
 quod modo proposui, non est sententia, uerum est; 125  
 credite me uobis folium recitare Sibyllae.

119-21 *del. Jachmann* 123-4 scutum-galeam *del. Hermann* 123 relinques  $\Phi$   
 : relinquis *PST* 124 *del. Lachmann, non interpretatur*  $\Sigma$  iaculum *P Vat.*  
 3286 : iacula  $\Phi$

<sup>13</sup> In this satire alone, the manuscripts confuse second and third person verbs in lines 10 (*possit* P<sup>1</sup>RFKZ : *pos(s)is* VU $\Phi$ ) and 134 (*fieres* ] *fieret* F). The second passage is the more pertinent, since it involves a change from second to third person and produces nonsense.

Despite the uncritical enthusiasm of G. A. Ruperti ('Sapiens consilium dignumque, quod animo sibi infigant tyranni'), this is a notoriously problematic passage. Housman (xxxiv, xxxviii-xxxix) considers 123b (*scutum gladiumque relinques*) and 124b (*spoliatis arma supersunt*) the least unlikely candidates for a pair of author variants in Juvenal, though he prefers to count the whole of 124 as interpolated in two stages:

'... here some editor has combined the alternatives [123b and its spurious alternative 124b] by forging a link of his own [124a], ... without seeing the consequence; not observing that *scutum* and *gladium*, at this addition, instantly forfeit their symbolic character, and that, whereas *scutum gladiumque* meant arms of all sorts, *scutum gladiumque et iaculum et galeam* means arms of four sorts.'

Although Courtney puts 124 first in his list of striking instances of Juvenalian verbosity (48),<sup>14</sup> he also lists it among passages 'where the presence of spurious matter has been suspected, but in my judgment wrongly'.<sup>15</sup>

'These lines admittedly are very tautologous. Yet on the one hand *relinques* 'you will not take as booty' correlates well with *tollas*; on the other *spoliatis arma supersunt* seems clearly to be the *sententia (lumina . . . praecipue in clausulis posita* Quintil. 8.5.2) referred to in 125. *Scutum gladiumque* symbolize offensive and defensive weapons as at Cic. *In Pis.* 73, *Pro Caec.* 62 and 64; the difficulty lies in *et iaculum et galeam*, another pair of offensive and defensive weapons, which in Housman's view would destroy the symbolism. Accordingly he and Clausen, following Lachmann, delete 124. I however am not certain that the symbolism necessarily is destroyed, though I agree that Juvenal should not have added the second pair; and in view of the way in which the rest of the passage is anchored in the context I incline to think the text sound.'

We may readily agree that Juvenal sometimes nods and that his particular weakness is verbosity rather than excessive concision. Still, doubts persist, since a poet who calls his

<sup>14</sup> 'One noteworthy case in which he goes on for too long is at 8.124.' The best Friedlaender can do in defence differs little from an attack: 'Nur der Reiz, den es für Juvenal hatte, das Vorausgehende in eine Sentenz zusammenzufassen, erklärt diese sonst unbegreifliche Tautologie.'

<sup>15</sup> E. Courtney, 'The Interpolations in Juvenal', *BICS* 22 (1975), 147-62, at 152-3, reproduced, with changes, in his commentary.

own words a *sententia*, in fact more than a *sententia*, ought to be properly sententious.<sup>16</sup> this is the worst possible place for diffuseness and redundancy.

In default of convincing evidence for a double recension, the evident tautology in our passage has inevitably led some to propose deletions. Lachmann, as we have seen, deletes line 124, while Hermann excises the two half-lines 123b and 124a (*scutum . . . galeam*).<sup>17</sup> Hermann's proposal is arguably neater, in that it removes all of one alternative and none of the other, while it is a small point in favour of Lachmann's that the scholia do not comment on 124.<sup>18</sup> However, neither deletion solves the principal problem, which is that neither 123b nor 124b can easily be spared, and we cannot get rid of 124a without taking one or the other along.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, it is not at all easy to decide which to keep and which to discard: Courtney's conclusion that both are 'excellent in themselves' seems just.<sup>20</sup> In fact, there are two separate problems in these lines, which must be attacked separately and with different methods.<sup>21</sup> The first is the

<sup>16</sup> I use 'sententious' here in the ancient or etymological sense, not the modern pejorative sense. The change in meaning from Seneca to Polonius is very nearly 180°.

<sup>17</sup> T. Högg, *Interpolationen bei Juvenal?* (dissertation, Freiburg i. Br., 1971), 160-3, provides the fullest discussion of the possibilities for deletion, listing them, in decreasing order of likelihood, as follows: (1) Pasquali and Griffith delete only 124a, keeping both 123b and 124b as author variants. Housman considers this possible but not likely. (2) Lachmann, followed by Jahn, Housman, and Clausen, deletes 124. However, it is a pity to part with *spoliatis aera supersunt* (though I will part with one third of it). (3) Hermann, followed by Vianello, Jachmann, and Knoche, deletes 123b-124a (all four of the listed weapons) as an 'explikative Binneninterpolation'. This is the neatest solution in that it removes all of one alternative and none of the other, but it is again a pity to part with *scutum gladiumque relinques*. A fourth option, which Högg relegates to a footnote (160 n. 4), is Leo's proposal to delete two whole lines (122b-124a), leaving only *curandum in primis ne magna iniuria fiat / fortibus et miseris: spoliatis arma supersunt*: no one seems to have followed him. Besides Friedlaender and Courtney, those who accept the redundancy, however reluctantly, include Duff, Labriolle-Villeneuve, Martyn, and Ferguson, to look no further.

<sup>18</sup> In 'The Transmission of Juvenal's Text', *BICS* 14 (1967), 38-50, at 41-42, Courtney argues that the silence of the scholia proves little or nothing in any passage.

<sup>19</sup> If this were prose, the problem would be simpler (or appear so) but in verse we are only permitted to delete entire lines or multiples of lines, though any deletion may of course begin in mid-line, like Hermann's of 123b-124a. Even in the *Aeneid* and Seneca's tragedies, which provide the only exceptions to this rule, otiose line-endings may be deleted, but not line-beginnings.

<sup>20</sup> This is one of the additions to the discussion of 8.121-4 in his commentary.

<sup>21</sup> While granting that the presence of two problems in one passage is a sign that they are likely to be connected, this is not inevitable, and it seems to me that in this case they are quite separate and have different solutions.

alleged weakness or ineptitude of 124a, the second the tautology of 123b (with or without 124a) and 124b.

Taking the first problem first, I do not see that 124a (*et iaculum et galeam*) is as inept as Housman alleges — Courtney, as we have seen, hedges. Granted that ‘sword and shield’ is good rhetorical shorthand for ‘weapons offensive and defensive’, that does not mean that longer, more specific and less symbolic, lists are impermissible. On the contrary, it seems to me that the weapons listed in 123b-24a are not purely symbolic,<sup>22</sup> and that the length of Juvenal’s list is itself a warning and a reminder that the provincials can, if pressed, field relatively well-equipped forces.<sup>23</sup> Housman treats Juvenal’s list as a miscellaneous assortment of weapons (‘arms of four sorts’), but it is in fact a fairly complete list, which is found elsewhere. Two well-known instances should suffice. In the *Odyssey*, Telemachos (22.99-115) and Melanthios (22.126-46) bring helmets, shields, and spears from the storeroom to their respective allies: the suitors and Telemachos are already equipped with swords,<sup>24</sup> while Odysseus, as a pseudo-beggar, and his other two companions, as slaves, do not have them to start with and do not need them, since the odds are not suitable for fighting at close quarters and they have Odysseus’ bow and the spears from the storeroom. It seems clear that breastplates and greaves, though essential for a proper Iliadic duel, are secondary and can be omitted in less formal circumstances. Similarly, in Livy 1.43, Servius Tullius, in his organization of the Roman army, arms the third class of soldiers with *galea*, *scutum*, *hasta*, and *gladius*: this list is essentially the same as Juvenal’s, since there is little difference between *iaculum* and *hasta*.<sup>25</sup> I do not mean to suggest that Juvenal was thinking of Homer or Livy, rather to show that his list is not a random assortment of weapons, but the complete equipment of a class of soldiers which would have been quite useful in battle, particularly irregular or guerrilla combat,

<sup>22</sup> The weapons named are nearly always symbolic in contemporary English usage, as in operations Desert Shield and Desert Scimitar, but that is because the weapons are now obsolete.

<sup>23</sup> Courtney notes that the Romans did not disarm conquered provincials.

<sup>24</sup> In 22.69-98, Eurymachos and Amphinomos draw their swords to rush Odysseus, calling on the other suitors to follow, and in 22.310-29 Odysseus uses the dead Agelaos’ sword to kill Leiodes. Telemachos has both sword and spear at 21.431-34, and his sword is also mentioned at 21.117-18.

<sup>25</sup> The second class also has *ocreae*, the first both *ocreae* and *lorica*, with *clipeus* instead of *scutum*.

even if not so well-armed as legionary regulars.<sup>26</sup> Consequently, I think that both *scutum gladiumque relinques / et iaculum et galeam* (all of 123b-124a) and *spoliatis arma supersunt* (124b) are ‘excellent in themselves’: the only real difficulty is that they are deplorably tautologous as juxtaposed.<sup>27</sup>

For this second problem, it seems to me that conjectural emendation is required and that what underlies our passage is a bitter conceit on the relative value of different metals in different circumstances. After the mention of gold and silver, in that order, we might expect some baser metal: what we are given is a list of weapons which would indeed have been made of either iron or bronze. I suggest then that we emend *arma* in 124 to make the point explicit: ‘take away all of their gold and silver, you will leave them shield and sword and spear and helmet — the plundered will still have their *bronze*’: *spoliatis aera supersunt*.

As I see it, the wit of the passage is rather complex (though some may object that I have introduced the complexities myself). These *aera* are not only ‘weapons’ (*OLD* s.v. 6.b) but ‘bronzes’ in the English sense, that is, bronze art-works (*OLD* s.v. 7), as if the oppressed provincials have merely been sunk into the lower-middle class. The train of thought proceeds from the (gold and silver) treasures they have lost, through the list of weapons they have kept, to a word (*aera*) which refers ambiguously to both wealth and weapons: the weapons they still possess and the less precious treasures which the Romans have not bothered to take. There is not necessarily any clear distinction between weapons and wealth in this context, at least if we picture the despoiled provincials taking the family heirlooms down from the wall (or out of the storeroom) and using them as weapons again, like Odysseus and Telemachus in the *Odyssey*. This point can be put more generally: the word-play I have proposed works in Latin because there is much less

<sup>26</sup> A. M. Kurfess, ‘Juvenal und die Sibylle’, *HJ* 76 (1956), 79-83, quotes a similar list from the Sibylline Oracles, πέλτας καὶ θυρεοῦς κόρυθαὶς παμποίκιλά θ’ ὅπλα, / πολλὴν καὶ τόξων πληθὺν βελέων ὀδίκων τε (3.729-30). It is intriguing to see a Sibyl connected with a list of weapons not unlike Juvenal’s, but the lists are not identical (Juvenal’s provincials are bowless) and the resemblance would be more significant if Juvenal’s list did not have even closer parallels in Homer and Livy. With or without τόξα, Juvenal and the oracle simply list the four or five most important ancient weapons, ‘weapons of four sorts’, παμποίκιλα ὅπλα, as Housman and the oracle put it.

<sup>27</sup> As M. Coffey puts it, ‘to propose a deletion is sometimes to evade the difficulty’ (‘Juvenal Report for the Years 1941-1961’, *Lustrum* 8 [1963] 161-215, at 179).

difference between the meanings ‘weapons’ and ‘wealth’ in Juvenal’s world than in ours. Few of our contemporaries, at least in the developed world, have any significant proportion of their capital tied up in weaponry, and weapons old enough to have any value as works of art today are too old to be much use at all in warfare.<sup>28</sup>

Although poetic weapons are often made of bronze, and sometimes referred to simply as *aera*,<sup>29</sup> iron might seem more appropriate in this contemporary context.<sup>30</sup> I think that Juvenal’s weapons are made of bronze rather than iron for a combination of reasons: because they are the makeshift arms of revolting civilians rather than standard-issue Roman military ordnance,<sup>31</sup> because iron weapons, if more useful in war, would be less valuable than bronze,<sup>32</sup> because bronze comes third in the standard Hesiodic list of metals, but most of all for the sake of the word-play, as outlined above.<sup>33</sup> If Juvenal wrote *aera*, then *arma* is either an intrusive gloss or an unconscious banalization: it comes to nearly the same thing here.<sup>34</sup>

<sup>28</sup> The referee argues that taking *aera* as ‘bronzes’ unnecessarily complicates my argument, and Dr. Heyworth prefers the sense ‘small change’. They may well be right, and I should probably have deleted most of the preceding paragraph, but will let it stand, since I am not yet persuaded and readers may prefer to decide for themselves.

<sup>29</sup> Most of the passages collected in *TLL* 1037.73-82 where forms of *aes* are used in the sense ‘arma’ are either singular (*aes*), or complex (e.g. Silius’ *cassidis aera*, 1.401), or both, but Vergil provides two exceptions: *ardentis clipeos atque aera micantia cerno* (*A.* 2.734), *atra . . . late / horrescit strictis seges ensibus, aeraque fulgent / sole lacessita et lucem sub nubila iactant* (*A.* 7.525-7). Of course, the first might be set aside as hendiadys, the second as referring primarily to the metal rather than the weapons made from it, but the two will provide at least partial parallels for my conjecture.

<sup>30</sup> Pliny treats iron as the standard metal for weapons and other practical uses (*N.H.* 34.138-9).

<sup>31</sup> Tibullus seems to attribute bronze weapons to barbarian armies in a contemporary context: *at nobis aerata, Lares, depellite telis* (1.10.25). However, it is hard to be certain, since a lacuna has swallowed up the following pentameter and hexameter.

<sup>32</sup> And far less appropriate as ‘small change’, if we accept the interpretation outlined in note 28.

<sup>33</sup> J. A. Willis (*per litteras*) adds that *aera* would introduce a nice mock-epic touch: ‘to use “bronze” to mean weapons would be one of Juvenal’s little tongue-in-cheek epic allusions’. I am grateful to Prof. Willis for his encouragement and advice.

<sup>34</sup> Presumably the latter, if the scribe was thinking of Ovid, *A. A.* 3.1-2, where the words occur in the same *sedes*: *Arma dedi Danais in Amazonas; arma supersunt, / quae tibi dem et turmae, Penthesilea, tuae*. I do not think the resemblance is striking enough to prove that Juvenal is imitating Ovid: those who do may count this as a decisive point in favour of the *paradosis*. There is also some resemblance in thought to Lucan’s *arma tenenti / omnia dat, qui iusta negat* (1.348-49), but again I do not think that it is close enough for Lucan’s *arma* to guarantee the word in Juvenal.

There are parallels in Juvenal for the kind of complex or riddling *sententia* I have proposed. The first is 10.112-13:

ad generum Cereris sine caede ac uulnere pauci  
descendunt reges et sicca morte tyranni.

Just as *spoliatis aera supersunt* in 8.124 would be intolerably obscure without the preceding list of weapons,<sup>35</sup> so *sicca morte* in 10.113 would be quite unintelligible without the preceding *sine caede ac uulnere*. More than one kind of death might be described as ‘wet’, and stabbing is not necessarily the most likely to come to mind: tyrants are no more likely than other people to be lost at sea or drown in the bath or drink themselves to death, all of which would be just as ‘wet’, in their various ways, as stabbing. Another example of this kind of *sententia*, a backwards riddle with the answer given first, is 1.69-72:

occurrit matrona potens, quae molle Calenum  
porrectura uiro miscet sitiante rubeta 70  
instituitque rudes melior Lucusta propinquas  
per famam et populum nigros efferre maritos.

70 rubeta *PRV sicut coni. Plathner* : rubetam  $\Phi$

The last three words would again be very obscure, suggesting miscegenation rather than murder, without the previous mention of the thirsty toad<sup>36</sup> and the explicit naming of Lucusta. In each case, the preceding, rather discursive, explanation allows Juvenal to end with a very compact and, in context, quite clear *sententia*.<sup>37</sup> Finally, if *spoliatis aera supersunt* in 8.124 still seems difficult or obscure, note that Juvenal calls his own words Sibylline as well as sententious.

### 3. Worried Bystanders (10.81-8)

Snatches of conversation from the spectators at the fall of Sejanus:

<sup>35</sup> That is why I reject Hermann’s deletion of 123b-124a. Although it interrupts the list of metals, the list of weapons in 123b-124a is still necessary to clarify the train of thought.

<sup>36</sup> For *rubeta* in 70, cf. J. G. Griffith, ‘*Frustula Iuvenaliana*’, *CQ* n.s. 19 (1969), 379-87.

<sup>37</sup> I assume (with Courtney, quoted above) that the *sententia* consists primarily of the last three words, though one of my three is different. Of course, Juvenal actually says that his words are not a *sententia*

‘perituros audio multos.’  
 ‘nil dubium: magna est fornacula.’ ‘pallidulus mi  
 Bruttidius meus ad Martis fuit obuius aram;  
 quam timeo, uictus ne poenas exigat Ajax  
 ut male defensus. curramus praecipites et, 85  
 dum iacet in ripa, calcemus Caesaris hostem.  
 sed uideant serui, ne quis neget et pavidum in ius  
 ceruice obstricta dominum trahat.’

84 quam ] non *Nisbet* | timeo uictis, ne *Weidner*

85 ut ] aut *FZ* | et ] et sic *F* sic *Z* ut *recc.*

There is a long scholarly controversy as to whether *Ajax* in 84 is meant to represent Tiberius or Sejanus. Although Housman, Griffith, and Nisbet,<sup>38</sup> among others, have argued for Sejanus, Courtney must be right in dismissing this as ‘frigid’, since Sejanus was in no position to take vengeance on anyone once his body was available for trampling (86).<sup>39</sup> However, as Courtney admits, that still leaves us with two problems:

‘Difficulty however remains; *male defensus* has no application to Ajax . . . and hardly seems to suit Tiberius either unless we suppose that he attempted to shift the blame for his incautious trust in Sejanus to others. *Victus* too is quite unsuitable to Tiberius, and is not improved by the emendations suggested.’

The second problem seems relatively minor. The participle is needed not to describe Tiberius — a task for which it is indeed ill-suited — but to specify that the comparison is to the Sophoclean Ἀἴας Μοστυγοφόρος rather than to any of the many other myths in-

---

but the simple truth. However, like Courtney, I cannot help taking them as a kind of super-sententia, with all of the characteristics of the breed except rhetorical exaggeration.

<sup>38</sup> A. E. Housman, review of H. L. Wilson’s edition, *CR* 17 (1903), 465-8, = *Classical Papers* 2.611-16; J. G. Griffith, ‘A Matter of an Adverb in Juvenal’, *Festinat Senex: Essays in Greek and Latin Literature and Archaeology* (Oxford, 1988), 78-80; R. G. M. Nisbet, ‘Notes on the Text and Interpretation of Juvenal’, *BICS Supplement* 51 (1988), 86-110, reprinted in *Collected Papers on Latin Literature* (Oxford 1995), 227-60.

<sup>39</sup> The problem is that the participles do not fit the main sentence: Tiberius is the one taking vengeance, but neither *uictus* nor *male defensus*, while Sejanus, *uictus* and therefore necessarily *male defensus*, was taking vengeance on no one. (I pass over Madvig’s interpretation, which Courtney rightly dismisses as ‘incredibly frigid’. He attributes the Sejanus interpretation to Hertzberg, not available to me, and rejects it as ‘equally frigid’, which seems a little harsh.)

volving Ajax: it is not that Tiberius is *uictus*, *ut Ajax* but that he is *ut uictus Ajax*.<sup>40</sup> Both are brutal murderers, half-insane (Tiberius) or entirely so (Ajax).<sup>41</sup>

*Vt male defensus* is more recalcitrant, and must be emended. As always, we should begin from the sense, and ask why Juvenal introduces this particular myth: what is the *tertium comparationis*? It seems to me that the point is not so much the resemblance between Tiberius and Ajax as that between Juvenal's worried bystanders and the often-neglected third party in the Ajax myth, the innocent cows and sheep tortured to death in his tent. The speaker fears that his own fate will be similar.<sup>42</sup> What Juvenal wrote was surely *a male defensus*: 'how I fear that defeated (= mad) Ajax may take his vengeance *on the defenceless*'.<sup>43</sup> This conjecture particularly suits the imagery of stampeding and trampling that follows: *curramus praecipites et, / dum iacet in ripa, calcemus Caesaris hostem*.<sup>44</sup>

The error posited would have been easy enough, and the variants are more interesting than they may appear. The recentiores' *ut* at the end of 85 makes as much sense as *et*, and a marginal correction might easily have been misplaced, with *ut* replacing *a*, the only other monosyllable in the line. If *ut* were then corrected with a marginal *a*, a scribe might well have prefixed the *a* to *ut* instead of replacing it, thus producing FV's *aut*. Finally,

<sup>40</sup> On the other hand, the referee argues that *uictus* is not the *mot juste*, and so may well be corrupt, unless it refers to some lost play on the theme.

<sup>41</sup> Juvenal refers to the madness of Ajax in the next book: *hic boue percusso mugire Agamemnona credit / aut Ithacum* (14.286f).

<sup>42</sup> Ruperti puts it well: 'Praeclara comparatio Tiberii, qui post interitum Sejani, immanis belluae hominisque furibundi instar, in omne civium genus crudelissime saeviit, (v. Suet. Tib. c. 61. et 62.) cum Ajace furente. Forte etiam satiricus poeta respexit tum stultam ignaviam, tum innocentiam Romanorum, quos insectatus est tyrannus, tamquam *pecora* essent, non homines.' When we think of the fate of Sejanus' young daughter, raped and then strangled by the executioner because execution of virgins was *inauditum* (Tac. *Ann.* 5.9), we see that the Sophoclean parallel is quite inadequate to express the horrors of Tiberian Rome.

<sup>43</sup> *Male defensus* has much the same meaning, with the participle more or less equivalent to a present passive, in Lucan 6.176-8: *caput obterit ossaque saxo / ac male defensum fragili conpage cerebrum / dissipat*. *A/ab* is the usual preposition with *exigere poenas* and similar phrases, though the *OLD*'s examples (s.v. *exigo* 8.a-c) are all from prose.

<sup>44</sup> It is possible that *ripa* also contributes to the metaphor, if we think of a herd of thirsty cows or sheep crowding the banks of a river.

*defensis* could have become *defensus* by assimilation to the case of the preceding noun or the ending of the following verb.<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> The ablative would not necessarily have been safeguarded by *a*, which would make some sense as an exclamation: *a! male defensus*. As so often before, I am grateful to Dr. Heyworth and the anonymous referee for their extremely helpful questions and objections, which were not confined to the notes in which they are named.