

Roman satire is particularly concerned with adjudicating social behavior, and among the most favored targets of satiric focus is the stabilizing system of friendship between elite and lower class individuals—known as patronage or *clientela*. The amorphous nature of the duties involved, which range from moral to financial support, from political assistance to visible participation in a patron's entourage, proved a problematic subject even for the ancients who had first-hand experience of these relationships. Of particular delicacy is the issue of motive in these reciprocal, but inherently unequal friendships. One facet of this anxiety is expressed through discussions of *captatio*, or legacy-hunting.

The most common term for this practice derives from its first occurrence in satire—Horace *Serm.* 2.5—in which Tiresias advises Odysseus to hunt legacies and follow in the footsteps of a *captator* like Nasica (57) in order to recover his devastated fortune. *Captatio* (a metaphor from hunting and fishing) is a behavior easy to condemn in writing, but difficult to identify in actual practice, for while it is motivated by self interest rather than genuine feelings of affection, it presents all the outward indications of traditional and socially acceptable *amicitia*. In fact, the only difference between a true friend and a captator is motive, which may be a source of speculation by others, but cannot truly be known.

My paper draws on three main texts: Horace *Serm.* 2.5, the Croton episode from Petronius' *Satyrica*, and Juvenal 12 to examine the *literary* meaning of *captatio*. The ubiquitous references to literature, both to specific works (the *Odyssey*, the tragedies of Iphigenia, the *Aeneid*), and to genres (epic, lyric, tragedy, comedy, mime), suggest that captation in satire is a means of confronting the problem presented by the author's utilization of his literary "inheritance." Satire uses the economic exchange implicit in legacy hunting as a literary device for exploring its status as a genre that is founded on making use of predecessors and other texts.

From Horace's adoption of a Homeric scene to Juvenal's manipulation of the epic storm, these texts can be read as comments on the development of literature out of previous forms, and an evolution of attitudes toward it. In Horace, the poetic project, like captation, consists of a utilitarian "snaring" of valuable epic material, and putting it to use in a new context—satire—use which may undermine some features of the model, but is acceptable and natural. In Petronius, the fodder for satire is material that is no longer vibrant, having fallen into popular obsolescence or worse, misunderstanding and resentment. The literature of the past in the *Satyrica* is consistently mislearned, misquoted, or ill-adapted, and it is reasonable to see in this a hint of the difficulties that faced the Neronian author. In the case of Juvenal, whose programmatic first *Satire* claims his goal is not to suppress "bad" poetry, but to participate in the poetic fray himself, the image of captation is especially grim. The portrayal of captation in *Satire* 12 suggests that the selection of appropriate material is fraught, and that the use of literary legacies is not just predatory, but may cause the total subversion, if not annihilation, of the model.