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Simus inter Exempla:

Exempla and Innovation in Valerius Maximus, Seneca and Juvenal

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Introduction

Rhetorical devices pervade much of ancient literature and often add interest to the text. Exempla, vivid stories recounting laudable or shameful actions performed by known individuals, were one device used traditionally throughout the Greek and Roman worlds to promote proper behavior and discourage improper actions. The vibrancy and potential novelty of exemplary stories ensured them a place in the Roman rhetorical tradition; historians such as Livy and Tacitus note that the recording of exempla is one of the primary purposes of writing history. Here, I will address how three Roman Imperial authors writing in different genres employed and deviated from the exemplary tradition.

During the reign of Tiberius (ca. 30 CE), Valerius Maximus published his compendium of *Memorable Deeds and Words* (*Facta et Dicta Memorabilia*), which includes a multitude of stories divided into nine books covering various virtues or vices. Little else is known of his life beside information gleaned from the text. In contrast, Lucius Annaeus Seneca is a well-known historical figure, both for his literary output and his position as Nero's advisor (and subsequent suicide in 65 CE). He published a number of philosophical works, including *On Anger* (*De Ira*) and *On Mercy* (*De Clementia*), tragedies and a collection of 124 letters to Lucilius, a slightly younger member of the Roman elite (*Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*). In many of these works, the influence of Seneca's Stoic philosophy is prevalent. The verse satirist Juvenal is more obscure historically, though his fifteen complete satires and unfinished sixteenth have been mined for biographical details of questionable veracity. He published his poems (Satires 1-5 in Book 1, Satire 6 in Book 2, Satires 7-9 in Book 3, Satires 10-12 in Book 4, and Satires 13-16 in Book 5) between 115 and 130 CE.

Valerius Maximus presents exempla in the expected context of Roman literature: he imagines his stories appearing as evidence or analogies in rhetorical speeches. Thus, his work is almost inseparable from its rhetorical function, although remarkable for its size – 967 stories. In contrast, Seneca and Juvenal deliberately endeavor to innovate within the framework of exemplary discourse by not only including exempla in their works but also theorizing about their function to enlarge their purview. Seneca tends to consider more private, personal events, whereas Juvenal emphasizes the publicity, shock-value, and humor possible with detailed accounts of everyday vice parading through Rome. Valerius Maximus may allude to some of the theories of vice and exempla that Juvenal and Seneca expand upon, but his major focus is clearly on documenting the exempla themselves, most of which originate in other sources. He intends his organized collection for the orator and the student of rhetoric, while Juvenal and Seneca are clearly not satisfied to use exempla in the predictable way Valerius recommended, but want to deploy them for their own purposes. Thus, it is interesting to study how the philosopher and the satirist approach exempla differently from the practical exemplary historian.

Like many ancient authors, both later writers try to do something original within the context of an established genre: Seneca in philosophy and Juvenal in satire. In alignment with his Stoic beliefs and his noted focus on the internal self (cf. Bartsch), Seneca uses exempla in part to establish a moral code that does not deal with legal courts or public office, but rather with daily life. In his *Epistulae Morales ad Lucilium*, especially, there is a focus on personalized (i.e. Lucilius') education, and through that an investigation of how moral education should work (Schafer 32). For Juvenal, in contrast, the theorizing helps to justify his never-ending list of negative exempla and provides comic moments, albeit sometimes ones with disturbing overtones. When he shares negative exempla, Juvenal appears superficially to be part of the

exemplary tradition; upon closer inspection, however, his sensational stories do not seem designed for moral instruction. Furthermore, using various techniques, Juvenal and Seneca define exempla more elaborately and deliberately; this allows them to emphasize the changes they are making to (or, for Juvenal, the liberties he is taking with) the literary convention. Finally, although it seems that exempla are traditional by definition, new exempla must also be created at certain points. The tendency of Seneca and Juvenal to use new, rather than old, exempla shows that they are consciously working to expand and continue the tradition of exempla in unique ways.

Chapter 1: *Melius personis quam verbis*: Theories of Vice and Exempla

Overview

Although exempla are a common device of Roman rhetoric, generally no time is made for discussing the theoretical effect of such stories on the audience; the effect is implicitly understood. Most simply, positive exempla should incite similar behavior, while negative should warn people away from similar actions. Yet negative exempla appear much less frequently in authors like Valerius Maximus and Seneca, despite the Cynic and Stoic perspective that the easiest method to encourage virtue is to prevent vice (Mendell 141). Valerius Maximus devotes a whole book of his catalog of *Memorable Deeds and Words* to negative characteristics such as luxury, cruelty, or outrageous behavior, but this is still a small part of his whole work (approximately 13% of his 967 stories). Similarly, Seneca includes references to several negative exempla throughout his works, but much less frequently than positive references, such as to Cato. The satirist Juvenal, however, exceeds both in providing multitudes of outrageous or shocking exempla in his Satires.

Despite finding some similarities in how these authors compose exempla, it is also evident that their works hold different purposes. Valerius Maximus is producing a compendium on every exemplum that a Roman orator or student might want to reference and does not attach an explicit moral lesson to each (Skidmore 59). In contrast, Seneca clearly introduces them as a teaching tool. Juvenal charts a new path by seeming to use exempla for their spectacular nature rather than their potential educational benefit. The accompanying emotional presentation, as compared to the more measured tones of Valerius Maximus and Seneca, demonstrates the different function of the exempla. In conjunction with that, Juvenal pays much less attention to the role negative exempla can have on a person's behavior, either as a warning or as an

unconscious stimulator to vice, showing that he is more interested in telling outrageous stories in a set framework rather than their traditional function.

How Vice (Metaphorically) “Spreads”: Disease, Contact, a Catchy Tune

Some ancient authors express beliefs about how vice, or virtue, spreads and how exempla fit into that equation. The inclusion of such theories illustrates a deliberate attempt to clarify the role of exempla. Juvenal and Seneca explicitly consider how vice spreads; Seneca even addresses the corollary spread of virtue, which Juvenal ignores, perhaps significantly. Both authors use metaphorical language to explain the spread of vice, in one case conjuring up the image of vice as a disease. Juvenal is especially vivid (2.78-81):

dedit hanc contagio labem
et dabit in plures, sicut grex totus in agris
unius scabie cadit et porrigine porci
uvaque conspecta livorem ducit ab uva.

An infection yields this stain and will spread it to many, just as the whole herd in the fields falls from the scab and mange of one pig, and a grape takes up a bluish color from having been seen by another grape.¹

Similarly, Seneca describes vice spreading like a disease in *De Ira*, arguing, “Customs are picked up from people conversing just as certain bodily ills jump over to people through touch; thus the mind hands over its own evils to those nearest” (*sumuntur a conversantibus mores et ut quaedam in contactos corporis vitia transiliunt, ita animus mala sua proximis tradit*, 3.8.1). He argues, “The same logic applies for virtues, in a different way, that is, they improve all that they have in their orbit” (*eadem ex diverso ratio virtutum est, ut omne quod secum habent mitigent*, 3.8.2). It is interesting that Seneca includes virtue in the same simile of vice as disease, because disease

¹ All translations are my own unless noted.

would seem to provide a negative connotation that is logical when compared to vice, but odd when likened to the spread of virtue.

However, one of his letters to Lucilius argues that each type of person reinforces another, without using the disease simile (*Ep.* 109.4):

malus malo nocet facitque peiorem, iram eius incitando, tristitiae adsentiendo, voluptates laudando; et tunc maxime laborant mali ubi plurimum vitia miscuere et in unum conlata nequitia est. ergo ex contrario bonus bono proderit.

A bad man harms another evil man and makes him worse, by rousing his anger, by agreeing with his dejection, and by praising his desires. Then wicked men have the most trouble when vices mix more and wickedness is gathered into one. Therefore, on the opposite side, a good man will benefit another good one.

The entire letter discusses how a wise man can benefit another wise man, and although Seneca does not use the simile of disease, he describes this mutually beneficial process with many other similes: the skilled wrestler and the talented musician must work with other advanced practitioners to maintain their technique (*Ep.* 109. 2). This outlook fits well with Seneca's obvious approval of turning toward great men as a guide for proper behavior. It is simple to extend the process Seneca describes so that not only spending time in another's company, but also hearing about actions of another person will prompt some emulation. By metaphorically re-living the examples set by Cato or Laelius, Seneca hopes that Lucilius will be steered toward good rather than shameful behavior. Seneca's focus on theorizing about exempla shows that he wants them to become a central method of cultivating proper behavior.

Seneca provides another simile for how vice spreads and is able to infiltrate even a virtuous person. He describes how vices act like music from the theater that audience members cannot forget (*Ep.* 123.8-9):

horum sermo multum nocet; nam etiam si non statim proficit, semina in animo relinquit sequiturque nos etiam cum ab illis discessimus, resurrecturum postea

malum. quemadmodum qui audierunt symphoniam ferunt secum in auribus modulationem illam ac dulcedinem cantuum, quae cogitationes inpedit nec ad seria patitur intendi, sic adulatorum et prava laudantium sermo diutius haeret quam auditur. nec facile est animo dulcem sonum excutere: prosequitur et durat et ex intervallo recurrit.

The speech [of those proud of their vices] harms us much, for even if it does not have an effect at once, it leaves seeds in the mind and follows us even when we depart from them. Afterwards the evil rises again. Just as the melody and the sweetness of the songs (which blocks thinking and does not suffer to be forgotten) rings in the ears of concertgoers, thus the speech of sycophants and admirers of perversities clings longer than it is heard. Neither is it easy to throw out the sweet sound from one's mind: it follows and endures and comes back after a time.

This view of the spread of vice is understandable because Seneca often complains that vices are exacerbated by crowds (*Ep.* 7.2,7). Even though Seneca is discussing a concert, music's association with theater, and the crowds certainly present in a theater, may have added to the fear of vice spreading, since many elite Romans viewed the theater with some suspicion on moral grounds; they believed it provided an outlet for obscenity, lust and rebellion (Edwards 99).

Vice's Slippery Slope in Juvenal and Seneca

Not only do Juvenal and Seneca claim vice is spread from person to person, but they also posit another type of spread: small vices can become worse habits with time. Seneca repeatedly describes how vices may ease in but then become worse quickly because "not only is the way to vice downward, but it is steep" (*non pronum est tantum ad vitia sed praeceps*, *Ep.* 97.10).

Similarly, he argues that the mind is carried away by the downhill nature of vice (*De Ira* 1.7.4, 2.1.1). He warns Lucilius that, "There is no vice without patronage; for all are coy and easily entreated at the beginning, but from that point are poured out more widely" (*nullum est vitium sine patrocinio; nulli non initium verecundum est et exorabile, sed ab hoc latius funditur*, *Ep.*

116.2). Thus, it is suitable that he uses exempla to warn Lucilius of how what seems slight is actually a sign of greater trouble. Juvenal evinces a similar understanding of how vice can increase in a person when he complains to Creticus that, “Sometime you will dare something more unseemly than this fashion: no one becomes completely infamous at once” (*foedius hoc aliquid quandoque audebis amictu;/ nemo repente fuit turpissimus*, 2.82-83).

Seneca also reflects on how an otherwise virtuous man can unintentionally pick up vices. He reasons, “If to be angry at faults is good for the wise man, he will be more angry at worse deeds and angry more often. It follows that not only will the wise man be angry, but he will be enraged” (*si sapientis est peccatis irasci, magis irascetur maioribus et saepe irascetur: sequitur ut non tantum iratus sit sapiens sed iracundus, De Ira 2.6.3*). He argues that “nothing is more wretched than the wise man” (*nihil est aerumnosius sapiente, De Ira 2.7.1*) since “whenever he proceeds from his house, he will need to proceed through wicked men and greedy, lavish and shameless men, who are successful on account of those things” (*quotiens processerit domo, per sceleratos illi avarosque et prodigos et inpudentis et ob ista felices incedendum erit, De Ira 2.7.2*). The wise man will struggle with this because although in one sense it is proper to become angry at vices, anger, in itself, is a vice. Thus, Seneca imagines a vicious downward cycle of vice: vices are increasingly paraded in the public eye, which makes virtuous men become angry, which is a vice in itself. He concludes, rather pessimistically, “The wise man will never cease to be angry, if he begins once” (*numquam irasci desinet sapiens, si semel coeperit, De Ira 2.9.1*). This idea is humorously exaggerated in Juvenal’s first and second books of satires, in which the “angry satirist” seems to never run out of topics to attack, merely transitioning from one grievance to another.

The downward spiral that Seneca and Juvenal perceive in vice is paralleled by the general Roman concern about progressive changes in morals and customs. Roman authors often cite the old golden days when food was simple, music was plain, dress and ornamentation unaffected, women modest and chaste, and farming was the norm. Many seem to think that Roman morals and customs were worsening as time passed, which corresponds to Seneca and Juvenal's view of ever-worsening vice. Just as one person becomes more enmeshed in wicked habits as time passes, both authors complain that vice has carried citizens to a nadir never reached before, and that today Rome is becoming worse than ever. This concern hints at the appropriateness of exempla: positive exempla often refer back to excellent deeds of the past, and negative exempla from contemporary events would be especially compelling. Ancient Roman historians, such as Livy or Tacitus, cite exempla as a major benefit of recording history for this very reason (see pg. 21, 40).

Valerius Maximus fits his concern about vice being punished and virtue rewarded into this context, showing that he is less concerned with exemplary theories than with properly classifying good and bad behavior. His examples are compiled for the sake of the orator or student's convenience when composing a speech, but he adds a unique dimension in his introduction by setting up himself and Tiberius as some of the means by which proper morality is broadcast and enforced. His compendium is also notable because it immediately begins to consider ideas of exemplarity by introducing Tiberius as an example for the ages, almost literally a god. Addressing Tiberius, Valerius proclaims, "Caesar, I call upon you, by whose heavenly foresight the virtues, about which I am about to speak, are kindly favored and the vices severely judged" (*Caesar, invoco, cuius caelesti providentia virtutes, de quibus dicturus sum, benignissime foventur, vitia severissime vindicantur*, 1.pr.). Thus, he shows how Tiberius as

emperor can prevent the downward spiral of vice. Tacitus specifically describes Tiberius taking on a censor's role, saying, "Tiberius added that it was not the time for bringing in the censor's office, but if anything slipped in morals, he would not be found wanting as a promoter of reform" (*adiecerat et Tiberius non id tempus censurae nec, si quid in moribus labaret, defuturum corrigendi auctorem, Annals 2.33*).

Later emperors, such as Claudius and Domitian, in taking the role of censor reinforce the power the emperor has in corralling vice and promoting virtue (Suetonius *Cl.*16.1; Juvenal 2.29-33). Even earlier emperors like Augustus discuss their role in reinstating exemplary practices. In the *Res Gestae*, Augustus declares, "By new laws taken up under my leadership, I brought back many examples of our ancestors now lost from our age, and I handed down examples of great deeds to be imitated by our descendants" (*legibus novis me auctore latis multa exempla maiorum exolescentia iam ex nostro saeculo reduxi et ipse multarum rerum exempla imitanda posteris tradidi, Res Gestae Divi Augusti 8*).

Vice as Inheritance in Juvenal and Seneca

Another method by which vices might spread is through family, as if they were learned along with one's table manners. Both Juvenal and Seneca regard this as a major mode by which vices spread. Juvenal devotes the entirety of Satire 14 to bemoaning how one vice after another is passed from parent to offspring. The proximity and long exposure to vice seem to be the causes for this association (14.31-37):

sic natura iubet: velocius et citius nos
 corruptunt vitiorum exempla domestica, magnis
 cum subeant animos auctoribus. unus et alter
 forsitan haec spernant iuvenes, quibus arte benigna
 et meliore luto finxit praecordia Titan,

sed reliquos fugienda patrum vestigia ducunt
et monstrata diu veteris trahit orbita culpa.

Thus nature orders: we are corrupted more swiftly and quickly by domestic examples of vice when they enter our minds from great authorities. Perhaps one or another youth will spurn them, for whom a Titan fixes the heart with a kindly art and better mud, but their fathers' paths, which should be fled, will lead the rest, and the long marked track of the old guilt drags them.

It is intriguing that Juvenal says, in a seemingly mocking way, that the bad influences come from *magnis auctoribus*. Although generally the practices of great men were meant to instill virtuous behavior in the young, here Juvenal is humorously suggesting the opposite, namely, that children learn bad habits from the example of their parents, turning the concept of exempla upside-down. In addition, the verb *traho* also appears in Seneca's description of familial vices, implying that offspring may not seek out vice of their own accord but may absorb it unconsciously and so are "dragged" down the road to vice: "Parents and slaves drag us into wickedness. No one errs just for himself, but he scatters the madness into those nearest him and accepts it in turn" (*trahunt in pravum parentes, trahunt servi. nemo errat uni sibi, sed dementia spargit in proximos accipitque invicem, Ep. 94.54*). As does Juvenal, Seneca specifically cites the love of money as being learned from parents: "Parents produce our admiration for gold and silver, and that greed, poured into weak people, sits more deeply and grows within us" (*admirationem nobis parentes auri argentique fecerunt, et teneris infusa cupiditas altius sedit crevitque nobiscum, Ep. 115.11*; cf. Juvenal 14. 107-122).

Geographic Distinctions of Vice: Rome and Elsewhere

Authors display a concern over vice spreading not only within a family unit, but also throughout the broader Roman family. The tendency to distinguish between examples of vice

done by Greeks or barbarians and those done by Romans appears in the writings of Valerius Maximus. In all his books, each chapter, whether about virtuous deeds or wicked ones, is divided into Roman and foreign exempla. This preoccupation with the geographic origin of behavior is logical to Valerius Maximus because he believes that Romans should either be proud of what Romans have done (or not done), desirous to out-do the virtuosity of a non-Roman, or more ashamed by examples of Roman vice. He clearly states at the start of an external section, “This crime however, since it is external, will be told with a more tranquil feeling” (*illud autem facinus, quia externum est, tranquilliore adfectu narrabitur*, 9.11.ext.1). In another section, he comments that, “We will now pass to those deeds, which have equal pain, yet no shame for our city” (*transgrediemur nunc ad illa, quibus ut par dolor, ita nullus nostrae civitatis rubor inest*, 9.2.ext.1). This shows that external deeds are less distressing to a Roman’s equanimity because they are not done by Romans and so bring no shame to the state.

The only exception to the pattern of internal then external examples is when Valerius Maximus laments the actions of Sejanus, which occur at the end of the external section covering “Shameless Words or Wicked Deeds” (*dicta improba aut facta scelerata*, 9.11). Sejanus was Praetorian prefect during part of Tiberius’ reign and was plotting to increase his power and potentially become emperor by marrying Livilla. In punishment, he was executed on Tiberius’ order. After listing three external stories, Valerius Maximus turns to Sejanus with a series of rhetorical questions. He never names Sejanus but asks, “Were you, who was clearly more savage than the cruelty of the wild barbarian, able to snatch the reins of the Roman Empire, which our ruler and parent holds in his saving right hand?” (*tu videlicet efferatae barbariae immanitate truculentior habenas Romani imperii, quas princeps parensque noster salutari dextera continet, capere potuisti?*, 9.11.ext.4). Not only does this exhibit Valerius’ shock at

Sejanus' actions, but, critically, it also shows the fear of Romans falling victim to foreign vices. Valerius clearly separates Sejanus from the other Romans, as if wanting to deny his Roman identity and class him with foreigners. Valerius Maximus implies that while he could console himself to the previous stories since they were foreign, this act is just too horrible to contemplate since a Roman has done it.

Seneca too implies there is a difference between external and internal examples of vice in his discussion on anger, although he goes further than Valerius in representing vice as having an origin and spreading from specific locales. As he says, "How I wish that such savagery had remained among foreign examples and that the barbarity of anger and punishments had not crossed into Roman customs with other foreign vices" (*utinam ista saevitia intra peregrina exempla mansisset nec in Romanos mores cum aliis adventiciis vitiis etiam suppliciorum irarumque barbaria transisset!*, *De Ira* 3.18). In addition to distinguishing vices done by non-Romans from Roman examples, he theorizes here and in other works that vices themselves have a geographic origin and that they can spread from one region to another or invade a man in a certain area. In a letter to Lucilius, Seneca urges him to find a wholesome place to live, a place that will not drown him in vice, and warns him away from places like Baiae or Canopus, which have become "inns of vice" (*deversorium vitiorum*, *Ep.* 51.3). This shows that Seneca believes vice can become concentrated in certain areas, like a whirlpool, and drag an otherwise strong man down. He provides Hannibal as an example, relating how "in one winter, the benefits of Campania loosened Hannibal and weakened the man unconquered by Alpine snows: he conquered with arms, he was conquered by vices" (*una Hannibalem hiberna solverunt et indomitum illum nivibus atque Alpibus virum enervaverunt fomenta Campaniae: armis vicit, vitiis victus est*, *Ep.* 51.5). Valerius Maximus too comments how "Campanian luxury was

exceedingly useful for our city: for, having embraced Hannibal, unconquered by arms, she handed him, conquered by her own enticements, over to the Roman soldier” (*at Campana luxuria perquam utilis nostrae civitati fuit: invictum enim armis Hannibalem inlecebris suis complexa vincendum Romano militi tradidit*, 9.1.ext.1). Although Valerius targets Campanian luxury specifically, Seneca provides a more thorough analysis of vice spreading from certain regions. Seneca’s greater theorizing supports his overall program of integrating exempla more fully into a moral education system.

Seneca specifically claims that “luxury selected that place [Baiae] as her usual home” (*illum sibi celebrandum luxuria desumpsit*, *Ep.* 51.1), and so alludes to Baiae’s reputation among ancient authors as a location associated with every kind of vice. Baiae was literally the location of many villas belonging to rich families and extensive baths, but it also metaphorically represented the abode of the worst vice (Laurence 73-74). In his *Pro Caelio*, Cicero repeatedly mentions Clodia’s residence at Baiae as an unsubtle attack on her reputation (*Pro Caelio* 15.35, 20.47, 20.49). In turn, in a letter to Atticus, he recounts how Clodius attempted to insult him by alleging that Cicero himself had visited Baiae (*Epistulae ad Atticum* 1.16). In the Imperial period, Baiae maintained its reputation for unlimited luxury (D’Arms 119). Juvenal mentions Baiae thrice (3.4, 11.49, 12.80), but only in Satire 11 does it have an explicit association with luxury (11.46-49):²

conducta pecunia Romae
 et coram dominis consumitur; inde, ubi paulum
 nescio quid superest [et pallet feneratoris auctor,
 qui vertere solum] Baias et ad ostrea currunt.

² In Satire 3, Juvenal sets up the poem by describing how his friend Umbricius plans to leave Rome and live in Cumae, which is “the gateway to Baiae” (*ianua Baiarum*). In Satire 12, a poem celebrating the safe return of a friend from sea and condemning legacy-hunters, Juvenal recounts that the damaged ship finally made it into the Portus Augusti and “with his maimed boat, the captain seeks out the inner pool of the safe bay, which is passable for a small Baian boat” (*sed trunca puppe magister/ interior petit, Baianae pervia cumbae./ tuti stagna sinus*, 12.79-81). Braund notes that a Baian boat refers to a “light pleasure boat” (2004, 427).

Money is hired in Rome and used up in front of the owners; then when some little amount is left, they run to Baiae and its oysters.

Here, as in other authors, Baiae is associated with opulence (the delicacy of oysters). However, Baiae had become so renowned for luxury, that it became a byword for excessive luxury regardless of the actual location of the behavior in question.

Valerius Maximus and Seneca clearly struggle with the growing vice in Rome (and Italy) yet take consolation in the fact that the non-Romans are generally worse. In contrast, Juvenal accepts the vice at Rome and fears for the barbarians. This reversal of expectations results in humor. In Satire 2, after denouncing a series of practices associated with homosexuality, he ends by worrying what the shades in the underworld would think of contemporary Romans who have mastered these skills to such an extent that they can educate others. The satirist makes this proclamation (2.166-170):

aspice quid faciant commercia: venerat obses,
hic fiunt homines. nam si mora longior urbem
induerit pueris, non umquam derit amator.
mittentur bracae, cultelli, frena, flagellum:
sic praetextatos referunt Artaxata mores.

Look what trade does: they had come as hostages, here they become men. For if a longer delay instills city customs in the boys, a lover will never be absent. The trousers, knives, bridles and whip are sent away: thus, they bring back juvenile morals to Artaxata [a city in Armenia].

In this case, Juvenal sees vice as spreading from Rome and staining the pure countryside. However, in Satire 3, the speaker Umbricius complains about Rome being taken over by the Greeks, who are responsible for spreading vices. Greeks bring unchastity, effeminacy, lust, ambition and flattery to the city (3.58-125). Umbricius grumbles that an honest man is not able to keep up, thus revealing how he feels that the Greeks, with their vices, are spoiling Rome.

Although Juvenal does not provide the black and white distinctions between external and internal examples of vice, he still clearly differentiates to some degree between Roman and foreign vices, revealing another method by which ancient Romans determined vice might spread.

A more traditional view about the preponderance of vice among barbarians and uneducated foreigners compared to Romans appears in Satire 15. In this satire, Juvenal recounts a story of cannibalism at a fight between two rival Egyptian cities. As a preface, he observes that “Certainly the barbarian crowd is savage in Egypt, but in terms of luxury, as much as I can note, it does not yield to renowned Canopus [a town in the Nile delta of Egypt known for its inhabitants’ excessive luxury, as noted by Seneca, *Ep.* 51.3, and others]” (*horrida sane/ Aegyptos, sed luxuria, quantum ipse notavi,/ barbara famosa non cedit turba Canopo*, 15.44-46). This echoes the opinions expressed by Seneca and Valerius Maximus, who view foreign vice in a separate category from Roman vice. After describing the events of the fight and discussing when cannibalism might be thought to be appropriate, the speaker nevertheless declares that, “The rules of Zeno admonish us better” (*melius nos/ Zenonis praecepta monent*, 15.106-107). In this instance, Juvenal is selecting a specific philosophical school to emphasize the contrast between “civilized” Romans and the wild Egyptians. Although he does not expect or demand that all his readers be Stoics, he cites Zeno’s rules to represent all the teachings that civilized Greeks or Romans might have. Thus, here he suggests that all the wisdom of Greece and Rome, as represented by Zeno’s Stoicism, is spreading to the wild parts of the world, saying, “Now the whole world has a Greek and Roman Athens” (*nunc totus Graias nostrasque habet orbis Athenas*, 15.110). However, the savage Egyptians ignored these civilizing rules in their crime. This view contrasts with the claim in Satire 2 that Rome itself is spreading vice, but is in agreement with the imperial perspective that Rome was providing civilization to the barbarian

nations. Despite the change in viewpoint between the Satires, these instances illustrate that the spread of vice has a geographical component for Juvenal.

Hoc facito et hoc fugito: Orders from Exempla

The preoccupation of certain authors with the spread of vice illustrates one reason for the use of exempla. Many ancient authors cite exempla as a means by which Roman ideals can be propagated and vice prevented. Pliny the Elder and Livy emphasize Roman virtue in many of their writings and describe it by reliance on historical or semi-mythological figures rather than by listing virtuous characteristics (Edwards 21). Valerius Maximus and Seneca go a step further and claim that exempla are better than words at illustrating a concept. Valerius justifies his work at one point, asserting, “It [the fact that wealth is not a guarantee of happiness] will be represented better by persons than by words” (*melius personis quam verbis repraesentabitur*, 4.4.pr). As he says later, “The benevolence of the human race is fostered and increased by these and similar examples: these are its torches, these its goads, on account of which, it burns with a desire to help and merit praise” (*his et horum similibus exemplis beneficentia generis humani nutritur atque augetur: hae sunt eius faces, hi stimuli, propter quos iuvandi et emerendi cupiditate flagrat*, 5.2.ext.4). Seneca too believes in the power of exempla for teaching good behavior “first because men trust their eyes more than their ears, and then since the journey is made long through rules but short and efficient through examples” (*primum quia homines amplius oculis quam auribus credunt, deinde quia longum iter est per praecepta, breve et efficax per exempla*, Ep. 6.5).

The reliance on exempla as an educational tool corresponds well to the Roman morality of *mos maiorum*, by which Romans tried to emulate the actions of their ancestors (Mayer 2005,

148). The practice of emulating predecessors' deeds could naturally be extended so that unrelated men, or women, were exalted as exempla for the younger generation. Valerius Maximus seems to follow in this path as he explains the purpose of his work (1.pr):

Urbis Romae exterarumque gentium facta simul ac dicta memoratu digna, quae apud alios latius diffusa sunt quam ut breviter cognosci possint, ab inlustribus electa auctoribus digerere constitui, ut documenta sumere volentibus longae inquisitionis labor absit.

I decided to catalogue simultaneously those deeds and words, selected from noble authors, of the city of Rome and external races worthy of remembrance, which are scattered too widely in other works to be able to be learned quickly, so that those wanting to use some examples may be spared the work of a long search.

This understanding seems to account for positive exempla as a mechanism by which proper behavior was encouraged. However, it does not explain the use of negative exempla as warnings to the young to avoid certain actions.

Negative exempla can also have an educational role. Horace explicitly defines this role, saying, "My excellent father accustomed me to this: namely, I should avoid each and every vice by noting each one through examples" (*insuevit pater optimus hoc me, / ut fugerem exemplis vitiorum quaeque notando, Sermo 1.4.105-106*). His father, desiring him to live sparingly and frugally, says, "Surely you see how badly the son of Albius lives and how Baius is destitute? It is a great lesson, that no one should want to destroy his father's property" (*'nonne vides, Albi ut male vivat filius utque / Baius inops? magnum documentum, ne patriam rem / perdere quis velit,' Sermo 1.4.109-111*). This shows that negative exempla can steer students away from unwanted action. Horace, however, goes on to say that his father employed both positive and negative exempla (*Sermo 1.4.120-126*):

sic me
formabat puerum dictis et, sive iubebat
ut facerem quid, 'habes auctorem, quo facias hoc'

unum ex iudicibus selectis obiciebat,
 sive vetabat, 'an hoc inhonestum et inutile factu
 necne sit, addubites, flagret rumore malo cum
 hic atque ille?

Thus, he was forming me as a boy with these speeches: if he was ordering that I should do something, 'You have an authority, by which you do this,' and he was presenting one from one of the selected judges. Or, if he was forbidding, 'Do you doubt that this is shameful and useless to do, when this one or that one burns with a wicked rumor?'

Horace explicitly explains how negative exempla function as elements of education: "Thus another's shame often drives tender minds away from vice" (*sic teneros animos aliena opprobria saepe/ absterrent vitiis, Sermo 1.4.128-129*). For Horace, exempla were especially effective because they were right in front of him and had names (Leach 631).

A scene from Terence's *Adelphoe* clearly inspired Horace's portrait of his father (Leach 618). In the play, Demea's two sons were separated at birth and brought up differently: one to be raised by Demea and the other by Demea's brother. At one point in the play, to his slave Syrus' amusement, Demea is congratulating himself on the proper education of the son he raised. In the conversation, the details of the actions taken as exempla are not described, but the process of pointing out exempla in order to mold proper behavior is explained (*Adelphoe* 412-419):

De. Syre, praeceptorum plenust istorum ille. **Sy.** phy!
 domi habuit unde disceret. **De.** fit sedulo:
 nil praetermitto; consuefacio; denique
 inspicere, tamquam in speculum, in vitas omnium
 iubeo atque ex aliis sumere exemplum sibi:
 "hoc facito." **Sy.** recte sane. **De.** "hoc fugito." **Sy.** callide.
De. "hoc laudist." **Sy.** istaec res est. **De.** "hoc vitio datur."
Sy. probissime. **De.** porro autem. . .

Demea. Syrus, he is full of such precepts. **Syrus.** Oh! He has one at home from whom he learns. **De.** I do this diligently: I pass by nothing; I habituate him. Then I order him to inspect the lives of all men, as if in a mirror, and to take for himself

an example from other men: “Do this.” **Sy.** Sensibly well done. **De.** “Run from this.” **Sy.** Clever. **De.** “That is something to be praised.” **Sy.** That is the thing. **De.** “That is given to vice.” **Sy.** Most excellently. **De.** Next however. . .

When exempla are referred to in a play’s dialogue, we can assume that members of the ancient audience would have understood the reference and perhaps found it amusing.³ In fact, many authors repeatedly draw on the practices of observation and emulation as a technique of formal education (Mayer 1991, 145). Moreover, there is the suggestion that even if an action is not intended to be exemplary, like Horatius Cocles’ single-handed defense of the bridge, it always had the potential to become an exemplum (Roller 7). This mind-set is important in the Roman understanding of history as shown by Livy’s preface to his history (*Ab Urbe Condita* 1.pr.10.1):

hoc illud est praecipue in cognitione rerum salubre ac frugiferum, omnis te exempli documenta in inlustri posita monumento intueri; inde tibi tuaeque rei publicae quod imitere capias, inde foedum inceptu foedum exitu quod vites.

This is especially wholesome and fruitful in thinking of history, that you can gaze on records of every example as though placed on a conspicuous monument; then you can pick out what to imitate for yourself and for your state, and then what to avoid that is shameful both in inception and its end.

Clearly, Romans were educated about the type of behavior that they should copy or avoid by recalling actions of historical characters, whether famous, in the case of Livy, or just the ne’er-do-well neighbor down the street, as in Horace and Terence.

Teaching by Example: How Exempla become Lessons

The clear separation between positive and negative examples as behaviors to imitate or behaviors to avoid, as illustrated by Horace, Demea in Terence, or Livy, is a critical

³ The humor is especially clear in this case because this speech is followed by Syrus’ comic explanation of how he does the same thing, except his rules pertain to the amount of salt appropriate in a certain dish, how well something should be cooked, or if a pan is clean enough (*Adelphoe* 419-430).

characteristic of exempla used in a pedagogical context. Likewise, Valerius Maximus sets apart most of his negative exempla in Book 9 of his catalog. So too, Seneca, after describing men carried away by their anger, announces, “Those examples should be thought of as ones which you should avoid, and these, in contrast, are those you should follow” (*et haec cogitanda sunt exempla quae vites, et illa ex contrario quae sequaris, De Ira 3.22*). The importance in this distinction is obvious; if students do not know what type is being described, they might accidentally start to imitate bad behavior or avoid good behavior.

In order to judge whether an exemplum is being used in an instructive sense, we can consider whether a student figure is present. Although Valerius Maximus is not addressing anyone as he composes his index of exemplary actions, he clearly imagines readers who take his exempla as part of some sort of lesson or argument (5.2.pr):

gratas vero animi significationes et ingrata facta libuit oculis subicere, ut vitio ac virtuti iusta merces aestimationis ipsa comparatione accederet. sed quoniam contrario proposito sese distinxerunt, nostro quoque stilo separentur, prioremque locum obtineant quae laudem quam quae reprehensionem merentur.

But I wanted to assemble for view grateful expressions of the mind and ungrateful deeds, so that just reward might come to vice and virtue by comparative evaluation. Yet, since they divided themselves by contrary intention, they shall also be separated by my pen; let those hold the first place that deserve praise rather than censure.

Thus, it seems that exempla can be meant for an educational purpose in the absence of a specific student figure. At the same time, the presence of a pupil figure or addressee does not necessarily mean that the exempla are meant to be taken exclusively in the sense of a tutorial. Seneca addresses his *Epistulae Morales* to Lucilius, *De Beneficiis* to Liberalis, *De Clementia* to Nero and *De Ira* to Novatus. In these works, he is clearly trying to instruct his readers, whether they are explicitly addressed or not. Although there is some controversy about how much the letters

to Lucilius were edited for publication, Lucilius comes across as more of a three dimensional character in the letters as compared to others of Seneca's addressees. This is especially noticeable when Seneca predicts Lucilius' response to something in the letters. Of interest to this discussion is the response Seneca imagines when he again urges Lucilius to take some great man's habits as his example. Seneca envisions Lucilius' complaint: "Those stories are repeated over and over in all the schools,' you say, 'now you will tell me about Cato, when it will come to despising death'" (*'decantatae' inquis 'in omnibus scholis fabulae istae sunt; iam mihi, cum ad contemnendam mortem ventum fuerit, Catonem narrabis,' Ep. 24.6*). This complaint, although created in the context of the letter, nevertheless serves to bolster the notion that exempla were used as a part of Roman education, and so would generally be associated with a pupil or student-figure.

Some of Juvenal's Satires are addressed to characters that could fall under the category of student, in the same way that Lucilius receives advice from Seneca. Juvenal advises Postumus not to marry in Satire 6, Ponticus not to rest exclusively on his pedigree in Satire 8, and Fuscinus not to copy the vices of his father in Satire 14.⁴ However, as is clear from those summaries, Juvenal's presumed advice is revealed almost exclusively by negative exempla: do not do anything of what I am about to tell you (Fredericks 111). In Seneca, the majority of exempla are positive, which Lucilius should imitate. In contrast, Juvenal is focused on displaying the spectacle of improper behavior rather than on providing advice to his readers. His Satires certainly have had some moral interpretations, but they represent much more than that (Braund 1996, 37). Just by analyzing the different types of exempla appearing in Juvenal as compared to

⁴ The other persons to whom satires are addressed include the suffering client Trebius in Satire 5, Corvinus in Satire 12 (to whom Juvenal sends a story about the safe return of his merchant friend and a tangent attack on legacy hunters), Calvinus in Satire 13 (to whom Juvenal composes a parody of a consolation for a lost bit of money) and Volusius of Bithynia in Satire 15 (to whom Juvenal addresses a story of Egyptian cannibalism).

Seneca, it seems clear that there is a different purpose to the works. Seneca details not only behavior to be avoided but also the sort of habits Lucilius should have. On the other hand, Juvenal almost exclusively lambasts every vice, rarely mentioning an example of virtue, and then often only to compare it to the horrors that now occur in Rome.

Following the Leader: Effects of Positive Exempla

When Valerius Maximus or Seneca use an exemplum, they make several assumptions about how it will affect the reader or listener. Positive and negative exempla clearly have different potential effects, of which both authors seem to be aware. Juvenal seems to address some effects of negative exempla, but he does not consider the effects of positive references to a significant extent. Valerius Maximus and Seneca, on the other hand, are very clear about the two main goals of using a positive exemplum: imitation and cognitive comprehension of the moral system.

It is evident that exempla were integral to the Roman philosophy of *imitatio* and *emulatio*. Valerius Maximus shows his certainty that exempla are a valuable means of encouraging imitation, and a vital rhetorical tool, by cataloging hundreds. He argues that remembrance of positive exempla will improve current habits (2.pr):

opus est enim cognosci huiusce vitae, quam sub optimo principe felicem agimus, quaenam fuerint elementa, ut eorum quoque respectus aliquid praesentibus moribus prosit.

It is necessary even that we learn what were the first principles of this blessed life, which we lead under the best leader [i.e. Tiberius], so that a look back at them should be of some benefit to present customs.

By sharing all these positive exempla, Valerius Maximus hopes to provide his audience with stories that could be employed in speeches with various effects. He provides some suggestions for the significance of certain tales, but he does not address the function as explicitly as Seneca does.

Seneca clearly believes that learning positive exempla would help drive one toward personal exemplary action. In addition, he includes more theorizing about exempla in order to facilitate their expansion to a wider variety of contexts. In a letter to Lucilius, after a series of stories recounting brave and noble deeds, he asserts, “We ourselves should boldly do such a thing also; let us be among the examples” (*nos quoque aliquid et ipsi faciamus animose; simus inter exempla, Ep. 98.13*). Thus, Seneca encourages Lucilius and himself to imitate the actions of such exemplary figures as Mucius Scaevola, Cato, or Regulus, and shows that at least some Romans did comprehend the importance of exempla and actually strive to become a person worthy of that rank. In another passage, Seneca relates the stories of Fabricius and Horatius Cocles before listing characteristics of his ideal man. He indicates the vital role exempla play in understanding proper behavior when he writes, “These and deeds of this sort show an image of virtue to us” (*haec et eiusmodi facta imaginem nobis ostendere virtutis, Ep. 120.8*).

However, Seneca encourages not only outright imitation, but also the construction of a framework by which one can judge behavior. He repeatedly urges Lucilius to take an exemplary man as a model to live by (*Ep. 11.10*):

elige itaque Catonem; si hic tibi videtur nimis rigidus, elige remissioris animi virum Laelium. elige eum cuius tibi placuit et vita et oratio et ipse animum ante se ferens vultus; illum tibi semper ostende vel custodem vel exemplum.

Therefore, choose Cato; if he seems too severe to you, choose a man like Laelius with a more relaxed mind. Choose him whose life and speech and soul-reflecting

face before you is pleasing to you; always show him to yourself as a guard or example.

Thus, Seneca imagines Lucilius not only copying exemplary actions but also considering what type of action a Cato or a Laelius would have taken if in Lucilius' position. By reinforcing the use of exempla, Seneca seems to want to construct a "Roman conscience" that judges actions in terms of the Roman moral framework, and specifically for him, a Stoic system. Seneca's references to Lucilius' potential exemplary mentors build them up to be almost a tangible presence that judges behavior (*Ep.* 25.6):

interim aliquorum te auctoritate custodi—aut Cato ille sit aut Scipio aut Laelius
aut alius cuius interventu perdit quoque homines vitia supprimerent, dum te
efficis eum cum quo peccare non audeas.

Meanwhile, guard yourself with the authority of some one—either let it be Cato or Scipio or Laelius or another by whose intervention even dissolute men would suppress their vices, while you make yourself one with whom you would not dare to sin.

The use of exempla makes these men seem vivid and facilitate Seneca's forming them into judges of behavior that work instantaneously in Lucilius' mind. Following a discussion of the fear of death and how to accept death properly, Seneca states the following (*Ep.* 104.21):

ad meliores transi: cum Catonibus vive, cum Laelio, cum Tuberone. quod si
convivere etiam Graecis iuvat, cum Socrate, cum Zenone versare: alter te docebit
mori si necesse erit, alter antequam necesse erit.

Cross over to better ones: live with the Catos, with Laelius, with Tubero. If it even pleases you to live with Greeks, abide with Socrates or with Zeno: one will teach you how to die if it is necessary, the other to die before it is necessary.

Seneca clearly imagines these exemplary figures becoming an active tool that Lucilius or others can use to ascertain if certain actions are acceptable or not.

To Jump over the Precipice or To Step Back: Effects of Negative Exempla

Positive exempla certainly are also meant, in addition to their role in encouraging appropriate behavior, to inspire good feelings in a reader or listener. However, authors more often focus on the feelings roused by their negative counterparts. Valerius Maximus generally maintains a detached tone, but sometimes he yields to a burst of emotion. For instance, his emotion is clear when he discusses Sejanus (see pg. 75) or Roman soldiers: “The condition of the forum is deplorable, but if you look back at the military camps, equally great indignation will spring up” (*detestanda fori condicio, sed si castra respicias, aequae magna orietur indignatio*, 9.7.mil. Rom.1). By addressing his audience (if **you** look back, *respicias*), he shows that he wants his exempla to stir up feelings in his readers.

This desired effect is especially crucial for Juvenal. He complains in his programmatic poem that there are too many vices to stay silent (1.30-33):

difficile est saturam non scribere. nam quis iniquae
tam patiens urbis, tam ferreus, ut teneat se,
causidici nova cum veniat lectica Mathonis
plena ipso. . .

It is difficult not to write satire. For who is so patient with the unjust city, so hardened that he can restrain himself when the new litter of the lawyer Matho comes, full of himself. . .

Juvenal, similarly to Valerius Maximus, imagines readers being carried away by their emotions upon witnessing an example of wicked behavior. Emotional or dramatic language is a vital part of Juvenal’s Satires. The angry expressions filling his first two books awarded him the label of the “angry satirist” in recent scholarship on those poems (Braund 1996, 17). Although Juvenal probably did not desire the same straightforward distress at bad behavior that Valerius Maximus seems to want, the speaker of the poems certainly seems to imply that exempla like the ones he

shares should excite emotions of anger and disgust. Although actual readers' responses are unknown, it is clear that Juvenal is pretending to situate his Satires in the exemplary tradition in order to capitalize on the comic possibilities in sharing vivid stories about the faults of others.

Although Seneca's writings are much less graphic than Juvenal's poems, he does include a number of negative exempla. His use of them as teaching tools, as discussed by the "fathers" of Horace and Terence, show another potential effect of negative exempla. Seneca is obviously not pioneering the use of exempla in this way; Valerius Maximus too sees a warning effect. At the beginning of his ninth book, which includes numerous examples of vice, he opens with luxury and explains why he does so (9.1.pr):

blandum etiam malum luxuria, quam accusare aliquanto facilius est quam vitare, operi nostro inseratur, non quidem ut ullum honorem recipiat, sed ut se ipsam recognoscens ad paenitentiam impelli possit.

Let even Luxury, the flattering evil, whom it is sometimes easier to attack than avoid, be introduced into our work, certainly not so that she might receive any honor, but so that by recognizing herself as luxury, she might be able to be driven to repentance.

However, Valerius Maximus, unlike Seneca, does not attach a clear moralistic judgment like this onto every story, or even every section (Skidmore 59). Rather, he includes examples that he expects his readers to understand are either positive or negative. He focuses on using and providing exempla rather than theorizing about how they should be used and their effect. Sometimes he explicitly comments on this presentation, as he says here, "But since it was established that I would investigate all parts of human life, let it be recounted with my good faith and proper judgment" (*sed quia humanae vitae partes persequi propositum est, nostra fide, propria aestimatione referatur*, 6.2.pr). This illustrates that Valerius Maximus sometimes expects his readers to draw their own conclusions about the incidents that he relates.

In contrast, Seneca clearly tacks on moral lessons to many of his exempla, highlighting the specific lessons he wants to be taken from them. This mirrors the Cynic idea of instilling proper behavior by forbidding incorrect behavior (Mendell 141). In one letter to Lucilius, Seneca introduces the exemplum of Pacuvius (*Ep.* 12.8-9). He describes how Pacuvius held a great feast every night, full of drink and luxury, with the overt purpose of celebrating one more day of life, but with the true purpose of just reveling in his luxurious life-style. Following this description, Seneca argues, “We should do from good motives what he was doing from bad motives” (*hoc quod ille ex mala conscientia faciebat nos ex bona faciamus*, *Ep.* 12.9). Seneca repeats this pattern with many other exempla: sharing a story and then explicitly drawing a lesson from it. Juvenal differs in that he continually attacks vices, but hardly ever explicitly labels them as bad. Instead, he describes numerous behaviors and assumes his readers know what the correct behavior is (Knoche 262).

The danger in Juvenal’s approach is that readers might imitate rather than avoid the exhibited behavior. It is likely not the conscious copying hoped for with positive exempla, but the subconscious absorption of bad influences, as discussed by Seneca in his theories about the spread of vice. Thus, another effect of negative exempla is the exacerbation of the expansion of vice. Valerius Maximus clearly is cognizant of this concern after detailing stories of those “who degenerated from renowned parents” (*qui a parentibus claris degeneraverunt*, 3.5; 3.6.pr):

animadverto in quam periculosum iter processerim. itaque me ipse revocabo, ne, si reliqua eiusdem generis naufragia consecrari perseveravero, aliqua inutili relatione inplicer. referam igitur pedem deformesque umbras in imo gurgite turpitudinis suae iacere patiar.

I note on what a dangerous journey I have proceeded. Thus, I will call myself back, lest, if I persist in following other shipwrecks of this type, I be tangled in some harmful story. Therefore, I will take a step back, and allow the disgusting ghosts to lie in the deep gorge of their own foulness.

Juvenal too evinces a belief that vice spreads through purposeful or unintended teaching by family members or acquaintances (numerous examples in Satire 14, see pg. 11; Keane 2006, 130). Yet, this does not prevent him from discussing vice from every possible angle. This again shows a dramatic difference between the more serious tone of Valerius Maximus and Seneca, as opposed to Juvenal's use of serious topics or rhetoric, but for a seemingly lighter purpose.

Conclusion

The variant theories, and level of theorizing, in these three authors illustrate how exempla were altered for different uses. Seneca and Juvenal both devote considerable attention to how vice spreads and how exempla fit into that context. The belief of vice "spreading" is a fundamental concept that underlies the use of exempla: an exemplum can prevent bad behavior, as a dam can stop a flood, and so stop vice from "spreading." In particular, Seneca investigates possible analogies for vice (and virtue) spreading, showing the initial work he does to produce a moral framework. Although Valerius Maximus focuses almost exclusively on cataloging exempla for use by speakers, Seneca and Juvenal not only follow some parts of the exemplary tradition, but also investigate the function of exempla and how they can expand their use. Juvenal's focus on negative exempla and the reaction they might prompt is distinct from the pedagogical function that is mostly advanced by Seneca and Valerius Maximus. Negative exempla are especially interesting because of their dangerous allure; authors must be careful not to, as Valerius says, end up in shipwrecks of that sort.

Chapter 2: *Eadem cantabit versibus isdem*: Characteristics of Exempla

Exempla as a Rhetorical Tradition

Even though Valerius Maximus, Seneca and Juvenal confront the exemplary tradition differently, all three share some characteristics. This illustrates that exempla did not spring up spontaneously in a multitude of authors; rather, they were a staple of rhetoric throughout Greece and Rome. As early as Aristotle's time, exempla were appearing in rhetorical guides (Turpin 363). The educational function of exempla was also instituted by their appearance in banquet songs or tragedy (Skidmore 5). They were meant not only to educate, but also to encourage imitation and even competition, as the exempla in Homer seem to do (Skidmore 3). Thus, exempla were firmly established as a rhetorical tool in Greek literature.

The Romans, too, valued the concept of an exemplum, and not only written ones, but visual and spoken ones. Quintilian notes the Roman fascination with exempla (*Inst.* 12.2.29-30):

quae profecto nusquam plura maioraque quam in nostrae civitatis monumentis reperientur. an fortitudinem, iustitiam, fidem, continentiam, frugalitatem, contemptum doloris ac mortis melius alii docebunt quam Fabricii, Curii, Reguli, Decii, Mucii aliique innumerabiles? quantum enim Graeci praeceptis valent, tantum Romani, quod est maius, exemplis.

Truly, more numerous or more noble [deeds and works of famous men] will never be found than in the monuments of our city. What other men will teach about bravery, justice, loyalty, moderation, frugality or disregard for pain and death better than men like Fabricius, Curius, Regulus, Decius, Mucius and countless others? For, just as much as the Greeks are strong in precepts, the Romans are in exempla, which are more important.

A connection between personal morality and state concerns often appears in texts about Roman morality and social life, so establishing proper behavior and encouraging self-control was critical for a functional empire (Edwards 4). Many authors, like Pliny the Elder and Livy, choose to

emphasize the virtues of the Roman state by providing exempla rather than rules (Edwards 21). The many exempla that Seneca addresses to Nero through his work *De Clementia* show the importance he places on exempla for instilling proper behavior. For Romans, morality was defined based on a person's position in the social system (Morgan 22). Certain actions suitable for one person may not be proper for another (Langlands 2011, 100). Exempla are especially suited for this situation because they represent specific moral rules based on gender, class or public position. Seneca addresses this in a long letter to Lucilius in which he considers what makes acts virtuous (*Ep.* 71.1):

consilia enim rebus aptantur; res nostrae feruntur, immo volvuntur; ergo consilium nasci sub diem debet. et hoc quoque nimis tardum est: sub manu, quod aiunt, nascatur.

For advice is adapted to the circumstances. Our circumstances are taken along, rather turned around. Therefore, counsel ought to grow in one day. Yet even this is too late: it should grow, as they say, under our hand.

In addition, exempla appear outside of literature, showing their wide functionality. Sallust argues that ancestral masks act as a visual reminder of and encouragement toward good behavior and actions (*Jugurtha*, 4; Bell 9). Similarly, Polybius documents how funeral speeches discussed the praiseworthy deeds of the deceased in order to encourage virtue in the youth (*Histories* 6.53-55; van der Poel 333). The wide trust in the power of exempla in promoting proper behavior illustrates why they were such a prominent device of Roman rhetoric (Coffey 141).

The Inescapable Rhetorical Influence

The language of rhetoric infused many aspects of Roman Imperial literature, so it is not surprising to see similar rhetorical techniques in such diverse authors (Coffey 123). All upper-

class men would have experienced similar early rhetorical training that focused on declamation, speeches on set topics, and the use of exempla (Bonner 98; Keane 2012, 405). Valerius Maximus clearly intends his work to serve as a reference for any orator seeking to use exempla in his speeches. Not only is this explicitly discussed in his preface, but the organization of the work makes his purpose clear. The individual books are divided into titled chapters discussing different virtues, incidents or vices (as Book 9 does exclusively), and even the chapters are neatly ordered into internal and external examples. This clear order would make it simple for anyone trying to find a specific type of exemplum to use (in a speech or other work). Seneca, while writing many more obviously rhetorical pieces, also displays his rhetorical training in his letters to Lucilius. Many of the letters give the impression of short essays dealing with a particular theme: vice, old age, prayer, education.

Juvenal too shows extensive rhetorical influence. Not only does he employ a variety of rhetorical tools, such as anaphora, rhetorical questions and the use of *sententiae* (Coffey 143), but he even mentions his own rhetorical training: “I too snatched my hand from under the rule, and gave advice to Sulla to become a private citizen and sleep deeply” (*et nos ergo manum ferulae subduximus, et nos/ consilium dedimus Sullae, privatus ut altum/ dormiret*, 1.15-17). This training shows in his Satires; some seem to read like declamatory essays answering questions about “why I write satire,” “why one should not be married,” “why exalted pedigrees are worthless,” or “what men should pray for” (Satire 1, Satire 6, Satire 8, Satire 10). Some of them (Satire 6, Satire 8) even address questions that are included in Quintilian’s rhetorical manual (Braund 2009, 456). However, as we will see, Juvenal differs from standard declamation in that he uses almost all apotrepic, or negative, exempla rather than the mixture of protrepic

(positive) and apotreptic exempla found in most authors (Braund 2009, 459). Despite these differences, rhetoric is a useful lens through which to consider Juvenal's work.

Stoic Links to Seneca's Use of Exempla

Exempla were a major component of Stoic teaching, making Seneca's use of them seem even more natural. Stoics strongly believed that it was possible to foster correct behavior by encouragement and warning, and so they employed exempla in moral education (Turpin 360, 364). Not only did Seneca use exempla in his rhetorical works, but some scholars also argue that he wrote his tragedies with an instructive purpose. The Stoic Epictetus claims that tragedies show examples of people made miserable by too much focus on possessions (*Epict.* 1.4.25-26, qtd. in Turpin 368). From this, Thomas Rosenmeyer argues that Seneca uses his tragedies as vehicles to deliver negative exempla (15, 16). Seneca's character Atreus is depicted in the same manner as Hannibal admiring the blood of fallen soldiers or Volesus seeing the endless rows of executed men in *De Ira* and so functions to warn readers or listeners away from cruelty and anger (Rosenmeyer 20). As Rosenmeyer puts it, "The severity of vice makes us shrink and think again" (20). Although including exempla was certainly not Seneca's only reason for writing tragedies, the works develop another dimension when considered from that perspective.

General Characteristics of Exempla

Exempla can be constructed about a variety of ethical, moral or political topics and can be introduced in a number of ways; at the same time, they all share some distinguishing characteristics. Most basically, an exemplum is a story, either short or long, about a saying or

action of a famous, or not so famous, person (Morgan 5). Matthew Roller's detailed analysis of exempla identifies four critical characteristics that are often present or implied. There must be: 1) a notable action (either good or bad), 2) a judgment by the primary audience in the story, 3) commemoration or sharing of the story with an external secondary audience, and 4) imitation or avoidance of the action by the secondary audience (Roller 4-5). Valerius Maximus, Seneca and Juvenal all follow these traditional characteristics when constructing their exempla. It will be useful to analyze a representative instance from each.

Valerius Maximus: Maximus' Luxury

An exemplum telling of Quintus Fabius Maximus appears in the chapter about those "who degenerated from illustrious parents" in Book 3 (*qui a parentibus claris degeneraverunt*, 3.5). It clearly contains Roller's four requirements. First, Maximus' shameful life is briefly described (3.5.2):

age Q. Fabi Maximi Allobrogici et civis et imperatoris clarissimi filius Q. Fabius Maximus quam perditam luxuria vitam egit! cuius ut cetera flagitia oblitterentur, tamen abunde illo dedecore mores nudari possunt, quod ei Q. Pompeius praetor urbanus paternis bonis interdixit.

Come, take this case: Quintus Fabius Maximus, son of the renowned citizen and general Quintus Fabius Maximus Allobrogicus: how doomed with luxury was the life he led! His other shameful deeds are erased, however his character is able to be exposed abundantly through this disgrace, namely that the city praetor Quintus Pompeius deprived him of his father's estate.

Although this description of the deed(s) done by Maximus is not very detailed, given the limitations imposed on a collection of 967 exempla, it is reasonable that Valerius might provide little detail, in order to emphasize the vice, in this case luxury, and its result.

This exemplum is especially clear regarding the judgment of the primary audience because not only does the praetor forbid Maximus from obtaining his inheritance, but also “no one could be found, even in so large a city, to refute the decision” (*neque in tanta civitate qui illud decretum reprehenderet inventus est*, 3.5.2). This clearly shows that the primary audience disapproved of Maximus’ actions, but Valerius goes further and describes that “people were bearing it grievously that the money, which ought to serve the splendor of the Fabian family, was being squandered in disgraceful deeds” (*dolenter enim homines ferebant pecuniam, quae Fabiae gentis splendori servire debebat, flagitiis dissici*, 3.5.2). Thus, although the anecdote is short, Valerius provides a judgment and reason for the judgment; the reason would help his readers to compare this to other events or exempla because it allows them to consider the same criteria used by the primary audience.

The secondary audience is not obvious within the text, but one is implied: readers of Valerius’ work. Similarly, it is hard to prove that negative exempla prevented repetition or expansion of the vice in question. More often, the stated (or unstated) opinion of the author conveys that the audience should imitate good or avoid repeating bad deeds. In the case of Maximus, Valerius provides a general conclusion: “Therefore, public severity disinherited one who had been made heir by his father’s excessive indulgence” (*ergo quem nimia patris indulgentia heredem reliquerat publica severitas exheredavit*, 3.5.2). The generic nature of this conclusion encourages the audience not to repeat Maximus’ excesses, so fulfilling Roller’s last characteristic. Thus, we see that even in a pithy story, Valerius Maximus incorporates the major features of an exemplum.

Seneca: Piso's Anger

Roller's four characteristics are also apparent in the exempla recorded by Seneca. In *De Ira*, he describes Gnaeus Piso. This man could not control his anger and so executed three men, when none needed to be killed (*De Ira* 1.18.3-6). As Seneca explains: one soldier had come back from leave without his companion, and so Piso ordered him to be executed on the basis that he must have killed the other man. Just before the man is executed, his comrade returns, and so the executioner brings both men back to Piso. Instead of granting a pardon, Piso is moved by anger to execute all three men: “‘You,’ he said, ‘I order to be led away [for execution] since you were condemned; you, since you were the cause of your fellow soldier’s condemnation, and you, since you, having been ordered to kill, did not obey your general’” (*te' inquit 'duci iubeo, quia damnatus es; te, quia causa damnationis commilitoni fuisti; te, quia iussus occidere imperatori non paruisti,* 1.18.6). This description clearly recounts a notable action that is fertile ground for an exemplum.

Seneca briefly mentions the fact that these events are taking place in the crowded camp, hinting at the existence of the primary audience. As he explains, “Accompanied by a huge crowd, the two soldiers, embracing each other, were led back to great rejoicing of the camp” (*ingenti concursu deducuntur complexi alter alterum cum magno gaudio castrorum commilitones,* 1.18.4). This short statement not only affirms that many people were present during the events, but that they were pleased at the soldiers’ reunion, and so presumably displeased at Piso’s order for them both to be killed. There is no explicit articulation about the audience’s reaction to Piso’s judgment, but because Piso’s decision to execute all three men demonstrates excessive anger, it is easy to infer that the other soldiers and camp-attendants disapproved of his action.

Just as Valerius Maximus' work posits a secondary audience, Seneca's publication of his book indicates his desire for Piso's story to be shared among later readers. Seneca also makes it clear what judgment future readers should make: to condemn and avoid repeating Piso's actions (Roller's fourth criterion). During the description of the crime, he exclaims, "Oh, how clever is anger at fashioning causes for its fury!" (*o quam sollers est iracundia ad fingendas causas furoris!*, 1.18.6). Then he concludes, "Anger, I should say, has this evil quality: it does not want to be ruled" (*habet, inquam, iracundia hoc mali: non vult regi*, 1.19.1). The combination of these two statements illustrates that Seneca is criticizing Piso's action because he not only fails to control his anger but also allows it free reign.

Juvenal: Lateranus' Unseemly Behavior

In Satire 8, Juvenal ponders the worth of good breeding and provides a number of exempla to illustrate his complaint that pedigrees do not necessarily make a moral person. This is a similar concern to that evinced by Valerius Maximus in his chapter on "those who degenerated from well-known parents" (*qui a parentibus claris degeneraverunt*, 3.5). One of Juvenal's examples of good breeding combined with bad behavior is Lateranus (possibly Plautius Lateranus, who was consul designate under Nero in 65 CE; Braund 2004, 335). Lateranus is introduced as a *mulio consul*, driving a chariot after dark and applying the brake himself (8.146-148). Juvenal also describes Lateranus frequenting all-night taverns and spending time with sailors, thieves, and fugitives (*nautis et furibus et fugitivis*) among other disreputable characters (8.173-176).

This meticulous sketch of remarkable behavior fulfills the first of Roller's four characteristics that must be present for references to become exempla. Juvenal's lurid account is

meant to expose a shocking event: “Lateranus applies the brake himself”, and “once he is not consul he will even drive in the daylight” (*ipse rotam adstringit sufflamine mulio consul*, 8.148; *finitum tempus honoris/ cum fuerit, clara Lateranus luce flagellum/ sumet*, 8.150-152). There is also an indication of a primary audience. Juvenal notes in the description of Lateranus that “indeed it was night, but the Moon sees, but the stars, witnesses, train their eyes [on him]” (*nocte quidem, sed Luna videt, sed sidera testes/ intendunt oculos*, 8.149-150). Although this is not a human audience, it is significant that Juvenal reports that Lateranus’ behavior was witnessed; his own description implies that someone must have actually seen it. Juvenal also notes that others have commemorated Lateranus’ conduct. He suggests that his actions are commonly discussed to the point that there is debate about his level of guilt: “One defender of the guilt will say to me, ‘We, as youths, did this’” (*defensor culpae dicet mihi ‘fecimus et nos/ haec iuvenes,’* 8.163-64). Finally, the passage portrays Lateranus as an exemplum that the secondary audience should not imitate. Juvenal clearly expresses his judgment to his readers, “Such crimes should be cut off with the first beard” (*quaedam cum prima resecentur crimina barba*, 8.166). Interestingly, he notes that the elite now forgive themselves “for actions that would be disgraceful to a worker” (*at vos, Troiugenae, vobis ignoscitis et quae/ turpia cerdoni Volesos Brutumque decebunt*, 8.181-182). The speaker implies that improper behavior like Lateranus’ has become common.

Exempla from History and History from Exempla

In addition to the characteristics identified by Roller, a few other attributes of exempla appear consistently from Valerius Maximus to Juvenal. First, almost all are of a historical, rather than mythological nature (to be sure, some stories of the early Roman period are semi-mythological). Indeed, in Roman literature most exempla are taken from the historical record (or

in Juvenal's case, what he thinks should be part of the historical record), while in Greek literature a mythological origin is more common (Skidmore 13). Instead of heroes and monsters, emperors, senators, generals, freedmen and even slaves appear in the works of Valerius Maximus, Seneca and Juvenal. Even contemporary or near-contemporary characters, including figures that seem, to a modern reader, more obscure than emperors or generals, could be used. A wide variety of players from Roman, as well as Greek and "barbarian," history are employed: from Cato and Cicero to Sejanus and Domitian. Juvenal himself clearly borrowed some of his more elaborate imperial examples (including Messalina in Satire 6, Sejanus in Satire 10, and Gaius Silius in Satire 10) from Tacitus' *Annals* (Highet 1951, 373; Keane 2012, 406).

The fact that many were drawn from history suggests a general belief that the main purpose of history was to record and provide exempla for future generations. Livy and Tacitus both cite the preservation of such stories as a service their histories provide (Skidmore 15). Even the Greek historian Diodorus cites exempla as a benefit from history, professing, "For it is good to be able to use the mistakes of others as examples in making corrections" (1.1.4; translation from Turpin 374). Seneca too argues that history abounds with exempla: "Neither do the examples by which you will be strengthened have to be collected for a long time: every age brings them forth. Into whatever part of history, either Roman or foreign, you send out your memory, prodigious examples will occur to you of either great success or great vigor" (*nec diu exempla quibus confirmeris colligenda sunt: omnis illa aetas tulit. in quamcumque partem rerum vel civilium vel externarum memoriam miseris, occurrent tibi ingenia aut profectus aut impetus magni, Ep. 24.3*). In that vein, Seneca incorporates cases not only from history but also from his own time (Mayer 1991, 147). Following in this path, Juvenal augments the satirist's usual critical description of everyday incidents with historical exempla (Keane 2012, 408). However,

even though many of these exempla may appear to be historical, that does not mean that they are completely factual: they are often used without context and so can often be exaggerated in order to better convey a message (Langlands 2008, 161, 174). It is especially probable that Juvenal sacrificed rigid historical accuracy to exhibit a more elaborate or arresting spectacle.

Vice at a Pinnacle

In conjunction with turning to history for exempla, Roman authors also compare the morality of current times to past generations. In general, their literature shows a longing for the older, simpler days, and that feeling is evidenced in the writing of Valerius, Seneca and Juvenal. Valerius Maximus often finds many customs to praise in former days, while seeing more problems in his time.⁵ Seneca too complains about the prominence of contemporary vice, but he notes that this is the same claim made by every generation, concluding, “We shall always pronounce the same thing about ourselves: we are bad, we were bad, and- I shall add this unwillingly- we will be bad” (*ceterum idem semper de nobis pronuntiare debemus, malos esse nos, malos fuisse,—invitus adiciam, et futuros esse, De Ben.1.10.3*). However, in his *De Ira*, he plainly embraces the idea of decline. Discussing the rampant nature of vice in modern Rome, he echoes the concerns of many other Roman authors (2.9.1-2):

maior cotidie peccandi cupiditas, minor verecundia est; expulso melioris aequiorisque respectu quocumque visum est libido se inpingit, nec furtiva iam scelera sunt: praeter oculos eunt, adeoque in publicum missa nequitia est et in omnium pectoribus evalvit ut innocentia non rara sed nulla sit. numquid enim singuli aut pauci rupere legem? undique velut signo dato ad fas nefasque miscendum coorti sunt.

The desire to sin is greater every day, while modesty is seen less and less. With the consideration of fairer and better things thrown out, lust thrusts itself in.

⁵ For example, see 2.praef-2.3; 2.5.5; 4.1.6; cf. Morgan 148.

Neither are crimes concealed now: they proceed before our eyes. Wickedness has been sent out into the public and increased in strength so much in the hearts of everyone that innocence is not rare, but actually gone. Surely it is not just individual people or a few who break the law? No, just as if there was a sign given, they appear from every direction to mix up right and wrong.

Juvenal shares the same concern in his Satires. His first satire overflows with complaints about all the horrible things he sees in Rome and he concludes with a statement that vice is at a pinnacle (1.147-149):

nil erit ulterius quod nostris moribus addat
 posteritas, eadem facient cupientque minores,
 omne in praecipiti vitium stetit.

There will be nothing worse for posterity to add to our customs; our descendants will do and desire the same things. All vice stands on a precipice.

From this rousing opening, Juvenal continues to attack all varieties of vice in his later Satires, representing many with the aid of exempla.

Specific Characteristics of Negative Exempla: Satiric Speaker and Shocked Language

Negative exempla like those seen in Juvenal seem to have characteristics that are not shared with their positive counterparts. First, there is often a satiric speaker within the scene (either the speaker of the poem or the poet's character) or a satirical and mocking tone throughout, and second, the author often expresses shock or revulsion. Juvenal employs a mocking voice throughout many of the exempla exhibited in his Satires. For instance, in Satire 10, he describes the dilemma of Gaius Silius, the man married by Messalina, in terms of what advice should be given to him: die now or die later. Although he starts out seeming to address an anonymous listener ("Choose what you think the one whom Caesar's wife has decided to marry

should be persuaded to do;” *elige quidnam/ suadendum esse putes cui nubere Caesaris uxor/ destinat*, 10.329-331), by the end he seems to be addressing Silius himself (“Whatever you think is easier and better, that white and pretty neck must be offered to the sword;” *quidquid levius meliusque putaris,/ praebenda est gladio pulchra haec et candida cervix*, 10.344-345). A mocking tone dominates witty remarks like, “She [Messalina] does not want to marry except legally” (*non nisi legitime volt nubere*, 10.338) or “Silius will get a tiny little delay [from death]” (*mora parvula*, 10.340) if he goes along with her wishes. This mocking voice frequently characterizes Juvenal’s Satires, especially in apostrophes to satiric targets.

Seneca too uses a satirical tone in several of the negative exempla he includes in his letters to Lucilius, although in his writings, the mocking statements come from an inset speaker. This type of speaker seems to help distinguish negative exempla from positive, and allows him to include mocking dialogue without lowering the tone of his own discourse. In such instances, Seneca is purportedly recording the scene of mocking, not inventing it. Although we cannot be sure that this is actually true, Seneca certainly either invents some dialogue, or favors stories that have that sort of dialogue. In addressing Lucilius about the “folly of mortals,” he indeed reveals a satiric tone and perspective at times (*stultitia mortalium*, *Ep.* 1.3; Dick 238).

Two especially interesting appearances of a satirical speaker occur in Letters 27 and 122. In the first case, Seneca urges Lucilius to attain a virtuous state of being. He emphasizes that Lucilius must do more than just attend to Seneca’s advice, because only by cultivating virtue himself will he ever become a man of virtue. To illustrate this point, he tells of Calvisius Sabinus, a rich but foolish man, who outsourced his learning to a collection of slaves. The exemplum is meant to show Lucilius that a “good mind is neither borrowed nor bought” (*bona mens nec commodatur nec emitur*, *Ep.* 27.8).

Seneca describes Sabinus in this way: “His memory was so bad that the name of Ulixes, or now Achilles, or now Priam would escape him; names he should have known as well as we know our attendants” (*huic memoria tam mala erat et illi nomen modo Ulixis excideret, modo Achillis, modo Priami, quos tam bene noverat quam paedagogos nostros novimus, Ep. 27.5*). Yet Sabinus wants to seem learned, so Seneca relates that he buys a multitude of slaves, one to learn Homer, one for Hesiod, and one each for the nine lyric poets (*Ep. 27.6*). At a dinner party, Sabinus “would keep them at his feet, and he would ask them for verses to recite, but would often fall apart in the middle of a word” (*habebat ad pedes hos, a quibus subinde cum peteret versus quos referret, saepe in medio verbo excidebat, Ep. 27.6*). Here is where Seneca’s example becomes more mocking: he introduces Satellius Quadratus, a “nibbler, flatterer and mocker of foolish rich men” (*stultorum divitum arrosor. . . arrosor. . . derisor, Ep. 27.7*). Satellius realizes Sabinus “thinks that he knows what anyone in his house knows” (*ut putaret se scire quod quisquam in domo sua sciret, Ep. 27.7*), so he urges him to learn to wrestle. Satellius points out mockingly that although Sabinus himself is sick, pale, and slight (*hominem aegrum, pallidum, gracilem, Ep. 27.8*), he has plenty of substitutes: “Do you not see how many very strong slaves you have?” (*non vides quam multos servos valentissimos habeas, Ep. 27.8*). This mocking character allows Seneca to make his point that some things, like a virtuous mind, cannot be bought at any price.

A mocking figure also appears in Letter 122, in which Seneca describes men who switch the order of living from day to night in order to distinguish themselves from the normal crowd. Not only does he discuss it generally, but he also introduces Acilius Buta, a praetor, who lived in this way. Not content with merely mentioning Buta, Seneca adds a touch of humor with the anecdote of how “Tiberius said to Buta, who was professing his poverty after his huge patrimony

was used up, ‘You awakened too late’” (*cui post patrimonium ingens consumptum Tiberius paupertatem confitenti ‘sero’ inquit ‘experrectus es,’ Ep. 122.10*). This is followed by a description of poetry readings by the poet Julius Montanus who “was generously inserting sunrises and sunset” and reciting endlessly; a description similar to Juvenal’s opening complaints in Satire 1 about hearing never-ending recitations of poetry (*ortus et occasus libentissime inserebat, Ep. 122.11*; cf. Juvenal 1.1-14). The satirist figure Natta Pinarius in Seneca’s letter claims, “I am prepared to listen to him [Montanus] from sunrise to sunset” (*paratus sum illum audire ab ortu ad occasum, Ep. 122.11*).

With this brief set-up, Seneca then returns to the issue of Buta with another satirist figure, here Varus, a Roman knight, comrade of Marcus Vinicius and devotee of good dinners (*Varus eques Romanus, M. Vinicii comes, cenarum bonarum adsectator, Ep. 122.12*). After Montanus depicted a sunrise in flowery terms, “Varus exclaimed, ‘Buta begins to sleep’” (*exclamavit ‘incipit Buta dormire,’ Ep. 122.12*). Later, when Montanus described how “‘already the shepherds place their own cattle in the stables, and already night begins to give slow silence to the lands lulled to sleep,’ then Varus said, ‘What do you say? Is it night already? I will go and greet Buta’” (*iam sua pastores stabulis armenta locarunt, iam dare sopitis nox pigra silentia terries incipit, idem Varus inquit ‘quid dicis? iam nox est? ibo et Butam salutabo,’ Ep. 122.13*). This exemplum, and the others in the letter, helps Seneca to warn Lucilius away from acting in wild or outrageous ways because then he would be spoken of mockingly, as Varus speaks about Buta. This device is similar to the mocking voice Juvenal employs.

A second major characteristic of many negative exempla is the use of language expressing shock or revulsion. This is most obvious in Juvenal’s first two books of satires,

where his *indignatio* is at the forefront (Braund 1988, 2). Juvenal often uses vivid language when describing exempla. Gracchus' marriage to a man is highly embellished (2. 124-127):

segmenta et longos habitus et flammea sumit
 arcano qui sacra ferens nutantia loro
 sudavit clipeis ancilibus. o pater Urbis,
 unde nefas tantum Latiis pastoribus?

He puts on flounces, a long dress and the bridal veil, he who, bearing the sacred works swaying from the mysterious strap, sweated under the sacred shields. O father of the city, from where has such wickedness come to Latin shepherds?

The description of Messalina at work is equally dramatic (6.120-123):

sed nigrum flavo crinem abscondente galero
 intravit calidum veteri centone lupanar
 et cellam vacuum atque suam.

But, with a golden wig hiding her dark hair, she entered a brothel, warm with old blankets, and her own empty room.

Similarly colorful is the depiction of noble Lateranus at a cheap tavern (8.173-176):

invenies aliquo cum percussore iacentem,
 permixtum nautis et furibus ac fugitivis,
 inter carnifices et fabros sandapilarum
 et resupinati cessantia tympana galli.

You will find him lying with some assassin, intermingling with sailors and thieves and fugitives, among executioners and makers of cheap coffins and the quiet drums of a priest lolled on his back.

Juvenal's language brings the scenes to life, with the effect that readers feel that they are present, even though they are actually the secondary audience. Seneca's use of similar tones in some of his letters, or descriptions in his works lends a comparable feel. Rhetorical questions appear frequently in his *De Ira*, lending an urgent or upset tone (e.g. 3.18-20). Vivid descriptions often

accompany the exempla in his letters: one thinks of the slaves surrounding the feet of Sabinus (*Ep.* 27) or the actions of Clodius bribing the jury (*Ep.* 97.1-10).

Valerius Maximus too uses elaborate expressions of disgust as the exemplum requires. Like Juvenal, he sums up the proper reaction to vice as *indignatio*, as when he lambasts the ungrateful actions of individuals (5.3.3):

ceterum ut senatus populiue mens in modum subitae tempestatis concitata leni querella prosequenda est, ita singulorum ingrata facta liberiore indignatione proscindenda sunt, quia potentes consilii, cum utrumque ratione perpendere liceret, scelus pietati praetulerunt: quo enim nimbo, qua procella verborum impium Sextili caput obrui meretur.

Although the mind of the senate and the people having been incited in the manner of a sudden storm should be met with a moderate complaint, nevertheless the ungrateful deeds of individuals should be censured with more unlimited indignation, since having power of deliberation, they preferred crime to piety, when they were able to ponder each with reason. With what a storm, what a tempest of words does the wicked head of Sextilius deserve to be buried!

In another chapter, “all the strength of indignation” fuels his tirade against Sejanus (*omnibus indignationis viribus*, 9.11.ext.4). The use of indignation was common in Roman rhetoric, as indicated by the fact that Cicero cataloged the fifteen sources of *indignatio* (*De Inventione* 1.100-105). While the Sejanus exemplum is unique in a number of ways (see pg. 75), it illustrates the use of *indignatio* well. For example, Valerius claims the “human race” (*genus humanum*) would bear the horrific results of Sejanus’ actions, addressing Cicero’s requirement to discuss the affected people (*De Inventione* 1.101). He implies, also, that Sejanus’ actions were premeditated (another source of *indignatio*; *De Inventione* 1.102), asking, “Or if you continued in your madness would the world have remained in its own state?” (*aut te compote furoris mundus in suo statu mansisset?*). The actions of Sejanus are portrayed as debased, and he himself is said to be “more savage than the monstrosity of barbarian brutality” (*efferratae barbariae immanitate*

truculentior), fulfilling two more of Cicero's methods (*De Inventione* 1.102-103). Rhetorical questions also mark sections with *indignatio*, as seen in the Sejanus exemplum. Braund shows that Juvenal displays many of those methods of accessing *indignatio* throughout his Satires (1988, 3).

Behind Closed Doors or Out in the Streets: Origins of Exemplary Figures

Despite these shared features, Seneca and Juvenal tend to depict different kinds of characters as negative exempla. Positive exempla are more often tied with famous individuals, such as generals, senators, emperors, or foreign leaders, and this holds true in Seneca's writings (Morgan 6). Augustus appears giving mercy to the conspirator Cinna; Cato dies well; Fabricius steadfastly refuses bribes of all sorts; Horatius Cocles valiantly defends the bridge (*De Clementia* 1.9.2-1.10.3; *Ep.* 82.12-13; *Ep.* 120.6; *Ep.* 120.7). However, Seneca's negative exempla often come from more private occasions, especially in his letters: the dinner party of Sabinus or the night-living Buta are both private events. It is also the case that less well-known characters often appear as negative exempla (Morgan 140). Yet, in the privacy of the events he recounts, Seneca breaks new ground.

Previously, private events were less likely to become exempla because they lacked a significant audience. By writing about these events to Lucilius, Seneca helps these incidents become full exempla by expanding their audience (to Lucilius and then later readers of the published collection). The published letter is an especially good medium for this expanded role because, as a letter, it retained the aura of private communication, but through publication, Seneca's letters gained a wider audience. Thus, the events described in his letters obtain the wider audience necessary to be termed exempla. It also served to call readers' attention to vice

in a way that had not been done much before, by forcing them to think about vices that are subtler or more private than tyranny and violence.

In contrast, Juvenal not only employs well-known figures as negative exempla (as does Seneca in cases discussing anger), but also often seems to attack public rather than private events: public wedding processions, Creticus' outfit worn to the law court, Lateranus out driving, or the characters he sees moving about on an average day in Rome. He especially singles out actions done in public that do not suit the position or status of the individual, at least in the speaker's opinion (Knoche 264). This reinforces the audience's role in commemorating exempla, for Juvenal often places his speaker in the scene of the action, seeming to be somewhere that it might not be possible for a real person to be (Richlin 312). His increased focus on public events correlates with the professed nature of his poems as a public attack on vice. Whereas Seneca's "private" letters are suited to reveal private vice, Juvenal's public Satires are ideal for castigating public vice. In Satire 1, he claims to take Lucilius, an earlier satirist, for his model (1.19-21):

cur tamen hoc potius libeat decurrere campo,
per quem magnus equos Auruncae flexit alumnus
si vacat ac placidi rationem admittitis, edam.

I shall explain why it is pleasing rather to race across the field through which the great ward of Aurunca [Lucilius] directed his horses, if you have time and can listen to reason calmly.

Later in the satire, he again appeals to his vision of Lucilius, who roars as if with a drawn sword (*ense velut stricto quotiens Lucilius ardens/ infremuit . . .*, 1.165-166). Taking Lucilius as his model (and a lone positive exemplum in the Satires) suits his focus on attacking vice and revealing wickedness to the public. The earlier satirist Horace also discusses Lucilius' writings in his satires (*Sermo* 2.1.62-65):

quid? cum est Lucilius ausus
 primus in hunc operis componere carmina morem
 detrahere et pellem, nitidus qua quisque per ora
 cederet, introrsum turpis. . .

What? When Lucilius first dared to compose songs in this type of genre and to pull off the skin, in which each man walked shining through the world, repulsive inside. . .

Horace's depiction of Lucilius publicly unveiling private wrongs corresponds to Juvenal's highlighting of public vice. Juvenal attacks private actions as well, but it is often in a context of revealing something to the public eye. The seeming publicity of these actions makes them more shocking and exciting for his readers.

Conclusion

Despite some differences, the exempla devised by Valerius Maximus, Seneca, and Juvenal share many characteristics overall. Exempla are a mark of rhetorical training and have a specific set of factors that distinguish them from other literary devices. In addition to the features identified by Roller's analysis, exempla often stem from historical characters. Longer exempla, either attacking wickedness or wishfully recalling older moral standards, will often include an exclamation about the current abundance of vice. Most interestingly, a satirical or mocking speaker and elaborate language expressive of shock or repulsion often distinguish negative exempla. When including exempla, authors like Juvenal and Seneca will often strategically employ specific features in order to emphasize their desired message.

Chapter 3: *Quid antiqua perscrutor?*: Construction of New Exempla

Overview

Although history provides many exempla for authors in the Imperial period, in order to keep the exemplary tradition in step with current times, new exempla must be devised. Incidents and events of the semi-historical regal period or the Republican era will not have the same effect on Imperial readers since the surrounding circumstances are not the same. The new hierarchy begun under Augustus immediately sets forth a new exemplary tradition focusing on figures appropriate for the new regime (Bell 11). Although Seneca and Juvenal do not select only famous Imperial figures, they, unlike Valerius Maximus, attend to this issue by consciously incorporating new exempla in their writings. This shows their continued attention to the theory and practice of using exempla, although each uses them in a distinct manner. Seneca crafts exempla that include incidents from personal life to aid in day-to-day proper behavior. Juvenal constructs numerous obscure exempla as he parades every sort of vice before his readers.

The creation of new exempla is not revolutionary. Each had to pass through a process of repetition and sharing in order to become the famous cases that regularly appear in rhetoric. The exempla about Cato, Lucretia, Horatius Cocles, or Mucius Scaevola all must have started out with limited audiences. Even ignoring the characters that appear in Livy's *Ab Urbe Condita* or other famous tracts, the creation of new exempla was not an unusual occurrence. The most basic function of an exemplum, as discussed above, is to encourage good behavior and discourage improper behavior. Roman funeral speeches recalled the good deeds of ancestors and the newly deceased and so aimed to instill virtues in the youth of the family (Skidmore 17). Thus, that practice was, in essence, the creation of new exempla.

Discussion of ancestral deeds that were worthy of emulation reinforced an understanding of Roman moral values. In addition, it helped to commemorate the deceased family member. Roller argues that such exemplary discourse, as well as more broadly used exempla, were a critical method in processing and sorting events (8). This is not a surprising concept. A tradition of judging and remembering events would have aided contemporary Romans' consideration and evaluation of current history. Given the fact that some Roman historians profess that the purpose of recording history was to preserve exempla, it is reasonable to assume that, over time, other authors would have wanted to create new exempla, ones not necessarily included in historical annals. Both Seneca and Juvenal do this in their works. Seneca includes a mixture of positive and negative stories, while Juvenal's are exclusively negative. However, both men do not restrict their harvesting of exemplary material from traditional fields. Seneca expands his reach to include characters pulled from his private life. This illustrates that he is trying to use exempla to encourage proper moral behavior in a broader section of society than military and political leaders (although they would certainly also be expected to adhere to Seneca's moral framework) and agrees with his focus on the inner self. Juvenal too introduces a variety of characters from Rome. His juxtaposition of famous characters, such as Messalina or Agrippina, with unknown ones like Pontia gives his Satires a more interesting perspective because it shows that he attacks rich and poor, famous and obscure persons with equal vehemence. In addition, Juvenal's tales often emphasize the public nature of such displays or the presence of an audience. The collection of these new cases from conventional or novel situations reinforce that both Seneca and Juvenal were interested in continuing and expanding the function of exempla.

New Exempla: News Headlines

A number of characteristics, as discussed above, generally define exempla. However, sometimes the narrative is condensed to a name and brief description. Although exempla can be short or long (Morgan 124), the length is an important distinction, especially in the creation of new exempla. Exempla are meant to engage with the knowledge of the reader (Langlands 2008, 162), and short descriptions or glancing references to names rely especially on the reader's knowledge for full comprehension of the text. There are many instances in Juvenal's Satires in which he names characters (like the poet Cluvenus in Satire 1, 1.80) about whom there is no other information, indicating either the name (and person) was known at the time, or it was a cover name (Hight 2009, 300). Some names can be identified as common names of certain clans (like Creticus for the Caecilii Metelli), or rare names associated with specific contemporary persons, against whom the satirist's barbs were directed (like names of a number of Pliny's friends; Hight 2009, 303). Knowing more background on some of these names would probably add to our understanding or appreciation of the Satires. Nevertheless, many times Juvenal provides brief descriptions of characters and sets them up as negative exempla, especially at the beginning of Satire 1, when he lists Mevia (1.22), Matho (1.32), Marius Priscus (1.49) and a new Lucusta (1.71). This type of exemplum especially relies on a reader to fill in more details and add to the drama of the story. Sometimes, as Valerius Maximus does with Sejanus, Juvenal will forgo critical names altogether, as when he describes Domitian (2.29-33):

qualis erat nuper tragico pollutus adulter
 concubitu, qui tunc leges revocabat amaras
 omnibus atque ipsis Veneri Martique timendas,
 cum tot abortivis fecundam Iulia vulvam
 solveret et patruo similes effunderet offas.

Just so was that adulterer, recently polluted by a tragic joining, who then was reinstating the harsh laws, feared by everyone, even Venus and Mars, while Julia loosened her fertile womb with so many premature births and poured out bits looking like her uncle.

This type of exemplum especially requires an astute reader to identify the major character as Domitian. It is more like a statue or graffito than an exemplum with named characters because hints or allusions to the subject, rather than a straightforward name, allow the audience to identify the target. In this case, Domitian is identified both as the uncle of Julia and by rumored or factual details about his rule.

Seneca too uses pithy descriptions at points. Just as in Juvenal, these sorts of exempla require the reader to provide more background, and they emphasize the connection between the reader and the writer because they must share some common knowledge in order for the point or joke to be evident. Seneca composes the exemplum of Natalis in this manner (*Ep.* 87.16):

nuper Natalis, tam improbae linguae quam impurae, in cuius ore feminae purgabantur, et multorum heres fuit et multos habuit heredes. quid ergo? utrum illum pecunia impurum effecit an ipse pecuniam inspurgavit? quae sic in quosdam homines quomodo denarius in cloacam cadit.

Recently, Natalis, of the tongue that was just as wicked as it was foul, in whose mouth women were being cleaned, was the heir of many and had many heirs. What then? Did money make him foul or did he defile his money? Thus, money falls to some men just as a coin falls into the sewer.

This exemplum questions if riches are incompatible with virtue, but Seneca does not provide an exhaustive description of Natalis' exploits. Thus, although it generally fulfills the requirements of exhibiting behavior to be avoided, there are clearly details that would have been known to some people at the time, but which Seneca does not include.

This type of exempla helps establish author-reader connections, because the reader and author must share knowledge about certain events. In contrast, for exempla with a detailed

description, the author does more of the work in introducing the story to the reader, who only must judge, learn, laugh or heed as the case requires (although they might know some of the information the author provides). While the short descriptions cited above do not explicitly include many of the exemplary characteristics, they do represent valuable snippets of whole exempla. It is easy to see how readers could imagine all the features of exempla with each segment. Nevertheless, full descriptions written by Seneca and Juvenal do explicitly include many exemplary attributes. By sharing a full story with their audience, the readers can then share the story with others, and so help the exemplum to spread.

Seneca's Exemplum in Process: Judging Claudius

Seneca initially expanded the realm of topics that exempla could cover by bringing them into private lives. Now, not just Cato is glorified for his noble death, but also Seneca's friend Aufidius Bassus. This expansion allows Seneca to set up exempla as the goal of any average Roman. Not many would have the chance to become a figure to equal Cato's exemplary standing, but many might be able to die well, or do some similarly "low-key" exemplary action. Through this change, Seneca can emphasize his moral goals in a clearly understandable manner. In addition, by providing more incidents from private lives, he shows that exempla can be culled not only from empire changing events, but also from small events, emphasizing that morality and good behavior is a constant struggle, a point he stresses in his letters to Lucilius. So, even though Seneca uses exempla from history, he also gathers them from nature and his own experiences (Morgan 287). This yields a rich palette from which he can construct his system of morality.

One of the newest famous exemplary figures that Seneca deals with is the Emperor Claudius. His *Apocolocyntosis*, likely written soon after the death of Claudius and the accession of Nero, describes the presumed journey of Claudius to heaven, his judgment at the hands of the gods, and his descent and trial in the underworld. The work does not present one of Claudius' deeds as an exemplum, since none is described in detail, but it represents the evaluation step of creating new exempla. The focus of the piece concerns the council of the gods on Olympus, deciding whether to admit Claudius as a god. Instead of an audience of Romans, the gods evaluate Claudius' actions and decide if he, as emperor, will be a positive exemplum (a god) or a negative exemplum (and be sent to the underworld).

However, before Claudius even arrives at Olympus, there are a few indications that he is not headed for paradise. The elaborate language Seneca uses in his physical description of Claudius echoes the intricate and shocked tone that often accompanies negative exempla.

Following Claudius' death, he appears on Olympus (5):

nuntiatur Iovi venisse quendam bonae staturae, bene canum; nescio quid illum minari, assidue enim caput movere; pedem dextrum trahere. quaesisse se, cuius nationis esset: respondisse nescio quid perturbato sono et voce confusa; non intellegere se linguam eius, nec Graecum esse nec Romanum nec ullius gentis notae. . . tum Hercules primo aspectu sane perturbatus est, ut qui etiam non omnia monstra timuerit. ut vidit novi generis faciem, insolitum incessum, vocem nullius terrestri animalis sed qualis esse marinis beluis solet, raucam et implicatam, putavit sibi tertium decimum laborem venisse.

It was announced to Jupiter that someone of good height and fine white hair had come, threatening something or other, for he continuously shook his head and was dragging his left foot. The messenger had asked of what country he was; he had responded something unintelligible with a confused sound and garbled voice, and the messenger was not able to understand his language, it was neither Greek nor Roman nor of any famous race. [Hercules is sent to investigate] Then Hercules was clearly disturbed at first sight, even he being one who did not fear any type of monster. As he saw the face of the new race, the strange step, the voice of the

kind that belongs to no earthly animal but rather to the beast of the sea, hoarse and strangled, he thought that a thirteenth labor had come to him.

The elaborate description portrays Claudius as a veritable monster, with whom only Hercules can deal. In addition, Claudius is initially labeled a negative exemplum because of the presence of the godly trial. The council of the gods is an important theme in satire, from Lucilius first parodying Ennius, to Juvenal's humorous depiction of Domitian's council summoned to deal with an enormous fish (although that council is composed of men rather than gods; Satire 4). In Seneca's imagined council, Hercules encourages the other gods to vote in Claudius' favor, but Augustus denounces Claudius' crimes, leading to Claudius' banishment to the underworld. The inclusion of a topic commonly treated in satire completes the creation of Seneca's mocking account of Claudius' death. The satiric elements of the *Apocolocyntosis* add to the humor of the piece. The satiric speakers sometimes appearing in Seneca's letters as marks of negative exempla differ because, although adding a bit of humor, the overall purpose is moral in those cases. The *Apocolocyntosis* is clearly a humorous attack on Claudius, even before the actual judgment of the gods banishes him to the underworld.

Despite that, Augustus' speech is especially interesting because he claims personal disgust at Claudius' actions as emperor. Even though Augustus was dead before Claudius' reign, in Seneca's portrayal, he appears as the primary audience who is reacting to Claudius' actions. Although he has kept silent before, he confesses that, "I am not able to pretend any more, nor limit the sorrow, which shame makes heavier" (*sed non possum amplius dissimulare, et dolorem, quem graviorem pudor facit, continere*, 10). After a series of rhetorical questions demanding if this was the reason he built up Rome, he confesses, "I do not find anything to say: all words do not measure up to my indignation" (*quid dicam non invenio: omnia infra indignationem verba sunt*, 10). *Indignatio* is a common word connected with Juvenal's Satires, since he himself

claims in the first satire that indignation will make his verses. In both Juvenal's first satire and Augustus' speech, the situation is such that both can no longer remain silent and find indignation at the heart of their words. Interestingly however, indignation prompts Juvenal's words, while words are not sufficient for Augustus' indignation. Despite that distinction and though the word may be a common one for oratory, its use by Seneca in a speech of satirical theme takes on special significance. It cements the connections that give the *Apocolocyntosis* a satirical flair and emphasizes the characteristics of a negative exemplum, helping guide the reader toward the conclusion that Claudius, despite the Senate's order, is no god.

Although Augustus' speech is a small part of the satire, it represents a critical fragment in Seneca's construction of the exemplum of Claudius. Augustus details Claudius' many crimes as emperor, murders of relatives and politicians, all without trials. He also disparages Claudius' physical deformities, and taunts that he would become a slave if Claudius could say three words quickly (11). These descriptions portray Claudius in a negative frame and illustrate the judgment of a unique primary audience, Augustus. By mentioning many of Claudius' deeds at once in the council setting, Seneca illustrates how an exemplary character like an emperor becomes either a negative or positive figure, associated with certain deeds or characteristics. Even though the *Apocolocyntosis* is humorous, Seneca's depiction of the evaluation of an exemplary character reveals some of the details involved in creating an exemplum.

Seneca's Positive Exempla

Seneca evinces a concern over dying well throughout his letters to Lucilius. Many exempla he discusses concern someone meeting death well or trying to escape from death.⁶ The historical account of Seneca's own death reads like another of his exempla. According to Tacitus, he encouraged his friends to remember their philosophical training before opening his veins (*Annals* 15.60-64). Before himself becoming a part of exemplary history, as he prompts Lucilius to do (*Ep.* 98.13), he recorded the deaths of other men who were not yet part of the exemplary tradition. By chronicling how Aufidius Bassus and Marcellinus met death, Seneca shows how two unremarkable men can be worthy of praise. In using mutual friends of himself and Lucilius, he selects topics for exempla from everyday existence, rather than battlefields or courtrooms.

Aufidius Bassus: *virum optimum*

In Letter 30, Seneca relates the story of Aufidius Bassus, a weak old man, but one who is still meeting death cheerfully. His narrative fulfills the characteristics of an exemplum. The letter opens with Seneca describing Bassus: "But already it [age] weighs down on him so much so that he is not able to be raised. Old age has pressed on him with a great –rather its entire weight" (*sed iam plus illum degravat quam quod possit attolli; magno senectus et universo pondere incubuit*, *Ep.* 30.1). Yet he notes Bassus' strength (*Ep.* 30.3):

Bassus tamen noster alacer animo est: hoc philosophia praestat, in conspectu mortis hilarem <esse> et in quocumque corporis habitu fortem laetumque nec deficientem quamvis deficiatur.

⁶ Men discussed in reference to their manner of death include: Aufidius Bassus (30), Telesphorus of Rhodes, Drusus Libo, nameless gladiators (70), Marcellinus, a Spartan boy (77), and Cato, Brutus (82).

Our Bassus, however is still swift of mind: philosophy offers us this: namely, that it is cheerful in sight of death and in whatever bodily condition, it is strong and happy, not failing although it is failed [by the body].

He explains that he has visited Bassus more frequently to appreciate how he is facing death and how “our Bassus does this and watches his own end with a mind and expression that you would think too untroubled if he were watching another’s death” (*hoc facit Bassus noster et eo animo vultuque finem suum spectat quo alienum spectare nimis securi putares, Ep. 30.3*). As part of assembling a new exemplum, Seneca includes a number of “quotes” from Bassus to add strength and interest to the story. “‘Therefore,’ he [Bassus] says, ‘death is so far beyond all trouble that it is beyond all fear of trouble’” (*‘ergo’ inquit ‘mors adeo extra omne malum est ut sit extra omnem malorum metum,’ Ep.30.6*). He also addresses why we should not fear death (*Ep. 30.16*):

illud quidem aiebat tormentum nostra nos sentire opera, quod tunc trepidamus cum prope a nobis esse credimus mortem: a quo enim non prope est, parata omnibus locis omnibusque momentis? ‘sed consideremus’ inquit ‘tunc cum aliqua causa moriendi videtur accedere, quanto aliae propiores sint quae non timentur.’

Indeed, he was saying that it is because of our own work that we feel this anguish, namely that we tremble when we think death is near us. For to whom is death not near? It is ready in all places and all times. He said, ‘But we must consider that when some cause of dying seems to approach, there are so many others, nearer, which we do not fear.’

These quotes from Bassus add depth and energy to the exemplum, helping Seneca make Bassus an exemplary character, although he is just a nearly anonymous friend.

Seneca himself is the primary audience of the story. While it is difficult to consider one person an audience, this concept fits in well with Seneca’s overall scheme to make exempla more a part of private life. A private occasion would not be expected to have a large audience, and so the parameters for how an audience is defined must be changed. For Seneca, and the private stories he recounts, the emphasis is on the wider secondary audience of his readers, who can use

the exempla to mold appropriate behavior. Seneca emphasizes himself as witness by writing, “I saw Aufidius Bassus, an excellent man, shaking and contending with age” (*Bassum Aufidium, virum optimum, vidi quassum, aetati obluctantem, Ep. 30.1*). The central verb “*vidi*” emphasizes that Seneca witnessed the event. In addition, the opening is significant, because by starting with Bassus’ name, there is an immediate focus on this previously unknown character.

The commemoration of Bassus’ approach toward death, as with previous examples from Seneca, is contained within the letter. In publishing his collection of letters, Seneca shares his amassed thoughts and exempla with a wider audience than Lucilius. Thus, more readers will have the opportunity to model their own end on Bassus’. Seneca recognizes that it is a common topic, but he argues for studying a concrete exemplum, like that of Bassus, to gain a better understanding (*Ep. 30.7*):

haec ego scio et saepe dicta et saepe dicenda, sed neque cum legerem aequè mihi profuerunt neque cum audirem iis dicentibus qui negabant timenda a quorum metu aberant: hic vero plurimum apud me auctoritatis habuit, cum loqueretur de morte vicina.

I know these things are said often and need to be said often, but neither when I read them were such things equally helpful to me nor when I heard such things being said by those who were denying fear of such things, when they were far from such fear themselves. This man truly had more authority with me, when he was speaking with death neighboring.

Seneca’s statement asserting that Bassus was more effective at persuading him not to fear death than precepts argues for the personal level of exempla that Seneca includes in his letters.

Seneca also includes clear praise of Bassus’ approach toward death, saying, “It is a great thing, Lucilius, and one needing a long time to learn: to depart with a calm mind when the inevitable hour arrives” (*magna res est, Lucili, haec et diu discenda, cum adventat hora illa inevitabilis, aequo animo abire, Ep. 30.4*). The inclusion of Lucilius’ name in the sentence

makes the advice specifically strong because Lucilius cannot help but pay attention to his name. This plain judgment (it is a good thing) completes Seneca's construction of Bassus as an exemplum of good death. The very private nature of the encounter fits with Seneca's tendency to make many exempla more personal and private, whether they illustrate virtues or flaws.

Tullius Marcellinus: *Voluptas* in Dying Well

Tullius Marcellinus is another character that Seneca employs to show how to die well. Again, Marcellinus is a friend of both Seneca and Lucilius. Letter 77, in which Marcellinus appears, opens with mail-ships arriving and Seneca reflecting that he was unconcerned with his business because he was an old man and so ready to meet death. To address this point more deeply, Seneca turns to the story of Marcellinus and several other anecdotes. He opens the exemplum, as he did with the passage about Bassus, by first mentioning Marcellinus and describing his condition (*Ep.* 77.5):

Tullius Marcellinus, quem optime noveras, adolescens quietus et cito senex, morbo et non insanabili correptus sed longo et molesto et multa imperante, coepit deliberare de morte.

Tullius Marcellinus, whom you knew well, a quiet youth and quickly an old man, having been snatched by illness, not untreatable, but long and troublesome and demanding many things, began to take counsel about death.

Marcellinus invites several friends to give him advice and decides to commit suicide on the counsel of his Stoic friend. Seneca describes how Marcellinus and the friend helped guide the slaves in their tasks, and then how Marcellinus dies. The primary audience is again small, merely the slaves and perhaps some friends and relatives present at Marcellinus' death. It is unclear whether Seneca was there or if he heard the story secondhand. A small audience again

emphasizes that Seneca is focusing on creating exempla that concern private rather than public life.

Seneca tells Lucilius, “But indeed this short story will not be useless; often necessity even demands such examples” (*sed ne inutilis quidem haec fabella fuerit; saepe enim talia exempla necessitas exigit, Ep. 77.10*). He clearly argues here for the importance of these personally relevant, rather than famous exempla. As in the case of Bassus, he implies that it is easier to learn difficult concepts from someone that is already well known to the student. This agrees with his earlier exhortation to Lucilius to live, metaphorically, with exemplary figures like Cato or Laelius (*Ep. 104*), because in both cases he is encouraging a very in-depth knowledge of the famous character and their actions. Such a complete understanding corresponds to the moral framework that Seneca wants readers to construct using exempla.

He guides the reader in this case by clearly laying out an opinion (*Ep. 77.6*):

amicus noster Stoicus, homo egregius et, ut verbis illum quibus laudari dignus est laudem, vir fortis ac strenuus, videtur mihi optime illum cohortatus. sic enim coepit: 'noli, mi Marcelline, torqueri tamquam de re magna deliberes. non est res magna vivere: omnes servi tui vivunt, omnia animalia: magnum est honeste mori, prudenter, fortiter.

Our Stoic friend, a distinguished person, and (so that I praise him with the words with which he is worthy of being praised) a strong and active man, seemed to me to advise him [Marcellinus] most excellently. He began thus: ‘Don’t, my Marcellinus, torment yourself as if you consider some great thing. It is not a great thing to live: all your slaves live, all the animals. It is a great thing to die honorably, discreetly and strongly.’

Seneca prefaces the advice by clearly labeling it the best, and then records the advice verbatim (seemingly). The fact that the friend is also labeled the “Stoic friend”, as compared to the other friends who are merely described as cowardly, or a flattering toady (*timidus* or *adulator blandus, Ep. 77.5*) indicates that this friend has an enhanced status immediately upon his introduction

(since Seneca is focusing on Stoic morality), bolstering the strength of his advice. These factors combine to convey a clear judgment to Lucilius and later readers that Marcellinus behaved properly.

Seneca's Negative Exempla

Publius Vinicius, the Stammerer

Seneca does not exclusively devise positive new exempla. He also includes negative exempla from both the private and public spheres. Besides the new exempla described earlier (*Ep.* 27, 122), he also discusses Publius Vinicius, who stammered. This is an especially interesting case, because Seneca initially describes the situation with characteristics of a negative exemplum before declaring that it is not Vinicius' manner of speech, but one who speaks too quickly who does wrong. This shows that Seneca wants readers to attend closely to the moral points he presents to ensure that they understand his advice. An exemplum is no good if the judgment is not properly understood, a concern authors sometimes face when including negative exempla.

Seneca opens the letter by discussing the satisfaction he receives from Lucilius' letters, as if he were actually conversing with him. He then mentions Lucilius' recent letter that told of a philosopher's speech, and uses that to transition into a discussion of proper speaking style, including the story of Vinicius. The description of Vinicius' behavior is accompanied by several mocking interruptions by other characters listed in the letter. These witty insults correspond to how Seneca often introduces negative exempla (*Ep.* 40.9-10):

cum quaereretur quomodo P. Vinicius diceret, Asellius ait 'tractim'. nam Geminus Varius ait, 'quomodo istum disertum dicatis nescio: tria verba non potest iungere'.

quidni malis tu sic dicere quomodo Vinicius? aliquis tam insulsus intervenerit quam qui illi singula verba vellenti, tamquam dictaret, non diceret, ait 'dic, †numquam dicas†?'

When asked how Publius Vinicius spoke, Asellius said, 'Little by little.' And certainly Geminus Varius said, 'I do not know how you are able to say that one is well-spoken: he is not able to join three words together.' Why then should you not prefer to speak as Vinicius does? Some man may come upon you, as silly as the one who said to Vinicius when he was plucking out single words as if he was dictating, not speaking, 'Say, can't you ever say anything?'

This description leaves no doubt that Vinicius' stammering was subject to jokes, as negatively judged behavior often is. However, Seneca makes the readers focus by changing their expectations so that Vinicius actually turns out to be a positive rather than negative exemplum.

Seneca opens this segment of the letter by declaring a preemptive judgment to ensure that Lucilius and his readers do not mistake the included mocking for disapproval: "Certainly you will do right therefore if you do not listen to those men who say as much as possible, not seeking how they say it, and if you prefer, if it is necessary, to speak as Vinicius does" (*recte ergo facies si non audieris istos qui quantum dicant, non quemadmodum quaerunt, et ipse malueris, si necesse est, †vel P. Vinicium dicere qui itaque†, Ep. 40.9*). The mocking description of exactly how Vinicius speaks follows. To reinforce a reader's understanding of Seneca's opinion on the matter, he concludes, "For I want the course of Quintus Haterius, the most renowned orator of his time, to be long absent from a rational man" (*nam Q. Hateri cursum, suis temporibus oratoris celeberrimi, longe abesse ab homine sano volo, Ep. 40.10*). These bookend judgments make it very clear that Seneca is holding up Vinicius as a positive exemplum in contrast to Haterius.⁷

These obvious judgments are important because Seneca is defying expectation in not sharing the

⁷ Quintus Haterius was an orator during the reigns of Augustus and Tiberius and died in 26 CE. Tacitus comments that appreciation of his style of eloquence died with him (*Annals* 4.61), and Seneca the Elder notes that Augustus joked that Haterius must have a brake (*Haterius noster sufflaminandus est, Controv.* 4.7).

opinion of the satirical characters in his exemplum. Clearly, he does not wish Lucilius and others to stammer purposely, but he would prefer them to speak slowly and carefully than rush headlong through their words.

This is a very interesting exemplum because the primary audience, consisting seemingly of Seneca and the other “speakers” of the letter, has a mixed opinion of Vinicius. The speakers mock his style of speech, but Seneca judges it to be better than a precipitous rush. The unexpected juxtaposition of mocking speeches with a positive exemplum illustrates Seneca’s focus on constructing exempla. He expects readers to attune to the details and so learn his recommendations for proper behavior.

Caligula: a Traditional Exemplary Character

Seneca does not only include characters from the private world, he also writes about well-known people, such as Augustus, Claudius and Caligula. These sorts of exempla are especially prevalent in his *De Ira*, *De Clementia* and *De Beneficiis*, implying that he regarded certain exempla as more suitable for different types of works. After discussing instances of cruelty and anger among rulers of the distant past, he suddenly turns to Caligula (*De Ira* 3.18.3):

quid antiqua perscrutor? modo C. Caesar Sex. Papinium, cui pater erat consularis, Betilenum Bassum quaestorem suum, procuratoris sui filium, aliosque et senatores et equites Romanos uno die flagellis cecidit, torsit, non quaestionis sed animi causa.

Why do I examine old cases? Just recently, Gaius Caesar killed Sextus Papinius, whose father was consul; Betilienus Bassus, his own quaestor; the son of his manager, and others, both senators and Roman knights in one day- tortured them with whips not for the sake of interrogation, but for his own amusement.

Seneca describes that Caligula had some killed in the garden that evening because he could not wait for the spectacle. Seneca's opening exclamation emphasizes that he wants to provide new exempla for his readers.

A clear audience is also detailed for the event, as Seneca describes, "So, walking in the terrace of his mother's garden (which separates the gallery from the river) with some women and other senators, he decapitated some of his victims by lamplight" (*ut in xysto maternorum hortorum (qui porticum a ripa separat) inambulans quosdam ex illis cum matronis atque aliis senatoribus ad lucernam decollaret*, 3.18.4). While the dark deed metaphorically contrasts with the lamplight, the light is primarily required because Caligula's anger could not wait until the light of day to see the executions. In addition, Seneca highlights Caligula's heedless behavior by emphasizing the publicity of his cruelty. Seneca's disturbed tone in the story emphasizes that this is a negative exemplum and provides a clear negative judgment to his readers. A series of rhetorical questions and excited phrases convey the shocked tone to a reader. Critically, this case illustrates Seneca using characteristics of exempla presentation to describe the actions of a recent emperor. It fits in well with Seneca's broader moral scheme because it shows that vices are just as prevalent in famous people as in others. The use of more recent exempla would be especially powerful for contemporary readers, because the horror and displeasure they feel from Seneca's description would likely be amplified by personal memories or stories they had heard. Thus these sorts of new exempla, like the others Seneca produces, broaden the applicability and effect of exempla.

Juvenal's Nod toward Stock Exempla

Juvenal clearly includes many new exempla in addition to stock negative exempla, such as Alexander and Hannibal. This correlates with his emphasis on the audience observing many of the actions he recounts. This tendency shows how he is pretending to be part of the process of establishing the exempla that will be used for future generations. Indeed, at one point he proclaims, "It is a thing worth noting in new annals and recent history, that a mirror was part of the equipment for civil war" (*res memoranda novis annalibus atque recenti/ historia, speculum civilis sarcina belli*, 2.102-103). He ends his programmatic first satire by announcing, "I shall try what can be gotten away with against those whose ashes are covered by the Flaminian and Latin roads" (*experiar quid concedatur in illos/ quorum Flaminia tegitur cinis atque Latina*, 1.170-171). Thus, Juvenal recognizes that he will not be using contemporary exempla, at the same time as he blends newly recorded and standard exempla without a perceivable difference in tone. Making fun of negative exempla does not require a distinction between old and new, but it does necessitate the satirist presenting himself as part of the exemplary tradition in order to be most humorous.

As part of that façade, Juvenal uses several stock exempla of ambition (Alexander: 10.168-187, Hannibal: 10.147-167, Pompey: 10.283-286) and old age (Nestor, Laertes, Priam: 10.246-272). Juvenal clearly recognizes how clichéd some of the old exempla have become when he finishes his description of Hannibal with this exclamation, "Go, mad one, and run through the savage Alps, so that you should please boys and become a declamation!" (*i, demens, et saevas curre per Alpes/ ut pueris placeas et declamatio fias*, 10.166-167). These cases illustrate that Juvenal is integrating his Satires into past exemplary tradition, while still pushing

its boundaries. His dismissal of Hannibal as an old declamation emphasizes the freshness and vibrancy of his new exempla.

Vice on Stage: Audience in Juvenal

Juvenal gives an especially interesting role to the audiences of his invented exempla. The continued prominence of an audience shows how much value he places on exempla throughout his Satires. By emphasizing the act of observation, Juvenal in essence recreates the initial occurrence of an exemplum, even though many years may have passed from it actually happening. In many cases, the audience augments the humor because an audience is not expected or wanted. This is another instance of Juvenal co-opting conventions and using them for his own humorous purposes.

Juvenal opens his first satire by asking, “Shall I always only listen?” (*semper ego auditor tantum?*, 1.1) and continues to describe that he is tired of being in the audience of poetry readings. This beginning immediately establishes Juvenal as a member of the audience, and so the later events he describes are inherently “performed” in front of an audience. This motif is cemented when he later asks, “Surely it is permitted that I fill my roomy tablets in the middle of the crossroads, when. . .?” (*nonne libet medio ceras inplere capaces/ quadrivio, cum. . .*, 1.63-64). Here too, the events he describes appear to occur on the stage of the street.

Throughout his Satires, Juvenal uses a variety of ways to portray the stories he tells as public spectacles performed before an audience. For instance, in Satire 2, he describes the wedding of Gracchus to a male musician. The crowd of witnesses is a critical part of the wedding celebration (2.119-121):

signatae tabulae, dictum 'feliciter,' ingens

cena sedet, gremio iacuit nova nupta mariti.
o proceres, censore opus est an haruspice nobis?

The tablets are marked; ‘congratulations’ is said; a huge crowd sits at the feast; the new bride lies in the lap of her husband. O, nobles, do we need a censor or a soothsayer?

By mentioning the audience, Juvenal ensures that the reader realizes the blatant nature of the action. In his appeal to Gracchus’ fellow citizens (*o proceres!*), the importance of the crowd is emphasized. In Satire 8, Juvenal also highlights the audience that watches nobles performing on stage, a truly public display (8.189-192):

populi frons durior huius,
qui sedet et spectat triscurria patriciorum,
planipedes audit Fabios, ridere potest qui
Mamercorum alapas.

The face of these people is harsher, who sit and watch the buffoonery of the patricians, who hear the Fabians performing in mime, and who are able to laugh at the ear boxing of the Mamerci.

Here the audience is not a passive player but a target of the satirist’s criticism. The audience’s role as witness, rather than satirical victim, is critical in many other instances.⁸ It illustrates that Juvenal’s use of exempla extends to public displays of vice rather than the private displays occasionally employed by Seneca.

Juvenal’s New Exempla

Unlike Seneca, Juvenal records strictly negative exempla, making them a defining ingredient in his Satires, just as earlier satirists had. His exempla include a mix of famous and

⁸ Audience (real or imagined) is emphasized in Juvenal in several other instances, including: Creticus (2.67), Umbricius’ speech (3.60), the crowd in Roman streets (3.244), Lateranus (8.149), Sejanus (10.67), and the marriage of Messalina and Silius (10.334-337).

common characters from Rome. Interestingly, exempla representing famous persons do not necessarily have more weight or persuasive power than others in Juvenal's Satires (Keane 2012, 414). Sometimes the juxtaposition of famous characters with relatively unknown players seems to add more humor to the situation. For instance, in Satire 4, Crispinus is the initial subject of the satire because he bought a mullet for six thousand denarii (among other vices; 4.1-33). However, this causes the satirist to wonder about the extravagances the emperor (Domitian) might be guilty of. Juvenal himself concedes that it is strange to focus on such an inconsequential issue in Domitian's reign, but the very triviality of the incident provides much of the poem's humor.

Another point of interest is the Roman origin of almost all of Juvenal's exempla. It is logical that Roman authors would have been more aware of new Roman events that were worthy of becoming exempla, and so it makes sense that mostly Roman characters, or foreigners in Rome (cf. Satire 3), appear. Generally, Juvenal's Roman audience would probably have been more receptive to exempla discussing people in Rome or Romans, since they might share or understand the experiences or circumstances of the exemplary character. One exception in Juvenal occurs in Satire 15, which consists almost entirely of a story about cannibalism between two Egyptian villages. The account (an exemplum against anger), is clearly new as the satirist claims, "But, I shall relate acts, certainly amazing, but that occurred recently during the consulship of Iuncus beyond the walls of warm Coptus" (*nos miranda quidem sed nuper consule Iunco/ gesta super calidae referemus moenia Copti*, 15.27-28). Juvenal's detailed introduction of a new exemplum from outside Rome indicates that new exempla were important for him, because there would have been many old narratives upon which he could have elaborated. By employing modern stories, he fulfills the expected role of a satirist to comment on current issues.

One such modern story that Juvenal describes is Creticus in Satire 2. After wandering from topic to topic, he settles down (for a short time) to ridicule the clothing chosen by the lawyer Creticus. The satirist asks in astonishment, “But what will others not do, when you put on transparent garments, Creticus, and with the people wondering at this outfit, harangue against women like Procula and Pollita?” (*sed quid/ non facient alii, cum tu multicia sumas,/ Cretice, et hanc vestem populo mirante perores/ in Proculas at Pollitas?*, 2.65-68). He jabs at Creticus by saying, “She [Carfinia] having been condemned would not put on such a toga” (*talem/ non sumet damnata togam*, 2.69-70). Creticus protests “But July is burning, I sweat” to which the satirist responds, “You should plead nude then; insanity is less scandalous” (*sed Iulius ardet,/ aestuo.’ nudus agas: minus est insania turpis*, 2.70-71). With this pithy description, Juvenal successfully imparts to readers of the satire what they should feel about Creticus’ behavior. He represents it as an exemplum of outrageous behavior that will lead to worse doings, claiming, “Sometime you will dare something more unseemly than this fashion: no one becomes completely infamous at once” (*foedius hoc aliquid quandoque audebis amictu;/ nemo repente fuit turpissimus*, 2.82-83).

For Juvenal, the “wondering people” (*populo mirante*) represent a clear audience. He emphasizes the spectacle-like nature of Creticus’ actions in front of a crowd by saying, “Behold the clothing in which the people hear you presenting laws and orders, the people who are recent victors with their raw wounds and the crowd from the mountains with their plows just set down” (*en habitum quo te leges ac iura ferentem/ vulneribus crudis populus modo victor et illud/ montanum positus audiret vulgus aratris*, 2.72-74). Juvenal’s criticism of Creticus has a less specific secondary audience: it is whoever reads or hears Juvenal’s satire and its clear negative conclusion about Creticus’ fashion. The passage also informs any reader or listener that

Creticus' actions should be avoided. The public nature of Creticus' action indicates Juvenal's tendency to attack vices performed in public or vices that somehow affect public society overall.

In Satire 6, Juvenal catalogs an exhaustive list of female vices, supported by vivid exempla in many cases. Here is Eppia falling in love with a gladiator and abandoning her husband, Messalina parading herself as a prostitute, wives giving angry orders, women participating in athletic events, indulging in huge amounts of food and drink, participating in the wild rituals of the Good Goddess, offering prayers for the success of musician-lovers, applying facial creams so they will be beautiful for their lovers, and spending excessive money on jewels and clothes. Juvenal concludes the satire with an investigation of female poisoners. He mentions Agrippina and Pontia specifically and compares them to the vengeful women, Medea and Procne. He describes Agrippina's killing of Claudius in her lust for power (6.620-623):

minus ergo nocens erit Agrippinae
boletus, siquidem unius praecordia pressit
ille senis tremulumque caput descendere iussit
in caelum et longa manantia labra saliva.

Less harmful therefore was the mushroom of Agrippina, since it pressed out the heart of one old man, and ordered his trembling head and lips dripping with saliva strands to descend to heaven.

This description of Agrippina's poisoning of Claudius dwells more on Claudius than Agrippina, but it clearly describes the event. In contrast, the description of Pontia focuses on her character and action (6.638-642):

nos utinam vani. sed clamat Pontia 'feci,
confiteor, puerisque meis aconita paravi,
quae deprensa patent; facinus tamen ipsa peregi.'
tunc duos una, saevissima vipera, cena?
tunc duos? 'septem, si septem forte fuissent.'

How I wish it was groundless. But Pontia shouts, ‘I did it! I confess! I prepared poison for my boys. The discovered murders are clear; I myself, however, accomplished the deed.’ Did you do both at one dinner, you most wicked viper? Two at once? ‘Yes, and seven, if by chance there had been seven!’

The juxtaposition of these two scenes next to the reference to Medea and Procne (“We shall have to believe what is said by the tragic poets about the fierce woman of Colchis and Procne. I am trying nothing against them,” *credamus tragicis quidquid de Cochide torva/ dicitur et Procne; nil contra conor*, 6.643-644) allows Juvenal to emphasize the different motives Agrippina and Pontia have. The satirist acknowledges that Medea and Procne “dared abundant monstrosities in their time, but not on account of money” (*et illae/ grandia monstra suis audebant temporibus, sed/ non propter nummos*, 6.644-646). He argues that such crimes are easier to accept if they are prompted by feminine madness, rather than cold calculation.

This judgment against poisoning for gain and riches is illustrated by the exempla of Agrippina and Pontia. Pontia’s confession has a public ring to it as she declares her lack of regret, agreeing with Juvenal’s focus on public fronts. The addition of these new cases, one with a famous woman and one with an unknown one, indicates Juvenal’s propensity to use new exempla in his Satires, especially if they add a humorous effect. When juxtaposed so closely, they also reinforce that Juvenal attacks rich and famous just as violently as he does poor and unknown characters. Humor is also added by making Agrippina’s mushroom “less dangerous” even though it still leads to death and by comparing the stories to Medea’s. In addition, Pontia’s declaration seems very theatrical despite her unknown name. This is comical since it follows the satirist’s exclamation that it is all true, even though it seems to be closer to a tragedy than reality. Furthermore, his claim that Medea’s crime is less appalling since she did not do it for money strikes readers strangely because they know that the tragedy of Medea is very shocking and

horrific. Combining old exempla with new allows Juvenal to create humorous, and sometimes disturbing, effects by surprising the audience's expectations.

Valerius Maximus' Sejanus: a Break in the Pattern

In contrast to Juvenal and Seneca, Valerius Maximus, while listing hundreds of exempla, seems to be compiling them from a variety of ancient works, rather than inventing or recording new stories. Within the text, there are mentions of several authors: Roman, such as Cato the Elder, Cicero, Livy, and Asinius Pollio, as well as Greek, such as Herodotus and Plato (Bloomer 63). While Valerius does not cite a source for every exemplum, he is clearly drawing many from the writings of Cicero and Livy and a smaller number from Sallust among other authors (Bloomer 67, 70, 112). The literary origins of many of his exempla illustrate that although certain individuals may be obscure to a modern reader, an ancient reader might have recognized them.

Agreeing with his lack of focus on exemplary theories, Valerius evidently did not see his role as documenting new exempla. This type is almost absent from his books, whether from a belief in his role as compiler rather than author, or from caution. Most stories that he uses are drawn from the period of Roman history prior to the fall of the Republic (Bloomer 204). The notable exception is his inclusion of Sejanus in his section on "Shameless Words or Wicked Deeds" (*dicta improba aut facta scelerata*, 9.11.ext.4). Although Book 9 is replete with chapters covering almost every conceivable vice, this chapter seems to represent the worst of the worst to Valerius Maximus.

This exemplum is remarkable, as stated previously, because it completes the section of external examples, even though Sejanus is clearly Roman. In addition, the delivery is unique

because Valerius never names Sejanus directly but merely exclaims over the horror of his actions. Seeming to recall himself from the barbarian horrors he was recounting, he asks, “But why do I pursue or linger with such deeds, when I understand that all those crimes are surpassed by the thought of one parricide?” (*sed quid ego ista consector aut quid his immoror, cum unius parricidii cogitatione cuncta scelera superata cernam?*, 9.11.ext.4). He continues with rhetorical questions that depict the horrible outcome if Sejanus had succeeded. The emotional language reveals that Valerius is too much a part of the primary audience to maintain the detached tone prevalent in the rest of his work. Fitting in with Valerius as the primary audience, the exemplum is also different from others in the work in that Sejanus’ actions themselves are not described, only their imagined effects and Valerius’ disturbed emotional response. He concludes the exemplum, which is also longer than most in the collection, by elaborately describing how Sejanus was foiled (9.11.ext.4):

sed vigilarunt oculi deorum, sidera suum vigorem obtinuerunt, arae, pulvinaria, templa praesenti numine vallata sunt, nihilque, quod pro capite augusto ac patria excubare debuit, torporem sibi permisit, et in primis auctor ac tutela nostrae incolumitatis ne excellentissima merita sua totius orbis ruina conlaberentur divino consilio providit. itaque stat pax, valent leges, sincerus privati ac publici officii tenor servatur.

But the eyes of the gods kept watch; the stars maintained their own activity. The altars, sacred cushions and temples were protected by the present divine will. Nothing that ought to guard our revered leader and the fatherland itself permitted itself to be sluggish, and the father and guardian of our safety, lest our surpassing works fall in the ruin of the whole world, was among the first to take precautions with his divine counsel. And so, peace stands; the laws are strong; the sound course of private and public duty is saved.

This conclusion is a clear appeal to Tiberius as the savior of the state. Valerius’ seeming hesitancy in naming Sejanus and his flattering description of Tiberius may illustrate one problem with creating new exempla: the danger of punishment. The Sejanus passage here clearly

portrays Sejanus in a negative perspective, and enthusiastically praises Tiberius. Both of these aspects may have been Valerius' way of ensuring that the emperor did not view his inclusion of such an event disapprovingly.

Seneca's Sejanus: the Fickleness of Fortune

Seneca and Juvenal likely would have faced a similar challenge with contemporary events, but by the time they were writing, the judgment of Sejanus was over: the established narrative said he was a bad man. Seneca mentions Sejanus several times throughout his oeuvre; however, the following two incidents establish Sejanus as an exemplum. Seneca discusses Sejanus briefly in a letter to Lucilius that mostly comprises a description of Vatia's villa. Although, Sejanus' full exploits are not discussed, he functions as a negative exemplum, emphasizing the incredible power of changing fortune (*Ep.* 55.3):

nam quotiens aliquos amicitiae Asinii Galli, quotiens Seiani odium, deinde amor merserat (aeque enim offendisse illum quam amasse periculosum fuit), exclamabant homines, 'o Vatia, solus scis vivere'.

For whenever the friendship of Asinius Gallus buried some, or the hatred, and then love of Sejanus (for it was equally dangerous to have offended him or loved him), men were exclaiming, 'O Vatia, you alone know how to live.'

His quick mention of Sejanus contains no fear of retaliation, but his description that being either a friend or foe of Sejanus was dangerous at one time illustrates how Valerius Maximus might have felt concerned about including Sejanus in his book of exempla. It also offers a reflection on the dangerous game of Imperial politics. Contemporary readers would have easily recognized the importance of Seneca's parenthetical thought: how easily their own changing fortunes, or that of their friends, could alter how they lived.

Although Seneca does refer explicitly to the events of Sejanus' downfall in another of his works, *On the Tranquility of the Mind (De Tranquillitate Animi)*, they are not depicted with as much righteous indignation as shown by Valerius Maximus or as much frightening detail as provided by Juvenal. This reference to Sejanus portrays him as an example of the capriciousness of Fortune, a different focus than that of the other authors (*De Tranquillitate Animi* 11.11):

honoribus summis functus es: numquid aut tam magnis aut tam insperatis aut tam universis quam Seianus? quo die illum senatus deduxerat, populus in frusta divisit; in quem quidquid congeri poterat di hominesque contulerant, ex eo nihil superfuit quod carnifex traheret.

You have held the highest offices: but were they so great or so unexpected or so comprehensive as those of Sejanus? On that day when the Senate led him out, the people tore him to pieces; although gods and men had given him everything that could be amassed, nothing remained of the man for the executioner to drag.

This passage occurs in a section in which Seneca is discussing how one can always be content: one must always be ready to give back whatever Fortune has bestowed, be it wealth or life itself. He argues that men will be stronger if they realize that any misfortune may befall them, no matter their current exalted standing, in wealth or public office. To strengthen this point, he gives examples of men who fell from positions of strength and power, Sejanus among them. Thus, in accordance with Seneca's internal focus, he makes the exemplum of Sejanus into a lesson urging acceptance of possible misfortunes, so that the threat of them loses power.

Juvenal's Sejanus: From Power to a Chamber Pot

In Satire 10, Juvenal systematically discusses for what men should pray. To show that power is not necessarily a blessing, he provides a full description of Sejanus' fall, sharing some characteristics with both Valerius' and Seneca's descriptions. The transition that can occur with

one exemplum, particularly a political one, over time, illustrates that the creation of new exempla was a slow and ongoing task. Like Valerius Maximus, Juvenal does not name Sejanus immediately, although he does name him later. Instead, he describes Sejanus' fault and what happened at his downfall (10.56-64):

quosdam praecipitat subiecta potentia magnae
 invidiae, mergit longa atque insignis honorum
 pagina. descendunt statuæ restemque secuntur,
 ipsas deinde rotas bigarum inpacta securis
 caedit et inmeritis franguntur crura caballis.
 iam strident ignes, iam follibus atque caminis
 ardet adoratum populo caput et crepat ingens
 Seianus, deinde ex facie toto orbe secunda
 fiunt urceoli, pelves, sartago, matellae.

Power having been subjected to great envy throws some down; the long and remarkable page of honors sinks others. The statues fall down, accompanied by a rope, then the axe strikes and cuts the wheels of the chariot, and the legs of the innocent horses are broken. Already the fires hiss, already the head adored by the people burns with bellows and forces, and great Sejanus is cracking. Then from the face that was second in the whole world are made pitchers, basins, a baking pan and chamber pots.

Interestingly, the vividness of Juvenal's account is augmented by his use of the present tense to describe an event that was already described in the past tense in Valerius' time. The use of the present tense reinforces the recent nature of this exemplum because it depicts it as if it is happening currently.⁹

Unlike Valerius Maximus, Juvenal does not praise Tiberius, showing that the passing of years makes authors feel more sanguine about writing about politically dangerous times. In fact, Juvenal includes a veiled criticism of Tiberius by having one of the crowd confess, "I fear that

⁹ It is not unusual for Juvenal to use the present tense in his Satires. In Satire 10 specifically, there is a mixture of present and past: for example, Cicero and Priam are described with the past tense, but Hannibal and Alexander with the present.

conquered Ajax will exact punishments for being poorly defended” (*quam timeo, victus ne poenas exigat Ajax/ ut male defensus*, 10.84-85). This comment alludes to the fact that Tiberius’ violence grew following Sejanus’ death (Suetonius, *Tiberius* 61-2; Braund 2004, 373, n.14). Although he does include this criticism of Tiberius, Juvenal also hints at the problem Seneca addresses by emphasizing how the crowd (the primary audience) witnessing the destruction is quick to condemn Sejanus: “What lips! What a face his was! If you believe anything from me, I never loved that man” (*quae labra, quis illi/ vultus erat! numquam, si quid mihi credis, amavi/ hunc hominem*, 10.67-69). These comments help Juvenal to portray the dangerous atmosphere of the time. It also shows how political characters become exempla as their story travels through the streets (10.69-77):

sed quo cecidit sub crimine? quisnam
 delator quibus indicibus, quo teste probavit?
 'nil horum; verbosa et grandis epistula venit
 a Capreis.' 'bene habet, nil plus interrogo.' sed quid
 turba Remi? sequitur fortunam, ut semper, et odit
 damnatos. idem populus, si Nortia Tusco
 favisset, si oppressa foret segura senectus
 principis, hac ipsa Seianum diceret hora
 Augustum.

‘But from what charge did he fall? Which informer demonstrated it and with what evidence or witnesses?’ ‘None of those things: a large, wordy letter came from Capri.’ ‘That is well; I ask nothing more.’ But, what of the crowd of Remus? They follow fortune, as always, and hate the condemned. The same people, if Nortia [Etruscan goddess of fortune] had favored her Etruscan, if the untroubled old age of the emperor was smothered, in the same hour, they would have named Sejanus Augustus.

The danger of disagreeing with official judgment limits the response of the primary audience, and so the traditional belief in the correct judgment of the internal audience is challenged. Such

serious political considerations juxtaposed with undeniably comic moments lend a disturbing feel to the passage.

The example of Sejanus shows how one event and its exemplary presentation can change over time as it is first created and then modified by later authors. Clearly, the treatment of Sejanus as an exemplary figure varies. Only much after his downfall and the death of Tiberius is it safe to discuss (or even mock) the event openly without clear praise of Tiberius as the positive exemplum in balance with Sejanus' negative character. Juvenal notably identifies this concern at the conclusion of his first satire when the interlocutor warns him of the sort of punishment that might await him if he describes current political figures (1.153-170). Thus, although there are a variety of new exempla in Juvenal and Seneca's works, most are of figures who have already died and are no longer a threat.

Conclusion

Whether newly composed or traditional, exempla are a major facet in Seneca and Juvenal's writings, and are the whole of Valerius'. However, to say that exempla are a particular literary device does not imply that they always appear the same way: Valerius is compiling them for use by a speaker; Seneca uses them to emphasize his moral points, and Juvenal exploits their comic capacity. The level of investigation into exemplary theory sets Seneca and Juvenal's work apart from Valerius' straightforward handbook. Seneca's speculation about vice and the function of exempla illustrates his overall concern with the process of Stoic moral education. In fact, Schafer claims that the *Epistulae Morales* themselves comprise an exemplum. As he says, "The *Letters* teach teaching by example; they are a literary case-study, an articulated, carefully drawn *exemplum* of Stoic and Senecan pedagogy" (33; cf. Nussbaum 340). Seneca is presenting his correspondence with Lucilius as an exemplum of the proper method to teach morality. Even if his letters are not an exemplum in the traditional sense, they (and his other works) expand the exemplary repertoire to include less famous characters and private events.

Juvenal's Satires also build from the theorizing about vice and exempla to actually molding more negative exempla. The preponderance of negative exempla found in the Satires is unique, but they fit exceedingly well in the mocking and critical world of satire, so Juvenal's tendency to use them is appropriate. Playing off the exemplary tradition also provides humor in the Satires. The satirical characters seen in some of Seneca's negative exempla reinforce the connection between satire and negative exempla. Thus, from Valerius' relatively simple compendium of exempla to Seneca's works and Juvenal's Satires, each author clearly adjusts and expands the exemplary tradition to suit his own purposes.

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