These two texts are distinctly Roman. Petronius’ work is one of the earliest examples of a novel. Juvenal’s Satires are the most vitriolic example of the Roman tradition of the composition of satirical verse. Satire is a genre which belongs to the Romans. It might be claimed that Petronius’ Satyricon, of which ‘Dinner with Trimalchio’ is the most significant surviving portion, is satire too, but this article will argue that it is something different.

We believe that the writer Petronius is the same Petronius who was known as arbiter elegantiae (judge of good taste) during the reign of Nero and committed suicide in A.D. 66, when accused of being involved in a conspiracy.¹ It is thought that he wrote the Satyricon in perhaps as many as twenty-four books somewhere around A.D. 65. His novel is often referred to as Menippean satire, a genre which originated with the Cynic philosopher Menippus of Gadara who lived in the first part of the third century B.C., and was adopted in Italy by Varro in the first half of the first century B.C. Menippus and Varro wrote in a mixture of prose and verse. There is very little verse in the ‘Dinner with Trimalchio’, but much of the episode of the Satyricon known as ‘The Road to Croton’ is in verse.

Details about Juvenal’s life are scanty too.² It is thought that he was perhaps born about A.D. 55 and died early in the 130s A.D. He lived through the unpleasant reign of Domitian [A.D. 81-96], but published his poems during the reigns of Trajan [98-117] and Hadrian [117-138]. Though Ennius [239-169 B.C.] is known to have written some books of Satires, Quintilian³ claimed that Lucilius [c.180-c.102 B.C.] was the founder of the Roman genre of satire. Surviving fragments of both these authors suggest that their satire was gentler and much more like that of Horace [65-8 B.C.] than that of the waspish Juvenal. Warmington says of Lucilius:

Posterity remarked on his satiric powers, how he lashed the city, tore away the mask of respectability, and scared the guilty; and called him variously harsh, bitter, agreeable, graceful, witty, learned, and so on.⁴

Sharrock and Ash state that many of Horace’s Satires hardly seem satirical at all, but that others are obviously satirical with targets such as luxury, excess, failure of self-control or to keep to proper Roman behaviour.⁵ Though Juvenal is indebted to his predecessors for the invention and development of the genre, he brings it to a very different approach. He appears to be deeply embittered with life and brings this attitude to his poetry. The writing of both Petronius and Juvenal can be said to have been influenced by reactions to the repressive regimes of emperors. They come, however, from different places on the social scale. Petronius, an eques, was governor of Bithynia and consul suffectus under Nero. He clearly lived well and enjoyed the pleasures which such a life had to offer. Juvenal was born in Aquinum in Latium, where he was a town magistrate, which would give him the status of eques. It is possible that he was

¹ See Tacitus Annals 16.18 for information about his death and some details of his life.
² There is an excellent and lengthy introduction to Green’s translation which discusses Juvenal’s life and his Satires. This paper has tried to avoid repeating what he says.
³ Quint. Inst. 10.1.93.
⁵ Sharrock and Ash (2002), 263.
exiled by Domitian for lampooning a court official. Such exile would deprive him of his property. Upon his return to Rome, he lived in comparative poverty. Feelings about the injustice of his exile and a life of poverty no doubt coloured his poetry.

Arrowsmith seems to me to summarise best the mood of the Satyricon in the introduction to his translation. He states that ‘it is this wonderful blending of satire and comedy that makes Petronius unique among Roman satirists and the Satyricon a genre of its own’.6 The central character of the novel is Encolpius, a poor but educated young man of good family, who lives by his wits. He is accompanied by a companion, Ascyltus, and a slave boy, Giton. They attend the school of rhetoric of Agamemnon, through whom they receive an invitation to have dinner with Trimalchio. Trimalchio is a wonderful comic character, a freedman who has made good and become one of the nouveaux riches. Commentators can see many features of others in Roman society in his portrayal. Many see similarities to Nasidienus in Horace Satires 2.8. Walsh, in the introduction to his translation, sees links to Nero in the fact that Trimalchio wears a golden bracelet on his right arm and a napkin round his neck.7 He does not, however, consider him to be a caricature of Nero. It could, however, be argued that the tyrannical behaviour of Trimalchio within his own house is meant to be a parody of Nero.8 Clearly Petronius amalgamated the characteristics of a wide range of people whom he had met and observed in Rome and the playground of the rich, the Bay of Naples. Walsh sums up his character as follows:

From this synthesis of the literary and the observed, Petronius created his superb portrait of Trimalchio, underlining the four features which particularly offended him in the mores of the emergent capitalists with freedman status: the boorish behaviour of the dinner host, the arrogance of the master shown in his contemptuous treatment of his slaves, the pretence to learning which he does not possess, and the superstition and morbidity which dominate his thoughts and his life in spite of, or in consequence of, his fabulous wealth.9

Examples of his treatment of his slaves can be seen in his wiping of his hands on a slave boy’s hair (27, p.52)10, the notice about possible punishment for slaves (28, p.52), when a slave’s ears are boxed for picking up a dish that had fallen (34, p.55), when he tells a slave to go and hang himself for being so useless (52, p.69), the crucifixion of a slave for insulting Trimalchio’s guardian spirit (53, p.70), when a servant is beaten for bandaging Trimalchio’s arm with white instead of purple wool (54, p.71), and when he threatens to have Stichus burnt alive if he lets moths ruin his burial shroud (78, p.90).

His pretence to be learned can be seen in 48 (p.67). Homer did not describe the labours of Hercules, nor did the Cyclops blind Odysseus. Hannibal did not capture Troy (50, p.68), Cassandra did not kill her sons as she had none (51, p.69), nor did Daedalus shut Niobe in the Trojan Horse (52, p.69). More inaccuracy about the mythology of Homer can be seen in 59 (p.75).

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6 Arrowsmith (1994), viii.
7 Walsh (1997), xxxi.
8 I thank Dr Rhiannon Evans for this suggestion.
9 Walsh (1997), xxxi-xxxii.
10 References are to Sullivan’s translation (1986 edition).
Much of Trimalchio’s behaviour is boorish. Some examples are urinating in a bottle (27, pp.51-2), his dress and entrance to the dinner (32, p.54), his swearing as he continues to play his game while his guests eat (33, p.55), his discussion of his visit to the toilet (47, pp.65-6), the fact that he is drunk and wants to dance (52, p.69), his behaviour with the boy Croesus (64, p.79), his drunken singing in the bath (73, p.86), and his behaviour with the boy which leads to an argument with Fortunata (74-5, pp.87-9).

There are frequent examples of his superstition. The guests have to cross the threshold with their right foot first (30, p.53). Trimalchio discusses astrology in 39 (p.59) and witches in 63 (p.78). He reacts badly to the cock crow in 74 (p.87). He admits to relying upon an astrologer in 76 (pp.89-90). His morbidity is particularly displayed near the end of the dinner when he reads his will in 71-2 (pp.84-6) and he discusses how much life he has left and what will happen when he is dead in 77 and 78 (pp.90-1).

The whole episode is filled with examples of the excessive form that wealth could take and the meal itself illustrates how that excessive wealth can lead to overindulgence in eating and drinking. Trimalchio’s lifestyle is not that of an average man. This is clear from the very beginning of the episode where he is in the baths. He is dried with bath-robe of finest wool (28, p.52) and his return home is in grand style (28, p.52). The dishes and implements used in the banquet are the most expensive and his game board has gold and silver coins instead of the usual pieces (33, p.55). Trimalchio is ‘so loaded that he doesn’t know how much he has got’ (37, p.57), ‘he’s got estates it’d take a kite to fly over—he’s worth millions of millions’ (37, p.58); his estates are so great that he has not even seen those from which the evening’s wine comes (48, p.67). He claims that the whole of southern Italy, from Tarracina (about 100km south of Rome) to Tarentum on the heel of Italy, is his, and he would like to add the island of Sicily to ‘my little bit of land, so that when I want to go to Africa, I could sail there without leaving my own property’ (48, p.67). The description of his house (77, p.90) makes it very grand.

The meal itself is full of surprises, as very little of the food is what it first appears to be. Trimalchio obviously takes great delight in devising, with his cook, surprises for his guests. The number of courses and the amount of food would defeat all but a glutton. Many may feel sick when they read the description of the various courses. The amount of food provided would feed hundreds. It is worth remembering that many in Rome at this time had very little to eat. Yet the grossness of the meal and the ridiculous nature of Trimalchio’s surprises are the source of much of the humour in ‘Dinner with Trimalchio’.

The narrator, Encolpius, is naive and has clearly never experienced such a banquet, as he is an impecunious student. He wants, however, to know what is going on and his frequent questions of fellow guests elicit this information. Much of the episode consists of the conversation of Trimalchio and his guests. They discuss issues which concern them and throw light upon contemporary Roman society. The philosopher Agamemnon does not get very far in his attempt to tell the guests what he has been debating with his students, because he makes the mistake of using the term ‘poor man’ (48, p.67), a term which is unfamiliar to Trimalchio. The guests tell stories, including the famous one of the werewolf (62, p.77). Trimalchio summarises his life story (75-77, pp.88-90). When the drunken Habinnas enters with his wife, he describes the banquet which he has already attended (65-66, pp.80-1). It should be noted that there is a marked difference in the original Latin between the cultured voice of Encolpius and the vernacular of Trimalchio and his fellow freedmen. It is not always easy to convey this in translation.
The main meal ends in slapstick when Ascyltus and Encolpius fall into the fishpond as they try to slip away. This forces them to join the other guests in the baths, another sign of the wealth of Trimalchio, as few houses had their own baths. The baths seem to help some of the guests to recover from their drunkenness, but the party is not over yet, as they move to another dining room (another sign of wealth) and more food and drink. Trimalchio, however, does not recover from his drunken state. When he kisses a young slave, a violent argument breaks out between him and Fortunata, his wife. Encolpius and Ascyltus finally escape, when the loud trumpet-playing of a slave brings the fire brigade.

Sullivan summarises Petronius as follows:

But Petronius, for all his acceptance of satiric themes and the satirist’s view of life, is saved by his own irony and artistic ambivalence towards satire. He can accept the satiric themes, but he does not accept the moral premiss, either because of his Epicureanism or his own view of existence. ... In Petronius we see the novelist taking over the satirist’s task, while working with the satirist’s themes—and it is not the so-called ‘realistic’ novelist who does what the satirist does even though he omits the more obvious moralizing, but rather the creative novelist who enlarges on life and reshapes it to his own artistic ends.11

Smith sums up ‘Dinner with Trimalchio’:

[T]he Cena deserves its pre-eminence [in the remains of the Satyricon]. As well as presenting on its own a fascinating microcosm of Roman life and manners, it amply illustrates Petronius’ versatility, his wide range of humour, his subtle characterization, his skilful interweaving of traditional literary motifs and techniques, and his unerring appreciation of the mentality of common people and the nuances of their speech. All these qualities combine to offer us something unique and refreshing in ancient literature.12

There has been much debate over the nature of the Satyricon, but it seems best to take it for what it seems to be—an amusing romp which follows the misadventures of its central character. It describes, in its surviving passages, the kinds of scrapes that an impecunious young man can get into. Sullivan states that ‘the standard [in the Cena] is one of taste rather than any moral standard’.13

What, then, are the targets of Juvenal’s barbed attack in Satires 1, 6 and 10? Satire 1 acts as an introduction to the first book of his Satires. The vices of Roman people are the stimulus for his poetry. He summarises the types of people who are a plague on society. He also bemoans the deterioration of the traditional patron/client relationship. In Satire 6, in an attempt to persuade his friend Postumus not to marry, he denounces women and depicts their vices. In Satire 10 he discusses the folly of praying to the gods. Juvenal would like to see traditional Roman values restored. Sullivan states:

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12 Smith (1975), xii.
His is the art of the orator who prefers a dazzling display of pyrotechnics or the loud squibs that will rivet our attention rather than a steady light that will guide us through an undergrowth of knotty ethical argument.\(^\text{14}\)

Green sums him up by stating:

Juvenal does not work out a coherent ethical critique of institutions or individuals: he simply hangs a series of moral portraits on the wall and forces us to look at them.\(^\text{15}\)

Juvenal begins Satire 1 by pouring out his frustration at having to endure the endless poetry readings that were so much a part of the Roman literary scene (1-18).\(^\text{16}\) It is now his turn to speak, and he will do so through the medium of satire. He asks the reader (audience) to listen to him as he explains why he has chosen to follow the path of the great satirical poet Lucilius (19-21). Lines 22-80 explain his choice of satire ‘because he is morally outraged at what he sees around him in a catalogue of wickedness. Each vignette of vice is followed by an indignant exclamation (e.g. 22-9 followed by 30)’.\(^\text{17}\) He cannot accept the fact that the comfortable, traditional life of the monied classes in Rome is being usurped by others who see ways to make money and to become the nouveaux riches. He targets eunuchs (22), women who perform in beast hunts in the amphitheatre (22-3), the nouveaux riches (24-30), informers (30-6), men who seek legacies by sleeping with wealthy women (37-44), the failure of courts to punish those who benefit from fraud (45-50). He thinks that these vices are worthy of both Horace’s and his own poetry rather than more boring epic tales of mythology (51-4). He continues by attacking husbands who profit from and ignore their wives’ adultery (55-7), young men who gamble away family fortunes (58-62), fraudsters (63-8), women who poison their husbands (69-72). He ends this litany of vices with a general attack on the effects of obsession with money, sex and status, which justify his choice of satirical verse. In lines 81-95 he again justifies his choice by saying that the wicked vices of humans have never been worse than they are now. In the second half of line 95 he turns to the patron/client relationship, a key feature of Roman society. He refers to the dole (sportula). This is not a state handout, but refers to whatever money a patron might give to his clients directly or might scatter in the street for them to fight over. The clients would also hope that they might be invited to dinner at the end of the day as repayment for the services which they performed for their patron during the day. It is important to note that the same person could be both a patron and a client. For example, a wealthy man might hope to be a client of the emperor, who was the highest level of the strata of Roman society, while he himself had a group of clients dependent on him. Juvenal states that money is the highest god in the Rome of his day and that greed has destroyed the patron/client relationship, as patrons have become selfish. He finishes this section by saying that a selfish patron who dies from a heart attack from bathing too soon after a huge meal is mourned by no-one, but that his death is greeted by cheers (142-6). He justifies his decision to write such satires now (147-9), but ends the poem with a conversation between the authorial persona and an interlocutor about the dangers of writing satire. The author ends by saying that he will perhaps only write about the dead (170-1), as writing about those alive can be danger-

\(^{14}\) Sullivan in Boyle and Sullivan (1991), 332.
\(^{15}\) Green (1998), 43.
\(^{16}\) The line numbering is that of the original Latin.
\(^{17}\) Braund (1996), 112.
ous. This may have been the result of exile under Domitian for lampooning an imperial official.

The sixth Satire is by far the longest of the Satires. In lines 1-24 Juvenal claims that Chastity has abandoned earth, as she is disgusted by adultery. He uses as examples the mistresses of two poets: Cynthia (Hostia), the mistress of Propertius, and Lesbia (Clodia), the mistress of Catullus. In lines 25-37 he thinks that Postumus must be insane for considering marriage and he believes that it is absurd to look for a chaste woman, as they are as rare as hen’s teeth (38-59). He lists some of the men that Roman women fall for in lines 60-81: ballet dancers, actors, orators, musicians. He then gives two examples of unfaithful wives, Eppia who ran off with a gladiator (82-113), and the sex-crazed Messalina, wife of Claudius, who used a brothel to try to satisfy her desires (114-135). Some women are only married for their money, others for their beauty, and this gives them the power to conduct adulterous relationships or engage in shopping sprees (136-60).

Juvenal suggests that there is perhaps the perfect wife, a paragon of virtue (161-83), but asks who can stand a perfect wife, as minor habits will irritate (184-99). If Postumus is to marry her, he must love her, but ‘the better you are as a man, the more desirable/your husbandly virtues, the less you get out of your wife’ (210-1). She will be in total control so that she will get everything she wants, and in due course will find a lover elsewhere with the connivance of her mother (200-241). She may become involved in lawsuits (242-5) or go in for athletics or gladiatorial combat (246-67) [picking up some of the stereotypes mentioned in 60-81], and the bed will become a quarrelsome battleground (268-85).

Juvenal sees the source of all these ills to be ‘too-long peace’ (292) and the effects of luxury on women (286-313). ‘Since Roman poverty perished, no visitation of crime or lust has been spared us.’ (294-5) They go out to late night parties and return home drunk (300-13). He continues with another list of the vices of women. The all-female celebration of the Good Goddess (Bona Dea) becomes a drunken sexual orgy (314-45). Women like having sex with eunuchs (366-78). Even poor women spend all their money on athletes (349-65) or musicians (379-97) [again picking up on lines 60-81]. It is suggested that the only solution is to lock wives indoors, but Juvenal asks who will guard the guards, as they will be bribed by the wives (O31). Juvenal attacks busybodies and gossips (398-412), uncouth wives who vomit at their own dinners (413-33), intellectuals (434-56), the time spent beautifying themselves for their lovers (457-73), the pattern of a woman’s day and especially her viciousness towards her slaves (474-511), and their superstitiousness (511-591). He ends with a series of much more serious accusations. He attacks abortion and the practice of adopting unwanted babies (592-609), the use of potions to send their husbands mad or to kill step-children (610-33). He claims that their crimes are due to ‘the lust for cash’ (645-6) rather than crimes of passion, as happened in the examples he gives of the likes of Medea and Phaedra (638-52). ‘The poem finishes with a vision of a Rome populated by modern Clytemnestras—women intent on killing their husbands’ (652-661). Sullivan sums up the satire as follows:

...and all (and more) [of the list of evils] are used as whips to chastise the whole female sex in the infamous sixth satire, with particular vehemence being directed at Lady

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18 The original Latin is the well-known quis custodiet ipsos custodes.
19 Braund (2004), 233.
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Chatterlys who turn to the lower orders for their pleasures and so demonstrate not only their insatiable sexuality but also their contempt for social decorum.\(^{20}\)

Although Juvenal is ostensibly giving Postumus reasons for not marrying, he seems to be making it clear that he himself could not bear to be married. In this poem there is the voice of a misogynist. The poem is full of vulgarity, but the obscenity gives strength to the argument which he makes. No doubt his picture of the behaviour of the women of Rome is exaggerated, but at the same time there can be no smoke without a fire. If you read between the lines, there is much criticism of men in Roman society too.

*Satire* 10 is more didactic than the other two. Juvenal asks ‘what is rational about our fears or desires’ (4-5). He begins with another attack on the accumulation of wealth, as ‘the most popular, urgent prayer, well-known in every temple, is for wealth’ (23-5). The only person who can move safely through the streets of Rome at night is a man with no money (22). He ends his introduction by asking what we should ask the gods for since ‘our current petitions are pointless’ (54-5). This leads him into a series of examples of pointless prayers to the gods. His first example is that of power (56-113). ‘Some men are overthrown by the envy their great power arouses’ (56-7). He uses as an example Sejanus, who rose to a position of great power under Tiberius and controlled Rome when the emperor withdrew to Capri. His plans to take over power from the emperor were revealed to Tiberius. Sejanus paid for his lust for power with his life. Sullivan points out how ‘the vivid presentation of Sejanus is carefully sketched until the coup de grâce is delivered with a crisp deflating statement like air being let out of a balloon’.\(^{21}\) Juvenal also uses Pompey, Crassus and Julius Caesar as supporting examples of those who were driven by a lust for power, but also were killed in their pursuit of it. He believes that it is a pity that the common people (*plebs*) no longer have a role to play in choosing their leaders. Sadly the only interest of the *plebs* now is bread and circuses (*panem et circenses*, 81).

His second topic is eloquence (114-32). Cicero and Demosthenes are used as examples of eloquent orators who paid for their eloquence with their lives. Demosthenes, who had attacked Philip of Macedon in his speeches, took poison when a price was put on his head: Cicero, who had attacked Mark Antony in his speeches, was killed on Antony’s orders, and his head and hands were nailed to the rostra in Rome as an example to others.\(^{22}\) His third topic is military success (133-87), where ‘the thirst for glory by far outstrips the pursuit of virtue’ (140-1). He states that such thirst for military glory has often destroyed countries, which can be said to be true of his first example Hannibal (147-67), the Carthaginian general. Though Alexander the Great (168-73) conquered the Middle East, his premature death did not allow him to enjoy his triumph. His third example is based on Herodotus’ description of the invasion of Greece by Xerxes and the Persians in 481-479 B.C. (173-86). The Greeks won famous victories at Salamis and Plataea. Xerxes went home with his tail between his legs.

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\(^{21}\) Sullivan in Boyle and Sullivan (1991), 331.
\(^{22}\) Juvenal includes what is regarded by many as one of the worst hexameter lines ever written ‘*o fortunatum natam me consule Romam*’ (122), which Cicero included in his poem about his own consulship. Cicero was claiming that his success in defeating the conspiracy of Catiline had saved Rome.
The fourth topic is long life (188-288). Juvenal describes the way in which old age makes us unattractive and runs through some of the physical and mental infirmities which can come with old age. Even if a man keeps his wits, his old age will be littered with funerals of relatives, especially his own sons. His final topic is the wish for beauty (289-345). He gives Lucretia and Virginia as examples of those whose premature deaths were caused by their beauty, which aroused lust in men (293-4). He then warns of the problems that will lie in wait for a handsome son. His final example is that of Gaius Silius (329-45) who went through a marriage ceremony with the sex-obsessed Messalina, wife of the emperor Claudius. When Claudius found out, he had them both executed. Juvenal ends the satire by suggesting that it is best to let the gods decide what we need. If we must pray to the gods, he suggests that we should ‘ask for a sound mind in a sound body (mens sana in corpore sano), a valiant heart/ without fear of death, that reckons longevity/the least among Nature’s gifts, that’s strong to endure/all kinds of toil, that’s untainted by lust and anger,/that prefers the sorrows and labours of Hercules to all/Sardanapalus’ downy cushions and women and junketings.’ (356-62) He says that the only way to enjoy a peaceful life is to be virtuous (363-4).

These three Satires present a very good example of the wide range of Juvenal’s attacks on the failings of Roman society. Green writes that ‘the prime quality of the Satires is their ability to project the splendour, squalor, and complexity of the Roman scene more vividly than the work of any other author’. He concludes:

But it was not so much human endeavours that obsessed him—he had always been rather hazy about what people actually did—so much as humanity itself, that marvellous ant-hill which he hated and loved with equal fervour, and from which he never succeeded in tearing himself away.

To this point this paper has done exactly what students are advised not to do in their essays. It has discussed each of the texts separately. It has been easier to consider the two works in this way. Students, however, will have to draw comparisons between the two works by looking for similarities and differences. There are obvious differences. ‘Dinner with Trimalchio’ is a novel written for the most part in prose and follows the misadventures of Encolpius. The chosen Satires are written in hexameter verse and deal with three unconnected topics. Petronius has no example to follow, but is pursuing a new path in literature. Juvenal is clearly using the established pattern of Roman satirical verse. The targets of his barbs are the foibles of his fellow members of Roman society at all levels. The Rome of his day was clearly a fertile soil for such targets. There is no doubt that Petronius too uses satire, but his work is not simply satire. It is a comic novel, farcical at times, which employs satire, but is primarily meant to amuse the reader. Each of us has a different sense of humour, but all of us will find something to laugh at in both works. Students should make a list of the things that make them laugh in each text. This may help them to find similarities and differences.

Both authors are obsessed with status. Petronius ridicules Trimalchio, a man who refuses to abide by social codes (ones which the arbiter elegantiae would approve of) and can get away with it because he is so rich. Juvenal’s persona feels constantly slighted by those who...

23 Green (1998), 53.
25 I thank Dr Rhiannon Evans for this helpful suggestion.
should be lower on the social scale, who seem to be able to set the standards of behaviour in Roman society. This standard ought to be set by the two upper classes in Rome, the patricians and the *equites*, but he gives many examples of how they behave inappropriately in current society with scant regard for the established customs of their ancestors (*mores maiorum*). It could be argued that all the aberrations shown by the two authors in fact define what should be ‘normal’ for Roman men and women.

Satire is, however, also a common feature of the two works. Some of the targets of the two writers are the same. Some are obvious, such as the *nouveaux riches* [Trimalchio himself in ‘Dinner’, and *Satire* 1.24-30], ill treatment of slaves [‘Dinner’ 27, 28, 34, 52 et al., and *Satire* 6. 474-511], women with expensive tastes [Fortunata in ‘Dinner’, and *Satire* 6.200-241], superstition [Trimalchio discusses astrologers in ‘Dinner’ 39, Juvenal attacks them in *Satire* 6.542-91], excessive wealth [‘Dinner’ is littered with examples of excessive wealth; Juvenal attacks excessive wealth and its pursuit in the prescribed *Satires*], drunkenness [Petronius condemns the drunken behaviour of Trimalchio and Habinnas; Juvenal attacks the drunken behaviour of women in *Satire* 6.300-13]. Both attack sexual misbehaviour. Such misbehaviour in ‘Dinner with Trimalchio’ is, for the most part, directed at homosexual behaviour towards attractive slave-boys. Juvenal attacks all forms of sexual misbehaviour. He is blunt and in your face in the way in which he does so. Petronius is much less blunt and much of his criticism is in the form of innuendo. As both present a view of Roman society and life, though in different eras, it is natural that there will be many small similarities. For example, both draw attention to the existence of eunuchs in Rome [‘Dinner’ 27, and *Satire* 6.366-78]. Both deride women who involve themselves in activities more appropriate for gladiators [‘Dinner’ 22-3, and *Satire* 6.246-67]. If one were to use the whole of the *Satyricon* and the Sixteen *Satires*, there would be more similarities. For example, Petronius condemns legacy-hunters in the section known as ‘The Road to Croton’, as Juvenal does in *Satire* 1.37-44. In *Satire* 5 Juvenal presents a bad host similar to Trimalchio. We are restrained, however, by the limits of the texts prescribed for study.

Most of the texts prescribed for Classical Studies are of a serious nature. Among Greek texts Aristophanes offers a chance to be entertained and to laugh. These two very Roman texts provide students with many reasons to laugh, and they certainly entertain. Students should, however, be aware that there are usually serious messages contained within all comedy. They should be looking for these messages as they read the texts. How do these two writers use their humour and their satire to comment upon Roman society?

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26 It should be noted that although Juvenal is writing in the second century A.D. the examples which he uses are often taken from the same period as Petronius.
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