

What's so Funny? *Democritus ridens* in Juvenal 10

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Abstract. The article analyzes Juvenal's use of Democritean material in his tenth *Satire*. The famous juxtaposition of laughing Democritus and weeping Heraclitus (which popularized and perpetuated the image of contrasting philosophers) is habitually interpreted in terms of Juvenal's poetic strategy, as indicating the shift in the tone of his satires and the change of Juvenal's stance from the anger as the dominant emotion of his earlier satires to laughter and irony of the later ones. There is a tendency to assume that the totality of Democritean material in Juvenal 10 derives solely from Seneca. However, close reading of the concluding lines of the *Satire* suggests a different argumentative strategy and deeper engagement with Democritus' thought by Juvenal. The comparison with Pseudo-Hippocratic 'epistolary novel' suggests Cynic *diatribai* as the source of the Democritean material in Juvenal 10.

Keywords: Democritus, Juvenal, Heraclitus, *Satire*, Cynicism, Ancient Philosophy.

Kas čia juokinga? *Democritus ridens* Juvenalio dešimtojoje satyroje

Anotacija. Straipsnyje analizuojama, kaip Juvenalis savo dešimtojoje satyroje taiko Demokrito filosofinę medžiagą. Garsusis besijuokiančio Demokrito ir verkiančio Herakleito sugretinimas (išpopuliarinęs ir įamžinęs šiųdviejų filosofų-priešybių vaizdinį) paprastai interpretuojamas Juvenalio poetinės strategijos kontekste, kaip nuoroda į kintantį Juvenalio satyrų toną ir poeto perėjimą nuo ankstesniųjų satyrų pykčio, kaip dominuojančios emocijos, prie vėlesniųjų juoko ir ironijos. Linkstama daryti prielaidą, kad Juvenalis visą dešimtosios satyros demokritišką medžiagą perėmė vien tik iš Senekos, tačiau, įdėmiai skaitant satyros pabaigą, matyti, jog Juvenalis pasitelkia kitokią argumentacinę strategiją ir yra įsitraukęs į gilesnį dialogą su Demokrito mąstymu, negu įprastai linkstama manyti. Palyginimas su pseudohipokratinėmis epistoliniu romanu nurodo į kinikų *diatribai* kaip į galimą demokritiškos medžiagos, naudojamą Juvenalio dešimtojoje satyroje, šaltinį.

Reikšminiai žodžiai: Demokritas, Juvenalis, Herakleitas, satyra, kinikai, Antikos filosofija.

In the scholarly literature, the mention of Democritus, as well as the allusion to Heraclitus, in Juvenal's tenth *Satire* are read and interpreted almost exclusively in terms of Juvenal's own authorial strategy and poetic programme. However, the juxtaposition of Democritus as the laughing, and Heraclitus – as the weeping, philosopher raises important questions about Juvenal's sources which have bearing on the patterns of doxographic transmission of the two Presocratic philosophers. In what follows, we shall seek to interpret Juvenal's

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poetic context as a testimony for interpretative traditions within which Democritus' (and, to lesser extent, Heraclitus') philosophy was read, re-interpreted, and transmitted.

The exquisitely and clearly structured Juvenal's tenth *Satire* consists of three principal sections (cf. Courtney 2013, 392–393; Wulfram 2011, 152; Murgatroyd 2017, 1):

- (1) introduction (1–55), which discloses the main thesis of the *Satire*: since human beings are incapable of determining what is good for them, more often than not their prayers bring detrimental effects;
- (2) the main body of poetic argument, which points out the vanity of praying for political power, *potentia* (56–113), eloquence (114–132), military distinction (133–187), long life (188–288), and beauty (289–345);
- (3) the conclusion (346–366), offering suggestions for that which is truly to be prayed for (*i. a.*, the famous *ut sit mens sana in corpore sano*, 356) – yet there is no need to pray for it, since it is in human beings' power to obtain it anyway.

The introduction contains a passage (28–53) which has been termed by some scholars an 'excursus' or a 'digression' ('Exkurs', Wulfram 2011, 153, 154; 'Digression', *ibid.*, 154) and which presents the reader with the image of the 'weeping' and the 'laughing' philosophers – Heraclitus and Democritus respectively:

*iamne igitur laudas quod de sapientibus alter
ridebat, quotiens de limine moverat unum
³⁰protuleratque pedem, flebat contrarius auctor?
sed facilis cuivis rigidi censura cachinni:
mirandum est unde ille oculis suffecerit umor.
perpetuo risu pulmonem agitare solebat
Democritus, quamquam non essent urbibus illis
³⁵praetextae trabeae fascēs lectica tribunal;
quid si vidisset praetorem curribus altis
extantem et medii sublimem pulvere circi
in tunica Iovis et pictae Sarrana ferentem
ex umeris aulaea togae magnaēque coronae
⁴⁰tantum orbem, quanto cervix non sufficit ulla?
quippe tenet sudans hanc publicus et, sibi consul
ne placeat, curru servus portatur eodem,
da nunc et volucrem, sceptro quae surgit eburno,
illinc cornicines, hinc praecedentia longi
⁴⁵agminis officia et niveos ad frena Quirites,
defossa in loculos quos sportula fecit amicos,
tunc quoque materiam risus invenit ad omnis
occursus hominum, cuius prudentia monstrat
summos posse viros et magna exempla daturos
⁵⁰vervecum in patria crassoque sub aere nasci.
ridebat curas nec non et gaudia volgi,
interdum et lacrimas, cum Fortunae ipse minaci
mandaret laqueum mediumque ostenderet unguem.*

Democritus is said to have laughed whenever he set a foot outside his threshold (*ridebat, quotiens de limine moverat unum protuleratque pedem*, 28–30), whereas his opposite number, Heraclitus, wept (*flebat contrarius auctor*, 30). Heraclitus is merely alluded to, without giving his name, yet the image of contrasting philosophers – weeping Heraclitus and laughing Democritus – should have been, one must presume, sufficiently well-known for Juvenal's readers. This is clear from the oblique way in which the two thinkers are introduced: *de sapientibus alter ridebat, [...] flebat contrarius auctor* (28–30); only later is Democritus referred to by name (34).

The perspectives of both philosophers (literally 'wise men', *sapientibus* (28)) on the follies of humankind seem to be equally valid; Juvenal chooses to follow Democritus – ostensibly on the grounds that the 'censure of harsh laughter' (*rigidi censura cachinni*) is easy for everyone. Heraclitus, on the other hand, ought to be hard-pressed to produce sufficient volume of humidity to cry for all humanity's sake (31–32); henceforth Heraclitus disappears from the poem.

What follows is an extended argument *a fortiori*, or *a minore ad maius*: Democritus (named here for the first time) 'used to shake his lungs with continuous laughter' (33–34) even though in his time there were no pompous absurdities of Juvenal's day – what would have he said had he seen those (enumeration of shockingly pretentious Roman practices follows, 34–46)? Democritus' hypothetical reaction to contemporary Roman realities is introduced through a conditional clause (*quid si vidisset*, 36). Yet even in his day Democritus 'used to discover material for laughter at every meeting with people' (47–48). His wisdom (*prudencia*) proves that 'even in the homeland of mutttons, where the air is dull¹, top-notch men can be born who provide great examples' (48–50). Democritus 'laughed at the cares and the joys of the crowd, and sometimes also their tears' (51–52), while he would 'tell the threatening Fortune to go hang herself and show her a middle finger' (52–53).

Democritus' appearance in Juvenal's tenth *Satire* is usually interpreted in terms of Juvenal's own poetic intentions². This reference is read as the poet's self-projection back into Democritus, heralding a change in Juvenal's style and poetic programme compared to his earlier efforts: 'To generations of readers and scholars, the Democritus passage has looked like a signal of Juvenal's own new worldview and approach to satire. There are certainly textual clues that suggest a self-referential agenda' (Keane 2015, 118). Also, 'The second, "mellower" [Juvenal], who sounded "unechte" to Ribbeck, emerges at the beginning of Book 4 and produces "quieter ... more philosophical, more ironic, more

¹ Inhabitants of Democritus' native Abdera had reputation for mental inadequacy; there is a whole section of *Philogelos* devoted to jokes based on the exploits of the obtuse Abderites (§ 110–127 Thierfelder; see Thierfelder 1968, 71–75). 'The idea that climate affects intellect goes right back to the Hippocratic *περὶ ἀέρων, ὑδάτων, τόπων*' (Courtney, 403). Abdera was first condemned for obtuseness by Herodas (2.58), as well as alluded to by Cicero (speaking on bad ideas of Democritus: *quae quidem omnia sunt patria Democriti quam Democrito digniora*, *De Nat. Deor.* 1.120).

² Thus already Lutz: 'Juvenal considers Democritus a satirist along with himself when he says, "To condemn by a cutting laugh comes easy to us all" (Lutz 1954, 311). Halliwell in his magisterial study on the Greek laughter, formulated it thus: 'Juvenal sets up Democritus as a figure of incessant, universal ridicule of life, a sort of patron saint of his own invective' (Halliwell 2008, 369).

urbane” verse than we have seen previously. The musings about the drawbacks of power and wealth that open *Satire* 10 suggest a new, more contemplative persona.³

While there is no reason to quibble with Keane’s and Courtney’s analysis as far as shift in Juvenal’s poetic strategy is concerned, it is legitimate to ask: what is the overall narrative function of Democritus as ‘the laughing philosopher’ in Juvenal’s tenth *Satire*? And should the passage introducing Democritus and Heraclitus (28–53) indeed be read as a ‘digression’ or ‘excursus’ from the main argument of the poem, as Wulfram states (Wulfram, 153–154)? Closely linked to these is the question of Juvenal’s sources of the Democritean material.

The most direct poetic ‘ancestor’, as it were, of Juvenal’s Democritus is the appearance of the ‘laughing philosopher’ in Horace’s *Epistle to Augustus* (*Ep.* 2.1, 194–201):

si foret in terris, rideret Democritus, seu
¹⁹⁵*diversum confusa genus panthera camelo*
sive elephans albus volgi converteret ora;
spectaret populum ludis attentius ipsis
ut sibi praebentem nimio spectacula plura:
scriptores autem narrare putaret asello
²⁰⁰*fabellam surdo. nam quae pervincere voces*
evaluere sonum, referunt quem nostra theatra?

Just as in Juvenal, Democritus is here ‘transplanted’ to Rome, and his reaction to the contemporary Roman theatre spectacles is imagined in the series of counterfactual conditional clauses: *si foret in terris, rideret* (194), *spectaret* (197), *putaret* (199). The similarity of Horatian passage to Juvenal is undeniable, as is the likelihood of direct influence. However, the picture of Democritus in Juvenal is considerably richer and fuller than the sketchy cameo appearance in Horace.

Democritus as an expert on laughter – with a suggestion that he may have authored a book on the subject – appears in Cicero’s *De oratore: Atque illud primum, quid sit ipse risus, quo pacto concitetur, ubi sit, quo modo existat atque ita repente erumpat, ut eum cupientes tenere nequeamus, et quo modo simul latera, os, venas, oculos, vultum occupet, viderit Democritus* (2.235). This, as Stewart asserts, is ‘[t]he earliest datable reference to Democritus’ special concern with laughter’ (Stewart, 186). Cicero – or Cicero’s source which he relies on – seems to imply that Democritus preoccupied himself with the physiology of laughter. While interesting in itself, this testimony seems to lie outside the immediate scope of our interests.

³ Keane 2015, 117 (quoting Highet 1954, 138; Singleton 1983, 198). Also see Courtney: ‘The prominence given at the beginning of Book IV to the laughing Democritus announces satire based not on indignation (in fact Juvenal in 360 urges men to abandon *ira* (contrast 1.45)), but on a mixture of scorn, cynicism and melancholy. That is readily comprehensible in this particular context [...], but the change of manner affects the whole book [...], so Juvenal’s announcement of it is to be taken as programmatic; 51–2 look like a new programme replacing 1.85–6. It is significant that he sees the goal of life as *tranquillitas* (364), that is Democritean εὐθυμία’ (Courtney 2013, 392).

The first Latin writer to introduce the contrast between weeping Heraclitus and laughing Democritus appears to be Seneca in his *De ira*, written ca. 40 AD (2.10.5)⁴. Comparison of Seneca's text with Juvenal's lines suggest strong intertextual connection⁵:

Seneca <i>De ira</i> 2.10.5	Juvenal 10
Heraclitus <u>quotiens prodierat</u> et tantum circa se male viventium, immo male pereuntium viderat, <u>flebat</u> , miserebatur <u>omnium</u> , qui sibi <u>laeti felicesque occurrebant</u> , miti animo, sed nimis imbecillo, et ipse inter deplorandos erat. Democritum contra aiunt <u>numquam sine risu in publico</u> fuisse; adeo nihil illi videbatur serium eorum quae <u>serio gerebantur</u> . Ubi istic irae locus est? Aut ridenda omnia aut flenda sunt.	alter <u>ridebat</u> , <u>quotiens</u> de limine moverat unum <u>protuleratque pedem</u> , <u>flebat</u> contrarius auctor (28–30) tunc quoque materiam <u>risu</u> invenit ad <u>omnis occursum hominum</u> (47–48) <u>ridebat curas</u> nec non et <u>gaudia volgi</u> , interdum et lacrimas (51–52)

Even more noteworthy is the fact that *De ira* seems to draw on Seneca's teacher Sotion's treatise on the same subject; three quotations from it are preserved in Stobaeus' *Anthology*. One of these directly mentions weeping Heraclitus and laughing Democritus – according to Zeph Stewart (1958, 186), this is the earliest extant mention of the emblematic pair:

Τοῖς δὲ σοφοῖς ἀντὶ ὀργῆς Ἡρακλείτῳ μὲν δάκρυα, Δημοκρίτῳ δὲ γέλωας ἐπήει

‘As for the wise men, instead of anger Heraclitus would be overtaken by tears, and Democritus by laughter.’

Stobaeus (3.20.53, p. 550 H.)

Sotion, an Alexandria-born Stoic-Pythagorean thinker, appears to have been active as a teacher in Rome in 13–18 AD (Fränkel 1945, n. 96, p. 224) where he influenced not only Seneca (who mentions him in *Ep.* 49.2 & 108.17–22), but also Ovid – who is likely to have based the image and doctrine of Pythagoras in the *Metamorphoses* on Sotion's teachings (Fränkel 1945, 108–109, n. 97, p. 224–225). Sotion seems to have departed Rome either after Tiberius banned *mathematici* in 16 (17?) AD (Tacitus *Ann.* 2.32.5; Dio 57.15.8) or when the Jews and Egyptians were expelled by Tiberius in 19 AD (Tacitus *Ann.* 2.85.5). After Sotion left, Seneca abandoned the vegetarian diet to which Sotion had persuaded him (*Ep.* 108.22).

It is only to be expected that the twin image of Heraclitus and Democritus would migrate from Sotion's Περὶ ὀργῆς to Seneca's *De ira*, a work dealing with the same to-

⁴ Two decades later the image of two philosophers also resurfaces in Seneca's *De tranquillitate animi* (15.2–3): *In hoc itaque flectendi sumus, ut omnia vulgi vitia non invisā nobis sed ridicula videantur et Democritum potius imitemur quam Heraclitum. Hic enim, quotiens in publicum processerat, flebat, ille ridebat; huic omnia quae agimus miseriae, illi ineptiae videbantur. Elevanda ergo omnia et facili animo ferenda; humanus est deridere vitam quam deplorare. Adice quod de humano quoque genere melius meretur qui ridet illud quam qui luget; ille ei spei bonae aliquid relinquit, hic autem stulte deflet quae corrigi posse desperat. Et universa contemplantī maioris animi est qui risum non tenet quam qui lacrimas, quando lenissimum adfectum animi movet et nihil magnum, nihil severum, ne miserum quidem ex tanto paratu putat.*

⁵ *Ita* Dick 1969, 242: ‘A comparison of the two treatments shows that Juvenal began the Democritus-Heraclitus passage with Seneca in mind.’

pic – the need to renounce anger. It is considerably more remarkable that the motif would resurface in that *Satire* of Juvenal in which the poet seeks to modify the tone of his satires, to move from the ‘irate’ authorial persona of the earlier satires to ‘gradual rejection of anger’⁶. Thus reference to Heraclitus and Democritus looks very much like intentional signalling by Juvenal that he is changing his stance from anger to laughter – all the more so that, as far as our evidence attests, two out of the three known previous appearances of the Heraclitus-Democritus pair (in Sotion and in Seneca’s *De ira*) referred precisely to the context of ‘anger management’, as it were: the Presocratic thinkers were adduced as examples of not giving in to anger.

So the appearance of the pair of ‘weeping Heraclitus / laughing Democritus’ in Juvenal’s tenth *Satire* seems to be motivated by the poet’s intention to rethink his poetic strategy, to move his poetic project, his later satires, from the ‘anger agenda’.

However, does this reading sufficiently explain engagement with Democritus, Democritean presence, in Juvenal 10? Not really, if one takes into account the concluding lines of the poem (363–366) which resonate with a number of Democritean themes:

*monstro quod ipse tibi possis dare; semita certe
tranquillae per virtutem patet unica vitae.*

³⁶⁵*nullum numen habes, si sit prudentia: nos te,
nos facimus, Fortuna, deam caeloque locamus.*

The emphasis in the final words of the poem shifts the focus away from the gods and onto the human beings themselves: ‘I will show you what you could give yourself; the only path to a truly tranquil life lies through virtue’ (363–364). Democritus’ fr. B 234 stresses that health (recalling the famous *mens sana in corpore sano* at line 356, the only thing worth praying for, according to Juvenal) is in human beings’ power to achieve, so it is misguided to pray for it: ὑγίειν εὐχῆσι παρὰ θεῶν αἰτέοντα ἄνθρωποι, τὴν δὲ ταύτης δύναμιν ἐν ἑαυτοῖς ἔχοντες οὐκ ἴσασιν· ἀκρασίη δὲ τάναντία πρήσσοντες αὐτοὶ προδότηι τῆς ὑγείης τῆσιν ἐπιθυμήσιν γίνονται. Also, Democritus’ fragment B 176 stresses the ‘self-sufficiency’ (αὐτάρκης) of nature as opposed to fickleness of profligate ‘fortune’ (τύχη): τύχη μεγαλόδωρος, ἀλλ’ ἀβέβαιος, φύσις δὲ αὐτάρκης· διόπερ νικᾷ τῷ ἥσσονι καὶ βεβαίῳ τὸ μείζον τῆς ἐλπίδος. The adjective *tranquillae* at line 364 hints at Democritus’ lost treatise Περὶ εὐθυμίας; its standard translation into Latin is *de tranquillitate*⁷.

⁶ To borrow Keane’s phrase (Keane 2015, 120). She does not support this reading of Juvenal’s trajectory for reasons which are outside our purview and are too onerous to debate here. It will suffice to mention that Keane is not right to maintain that the reading of the tenth *Satire* as Juvenal’s rejection of anger somehow rests on the assumption that, in Juvenal’s eyes, Heraclitus = anger, as is clear from her criticism of that position: ‘If Juvenal is criticizing Heraclitus’s tears, this is not necessarily the same as rejecting anger’ (Keane 2015, 120). For Seneca (and Sotion), on whom Juvenal relies, both Heraclitus and Democritus signify rejection of anger – except that Seneca is more amenable to Democritus’ way of rejecting anger than to that of Heraclitus (see *De ira* 2.10.5).

⁷ See Murgatroyd 2017, n. 19, p. 17: ‘Juvenal’s knowledge of Democritus may have come (at least in part) from Seneca. In his *Tranq. Animi* (at 2.3), Seneca translated Democritus’s *euthymia* as *tranquillitas* (cf. Juvenal’s *tranquillae ... vitae* at 364); at 13.1, he wrote that when Democritus said that if a man wanted to live tranquilly he should not engage in many public or private affairs, Democritus was referring to useless affairs (*supervacua*, the word used by Juvenal at 10.54); and at 15.2 he made the contrast between the laughing Democritus and the weeping Heraclitus and advised imitating the former (cf. *Juv.* 28ff.).’

Moreover, as Courtney notes, ‘Plutarch 2.465c quotes the *περὶ εὐθυμίας* of Democritus as advising moderation even if *τύχη* brings overweening prosperity (p. 132 Diels–Kranz; cf. fr. B 191)’ (Courtney 2013, 396).

The final two lines of the poem invoke and interpret several Democritean fragments simultaneously. Juvenal’s passionate exclamation ‘You’d have no divinity, if there were prudence. It is we, we who made you, Fortune, a goddess and placed in heaven!’ (365–366) is mirrored by Democritus’ statement in fragment B 119:

ἄνθρωποι τύχης εἰδῶλον ἐπλάσαντο πρόφασιν ἰδίης ἀβουλήs. βαιὰ γὰρ φρονήσει *τύχη* *μάχεται*, τὰ δὲ πλεῖστα ἐν βίῳ εὐζύνετος ὀξυδερκεῖη κατιθύνει

‘People fashioned an image of fortune as an excuse for their own folly. For in a few cases fortune conflicts with prudence, but most things in life intelligent clear-sightedness keeps straight.’

Fr. B 119 DK (Christopher Taylor’s translation)

Democritus’ fragment speaks of ‘anthropogenic’ origin of Fortune (note cult connotation of *εἰδῶλον ἐπλάσαντο*) and a tension between prudence and fortune. These are precisely the thematic lines of Juvenal’s conclusion. Also, in this connection one may quote two fragments of Democritus which internalize the source of happiness and unhappiness: *εὐδαιμονίη ψυχῆς καὶ κακοδαιμονίη* (fr. B 170), *εὐδαιμονίη οὐκ ἐν βοσκήμασιν οἰκεῖ οὐδὲ ἐν χρυσῷ*: *ψυχῆ οἰκητήριον δαίμονος* (fr. B 171). In the view of the fact that ‘happiness’ (*eudaimoniē*) and ‘unhappiness’ (*kakodaimoniē*) contain a reference to ‘divinity’ (*daimōn*) in their etymological make-up, these two fragments are as much about the internalization and ‘secularization’ of the sources of happiness and misery which tradition links to divinity, their transfer from the sphere of gods into the human psyche, as the more overtly anti-religious fr. B 234 & B 119 (*v. supra*)⁸. Thus they chime perfectly with the sentiment of the concluding lines of the tenth *Satire*.

Thus the ending of the poem reveals a wealth of Democritean material in its background which suggests that Juvenal’s engagement with Democritus’ thought is broader and deeper than would have been required by an invocation of the ‘laughing philosopher’ to serve as a role-model for the satirist’s new poetic strategy. If anything, the echoes of Democritus at the concluding section of the poem amply demonstrate that the Democritean episode in the introductory section of the *Satire* is not a ‘digression’ or ‘excursus’ (*pace* Wulfram 2011, 152, 154), but part of a programmatic and thorough interpretative effort.

This, however, leaves us with a dilemma: where does all this Democritean material come from? It certainly cannot be plausibly thought to derive in its totality solely from Seneca⁹, let alone from Horace or Cicero. Nor is there anything to indicate that Juvenal may have engaged with Democritus’ thought of his own accord.

⁸ Fragments B 170 and B 171 could be read as Democritean appropriation (and re-interpretation) of Heracitus’ fr. B 119: ἦθος ἀνθρώπου δαίμων, which very roughly translates as ‘The character is human being’s divinity / fate’.

⁹ See Anderson’s synoptic discussion of Seneca’s use of Democritus in his *De ira* and *De tranquillitate animi* (Anderson 1982, 342–344), which concludes: ‘This alone Seneca tells us about Democritus’ ideas: that men can achieve *tranquillitas* by disengagement’ (*ibid.*, 344). Dick’s insistence that Juvenal’s material in the concluding

The clue out of this dilemma lies in the concluding lines of the poem's introduction where Democritus is said to tell the Fortune to go hang herself and to stick a middle-finger at her (52–53):

*Fortunae ipse minaci
mandaret laqueum mediumque ostenderet unguem*

This brazen display by Democritus is an unmistakably Cynic motif. As James Uden says, 'Juvenal's passage ends with an archetypal Cynic display of ἀναίδεια ("shamelessness"), as Democritus counters humanity's enslavement to the tyranny of fortune by giving Fortuna the middle finger – an obscene gesture that was somewhat of a trademark for the Cynic σοφός Diogenes'¹⁰.

Indeed, a rather persuasive and still influential thesis by Zeph Stewart asserts that Democritus' ethics was preserved and popularised through the Cynic popular preaching, the Cynic *diatribai*. Thus the ethical-political maxims were transmitted in a specific tradition, totally distinct from, and virtually not overlapping with, the doxographic tradition that preserved Democritus' cosmological fragments. Stewart's analysis of Democritus' ethical fragments' transmission leads him to conclude that 'the sayings attributed to Democritus were part of the common store from which a first century Cynic might draw his "useful maxims", but more importantly it suggests that it was among the Cynics and their allies that his fragments were preserved during the period – and probably deformed for more convenient use' (Stewart, 184)¹¹.

If, as the Cynic 'trademark' bearing lines 52–53 suggest, Juvenal received the bulk of the Democritean material from the Cynic tradition, that would explain not only its availability to Juvenal, but also the structural arrangement and thematic nature of the materials thus received. For if Juvenal borrows his Democritean material from the Cynic source where they were used to furnish material for Cynic popular preachers' 'sermons', *diatribai*, Democritus' fragments would be embedded within the pre-fabricated ethical arguments which addressed trenchant social and moral issues. Philosopher's texts would have been already 'pre-digested', adapted to the arguments of the *diatribē*. The poet

section of the *Satire* 10 derives from Seneca and Seneca alone is hard to justify insofar as Juvenal's parallels with Democritean fragments are much closer and more specific than the fairly general Senecan antecedents which Dick adduces (see Dick 1969, 243–245). More convincing is Anderson's overall assessment of Juvenal's indebtedness to Seneca: 'I feel somewhat distrustful of any evidence which tends to show that Seneca exercised a decisive influence upon the creation of Juvenal's later satirist. I should much prefer to argue [...] that these theories circulated freely in the First and Second Centuries and that no single source for Juvenal's new practices can or should be isolated. [...] [W]e should be interested in Seneca less as a source than as a possible indication of and analogue for the new developments in Juvenal's *Satires*' (Anderson 1982, 341).

¹⁰ Uden 2015, 160–161, referring to Diog. Laert. 6.34, 35; Epict. 3.2.11. Uden analyses Cynic underpinnings of Juvenal 10 at length – see Uden 2015, 159–169.

¹¹ Cf. also his very prescient remarks: 'This review of the evidence for Cynic activity in the preservation of Democritus' fame and fragments is not intended as an attack on the authenticity of the fragments. It is rather a more detailed and better defined warning for the exercise of a caution [...]. It means that certain emphases should be taken into account, certain types of intrusion expected; it means that deformations toward simplicity should be assumed, as well as changes of vocabulary; it may help to explain the order and the very existence of some of the fragments' (Stewart 1958, 187).

who was using this material, such as Juvenal, needed only to insert relevant *exempla* and refashion it in a poetic form. In other words: my hypothesis is that Juvenal is using, as a structural blueprint for his poem, an earlier Cynic *diatribē* that used to deride vanity and pointlessness of human prayers and wishes. The bulk of the Democritean material must have come within that *diatribē*, already pre-fabricated and integrated into the framework of Cynic thought.

We do not have surviving examples of such a Democritean-leaning Cynic *diatribē* which may have served as an example for Juvenal. We know, however, of a text which may be derived from precisely such a prototype. A series of Pseudo-Hippocratic letters constitute what has been termed as a ‘epistolary novel’ (‘novella in letters’, Smith 1990, 20; ‘Briefroman’, Wulfram 2011, 146): an exchange of letters between ‘Hippocrates’, the people of Abdera who became preoccupied with the health of the famous scion of their city – Democritus, Democritus himself, and others¹².

The Abderites are concerned with Democritus’ health because Democritus merely laughs at everything:

(I a) ‘[Democritus] is now constantly wakeful night and day, laughs at everything large and small, and thinks life in general is worth nothing. (b) Someone marries, a man engages in trade, a man goes into politics, another takes an office, goes on an embassy, votes, falls ill, is wounded, dies. (c) He laughs at every one of them, whether he sees them downcast and ill-tempered, or happy. (II a) The man is investigating things in Hades, and he writes about them, and he says that the air is full of images. (b) He listens to birds’ voices. Arising often alone at night he seems to be singing softly. (c) He claims that he goes off sometimes into the boundless and that there are numberless Democrituses like himself.’

Letter 10.1 (Smith 1990, 57)

This is a very brief example from a copious material to analyse which there is neither time nor space in the framework of present endeavour¹³. This passage *in nuce* exhibits traits which are much more extensively illustrated in the central text of this ‘epistolary novel’ – in the *Letter 17* which documents the actual encounter between ‘Hippocrates’ and Democritus. But even this short passage contains several important points of contact with Juvenal’s text (admittedly, there can be no comparison between the two in complexity and elaborateness).

Pseudo-Hippocratic passage breaks into two halves. In the first half, (a) the motif of Democritus’ laughter at the vanity of life is introduced. This roughly corresponds to the introductory section of Juvenal’s poem which introduced the Heraclitus–Democritus pair (28–53). Then (b) a number of topics which provoke Democritus laughter are enumerated: marriage, trade, politics, public service, travelling, voting, illness & wounds, death. Once again, this list is not dissimilar to the list of topics covered as examples of vanity of human

¹² Letters 10–17 in Smith edition (p. 54–93). The *terminus ante quem* for the letters is provided by the papyrus fragment P. Oxy. 1184 (*Letter 11*) from Tiberius’ period, thus dating letters to the beginning of the 1st century AD at the latest.

¹³ For thorough analysis of Democritus’ laughter in the Pseudo-Hippocratic *Epistles*, see Halliwell 2008, 360–364.

desires in Juvenal: trade, politics, eloquence, war, longevity, beauty. Finally, **(c)** the author of Pseudo-Hippocratic epistles emphasises that Democritus laughs both at downcast and ill-tempered, and at happy people. This sentence corresponds almost entirely to lines 51–52 of Juvenal 10: *ridebat curas nec non et gaudia volgi, interdum et lacrimas* – Democritus ‘used to laugh at cares and also the joys of the people, as well as at the tears’.

Second half of the section is no less interesting, as it seeks to weave into the letter’s narrative various topics from Democritus’ philosophy: **(a)** investigation of things under the earth (several sources refer to Democritus’ work Περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἅιδου, *On the things in Hades* – cf. fr. A33, B0c, B1 DK) and Democritus’ famous theory of ‘images’ (*eidōla*); **(b)** study of birds’ voices (most likely reference to Democritus’ fragment B 154: ‘We are pupils of animals in the most important matters: the spider for spinning and mending, the swallow for building, and the song-birds, swan and nightingale, for singing, by way of imitation’ – see Hershbell, p. 93); as well as **(c)** references to boundlessness of the cosmos and the parody of Democritus’ theory of infinite worlds (with infinite Democrituses in them).

Even this short example makes it clear that the Pseudo-Hippocratic ‘epistolary novel’ derives its material from the interpretative tradition which reinterprets Democritean material and blends it with Cynic tenets¹⁴. Thus the source of the Pseudo-Hippocratic letters seems to be a Cynic *diatribē* that criticized human life, wishes, and conventions (represented as the objects of Democritus’ laughter both in *Letter 10* – and Juvenal’s tenth *Satire*). One may postulate a common source both for the pseudepigraphic ‘epistolary novel’ of Hippocrates encounter with Democritus, and for Juvenal’s tenth *Satire* both of which dramatize laughing Democritus as a Cynic sage engaged on mocking everyday human conventions and traditional values. Introduction of weeping Heraclitus into the ambience of Cynic popular *diatribē* alongside laughing Democritus seems to be Juvenal’s own innovation, for which he relies, primarily and proximately, on Seneca’s, and, ultimately, on Sotion’s inspiration. Nonetheless, Heraclitus remains a merely marginal presence in the genre dominated by Democritus’ resounding *cachinnus*.

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¹⁴ Cf. Smith on Pseudo-Hippocratic letters: ‘The laughing Democritus acknowledges, especially with his diatribe, the Cynic view’ (1990, 28, and see the discussion in p. 27–29).

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