

## Passing Time

### *Hunting, Poetry, and Leisure*

*Vladimir*: That passed the time.

*Estragon*: It would have passed in any case.

*Vladimir*: Yes, but not so rapidly.

—SAMUEL BECKETT, *Waiting for Godot*

Preserved for us on an amphora in the Vatican Museum under the name of the black-figure painter Exekias (fig. 8) is a remarkable evocation of ancient leisure.<sup>1</sup> Two men, the greatest of the Greek warriors at Troy, sit opposite one another playing at a game on a board. These warriors are Achilles and Ajax. The scene in Exekias's painting takes place during the Trojan War. It is situated in what must be a brief interlude during or immediately before the fighting around the walls of the citadel.<sup>2</sup> Exekias (who flourished in third quarter of the sixth century B.C.E.) makes unequivocal this temporal location. Achilles is fully armed. His helmet is on, as if he were ready at any moment to go to battle. His two javelins rest instantly available on his left shoulder, and his hand grasps them. His shield, propped just behind him, is within easy reach. The lesser figure of Ajax mirrors that of Achilles in all respects except one: his helmet rests on his nearby shield.<sup>3</sup> Despite the absence of a helmet, Ajax, too, is ready for battle: the pair of javelins resting on his left shoulder makes this quite apparent.<sup>4</sup>

The focus of the picture, however, is not on the two warriors. It is on the box where their game is being conducted. We can barely make out the game. But it is quite clear what they are doing. The warriors' concentration on that box is total. The viewer is drawn toward it with them. Our eyes are led to the game by the way that their figures (their very backs and even their musculature) curve inward toward it, by the way that their arms reach toward it, by the way that their eyes, noses, foreheads (and Achilles' helmet plume), thighs, lower legs, and feet point toward it. The bases of the two pairs of javelins are

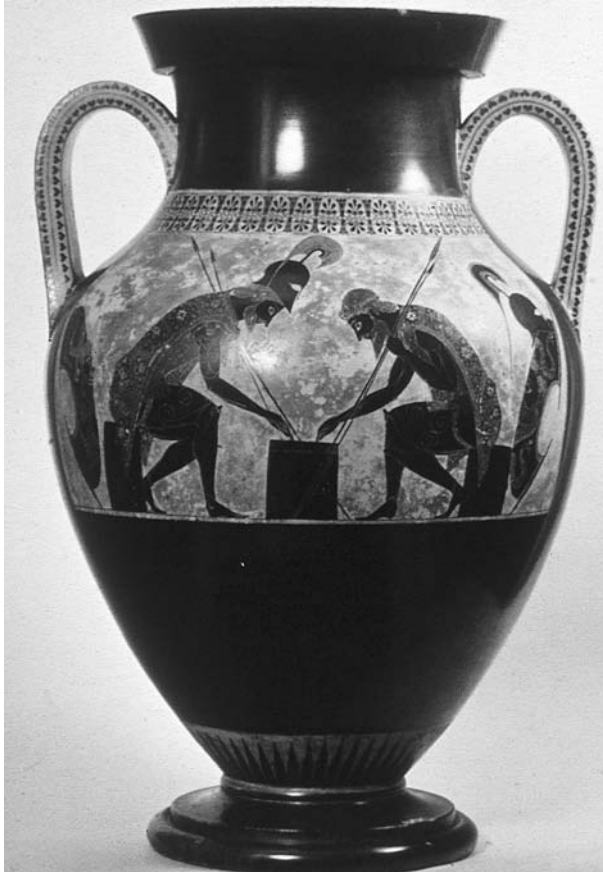


FIG. 8. Exekias, "Achilles and Ajax" (ca. 530 B.C.E.).  
(Photography courtesy of Vatican Museums.)

fixed on either side of the game box, as if more firmly to anchor the viewer's concentration on the game.<sup>5</sup>

The hands of Achilles and Ajax are poised over the board with striking deliberation. We sense that this very deliberation will shortly be produced for their many victims on the battlefield. The contrast that this brings out, between the pacific and trivial nature of the game and the terrible and bloody events in which Achilles and Ajax are about to participate, is breathtaking.<sup>6</sup> These two heroes will shortly abandon this most convivial of pastimes and participate in the most protracted, bloody, and famous of all ancient conflicts. This war will eventually claim both Achilles' and Ajax's lives.<sup>7</sup> It will cause untold sufferings for the Trojans, as well as the destruction of their city. But not for the present.

At this moment, the two heroes, distracted and content, seem to have no consciousness of the terrible events in which they are key players. The enormity of this realization is to be contrasted with the calm and apparent unimportance of their current activity, the game.

Exekias's vision of how free time may be occupied is constructed around a series of polarities or juxtapositions. This is evident in, for example, the simple contrast between the threatening and purposeful martial habiliment of Achilles and Ajax, between the striking physiques of Achilles and Ajax and the triviality of the game, between the ornate beauty of their dress and its martial purpose. There are also polarities evident between the calm of the warriors and the disordered world of war that they will soon enter, between the board game itself and the serious business of war that is soon to come, between the weapons and the game board, between the way the fighters' hands are outstretched in this picture and how we know they will soon be outstretched on the battlefield. These juxtapositions emphasize the deliberate purposelessness of their play.

It would be easy, when viewing Exekias's remarkable evocation of leisure, to interpret it in some way as expressing a tragic vision of human life. Such an interpretation would go something as follows: War rages around the doomed pair, Achilles and Ajax. The contrast between the insignificance of their game and the momentous nature of events that enfold them highlights their impending deaths. It is as if Achilles and Ajax were the game pieces on the board and the Trojan War was the board itself.

That is far too sentimental an interpretation. Exekias, rather, seems to me to be commenting on the power of play and of games. Despite the chaos around them, Achilles and Ajax are totally absorbed by their game and, presumably, become oblivious to their surrounds. Such leisure activities therefore exist in spite of the surrounds. So leisure in this portrait is something slotted in between other momentous events. Part of its allure, for us viewers at any rate, resides in its acting as an alternative to (not an escape from) war. But that is our reaction. For the two players, the attraction of the game must consist not in such metaphysical implications or in its capacity to provide for them an escape from the savage reality of the war and the proximity of their own deaths but in the simple fact that the game in itself is pleasurable.<sup>8</sup>

There are other aspects of this vase painting that must be highlighted. Exekias's evocation of leisure marks it as no *passive* affair. Leisure requires activity, however slight, as the outstretched arms and the visible musculature beneath the cloaks indicate. The body itself is engaged in this game. Even more important than the complicity of the body itself in Achilles' and Ajax's leisure activity is mental concentration. The very focus of the bodies and of their ges-

tures implies this. It is their concentration that renders irrelevant, for a time, both the war and time itself. Exekias's game requires, furthermore, a form of complicity, of community, and of association: the game requires more than one person to play it. It is notable that this game, furthermore, is a public affair. The dress of the warriors indicates that their game is no secluded pastime but is probably carried out in the open air very near to or even at the marshaling place for the massed fighters; their game, that is, takes place within the melee of public activity, almost within the midst of the war itself. The game asserts vigorously a type of "exteriority." So it is, too, that this form of leisure is both competitive and assertive. Achilles asserts his dominance, not just physically, but, as the painter tells us, by defeating Ajax in this round of the game.

What do Exekias, Achilles, and Ajax have to do with this portion of my study and with this book as a whole? This evocation of leisure and, through this, of how free time may be employed acts as a benchmark against which subsequent formulations or manifestations of the use of free time may be gauged. This chapter will focus on some of the registers of free time and leisure in antiquity. Their changing temporal conception, I will argue, closely mirrors that of those other affectivities and registers that have already been discussed, especially that highlighted in the previous chapter. Their various reflections change markedly within ancient culture. The most notable experiential shift occurs, we will see, approximately at the same time as another major fissure begins to emerge, that between the active and the passive registering of melancholia or lovesickness (see chapters 1–2). This occurs sometime toward the middle of the first century of our era. I will argue, as is in keeping with the three chapters in this part of my book, that leisure is construed in accordance with a desire to protect—even reformulate—a self that is seen as under stress from a variety of societal pressures. It will follow from this that I am asserting a periodization for the construction of leisure. This assertion of a periodization for the utilization of free time (and, perhaps, leisure itself) should come as no surprise, for its perception and use are intertwined intimately with, for example, how it is that the body, the mind (see chapters 1, 2, or 6), and, crucially, time itself (see chapter 6) are felt.

The entirety of the perceptual register of free time and leisure cannot possibly be surveyed within the short space available here (see Balsdon 1969; Veyne 1987; Toner 1995). It is possible only to point to trends and to tendencies. These are best illustrated by tracing the historical development of one mode through which time, in a leisurely manner, may be filled. Such an approach may offer clues to the changes evident in the larger affective field. Elsewhere, in my discussion of the history of didactic epic poetry (Toohey 1996), I have offered some tentative conclusions on this matter. Here, it is my intention to repa-

some of that material and to reformulate it in accordance with the conclusions this book is attempting to press. By charting the association that a number of didactic authors display toward the use of time in leisure and play, we may come better to understand how one of leisure's ancient forms may have changed and, further, how this may demonstrate the various societal cultures within which it was nurtured.

First let us try to pin down, using Exekias's painting as a model, a more systematic description of leisure and thus the use of free time. The definition offered here is not intended to be timeless but, rather, applies essentially to Exekias. As I trace later historical representations of how free time may be used, we will find that the vision changes markedly.<sup>9</sup>

The preconditions for leisure are free time and the freedom to choose to utilize this. Leisure must also entail pleasure, constitute an end in itself, and involve the application, if not necessarily of some degree of intelligence, at least of a marked degree of mental concentration.<sup>10</sup> I doubt that we need to expand on the need for pleasure in a satisfactory leisure activity (although Aristotle, in his *Politics*, felt obliged to assert the link). If it does not please, would Achilles and Ajax be devoting such considerable attention to it? But what type of activity constitutes an end in itself? Many believe, and it is hard to reject their conclusion, that activities pursued with an end in mind are best thought of as utilitarian, ultimately as little more than work (Aristotle *Politics* 1337b; de Grazia [1962] 1994, 15). They are the sorts of things we do (or hope we do) to keep alive. It is probably true that any activity that functions as an end in itself cannot be thought of as work. Leisure has nothing to do with work or with survival. It is done for its own sake: the board game of Achilles and Ajax could not be further from the utilitarian backdrop of war. That a satisfactory leisure activity should engage the mind was Aristotle's position (in the *Politics*; cf. Pieper 1952). He believed successful leisure (*scholê*) and the exercise of the mind were closely related (*Ethics* 1177b). Although Aristotle probably exaggerates the importance of this element, we ought to note that the intellectual component, while not needing to be profound, must be such as to generate in an individual a marked level of mental concentration. This element of concentration is vital, for without it there cannot be achieved that sense of otherworldliness, that sense of distraction or escape from the quotidian, that is such a notable feature of satisfying and therapeutic leisure.<sup>11</sup> The concentration that Achilles and Ajax display toward their game is made quite apparent in Exekias's rendering of leisure and of the use of free time. Two other qualities, neither of which are stressed in the Aristotelian scheme of things but which are prominent in Exekias's vase, are constants in leisure: first, leisure is most often pursued in a bodily position that is the opposite to that of work (hence one that

is nonquotidian, often sedentary);<sup>12</sup> second, leisure is frequently, though not exclusively, pursued in company with others.<sup>13</sup>

Leisure, as Achilles and Ajax show, is closely related to play. I have suggested (Toohey 1996) that they are siblings (cf. Huizinga [1949] 1971; O’Loughlin 1978). Because the concept of play will prove important to my discussion, I offer here a few summarizing comments (see too Bruner 1975). These are, again, based on Exekias. I suppose that the simplest distinction between leisure and play is that leisure owes its existence to work, while play does not. Leisure is conceived as an alternative to work. It is probably fair to say that a child can have no leisure. Not being subject to work, a child cannot have leisure from something. The same could be said of the unemployed. Play, however, does not exist in contradistinction to work. A child’s life or that of any unemployed person may be full of play. Play seems dependent on the pleasure inherent in leisure (cf. Aristotle *Politics* 1337b). In play “the player leaves his everyday world and enters one in which for the moment he is free of necessity, namely in his free time, his time of recreation” (de Grazia [1962] 1994, 375). Play is inherently “otherworldly.” It usually has rules, against which one often can pit oneself. It usually involves interaction with others (in person or through instructional material). Because play is not concerned with the here and now, it also seems to exploit the gulf between signifier and signified, between subject and object. Play can be a game, though this is not necessarily so. Games, often mere contests, are so frequently and so vigorously predicated on winning and losing that they may forfeit their autonomy.<sup>14</sup> Loss and victory easily undermine the self-referentiality and come to function as economic or social “ends.”<sup>15</sup>

Leisure, in the model I have suggested, is built upon purposelessness, upon a disjunction between action and realization—perhaps more properly, upon a disjunction between the subject and the world (the object). Leisure here derives its resonance from the chosen inability of the individual to influence the world by practicing its particular modality. In the most peculiar of manners, it is as if leisure recapitulates the infantile rupture that took place between the individual and the world. It is at this point that play becomes important. For the child, it helps overcome the trauma of that rupture by teaching a limited mastery of the physical worlds and thus a pleasurable tolerance of the disjunction between self and other. Leisure, because it is so often and so easily perceived as frivolous (as purposeless, as forging no link between subject and object), is frequently disapproved of or rejected out of hand. Play provides its rationale, its excuse, and even its justification. Play restores the balance potentially offset by leisure’s purposelessness. This is inherent in the model based on Exekias that I have sketched.



To chart the changes in such a slippery experience as the use of free time or such an intangible concept as leisure itself, we need to focus on some discrete mode of its construction (e.g., a toy, a game, a spectacle)<sup>16</sup> and to allow this specific instance to speak for the general. It has often been argued that ancient didactic poetry, in many, if not all, of its incarnations, functions as an adjunct to the leisurely use of free time (Effe 1977; Toohey 1996). On the simplest level, it may provide instruction on such essentially leisure activities as hunting with dogs, fishing, the theater, love, and gardening (Dalzell 1996).<sup>17</sup> On a more complex level, didactic poetry may function, in itself, as a form of intellectual play—displaying those characteristics adumbrated in the previous paragraphs (Toohey 1996). Were we, therefore, to chart the interaction between examples of didactic poetry that focus explicitly on leisure activities and the use of free time, it might be possible to descry the lineaments of a reasoned sequence, or periodization, for the manner by which the leisurely use of time, in this arena at any rate, may be registered:<sup>18</sup> the concrete instance of didactic epic, that is, may provide clues for the general.

Hunting may provide the most comprehensible example.<sup>19</sup> It is in many, if not all, eras a leisure activity, while being one of the more popular topics within the extant ancient didactic corpus. For what it is worth, opinions on the status of hunting as a leisure activity differ in prose. Xenophon (*Cynegeticus* 7), describing hunting with hounds on foot, sees the activity not as leisurely but as utilitarian, as good preparation for war (see Hull 1964). Arrian, describing a hunt that uses horses with the dogs, sees no particular morality in hunting (Anderson 1985, 119). Pleasure drives its practice. The Celts, who provide much of Arrian's focus, are said to hunt "for the sheer pleasure of it" (Hull 1964, 164). At any rate, to follow is a very simple evaluation of the worth of hunting. It comes from Rutilius Namatianus's poem *De reditu suo* (vv. 615–30).<sup>20</sup>

And now, returning to Triturrita from the city of Pisa	615
I was setting the hanging sails to a gleaming South wind,	
When, shrouded by sudden clouds, the sky turned foul.	
The broken clouds scattered their wandering lightning.	
We stopped. For who, in such a terrible storm,	
For who would dare to travel on seas soon to be raging.	620
We pass our leisure from the sea in the neighbouring woods,	
And it pleases us to exercise in the pursuit of game.	
Our hospitable bailiff prepares the hunting instruments	
And the dogs who know how to recognize the strong scented	
furrow.	

By ambush and by the snare of wide-meshed nets 625  
The boar, with his terrifying flash of tusk, is overthrown and falls.  
A boar that Meleager's might would have feared to approach,  
That would have weakened the joints of Hercules.  
The hunting bugle rings back from the echoing hills  
And song makes the booty light for carrying. 630

We have met Rutilius before and examined his comments on the problems suffered by anchoritic monks and on Bellerophon. In this phase of his poem, he is no longer at sea and reflecting on melancholy. He has broken his sea voyage to Gaul to stay in a country house, probably that of a friend. Hunting has been undertaken here as a means, we would say, for relaxation, as a means for leisure. The passage, I think, speaks for itself. Note especially verse 621, "We pass our leisure from the sea in the neighbouring woods." Neither the replenishment of food supplies nor the acting out of ideological posture seems to be at issue here. It is just a matter of passing time pleasurablely, of play, of purposelessness.

There survive didactic poems on this topic of hunting, written by Ovid, Grattius, Oppian, and Nemesianus, that reflect, in very different ways, the leisurely tradition encapsulated in these lines by Rutilius.<sup>21</sup> The didactic poetry written on hunting (and, to a lesser extent, on fishing)<sup>22</sup> is obviously dictated by the exigencies of leisure. While these texts do aim to impart some information on technical topics,<sup>23</sup> they have as their target more the amusement of those people who would wish to enjoy very popular leisure pursuits.<sup>24</sup> What I propose to do in this section is to look at the attitudes displayed by these hunting (and fishing) poems and then to attempt to demonstrate how these may relate to one another and in turn to the idealized template for leisure within Exekias's painting. Thence may emerge the periodization to which I have referred, one that will allow us to compare the modes by which leisure is experienced and the modes by which we may relate to leisure the other affective registers surveyed up to this point in my book.



Before we begin with the didactic poems, there remain a few general comments that ought to be made concerning hunting. Its practice in antiquity was not always based upon the exigencies of leisure.<sup>25</sup> If we survey, briefly, the prose and pictorial depictions of hunting, a trajectory becomes apparent: hunting shifts from a subsistence activity, to one providing education, to one pursued particularly as a means of affirming power, to, finally though not exclusively, one that simply fills in time in a pleasurable manner. Several of these elements may



be present at one time, but the pattern I have indicated here is operant, in the most general of senses.

Let me explain this trajectory in a little more detail. In its earliest practice—as we see it in Homer, for example—hunting seems to have been firmly utilitarian, an activity unrelated to leisure. The Homeric hero, according to Anderson (1985, 15), hunted to provide himself with a meal. The skills required—cunning, patience, physical endurance, and, in the case of the hunting of larger animals, courage—not unexpectedly came to be associated with the battlefield. While we may wonder at the worth of hunting as preparation for taking part in war as a hoplite in a phalanx or an oarsman in a trireme, such a writer as Xenophon (*Cynegeticus* 7) asserts the educational value of hunting and claims that “hunting brings bodily health, improves sight and hearing, is an antidote to senility, and excellent training in the art of war.”<sup>26</sup> Plato, in the *Laws*, provides an echo of Xenophon’s utilitarian explanation when he praises hunting “of four-footed beasts” with horses and with hounds and with “men’s own bodies.” Plato admires the chase and the shooting and believes that “those who hunt in this way have their thoughts fixed on god-like manhood” (Anderson [1985, 22]). Whether representative of manhood or war, the vision is utterly utilitarian.

It is telling that Plato despises the banausic forms of hunting, such as fishing and fowling (see Longo 1989). These vigorously utilitarian activities make no claim on the time of a person who had the leisure to frequent the Academy or Socrates’ company. Hunting with dogs or on horseback was no pursuit for the poor. Indeed it could not be practiced by the poor. Breeding and maintaining dogs was a full-time job. It is not surprising, therefore, that hunting became associated in Greece not just with wealth but with the sort of display associated with the aristocracy.<sup>27</sup> This association is well illustrated in Xenophon’s *Cyropaedeia* where the hunting abilities of the Persian noble Cyrus—above all, his abilities on horseback—are extolled. Xenophon no doubt wishes the same abilities for his own Greek class. Two aspects of Persian hunting are worth noting, in passing, in this context. First is the imperial habit of establishing, within the palatial precinct, large walled enclosures in which emperors and nobles could hunt undisturbed on horseback. That practice illustrates the link between class and hunting as a leisure-time activity. Second, there was the strange link made by the Persians between hunting and empire (Anderson 1985, 67). The emperor, depicted on stone relief and in prose, is cast as the mighty hunter, the “protector of the people.” The class-based ideology underlying Persian hunting is inevitably present, in spirit at any rate, in classical Greece. The various Greek pots, made to be buried in graves, that associate life (especially those of

the young) with hunting make apparent this link between social power and hunting (Anderson 1985).

During the Hellenistic period, a specific type of hunting, termed by Anderson (1985) as the “royal hunt,” became very popular among Greeks of the ruling classes. Hunting, particularly on horseback and often within game-stocked regal parks, was practiced constantly and enthusiastically by monarchs. It could often be accompanied by considerable and expensive trappings. A variety of animals might be shipped in especially for the hunt, and these might be paraded publicly before the event. Anderson (1985, 81) details one such parade.

A procession [was] organized by Ptolemy Philadelphus of Egypt (283–247 B.C.) . . . and included hunters with gilded spears, 2,400 hounds of the Indian, Hyrcanian, and Molossian breeds, trees with beasts and birds dangling from them, and caged parrots, peacocks, guinea fowl, pheasants and “Ethiopian birds” . . . sheep of exotic breeds, white Indian and Ethiopian oxen, a large white bear . . . leopards, panthers, and lynxes . . . and this section of the procession was closed by a giraffe and a rhinoceros [Athenaeus 5.201b–c].

These were creatures all destined eventually for the royal hunt. Such a remarkable display cannot be motivated simply by an overenthusiasm for leisure-time activities. Its motivation is in the display itself. That, at root, is designed to exhibit power. Such displays, one must conclude, were another means used by the Hellenistic monarchs to shore up their novel and insecure regal positions. Hunting, while apparently a leisure-time activity for the very rich, is in fact as practical an activity for them, but in a different way, as it was for Homer, or Plato, or Xenophon.

In Rome, I suspect, this link with class became less pressing. Hunting became part of the normal aristocratic lifestyle and, unquestioningly, became associated with passing time pleurably, with leisure. This pastime of hunting, imitated on the grand scale from Greece, seems to have taken root in the 170s and 160s B.C.E.<sup>28</sup> The ethos that seems to have become associated with hunting in Rome may be viewed, as neatly as anywhere else, in the description given to us of hunting by Rutilius Namatianus, cited in the last section of this chapter. I will have more to say on this in the next section of this chapter.



Things are seldom as simple as they ought to be. This is as true of the poetical descriptions of hunting as of any other activity.<sup>29</sup> The sorts of ideological or discursive underpinnings that may influence the depiction of hunting and of

leisure in Rome may well be illustrated by a poem of Martial. The poem that I have in mind is 1.49. It was published in 80 C.E.

Martial's poem acts as an invitation to a Licinianus to come for a summer visit to the poet, his fellow countryman, on his regional estate in Spain. The visit is more than just that. Martial is urging Licinianus to abandon Rome and to take up residence in his native Spain. A crucial part of the attraction of Spain, according to Martial, is the hunting. The poem is a long one but deserves quoting in full.

Worthy to be acclaimed by the Celtiberians,  
     Glory of our Spain,  
 Licinianus! You will see lofty Bilbilis,  
     Famed for horses and weapons;  
 And old Caius with its snows; and sacred Vadevero                    5  
     Set in rugged hills;  
 And the pleasant wood of pretty Boterdus,  
     Beloved of generous Pomona.  
 You'll swim in the gentle shoals of warm Congedus  
     And the smooth lake of the nymphs,                                    10  
 And, relaxed, you'll brace yourself in shallow  
     Salo, which freezes steel.  
 There Vorberca will provide you freely with animals  
     To shoot at close range while you lunch.  
 You will break the cloudless heat in golden Tagus,                    15  
     Hidden in the forest's shades.  
 Chill Derceita will slake your raging thirst,  
     And Nutha, which is colder than snow.  
 And when frosty December and wild winter  
     Howl with the hoarse north wind,                                    20  
 You'll go back to the sunny shore of Tarraco  
     And your own Laletania.  
 There you will slaughter deer snared  
     In soft-meshed nets, and native boars,  
 And run the cunning hare to death with your stout horse.            25  
     Stags you'll leave to your bailiff.  
 The neighboring forest will come right down to your hearth,  
     And its crowd of grimy children.  
 The hunter will be invited, and he'll come  
     As a dinner guest called from nearby.                                30  
 Nowhere will you see a crescent shoe buckle or a toga  
     Or clothes smelling of purple dye.

There will be no litter bearer or grumbling client  
 Or imperious widow.  
 No pale defendant will interrupt your deep slumber. 35  
 Instead you'll sleep the whole morning.  
 Let someone else win the big, mad "Bravo":  
 You should pardon the successful [*felices*].  
 What you must do is to enjoy real pleasure [*gaudium*].  
 Let your lawyer friend Sura get the public praise. 40  
 It's only right that life seeks what else is in store,  
 When fame has been sated.

Martial goes to great lengths to induce Licinianus to visit his estate. He stresses (vv. 1–18) the various summer attractions of his region. In doing so he heaps up, almost sensuously, local nomenclature and characterization (of towns such as Bilbilis, Vadevero, Boterdus, and Pomona and of rivers such as the Congedus, Salo, Vorberca, Tagus, Derceita, and Nutha—these are all vividly invoked). Part of this appeal resides in stressing the ease of hunting in the region (vv. 13–14): so plentiful is game that it might be had even while lunching—in a state, that is, of remarkable passivity. In Licinianus's region of Tarraco, the hunting (vv. 23–26) is more vigorous than on Martial's estate. In Laletania there are deer and boars and hares for hunting on horseback (cf. also vv. 23–25). Hunting here, however, is not as active an affair as it was for Homer, or Xenophon, or Plato. This is not hunting for subsistence, or education, or display. It is a game. Stags are left to the bailiff (v. 26), and Licinianus is to concentrate on hares or deer caught in "effete" (*mollia*) nets (v. 24).<sup>30</sup>

The appeal of Martial's and Licinianus's Spanish countryside is in its non-quotidian nature. It is as far from the life of the city as could be imagined. This is a point made forcibly again in the final four lines of the poem. Licinianus is clearly still resident in Rome, where he practices, actively and vigorously, as an advocate (vv. 31–34). The attraction of a life in Spain, argues Martial, is that it will provide a release from such a grueling regime (v. 37: "let someone else win the big, mad 'Bravo'"). The key to Martial's argument is provided in verses 38–42. Licinianus has fame (v. 42), thus success enough (v. 38). He should devote himself to real pleasure (*verum gaudium*). That is Spain, the rural life, and, especially, hunting. As we can see, hunting becomes the very embodiment of the leisured life. Martial would have Licinianus practice a form of life that embodies a complete disjunction between action (the Roman life of the advocate) and realization (the easy hunting on Martial's or Licinianus's estates).

To what extent does Martial's vision match that of the Exekian template? Many of the elements are there. Licinianus is urged to devote himself to the

pursuit of not only free time but a free time that is chosen and pleasurable. His hunting, furthermore, is purposeless, playful, and companionable. There is here no place for subsistence, for education, or for the display of power. Yet there is a key difference, and in this regard we may contrast Martial with Rutilius Namatianus as well. There is, in Martial's advocacy of verses 31–36, a recommendation for hunting that is based on an escapist appeal. Hunting and the Spanish way of life are valuable precisely in their contrast with Rome. There is in this contrast an implicit regret that Rome could not be better—more like Spain. Public life in Rome, Martial implies, is in some way or another a threatening process. It is something inimical to human happiness. Martial argues to Licinianus that if he is to achieve true happiness, then Rome and his legal life must be abandoned. Hunting comes to symbolize the happiness that an alternative mode of life in Spain could offer. Martial's leisure activity therefore has an implicit end, despite its apparent purposelessness. Thus there is the idea of escape, of the alternative offered by leisure through hunting.

It is too soon to be positing links and changes. But, for the sake of clarity, I would like to anticipate my contentions and conclusions concerning this theme of filling in time. The contrast between Exekias and Martial represents more than a mere difference in outlook toward the use of free time. It represents, in my opinion, a fundamental shift, above all, from the active to the passive. This is precisely the shift we have witnessed in other affective registers: melancholy, love, suicide, and time itself. The focus of this and the last two chapters has been on the notion of “reformulating the personality.” Licinianus's social self may be under no imminent threat from his Roman legal practice. Martial seems to believe his happiness is. Hunting, in Martial's eyes, offers a means for recalibrating and reformulating Licinianus's hold on happiness. That conceptualization has no parallel in Exekias's vision.



To take the preceding simple conclusions further, I would like now to turn to didactic epic proper and to Ovid's poem on fishing. In Ovid's poem, the Exekian vision of things is operant. At any rate, the 134 lines of Ovid's *Halieutica* represent but a portion of the original poem. There is no proper introduction and conclusion, nor are there, as part of the body of the poem, the sorts of didactic elements that we might expect: descriptions of dangerous fish, their and other fishes' social habits, the tools that fishermen use to catch them, and so forth.<sup>31</sup> Yet there is enough of the *Halieutica* to enable us to gain an idea of how it went about things.<sup>32</sup> It is as if Ovid had asked himself the question, how do you turn a practical manual into something impractical—something pur-

poseless; or, to put it another way, how does instruction become play?<sup>33</sup> Part of the answer is to put the instruction in verse. Another part of the answer is to write about something that may involve play. The other part of the answer lies in irony and in the mock serious. Both signal apparent purposelessness.

How fish protect themselves is the subject of verses 10–48 of the *Halieutica*. Unlike land animals, who exercise self-protection through instinct (vv. 49–81), these fish exhibit a remarkable level of self-knowledge, of, we might say, *notitia sui*. This self-knowledge is exhibited—or better, gained—through adversity. This is a simple notion, one that has a direct parallel to that for which I have argued, in more complex circumstances, in relation to the self.<sup>34</sup> Ovid provides us with a number of examples of piscine self-knowledge. The lamprey (*muraena*), for example, is cited twice in this regard. Here is what Ovid says first (vv. 27–30).

The fierce lamprey, conscious of<sup>35</sup> his smooth back,  
Struggles more against the loosened apertures of the net,  
And, finally, by means of his many twists, slips out to escape,  
And does harm by his example: he offers an escape for all.

The lamprey's self-knowledge is of a very limited sort—a consciousness of his physical advantages. Yet, as Ovid has it, the lamprey *understands* this advantage and acts upon it quite deliberately. He knows how to get out of trouble by using his key physical attribute.<sup>36</sup> Using his knowledge of his slippery back, he wriggles through fishing nets. The lamprey's exemplary self-knowledge is stressed again later (vv. 43–45).

Nor is the lamprey unknowing of his own strength at harming,  
Nor in self-assistance and in fierce biting at close quarters  
Is he found wanting, nor when captured does he lose his threatening  
spirit.

Notice how, in this second passage, Ovid places stress on knowledge and understanding (v. 43: *nec nescit* [nor is he unknowing of . . .]). The strength of the lamprey again resides in self-consciousness and in deliberate exploitation of its own best features.

Contrast land animals (vv. 49–81). They are driven by instinct to self-preservation, unlike the thoughtful fish. Forest dwellers are worst, states Ovid (vv. 49–52).

Other creatures that live in thick forests  
Are frenzied and terrified constantly by baseless fears  
Or are drawn headlong by crazed daring.  
Then nature urges them to hunt or to fight at close quarters.

So it is that creatures such as the lion, the bear, the boar, the hare, the hind, and the stag fight or flee, frenzied or terrified, instinctually and uncontrollably. There is no self-knowledge here. Look at what the boar does (vv. 60–62).

The hunted boar displays his anger with his hairy bristles.  
He rushes vigorously onto fixed, wounding steel.  
Checked by a spear thrust through his guts, he dies.

Even horses and hounds, both of whom Ovid admires, are driven by a comparable thoughtlessness.

But can we take this partisan moralizing seriously? The tone of these lines can allow us only to answer this query in the negative. In the broadest of senses, a passage that attributes such self-conscious and humanlike intelligence to such unlikely recipients as fish is pulling our leg. This suspicion is reaffirmed by some of the descriptions of the fish. Some are too bizarre to take seriously (e.g., at vv. 16–18, one scarfish rescues another by grabbing its tail and dragging it from the trap) or too histrionic (e.g., at v. 20, the squid's very gizzards, *hilla*, fear "snatching hands" [*manus rapaces*]). Ovid mocks more than he instructs. The mockery is no doubt directed toward poems such as that of Gratius to be discussed shortly. Ovid has no pretension to practicality. He is more interested in writing an amusing poem than in providing instruction. His focus, thus, is on his own poem. Ovid conveys this nicely when he states, "our task is dependent on *ars*, all our hope is in this" [*noster in arte labor positus, spes omnis in illa*] (v. 82). *Ars* here implies not just the skill required of a successful fisherman but also that required of a poet (a practitioner of *ars poetica*). Such self-referentiality deliberately exploits the gap between the means (Ovid's verse texture) and the advice (instruction to fishermen). It highlights the medium (the poem itself) and so stresses the importance of play and purposelessness in Ovid's overall design.

It is in this spirit of play that we come to read the remaining sections of the poem (vv. 82–93, on where to hunt for fish, and vv. 94–113, a list of fish to be hunted). The extensive, learned catalog has its force not in instruction but in its playful display of erudition. How else than as playful should passages such as the following (vv. 107–10) be taken?

And the ruddy Pager, and the tawny Snoods, and  
The self-conceiving Channe, playing both parents to itself,  
Then the green-scaled, small-mouthed, rock-dwelling,  
Seldom seen Dory, and the painted Morays . . .

It must be very difficult to set such extravagant lists to verse.

The spirit of parody that so permeates Ovid's poem highlights other aspects

of its “leisurely” nature—a nature that has its analogue in the vision of Exekias. These relate to the pleasure side of leisure. The strain of parody enforces a marked gap between the signifier and the signified. It is difficult, if not downright impossible, to believe that Ovid intended the instruction of the *Halieutica* to be read and used by the sorts of men and women for whom he wrote. They would have had their own authorities. While I have no doubt that his information was reliable, I doubt that we should read them in anything other than the playful and ironic spirit in which they were conceived. The poem also offers rules against which to pit oneself, and it implies the eventual interaction with other people.

We can go further. Leisure as it is *embodied* in the *Halieutica* is the most purposeless of things. We could also say that a leisure that is devoted to reading about fishing is frivolous. The accusation that could be leveled against the poem, of purposeless frivolity, is mitigated by play, however, in two ways: first because it insists upon the pleasurable (nonharmful) nature of the experience; second because it focuses attention at the same time onto the poem itself. As I have just noted, the *Halieutica* parodies instructional literature. In so doing, it forces attention, at least for a time, away from its advice (the activity of fishing) and onto its means (the poem as a generic parody). Thus parody forces a gap between the subject (the poem) and its object (fishing). But this is done in such a pleasurable manner that it produces enjoyment. The *Halieutica* therefore plays upon purposelessness. Play restores the balance potentially offset by the purposelessness of leisure and at the same time answers definitively any accusation made against the *Halieutica* of utter frivolity. In this way Ovid’s poem provides a striking, albeit much lighter, analogue to Exekias’s painting. The purpose of the poem is thus pleasure, not sensual, but intellectual and mental, very much of the same order as that attributed to Exekias’s game players, Achilles and Ajax.<sup>37</sup>

The focus of this chapter is not just leisure but, specifically, the modes by which leisure can be conceptualized in didactic poetry and how leisure occurs in didactic poetry that has hunting as its theme. One of the least expected places within the corpus of poetry that has instruction in hunting as its aim is again provided by Ovid. The concern of this poetry is not fish but sexual relations.<sup>38</sup> Ovid, in his didactic poetry on love, pursues the metaphor of hunting into amatory contexts (see *Ars amatoria* 1.43–50, 277–82). What may surprise (initially at least) is that in these poems the real focus is on the act of creating poetry on “amatory hunting,” rather than on the amatory process itself. These “hunting” poems are in no way utilitarian (aiming to assist in seduction). Mirroring Exekias’s vision of leisure and that which we have encountered in the *Halieutica*, this poetry is resolute in its salutary uselessness.



Ovid's *Ars amatoria* embodies this Exekian tradition. The merest summary of its contents will illustrate its comic and leisure-related nature. Book 1 (telling how to catch a woman) divides, after its introduction (1.1–40, which asserts this poem's status as a legitimate didactic product), into two parts. The first (1.41–262) outlines the best places in Rome, primarily, to pick up a lover: colonnades, foreign temples, the theaters and the Circus, processions, dinner parties, coastal resorts, and Diana's forested shrine near Aricia. The second part (following a bridge at 1.263–68 and a postscript at 1.755–72) offers various means for gaining the favor of the woman met in the places listed in verses 41–262: insinuating oneself with her maids, love letters, personal presentation, behavior at dinner parties, promises, tears, violence, and looking lovelorn (1.269–754). Success in seduction is assumed for the predominantly male audience of the second book of the *Ars amatoria*. It aims to impart the self-knowledge (the *notitia sui* of the lamprey), the self-control, and the humility necessary to retain one's lover. Ovid teaches us how to sustain and cultivate a relationship. Thus, after the introduction of 2.1–98, we are instructed in the avoidance of aphrodisiacs (2.99–106), then on the need for persuasiveness (2.107–44), tolerance (2.145–76), and an accommodating nature (2.177–232). Shower the woman with gifts (2.255–86), flattery (2.247–314), and attention when sick (2.315–36), and, if necessary, fuel her enthusiasms with discreet absences (2.357–408), Ovid advises his seducers. Encouraging jealousy can be useful (2.435–60), as can settling quarrels with lovemaking (2.461–92). Ovid offers advice on coping with infidelity (2.535–640) and encourages his pupils not to criticize a lover's shortcomings (2.641–702). The book finishes with advice on lovemaking (2.703–32) and a brief conclusion (2.733–46). As should be evident, the conceit generating all of this is hunting. The opposite sex becomes the quarry.

Books 1 and 2 of the *Ars* were composed as a pair. Perhaps their popularity caused Ovid to rethink his design and to add a third book of advice, this time for the quarry, women. The material within this book (surely written for male readers) combines advice on hunting and on *cultus*. There are two halves reflecting approximately these two concerns. The first (3.101–524) outlines a variety of necessary personal accomplishments: dressing up (3.101–32), hair (3.133–68), clothing (3.169–92), personal hygiene (3.193–208), cosmetics (3.209–50), poetry (3.311–48), dancing and games (3.349–80), where to appear in public (3.381–432), and the sort of man to avoid (dandies: 3.433–66). The second half of the book (3.553–808) dwells on how women ought to deal with their lovers—whether inexperienced, experienced (3.553–76), or suspicious husbands (3.611–58)—then how to fan jealousy (3.577–610), how to eat (3.747–68), and how to make love (3.769–808).<sup>39</sup>

I have written in more detail about this aspect of Ovid's depiction of leisure

elsewhere (Toohey 1996). It would be too repetitive to reproduce the material here. Play, leisure, and the use of free time are at the very heart of the *Ars amatoria* (Myerowitz 1985; Citroni 1989; cf. Hollis 1973, 93). In his comedy on love, Ovid has made leisure prominent and has ironically enshrined its pursuit through the metaphors of love and hunting. The *Ars amatoria* could be read as a specialist leisure guide: not only does it envision the life of the lover as sensually gratifying and as an ideal means for passing time, but Ovid believes that *writing* and *reading* about love represent an ideal pastime.<sup>40</sup>

The sorts of conclusions that I have suggested for the *Halieutica* therefore apply with the same force and vigor to the *Ars*. The latter's direct focus on amatory dalliance makes it even more palpably a leisure manual. It is, however, an utterly frivolous poem. Its subject matter is completely purposeless (especially when viewed from the perspective of an emperor such as Augustus), and its treatment is completely frivolous. As with the *Halieutica*, the notion of play in the *Ars* interposes itself between us and the acceptance by the reader of the poem's advice as seriously meant. Perhaps even more than in the *Halieutica*, Ovid has, both through the parodic nature of his poem and through his emphasis on its persuasory attraction, highlighted its existence as a subjective entity. In many a passage, Ovid makes plain the gap between subject (the poem) and object (its instruction).<sup>41</sup> He thus highlights the purposelessness of his poem, but he excuses this through the pleasure inherent in the playful texture of the poem. (Once again play comes to the rescue of purposelessness.) The purpose of the poem is thus pleasure—again, not sensual, but intellectual or even psychological and very much of the same order as that of Exekias's Achilles and Ajax. Play is therapeutic. Ovid's seemingly frivolous poems are profoundly so.

The *Remedia amoris* continues the comic tradition of the *Ars amatoria* (cf. Conte 1994b). Its primary reason for composition was parodic (I would place this above any didactic pretense). Not content with the joke of the *Ars Amatoria*, Ovid attempted to cap it with a repeat performance—one that parodies Ovid's own poetry as much as the subgenre within which it is composed. In the *Ars* he had taught how to hunt out a partner and how to fall in love, while in the *Remedia* he teaches how to remove the snares put in place by the hunter. This poem stands as a fourth book to the *Ars amatoria*. A brief summary of the contents of the poem will once again illustrate its instructive nature and how this links with our theme of leisure and the use of free time. After a preface (to Cupid) and a statement of aim (to help those who are crossed in love) (vv. 1–40) and following a type of invocation (vv. 41–98, directed to the audience and to Apollo), Ovid outlines a variety of means for countering infatuation: initial caution (vv. 79–134), avoiding idleness (vv. 135–50), business (vv. 151–248), avoidance of magical assistance (vv. 249–90), and just about anything

that will cast one's lover in an unattractive light (vv. 291–340). A defense of the *Ars amatoria* bisects the poem (vv. 356–98: Ovid has been accused of being insufficiently “epic”). The second half of this very funny poem continues with advice on tactical ploys: how to cast one's lover in the worst of lights (vv. 399–544), means for distracting oneself (vv. 545–602), how to avoid one's lover (vv. 603–64), how to behave in front of her (vv. 665–90), places to avoid (vv. 699–784), and advice on diet (vv. 785–800). The poem finishes with a brief epilogue (vv. 801–4).

The utilization of free time dictates the choice of subject matter for Ovid's erotodidactic poems. But this choice of subject matter is also reflected in the very texture of this poem—something quite obvious from my summary. Instruction, to restate the point, has always been the *sine qua non* of didactic poetry, and Ovid attempted instruction in his long poems on eros. Yet instruction seems primarily to provide the excuse for the poetry. Its *raison d'être* exists above all within the poetic texture itself.<sup>42</sup> The pleasure that these poems offer resides not so much in their ends as in their process. The elements of play within the *Remedia* (the process) seem not so much to undercut as to complement the purveyance of information (the ends). Play and pleasure are key constitutive elements of leisure. Like proper artifacts of leisure activity, these poems also exhibit self-containedness and intellectual complexity. Let me also reemphasize that Ovid's poetry is totally purposeless. The activity on which it instructs is purposeless (it does not aim for any utilitarian end), and the medium through which this message is delivered is also purposeless (it aims to produce a pleasure that is specifically text-orientated).

We should now return to the central theme of this chapter, hunting, and see how, in didactic poetry, it fares after Ovid. But before doing this, I would like to put one more query: what does this discussion of Ovid have to do with my theme of the reformulation of the personality? Exekias and Ovid provide a remarkably compelling model for the means for such a reformulation. The personality is most threatened by the widening of the fissure between subject and object and, with this, the replication of the childhood rupture between the self and the world. Exekias's and Ovid's strategy is first to highlight the fissure (in Exekias's case, in the contrast between the war and the game; in Ovid's, by highlighting the existence of his poem less as an instructional manual than as a poetic artifact), then to demonstrate how the fissure is bridged, through play and through purposeless pleasure.<sup>43</sup> The reformulation offered by later writers on hunting is of a completely different order. It echoes the end-orientated Martial 1.49.



Ovid's contemporary Grattius (cf. *Epistulae ex Ponto* 4.16.34, dated to 8 C.E.) has left us 541 lines of an incomplete poem on hunting with dogs, the *Cynegetica*.<sup>44</sup> Instruction, rather than play, conditions Grattius's text.<sup>45</sup> The utilitarian dominates poetic textures. Whimsy and wordplay are excluded (there is none of that Ovidian humor or misdirection that calls into doubt the applicability of the material being broadcast). Grattius exhibits a number of interesting ideological tics that betray what might be termed subjective camouflage or even a censoring of the ego.

To illustrate this, the best method is to begin with Grattius's striking approach to the Hellenistic equation between empire and hunting. At verses 307–25 Grattius complains of the effects of excessive luxury and greed (v. 308). He illustrates this, as we might expect, first with dogs: luxury and greed should be avoided when raising pups ("such pandering comes at great cost," v. 309). Grattius attempts to back this up by highlighting the vices of luxury-loving Egyptian monarchs, Lydians, and Greeks generally. The Romans of the early Republic are offered as exemplars of the advantages of a life without the trappings of luxury (vv. 321–25). It was these early Romans who made Rome a world power (*imposuere orbi Romam caput*). Grattius's rearing methods for animals match, microscopically, the triumphant methods used by Rome to dominate the world (at v. 328 the hunter's rule over pups is termed an *imperium*). The lines in question run as follows:

You must sustain the young brood with a mild and simple pap:  
 And do not let them know the other luxuries and the outlays of  
 The gluttonous life: such indulgence comes home at a mighty cost.  
 This is not surprising: no other life eats more into the senses of  
     mankind, 310  
 Unless reason [*ratio*] banishes it and bars the way against the  
     approach of vices [*vitiis*].  
 Such was the fault that ruined Egyptian kings,  
 As they drank old Mareotic wines in goblets of precious stone,  
 Reaping the perfumes of nard-bearing Ganges and ministering to  
     vices [*vitiis*].  
 By this sin you fell too, Lydia, to Persian Cyrus— 315  
 And you were rich and golden in the veins of your river.  
 In fact, so that you might have nothing left to possess,  
 While you were gathering together the arts that luxury fashioned,  
 And while you were madly following the faults of other nations,  
     Greece,  
 How much and how often did you fall short of ancestral honor? 320  
 But of what sort, and how simple, was the table of our Camilli?

What was your dress, Serranus, after so many triumphs?  
 These were the men who, in accord with the bearing and endowment  
 of ancient virtue,  
 Set over the world Rome as its head; and by them  
 Was virtue [*virtus*] exalted to heaven; thus did she reached the highest  
 honors. 325

This unexpected ideological underpinning of Grattius's *Cynegetica* is far more extensive than it may appear at first sight. It is crystallized in an opposition between *ratio* (reason) or *ars* and *violentia*, an opposition made plain from the proem (vv. 6–9). Thanks to *ratio*, we learn in verse 9, *demens cecidit violentia retro* [mad violence falls to the rear]. *Ratio* and Rome receive their implicit link in verses 24–60. Lavishness in the making of nets is rejected (with another shot at the Egyptians, at vv. 42–45) in favor of the sorts of products constructed by poor, hardworking Italian farmers (vv. 45–48). Roman *paupertas* (frugality) makes a stronger net. Hunting, Rome, world domination, and frugality are set against *violentia*, a taste for luxury, being foreign, and ultimate powerlessness (manifested in a different way in vv. 344–98, where wounds and disease are described: *ratio* is the only answer for these; note, too, that the training of the essentially unruly spirits of dogs is tantamount to the action of hunting itself—extirpation of the wild).<sup>46</sup>

Hunting, *ars* and *ratio*, furthermore, may be associated with civilization (at v. 284 *natura*, that which hunting confronts, is *impatiens* and given to *furor*). That great civilizer and mythic hero Hercules was a hunter. He took his most famous adornment, the lion skin, from the hunt (vv. 69–74). Hunting, civilization, *ars* and *ratio*, Rome, world domination, frugality—we are forming a heady brew. It does not surprise that Grattius continues to cast his net wider still. Dercylus, the ingenious first hunter, learned his art from a god—as did another primeval hunter, Hagnon (vv. 249–50). The god was Diana, who is also at the fore at verses 480–96. We could add, therefore, respect for the gods (v. 105) and *industria* (v. 95) to qualities clustering beneath *ratio* (vv. 95–110). To these divine references one ought also add the digression-like description of the curative powers of Vulcan's grotto in Sicily (vv. 430–66). Here beast and human alike, provided they are pure of heart, can count on the assistance of the god (vv. 446–49).

His priest, with pallid hand waving the olive branch  
 Proclaims: "In the presence of the altars and in the presence of god,  
 I ordain that all go out of the land, and go far from here,  
 Those who have put their hands to crime or contemplated it in their  
 heart."

It is as if *ratio* (here manifest as devotion to the gods) can master the universe. Grattius sums this up very nicely at verses 326–29: “Experience, careful in action, how great the benefit you have lavished on humans, if only they see to their laziness and, by action, stick to their ideals.”

What is it that so drives Grattius to stress this almost puritanical (as it is formulated) link between hunting and empire? Why does he instrumentalize free time and, by implication, see it as a threat to the boundaries of the self?<sup>47</sup> The answer, I believe, lies one step back from the analogy between hunting and empire. It resides in his concern with the deleterious effects of *indulgentia* and *luxuria*. Grattius regularly sees these two modes as capable of undermining the training of animals (dogs or horses), their behavior, and also human behavior and institutions. What Grattius seems to fear is lack of control. Again and again he chides indulgence, luxuriance, overenthusiasm—in plants even, as well as dogs, horses, and humans. It is almost as if he felt ill at ease with the societal purposelessness of hunting. As a free-time activity it could become particularly driven by *indulgentia* and *luxuria*. To play this down he attempted to analogize it with the maintenance and acquisition for Rome of empire. Thus is removed any possibility of an accusation of frivolity. At the same time are removed the pleasure element and play, as they apply to the activity of hunting (and as they apply to the poem itself). This produces a curious flattening of the texture within the *Cynegetica*. Grattius’s poem, therefore, steps back from Exekias’s and Ovid’s model for leisure and seeks to impose the societal sanction of purpose on free time. That purpose manifests itself through exercise of power is all the more depressing.

Grattius seems driven by a fear of a lack of control. This lack of control (or powerlessness) becomes acute in the area of free time and leisure—and, one might guess, in the realm of pleasure. A lack of control threatens his capacity for self-definition. To reassert control, he insists on a pragmatic approach to leisure. This pragmatism is made concrete by anchoring it in imperial ideology.



It is much easier to see what Oppian was afraid of and how he used leisure to combat it. For the poet of the *Cynegetica*, leisure is, as it was for Grattius, a very purposeful thing, if we may judge from the underlying ideas that seem to bind together the various elements of his poem.<sup>48</sup> (I have already discussed some of these in my chapter on lovesickness. My remarks here should be taken as a supplement to that discussion.) Oppian, as I showed in chapter 2, is obsessed with sexual relations. Why, when he might have provided his ancient readers with useful technical information on hunting, does he focus so relentlessly, and

with such patient disdain, on the mating habits of his quarries? Why has he felt so driven to ignore the claims of leisure and the enjoyment of free time and to focus so relentlessly on what is best understood as a warped concern with sexuality? There is, if we look closely, a logic behind Oppian's interest in hunting, fishing, and uncontrolled eros. This provides a part of the answer. We can detect this best in the tale of Heracles and the Orontes (2.109–58; cf. Hollis 1994). The river Orontes, obsessed with a young woman, Meliboea, lingered to find her in the high country and, blocked in by mountains, flooded the plain there and even Oppian's hometown (*Cynegetica* 2.115–22).

For once upon a time, by the foot of Emblonus,  
All the plain was flooded; since always massive Orontes was,  
In his eagerness, forgetting the gleaming sea  
And burning for the dark-eyed nymph, the daughter of Ocean.  
He lingered amid the heights and he covered the fertile earth,  
Unwilling to abandon his ill-desired love of Meliboea.  
With mountains on either side was he encircled round;  
Mountains on either side leaned their heads together.

Heracles' labor (done as a favor for Archippus) was to cut through the mountain barrier and provide egress to the sea for the Orontes. This made the plain of Heracles fertile for the region of Chersonese (2.150–53).

And everywhere to this day the fields flourish with corn  
And everywhere the works of oxen are heavy on the prosperous  
    threshing floors  
Around the Memnonian shrine, where the Assyrian dwellers  
Mourn for Memnon.

It also provided some sort of a conclusion for Orontes' frustrated eros. So we read of the river's egress (2.145–49):

So the mighty river Orontes bellowed about the shores,  
A dread noise, and mightily roared the headlands  
When they received within their bosom the swell of the newly come  
    sea;  
And the black and fertile earth took heart again,  
Arisen from the waves, a new plain of Heracles.

The message in this vignette is that unbridled eros, such as that of Orontes, is utterly destructive. Heracles, the prototypical hunter, turns this eros to something profoundly profitable (the subsequent plain). Thus are linked fertility, the control of lust, and the activities of a hunter: these links underpin Oppian's

thinking, thus his endorsement of hunting and his loathing of animal sexuality. Hunting is an exercise in the eradication of profligate, uncontrolled animal eros. Hunting is also for god. In a prayer to Zeus at 1.409–20 we hear (cf. 2.1–42): “O Zeus, in you and by you are all things rooted . . . with what loving kindness [*philotês*] you have marked out and divided the bright sky and the air, the fluid water . . . and established them apart from one another, yet you have bound them all, one to another, in a bond of amity.”

The clash between reasoned, learned behavior (*technê* or, in Latin, *ars*) and passionate, uncontrolled emotional drive (*lyssa* [*Halieutica* 3.622] or, in Latin, *impetus* or *furor*) is at the heart of Oppian’s poem. I have said enough already (both here and in chapter 2) of Oppian’s attitude toward uncontrolled emotional drives. What can we determine of his attitude toward reasoned and learned behavior? Oppian’s take on *technê* may best be understood by considering the *Cynegetica* as a whole. It aims, through its didactic instruction, to provide individuals with the *technê* sufficient to master the *lyssa* of the animals to be hunted. Thus it is clear that humans conquer by an intelligence and cunning that are not possessed by the members of the animal kingdom. Conversely, animals are conquered precisely because of their enslavement to emotion (exactly the point Ovid makes of women at *Ars amatoria* 1.372 and of land animals in the *Halieutica*). Human cunning and intelligence, Oppian claims, places humans next to the gods in power. Hunting therefore exhibits not just the superior intellectual and moral strength of *technê* but also the divine order of things within the universe. Animals are divorced from the divine precisely through their enslavement to passion or *lyssa*.

Hunting above all entails the application and display of *technê*. For Oppian *technê* is most usefully applied in the extirpation of animal *lyssa*. Hunting is, even for Oppian, pre-eminently a leisure activity—one assumes, given his choice of subject matter, the pre-eminent leisure activity. We may assume, therefore, that the value of leisure for him resides in its practical worth, its ability to combat animal lust.

For Oppian the occupation of free time becomes a very practical and purposeful affair. I am not for a moment claiming that he saw hunting as anything other than a leisure activity. Rather, like many other individuals, he saw in his preferred form of free-time activity a higher, moral (or moralistic) text. For Oppian hunting affirms a divine order that appears to excoriate wanton and lustful behavior. The hunter, by dominating the animal world, insists on a very moral order.<sup>49</sup>

The Oppian of the *Cynegetica* comes close to psychological instability. He is clearly projecting his own human anxieties onto animals. His obsessive desire to expunge all traces of unbridled eros speaks to unstable drives within his own



psychology. Leisure and hunting serve the purpose for him, therefore, of controlling his own unstable inner drives (to state it again, his reading of the animal world must parallel an unstated one of the human). But Oppian cloaks the personal instability under the mantle of religion. Leisure and hunting, by combating license, affirm the will of god. We should also note that for Oppian, leisure affirms the integrity of the personality.

Ovid's erotic poems offer a version of leisure that implies participation. One is intended to learn the techniques purveyed in these poems and to participate in their arts. But, more importantly, one also participates in the game embodied by the *artes* of these poems—their poetic texture. One is intended to enjoy the poems for themselves, just as one is intended to enjoy the end to which they instruct. The gap between message and medium is highlighted but is bridged by play and by pleasure. Grattius and Oppian use didactic literature and its related pursuits to instruct us in the use of leisure. How these poets differ from Ovid is that leisure and play are qualities that exist *outside* their poems. They reside out there in the real world of hunting or fishing or gardening. These poems are translucent. They mean what they say. They are handbooks (Hopkinson 1994, 205). However, Oppian, though a far more exuberant poet than Grattius, shares with him a pragmatic attitude toward leisure. Oppian renders hunting purposeful by viewing it as the reflection of the will of a higher order. But he does so to expunge a fear of uncontrolled eros, something as dangerous in himself as in animals. So, too, did Grattius attempt to distance himself from the lack of personal control that was latent in free-time activities. He did this by pressing the unconvincing analogy between hunting and empire. So it is that the effect for the *Cynegetica* is none too different from that for Grattius's poem. Oppian, like Grattius, steps back from the model for leisure offered by Exekias and Ovid and imposes on leisure the moral sanction of purpose.



Marcus Aurelius Olympius Nemesianus, a Carthaginian who wrote during the third century of our era, has left us a *Cynegetica* that was composed possibly in 283/4 C.E. and at any rate in the period between the death of Carus in 238 C.E. and that of Numerianus in 284 (for text and translation see Duff and Duff [1935] 1982; cf. Volpilhac 1975 and Williams 1986). (Nemesianus was writing between thirty and eighty years after Oppian.)<sup>50</sup> Nemesianus's hunting poem survives in 325 hexametric lines and breaks off, unfortunately, just as the hunt is about to begin. What survives of his *Cynegetica* treats preparations: dogs, how to train and rear them, their breeds; then horses, their breeds, and their handling; and finally the implements of the hunt.

Nemesianus exhibits none of Oppian's strange psychological mannerisms or Grattius's taxing concern for *ratio*. His fragment, however, could not be called a practical manual on hunting. Nor is it one that embodies a spirit of recreational leisure. The ideas of the poem run too close to its surface and present too pragmatic an approach to leisure. At any rate, the following lines (*Cy-negetica* 99–102) may give some indication of the importance of leisure for Nemesianus's work.

So, come with me, whoever is love-struck  
 With hunting and abhors lawsuits and terrible chaos  
 And shuns civil war and the crash of battle,  
 Nor pursues prey in the depths of the greedy sea.

Nemesianus envisages his preferred leisure hobby, hunting, as an alternative to the woe brought on by city life (above all litigation and civil discord) and, curiously, as an alternative to halieutic activities. As is the case with Martial 1.49, it is this pervasive sense of withdrawal and psychic sequestration that makes Nemesianus's conception of leisure and of the use of free time (based upon a desire for escape) so thoroughly different from that of Exekias and Ovid. Nemesianus rejects the pressure of the city and of engagement with the world. He recommends sequestration within an escapist world of the hunt. Nemesianus's escapism is driven by an anxious desire for solace (and even order) in a seemingly hostile universe.<sup>51</sup> In that sense he is very close to Martial, but without the buoyancy.

The idea of escape is woven into the texture of the poem. The proem begins conventionally with a claim to poetic novelty (vv. 1–14), albeit utilizing an imagery redolent of the hunt. Then follows a long rejection of mythological themes (vv. 15–47): Nemesianus will not sing of Niobe, Semele, Bacchus in Jupiter's thigh, Pentheus, Dirce, Hippodamia, Danaus and his daughters, Biblis, Myrrha, Cadmus, Io, Hercules' labors, Tereus and Philomela, Phaethon, Cycnus, Tantalus, Medea, Scylla, Circe, or Antigone. Nemesianus's examples are all of harsh treatment by the gods, sudden death, sexual intrigue, or bizarre transformation. The rejection of myth in poetry is conventional. But Nemesianus seems to be indicating that his poetic fare requires the removal not just of myth but also of unsavory and unsettling tales. This is important, for a literature of leisure and of escape might well be judged as the improper medium for such unsettling and salacious material. It follows that his evocation of hunting borders on the idyllic and stresses, in part, the peaceful nature of hunting (hunting is carried out over green fields [v. 48] and riverbanks [vv. 54–55], in pursuit, as often as not, of less-than-dangerous creatures such as hares, does, ichneumons, and hedgehogs). The context is worth quoting in full (vv. 48–62).

The glades, the green tracts, the open plains,  
 We search; swiftly we course all over the fields,  
 And eager are we to catch varied quarries with docile hound.  
 Shafting nervous hares, passive does,  
 Daring wolves, or capturing the crafty fox  
 Do we enjoy. To wander along the river-side shades  
 We enjoy and hunting the ichneumon on the quiet banks  
 Among the crops of bulrushes, piercing with the long weapon  
 The threatening pole-cat on a tree-trunk  
 And bringing home the hedge-hog entwined in the coil of  
 Its prickly body: for such a task it is our resolve to set sail,  
 While our small vessel, accustomed to be moved along neighboring  
 Shores and run across safe bays with the oar,  
 Now first spreads its canvas to southern winds. Trusty havens does  
 It leave and dares to try the Adriatic storms.

It is no surprise that, for the time being, Nemesianus rejects imperial eulogy (of the emperor Carus and his sons Carinus and Numerianus) and its connotations of commitment to the “real world” of which his sequestered vision of hunting does not form a part (vv. 63–85). Here are some of the lines in which he does this (vv. 63–78).

Presently the preservation on the lyre of your triumphs,  
 I'll attempt, you gallant sons of deified Carus,  
 And of our sea shore beneath the twin boundaries of the world,  
 I'll sing, and of races subjected to the brothers' divine power,  
 Which drink from the Rhine or the Tigris or the Arar's  
 Source or view the very origins of the Nile;  
 Nor let me be silent concerning the recent northern wars  
 Which for the first time you victoriously concluded, Carinus,  
 Almost outstripping even your divine father, and concerning how  
     your brother seized  
 Persia's very heart and the citadels of Babylon,  
 In vengeance for the outrages done to the dignity of Romulus' race.  
 I shall also tell of the feeble flight and the unopened quivers,  
 Of the Parthians and the unbent bows and absent arrows.  
 These shall my Muses consecrate to you both,  
 As soon as it is my fortune to see your holy faces,  
 Kindly divinities of the earth.

The conclusion to this proem consists of a prayer to Diana (quoted in full later in this discussion). The prayer to the goddess breathes a kind of relief, as if

Nemesianus were anxiously grateful to be done with such imperial matters—and, I suspect, to be done with the possibility of having to treat unsettling and lascivious tales from mythology. It is here that we find hunting described as an escapist pursuit (vv. 99–101, quoted earlier).

There is a pattern to Nemesianus's logic of escape. We could explain this most simply by categorizing Nemesianus's likes and dislikes. The resulting picture ought to provide a map for his overall thought habits. As is indicated in verses 1–3, hunting is a type of recreational labor (*hilaris labor*, v. 1) carried out in a safe, rural landscape (*securum rus*, v. 2).

The thousand modes of hunting I sing; the happy labours,  
The swift chases, the battles in the safe countryside  
Do we reveal.

It is associated, furthermore, with acquiescence in the will of god (vv. 10, 86–102—the latter quoted elsewhere in this section) and (not surprisingly, given its context) with poetry, another leisure activity. For Nemesianus, furthermore, hunting is an innocent type of *amor* (v. 99). Its practice involves no anger, passion, or violence (see the many myths alluded to in vv. 15–47), no war, imperial conquest, or real danger (cf. the *recusatio* of vv. 63–85—partially quoted earlier). Hunting is also the antipodes of the disorderly and litigious life of the city (vv. 99–102; cf. Martial again). Above all, hunting embodies the private; its antinomies are all public. This contrast is captured in the opposition between the type of poetry Nemesianus creates (his didactic mode) and that which he has rejected (encomiastic epic and a poetry based upon epic).

This much we can extract from the proem itself. The remainder of the poem confirms and expands this ideational grid. Elsewhere hunting is associated with youth (*vigor iuvenalis*, v. 280), morning, health and strength (v. 253), obedience (*obsequium*, vv. 188, 267), freedom (v. 264) and, perhaps not surprisingly in this context, love of right behavior (*amor virtutis*, v. 188). All of these qualities are to be contrasted with those associated with city life: age (*senectus*, v. 117), illness (the canine rabies and mange of vv. 117 and 196 ff.), restraint (as opposed to the obedience learned through training [v. 179]; see the description of the puppies at v. 166), and a general lack of civilization (exhibited above all by beasts of prey). This predictable register could be continued, but I doubt that would change what I have suggested. The pursuit of hunting and the training of animals for hunting aims to inculcate the virtues associated with this world of escape and sequestration. There is an ideational grid, a system of thought behind Nemesianus's poem. This enables us to predict its thematic choices.

One last point concerning Nemesianus's *Cynegetica* deserves to be made. Hunting and the life of sequestration give evidence to an *amor virtutis*, a love

of right behavior. The *virtus* to be associated with this mode of life is also, remarkably, to be associated with an acquiescence with the will of god (vv. 10, 86–102), as is evidenced in Nemesianus's prayer to Diana (vv. 86–98).

You only, who roam the peaceful glades and woodland,  
 Diana, great glory of Latona, ah, come quickly,  
 Assume your ancestral garb, bow in hand, and hang  
 The coloured quiver from your shoulder; let your weapons be golden,  
     your arrows;  
 Let your gleaming feet be fitted with purple buskins;  
 Let your cloak be richly decorated with gold thread,  
 And let a belt tighten the wrinkled tunic-folds with jewelled  
 Fastenings: restrain your entwined tresses with a band.  
 In your train let docile Naiads come and, ripening in fresh youth,  
 Dryads and Nymphs who give the streams their water,  
 And let the apt pupil echo the Oreads.  
 Goddess, arise, lead your poet through the pathless wilds:  
 We follow; you show us the wild beasts' homes and lairs.

Nemesianus does not bring this aspect of his belief system to the fore. Yet its logic is apparent from the template I suggested earlier. The *virtus* that accrues to the dogs and to the hunters sets their action in line with god. The invocation to Diana, though typical enough of its type, breathes a sincerity. Diana, huntress goddess and emblem of the divine, is invoked as protectress and patron of Nemesianus's escapism. The gods, it appears, admire his sequestration and, in his eyes at least, associate it with right behavior.

Leisure, for the Aristotelian, challenges. This is the intellectual component. But leisure, for most of us, is more normally a type of escape (Rybczynski 1991). The concept of leisure implicit in Nemesianus's formulation more closely resembles the modern one. Escape is all-important. For Nemesianus, the hunt represents an antidote for the insecurities of everyday life (vv. 99–102). Thus Nemesianus's play, though a source of profound pleasure to him, is no end in itself. Hunting serves as a means for distracting one, as a means for rescuing one from the distressing hurly-burly of public life. One may make one other observation of this stance taken by Nemesianus. For Nemesianus the use of free time and leisure involves the problematization of the place of power in human life (on the historicity of leisure see Burke 1995). As is evident from the preceding quotation, it is the intrusive exercise of power that he finds so difficult to cope with in his normal public life. His alternative (exercising power over the nonhuman world) highlights the difficulties related to, rather than challenges, the role of power in society (with Nemesianus cf.

Grilli 1953; André 1966). Nemesianus, just like Grattius and Oppian, saw his pragmatic and moralistic form of leisure as another means for shoring up a very fragile social personality.

Nemesianus's formulation of free time and of leisure stands at the opposite end of the spectrum to that of Exekias and Ovid. If the link between subject and object was fractured in the hunting poetry of Grattius and Oppian, it has been irrevocably set apart within the poetry of Nemesianus. The leisure act (the object, as it were) has no existence in itself. It is registered only insofar as it affects the person experiencing it (the subject). It is absorbed into the needs and demands of the subject. It is reformulated as part of the psychological requirements of the subject. Play and leisure have no role here. Leisure and free time are to assuage the asperities of felt experience. They have, for the subject's inner stability, an important and purposeful role to play.

Consult the leisure pages of your local newspapers. Leisure is inevitably confused with escape. The provincial capital Noumea, say, exists not in its own right (as an object) but only as a tool for "recharging" the run down "batteries" of the Sydney worker (the subject). The object is, with us as with Nemesianus, absorbed within the psychic requirements of the subject. The chasm, thus, between the reality of the object and the needs of the subject is set firm.



I will now recapitulate the main details of the trajectory, as I have seen it, of the development of the concept of leisure (of filling in time) as it has been evident in Exekias, then in Ovid, Martial, Grattius, Oppian, and Nemesianus.

Exekias's vase painting has been singled out because it provides such a striking template against which later versions of leisure may be understood. Exekias's version represents a type of leisure that entailed, as preconditions, free time and the freedom to utilize this. Leisure for Exekias also includes pleasure, constitutes an end in itself, and involves the application of some degree of mental concentration. I have also stressed the importance of play in Exekias's case. Play, I suggested, was "otherworldly," had rules against which a participant could commit themselves, and entailed interaction with others.

Ovid's didactic poetry on love, remarkably, captures the conceptual underpinning of the vision of leisure apparent in Exekias's painting. It is based on the vigorous utilization of free time and is devoted wholly to pleasure. Love, of its nature (unless it is purely procreational), constitutes an end in itself. It certainly does for Ovid, and it may even have hastened his banishment to Tomis. Love, furthermore, requires considerable intelligence—if not, why should these instructional manuals exist?

Consideration of the importance of play for these poems leads us away from the purely instructional. Ovid's erotodidactic poetry is otherworldly insofar as it seems to function at more than one level. Just as important as instruction is the aesthetic life of the poems qua poems. (We are to enjoy the experience of reading Ovid's poetry as much as—perhaps even more than—learning from it.) Our interest in the poems themselves undercuts an interest in their referent, love. Are there rules describing this? There are those of love itself, but there are also the various levels at which persuasion functions within these poems (that of the lover, the poet, and the poem). These poems, furthermore, imply interaction with others on two levels: between the lover and the beloved and between the addressee of the poem and its speaker. The gap between subject and object is narrowed, however, by play and pleasure. These qualities, evoked by the poem's self-referentiality, counter the accusations that might be made against the poems for purposeless frivolity.

Ovid's remarkable vision seems quickly to fade. His contemporary Grattius has different ideas. In his conception of leisure as it is embodied in hunting (for him no subsistence activity), it is pursued for pleasure and during free time. As Grattius exemplifies hunting, however, it functions as no mere end in itself. Grattius's hunting seems to have an intensely practical end residing outside or beyond itself, that of the affirmation of the values to be associated with empire and, with this, Roman civilization and societal order. As we can see, his mode of hunting has little of the spirit of play so evident in Ovid. It is hardly otherworldly, and, in its imperial aims, it plays little on the gulf between subject and object. Leisure thus becomes purposeful. The play element, both in hunting and in Grattius's poem itself, begins to vanish. As this happens, a gap between the subjective, purposeful experience of hunting and the leisurely act of hunting itself begins to widen.

Grattius's leisure, just as was the case in Martial 1.49, is pursued not just for practical reasons. The self, threatened alternatively by the pressures of uncontrol or by the city (Martial), is recalibrated by an almost irrational means: control through empire (in Grattius's case) or escape (in Martial's case).

Oppian reflects the practical and restorative concerns of Grattius and Martial, though his efforts are directed not toward an affirmation of imperial destiny or of a self-protective personal morality but toward the extirpation of personally dangerous internal drives. Oppian's poem, ostensibly, aims to provide us with instruction on a pursuit that occupies free time and provides considerable pleasure. The persistent focus on animal behavior (rather than on that of the hunter) and, at that, on the sexual behavior of animals (their *philotesia erga*) does not allow us to state that the leisure activity of the *Cynegetica*, or indeed

its poetic depiction, has an end in itself. Hunting and the hunter master animal sexuality and, as I have said, bolster the immanence of the divine order in the universe. For Oppian, as I have stated earlier, hunting affirms the divine order that appears to excoriate wanton and lustful behavior. The hunter, by dominating the animal world, insists on a moral order. But he also keeps at arm's length the dangerous forces of eros. Hunting thus, as a purposeful activity with no end in itself, has very little to do with play. Hunting seems designed to keep this deranged didactic poet sane.

Nemesianus, the last of the didactic poets considered in this chapter, presents the same concerns with free time and with leisure. Hunting, however, is for him a purposeful activity possessing an end in itself. It offers an escapist alternative to the real or public life that Nemesianus apparently finds so difficult to tolerate (Nemesianus is close to Ovid). For Nemesianus, I have suggested, hunting provides an alternative to the stresses of public life and its concomitant exercise of power. In so doing, it problematizes the very notion of power itself. His version of leisured hunting shows much in common with the versions of Grattius and Oppian. The gap between subject and object, the alienation of the hunter from hunting, we might say, is complete in Nemesianus. Hunting is not pursued for its own ends or even for play and pleasure. It is pursued to restore the troubled inner state of the alienated subject.

These didactic poems, from Ovid through Nemesianus, seem to present a version of leisure that, though directed toward the use of free time and pleasure, increasingly implies that the filling of free time is something that should be of a purposeful nature. Oppian and Nemesianus particularly register this purpose as something interior to a creature, as something almost private (the establishment of moral purity or corporeal escape). Nemesianus represents something of a final point in this evolutive process, with his stress on passivity, yielding, withdrawal, isolation, privacy, interiority, and the problematization of control. His absolute antipodes is perhaps to be found in Exekias, with his version of unpurposeful leisure and its stress on activity, assertion, participation, complicity, the public, exteriority, and the surface of things. For Nemesianus, leisure, embodied in hunting, exists to keep him sane.



Is there any link between the conception of time argued for in chapter 6 and that exhibited by the preceding didactic approaches to leisure and the use of free time? To attempt to answer this question, I would like to look at a passage describing Seneca at the games, watching others watch the combatants. It



provides us with a very graphic picture of the Roman utilization of free time. Here is Seneca's description of events in the arena, of the "hunting," in a public space, of criminals (*Epistles* 7.2–6) (Loeb translation).

But nothing is more damaging to good character as the habit of lounging at the games; for then it is that vice (*vitia*) steals subtly upon one through the avenue of pleasure (*per voluptatem*). What do you think I mean? I mean that I come home more greedy, more ambitious, more voluptuous, and even more cruel and inhuman—because I have been among human beings. By chance I attended the mid-day exhibition, expecting some fun, wit, and relaxation,—an exhibition at which men's eyes have respite from the slaughter of their fellow-men. But it was quite the reverse. The previous combats were the essence of compassion; but now all the trifling is put aside and it is pure murder. The men have no defensive armor. They are exposed to blows at all points, and no one ever strikes in vain. Many persons prefer this programme to the usual pairs and to the bouts "by request." Of course they do; there is no helmet or shield to deflect the weapon. What is the need of defensive armour or of skill? All these mean delaying death. In the morning they throw men to the lions and the bears; at noon, they throw them to the spectators. The spectators demand that the slayer shall face the man who is to slay him in his turn; and they always reserve the latest conqueror for another butchering. The outcome of every fight is death, and the means are fire and sword. This sort of thing goes on while the arena is empty. You may retort: "But he was a highway robber; he killed a man!" And what of it? Granted that, as a murderer, he deserved this punishment, what crime have you committed, poor fellow, that you should deserve to sit and see this show? In the morning they cried: "Kill him! Lash him! Burn him! Why does he meet the sword in so cowardly a way? Why does he strike so feebly? Why doesn't he die game? Whip him to meet his wounds! Let them receive blow for blow, with chests bare and exposed to the stroke!" And when the games stop for intermission, they announce, "A little throat-cutting in the meantime, so that there may still be something going on!"

Seneca's vision of free time is conditioned by an abhorrence of gladiatorial combat, and this passage, to be sure, is as much a confirmation of that as it is of anything else. Yet the focus is preeminently on the spectator and, at that, on the deleterious way that these spectators have chosen to occupy their free time (and thus on how they have forced Seneca to ruin his). Seneca's characterization of the way these individuals at the games occupy their free time stands at the very opposite end of the continuum to that of Exekias. For example, what Seneca seeks at the games is "fun, wit, and relaxation," pleasure, in other words, of a form that we could readily identify with the pursuits of Achilles

and Ajax in Exekias's representation (or with those described by Ovid, for that matter). Seneca's spectators, by contrast, are driven by a corrupt pleasure (*voluptas*), which he judges as little more than a perversion. Along with this lack of pleasure goes an absence of play: the closest thing to play in this vignette is the contest between the combatants. But, as it is to the death, it can hardly be termed play. Most alarmingly, the "games" viewed here are not self-sufficient—they do have a purposeful end. That is death, which is desired by the spectator and suffered, invariably it seems, by the combatants. The spectators, as I say, become awful and passive hunters.

The free-time experience of these spectators is markedly different to that of Achilles and Ajax in other ways. The intense concentration that Achilles and Ajax exhibit as they play their game is not apparent in the game's spectators. The Romans, so Seneca accuses, lounge about as they watch others perform. This occupation of free time also does not entail the mild social interaction afforded by the board game. The focus of the spectator is above all on the combatants, as Seneca describes it. Other spectators are irrelevant to the game. The complicity of Exekias's contestants, which brings with it a personal involvement in the game (through competition with the other contestant) and even a mild physical involvement with the game, is absent from the experience of the leisure seekers in Seneca's evocation. Seneca's Romans watch; Exekias's Greeks participate. Furthermore, the Roman spectators are denied, as Seneca states, even relaxation of the form that could flow from their game. The best that one could say of the Roman spectacles, as Seneca depicts them, is that they provide a form of escape through their being utterly different to the forms of quotidian experience that constitute the basis of the spectators' lives.

The stress on eyes and on watching in Seneca's passage is striking. It demonstrates, on the part of the spectators, a remarkable estrangement or alienation from their chosen form of leisure.<sup>52</sup> The occupation of free time for these spectators, because it ceases to be participatory, because it is characterized by the eyes, becomes a passive experience, one of watching and of mere entertainment. At the Roman games the emphasis shifts from spectacle to spectator. Rather than providing an alternative to the stresses of daily life, this, we assume, becomes a real escape. Seneca's vignette, therefore, offers us an evocation of free time that, were we to look back to the various forms of didactic leisure, seems most closely to resemble that of Nemesianus. There poetry ceases to become a participatory form of leisure activity and recommends a form of estranged leisure that is external to itself and that offers an alternative to mundane life.

One other important link between Seneca's passage and the works of Gratius, Martial, Oppian, and Nemesianus exists in the problematization of

power. What do I mean by this? Consider Seneca first. His leisure seekers attempt to exercise considerable power. The combatants are “thrown” to the spectators, who “demand” the mode that the fight is to follow. They insist, in the morning sessions at least, on high and murderous standards from their combatants (“Kill him! Lash him! Burn him! Why does he meet the sword in so cowardly a way? . . . Whip him to meet his wounds!”). In the lunchtime sessions, they demand “a little throat cutting.” Thus their power is, even if vicariously, of the highest order, for they control life and death. No doubt their lives outside the game place had no such privilege. This desire to exercise power and control within their free-time activity places a remarkable slant on leisure, for, despite the violence in the arena, the experience of the spectators is utterly passive. Our spectators seek passively in the arena that which they are denied in daily life. Grattius, Martial, Oppian, and Nemesianus exhibit this absence of control as well. The stark contrast, then, between the passivity of these powerful, hunting spectators and the terrible activity of the powerless, hunted contestants highlights the twin notions of power and control. In life outside the arena the majority of these spectators exercise no such prerogatives. The arena, it seems, offers an alternative, an escape from the arbitrary powerlessness of their own lives. (The arena, we could guess, provides an affirmation for fragile senses of the self.) In this they can, vicariously, play out the puzzles and inequities forced on them by real life (cf. Barton 1993; Toner 1995). It is hard, once again, not to compare the didactic poet Nemesianus (or even Martial in 1.49). The chaos and violence of an everyday life to which he felt victim drove him to a surrogate form of leisure violence, hunting. Can it have been so different for these spectators?

It is possible to tie the conclusions reached in this chapter with those of the preceding chapters. The implied concomitants of the form of free time described by Seneca—and by Grattius, Martial, Oppian, and Nemesianus—are of a type with those that we have observed repeatedly when surveying such conditions as melancholia, boredom, eros, suicide, and the experience of time’s passing. The qualities of which I am thinking are passivity, yielding, withdrawal, isolation, and estrangement. These qualities could be said to characterize the relationship of Seneca’s spectators to the contestants, just as well as they could be said to characterize Nemesianus’s conception of didactic leisure or the psychology of one of Chariton’s lovers or even of one of St. John Chrysostomos’s enervated monks. But there are other qualities worth mention as well. The experience at the Roman games is urban, quintessentially so, and time-bound, and it is for the contestants an individualist experience. It is also one marked by signs—the presence or absence of armor displays the legal standing of a fighter and whether or not he may be allowed to fight in the

morning or at lunchtime. Above all, however, the experience that we witness with these spectators and contestants is the problematization of control. Nemesianus's leisure, therefore, reflects the discursive continuum that we have witnessed progressively in each of the chapters so far.

What does this have to do with the affirmation of the self and with the reformulation of the social personality, the themes of the second part of this book? The answer, not unexpectedly, lies in these escapist formulations of leisure activity (something conceptually to be related to Seneca's game spectators). Each of these authors, with the exception of Ovid, finds himself under threat from a hostile world. The means of shoring up his self-esteem and self-identity, of protecting what is an utterly fragile self, of affirming the boundaries of self, is withdrawal, personal sequestration, or the extirpation of forces entailing a lack of control. This may also have been the strategy of Seneca's spectators. It represents a completely subjective experience, one whose success is built upon the estrangement from the objective. The reformulation of the self is achieved through alienation. Indeed, the self itself is built and fed upon such a sense of alienation. In the next chapter I will focus on one of the greatest Roman exemplars of this form of alienation, Hostius Quadra.