

THE RHETORIC OF A STOIC POET (PERSIUS SATIRE 5)¹

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The narrative style in Persius Satire 5 produces a poem which is not so much a sermon, as a *sermo* or conversation. Persius' technique of using a quick exchange between poet/speaker and adversary/interlocutor (whether real or imaginary) is derived from the kind of philosophical discourse referred to as diatribe, a moral lecture focussing on a general issue and aiming at the improvement of mankind as a whole.² The employment of this dramatic structure aids the development of the argument and theme of the satire by giving the question and answer process of thought in a form which is more accessible to the imagination of the recipient/audience.

It should therefore not surprise us that Persius uses the important traditional satiric technique of addressing his reader in this satire. Although this dramatic situation serves as a structural basis for the development and explanation of the theme of true Stoic freedom (*libertate opus est*, line 73) in this satire (Zietsman 1993:65-66, 70-72), the aim of this article is to comment on three of the most important dialogues in the satire (pointing out two more), and to indicate various aspects of the poet's conversation technique in order to illustrate how skillfully and subtly he criticises even the most unsuspecting reader/listener by alternating and also varying the roles between the satirist/adviser and his recipient/audience.

Framework of the five dialogues in Satire 5

1. Persius and Cornutus (lines 1-29)
2. Persius and an imaginary adversary (lines 62-72)
3. Persius and Marcus Dama (lines 73-131)
4. Avaritia, Luxuria and the moral slave (lines 132-160)
5. Davus and Chaerestratus (lines 161-175)

The wide variety of dialogue ranges all the way from firstly, the personal conversations of the poet with Cornutus (lines 1-29), secondly, the invitation to an imaginary audience to follow the doctrines of Stoicism and also an attack on procrastination (lines 62-72), through, thirdly, the explanation to an imaginary adversary (soon to be identified as the reader/listener himself) of the need for true (philosophical) freedom (lines 73-131), to fourthly, the exhortations addressed to the moral slave by *Avaritia* and *Luxuria* (lines 132-160), and fifthly, a scene taken from comedy where the satirist/adviser and recipient have been replaced "on stage" by two characters from the comedy, respectively the slave Davus and the lover Chaerestratus (lines 161-175).

¹ This article was presented in an abridged form as a paper entitled "*The Stoic author and his audience*" at the biennial conference of the Classical Association of South Africa, Bloemfontein, January 1995.

² For the Stoic diatribe tradition in Persius, see Van Rooy (1965:74-75, 93).

1. PERSIUS AND CORNUTUS (LINES 1-29)

Cornutus points out the defects of tragic style

- 10 *tu neque anhelanti, coquitur dum massa camino,*³
11 *folle premis uentos nec clauso murmure raucus*
12 *nescio quid tecum graue cornicaris inepte*
13 *nec scloppo tumidas intendis rumpere buccas.*

Cornutus reminds Persius of his literary programme

- 14 *uerba togae sequeris iunctura callidus acri,*
15 *ore teres modico, pallentis radere mores*
16 *doctus et ingenuo culpam defigere ludo.*

"You're different; you don't squeeze air from a bellows which gasps as the furnace smelts the ore, or go in for hoarse and pent-up muttering, inanely cawing to yourself some deep observation, nor do you strain to blow up your cheeks until they go bang. You keep to the dress of everyday speech, clever at the pointed juxtaposition; you've a fairly well-rounded diction; you're expert at scraping unhealthy habits and nailing vice with a stroke of wit."⁴

The introduction to this satire is essentially a conversation between Persius and his friend, Cornutus,⁵ expounding the poet's rejection of the traditional themes and style of contemporary epic and tragedy (lines 1-9) and also his approach to his own poetry (lines 10-29).⁶ Although the first four lines are spoken by Persius, he becomes the unnamed recipient in line 5, while it appears that Cornutus is the satirist/adviser. This substitution of roles is thoroughly appropriate, since, as we learn later (lines 30-51, dealing with Persius' Stoic education), the relationship between Cornutus and Persius is one of teacher (adviser) and student (recipient). Cornutus questions the themes of contemporary epic and tragedy (lines 5-9) and also points out the defects of tragic style (lines 10-13) by formulating three things that Persius avoids in the composition of his satires.

The importance of the dialogue between Persius and Cornutus lies in the fact that while Cornutus (the poet's mouthpiece) is questioning the themes of contemporary epic and

³ I have used Clausen's edition (1959) for quotations from Persius.

⁴ For translations of the passages quoted I have used the translation by Rudd (1979).

⁵ Although Witke (1970:90) states that the whole point of 5-18 is weakened if we assign these words to Cornutus, who speaks nowhere else in the poem, and that this is the poet's device for putting words of criticism in the reader's mouth and for setting forth self-criticism, most commentators identify the interlocutor as Cornutus. See i.a. Anderson (1960:69; Bo 1969:82; Dessen 1968:72; Reckford 1962:498; Reigl 1956:5; Semple 1961:171). Coffey (1976:106 simply calls this person an "interrupter". For Cornutus' life, see Raschke (1976:147-151).

⁶ Poetry and the appropriate style for the satirist are also the subjects of the prologue and the first satire.

tragedy (lines 5-9) and criticising tragic style by referring to the style of contemporary poets by way of a negative formulation, he is at the same time (lines 10-13) defining the style of Persius' poetry (Witke 1970:92-93): he is saying what the poet's style is *not*, preparing the reader for his positive formulation in lines 14-16.

Cornutus opens his criticism with the personal pronoun *tu*, emphatically placed as the first word of his criticism. The commentaries on the opening lines generally assume that Persius begins to imitate the epic poets only to be restrained by Cornutus who outlines the true standards he should follow.⁷ It is however significant that, rather than the imperative, Cornutus uses the indicatives, *neque ... premis ... nec cornicaris ... nec intendis*. By doing so, he implies his approval of Persius' work, and that the poet is already complying with his standards. It should be remembered that although Cornutus acts as interlocutor, this conversation is actually part of the poet's technique of conveying his personal view to his reader. By attributing this praise of himself to a respected speaker like Cornutus, Persius avoids the charge of vanity while at the same time he is indirectly establishing his own reputation for veracity (Dessen 1968:72).

Against this background lines 14-16 should be read: they are the most forthright exposition of the style and content of Persius' satires. In these programmatic lines Cornutus states that Persius' style concurs with the simple, unadorned, and presumably earnest style of the average citizen: his style is the plain language of everyday life - *uerba togae sequeris* (line 14) - in order to reach not only the sophisticated reader, but also and above all the ordinary citizen. At the same time however, it is Persius' task to criticise his audience/mankind - *pallentis radere mores* (line 15): he has to shock, upset, and antagonise our expectations by an ethical attack on the morals of a society in general and by vigorously transfixing human faults with well-educated wit in the manner of a native Italian,⁸ therefore, of a typical satirist⁹: *ingenuo culpam defigere ludo* (line 16).

The familiar satiric claim to speak *sermo merus* (Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.48) is recalled by *uerba togae sequeris* (line 14). Although several scholars¹⁰ have tried to demonstrate that the phrase refers to Persius' style as *sermo uulgaris* or *sermo cotidianus*, Anderson¹¹ argues that "no toga-wearing Roman ever spoke as this satirist does; not even Cornutus, despite the role that Persius here assigns to him as teacher of correct satiric diction, wrote in the way he himself seems to advocate".¹² The problem is that Persius is not utilising the everyday speech advocated by Horace (nor, for that matter, the playful manner so brilliantly displayed by Horace). The Horatian allusions which Persius achieves in lines 14-16 therefore rather serve to confuse the picture of the satirist than to clarify it. These lines might refer to the contrast between satire, the truly Roman genre, and epic and tragedy, the (foreign) Greek genres. This contrast would then be implied by *uerba togae* (also associated with the *fabula togata*, comedy that was Greek in form but in which the

⁷ See i.a. Coffey (1976:106) and Conington (1874:82-83).

⁸ Lewis and Short, s.v. *ingenuus* I: "native, indigenous, not foreign".

⁹ See also Némethy (1903:241-242).

¹⁰ See for example Bo (1969:84); Pretor (1907:64); Van Wageningen (1911:xxv ff.); Villeneuve (1918:364ff.).

¹¹ Anderson (1966:410). See also Bellandi (1972:330-331) and Reigl (1956:168-172).

¹² Horace, on the other hand, did mean his audience to hear his hexameters as a poetic version of everyday speech.

characters and life presented were Roman as in contrast to the *fabula praetexta*¹³ and *ingenuo* (native, indigenous, not foreign)¹⁴ as opposed to the reference to the Greek genres in *Mycenis* (line 17).

I agree with Anderson's solution that Cornutus is here referring, among other things, to the language of a *free Roman*¹⁵ and that he is accordingly recommending an ethical attack on vice (*pallentis radere mores*, line 15) in the manner of a free-born citizen. (Anderson 1960: 71. See also Bellandi 1972:324). This is strengthened by two more phrases also referring to Persius' style.

Firstly, *ore teres modico* (line 15)¹⁶ is opposed to the grandiloquence of *grande locuturi* (line 7) and means "polished, rounded off" (Lewis and Short, s.v. *teres* II) as in Cicero *De Or.* 3.52, *est (oratio) et plena quaedam sed tamen teres et tenuis non sine neruis ac uiribus*.¹⁷ At the same time, *teres* also suggests the Stoic idea of moral freedom. It recalls Horace's description in *Sat.* 2.7.86 of the truly free man as one *in se ipso totus, teres, atque rotundus*. Persius' style (*ore ... modico*) is contrasted with *ore magno* which is typical of high style: *nunc, ueneranda Pales, magno nunc ore sonandum* (*Verg. Georg.* 3.294).¹⁸ At the same time Persius uses a food metaphor: the "modest mouth" of the satiric poet is contrasted with the "gaping mouth" (*hianda*, line 3) of the tragic actor or poet (Raschke 1976:58).

Secondly, the emphatic *ingenuo ... ludo* (line 16) also refers to Persius' style. *Ludus* is one of the most common descriptions of the satiric manner in Lucilius and Horace (Anderson 1966: 410; Bo 1969:85), who frequently describes his work as *ludus* (for example *Epist.* 1.1.1-3) while *ingenuus* (which can also refer to a liberal standard of humour as in Cic. *De Off.* 1.103) is a strong motif in Hor. *Sat.* 1.6. It is consequently most natural to interpret these phrases in Horatian terms, and to assume that Persius is being said to use the playful manner of a native Italian and of a typical satirist (Némethy 1903:241-242).

His main object is *pallentis radere mores* (line 15) and *culpam defigere* (line 16). The scholiast elucidates *pallentis* with *morbo uitioque* while Conington compares *radere* with 1.107-108, *teneras ... radere ... / auriculas* and 3.113-114, *tenero ... ulcus in ore / ... radere* where (as in 5.15) *radere* suggests a scraping operation done with a surgical instrument. According to the scholiast morality is seen as unhealthy flesh requiring the surgery of Stoicism and *pallentis radere mores* is therefore a reference to ethics.

Anderson (1966: 410; see also Harvey 1981:131) discusses the meaning of *defigere*, indicating that whatever the metaphor alludes to - whether Persius implies that he "nails down" a fault, that he "pierces it" as with a sword, or that he "fixes it motionless and

¹³ Conington (1874: 85). See also Némethy (1903:240-241); Reigl (1956:12); Van Wageningen (1911: ad 14).

¹⁴ In prol. 7 Persius refers to Roman satire as *carmen nostrum*.

¹⁵ Lewis and Short, s.v. *toga* B II: "particularly refers to the outer garment of a Roman citizen in time of peace"; *O.L.D.*, s.v. *toga* 2: "the formal outer garment of free-born Roman men".

¹⁶ Bo (1969:85): *modico*, 'temperato, non elato, non magno'.

¹⁷ See also Quint. 11.3.64. Bo (1969:85) explains *teres* as *proprie significat aliquid, iusto modo praeditum, et a macie et a pinguedine remotum et hic translate poetam qui temperato loquendi genere utitur*.

¹⁸ See also Hor. *Sat.* 1.4.43-44 and *Carm.* 4.2.7-8; Prop. 2.10.12; Hor. *A.P.* 323-324, *Grais ingenium, Grais dedit ore rotundo / Musa loqui*.

helpless" by the spell of his satire - it is qualified by the phrase *ingenuo ... ludo*, in which Persius suggests a mild, Horatian playfulness which does not accord with the expressive verb *defigere*. Although Anderson concludes that the satirist is either playful, or that he is vigorously transfixing faults, it seems to me that the suggestion Persius is making here is that he is indeed doing both: he is transfixing human faults in a playful manner.

*Mores*¹⁹ might in a broad sense refer to the morals of a society in general but in the context of Satire 5 it refers to the poet's attack on the moral slave in line 73 ff., while *culpam* refers to the slave's folly (lines 73-131) in mistaking judicial freedom for true moral freedom. At the same time, apart from referring to the playfulness typical of the genre of satire, *ludo* refers to line 132-188 where Persius describes five different types of moral slavery to illustrate his attack on a non-philosophical life in a playful manner (so Persius seems to be suggesting here, although the attack will actually be harsh and relentless).

The reference to ethics in Persius' phrase *pallentis radere mores* (line 15) is confirmed by *doctus*, emphatically placed at the beginning of line 16. Apart from the obvious reference to poets and poetry, (*O.L.D.*, s.v. *doctus* 3) the word is commonly used *de philosophis* (see *T.L.L.*, v. 1.1755.13 ff.). This is the first direct indication of the poet's philosophical background and at the same time implies that his work, unlike that of his predecessors, will mainly have a moral flavour. At the same time *doctus* forms the climax of a second *tricolon crescens* referring to the style and themes of Persius' satire. In lines 10-13 the poet employed a tricolon to indicate three things he does not do when composing his poetry (*neque premis, nec cornicaris, nec intendis rumpere*), and in lines 14-16 the tricolon is applied to the positive aspects of his style and themes: he is *callidus, teres* and *doctus*.

To summarise: the nature and mission of poetry is redefined. Persius' poetry does not consist of well-worn themes of tragedy (*fabula*, line 3) or epic (*uolnera Parthi*, line 4); he does not treat the gruesome details of contemporary literature (*Procnos aut ... olla Thyestae*, line 8; *mensas*, line 17); nor is his poetry worthless like hot air (*nebulae*, line 7; *anhelanti ... / folle*, lines 10-11; *uentos*, line 11; *tumidas ... buccas*, line 13) croaked out with a hoarse voice (*raucus / ... cornicaris*, lines 11-12) in an unintelligible (*clauso murmure*, line 11) and useless (*inepte*, line 12) manner. Above all, he is not inspired by the Greek Muses (*Helicone*, line 7) to compose worthless poems (*nugis*, line 19) in high style (*grande locuturi*, line 7). No - his poetry is the truly Roman genre of satire, employing the plain language of everyday life (*uerba togae sequeris*, line 14; *plebeia ... prandia*, line 18); his style is modest and well-rounded (*ore teres modico*, line 15); his aim is to attack human faults (*pallentis radere mores*, line 15; *culpam defigere*, line 16) in the manner of a typical moralist and satirist (*doctus ... ingenuo ... ludo*, line 16).

The true nature of Persius' poetry is finally revealed in *secrete loquimur* (line 21)²⁰ which can be interpreted in two ways. Although the primary meaning of *secrete loquimur* may be "we (Persius and Cornutus) are talking on our own", Persius thereby implies that, by speaking privately, what he has to say is meant for Cornutus' ears and not for the public:²¹ he is actually rejecting the common crowd as his audience, saying that he is writing for a select few as his audience (Bo 1969:86) and for his friend and moral praeceptor, Cornutus

¹⁹ In line 38 Persius uses the phrase *intortos ... mores* to refer to his own moral slavery before the time when Cornutus came to his aid.

²⁰ *secrete* is a rare alternative for *secreto* (see Lewis and Short, s.v. *secerno* II B, adv. 2) and is a much better manuscript reading than the variant *secreti*.

²¹ Conington (1874:87); Harvey (1981:133); Morford (1984:56); Némethy (1903: 243).

- his poetry is the truly Roman genre of satire and his aim is to attack human faults in the manner of a typical moralist and satirist: these are the limits he has set for himself.

This conversation is followed by an address to Cornutus (lines 30-51), relating the poet's spiritual rescue by his tutor who taught him Stoicism. It is a theme that briefly reappears in the second dialogue.

2. PERSIUS AND AN IMAGINARY ADVERSARY (LINES 62-72)

In an article published earlier I referred in detail to the select audience for whom Persius is writing, by discussing the metaphor of the cleansed ear which denotes receptiveness particularly as far as dedication to Stoicism is concerned (Zietsman 1993:61-73). This is especially evident in the second dialogue when Cornutus features for a second time. In this instance he is introduced together with his philosophy in order to contrast his devotion to philosophy with the lusts and greed of other men.

In lines 52-72 Persius addresses an imaginary audience: he explains that other professions and walks of life lead to disaster and sorrow and that they constitute a meaningless and futile life. To give sense and meaning to life, man should adopt a Stoic approach, the *frux Cleanthea* taught by Cornutus, whose chosen profession is the teaching of philosophy (lines 62-64):

Persius urges mankind to pursue Stoicism

62 at te nocturnis iuvat inpallescere chartis;
63 cultor enim iuuenum purgatas inseris aures
64 *fruge Cleanthea. petite hinc, puerique senesque,*
65 finem animo certum miserisque uiatica canis.

"But *you* enjoy acquiring a pallor from your books at night.
Tending students like a farmer, you clear their ears and sow
Cleanthes' seed. From that young and old should draw
a ration for desire and supplies for their grey years of sorrow."

The sense of lines 63-64(a) is that just as the farmer clears away the weeds before sowing the seeds, Cornutus cleanses the ears of youth from vices through his instruction and thereby educate them by the doctrine of Stoic philosophy.²² Persius therefore invites his audience to change their way of life and outlook before it is too late (lines 52-61), and to follow the doctrines (*fruge Cleanthea*, line 64) of Cornutus.

At this point Persius becomes the satirist/adviser and turns smoothly to address his audience as second person recipients directly. He however still refrains from singling out the individual reader, but encourages mankind at large to pursue Stoicism:²³ *petite hinc, puerique senesque / finem animo certum miserisque uiatica canis*, lines 64(b)-65. By using

²² So the scholiast. See also Hor. *Epist.* 1.1.39-40, *nemo adeo ferus est ut non mitescere possit, / si modo culturae patientem commodet aurem.*

²³ Witke (1970:95): *hinc*, "from the Stoa"; Bo (1969:96): *ex philosophia* (also the scholiast).

the plural imperative *petite* (line 64) Persius effectively separates this group from Cornutus, who has just been addressed in the second person singular (*te iuuat / inseris*, lines 62-63), but *hinc* (line 64) provides a connection between teacher and potential students.

Soon the satirist/adviser will choose one of this group to set up the method that he uses in criticising their procrastination (lines 66-72). It is worth noting that Cornutus now entirely disappears from the satire.

66 "cras hoc fiet." idem cras fiat. "quid? quasi magnum
67 nempe diem donas!" sed cum lux altera uenit,
68 iam cras hesternum *consumpsimus*; ecce aliud cras
69 egerit hos annos et semper paulum erit ultra.
70 nam quamuis prope *te*, quamuis temone sub uno
71 uertentem sese frustra *sectabere* canthum,
72 cum rota posterior *curras* et in axe secundo.

"Tomorrow will do for that."

'Well do it tomorrow.'

'What?'

A day's grace? That's a big concession!

But when the next day dawns

we have finished yesterday's tomorrow, and look - a new tomorrow
is baling away our years; it will always be just ahead.

Although you are under the same carriage and close to the rim
of the wheel that resolves in front, it's futile trying to catch it,
for you are running in the rear position on the back axle."

The imaginary adversary answers Persius' call to Stoicism with an undertaking to begin studying it the next day: "*cras hoc fiet*" (line 66); but Persius warns that men go on putting off the work of studying virtue to a tomorrow that never arrives (lines 66-69) (Conington 1874:93). It is important to note that the satirist initially sets the adversary at ease by including himself in his indictment on procrastination (*consumpsimus*, line 68) and only in line 70 does he finally turn directly to the reader with the familiar *te*.

Addressing the adversary (i.e. the procrastinator) now directly for the first time by using two second person singular verbs (*sectabere*, line 71 and *curras* line 72), Persius illustrates to the adversary the futility of procrastination (lines 70-72):²⁴ the procrastinator is a rear wheel of a carriage, that never catches up with the front wheel. The message is clear: time wasted can never be caught up.

Persius' metaphor vividly describes the inexorable advance of time and the inability of the individual to break out of his confinement (Morford 1984:59). This warning is an important preparation for the poet's treatment of the adversary in the rest of the satire.

²⁴ Stoics and others often point out the undesirability of deferring self-improvement. See for example Hor. *Epist.* 1.2.37-43; Sen. *Epist.* 1.2; Mart. 5.58 and 1.15.11-12, *non est, crede mihi, sapientis dicere "Viuam": / sera nimis uita est crastina: uiue hodie.*

3. PERSIUS AND MARCUS DAMA (LINES 73-131)

In the next section of his satire, Persius turns to discuss true freedom - presumably because in Stoic thinking this is an important example of the kind of thing people should learn about (lines 64-65). The various aspects of the conversation technique in lines 73-131 will be dealt with in a separate article and therefore I refer to this important dialogue by making only a few very brief remarks.

Persius begins with a brief general statement of the need for true freedom (*libertate opus est*, line 73) and goes on from there to talk about the misconceptions that people have about freedom (lines 73-90). This passage is largely in the third person, but there are indications of a satirist/adviser-recipient relationship in two of the verbs (*recusas/ ... tu ... palles*, lines 79-80) and in the Stoic who speaks to an imaginary interlocutor (*colligis*, line 85; *tolle*, line 87).

From line 91 onwards the satire moves to the satirist/adviser-recipient method and this fills the next 100 lines of the poem. Within the overall arrangement there are a number of variations on the theme. For the first 40 lines (i.e. up to line 131) the satirist/adviser speaks directly to his second person recipient: the poet gradually draws the reader/listener into his attack on moral slavery, thereby diminishing to a certain extent the role of the adversary who is finally identified as the reader/listener himself (*diluis*, line 100).

The whole of this section (lines 73-131) proceeds in the conversational manner which is appropriate to the principles of satiric composition established by Persius in lines 1-21. Gnomonic expressions (for example lines 96-99) alternate with vivid examples of the poet's arguments (as in lines 76-81 and 122-123); the philosophical diatribe is enlivened not only by the dialogue between Persius and an imaginary adversary, but also by metaphorical usages and variation of style and vocabulary.

4. AVARITIA, LUXURIA AND THE MORAL SLAVE (LINES 132-160)

For the rest of his diatribe on moral domination and enslavement Persius illustrates his thesis (that only the wise man is free) by examples of the mental passions that keep the non-Stoic enslaved. The role of the satirist/adviser speaking to a second person recipient is now taken over by the personified *Auaritia* (lines 132-140) and then by *Luxuria* (141-153), each of whom addresses the recipient from her own point of view. Their admonitions and conflicting demands endeavour to enslave the man who heeds them.²⁵ Though *Auaritia* makes her case forcefully, *Luxuria* sees some of the snags and warns that even if the

²⁵ Such debates between abstracts were traditional in diatribe - see Lejay's edition of Horace's *Satires*. His introduction explains the connection between diatribe and satire. Conflicting abstracts are personified elsewhere. Wealth and Poverty appear in Aristophanes' *Plutus* and a contest between Right and Wrong is held at Aristoph. *Nub.* 889-1114. Cleanthes wrote a dialogue between Reason and Anger (*SVF* 1.570), and *Vita* and *Mors* apparently confronted each other in Ennius (Quint. 9.2.36). Particularly relevant to Persius is Prodicus' tale of the Choice of Heracles (Xen. *Mem.* 2.1.21-33) in which Ἀρετή and Κακία try to win over the youthful Heracles who must choose between the ways of life they represent. Prodicus' story also influences Ov. *Am.* 3.1, where *Tragoedia* and *Elegia* put their respective cases to the poet, and Sil. 15.18-128, where *Virtus* and *Voluptas* compete for Scipio's allegiance (Harvey 1981:162).

- 132-133 *Auaritia* rises the adversary by insisting (*instat*) that he should get up (*surge*) and do something instead of lying lazily around (*piger stertis*) already in the morning (*mane*). Initially he refuses strongly (*negas*, line 133) but when she insists, he offers only a lame excuse: "*non queo*"; line 133. As *Auaritia* keeps on insisting the adversary weakens even further and now asks:
- 134(a) *et quid agam?*
- 134(b)-
137(a) When *Auaritia* tells him that he should get up to earn some money by indulging in trading, to borrow money, and to swear falsely (*iura*),
- 137(b) he once again offers an excuse, although stronger now but on moral grounds: "*sed Iuppiter audiet*". This answer is however only directed at the idea of swearing an oath (*iura*, line 137) and is not a denial of gaining wealth.
- 137(c)-139 But *Auaritia* threatens him with eternal poverty if he chooses to live a moral life ("*si uiuere cum loue tendis*") and the adversary finally succumbs to the insisting demands.
- 140 Conclusion: Without any further reference to the adversary, the change of scene makes it clear that *Auaritia* has indeed prevailed. The adversary has bowed to the demands put forward by *Auaritia* and is ready to depart on his journey.

To summarise: four times *Auaritia* repeats her cry of "*surge*", once with *eia*, an interjection used for exhortation.²⁶ Four more imperatives follow in quick succession: "*aduehe*" (line 134), "*tolle*" (line 136), "*uerte*" and "*iura*" (line 137). Her remarks are animated and expressive, for example *rogat!* and *en*²⁷ (line 134), and *eheu* (line 137), but they are also contemptuous: *baro* (line 138). The effect is one of agitation and hastiness, fitting the character of *Auaritia*.²⁸ I should also point out that Persius presents *Auaritia* as speaking vulgarly precisely because it was possible for a man of low station to acquire wealth in the highly mobile society under Nero. The image that she uses to show what will happen "*si uiuere cum loue tendis*" (line 139), is most direct and even impinges upon the vulgar: "*regustatum digito terebrare salinum / contentus perages*" (lines 138-139): "You'll spend your days happily scraping the bottom of the barrel".

When the adversary is finally convinced (line 140) and ready to set sail (*ocius ad nauem*, line 141) *Luxuria* appears as the second example of the causes of moral slavery. The adversary's earlier laziness (line 132) and reluctance (lines 133, 134, and 137) are now contrasted with his keenness (line 141) after he had been convinced to obey the demands made by *Auaritia*. This contrast is accentuated not merely by the change of scene (line 140), but also by the emphasis on *ocius* as the first word in line 141 and by the fact that *ocius* fills the first foot of the line:

141 *ocius ad nauem! nihil obstat quin trabe uasta*
142 *Aegaeum rapias, ni sollers Luxuria ante*
143 *seductum moneat: "quo deinde, insane, ruis, quo?"*

²⁶ See Verg. *Aen.* 4.569, *heia age, rumpe moras*; Hor. *Sat.* 1.1.18, *uos hinc mutatis discedite partibus: eia!*

²⁷ Compare Verg. *Ecl.* 6.69 and *Georg.* 3.42.

²⁸ Lewis and Short, s.v.: "a greedy desire for possessions, greediness, avarice, covetousness".

- 144 *quid tibi uis? calido sub pectore mascula bilis*
145 *intumuit quam non extinxerit urna cicutae?*
- 146 *tu mare transilias? tibi torta cannabe fulto*
147 *cena sit in transtro Veientanumque rubellum*
148 *exhalet uapida laesum pice sessilis obba?*
- 149 *quid petis? ut nummi, quos hic quincunce modesto*
150 *nutrieras, pergant audos sudare deunces?*
- 151 *indulge genio, carpamus dulcia, nostrum est*
152 *quod uiuis, cinis et manes et fabula fies,*
153 *uiue memor leti, fugit hora, hoc quod loquor inde est."*
- 154 *en quid agis? duplici in diuersum scinderis hamo.*
155 *huncine an hunc sequeris? subeas alternus oportet*
156 *ancipiti obsequio dominos, alternus oberres.*
- 157 *nec tu, cum obstiteris semel instantique negaris*
158 *parere imperio, "rupi iam uincula" dicas;*
159 *nam et luctata canis nodum abripit, et tamen illi,*
160 *cum fugit, a collo trahitur pars longa catenae.*

"'Get this aboard right away!' The huge ship is ready
to hurry you over the Aegean, when Luxury slyly draws you
aside for a word of advice: 'Where the hell are you off to?

What do you mean? Are you mad? Why a whole jar of sedatives
couldn't quell the frenzy that's raging in that hot head of yours!

You - hopping over the sea, having your supper on a bench
with your back propped against a coil of rope, while a squat mug
reeks of Veientine rosso ruined by stale resin!

All for what? That the cash you reared at the modest rate
of five per cent should strain to sweat out a greedy eleven?

Give yourself a treat; let's make some hay. What you live is ours.
Soon enough you'll turn into dust, ghost, and hearsay.
Live with death in mind; time flies - my words reduce it.'

Well then, two hooks are pulling in opposite ways.
Which will you follow, this or that? Your loyalty is bound
to vacillate, obeying and deserting each master in turn.

Even if you once succeed in making a stand and defying
their incessant orders, you can't say 'I've broken my bonds!'
For a dog may snap its fastening after a struggle, but still
as it runs away a length of chain trails from its neck."

If *Auaritia* is direct and colloquial, *Luxuria* is the opposite (Witke 70:103). Her appearance on the scene (lines 141-142) is heralded by an epic usage, *trabe ... Aegaeum rapias*.²⁹ Unlike *Auaritia* she has no need to resort to bullying tactics. She is *sollers* (line 142),³⁰ meaning "artful, ingenious, inventive" (Lewis and Short, s.v. II). She talks to the adversary without being overheard by anyone else (*seductum moneat*, line 143) and refers to the merchant's haste to satisfy *Auaritia* as insanity ("*quo deinde, insane, ruis, quo?*"³¹, line 143).

Luxuria is equally persuasive: a series of subtle questions (lines 144-150 and 154-155), unlike the harsh demands that *Auaritia* issues to the adversary, are all intended to persuade the adversary - here the merchant - to stay at home rather than to face discomforts (lines 146-148) which will be of little purpose (lines 149-150).

Luxuria's unceasing battery of questions is emphasised by the skilful spacing of "*quid tibi uis?*" (line 144), "*tu mare transilias?*" (line 146), "*quid petis?*" (line 149) and "*en quid agis?*" (line 154), all stressed by position in the first half of the line. These questions are contrasted in forcefulness with the adversary's feeble "*et quid agam?*" in line 134. It is no wonder that *Luxuria* succeeds in halting his rush to satisfy *Auaritia*.

It should be noted that *Luxuria*, true to her nature, concentrates on the discomforts of the journey, rather than on the dangers of the proverbially perilous sea. In lines 146-148 the vulgar words *cannabe*, *rubellum*, *uapida* and *obba* are everyday objects referred to in terms which provoke a sense of scorn and rejection. *Luxuria* is trying to dissuade the adversary from a certain course of action; accordingly she depicts it in terms calculated to repel him and to stress the uncomfortable surroundings of a voyage by sea: he is apparently to recline not on a coach but on a coil of rope (*torta cannabe fulto*, line 146)³² on deck and the *cena* will not be set on a table³³ but on a *transtrum* instead (*transtro*, line 147, is one of the cross-beams on which the rowers sat³⁴).

Luxuria ends by telling her slave to enjoy life while he can (lines 151-153) by using several phrases reminding him of the brevity of life (Bo 1969:114-115; Harvey 1981:168-169). The high-sounding and relatively languid overtones of the imperatives and subjunctive used by *Luxuria*: "*indulge genio, carpamus dulcia*" (line 151), and "*uiue memor leti*" (line 153) differ greatly in tone with the imperatives used by *Auaritia*. The change from the singular imperative *indulge* (line 151) to the plural subjunctive *carpamus* probably suggests that *Luxuria* is representing herself as the companion or even mistress of the slave (Harvey 1981:168).

²⁹ Cat. 4.3; Verg. *Aen.* 3.191, 4.566; Hor. *Carm.* 1.1.13; Ovid *Pont.* 1.3.76; Persius 1.89, 6.27; Stat. *Th.* 5.422, *Ach.* 1.44, *Silu.* 3.2.70; Sil. 6.523; Juv. 14.276 and 296. It occurs first at Enn. *Ann.* 616 (Vahlen²) and is then mainly confined to elevated poetry.

³⁰ Bo (1969:112): *quae accommodate ad persuadendum scit dicere*.

³¹ Bo (1969:113): "*deinde*" *auget indignationem et uehementiam*.

³² For the use of such ropes on deck see for example Ovid *Fast.* 3.587.

³³ Bo (1969:113); Némethy (1903: 289). Pretor (1907:81) suggests that *fulto* could possibly refer to *transtro*, "a broken bench propped on a coil of rope".

³⁴ Verg. *Aen.* 4.573 and 5.136; Luc. 3.542-543.

Although the adversary, unlike in lines 132-140, never answers *Luxuria*, it seems that he is beginning to doubt the advisability of the demands put by *Auaritia*.³⁵ The final lines of this section are spoken by the satirist/adviser who again speaks directly to the recipient (lines 154-160). He uses the image of the fish and baited hooks (*duplici in diuersum scinderis hamo*, line 154) to indicate that the moral slave is the victim of both temptations and is torn between conflicting demands: *huncine an hunc sequeris? subeas alternus oportet / ancipiti obsequio dominos, alternus oberres* (lines 155-156): "Your loyalty is bound to vacillate, obeying and deserting each master in turn".

Even if the adversary succeeds in resisting one or the other he cannot be free: he is like a dog that breaks its chain but still drags a section of the chain with it as it runs away (lines 157-160). The implied solution is that since the moral slave cannot choose between these two forms of slavery, he has to break free from both in order to be really and completely free. And this, a complete break, is the explicit subject of the final dialogue (lines 161-175), dealing with the lover who endeavours to free himself from the domination of his mistress.

5. DAVUS AND CHAERESTRATUS (LINES 161-175)

The dialogue between *Auaritia*, *Luxuria* and the moral slave develops into a moral paradigm taken from the *Eunuchus* of Terence (Act 1, Scene 1), following the precedent of Horace *Sat.* 2.3.259-271 as a stock example of the slavery to love: Persius demonstrates that real freedom includes the ability to escape the slavery of sex. The scene depicts the indecisive condition of Chaerestratus, torn between his passion for Chrysis and his perfect awareness of her faithlessness: he is the typical slave to passion.

In a separate article I shall illustrate that the satirist/adviser and recipient are still present, but they have been replaced "on stage" by Davus and Chaerestratus respectively. After this episode, the satirist/adviser finally reappears, speaking directly to the recipient as he provides more examples of moral slavery, namely that of political ambition (lines 176-179b) and of slavery to superstitious beliefs (lines 179c-188). This lively account of the superstitious man is a satirical presentation of Jewish practices, the fear of native Roman *Lemures*, and the exotic customs that belong to Cybele and Isis.

Persius' contempt for Oriental religions ends in a short epilogue (lines 189-191) where the poet's words are dismissed as worthless by a vulgar centurion, Pulfenius, who guffaws at the moralising and offers a low price for the wisdom of Greece, a scene which proves that the poets' message is only for a select audience who have ears to listen.

The fact that Persius' fifth satire is often pointed out as the most successful of his satires can mainly be attributed to the methods the author uses. He shows a satisfying variation in approach, in which content and method blend to produce a unity.

The narrative style and restrained diatribe prove refreshing. There is also a satisfying alternation in thought between the positive recommendation of the Stoic *libertas* and the description of those who have not accepted or cannot accept the idea of this ethical and moral freedom. This atmosphere is reinforced by a wide variety of dialogue that gives a distinct dramatic situation to his poem: the imaginary adversary is a rhetorical mouthpiece for a postulated line of objection or a passing thought.

³⁵ The opposed tendencies of *auaritia* and *luxuria* are recognised elsewhere by moralists, for example Sall. *Cat.* 5.8. and Sen. *Epist.* 56.5.

Persius' technique of using an adversary/interlocutor (real or imaginary) in conversation enables the commentator to divide the satire into five distinct units. It is with the aid of this structure that Persius develops and explains his theme of true freedom.

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