

PERSIUS, SATURN AND JUPITER

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INTRODUCTION

Persius' fifth satire can be divided into five distinct sections to which I shall refer as **Units**. A broad outline of the structure of the satire can be represented as follows:

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| Unit 1:1-29 | The poet's rejection of the traditional themes and style used by contemporary poets. |
| Unit 2:30-51 | When Persius had freedom of choice, he chose Cornutus as his example and learned from him the principles of Stoicism. |
| Unit 3:52-72 | Other professions and walks of life that Persius might imagine lead to disaster; he invites his audience to change their way of life and outlook now, and follow the doctrines of Cornutus. |
| Unit 4:73-131 | Cornutus teaches <i>uirtus</i> , and this <i>uirtus</i> will grant one, by way of <i>ratio</i> , true <i>libertas</i> . |
| Unit 5:132-191 | On the other hand, refusal to change one's attitude and way of life leads to <i>seruitus</i> because of one's <i>uitia</i> . |

The first unit (1-29) is a dialogue between the poet and his friend, Cornutus, during which Persius rejects the style and themes of contemporary epic and tragedy and deals with his approach to his own poetry.

The passage is hard-hitting literary satire and presents tragedy and epic as pretentious, hypocritical, and ridiculous (1-13) (Rudd 1986:22-23). In contrast, Persius' subject is real life: his poetry is different from contemporary literature (14-18) and inspired by a different Muse (19-25).

It is under the inspiration of *Camena* (21) that Persius presents his poetry to Cornutus and thereby reveals his innermost feelings and the secrets of his heart in order to describe the quality of their friendship (26-29).

Although the poet's account of his education by Cornutus (Unit 2) is itself non-satirical, it prepares us for the main body of the poem (Units 4 and 5) which is a discourse based on the well-known Stoic paradox that only the wise man is free and that every fool is a slave.

The preparation is not just thematic. By describing his studies Persius convinces his readers that he is qualified to preach and also that he is sincerely committed to his philosophy: he urges young and old (Unit 3) to be educated in philosophy so that they may also benefit from the *frux Cleanthea*, i.e. Stoicism (64), taught by Cornutus.

DISCUSSION OF UNIT 2: LINES 30-51

In Unit 2 the poet relates his spiritual rescue by his tutor, who taught him Stoicism. They were fated to live in close association and to spend all their time together. The most important reference to the unanimity between Persius and Cornutus is the reference to Jupiter and Saturn (50).

Although this reference could be interpreted as being strictly to their inevitably opposed powers in astrology where the benignant Jupiter counteracts the malignant Saturn (Housman 1913:21; Villeneuve 1918:121), and in that sense contains the most trite astrological reference possible,¹ the reference to Saturn here is essential for the development of the satire's central theme of slavery. Admittedly, it may seem that Persius does not really stress the conflict of Jupiter and Saturn, inasmuch as he mentions Saturn explicitly only here.²

To appreciate and understand the actual importance of this reference, it is necessary to discuss lines 30-51 as a whole in order to illustrate how the theme of moral slavery is anticipated in these lines and culminates in the reference to Jupiter and Saturn. I have divided the unit into three shorter sections and I shall limit my discussion to words and phrases relating to the development of the theme of slavery.

(i) Lines 30-36(a)

Persius confesses his need as adolescent for his master and mentions three circumstances that led to his relationship with Cornutus.

30 cum primum *pauido* custos mihi *purpura* cessit
31 *bullaque* subcinctis Laribus donata pependit,

32 cum *blandi comites* totaque inpune *Subura*
33 permisit sparsisse oculos *iam candidus umbo*,

34 cumque *iter* ambiguum est et *uitae nescius error*
35 diducit trepidas ramosa in compita mentes,

36(a) *me tibi supposui*.³

"When first my guardian, the purple band, left me when I was (still) apprehensive and the *bullae*, consecrated to the girdled *Lares*, was hung up; while my companions were coaxing (me) and the fresh white toga allowed my eyes to wander over the *Subura* with impunity; and (at the age) when the road is unsure and *error*, ignorant of life, leads bewildered minds on branching paths, I placed myself under your care."

¹ These connotations have remained so in modern English usage in the adjectives "saturnine" and "jovial".

² Anderson (1960:77-80) mentions two other potential references to the god and his associations in the latter part of the satire.

³ I have used Clausen's edition (1959) for quotations from Persius. Translations are adaptations from those by Lee and Barr (1987).

Lines 30-31 express the first (*primum*) circumstance: he had laid down his childhood *bullā* and assumed the *toga uirilis*. The word *purpura* (30) refers to the purple hem of the *toga praetexta* which was worn by boys until they assumed the plain *toga uirilis* or *pura* on reaching manhood at the age of sixteen.⁴ The *bullā* (31) was an ornament worn around the neck by children of free birth which was meant to avert evil influences.⁵ Like the *toga praetexta*, it was given up on reaching manhood. Both references hint at a child's (but here specifically at Persius') moral inadequacy during his youth since both were regarded as protective tokens of boyhood, consecrated (*donata*) to the *Lares* (31)⁶ under whose tutelage boys who have not yet reached the age of manhood were especially considered to be.

That youth is a morally vulnerable time is suggested by *pauido* (30), which remains undefined until 32 ff.: because Persius has relinquished the protective tokens of boyhood at the beginning of the self-reliant period of life, he is apprehensive. The implication of *pauido* here is not that the youth is afraid, but that he lacks self-confidence and is consequently uncertain or apprehensive as to what the future entails.

The second factor that led Persius to Cornutus is expressed in 32-33: on reaching manhood Persius is free to decide for himself what to do and also to choose his companions, even if that means following the path of temptation with companions (*blandi comites*, 32) encouraging him in immorality. This is a highly charged context: the reference in *Subura* (32) is to the thriving prostitution in this part of Rome (and consequently an especially dangerous area for young people to wander at will). Therefore, *blandi comites* should be explained not as "when my companions made themselves pleasant" but as "when my companions were coaxing me", i.e. "to take part in the sexual pleasures obtainable in the *Subura*".

The sense of freedom of choice is emphasised by *candidus umbo* (33): *umbo* stands for *toga* but is actually the bandlike fold of the *toga* across the chest.⁷ Highly unusual is *candidus* applied to the *toga uirilis*. Persius might have chosen these words to accentuate that the *toga* was still new and clean and the sense of freedom still fresh, therefore also *iam candidus*, underlining the predicament of the moral vulnerability of youth.

The third factor urging Persius to attach himself to Cornutus is that he has now reached the crossroads of life and cannot decide which way to choose (34-35). The metaphor of the path of life (*iter*, 34) is extremely common in both Greek and Latin⁸ and refers to the symbol of the Pythagorean Y which was chosen by the Pythagoreans as the symbol of human life.⁹ The stem of the symbol represents the early period of youth in which the character is still unformed: the lefthand branch denotes the easy path of vice, the other the steep and difficult ascent to virtue. The path of life is called *ambiguum* (34) to indicate the dilemma of a youth who has no experience of life to guide him in his choice.

⁴ O.C.D., s.v. *toga*. See also Bo 1969:88.

⁵ See Macr. *Sat.* 1.6.9 and Mayor on Juv. 5.164.

⁶ *subcincti Lares dicebantur quia Gabino habitu cincti dii Penates formabantur, obuoluti toga supra umerum sinistrum, dextro nudo* (scholiast).

⁷ Bo 1969:89; Conington 1874:88. Pretor (1907:66) explains *umbo* as the knot into which the folds of the *toga* were gathered after passing the left shoulder.

⁸ See for example Lucr. 2.10; Cic. *De Off.* 1.118; Hor. *A.P.* 404. Persius also uses it at 3.56-57. See Harvey 1981:93-94 and 136.

⁹ Pretor 1907:43 ad 3.56; Némethy 1903:180-181.

In 34 *error* implies the possibility of youth mistaking the road, the liability to go astray rather than the fact of doing so (Pretor 1907:66). The youthful Persius, being ignorant and inexperienced (*uitae nescius*), has no guidance to rely on and therefore does not know which way to turn. The metaphor of the path of life therefore here alludes to the moral crisis of youth in general terms: *uitae nescius error* (Persius' moral insufficiency already suggested in 30-33) leads (*diducit*) youth to the point where the road divides and it has to make a choice (*in compita*, 35) (Némethy 1903:49) for which it is not really qualified, since the mind is still bewildered (*trepidus ... mentes*,¹⁰ recalling *pauido*, 30).

After six lines describing his crisis as a youth who is morally insecure and who has to choose between the difficult path of virtue and the easy one of immorality, Persius emphatically says *me tibi supposui*, 36(a). Compared with the multiple subordinate clause in 30-35, the main clause in 36(a) is remarkably brief and, through its unexpected brevity, gains in emphasis and force (Harvey 1981:137). Persius chooses to make himself the adopted child¹¹ of Cornutus, thereby metaphorically describing his relationship with Cornutus as that of father and son. The verb *supponere* belongs to the vocabulary of parenthood, for the newborn infant was placed at the feet of the father for his acceptance.¹² The expression *me tibi supposui* and the metaphor immediately following suggest that Persius was still morally an infant with Cornutus as his moral father although he had reached physical and legal manhood (Morford 1984:58).

(ii) Lines 36(b)-44

Continuing the metaphorical reference to the relationship between him and Cornutus as that of father and son (36a), Persius recounts the transformation produced in him by Cornutus as his tutor, guide and friend (36b-40). The poet then recalls the happy days he spent in Cornutus' school, mornings of hard study compensated by evenings of social relaxation (41-44):

36(b) *teneros tu suscipis annos*
 37 *Socratico*, Cornute, *sinu*. tum *fallere sollers*
 38 *adposita* intortos extendit *regula* mores
 39 et *premitur ratione* animus *uincique laborat*
 40 *artificemque* tuo ducit sub pollice uoltum.

41 *tecum* etenim *longos memini consumere soles*
 42 et *tecum primas epulis* decerpere *noctes*.
 43 *unum opus et requiem pariter disponimus ambo*
 44 atque *uerecunda* laxamus *seria mensa*.

"You lifted my tender years in your Socratic arms, Cornutus. Then, unobtrusively, unawares the skilful rule was laid down to straighten my crooked morals; and my mind, pressed by reason, struggled to submit and under your thumb it took its skilfully-moulded features. For with you I remember spending long sunny days and reaping the early part of the night in supper with you. Together we both arranged our work and rest as one and relaxed our serious studies with a modest meal."

¹⁰ "*animos incertos, anxios*" (Némethy 1903:249).

¹¹ The verb *supponere* is also used of supposititious children (*O.L.D.*, s.v. 4).

¹² See for example Ter. *Eun.* 912; Liv. 3.44.9. See also Harvey 1981:137; Morford 1984:57-58.

The verb *suscipis* (36b) is anticipated by *supposui* (36a), referring to the placing of the newborn infant at the feet of the father, who signified acceptance of his paternal responsibilities by lifting the child up (*suscipere*) into his arms.¹³ Persius' usage of these words denotes a connection almost as close as that implied by adoption (Pretor 1907:66). Viewed one way, 36(b)-37 therefore present a metaphor of a father taking up and rearing a child: *tu suscipis ... sinu* means "you take to your bosom", *teneros ... annos* means "infancy", and *Socratico* recalls the tender affection with which Socrates watched over youth. Considered another way, however, *tu suscipis* may mean "you take up as a pupil", *teneros ... annos* can mean "immaturity" (or the infancy of judgement which belongs to youth) (Bo 1969:89; Conington 1874:89; Némethy 1903:250), *sinu* "protection" or "care", and *Socratico* would relate to philosophy (Conington 1874:89; Harvey 1981:137). This interpretation would then mean that Cornutus as moral guide with his philosophical attitude and teaching took care of Persius as a pupil in his immaturity. The result of the ambiguity in these lines is that it enables Persius to underline the completeness of the protection against youthful immoralities (*Subura*, 32) offered by Cornutus both as a second father and as a tutor.

The phrase *fallere sollers* (37) seems to mean "skilful, clever, ingenious, shrewd to deceive",¹⁴ so that it should be understood of the gradual art with which Cornutus leads his pupil to virtue, meaning his subtle inculcation of Stoicism. This interpretation is strengthened by the meaning of *fallere* as "to lighten any thing difficult",¹⁵ indicating that the rule (*regula*) that was applied to straighten (*extendit*, 38) the crooked morals (*intortos ... mores*, 38) was subtle in the sense that it was not to be observed or felt.¹⁶ The further implication (continuing from *me tibi supposui*, 36a) is therefore that Persius received his education voluntarily and without being forced.

If *regula* (38) is understood to mean the ruler used by masons and carpenters for drawing straight lines, it is used figuratively as a metaphor taken from carpentry, and means that the crooked morals are straightened as if by the carpenter's ruler.¹⁷ On the other hand, the representation of right and wrong by straight and crooked is common. In this case *regula* would then be an ethical rule or criterion standing outside the carpentry metaphor and is used in its received extended sense.

Persius' metaphorical description of the moulding of the mind of the pupil (*premitur ... animus*, 39) during the educational process is emphasised by *uincique laborat* (39) which also refers to a metaphor of training and also fits the image of moulding. These phrases foreshadow the metaphor in 40¹⁸ which describes Cornutus' instruction as that of the skilful (*artificem*) shaping of a portrait in wax or clay. The imagery of moulding applied to mind and character is widespread while *pollice* is often mentioned in the context of moulding. The sense of the metaphor here is that Cornutus moulds the minds of his pupils with his precepts in the same way as the craftsman shapes the images in clay or wax with his thumb.

¹³ Bo 1969:89; Conington 1874:89; Morford 1984:58. See for example Cic. *Att.* 11.9.3, *haec ad te die natali meo scripsi, quo utinam susceptus non essem.*

¹⁴ Lewis and Short, s.v. *sollers*.

¹⁵ Lewis and Short, s.v. *fallo* II C.

¹⁶ See also Hor. *Sat.* 2.2.12, *molliter austerum studio fallente laborem.*

¹⁷ Némethy 1903:250; Pretor 1907:66; Lewis and Short, s.v. *regula* I.

¹⁸ Harvey 1981:138 does not agree and argues that since *uincique laborat* intervenes, Conington seems wrong to take *premitur* as foreshadowing 40.

Ratione (39) is a direct reference to Stoic philosophy (as in 96 and 119), alluding to *ratio* as a force of restraint, checking activities which are forbidden to the non-philosopher. Only with *regula* and *ratio* as prerequisites can the wise man obtain the Stoic virtues in order to free himself of the masters dominating the life of a fool: *uirtus* guarantees *libertas* (73-131).

The youthful Persius' apprehensiveness (*pauido*) at reaching physical and legal manhood (30-31) is removed by the ethical rule applied for his tuition (37-38); in exchange for the enticing friends (*blandi comites*) leading him to the temptations of the *Subura* (32-33) his mind is moulded by Stoicism and he voluntarily co-operates (39); his inexperience to choose correctly at the crossroads of life (34-35) is given shape by Cornutus, the artisan and teacher (40).

In 41-44 Persius points out that his training (37-40) was accomplished not only by formal education, but also by the hours of relaxation shared with Cornutus. The constant companionship of tutor and pupil reflects the idea of *contubernium*.¹⁹ It was established practice for young Romans of the senatorial order to begin their careers in the *contubernium* of a general or governor, that is, to be a member of his personal staff, attached to him from day to day, if not literally sharing the same quarters. This attitude to *contubernium* exists originally in the military sphere,²⁰ but *contubernium* also comes to denote the close contact experienced among friends and by pupils with their teachers.²¹ The aspiring philosopher, taking advantage of *contubernium*, may model himself on, or at least be greatly influenced by, his teacher.²² Persius too, having entered the *contubernium* of a Stoic, lives closely and constantly with Cornutus in order to learn both his precepts and his way of life (Harvey 1981:138-139).

The implication of *longos memini consumere soles* (41) is that Persius and Cornutus did not only share long days of hard work (41) but also their evenings of relaxation (42). It is significant that the relaxation of teacher and pupil is tempered with frugality and moderation: *primas ... noctes* (42) stands for *primam noctis partem* and seems to suggest the avoidance of excessive pleasure. Although *epulis* (42) actually means "a sumptuous meal, a banquet, feast"²³ it seems that Persius uses the word in a general sense for "meals" in contrast to the excessive and luxurious *cena* which often lasted until after midnight (Carcopino 1970:288). Persius and Cornutus, on the other hand, spent only the early part of the evenings (*primas ... noctes*) for their meals which are also defined by *uerecunda ... mensa* (44), modest meals, and then returned to their study.²⁴

Apart from the metaphor used by Persius in 36-37 to describe the relation between him and Cornutus as that of a child and his father (*me tibi supposui. teneros tu suscipis annos/Socratico, Cornute, sinu*), there is also a second guiding metaphor in this passage (41-44) namely that of harmony which was a basic concept in the thought of Plato and many Greek

¹⁹ Lewis and Short, s.v. I A 2: "the intercourse of a young man and the general accompanied by him in war". See for example Sall. *Iug.* 64.4; Livy 42.11.7.

²⁰ *R-E.*, iv.1165.18ff.

²¹ See Tac. *Dial.* 5.2 and Plin. *Epist.* 4.19.6.

²² See Sen. *Epist.* 6.6.

²³ Lewis and Short, s.v. *epulum* II.

²⁴ That the two friends often spent the night for studying is confirmed by *at te nocturnis iuuat inpallescere chartis* (62) and *insomnis ... iuuentus* (3.54).

thinkers, including the Stoics. The Greek word *ἁρμονία* literally refers to things "fitting together".²⁵ In philosophy it was used by Plato especially in the psychological and moral context of a soul whose parts are in harmonious union, and by the Stoics of the philosopher living in harmony with nature.²⁶ These are the principles underlying Persius' description of his life with Cornutus (41-44). He emphasises their union with the word *tecum* emphatically placed and twice repeated in 41-42. The shared hours of work and relaxation is summarised in *unum opus et requiem pariter disponimus ambo*, 43. Both *unum* and *ambo* are stressed as a result of their respective positions at the beginning and end of the line. These two words are further emphasised by the inclusion of the adverb *pariter* which follows immediately after the *caesura* of the line.

At the same time, Persius' description of his close union with Cornutus recalls (by way of contrast) the relation between Persius and the companions of his youth: *blandi comites* (32) introduced the inexperienced Persius to the temptations of *Subura*; but Cornutus, his moral father, moulded his mind by introducing him to Stoicism (*Socratico ... sinu*, 37).

(iii) Lines 45-51

Persius continues the metaphor describing his companionship with Cornutus as an harmonious union (41-44) by summarising their association in astrological terms (45-51). The friendship and unanimity between Cornutus and Persius is such that the poet is convinced they were born under the same beneficent star, which has an astrological influence of harmony upon their lives. Whatever the astrological accuracy of Persius' words, he makes the harmony between him and Cornutus clear by the repetition of words expressing constancy and union and, finally, by translating the Greek idea of harmony into Latin in *me tibi temperat* (51), "some star certainly brings me into harmony with you" (Morford 1984:58-59).

45 non equidem hoc dubites, amborum foedere certo
 46 consentire *dies et ab uno sidere duci*.
 47 nostra uel aequali suspendit *tempora Libra*
 48 *Parca tenax ueri*, seu nata fidelibus *hora*
 49 diuidit in *Geminos* concordia fata duorum
 50 *Saturnumque* grauem nostro *Ioue frangimus* una,
 51 nescio quod certe est quod *me tibi temperat* astrum.

"One surely wouldn't doubt this, that the days of both agree in a settled covenant and are derived from the self-same planet. Whether Fate, tenacious of the truth, suspended our times in the equal Balance, or the hour that dawned upon us faithful two divides the harmonious destinies of the two of us between the Twins, and we together with the help of Jove are breaking Saturn's baleful influence, there is certainly some star which blends me with you."

Stoicism tended to look favourably on astrology because its doctrines of *εἰμαρμενή* and *συμπάθεια τῶν ὄλων* were thereby corroborated.²⁷ Moreover, astrology was an important part

²⁵ Liddell and Scott, s.v.

²⁶ Morford 1984:58; *O.C.D.*, s.v. *Stoa*.

²⁷ *R-E.*, 2.1813.10ff.

of the contemporary cultural scene and widely approved by educated people. Persius is certainly influenced by the astrological passage in Hor. *Carm.* 2.17.15-24, but while Horace is concerned to explain only the friendship that flourishes between Maecenas and himself, Persius also has in mind the pursuit of philosophy that both he and Cornutus enjoy.

These astrological references serve to accentuate the close relationship between Persius and his tutor on the one hand, but on the other hand are of the utmost importance for the development of the central theme of the satire in that they emphasise by implication the contrast between moral freedom and moral slavery.

Explaining 45-46, Housman writes that the ὥροσκόπος the sign of the zodiac which is rising at the moment of birth, presides over the first year of a child's life, the next sign over the second, and so on till the child is twelve years old and the zodiac exhausted; then the first sign presides over his thirteenth year and the wheel goes round again. Not only the years, but the months, days and hours of life are severally allotted in the same order to the same twelve signs, beginning from the ὥροσκόπος. The phrase *ab uno sidere duci* (46) stresses the fact that Persius and Cornutus have the same ὥροσκόπος.²⁸ Therefore, the words *dies* (46), *tempora* (47) and *hora* (48) are not merely synonyms for *uita*,²⁹ but have their proper force in their literal meanings in this context.

It was believed that those born under *Libra* (47) had a great capacity for friendship. The *Parcae* are often mentioned with reference to their proverbial veracity (*tenax ueri*, 48). They are included in the list of astrological references also in order to remind the reader of the Stoic doctrine of fate and unchangeable laws.³⁰

The close friendship is further emphasised by the reference in 48-49. Persius and Cornutus were both born when the sign of *Gemini*, the appropriate sign for two people so closely united, was rising in the east: this might be supposed to engender in them a unanimity like that of Castor and Pollux (Housman 1913:20).

I have already said that the most important astrological reference to the unanimity between Persius and Cornutus is the reference to Jupiter and Saturn (50).

Roman astrologers considered Saturn essentially malignant. The evil influence of Saturn could be counteracted only by a happy conjunction of planets which frequently, as here, depended upon the relative positions of Jupiter and Saturn.³¹ Behind this attitude lay exact astronomical observations, e.g. that Saturn was the most remote of the known planets, that it therefore carried out its revolution more slowly than the others,³² that it gave off a faint light because of its distance and so seemed dark, gloomy, and cold.³³

²⁸ For *duci* in the sense of *capere originem*, see *T.L.L.*, v.1.2153.38ff.

²⁹ Manil. 2.828, *unde dies redit et tempus describit in horas* and 2.831, *hunc penes arbitrium uitae est, hic regula morum*. See also Bo 1969:91; Némethy 1903:253.

³⁰ Conington 1874:91. Jahn notes that one of the *Parcae* is represented in Roman art with scales in her hands and also as marking the horoscope on the celestial globe.

³¹ See Cic. *N.D.* 2.119.

³² See Servius on *Georg.* 3.93: *Saturni stella tardissima est*.

³³ Seneca's opinion of astrology is in opposition to that of Persius: he cites *Georg.* 1.336 in *Epist.* 88.14, only to ridicule anyone who trusts in astrology.

When Jupiter overthrew Saturn's reign, a myth which Stoics easily rationalised into the conquest of disorder by reason,³⁴ a new worldorder came into existence. Securely bound, Saturn ceased to control any part of the universe.

The downfall of the great ruler is generally relevant to Persius' theme, most obviously because as the symbol of irrational license reduced to chains Saturn later in this satire symbolises the course of such characters as Dama (73-90) or the lecher Chaerestratus (160-175) who imagine themselves to be free but are actually still in the chains of moral slavery. Significantly, these slaves (non-Stoic fools) scorn Jupiter (139), the symbol of rationality and order, so as to demonstrate their difference from Persius and Cornutus. *Libertas* and the favour of Jupiter are synonymous (114).³⁵ Furthermore, while the Stoic friends together break the evil influence of Saturn, the satirist exposes the essential slavishness of fools who are unable to break their bonds and escape conclusively. It seems as though fools enjoy the dubious favour of Saturn.

The reference to Saturn in 50 tightens the relation between this satire and Hor. *Sat.* 2.7 which has strongly influenced its conception. It is as if Persius, about to launch forth specifically upon his discussion of slavery, has Horace's use of Saturn under similar circumstances clearly in mind. Horace gives his satire a dramatic setting directly relevant to its theme by setting it on the *Saturnalia*, when Saturn gave slaves temporary privileges in Rome.

Persius was clearly thinking of Horace in choosing his theme and he had Horace in mind when he formed his astrological phrase in 50; accordingly, it would not be unlikely that he has taken Horace's dramatic setting and changed it into a symbolic one. As Satire 5 progresses, Persius seems to contrive a psychological *Saturnalia* where fools imagine themselves free and attempt to indulge in licentious activities, only to find themselves slaves again after a short interval.

It is therefore clear that Saturn in 50 possesses connotations that unify Unit 2 and the specific discussion of moral slavery: Saturn, the lord of the age of irrational bliss, the prisoner of Jupiter, the patron of *Saturnalia* and, of course, the malignant planet, combines most of Persius' themes in his various associations.

To return to the text: the opposition between Jupiter and Saturn is especially suggested by *frangimus* (50): "to escape astrological influence" (Witke 1970:90). The scholiast explains the passage as *Saturni astrum frangit*. This should be compared with 164-165, where the lecher Chaerestratus tries to break with his mistress and asks *an rem patriam .../limen ad obscenum frangam*, "Should I waste my inheritance from my father on a house of ill fame?"³⁶ Both in 50 and 165 the meaning of *frangere* is "to diminish the influence/extent of", or "to break the force of",³⁷ thereby linking by way of contrast the malignant influence of Saturn with the lecher's passion for his mistress: in the same way that Persius is able to break away from the influence of Saturn, the lecher is unable to make the final break with his mistress. Persius uses *frangimus* in 50 to convey his complete freedom from Saturn; he has utterly broken its evil influence: thus he, together with Cornutus, has secured his own freedom. The divine power of Jupiter has now become his protection against moral lapse.

³⁴ Cic. *N.D.* 2.64.

³⁵ Villeneuve (1918:137) connects *Ioue dextro* in 114 with the cult of *Jupiter liberator* who is also mentioned as the protector of freedom in Tac. *Ann.* 15.64 and 16.35.

³⁶ See also *T.L.L.*, vi. 1248.22-24 and 1251.3.

³⁷ *O.L.D.*, s.v. 6.

Persius' reason for dissociating himself from traditional literature, for wanting to criticise the morals of his time, and for his tribute to Cornutus is now clear: Cornutus taught him philosophy in order that he might be morally free.

A final word remains to be said about the purpose of this unit as a whole. The two principal subjects of Persius' satires are poetry and ethics: in the first satire he had shown how the two could not be separated, and his attitude is the same in the fifth. In the first unit he had explained and defended his poetic principles, techniques, and purpose; in the second he justifies his credentials as a moral critic by recalling his training under Cornutus. The passage is an eloquent testimonial to Cornutus as a friend and teacher, and as a personal statement it is unique in Roman satire.³⁸ But it also expresses how intertwined the thoughts of the two men are: therefore, when Persius offers moral criticism on Roman society (as he will do in 73 ff.), he speaks with the authority of Cornutus. Lines 30-51, therefore, justify Persius' claim to be a moral critic (Morford 1984:57).

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³⁸ The closest parallels are Horace's tributes to his father (*Sat.* 1.6.65-99) and to Maecenas (*Sat.* 1.6.1-6 and 45-64).