

Peter Koncelik

12/5/18

Limatula Libertas Iuvenis

- 1** Sto doctis ebriis stabulo cinctus scola.
Turbidus sordes iuvenis sexualis quoque forma
tristis parentis. novus et nova inusitate
terent mare palam ostento bile sexuelle apud
- 5** acto maris honoris veri quoque femina fronte
delectat, sed dubitet hanc actionem nocte
postmodum. Hic, scholaris praestat libertatem iuvenis
solo modo quem scit: bibet plurimum meri.
Angulo classis medicorum ludo vomet illo,
- 10** ardentibus ventribus, dimitterent se vero
medico. Denique actus salit peritus arte
in seram, saltans usu cruces et gratum sonat
carmen docto oculo populis miratis sicut alti
pulchro melodramate. Enim locus hic ubi
- 15** est iuvenes merent veterum aeres aditum studi.

Translation:

The Refined Freedom of Youth

I stand in the college bar, surrounded by inebriated “academics”.

It is a cesspool of young sexuality, and the embodiment of parental disappointment.

A young man and woman bizarrely rub together, with the male sexual frustration shown publicly in his act of true male honor, and the woman in front also takes part, but she questions this activity later in the night. Here, the student shows his freedom of youth in the only which he knows: he drinks an inordinate amount of alcohol. In that corner, a class of doctors (currently) in school, with burning stomachs, vomit, as they might send themselves to a real doctor. Finally, the one talented in the art of performance leaps up onto the bar, dancing his legs with skill and singing a pleasing song to marveled onlookers with a learned eye, just as elites at a beautiful opera. Indeed this is the place where young people earn the money of their elders and the opportunity of study.

Commentary

This satire is inspired by Horace's location-focused Satire 2.8, in which he uses the setting of *convivia*, an elite dinner party, to vividly illustrate the degradation of high nobility and wealth with the lows of the gastronomic excess and the grotesque. Rather than focusing on elites

in terms of political or monetary status, this satire focuses on students at a top university. Drawing inspiration from collegiate party culture, and with a location-focus of the college bar, this poem critiques student behavior in two primary ways. Overall, it focuses on the ironic behavior of so-called academic students, whose intellectual potential is lost in favor of partying and promiscuity. This academic degradation is tied to parental disappointment, monetary waste, and the squandering of an unparalleled opportunity to study at such an institution. Within this broader thematic framework, a variety of small scenes within the college bar are depicted, all demonstrating the different manners in which the high, elite-university students, are brought low. These interspersed scenes specifically center on the idea of the external, and how the open “shows” and “competitions” of shameless actions lead to degradation in different contexts, including sexuality, ingestive excess, and drunken performance. Stylistically, the use of disparate yet thematically connected scenes mirrors the style of Horace, particularly in satires 1.1 and 2.8. The conversational style, lighter subject matter, and often comedic observations are very similar to Horatian style and programme, combined with the heavy imagery and word-based depictions more reminiscent of Juvenal.

1. stabulo...scola. A College bar, in this case inspired by Piranhas Bar and Grill in downtown Nashville. Vanderbilt’s own trashy dive, it is known for its high freshman concentration, cramped quarters, and bellowing music.

1. Sto. Use of first person followed by a specific location: See line 1 of Horace 1.9, where he uses a similar initial construction in a satire of firsthand observations and complaints.

1. This line's spondaic fifth foot emphasizes the introduction, starting the satire off with a strong metric note.

2. **Turbidus sordes.** Both similar adjectives meaning dirty, filthy, sordid, etc. repeatedly for emphasis. Used substantively, it could be literally translated as "a dirty and filthy place."

2. **Turbidus sordes iuvenis sexualis.** Minor allusion to a similar line to the 1984 film, *This is Spinal Tap*. In the film, it reads "they are treading water in a cesspool of retarded sexuality and bad poetry." (*Spinal Tap*, dir. Rob Reiner. 1984).

2-3. **forma tristis parentis.** This concept of a location as the "embodiment" of degradation is also seen in Horace 2.8, where the elite and noble *convivia* degrades the guests and the events that transpire. In this case, the mere location itself degrades the high-minded to the bodily grotesque. Also see Juvenal 6, partic. 114-135 (brothel scene).

3-4. **inuitate terent.** Colloquially, "grinding."

4. **novus et nova.** These nominatives are not only emblematic of the youthful population at the bar, but particularly alludes to bar's high density of freshman, "new" to the college experience.

4. **bile.** Secondary meanings of *bile*, including gall and bile, relate the sense of masculine anger to the bodily grotesque. Such sexual frustration is not situational, but endemic to bodily masculinity.

4. **palam...ostento.** Diction emphasizes sense of shameless presentation and openness of the man's sexual behavior.

4. **bile...ostento.** This ablative absolute grammatically separates the action from the rest of the sentence, drawing a segmented attention of the reader. This focus resembles the attention such an open act would receive within the narrative itself.

4-5. mare...maris. Anaphora. Connects dissimilar concepts of “sexual frustration” and “true honor”, both with their repeated classifications as “male”.

5. honoris maris veri. In addition to a place of grotesque degradation, the college bar also serves as an arena for masculine competition. Typical conversations indicate that men often compete, either explicitly or implicitly, in who can achieve the most sexual interactions in a night. The diction of ‘veri’ and ‘honoris’ demonstrate the extent to which men who behave as such are praised.

5. fronte. Referring to the position of the woman while the man and the woman dance.

Oftentimes the woman is unsure of whom she stands in front of, hence the double meaning of *dubitat* in questioning her actions and wondering who had stood behind her.

6. delectat. “enjoys”/”takes part”.

6. delectat...dubitat. Alliterative verbs intertwine the two actions of the woman, emphasizing their causal relationship.

7. libertatem iuvenus. Heavy drinking, partying, and poor behavior is equated with youthful freedom.

7. praestat. “show”/”demonstrate”. As with the grinding between the young man and the young woman, drinking is often seen as an implicit, open show and competition.

8. plurimum. Image reminiscent of Porcius the jester ingesting entire cakes. See Horace 2.8, 23-24. Allusion further emphasizes idea of “performance,” with this individual acting like a jester for entertainment.

8. meri. Ironic invocation. “Unmixed wine”, though indicative of poor alcohol in Roman times, is standing in for the customary, far-inferior Taaka vodka of contemporary college parties and bars.

9. angulo...illo. Abl. of Place Where. “In that corner (of the tavern)”.

9. vomet. Even this act of sickness is put on display. In most contexts one would go to a private bathroom to vomit, but at the college bar there are no restrictions to the show of the bodily grotesque.

9. classis medicorum...vomet. Ironic juxtaposition, as these individuals aim to be so skilled and familiar with bodily function and health.

9. ludo. Abl. of Time When, literally “during school”. Pairs with *classis medicorum* to colloquially mean “class of future doctors.” Diction also connotes an “elementary school” and “games,” rather than university or college.

10. ardentibus ventribus. Ablative Absolute of alcoholic effect. Allusion to Horace 2.8, where it reads “fiery wines dull a sharp stomach.” (2.8 38-39)

10. dimmitterent. Imperfect Active Subjunctive, acting in a Potential Subjunctive phrase. ie. “as they might send...”

10. vero medico. Indirect object. “A true (real) doctor,” unlike those who previously vomited.

11. actus arte peritum. Constructive allusion to Horace 1.1, line 9. *iuris legumque peritus* = “the one skilled in the motions of law.”

11. actus. 4th Declension genitive singular (-us is long syllable). Diction once again emphasizes idea of performance.

12. seram. In this context, “bar”. Additional meanings of “lock” and “fence” subvert the individual’s action: the intent of this bar is restrictive, not a stage for performance. Thus the audacity of jumping upon the bar is heightened.

12. usu. Abl. of means. “skill”/“experience”

12. usu cruces. Assonance. The repetition of the long -u vowel sound evokes a sense of slurred, drunken behavior, as is the dance in this scene.

12-13. gratum...carmen. In actuality, this would not be much of a pleasing song at all: rather an attempt to lipsync over excessively loud music.

13. docto oculo. “with a keen/learned eye.” Again emphasizes “academic” population within the bar. Another emphasis of performance ideology, and ideas of the grotesque spectacle and the observant spectator.

13. sicut. Simile. Draws upon extensive Horatian simile in satire 1.1, also in comparing the low to the high. Specifically see 1.1 62-63 (“like the rich Athenian”) and 1.1 (“just as (for) the slaves”).

13. alti. Substantive adjective representing the elite (ie. “high ones”). “High” as in elite, and with respect to their elevated watching position from box seats in the opera house.

13-14. imply “sunt” in dependent simile clause: “alti (sunt) melodramate.”

14. Hiatus, between “melodramate. Enim.” This hiatus provides a metric break that calls to a shift to the concluding idea. Echoes the emphatic technique of a spondaic 5th foot in line 1.

15. emerunt. Thematic callback to beginning of poem, to reference of “tristis parentis” (disappointed parents). While the actions of promiscuity and misbehavior alone induce sadness,

the youth's actions "earning" or "deserving" the opportunities their parents provide may lead to more than just parental disappointment.

15. veterum aeres aditum studi. Chiasmus (gen. acc. acc. gen.). This use of chiasmus brings the objects that the young people "deserve" into a more singular, cohesive unit. It also connects the money of the parents with its use, the opportunity of education.