

IN VIRGINE MULIERES, FUGITIVI ET COMPEDITI
(PETR. SAT. 39. 9)*

Many readers and scholars of Petronius must have been puzzled by the astrological passages of *Cena Trimalchionis*, which, along with exhilarating jokes, represent a hermeneutical challenge. Associations between certain signs of Zodiac on the one hand and groups of people attributed to them by Trimalchio (39. 5–12) or kinds of food placed on appropriate segments of the Zodiac dish (35. 1–4) on the other are not always obvious; in many respects the text is obscure and sometimes corrupt.

Much has been done by scholars for interpreting single forecasts made by Trimalchio, but the whole scene still needs elucidation. It is important to distinguish between actual astrological beliefs of the time, Trimalchio's particular adaptation of popular superstitions, his distorted notion of cosmology, and – last but not least – his humour, which is to be separated from that of Petronius. I intend to give a detailed analysis of these astrological passages in a larger article, but in anticipation of my further argumentation I would like to point out that most comments seem to underrate Trimalchio's proneness to witticisms and strongly overestimate his astrological knowledge.¹

I shall concentrate on one of the signs:

39. 9 in Virgine (*scil.* nascuntur) mulieres, fugitivi et compediti.

mulierosi Gronovius

* Astrological chapters of the *Cena* were the subject of my first undergraduate dissertation written in 1999/2000 under the supervision of *héros de la fête*. A part of it (greatly expanded) is now handed over to him again, like *aper pilleatus* that *tamquam libertus in convivium revertitur* (40. 3; 41. 4). For improving the English of this article I am grateful to Natalie Tchernetska.

¹ It was Jacques de Vreese who first looked at Trimalchio's Zodiac chatter through the telescope lenses of astrological writings (*Petron 39 und die Astrologie* [Amsterdam 1927]). Famous is Housman's opinion of him transmitted in the postcard to Stephen Gaselee on 9 Nov. 1927: "Thanks; I have plodded through De Vreese. He has mugged up a lot of astrology; but what a goose, trying to make Trimalchio an expert and Petronius a fool." (A. Burnett [ed.], *The Letters of A. E. Housman* II [Oxford 2007] 42). Many propositions of de Vreese have been accepted in commentaries on Petronius, his only severe critic being Sven Eriksson, *Wochentagsgötter, Mond und Tierkreis: Laienastrologie in der römischen Kaiserzeit*, *Studia Graeca et Latina Gothoburgensia* 3 [Stockholm 1956] 38–88 (Kap. II: "Die Astrologie bei Petron").

It can be debated – as Burmann has done² – whether *mulieres* imply all women (which would be too naïve in view of other, apparently more specific and less trivial forecasts), ‘real women’ (cf. 42. 7 *mulier quae mulier*) or ‘effeminate’ men. The third option seems preferable to me, as it corresponds to Trimalchio’s (often unnoticed) tendency to depreciate the prestige of all signs of Zodiac except his own, Cancer; hence Gronovius’ emendation seems superfluous.³ As often is the case with Trimalchio’s astrological forecasts, the association with the sign of Zodiac is clear, but the exact meaning of the word, which denotes groups of people attributed to this sign, is either obscure or cannot be interpreted with certainty.⁴

It is more difficult to explain *fugitivi*, which by most scholars is taken in a single entity with *compediti*. W. B. Sedgwick suggested that “‘Virgo’ must have been a sort of stocks (cf. ‘Scotch Maiden’)”;⁵ there seems to be little ground for this assumption.

H. Blümner suspected a play on words “*virgo – virga*”, “weil Ausreißer und Gefangene mit Ruten gestrichen werden”.⁶ This seems unlikely. First, the “*virgo – virga*” pun, typical for the Middle Ages, to my knowledge is not attested in Classical antiquity. More important, it seems to contradict associative principles of Trimalchio’s forecasts (no matter whether they are taken seriously as real beliefs or interpreted as intentional puns).

In the case of other signs of Zodiac, the groups of people attributed to them by ‘*mathematicus*’ (39. 5) are mostly associated with the sign itself; if some

² P. Burmann (ed.), *T. Petronii Arbitri Satyricon quae supersunt... I* (Amsterdam 1743) 237.

³ De Vreese (n. 1) 44–46 also argues for ‘*molles viri*’, quoting *Cat. Cod. Astr. Gr.* II 96 (= Vett. Val. 10. 10): Παρθένος οἶκος Ἑρμοῦ, θηλυκόν, τρυφήρες. Two other parallels (Firm. Mat. 8. 11. 1 and 24. 6) are of little value, since each refers not to the whole of Virgo, but to a particular day. Still, even if the connection between Virgo and effeminacy were firmly attested in astrological tradition, it would not necessarily imply that Trimalchio possessed astrological knowledge: the analogy is banal and could have easily occurred to any simple-minded occultist or a skilled wisecracker. Eriksson (n. 1) 61 believes that the naïve astrologer reserved this sign for women on the whole and, possibly, made an ironic reverence to the ladies present at the party.

⁴ Cf. *arietilli* (? *arieti illi* H) (Aries), *qui se ipsi pascunt* (Taurus), *bigae et boves et colei* (Gemini), *aerumnosi, quibus prae mala sua cornua nascuntur* (Capricornus), *cucurbitae* (Aquarius).

⁵ *CPh* 39 (1925) 117. “Maiden” was the official designation of the guillotine in Edinburgh since its creation in 1564; the origin of this name remains uncertain. The so called “Iron Maiden” (“eiserne Jungfrau”) – a casket, often decorated with a female head, the inside of which was filled with nails or knives for piercing the victim – is generally considered to date back to the 17th–18th centuries, while legends about its wide use in the Middle Ages are based on misinterpretation of medieval “cloaks of shame”.

⁶ “Kritisch-exegetische Bemerkungen zu Petrons *Cena Trimalchionis*”, *Philologus* 30 (1920) 335.

wordplays are employed, they still refer to the word designating the sign, and not to something else. E. g., in *Geminis ... boves et colei* (oxen yoked in pairs and *gemi* = ‘testiculi’); in *Aquario ... cucurbitae* (pumpkins are watery, regardless of the interpretation of ‘*cucurbitae*’); in *piscibus obsonatores* (‘*pisces*’ = ὄψων, cf. the same ‘astrological’ pun in *AP* 11. 318). The same is true for the ‘zodiacal’ food in 35. 2–5. On the contrary, the “*Virgo – virga*” pun would imply a three-stage association: *Virgo* > *virga* > ‘the ones prosecuted with *virgae*’, which seems too complicated. Finally, the connection between *fugitivi et compediti* and birches is also far from obvious (something like *ulmitribae* or, if anything, *verberati* would be more prompting).

A curious explanation was suggested by P. Thomas,⁷ who cites Plin. *NH* 28. 13 *Vestales nostras hodie credimus nondum egressa urbe mancipia fugitiva retinere in loco precatone*. This deserves attention, since the association between *Virgo* and (*Virgo*) *Vestalis* must have been firm, and if the superstition described in Pliny was widespread enough, the pun could be understood by the audience. Still, the reference to the purely Roman custom seems to be too specific for the local milieu. Besides, this would also disagree with the general principle mentioned above: either *Virgo* must in some sense be ‘*fugitiva*’ or *fugitivi* must themselves be like ‘*virgines*’.

The most popular explanation, repeated in most commentaries, is that of de Vreese, according to whom the clue is provided by the astrological tradition: *Virgo* was identified as *Erigone* or *Astraea*, who fled from earth to heaven (he quotes *inter alia* Manil. 4. 542 f. *Erigone ... labentia [scil. saecula] fugit* and Ov. *Fast.* 1. 249 *Nondum Iustitiam facinus mortale fugarat*).⁸

The association between *Virgo* and *fugitivi* through the story of her escaping from earth might indeed seem natural to those familiar with the myth. However, one must take into account the context of *Cena Trimalchionis*. *Trimalchio*’s erudition in mythology – as well as in history and astronomy – is grotesque. Cf., e. g., his excursus in 59. 4:

Diomedes et Ganymedes duo fratres fuerunt. horum soror erat Helena.
Agamemnon illam rapuit et Dianae cervam subiecit...

and what follows. Could such an erudite remember the myth of *Astraea* or *Erigone* and refer to it while addressing his guests? Even if we assume

⁷ Pétrone, *Le diner chez Trimalchion*, trad. nouv. avec une introd. et des notes (Bruxelles 1923); *non vidi*, quoted by de Vreese (n. 1) 41.

⁸ De Vreese (n. 1) 49–54; he attributes great importance to Manilius’ distichon (4. 542 f.), which is quoted in full three times on p. 52 f. On p. 46–49 he draws attention to the curious fact that runaway slaves and captives were often mentioned in astrological treatises. In laying stress on Manilius’ *fugit* de Vreese is justly objected to by W. Hübner, *Die Eigenschaften des Tierkreises in Antike: Ihre Darstellung und Verwendung unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Manilius* (Wiesbaden 1982) 563.

that the combination of Virgo and runaway slaves, inspired by the myth of Erigone, was common in popular astrology and Trimalchio mentioned it without knowing the myth, his words would still give the impression that he knew the story; but that would spoil the consistency of his character and should have been avoided by Petronius.

Other interpretations of *fugitivi* harmonize it with Virgo through erotic connotations of the verb '*fugere*'. P. Fossataro, taking '*fugitivi et compediti*' together, explains "perchè le virgines fuggon cogli amanti".⁹ Although '*fugere*' often implies running away from home and could be applied to young women (cf. Sen. *Med.* 115 *si qua peregrino nubit fugitiva marito*), in antiquity the idea of a young girl escaping with her lover would hardly be the first thing to come to mind in connection with *Virgo* and *fugitivi*: it became a cliché much later.

Eriksson, on the contrary, takes *fugere* in the sense '*aversari*', referring to few examples collected in *ThLL* VI. 1 col. 1487. 4 ff. s. v. *fugio*;¹⁰ *fugitivi* would then imply that young maidens tend to repel the attention of men (like in Hor. *Carm.* 1. 24 *Vitas hinnuleo me similis, Chloe...* quoted by Eriksson *exempli gratia*). In fact, the number of examples in support of this interpretation can easily be increased, as in a similar context *fugere* is often meant literally: cf., e. g., Verg. *Ecl.* 3. 65 *et fugit ad salices et se cupit ante videri* or Hor. *Carm.* 3. 18. 1 *Faune, nympharum fugientum amator*. Besides, apart from *fugere*, the idea is often expressed by *fuga*, *fugax*¹¹ and also *fugitivus*. The closest parallels would be Mart. 11. 43. 7 *torquebat Phoebum Daphne fugitiva* and Maxim. 1. 67 f. *et modo subridens latebras fugitiva petebat, / non tamen effugiens*¹² *tota latere volens...* (often quoted in comments on Hor. *Carm.* 1. 9. 21 f.).

One might object that examples for *fugere* in this sense are not numerous and mostly occur in poetry, the connection between *virgines* and *fugere*

⁹ *Petronii Cena Trimalchionis, con studii illustrativi e note* (Napoli 1912) 89; '*compediti*' is explained in a far more questionable way: *virgines* were "custodite severamente in casa".

¹⁰ Eriksson (n. 1) 61. In his opinion, *sterilicula* (a womb of a saw that has not farrowed) placed on the sign of Virgo in 35. 3 suggests that *fugitivi* imply not all women, but exactly virgins. It is possible, but, in view of the preceding *mulieres*, not obligatory: the association could also be based on the general idea of a young woman. Whether the food in 39. 1–5 is connected with forecasts in 39. 5–12, remains disputable: strong similarity in the case of Gemini and Capricorn (possibly, also Aries and Sagittarius) is balanced with the lack of connection in the case of Lion and Aquarius.

¹¹ See, e. g., passages quoted by F. Bömer, *P. Ovidius Naso: Metamorphosen. Kommentar I* (Heidelberg 1969) 165 (ad l. 530 *fuga*, 'fuga als erotischer Motiv'); 168 (ad l. 541 *fugacem*, 'de puellis captationem viri effugientibus').

¹² R. Ellis, "On the Elegies of Maximianus. II", *AJPh* 5 (1884) 137 is right that the accumulation of present participles (*subridens, effugiens, volens*) is somewhat inelegant, but his emendation *e facie*, as well as Baehrens' *effugiis*, seems unnecessary.

being far from idiomatic. However, the *topos* of young girls running (or pretending to run) away from their suitors was certainly common enough to be remembered even by illiterate persons, incapable of recalling the myth of Daphne. The fact that, apart from *fugere* and its derivatives, such words as *abscondere*, *latere*, etc. could be used for this idea, is not relevant: it suffices that *fugitivi*, when mentioned in combination with *Virgo* and reinterpreted as adjective, could in all probability suggest the analogy with elusive girls.¹³

Thus, it is not the idiom, but the motif, that in combination with a play on words provides the basis for the joke. It is not unparalleled in the *Cena*: in 56. 9, along with other intricate puns accompanying the distribution of *apophoreta*, “*canale*” (or “*canalis*”)¹⁴ turns out to be a hare (‘related to a dog’).¹⁵ In spite of the weaknesses indicated above, the explanation offered by Eriksson remains in my opinion the most preferable.

Fewer explanations have been offered for *compediti*. As is the case of *fugitivi*, most commentaries follow the interpretation of de Vreese,¹⁶ which deserves closer attention. The starting point of his argumentation is a vexed passage in Manilius (4. 189 f.):

At quibus Erigone dixit nascentibus aevum
 †ora† magisterio †nudosque† coercita Virgo
 190 ad studium ducit mores et pectora doctis
 artibus instituet...

ora GLV, *opta* M, *ore* C, *apta* Bentley, *ore magis tenero* Jacob
nudosque codd., *nodoque* Scal., *rugisque* Köstlin, *motusque* Bechert,
nodisque Housman toto versu post v. 201 transposito, *vestesque* Flores

De Vreese is not discouraged that an agreement on the meaning of v. 190 has not been (and is unlikely to be) reached: leaving aside the interpretation of *ora*, he concentrates on the second hemistich, for which

¹³ Another possibility would be to take *fugere* in a slightly different meaning: ‘(amantem) deserere’ (cf. *ThLL* VI. 1. col. 1481. 1 ff. and esp. *Iuv.* 9. 74); then *Trimalchio* would hint that women often abandon their husbands or lovers. *Fugitivus* as adjective, sometimes applied to runaway animals, could hint in this direction, cf. *Ov. Her.* 5. 91 *Tyndaris infestis fugitiva reposcitur armis*. It is particularly interesting that *fugitivus* in its primary meaning (‘runaway slave’) was sometimes played upon in erotic context (*Lucil.* 854 Marx, cf. *Petr.* 105. 10). However, abandoning the beloved is associated also with men (*Ov. Ars am.* 3. 31 *saepe viri fallunt, tenerae non saepe puellae*) and elusive girls have more of a *topos* than runaway wives.

¹⁴ *canalem et pedalem* H, *canale et pedale* Buecheler. It is not quite certain what the direct meaning of *canale(m) et pedale(m)* was; for possible explanations see W. Heraeus, *Kleine Schriften* (Heidelberg 1937) 75.

¹⁵ Cf. *Petr.* fr. 43. 15 *et canis in somnis leporis vestigia latrat*; *Ov. Met.* 1. 533 etc.

¹⁶ De Vreese (n. 1) 54–69.

he adopts Scaliger's emendation *nodoque*. However, Scaliger's emendation itself has been interpreted in different ways:¹⁷ (1) as a knot or bun of hair; (2) a knot of a girdle or a breast band;¹⁸ (3) the noose with which Erigone hanged herself; (4) a metaphorical 'knot', *magisterio nodoque (nodisque)* taken as hendiadys;¹⁹ (5) autumnal equinoctial point, i.e. intersection of celestial equator and ecliptic. The last interpretation was put forward by Bentley²⁰ and strongly favoured by de Vreese, mainly on the ground that it is related to astronomy.

Both the text and interpretation of Man. 4. 190 can hardly be relied upon with certainty; more important is that even if Scaliger was right in conjecturing *nodoque* and Bentley in interpreting *nodus* as autumnal point, it would still be far from Trimalchio's *compediti*. De Vreese tries to substantiate the connection in the following way. He stresses that due to the precession of equinox the autumnal point, originally linked with Libra, in Petronius' times was already in the constellation of Virgo (the readers of Petronius, as he believes, must have been aware of that).

Further de Vreese refers to different types of astrological depictions of Virgo. Often she is represented horizontally, her head being in the last part of Leo and her feet in the first part of Libra, on which the author remarks: "Diese gezwungene Haltung einer geflügelten Figur gibt schon einigermaßen den Eindruck einer Person, die auffliegen will, aber zurückgehalten ist" (p. 66). When Virgo touches the beam of Libra with her foot and even, in some cases, when she is situated vertically and holds one of Libra's chains (obviously, thought of as *Iustitia*), her position, according to de Vreese, also suggests "den Gedanken an ein Gebundensein oder ein Festgehalten werden" (p. 67). Finally, he summarizes the depictions of Virgo as "mit den Füßen an den Herbstpunkt Libra festgebunden" (p. 69).

¹⁷ For different interpretations see *ibid.* 56–58; D. Luizzi (ed.), *M. Manilio, Astronomica, libro IV* (Galatino 1994) 101.

¹⁸ Thus Scaliger's first edition (see n. 19). W. Gundel, "Parthenos 1", in *RE* 18. 2 (1949) 1937 refers *nodo* to Virgo's girdle (ζώνη, περίζωμα) mentioned by Ptolemaeus and rejects the view of de Vreese (see below). W. Huebner, *Manilius, Astronomica, Buch V. Bd. II: Kommentar* (Berlin – New York 2010) 142; 335 inclines to support Gundel.

¹⁹ This was offered by Scaliger in his postmortem edition of Manilius (Strasbourg 31655) 286 and supported by Housman, who transposed v. 190 after v. 201 to replace the phrase *munera frenat* in 201 with *ora frenat* (201–190). Originally Scaliger's *nodoque* implied *strophium* (Heidelberg 11579) 215; in the 2nd edition (Leiden 21600) 317 he tried to preserve the transmitted *nudosque* taking it with *mores* in v. 191 and leaving *coercita* without an apposition. De Vreese (n. 1) 58 was confused with Housman's reference to Scaliger, because he only used Scaliger's first edition.

²⁰ *M. Manilii Astronomicum, ex recensione et cum notis R. Bentleyi* (London 1796) 195 f.; for *nodus* as astronomic *terminus technicus* he quotes *Lucr.* 5. 687 f. and *Man.* 3. 622, for *coercere* *Man.* 3. 647.

These constructs are controversial in many ways. First of all, it is only in his ‘impressions’ and ‘thoughts’ that Virgo is bound to the autumnal point in depictions. If any Zodiacal depictions were of relevance for Trimalchio’s forecasts, these would be purely ornamental rather than those matched with celestial map, like planisphaeria and celestial globes referred to by de Vreese; in any way, contrary to many commentaries, which summarize him inaccurately,²¹ I do not know any pictures of Virgo that would have explicit signs of bonds or fetters.²² The analogy between Manilius’ *nodoque coercita Virgo* (if the text and interpretation are correct) and *compediti* is also vague. Finally, Eriksson is surely right that such niceties as the recession of equinox could hardly be familiar to most Petronius’ readers, to say nothing of Trimalchio.²³

Alternative interpretations of *compediti* suggest its strong connection with *fugitivi*; those of Blümner and Fossataro have been mentioned above (n. 6 and 9). Eriksson goes as far as to deny any connection between *compediti* and Virgo: in his opinion, *compediti* is a “secondary forecast”, which has no connection with the sign itself, being just linked to the “primary” one, in this case *fugitivi*: runaway slaves were put in the stocks. Another “secondary forecasts”, according to Eriksson, are (*bubulci et*) *qui se ipsi pascunt* for Taurus, (*colei et*) *qui utrosque parietes linunt* for Gemini and *scholastici* for Aries.²⁴ Still, neither of the three other examples seems satisfactory to me.

Qui se ipsi pascunt, whatever be the interpretation of the idiom, does not need *bubulci* to explain its analogy with Taurus: it is normal that an ox or a bull “*pascitur*”, no matter that the same word could be applied to other species of cattle. Equally wrong is the denial of any connection between Gemini and *qui utrosque parietes linunt* (be it interpreted with or without obscene connotations): the word *utrique* and the idea of duplicity are enough to provide the analogy. It is easy to imagine twins painting two opposite walls; how this image can be deduced from *colei*, remains unclear to me.

²¹ P. Perrochat, *Pétrone, Le festin de Trimalchion: comm. exég. et crit.* (Paris³1962) 69: “la Virgo se trouvait au voisinage d’un de ces ‘nœuds’, l’équinox d’automne, et, sur le représentations figurées du zodiaque, les pieds de la Virgo paraissent liés à ce nœud”; literally the same M. S. Smith (ed.), *Petronius, Cena Trimalchionis* (Oxford 1975) 90 and C. Pellegrino (ed.), *Petronii Arbitri Satyricon* (Rome 1975) 277; E. T. Sage (ed.), *Petronius, The Satiricon* (New York 1969) 162: “In some representations of the zodiac the Virgin’s foot is fettered”.

²² See Gundel (n. 18) 1942–1945 and idem, *Zodiakos: Tierkreisbilder im Altertum. Kosmische Bezüge und Jenseitsvorstellungen im antiken Alltagsleben*, Kulturgeschichte der antiken Welt 54 (Mainz 1992) with further literature.

²³ Eriksson (n. 1) 81.

²⁴ Eriksson (n. 1) 74; 56; 57; 58.

It is more complicated with *scholastici*. The association between them and Aries is indeed explained in the preceding words: *habet ... caput prae-terea durum, frontem expudoratam, cornum acutum*. I think that at first these words are taken literally, but the mention of *scholastici* suggests their metaphorical reinterpretation: rhetoricians, like rams, have a “thick head” (stupidity or pushiness), a “sharp horn” (for “butting” in rhetoric duels) and a “shameless forehead” (“brazen face”). In any way, it seems indisputable that some comparison between rams and rhetoricians is implied.

Thus, *compediti* would remain the only example of Eriksson’s “secondary forecasts”, which calls the whole category into question. “Einmal ist keinmal”: we still need to look for some connection between *compediti* and Virgo.

I suggest that this association was provided by the double meaning of the word *compes*, which along with fetters could denote anklets. Ankle bracelets and ornamental chains for feet were widespread in Greece as well as in Rome.²⁵ The general terms for anklets in Greek were πέδα (properly ‘fetters’) and περισκελίδες. The most common Latin term appears to be *periscelis*, but *compes* is used in this sense in Plin. *NH* 33. 152:

argentum succedit aliquando et auro luxu feminarum plebis compedes
sibi facientium, quas induere aureas mos tritior vetet.²⁶

Reproaches for wearing excessive ornaments addressed to women and appeals not to put ‘chains’ on must have been commonplace. Mockeries based on the similarity between ornaments and fetters, and in particular between stocks and ankle bracelets, are easy to find.²⁷ The very words

²⁵ See P. Paris, “Periscelis”, *DAGR* 4. 1 (1907) 396 f.; E. Saglio, “Compes”, *DAGR* 1. 2 (1887) 1428 with n. 16 f.; J. Andrée-Hanslik, “Periskelis”, *RE* 19. 1 (1937) 858. On Oriental ankle bracelets joined by a chain cf. E. Fr. Car. Rosenmüller, *Jesajae vaticinia* (Leipzig 1829) 115–118; 124 (ad *Jes.* 3. 16; 20). There were many kinds of foot ornaments: anklets, chains, laces and bandages worn around the ankles, calves and even thighs. It is difficult to specify the difference between them, and Greek names for them are numerous: πέδα, περισκελίδες, περισφύρια, περιπέζια, αἴγλη, etc.; in Latin the idea was sometimes expressed by *vinculum (aureum)*: Ov. *Ars am.* 3. 271; Manil. 5. 519; Petr. 126. 17.

²⁶ *OLD* interprets *compedes* here not as a proper term for anklets, but as their metaphorical designation: “iron. or contempt. of bracelets.” Irony is not impossible (cf. 33. 39–40: *idem enim tu, Brute, mulierum pedibus aurum gestatum tacuisti <...> etiamne pedibus induetur [scil. aurum]..?*), but I believe that the first option suits the context better; cf. n. 28.

²⁷ E. g., Hdt. 3. 22 καὶ νομίσας εἶναι σφεα (*scil.* collar and bracelets) πέδας εἶπε ὡς παρ’ ἑωυτοῖσι εἰσι ῥωμαλεώτεροι τουτέων πέδα. Luc. (Pseudo-) *Amor.* 41 καὶ ἄχρι τῶν ποδῶν ἐσχάτων καταβέβηκεν ὁ ἄθλιος χρυσὸς ἅπαν, εἴ τι τοῦ σφυροῦ γυμνοῦται, περισφίγγων. ἄξιον δ’ ἦν σιδήρω τὰ περισφύρα σκέλη πεπεδηῖσθαι.

πέδα and *compedes*, each denoting both ‘vinculum’ and ‘ornamentum’, invited to witticisms of that kind. Later on, this cliché was readily taken up by Christian moralists:

Cypr. *Hab. virg.* 21 non inferantur auribus vulnera, nec brachia includat aut colla de armillis et monilibus catena pretiosa: sint a compedibus aureis pedes liberi, crines nullo colore fucati.²⁸

Ambros. *de virg.* 1. 6. 55 illinc collum catena constringit, inde pedem compes includit. Nihil refert auro oneretur an ferro.²⁹

In fact, we do not need to go far to find examples. A similar quip of Trimalchio is to be found in 67. 7:

(Fortunata) ultimo etiam periscelides resolvit et reticulum aureum, quem ex obrussa esse dicebat. notavit haec Trimalchio iussitque afferri omnia et ‘videtis’ inquit ‘mulieris compedes: sic nos barcalae despoliamur...’.

Since female ornaments, especially anklets, were often likened to fetters, and *compedes* in particular could be used as a proper or at least ironic term for anklets (see Pliny above), it is probable that this ambiguity lies behind Trimalchio’s *compediti*. It was easy for the guests to understand the joke: as in the case of *fugitivi*, all they had to do was to reinterpret the word as adjective and apply it to Virgo.³⁰

²⁸ K. Wulff (*ThLL* 3. 6–9 [1988] 2060. 81) interprets Cyprian’s *compedibus aureis* as ‘ornamentum muliebre’; Danuta Schanzer, *A Philosophical and Literary Commentary on Martianus Capella’s “De nuptiis Philologiae et Mercurii”*. Book I (Berkeley – Los Angeles 1986) 77 f. (ad 1. 7 *auri compedibus*) objects to it: “in Cyprian the word is used as a purely satirical metaphor, not as a real term for ankle bracelets. Jewelry is described in terms of bondage”. *Catena (de armillis et monilibus)* is surely taken metaphorically; as for *compedes aurei*, I cannot say with certainty whether it is only a metaphor or (in view of *compedes* used of anklets in Pliny) a double entendre (cf. n. 26).

²⁹ Cf. Basil. Caes. *Homil. in div.* 4; Clem. Alex. *Paedag.* 2. 12. 122–123.

³⁰ De Vreese came close to this solution. In defense of his concept of Virgo ‘bound’ to the autumnal point (point Libra) on p. 67 he refers to Hugo Grotius’ *Notae ad imagines* in his *Syntagma Arateorum* (Leiden 1600) 39: “περιποδία orbiculum est pedibus alligatus, quo gentes quaedam usae. Ptolemaeus autem παραπόδιον σύρμα vocat nisi tunicam talarem intelligas”. That is, Grotius, commenting upon Ptolemaeus’ ἐν τῷ περιποδίῳ σύρματι (*Alm.* 7. 5 p. 104, 7 Heiberg), interprets the word as ‘anklet’ (which seems improbable), but takes into account the meaning preferred now in LSJ s. v. “going around the feet, σύρμα” (cf. Grotius’ further remark on ἐν τῷ περιποδίῳ applied to Auriga on p. 44; NB! References in LSJ s. v. are to be corrected: read “*Alm.* 7. 5” for adjective and “*Alm.* 8. 2” for substantive). De Vreese only picks up the mention of ‘anklet’ attributed to Virgo by Grotius and citing Plin. *NH* 33. 152 on *compedes* quoted above suggests that originally the Virgin’s anklet was meant to bind her foot to Libra and only later it came to be regarded as a mere ornament.

If the interpretation suggested here is correct, Trimalchio's characteristic of Virgo (which, like in the case of many other signs, happens to be far from complimentary) is based on puns; in addition, it is an oblique criticism of women. Other cases of the astrologer's oblique satirical attacks are innkeepers attributed to Aquarius for watering the wine and, as M. Korenjak has brilliantly shown,³¹ *rhetores* attributed to Pisces for their presumed disability to speak outside the school.

The interpretations for *fugitivi* and *compediti* elaborated by de Vreese show that Housman's sarcastic remark on his zeal in applying of astrological doctrines to Petronius (n. 1) was not baseless; nevertheless, his work exerts influence on all substantial commentaries to Petronius, while Eriksson's sound critique of de Vreese remains ignored. One of the few, who maintains a healthy scepticism about Trimalchio's astrological skills, appears to be M. Korenjak: "...Trimalchio does not seem to be concerned with scientific astrology at all."³²

Denis Keyer
St. Petersburg Institute for History, RAS
Bibliotheca classica Petropolitana

Обсуждая характеристику зодиакального созвездия Девы, данного Трималхионом (Petr. 39. 9), автор оспаривает объяснение Жака де Врезе, который усматривал в *fugitivi* ('беглые рабы') намек на миф об Астрее / Эригоне, "убежавшей" с земли на небо, а *compediti* ('колодочники') объяснял с помощью астрономического термина *nodus* (точка осеннего равноденствия, букв. "узел" года). Применительно к *fugitivi* в статье защищается толкование, предложенное Свенном Эрикссоном: здесь обыгрывается мотив "дева убегает от преследующего ее поклонника". Для *compediti* предлагается новое объяснение: нередко женские украшения из золота – ожерелья, браслеты и ножные браслеты – иронически уподоблялись оковам, а слово *compedes* ('ножные кандалы') могло употребляться для обозначения ножных браслетов (Plin. NH XXXIII, 152; cf. Petr. 67. 7); эту игру слов и подразумевает *compediti*, содержащее, таким образом, косвенный сатирический выпад против женщин: под Девой рождаются "те, кто не расстаются с цепями".

³¹ "In piscibus obsonatores et rhetores: Petr. 39. 13", *PCPhS* 52 (2006) 134–137; to the parallels quoted by him I can add Sex. Emp. *Adv. Math.* 2. 18: ...ἰχθύων δὲ ἀφωρότεροι ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ὑπαίθρου θεωροῦνται. The metaphor of rhetoric teachers 'fishing for' pupils in Petr. 3. 4, usually referred to in commentaries, could hardly be alluded to by Trimalchio: Agamemnon's extensive simile was intended to be original rather than based on proverbial or widespread analogies, and specific problems of rhetoric teachers are unlikely to be familiar to Trimalchio and his audience.

³² Korenjak (n. 31) 134.