

Eumolpus' *Pergamene Boy*: Pedagogical Considerations
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Eumolpus' *Pergamene Boy*, Sat. 85, translated by Ruden (2000)

“When I went out to Asia on a quaestor’s staff, I was put up at a home at Pergamum, which I enjoyed not only because of its elegance, but also because of the gorgeous son of my host. I figured out a way to become his lover without any suspicion from the family. **Whenever at the dinner table the subject of pederasty came up**, I lit up with such anger, I begged them with such savage severity not to rape my ears with this obscene talk, that the parents (the mother especially) came to view me as one of those philosophical saints. In no time, I was taking the stripling to the gymnasium, supervising his studies, teaching and admonishing him. With me on guard, the house was supposed to be off limits to sexual predators.” ...

Eumolpus' *Pergamene Boy*, Sat. 85, Müller, Konrad (2005)

*"in Asiam cum a quaestore essem stipendio eductus, hospitium Pergami accepi. ubi cum libenter habitarem non solum propter cultum aedicularum, sed etiam propter hospitis formosissimum filium, excogitavi rationem, qua non essem patri familiae suspectus amator. **quotiescumque enim in convivio de usu formosorum mentio facta est**, tam vehementer excandui, tam severa tristitia violari aures meas obsceno sermone nolui, ut me mater praecipue tamquam unum ex philosophis intueretur. iam ego coeperam ephebum in gymnasium deducere, ego studia eius ordinare, ego docere ac praecipere, ne quis praedator corporis admitteretur in domum” ...*

<summary of intervening sections, Sat. 85.4 - 86: Eumolpus offers the boy a pair of doves in exchange for a kiss, a pair of fighting roosters in exchange for touching, and a stallion in exchange for sex, but Eumolpus does not give the boy a stallion>

Eumolpus' *Pergamene Boy*, Sat. 87, translated by Ruden (2000)

“Through this offense I closed up the opening I had made for myself, but I soon returned to my former **impudence**. When after a few days another holiday created a similar situation, and I heard his father snoring, I began to plead with the boy to make it up with me—that is, that he accept my atonement. **I said everything that a painful swelling in one’s libido tells one to say**. He was angry, and said only, ‘Go to sleep, or I’ll tell my father. **But for the truly conscience-free, no challenge is too great.** ‘I’ll wake my father up,’ he continued to threaten, but I crawled up to him and wrested away my bliss while he fought back feebly.

He was far from upset at my aggression, but he complained for a while about being deceived, and also mocked and reviled after boasting to his schoolmates about this rich admirer. Then, however, he said, ‘You’ll see, though: I’m not like you. If you want, you can do it again.’ With bad feeling vanished, I was reconciled to the boy, and having enjoyed his favor I fell asleep. But the boy was at the end of puberty, an age eager for passive pleasure; he wasn’t happy with a single encore. He roused me from my doze and said, ‘Don’t you want to?’ Really, it wasn’t a troublesome duty. He got what he wanted, though he must have been rather oppressed by my

panting and sweating, and I feel asleep again, exhausted by ecstasy. Less than an hour later, he poked me and said, ‘Why don’t we do it again?’ This was too much. I flared up with annoyance and turned his own words back on him: ‘Go to sleep, or I’ll tell your father.’”

Eumolpus’ Pergamene Boy, Sat. 87, Müller, Konrad (2005)

“cum ob hanc offensam praeclusissem mihi aditum quem feceram, iterum ad **licentiam** redii. interpositis enim paucis diebus cum similis casus nos in eandem fortunam rettulisset, ut intellexi stertere patrem, rogare coepi ephebum ut reverteretur in gratiam mecum, id est ut pateretur satis fieri sibi, **et cetera quae libido distenta dictat**. at ille plane iratus nihil aliud dicebat nisi hoc: ‘aut dormi, aut ego iam dicam patri.’ **nihil est tam arduum quod non improbitas extorqueat**. dum dicit: “patrem excitabo”, irrepsi tamen et male repugnanti gaudium extorsi. at ille non indelectatus nequitia mea, postquam diu questus est deceptum se et derisum traductumque inter condiscipulos, quibus iactasset censum meum, ‘Videris tamen’, inquit, ‘non ero tui similis. Si quid vis, fac iterum’ ego vero deposita omni offensa cum puero in gratiam redii, ususque beneficio eius in somnum delapsus sum. sed non fuit contentus iteratione ephebus plenae maturitatis et annis ad patiendum gestientibus. itaque excitavit me sopitum et ‘numquid vis’ inquit. et non plane iam molestum erat munus. utcumque igitur inter anhelitus sudoresque tritus, quod voluerat accepit, rursusque in somnum decidi gaudio lassus. interposita minus hora pungere me manu coepit et dicere: ‘quare non facimus?’ tum ego toties excitatus plane vehementer excandui et reddidi illi voces suas: ‘aut dormi, aut ego iam patri dicam’

Approach 1: students understand the difference between Athenian pederasty and Roman *stuprum* and apply this understanding to the story

Approach 2: students compare their own understanding and interpretation of the “Pergamene Boy” to scholarly descriptions of the episode

Approach 3: students conduct a close reading of the story that prioritizes the perspectives of the boy and his parents

Approach 4: students compare Eumolpus’ actions to child grooming

Works Cited

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