IV

Reconciliation: Encolpius and Giton (§ 91)

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Encolpius' and Giton's reconciliation (§ 91) has to be understood in the context of the First Rivalry over Giton (§§ 9–11) and of the episode that follows directly after the famous *cena Trimalchionis* (§§ 26.7–79.7). I will refer to the latter episode as the Second Rivalry over Giton (§§ 79.8–82): Encolpius gets to have sex with Giton, but – as soon as he wakes up afterwards – he realises that Ascyltus took the boy away while he was asleep (§ 79.8–9). Encolpius becomes furious and contemplates killing both Ascyltus and Giton. Eventually, however, he contents himself with making accusations, demanding that Ascyltus leave him and Giton alone (§ 79.10–11). As they had already talked about doing at § 10.4, Encolpius and Ascyltus split up their belongings. The latter suggests that they also divide Giton: He draws his sword and swears he will not leave without his share of the boy (§ 79.12–80.1). When Encolpius and Ascyltus get in position for a fight, Giton intervenes, beseeching them to refrain from bloodshed. If anyone had to be killed, Giton asserts, it should be himself – as he was the cause for the trio's troubles (§ 80.2–4). Ascyltus and Encolpius agree that Giton should be free to choose the partner he wants to be with. Contrary to Encolpius' expectation, the boy decides to go with Ascyltus (§ 80.5–6). As the two leave together, Encolpius is profoundly shocked and briefly contemplates committing suicide (§ 80.7–9). Now alone, he rents a room in a lonely place, where he gives vent to his feelings of anger and despair. He levels bitter accusations at both Ascyltus and Giton, who are, of course, absent (§ 81.1–6). In his wrath, he eventually takes up his sword and runs outside, eager to kill anyone he might come across. Before he knows it, though, a soldier takes away Encolpius' sword; his anger gradually subsides (§ 82.1–4).

In the next episode, Encolpius visits an art gallery, where he meets an elderly poet called Eumolpus (§§ 83–90). It is when he is still together with Eumolpus that Encolpius, for the first time after they had separated, suddenly spots Giton:

[**91**.1] *video Gitona cum linteis et strigilibus parieti applicitum tristem confusumque. scires non libenter servire.* [2] *itaque ut experimentum oculorum caperem …*
convertit ille solutum gaudio vultum et 'miserere' inquit 'frater. ubi arma non sunt, libere loquor. eripe me latroni cruento et qualibet saevitia paenitentiam iudicis tui puni. satis magnum erit misero solacium, tua voluntate cecidisse.' [3] *supprimere ego querellam iubeo, ne quis consilia deprehenderet, relictoque Eumolpo – nam in balneo carmen recitabat – per tenebrosum et sordidum egressum extraho Gitona raptimque in hospitium meum pervolo.* [4] *praeclusis deinde foribus invado pectus amplexibus et perfusum os lacrimis vultu meo contero.* [5] *diu vocem neuter invenit; nam puer etiam singultibus crebris amabile pectus quassaverat.* [6] *'o facinus' inquam 'indignum, quod amo te quamvis relictus, et in hoc pectore, cum vulnus ingens fuerit, cicatrix non est. quid dicis, peregrini amoris concessio? dignus hac iniuria fui?'* [7] *postquam se amari sensit, supercilium altius sustulit …*
'nec amoris arbitrium ad alium iudicem ⟨de⟩tuli. sed nihil iam queror, nihil iam memini, si bona fide paenitentiam emendas'. [8] *haec cum inter gemitus lacrimasque fudissem, detersit ille pallio vultum et 'quaeso' inquit 'Encolpi, fidem memoriae tuae appello: ego te reliqui an tu ⟨me⟩ prodidisti? equidem fateor et prae me fero: cum duos armatos viderem, ad fortiorem confugi'.* [9] *exosculatus pectus sapientia plenum inieci cervicibus manus, et ut facile intellegeret redisse me in gratiam et optima fide reviviscentem amicitiam, toto pectore adstrinxi.*

[**91**.1] I saw Giton leaning against the wall with some towels and scrapers, looking sad and troubled. You could tell he was not a willing slave. [2] So as to test the evidence of my eyes …
He turned towards me, his face softening with pleasure: "Have pity on me, brother. Where there are no weapons around, I speak freely. Take me away from this bloody criminal and punish me, your repentant judge, as cruelly as you like. In my misery, it will be a sufficient consolation to die because you wanted it." [3] I told him to stop his lamentation, fearing that someone might overhear our plans. We left Eumolpus behind – for, he was reciting a poem in the bath – and, dragging Giton out through a dark

and dirty exit, I flew hastily to my lodgings. [4] Having shut the door, I rushed to embrace his breast, rubbing my face against his, which was wet with tears. [5] For a long time neither of us could speak; the boy's lovely breast shook with continuous sobs. [6] "Oh, it is scandalous – the fact that I love you although I was deserted; and in this breast, though there was a deep wound, there is no scar. What do you have to say for yourself, having given your love to a stranger? Did I deserve this insult?" [7] After he realised he was still loved, he raised his eyebrow …
"I left the decision about our love to no other judge but you. But now I make no complaint, I will forget all if you show genuine repentance." [8] As I poured this out amid groans and tears, Giton wiped my face with a cloak and said: "Encolpius, please, I appeal to your honest memory: Did I desert you or did you betray me? I admit and I confess openly: When I saw two armed men, I took refuge with the stronger one." [9] After I had kissed that breast so full of wisdom, I threw my arms around his neck, and so that he might really know that I had been reconciled to him and that our friendship lived afresh as sincerely as ever, I hugged him with my whole breast.

This episode has received comparatively little scholarly attention, particularly when it comes to the identification of theatrical elements. Notably, it is one of the few passages of the *Satyrica* that are not discussed in Panayotakis' (1995) *Theatrum Arbitri.*[497] However, some illuminating remarks about this episode have been made by scholars such as Carmen Codoñer (1995), Edward Courtney (2001), and Konnor L. Clark (2019). Their insights will be discussed in the course of this chapter.

In my reading of the reconciliation episode, I will argue that it is akin to scenes of seduction in ancient comedy. I will suggest that Encolpius plays the role of an *adulescens* in love, and that Giton plays that of a cunning prostitute or *puer delicatus.* Firstly, I will analyse the dynamics of reconciliation between Petronius' characters, focusing on the role reversal – or the reversal of power relations – that occurs in the course of the passage. Thereafter, I will show that the relationship between Encolpius and Giton strongly resembles that between comic *adulescentes* and the prostitutes they desire. Though it is less well attested, the relationship between comic slave owners and their *pueri delicati* will also prove to

497 Panayotakis (1995: 122) merely offers a brief plot summary of this episode. He does not mention parallels with the comic tradition.

be an important point of comparison. Lastly, I will closely investigate the narrative techniques that account for the theatricality of Petronius' episode.

IV.1 The Charms of Giton

IV.1.1 Encolpius in Control

Likely owing to its sorry state of transmission, the reconciliation episode begins *in medias res.*[498] Encolpius sees Giton for the first time after they had separated and, in his capacity as narrator, makes known that the boy looks miserable. Not only does he state that he was sad and troubled (*tristem confusumque,* § 91.1), but – more importantly – he emphasises the point that Giton is performing the task of a slave: He is holding *lintea* and *strigiles,* which, we may assume, he is supposed to use for scraping off oil from Ascyltus' body as soon as he leaves the bath.[499] As if it was not enough to draw attention to these items, Encolpius spells out the fact that Giton is acting like a slave, and that he is (supposedly) unhappy about it: *scires non libenter servire* (§ 91.1).[500] In effect, Encolpius conveys the impression that, whilst being with Ascyltus, Giton is having a thoroughly bad time. The boy's (perceived) social status is as low as it can be, and his emotional state is equally pitiful.

In the first part of the reconciliation episode (§ 91.2), Giton's behaviour is in line with the powerlessness and despair Encolpius attributes to him. When the boy spots Encolpius, his face lightens up (*solutum gaudio vultum*). He immediately humbles himself to Encolpius, begging for forgiveness (*miserere*). When Giton speaks of "the repentance of your judge" (*paenitentiam iudicis tui*), he refers to the fact that he himself had made a decision – a verdict, as it were – on which partner he wanted to be with (cf. § 80.5–6). In other words: Giton claims that he repents his past decision, thereby taking the blame for his separation from Encolpius. Ascyltus, who had been Giton's favourite at § 80.6, is now described as a

498 In the extant *Satyrica,* the reconciliation episode is preceded by Encolpius' encounter with Eumolpus in the art gallery (§§ 83–90).

499 On this servile task, cf. e.g. Pers. 5.126: *i, puer, et strigilis Crispini ad balnea defer* ("Off you go, slave boy, take Crispinus' scrapers to the baths"). Trans. Braund (ed. trans. 2004). For further references, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*)

500 On Giton's slave-like features, cf. section III.1.2. Rape and Comic Slave Characters.

latro cruentus. In a move that may remind us of the Second Rivalry over Giton (§ 80.4), the boy even offers to receive a cruel punishment at the hands of Encolpius (*qualibet saevitia … puni*).

Having listened to what Giton has to say, Encolpius is eager to be alone with him. In order to avoid unwanted attention, he tells the boy to be quiet; they leave Eumolpus behind and enter Encolpius' room (§ 91.3). Once they are alone, Encolpius cannot help but show signs of affection for Giton: He embraces him and wipes away his tears with his own face (*invado pectus amplexibus et perfusum os lacrimis vultu meo contero,* § 91.4).[501] This is despite the fact that, not too long ago, Encolpius had been furious at Giton's betrayal, creating the impression that he could not (easily) forgive him (cf. § 80.4). When Encolpius finally addresses the boy (§ 91.6), his words not only express his (past) indignation but also his increasing willingness to forgive and forget. On the one hand, he reminds Giton of the fact that he had been deserted by him (*relictus*), and that this had inflicted a deep wound in his breast (*vulnus ingens*). He asks Giton to explain his affair with Ascyltus (*quid dicis, peregrini amoris concessio*) and, in the form of a question (*dignus hac iniuria fui?*), suggests that he did not deserve such an insult. In effect, Encolpius asks Giton for a heartfelt apology. On the other hand, much of Encolpius' accusation is framed in a way that clearly indicates his willingness to pardon Giton's behaviour. His exclamation, *o facinus … indignum,* rather than being another description of the boy's betrayal, refers to what is going on in Encolpius' mind, i. e. the process of forgiving his beloved Giton: Even though he had been deserted and hurt, Encolpius still loves the boy (*amo te*) and feels that the damage that has been done is not irreparable (*cicatrix non est*). With this frank admission of his own emotions, Encolpius significantly weakens his bargaining position, as it were – a fact that does not go unnoticed by Giton (cf. below). We should also note that Encolpius' change of heart had been hinted at by the words of the narrator: Apparently reflecting Encolpius' perception at the time, he describes Giton's breast as lovely (*amabile,* § 91.5).

501 In the First Rivalry over Giton, the boy had wiped away his own tears with his thumb (*manantes lacrimas pollice extersit,* § 9.2).

IV.1.2 Giton in Control

At § 91.7, the narrator interrupts the speech of Encolpius the protagonist and provides his audience with some information about Giton's take on the matter: *postquam se amari sensit, supercilium altius sustulit.*[502] It is worth noting that the verb *amari* harks back to related word forms occurring earlier in the episode: *amabile pectus* (§ 91.5) and *amo te* (§ 91.6). Evidently, Giton realises that Encolpius has left him much room for manoeuvre. In the given context, we may be confident in interpreting Giton's raised eyebrow as a sign of haughtiness – a combination that is well attested in Graeco-Roman antiquity.[503] Codoñer (1995: 709) is right to point out that this formulation is meant to put readers/listeners on their guard: It is a foretaste of the dominant role Giton will play in the remainder of the episode. For now, however, Encolpius the protagonist is allowed to finish his speech.

Encolpius continues to make mild accusations against Giton (§ 91.7). On the one hand, he suggests that Giton must take full responsibility for their separation, since he alone had been given the right to choose a partner (*nec amoris arbitrium ad alium iudicem ⟨de⟩tuli*). On the other hand, he makes clear that – if only the boy was to show genuine repentance – he is prepared to pretend none of this ever happened (*nihil iam queror,*

502 The interpretation of this passage becomes more complicated if we take into account the (possible) *lacuna* after *sustulit,* which had originally been indicated by Pierre Pithou (Pithoeus) in 1587; cf. Müller (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*). To my knowledge, Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*) is the only scholar who spells out what is supposedly missing: "Ausgefallen scheint ein Gedanke, der sinngemäß Encolpius' Überlegungen 80,6 entspricht (*vetustissimam consuetudinem putabam in sanguinis pignus transisse*)." I fail to see, however, why such a piece of information should be deemed essential to the episode. Since the text can be perfectly well understood without it, I believe there is no need to indicate a *lacuna* here. For earlier scepticism towards this *lacuna,* cf. Ehrhard in Burman (ed. 1734 *ad loc.*).

503 Cf. e.g. Plin. *HN* 11.51: *facies homini tantum, ceteris os aut rostra. frons et aliis, sed homini tantum tristitiae, hilaritatis, clementiae, severitatis index, in assensu eius supercilia homini et pariter et alterna mobilia, et in his pars animi: iis negamus, annuimus, haec maxime indicant fastum; superbia aliubi conceptaculum sed hic sedem habet: in corde nascitur, huc submit, hic pendet – nihil altius simul abruptiusque invenit in corpore ubi solitaria esset* ("Only man has a face, all other animals have a muzzle or beak. Others also have a brow, but only with man is it an indication of sorrow and gaiety, mercy and severity. The eyebrows in man can be moved in agreement with it, either both together or alternately, and in them a portion of the mind is situated: with them we indicate assent and dissent, they are our chief means of displaying contempt; pride has its place of generation elsewhere, but here is its abode: it is born in the heart, but it rises to the eyebrows and hangs suspended there – having found no position in the body at once loftier and steeper where it could be sole occupant"). Trans. Rackham (ed., trans. 1940). For various other references, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*) and esp. Sittl (1890: 93–4).

nihil iam memini, si bona fide paenitentiam emendas). Whilst making his speech, we now learn, Encolpius lets out groans and sheds tears (*haec cum inter gemitus lacrimasque fudissem,* § 91.8).

It is at this point that the role reversal between Encolpius and Giton becomes clearly visible.[504] While, at the beginning of the episode, Encolpius had wiped away Giton's tears (*perfusum os lacrimis vultu meo contero,* § 91.4), now the tables have turned: Encolpius is the one crying and Giton is the one wiping away tears (*detersit ille pallio vultum,* § 91.8). We should also note that Encolpius had clearly expressed his affection for the boy – wiping away his tears with his own face! –, whereas Giton's way of doing it is much more detached: He makes use of a cloak.[505] Having listened to Encolpius' accusations and his plea for a heartfelt apology, Giton now presents the events of the past in a new light, suggesting that (part of) the blame lies with Encolpius himself: *ego te reliqui an tu ⟨me⟩ prodidisti*? (§ 91.8). Giton's argument is that Encolpius had proved himself weaker than Ascyltus, thus leaving the boy no choice but to "take refuge" with Encolpius' rival: *cum duos armatos viderem, ad fortiorem confugi* (§ 91.8). Notably, Giton had hinted at this kind of reasoning when he was still asking for Encolpius' forgiveness: *ubi arma non sunt, libere loquor* (§ 91.2).

As in the First Rivarly over Giton, the boy's references to weapons (*arma,* § 91.2; *armatos,* § 91.8) may be interpreted as sexual metaphors.[506] Since, in the night immediately before their separation (§ 79.8–10), Giton had had sex with both Encolpius and Ascyltus, he was in a position to compare their weapons, i.e. their penises and/or sexual skills, and may

504 The role reversal has been noted by Codoñer (1995: 709), Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 91.8) and Clark (2019: 109–10).

505 Some scholars have a slightly different understanding of this passage. In his recent Loeb edition, Schmeling (ed., trans. 2020: 261) offers the following translation for *detersit ille pallio vultum* (§ 91.8): "he [sc. Giton] wiped his face with his cloak" (emphasis added). Heseltine & Warmington (eds., trans. 1969: 215), Ruden (trans. 2000: 72), and Courtney (2001: 144) also suggest that Giton wipes away his own tears. Of course, this alternative reading does not change the overall thrust of the episode: Arguably, Giton stops crying and thereby assumes a more dominant role vis-à-vis Encolpius. Still, since Giton's gesture is immediately preceded by the mention of Encolpius' tears (*haec cum inter gemitus lacrimasque fudissem*), I deem it more plausible for Giton to wipe away Encolpius' tears rather than his own. The role reversal between the two, I believe, makes this interpretation even more likely. My reading is supported, among others, by Sullivan (trans. 1965: 102), Codoñer (1995: 709), Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*), and Holzberg (ed., trans. 2013: 195).

506 Cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 91.8) as well as Gonsalius in Burman (ed. 1743 *ad* § 91.8) and Fröhlke (1977: 74).

have come to realise that Ascyltus was stronger, i.e. better endowed and/or more sexually competent. It is also important to note that, in a way, Giton turns Encolpius' own words against him: As Clark (2019: 109f.) has pointed out, Giton's question (*ego te reliqui,* § 91.8) picks up on Encolpius' formulation *quamvis relictus* (§ 91.6); his appeal to Encolpius' memory (*fidem memoriae,* § 91.8) echoes the latter's assurance that he will no longer remember what has occurred (*nihil iam memini,* § 91.7). In fact, we may add another point: After Encolpius had implored Giton to repent "in good faith" (*bona fide paenitentiam emendas,* § 91.7), the boy now appeals to the "faithfulness" of Encolpius' memory (*fidem memoriae tuae appello,* § 91.8). These verbal cues further emphasise the role reversal between Encolpius and Giton.

Taken at face value, Giton's words are hardly compatible with Encolpius' description of their separation. For, the latter had pointed out that Giton's intervention deescalated the conflict between Ascyltus and himself: *inhibuimus ferrum post has preces* ("We put up our swords after these pleas", § 80.5). Encolpius' depiction of the following events (§ 80.5–6) does not suggest that, when allowed to follow whomever he wanted, Giton had no choice but to go with the stronger partner.[507] Nevertheless, after the boy has proposed this explanation for their separation, Encolpius is entirely won over by Giton. Freed of all restraints, he kisses the boy's breast, throws his arms around him, and hugs him as closely as he can (§ 91.9). Apart from his actions, Encolpius' change of heart is marked by the way he, in retrospect, tells us about them: He describes Giton's breast as being "full of wisdom" (*pectus sapientia plenum,* § 91.9), apparently indicating that he firmly believes the boy's story, and even that he is impressed at the prudence Giton was able to muster at a time of danger. It seems that, as long as it allows him to forget about his rival Ascyltus, Encolpius is ready to accept almost any explanation from Giton. The boy suggests that he chose Ascyltus out of fear, not out of love, which means that Encolpius need no longer feel betrayed. In other words: Giton's explanation allows Encolpius to believe what he wants to believe.[508] By hugging Giton closely, Encolpius admits, he means to let him know that the old bond between them has been restored (*ut facile intellegeret redisse me in gratiam et optima fide reviviscentem amicitiam,* § 91.8). Somewhat ironically, Encolpius claims his full forgiveness to be

507 Cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 91.8).

508 Clark (2019: 110) interprets the ending of the reconciliation episode along the same lines.

"in best faith" (*optima fide*), thus echoing both his (failed) plea for repentance and Giton's way of the turning the tables (cf. above).

At the end of the episode, Encolpius has completely fallen for Giton. Not only has he dropped all charges against him, as it were, but he has even (tacitly) taken the blame for their separation. Adopting Giton's perspective, we may state that the boy has twisted Encolpius around his little finger. He has exploited Encolpius' reawakened love for him, taken him off guard with a different take on the past events, and has even used his own words against him. Having started out from a low and servile position, he has shrewdly gained the upper hand over Encolpius.

IV.2 The Charms of Comic Prostitutes and *pueri delicati*

Relatively little has been said about the theatrical aspects of the reconciliation episode. Slater (1990: 101) claims that Encolpius and Giton "play out a comedy of reconciliation," the implication being that their words and actions are thoroughly insincere and/or artificial.[509] According to Courtney (2001: 144), Giton's offer to receive punishment at the hands of Encolpius (§ 91.7) amounts to another instance of "histrionic posturing:" He suggests that Giton presents himself as another Lausus, who, in his death, might find solace in the fact that he was killed by the great Aeneas.[510] The motif of role-playing, of course, has also been shown to be prominent in the First Rivalry over Giton. Clark (2019: 111–3) compares the cunning Giton demonstrates in the reconciliation episode to that of *servi callidi* in the *fabula palliata*. His analysis concentrates on how both Giton and 'cunning slaves', such as Milphio in Plautus' *Poenulus* (292–5) or Mercurius in the *Amphitruo* (1021–7), use their owners' words against them and/or make use of partial truths. Taking these findings as a starting point, the following section will focus on how Giton's powers of seduction – i.e. his skills at twisting Encolpius around his little finger – are akin to those of prostitutes and *pueri delicati* in Graeco-Roman comedy. Comic interactions between men and the *meretrices* or *pueri* they are/fall

509 George (1966: 340) had already suggested that Giton's words at § 91.2 have a declamatory ring to them.

510 Verg. *Aen.* 10.829 f.: *hoc tamen infelix miseram solabere mortem:* | *Aeneae magni dextra cadis* ("This at least, unhappy man, will console you for your sad death: you fall by the hand of great Aeneas"). All translations of the *Aeneid* are taken from Fairclough & Goold (eds. trans. 1999–2000). For further remarks on the motif of *'victor victus'*, cf. Casali (1995: 505 n. 2).

in love with, I suggest, regularly bring about the same kind of role reversal as we encounter in the *Satyrica.* As stated before, I do not suggest that a comic reading of the episode is the only valid line of interpretation. Connections to tragedy, for instance, are worth exploring.[511]

Prostitute characters, typically female ones, have always been of some importance to the ancient comic stage.[512] When we speak of 'prostitutes' in Graeco-Roman comedy, we refer to a wide range of sex workers represented in the context of theatrical performances:[513] On the one end of the spectrum, there are more or less independent, free (and usually foreign) women who receive payment for accommodating their clients sexually and in a variety of other regards, for instance by accompanying them to parties. In ancient Greek, such women are commonly, and euphemistically, called ἑταῖραι ('companions', often rendered as 'courtesans'). If non-citizen women lived in a long-term relationship with male citizens, they could be called these men's παλλακαί ('concubines', *concubinae* in Latin).[514] On the other end of the spectrum, there are enslaved women, typically referred to as πόρναι ('whores', 'prostitutes'), who are owned by πορνοβοσκοί (literally 'whore-herders', *lenones* in Latin) and who perform forced sex work in brothels or on the streets. These common labels, however, should not make us assume that there were clear-cut categories of sex workers in antiquity.[515] In the *fabula palliata,* the most common term for 'prostitute' – regardless of the woman's status

511 I thank Annemarie Ambühl for making me aware of this point: The reconciliation episode may be fruitfully read against the backdrop of the (partial) reconciliation between Menelaus and Helen, in which Helen wields the powers of seduction (Eur. *Tro.* 860–1059, esp. 891, 1049–51). The formulation *peregrini amoris* (§ 91.6) might allude to Paris. We may also be reminded of Menelaus dropping his sword when seeing Helen's naked breasts (Eur. *Andr.* 627–31). Habermehl (ed. 2006) mentions the latter passage in the context of § 105.7, when the sailors' anger subsides at the sight of Giton's naked body.

512 On male prostitutes and *pueri delicati* in ancient comedy, cf. section II.3. Other Male-Male Relationships in the Comic Tradition.

513 The most detailed discussion of prostitute characters in Graeco-Roman comedy is Auhagen (2009). More recent contributions to this field of research include Marshall (2013), Witzke (2015), Richlin (2017: 114–26), Witzke (2020: 339–41, 343 f.), and the contributions in Bandini & Pentericci (eds. 2020). For recent studies on ancient prostitution beyond the confines of comedy, cf. Robson (2013: 67–89), Cohen (2015), Strong (2016), Kapparis (2017), and the contributions in Kamen & Marshall (eds. 2021).

514 For further discussion, cf. e. g. Robson (2013: 30 f.).

515 Robson (2013: 70 f.) emphasises the point that sex workers' social background, working practices and living conditions were much more diverse than the terminology suggests. Krieter-Spiro (1997: 43–54) and Witzke (2015: 8 f.) note that, in Graeco-Roman comedy, the labels applied to sex workers are often highly context dependent.

and degree of independence – is *meretrix* (derived from *merere,* 'to earn'). We also encounter the disparaging terms *scortum, lupa* and *prostibulum,* as well as the euphemistic term *amica.*[516]

In extant Old Comedy, sex workers are no more than marginal characters. There are no speaking prostitutes in Aristophanes; occasionally, other characters refer to (negative) stereotypes associated with this group of women.[517] As far as we can tell from the surviving fragments, prostitute characters grew in popularity in Middle Comedy. Various plays belonging to this period likely bear the names of sex workers; attacks against their moral character become more frequent: Men complain about the greed of young prostitutes, and mock elderly ones for their attempts to conceal their old age.[518] In New Comedy and the *fabula palliata,* we encounter a rich variety of plays that centre around prostitute characters. Invariably, the plot is set in motion by a young male citizen's desire for a prostitute, be she the poor daughter of a widowed or unmarried citizen mother (e.g. in Men. *Pk.* and Ter. *Ad.*) or the slave of a πορνοβοσκός or *leno* (e.g. Men. *Epit.* and Plaut. *Cist.*), or indeed an independent sex worker (e.g. in Men. *Sam.* and Ter. *Haut.*). Typically, though not always, the young man eventually gets what he wants, with the play ending in one of two ways: 1) The young man is allowed to marry the supposed lower-class or slave woman, since she miraculously turns out to be of respectable birth (e.g. in Plaut. *Rud.* and Plaut. *Poen.*); 2) the young man is allowed to spend a certain amount of time, for instance a full year, with the woman he desires (e.g. in Plaut. *Asin.* and Plaut. *Mil.*).[519]

Following some remarks about Menandrian ἑταῖραι in Plutarch (*Mor.* 712c), comic prostitutes are sometimes categorised according to their 'moral character', i.e. according to whether they are faithful (or even 'truly love') a single customer, or whether they are primarily interested in making a profit and typically have more than one customer at a

516 On the Latin terminology, cf. Witzke (2015: 8 f.) and Richlin (2017: 119–22).

517 Cf. e.g. Aristoph. *Eccl.* 877–1111. Auhagen (2009: 40–58) offers a full discussion of prostitute characters in Old Comedy.

518 Cf. Auhagen (2009: 59–79) for a detailed discussion of prostitute characters in the fragments of Middle Comedy.

519 This categorisation is based on Rosivach's (1998: 51–139) thorough discussion of all comic plots revolving around young men's affairs with prostitute characters. For a concise overview of prostitute characters in Plautus and Terence, including their social status and working conditions, cf. Witzke (2015: 10).

time.[520] While the former type (the ἑταίρα χρηστή or *bona meretrix*) is overwhelmingly dominant in the extant plays of Menander and Terence, in Plautine comedy we see the rise of the so-called *mala meretrix,* sometimes also referred as the *meretrix callida* (as she is arguably the female counterpart of the *servus callidus*).[521] It is specifically this type of character, I argue, that bears a striking resemblance to Giton in the reconciliation episode.

IV.2.1 The *meretrix callida,* or: The Art of Seduction

Meretrices callidae, as they appear in Plautus' *Bacchides, Menaechmi, Miles gloriosus,* and *Truculentus,* belong to the category of independent prostitutes mentioned above. They are characterised by their ability (and willingness) to use their charms and their sex appeal so as to manipulate men, usually for the sake of money or some other personal benefit. The most prototypical representative of this character type is Phronesium in the *Truculentus*: Together with her *ancilla* Astaphium, who is just as cunning as herself, she takes advantage of no less than three customers in the course of the plot, playing them off against one another and eventually fleecing them all of their last penny. In an earlier section, we have discussed a scene from the *Truculentus* (138–63), in which Astaphium first hears out the complains of Phronesium's customer Diniarchus, and then proceeds to use his own arguments against him, rendering him willing to spend even more money on the prostitutes he claims to despise.[522] In the context of the reconciliation episode, however, I will draw atten-

520 Plut. *Mor.* 712c: τὰ δὲ πρὸς τὰς ἑταίρας, ἂν μὲν ὦσιν ἰταμαὶ καὶ θρασεῖαι, διακόπτεται σωφρονισμοῖς τισιν ἢ μετανοίαις τῶν νέων, ταῖς δὲ χρησταῖς καὶ ἀντερώσαις ἢ πατήρ τις ἀνευρίσκεται γνήσιος ἢ χρόνος τις ἐπιμετρεῖται τῷ ἔρωτι συμπεριφορὰν αἰδοῦς ἔχων φιλάνθρωπον ("Affairs with prostitutes, if the women are brash and bold, are cut off when the young men are chastened in some way or other or they change their mind, while for women who are good and return the young men's love either a lost citizen father is rediscovered or some additional time is allowed for the affair as a humane indulgence of the young man's sense of shame"). Trans. Rosivach (1998: 1), slightly adapted. Plutarch's moralising and patronising categorisation, which has been reproduced by some modern scholars, has rightly been criticised by Marshall (2013: 175) and others.

521 Auhagen (2009: 80–262) discusses the presence the of 'good', 'bad' and 'pseudo-prostitutes', i.e. prostitutes who turn out to be of respectable birth at the end of the play, in New Comedy as well as in Plautus and Terence. For the term *meretrix callida,* cf. Witzke (2020: 340).

522 Cf. section III.2.2.3. The Dynamics of Comic Altercations.

tion to a seduction scene dominated by another *meretrix callida:* The Athenian Bacchis in Plautus' *Bacchides.*[523]

Although part of the beginning of the *Bacchides* has been lost, a broad outline of its plot can be reconstructed with reasonable certainty.[524] For our purposes, it suffices to note that a young Athenian citizen named Mnesilochus, while away on a business trip at Samos, fell in love with a prostitute called Bacchis (the Samian Bacchis, henceforth 'Sister'). She was later contracted to a soldier for a full year; the only way to end the contract early, we gather, is for Sister to pay back the soldier's money. Since Mnesilochus had learned that Sister was on the way to Athens, he asks his friend Pistoclerus to find her there. Indeed, Pistoclerus locates the young woman: She is staying with her sister, who is also a prostitute and who is also called Bacchis (the Athenian Bacchis, henceforth simply Bacchis). In the scene I am about to discuss (Plaut. *Bacch.* 39b–104), Pistoclerus (Pi.) has apparently already told the two prostitutes about Mnesilochus' love for Sister (Si.); he has entered into a longer conversation with Bacchis (Ba.). In order to make apparent the parallels between this scene of the *Bacchides* and Petronius' reconciliation episode, I will divide Plautus' text into two parts (39b–73a; 73b–104).

IV.2.2 Pistoclerus in Control (Plaut. *Bacch.* 39b–73a)

Pi.: *quid agunt duae germanae cognomines?*
quid in consilio consuluistis? 40
Ba.: *bene.*
Pi.: *pol hau meretriciumst.*
Ba.: *miserius nihil est quam mulier.*
Pi.: *quid esse dicis dignius?*
Ba.: *haec ita me orat sibi qui caveat aliquem ut hominem reperiam,*
ut istunc militem – ut, ubi emeritum sibi sit, se revehat domum.
id, amabo te, huic caveas.
Pi.: *quid isti caveam?*

523 Apart from the passage to be discussed here, the seduction scene at the end of the *Bacchides* (1118–1206) is worth comparing to Petronius' episode.

524 For a full discussion of how the play's beginning can be reconstructed, cf. Barsby (1986: 93–7).

Ba.: *ut revehatur domum,*
ubi ei dederit operas, ne hanc ille habeat pro ancilla sibi;
nam si haec habeat aurum quod illi renumeret, faciat lubens.
Pi.: *ubi nunc is homost?*
Ba.: *iam hic credo aderit. sed hoc idem apud nos rectius*
poteris agere; atque is dum veniat sedens ibi opperibere.
eadem biberis, eadem dedero tibi ubi biberis savium.
Pi.: *viscus meru' vostrast blanditia.*
Ba.: *quid iam?*
Pi.: *quia enim intellego,*
duae unum expetitis palumbem, peri, harundo alas verberat.
non ego istuc facinus mihi, mulier, conducibile esse arbitror.
Ba.: *qui, amabo?*
Pi.: *quia, Bacchis, Bacchas metuo et baccanal tuom.*
Ba.: *quid est? quid metuis? ne tibi lectus malitiam apud me suadeat?*
Pi.: *magis inlectum tuom quam lectum metuo. mala tu es bestia.*
nam huic aetati non conducit, mulier, latebrosus locus.
Ba.: *egomet, apud me si quid stulte facere cupias, prohibeam.*
sed ego apud me te esse ob eam rem, miles quom veniat, volo,
quia, quom tu aderis, huic mihique hau faciet quisquam iniuriam:
tu prohibebis, et eadem opera tuo sodali operam dabis;
et ille adveniens tuam med esse amicam suspicabitur.
quid, amabo, opticuisti?
Pi.: *quia istaec lepida sunt memoratui:*
animum fodicant, bona destimulant, facta et famam sauciant.
Si.: *quid ab hac metuis?*
Pi.: *quid ego metuam, rogitas, adulescens homo?*
penetrare [me] huius modi in palaestram, ubi damnis desudascitur?
ubi pro disco damnum capiam, pro cursura dedecus?
Ba.: *lepide memoras.*
Pi.: *ubi ego capiam pro machaera turturem,*
ubique imponat in manum alius mihi pro cestu cantharum,[525]

525 Following some earlier editors, de Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3 *ad loc.*) transposes line 68 after line 69. My text, however, follows the order of the lines as preserved in the manuscripts; cf. the editions of Lindsay (ed. 1904/5) and Barsby (ed. 1986).

pro galea scaphium, pro insigni sit corolla plectilis,
pro hasta talos, pro lorica malacum capiam pallium,
ubi mi pro equo lectus detur, scortum pro scuto accubet?
apage a me, apage.
(Plaut. *Bacch.* 39b–73a)

Pi.: (*aside*) What are the two sisters doing, prostitutes with the same name? (*to them*) What counsel did you take in your council?
Ba.: Good counsel.
Pi. Well, that is unusual for prostitutes.
Ba.: Nothing is more wretched than a woman.
Pi.: What do you say deserves it more?
Ba.: This girl asks me to find her someone to take care that this soldier – that he takes her back home when he has received her services. Please, do take care of this for her.
Pi.: What should I take care of for her?
Ba.: That she is taken back home when she has given him her services, so he does not keep her as his slave-girl.
Well, if she had the money to pay him back now she would do so happily.
Pi.: Where is this person now?
Ba.: He will be here soon, I believe. But you will be able to deal with this matter better at our place. And until he comes you will be sitting there waiting. You will have a drink too, and I will give you a kiss too when you have had your drink.
Pi.: Your flattery is pure birdlime.
Ba.: How so?
Pi.: Because I understand you two are trying to catch one pigeon. (*aside*) I am done for, the twig is hitting my wings. (*to Bacchis*) Madam, I do not think that this kind of behavior is good for me.
Ba.: How so, please?
Pi.: Because, Bacchis. I am afraid of Bacchants and your shrine of Bacchus.
Ba.: What is that? What are you afraid of? That my bed could persuade you to do something naughty at my place?
Pi.: I am more afraid of your bidding than your bed. You are a bad beast:
Woman, a shady place is no good for someone of my age.

Ba.: If you wanted to do anything stupid at my place, I myself would prevent you from doing it. But when the soldier comes, I would like you to be with me for the simple reason that when you are there, no one will wrong her (*points to her sister*) or me. Your presence will prevent it, and at the same time you will support your friend. And when the soldier comes here he will suspect I am your girlfriend. Please, why have you fallen silent?

Pi.: Because these things are very pleasant to talk about: the very same things are thorny in practice, when you try them out: They hurt your heart, torture your possessions, and wound character and reputation.

Si.: What do you fear from her?

Pi.: What do I fear, you ask, I, a young man? To enter a gymnasium of this sort where one sweats losses? Where I would take to debt instead of the discus, to shame instead of running?

Ba.: You speak in such a lovely way.

Pi.: Where I would take a turtle-dove instead of a sword, where someone else would place a jug in my hand instead of a boxing-glove? Where I would have a cup instead of a helmet and a plaited garland instead of a soldier's crown,
where I would take dice instead of the spear and an effeminate cloak instead of my cuirass, where I would be given a bed instead of a horse, and where a Sheila would be lying with me instead of a shield? Away from me, away!

Of course, I am aware that the contexts of Petronius' episode and Plautus' scene are far from identical: One the one hand, we are dealing with the reconciliation between Encolpius and Giton, two characters who have known each other (and whom Petronius' audience has known) for a long time. On the other hand, there are Pistoclerus and Bacchis, who have never seen each other before in their lives. Still, as I will show in the following section, a number of parallels between the two texts stand out.

In the first part of Plautus' scene, the roles of Bacchis and Pistoclerus are very clearly defined: Bacchis asks Pistoclerus to do something for her; Pistoclerus adamantly refuses, levelling all sorts of accusations at her. In many regards, these roles are comparable to those taken by Giton and

Encolpius in the first half of the reconciliation episode. Just as Giton assumes a low (and even slave-like) position when he addresses Encolpius (§ 91.1–2), Bacchis approaches Pistoclerus as a supplicant: She asks him to enter her place, supposedly for the sole purpose of watching over her sister, i.e. to prevent the soldier from taking advantage of her (42–6).[526] Pistoclerus, on the other hand, finds himself in a position of power. He is completely free to choose whether or not to agree to Bacchis' request. Similarly to Encolpius (§ 91.3–7), his first impulse is not to give his approval so easily. In fact, Pistoclerus severely reproaches Bacchis' moral character from the very beginning of their conversation (as we have it): He suggests that prostitutes are never up to any good (40) and that they deserve to be wretched (41). A little later, he plainly calls Bacchis a "bad beast" (*mala tu es bestia,* 55) and asserts that prostitutes corrupt (citizen) men in almost every conceivable way: *animum fodicant, bona destimulant, facta et famam sauciant* (64). As he will reiterate throughout this scene (cf. e.g. 66–72), Pistoclerus is mainly concerned about his money and his good reputation. His reproaches against Bacchis (and against prostitutes in general) are comparable to the accusations and insults Encolpius hurls at Giton after their separation (§ 81.5), and when the boy has already apologised to him (§ 91.6–7). Another point worth mentioning is that Pistoclerus' way of criticising Bacchis involves the frequent use of wordplays: When he asks Bacchis what the two sisters are up to, he does so in the form of a *figura etymologica: quid in consilio consuluistis* (40).[527] When she jests that her bed might induce Pistoclerus to do something naughty (*quid metuis? ne tibi lectus malitiam apud me suadeat?,* 53), he twists her words around, claiming that he is not afraid of her bed (*lectus*) as much as of her allurements (*inlectum,* 55). Pistoclerus most clearly displays his verbal virtuosity, of course, when he links Bacchis' name to Bacchants and the Bacchanalia (53). For this part of Plautus' scene, then, we may note that Pistoclerus' control over the situation is marked by his ease at playing with – and thereby dominating – the words he exchanges with Bacchis.

As Giton tries to propitiate Encolpius, Bacchis does everything she can to change Pistoclerus' mind. She appeals to his sense of decency, presenting her sister as the victim of a ruthless soldier (esp. 58 f.: *sed ego*

526 According to Barsby (ed. 1986 *ad loc.*), the anacoluthon in Bacchis' explanation (42 f.) "reflects Bacchis' excitement as she begins to embellish her story." For Bacchis' (true) motives, cf. Plaut. *Bacch.* 102–4 and see the discussion below.

527 For references to similar wordplays in Plautus, cf. Barsby (ed. 1986 *ad loc.*). Barsby may also be consulted on the other Plautine puns discussed in this section.

apud me te esse ob eam rem, miles quom veniat, volo, | *quia, quom tu aderis, huic mihique hau faciet quisquam iniuriam*). Similarly, Giton suggests that he needs to be rescued from the cruel Ascyltus (*eripe me latroni cruento,* § 91.2). In Bacchis' case, we can be sure that she is not being perfectly honest, since she will later tell her sister that she has made a great catch (i. e. Pistoclerus) and that this will allow them to earn much more gold.[528] Giton's ulterior motives, of course, are not made this explicit. To support her case, as it were, Bacchis uses her charms and her sex appeal: She employs several terms of endearment (*amabo* at 44, 53, 62) and makes Pistoclerus think of the comforts – including drinks and kisses – he could enjoy at her place (48 f.). The young man does not fail to identify these advances as *blanditia* (50). Admittedly, there is no direct equivalent for these flatteries in the reconciliation episode; arguably, this is because Encolpius is enchanted simply by meeting Giton after they had been apart for some time. In a way, at least, Giton's (insincere) offer to receive punishment at the hands of Encolpius may be understood as a type of flattery. After all, the boy suggests that it would amount to a kind of honour to be killed by Encolpius (§ 91.2). What is more, when Giton addresses Encolpius as his *frater* (*'miserere' inquit 'frater',* § 91.2), this may be interpreted as a term of endearment: It is the most common term for a man's male sexual partner in the *Satyrica,* and it is what Giton was allowed to choose at the end of the Second Rivalry over Giton.[529]

One striking resemblance between Pistoclerus and Encolpius is that – despite their accusations – their attraction to Bacchis/Giton occasionally shines through. We have remarked that Encolpius not only embraces Giton and wipes away his tears (§ 91.4), but that his reproaches also imply his willingness to forgive and forget. Similarly, Pistoclerus protests against Bacchis' attempts to seduce him, but he also admits that her efforts are not entirely fruitless: In line 50, Pistoclerus compares Bacchis' flatteries to birdlime (*viscus meru' vostrast blanditia*), his point being that she, like any prostitute, is a kind of bird-catcher on the lookout for prey (i. e. wealthy men). This kind of imagery is typical for scenes of seduc-

528 Cf. Plaut. *Bacch.* 102–4 (quoted in section IV.2.3. Bacchis in Control (Plaut. *Bacch.* 73b–104)). Also cf. note 526 above and note that Barsby (ed. 1986: 4) interprets as a "false reassurance" Bacchis' claim that she will prevent Pistoclerus from doing anything stupid at her place (Plaut. *Bacch.* 57).

529 Cf. § 80.5: *sit illi saltem in eligendo fratre [salva] libertas* ("he [sc. Giton] should at least have the freedom to choose his brother"). For further discussion of the term *frater* in Petronius, cf. Richlin (2009: 85) and Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad* § 9.2).

tion in the *fabula palliata.*[530] Significantly, in the next line Pistoclerus presents himself as the bird-catcher's prey, saying that her twig (sc. with birdlime on it) has already touched his wings: *harundo alas verberat* (51). In combination with the exclamation *peri* ("I am done for" or "I am dead," 51), this strongly suggests that – despite his repeated claims to the contrary – Pistoclerus feels a powerful attraction towards Bacchis. This impression is strengthened by the fact that Pistoclerus falls silent when Bacchis refers to herself as his *amica* (61 f.) and that he admits her offer to be *lepida* (62). At the end of the passage I have quoted, however, Pistoclerus musters all his resolve and delves into the various forms of corruption he associates with prostitutes. He uses an extended metaphor in which Bacchis' house is contrasted with a gymnasium (*palaestra,* 66–72). If he was to follow Bacchis, he suggests, his 'manliness' and his wealth would be replaced by effeminacy and debauchery.[531] At the end of his tirade, Pistoclerus seems to have regained full control over the situation and tells Bacchis to leave him alone: *apage a me, apage* (73a).

IV.2.3 Bacchis in Control (Plaut. *Bacch.* 73b–104)

Ba.: *ah, nimium ferus es.*
Pi.: *mihi sum.*
Ba.: *malacissandus es.*
equidem tibi do hanc operam.
Pi.: *ah, nimium pretiosa es operaria.*
Ba.: *simulato me amare.* 75
Pi.: *utrum ego istuc iocon adsimulem an serio?*
Ba.: *heia, hoc agere meliust. miles quom huc adveniat, te volo me amplexari.*
Pi.: *quid eo mihi opust?*
Ba.: *ut ille te videat volo.*
scio quid ago.
Pi.: *et pol ego scio quod metuo. sed quid ais?*
Ba.: *quid est?*
Pi: *quid si apud te eveniat desubito prandium aut potatio*

530 Cf. esp. Plaut. *Asin.* 215–26. For further references, cf. Barsby (ed. 1986 *ad loc.*) and Richlin (2017: 115).

531 For a full discussion, cf. Barsby (ed. 1986 *ad loc.*).

forte aut cena, ut solet in istis fieri conciliabulis,
ubi ego tum accumbam?
Ba.: *apud me, mi anime, ut lepidus cum lepida accubet.*
locus hic apud nos, quamvis subito venias, semper liber est.
ubi tu lepide voles esse tibi, 'mea rosa,' mihi dicito
'dato qui bene sit': ego ubi bene sit tibi locum lepidum dabo.
Pi.: *rapidus fluvius est hic, non hac temere transire potest.*
Ba.: *atque ecastor apud hunc fluvium aliquid perdundumst tibi.*
manum da et sequere.
Pi.: *aha, minime.*
Ba.: *quid ita?*
Pi.: *quia istoc inlecebrosius*
fieri nil potest: nox, mulier, vinum homini adulescentulo.
Ba.: *age igitur, equidem pol nihili facio nisi caussa tua.*
ill' quidem hanc abducet; tu nullus adfueris, si non lubet.
Pi.: *sumne autem nihili qui nequeam ingenio moderari meo?*
Ba.: *quid est quod metuas?*
Pi.: *nihil est, nugae, mulier, tibi me emancupo:*
tuo' sum, tibi dedo operam.
Ba.: *lepidu's. nunc ego te facere hoc volo.*
ego sorori meae cenam hodie dare volo viaticam:
ego tibi argentum iubebo iam intus ecferri foras;
tu facito opsonatum nobis sit opulentum opsonium.
Pi.: *ego opsonabo, nam id flagitium meum sit, mea te gratia*
et operam dare mi et ad eam operam facere sumptum de tuo.
Ba.: *at ego nolo dare te quicquam.*
Pi.: *sine.*
Ba.: *sino equidem, si lubet.*
propera, amabo.
Pi.: *prius hic adero quam te amare desinam. –*
Si.: *bene me accipies advenientem, mea soror.*
Ba.: *quid ita, opsecro?*
Si.: *quia piscatus meo quidem animo hic tibi hodie evenit bonus.*
Ba.: *meus ille quidemst. tibi nunc operam dabo de Mnesilocho, soror,*
ut hic accipias potius aurum quam hinc eas cum milite.
(Plaut. *Bacch.* 73b–104)

Ba.: Ah, you are too wild.
Pi.: For my own benefit.
Ba: You need to be softened. I will do this work for *you.*
Pi.: Oh, you are too expensive a worker.
Ba.: Pretend to love me.
Pi.: Should I pretend this in jest or in earnest?
Ba.: Well now! Seriously for preference![532] When the soldier comes here, I want you to embrace me.
Pi.: What do I need to do that for?
Ba.: I want him to see you. I know what I am doing.
Pi.: God, and I know what I am fearing. But what do you say?
Ba.: What is it?
Pi.: What if by any chance a lunch or a drinks party or a dinner suddenly took place at your establishment, as it normally happens in those resorts, where would I lie then?
Ba.: With me, my darling, so that a lovely lover is lying with a lovely lady. However suddenly you might come, here at our place there is always a free space. When you want to have a lovely time, say to me, "my rose, give me some fun"; I will give you a lovely place where you can have some fun.
Pi.: (*half aside*) This is a rapid stream, it cannot be crossed carelessly here.
Ba.: (*aside*) And, good god, you will have to lose something at this river. (*to Pistoclerus*) Give me your hand and follow me.
Pi.: No, not a bit of it.
Ba.: Why not?
Pi.: Because nothing more enticing can happen to a young man than that: night, a woman, and wine.
Ba.: Go on now, it is not important to me, except for your sake. The soldier will take her away. Do not help me if you do not want to.
Pi.: (*aside*) Am I not useless, being unable to control myself?
Ba.: What is it you are afraid of?
Pi.: (*after a pause*) It is nothing, nonsense. Madam, I surrender myself to you. I am yours, I am giving you my attention.

532 I here follow Barsby's (ed. 1986) translation for *hoc agere meliust.* De Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3) translates "You'd better pay attention."

Ba.: You are a sweetie. Now I would like you to do this:
I want to give my sister a welcome dinner today. I will
have the money brought out to you in a moment.
You mind that a rich meal is bought for us.
Pi.: I will do the buying myself, because it would be a disgrace for me if you were making an effort for my sake and had to spend money of your own for that effort.
Ba.: But I do not want you to give me anything.
Pi.: Let me do it.
Ba.: Yes, I will let you do it if you like. Hurry, please.
Pi.: I will be back before I stop loving you.
Exit PISTOCLERUS to the right.
Si.: You will be giving me a good welcome on my arrival, my sister.
Ba.: What do you mean, please?
Si.: Because at least to my mind you have made a good catch of fish here today.
Ba.: Yes, that boy is mine. Now I will help you out with Mnesilochus, my sister, so you can receive some gold here instead of going away with the soldier.

Similarly to Encolpius in the second half of the reconciliation episode, Pistoclerus now finds it increasingly difficult to resist the advances made to him. On the one hand, he still claims that Bacchis is too expensive for him (74) and, at least once, flatly refuses what she is asking (*aha, minime,* 87). In a moment of reflection, he describes his encounter with Bacchis as a risky undertaking, comparing it to the crossing of a rapid stream (85). This remark shows that Pistoclerus' emotions have not yet completely overpowered his intellect. On the other hand, his attraction to Bacchis shines through his objections more clearly than ever: When she asks him to *pretend* to love her (*simulato me amare,* 75), he asks back whether he should really only pretend (*iocon adsimulem an serio,* 75), thereby effectively giving away that he is falling in love with Bacchis as they speak. He also admits that, to young men such as himself, nothing is more enticing than what she is offering: *nox, mulier, vinum* (88). Finally, at line 91, he comments on the fact that he is losing control over himself: *sumne autem nihili qui nequeam ingenio moderari meo?* All of this may remind us of Encolpius, who – while he is still reproaching Giton – embraces the boy, wipes away his tears (§ 91.4) and admits that he still loves him (§ 91.6). The *adulescentes* Pistoclerus and Encolpius resemble each other

in that, while trying to remain firm, their words and actions clearly hint at the fact that they are having a change of heart.

When discussing the reconciliation episode, we have noted that the role reversal between Encolpius and Giton is marked in several ways: At the end of the episode, Giton wipes away Encolpius' tears and blames him for their separation – all of which Encolpius had done to Giton a little earlier. In Plautus, the role reversal between Pistoclerus and Bacchis is marked in a similar manner. A first point worth noting is that Bacchis gradually becomes more forthright and assertive: While in the first part of the scene she often made her advances in the form of questions (e.g. 54) or more or less subtle hints (48 f., 61), she now gives explicit instructions to Pistoclerus, several times in the form of imperatives: *simulato me amare* (75); *manum da et sequere* (87). Her confidence is perhaps most clearly expressed in the short sentence *scio quid ago* (78) and in her comment on how Pistoclerus is about to lose something (sc. money) while "crossing the stream": *atque ecastor apud hunc fluvium aliquid perdundumst tibi* (86). In a way, Bacchis' change in attitude is comparable to how Giton becomes ever more self-confident in the course of the reconciliation episode: First, he begs for Encolpius' forgiveness (§ 91.2); later, he shifts the blame for their separation to Encolpius (§ 91.8).

While it had been Pistoclerus' part to use verbal virtuosity, it is now Bacchis' turn to do so.[533] In the lines that make Pistoclerus think he is crossing a rapid stream, she uses no less than four forms of the word *lepidus* ("lovely"): *ut lepidus cum lepida accubet … ubi lepide voles esse tibi … locum lepidum dabo* (81–4). When he still contemplates (and tries to resist) the temptations he is facing (*istoc inlecebrosius | fieri nil potest,* 87 f.), she reassures him that she only has his best interest in mind, thereby using some of his very own words: *nihili facio nisi caussa tua* (89). Of course, the context makes clear that her reassurance is disingenuous.[534] Arguably, just as Giton does with Encolpius, Bacchis tells Pistoclerus what he wants/needs to hear so as to agree to her request. We encounter the last instance of Bacchis' verbal virtuosity when she asks Pistoclerus to make arrangements for her sister's banquet. As he did earlier (40), she now uses a *figura etymologica,* further embellished by alliteration: *tu facito opsonatum nobis sit opulentum opsonium* (96). The fact

533 Notably, Pistoclerus comes up with his last wordplay in line 74: *ah, nimium pretiosa es operaria.* His formulation picks up on Bacchis' expression *ah, nimium ferus es* (73) and on her offer to do the work (of softening him) for him: *equidem tibi do hanc operam* (74).

534 Cf. Plaut. *Bacch.* 86 as well as the remarks above.

that Bacchis takes over Pistoclerus' way of speaking does not only hint at the role reversal between the two, but it also resembles the way in which Giton twists around Encolpius' own words at the end of the reconciliation episode.

The clearest marker of the role reversal, of course, is Pistoclerus' outright surrender to Bacchis. He submits himself to her, presenting himself as her personal property, i. e. her slave: *tibi me emancupo: | tuo' sum* (92 f.).[535] A citizen lover subjecting himself to his non-citizen beloved, as in this case, may remind us of the various master-slave reversals we find in the *fabula palliata.*[536] It is important to note that Pistoclerus goes far beyond what Bacchis had originally asked him to do. Rather than merely staying at her house so as to guard her against the soldier, he offers to pay for her sister's banquet: *ego opsonabo* (97). It is remarkable that Pistoclerus, who had been greatly concerned about his money throughout the scene, now firmly insists on covering Bacchis' expenses (cf. also *sine,* 99). What is more, he makes clear that he truly believes Bacchis was acting in his best interest (cf. 89): When he offers to pay for the banquet, he makes it sound as if she was doing him a favour rather than the other way around (*nam id flagitium meum sit, mea te gratia | et operam dare mi et ad eam operam facere sumptum de tuo,* 97 f.). In a way, Pistoclerus' enthusiasm is not unlike Encolpius', who not only forgives Giton for having chosen Ascyltus over him but even admires the boy's (supposed) prudence at the time of his decision (*pectus sapientia plenum,* § 91.9). At the end of the conversation, both Giton and Bacchis have not only managed to change Encolpius'/Pistoclerus' mind, but they have also managed to make these men thoroughly happy about it.

IV.2.4 Parallels in Other Comedies

It is crucial to point out that Plautus' *Bacchides* is not the only extant comedy in which we find characters and/or scenes that may remind us of the reconciliation episode in the *Satyrica.* Rather, the cunning prostitute who turns (potential) customers around her little finger appears to have

535 His formulation is later echoed in Bacchis' words: *meus ille quidemst* (Plaut. *Bacch.* 103).

536 For references to the motif of the lover as a slave in Graeco-Roman comedy and beyond, cf. Barsby (ed. 1986 *ad loc.*). Richlin (2017: 203–24) devotes a detailed discussion to master-slave reversals in the *fabula palliata.* A few of these cases will be mentioned below.

been a stock type of ancient comedy. Furthermore, in the case of Plautus' *Casina,* we encounter a male character who manipulates his lover (i.e. his owner) in a similar manner. To clarify this point, I will briefly refer to parallels between Petronius' reconciliation episode and a few *fabulae palliatae* other than the *Bacchides.*

At the beginning of Terence's *Eunuchus,* the *adulescens* Phaedria is angry at the prostitute Thais. Having excluded Phaedria from her house, Thais now calls him back (Ter. *Eun.* 49), and thus leaves him at loss as to what to do: Should he pander to her whims and go, or should he refuse and thus miss out on a chance to see his beloved (46–8)? Before he finds out that Thais has legitimate reasons for behaving the way she does (81–206), he complains to his slave Parmeno about the "insults of prostitutes" (*meretricum contumelias,* 48). Similarly to Pistoclerus and Encolpius, Phaedria is torn between his sense of indignation and the strong attraction to his beloved. He[537] contemplates that it would be best to stay away from Thais altogether (49 f.) but feels that he will likely not be able to resist her (51–5).[538] Apart from Phaedria's inner struggle, it is worth pointing out that he expects Thais to exploit his feelings once she finds out that he loves her (*indicans | te amare et ferre non posse: actumst, ilicet, | peristi: eludet ubi te victum senserit,* "making it quite clear that you love her and cannot bear it – you have had it, it is all over, you are done for; she will toy with you once you are beaten," 53–5). This idea, of course, may remind us of the description of Giton in the reconciliation episode, where he is said to display haughtiness (in the form of a raised eyebrow) as soon as he realises that Encolpius still loves him: *postquam se amari sensit, supercilium altius sustulit* (§ 91.7). The same notion occurs in the prologue to Plautus' *Truculentus,* where the prototypical *mala meretrix* Phronesium is said to take as much (money) from men as she possibly can (Plaut. *Truc.* 12–6). According to the prologue speaker, this is typical of all women: *nam omnes id faciunt, quom se amari intellegunt* ("yes, they all do that when they realize that they are loved," 17).

In Terence's *Eunuchus,* the conversation between Phaedria and Parmeno (46–80) touches upon several more negative stereotypes about mercenary prostitutes. Notably, Parmeno suggests that Thais will use false tears (*falsa lacrimula,* 67)[539] to quell Phaedria's anger and that she

537 Some manuscripts give lines 50–55 to Parmeno, whereas Donatus and most modern editors give them to Phaedria; cf. Barsby (ed. 1999: 90) for further discussion.

538 For a full discussion of Thais in the *Eunuchus,* cf. Auhagen (2009: 229–41).

539 For such false tears, cf. also Ter. *Ad.* 557–60.

will ultimately turn the accusation back on him, making him the one who pays the price (*te ultro accusabit, et dabis | ultro supplicium,* 69 f.). Again, this strongly resembles what we find in the *Satyrica*: Despite his anger, Encolpius affectionately wipes away Giton's tears (§ 91.4), and the boy ultimately shifts the blame for their separation to Encolpius. When Phaedria subsequently expresses his frustration with the situation he finds himself in, he almost sounds like another Encolpius:

> *o indignum facinu'! nunc ego*
> *et illam scelestam esse et me miserum sentio:*
> *et taedet et amore ardeo, et prudens sciens,*
> *vivos videnque pereo, nec quid agam scio.*
> (Ter. *Eun.* 70–3).

> What an outrageous way to behave! Now I realise that she is a scoundrel and I am in misery. I am fed up with her, but I am on fire with love. I am going to my ruin awake and aware, alive and with my eyes open. And I have no idea what to do.

Phaedria does not only use the same exclamation as Encolpius (cf. *'o facinus' inquam 'indignum',* § 91.6),[540] but he also describes a similar kind of dilemma: Just as Encolpius feels he cannot help but forgive Giton even though he has betrayed him (*cicatrix non est,* § 91.6), Phaedria feels he cannot stop loving Thais even though she makes him feel miserable (*et taedet et amore ardeo*). In both cases, love is bittersweet.

Another point worth mentioning concerns Encolpius' willingness to forgive Giton (and even to praise his prudence) on account of the boy's claim that he left Encolpius out of fear, rather than out of love for Ascyltus (§ 91.8). We have noted that, even though Giton's explanation is rather implausible, he succeeds at making Encolpius feel at ease about their separation. It is this doctrine of 'lovers believe what they want to believe'[541] that is most clearly expressed by the *adulescens* Diniarchus, one of the customers of Phronesium in Plautus' *Truculentus*: *hoc nobis vitium maxumumst, quom amamus tum perimus: | si illud quod volumus dicitur, palam quom mentiuntur, | verum esse insciti credimus, ne ut iusta utamur ira* ("This is our greatest problem: When we are in love, we perish; if the

540 Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 91.6) rightly points out that Encolpius is here using a comic expression, cf. e. g. Plaut. *Men.* 1004 and Ter. *Phorm.* 613 f.

541 I am here using Duckworth's (1952: 239) expression.

things we want to hear are said, when they are lying openly, we dimwits believe them to be true, let alone that we should have righteous anger," Plaut. *Truc.* 190–2).[542] Ironically, even though Diniarchus here claims to be aware of the deceptions used by prostitutes, he falls for the tricks of Phronesium and her *ancilla* Astaphium all the same.[543]

Lastly, we should note that female prostitutes are not the only comic characters who manipulate and dominate the men in love with them. The case of Plautus' *Casina* proves that male characters may equally wield this type of power.[544]

In an earlier section,[545] I have already touched upon the sexual relationship between the *senex* Lysidamus and his slave Olympio. Apart from the fact that Olympio already has a beard – i.e. that he is already past what is usually considered the prime of youth – he may be regarded as a typical Plautine *puer delicatus*. We have observed that, in their first homoerotic encounter (Plaut. *Cas.* 451–66), Lysidamus first asks whether he may kiss and embrace Olympio, and then expresses his deep satisfaction when allowed to do so. Here, I will briefly discuss the second homoerotic encounter between the two (723–41). At this point in the play, it looks as if Lysidamus will soon get what he desires. In their lottery over whose slave – i.e. either Lysidamus' Olympio or Cleostrata's Chalinus – will be allowed to 'marry' Casina, Lysidamus has come off victorious. He has instructed his servants to make wedding preparations and is looking forward to having sex with Casina himself – since this is the entire point of marrying her to Olympio.[546] The latter, however, does not fail to see that he now finds himself in a position of power: Lysidamus cannot have Casina without the help of his slave. When Olympio spots the old man, he asks whether he should not clothe himself in a grand, aristocratic style (*cesso magnufice patriceque amicirier,* 723) – an expression that foreshadows the master-slave reversal that is about to come. Upon arrival, Lysidamus makes some sexually suggestive approaches to his slave, only

542 For the corrupt words in line 192 (*†ne vias utamur†*) I am following the emendation *ne ut iusta utamur,* as first proposed by Bugge and Bücheler, cf. the discussion in Enk (ed. 1956 *ad loc.*). De Melo's (ed., trans. 2011–3) translation also follows this emendation.

543 Cf. e.g. the discussion in section III.2.2.3. The Dynamics of Comic Altercations.

544 We should also remember that we occasionally encounter male prostitutes in ancient comedy. In the case of Pomponius' *Prostibulum,* for instance, such a character takes centre stage; cf. the discussion in section II.3. Other Male-Male Relationships in the Comic Tradition.

545 Cf. section II.2.2. The Evidence of Graeco-Roman Comedy.

546 Cf. my plot summary in section III.1.2. Rape and Comic Slave Characters.

to be met with refusal: Olympio complains about Lysidamus' bad breath (727) and suggests that he might have to vomit if the old man came any closer (732ª). Thereafter, Lysidamus (Ly.) tries to reestablish his authority by referring to the fact that he owns Olympio (Ol.):

Ly.: *eru' sum.* 734–6[547]
Ol.: *quis erus?*
Ly.: *quoius tu servo's.*
Ol.: *servos ego?*
Ly. *ac meu'.*
Ol. *non sum ego liber?*
memento, memento. 737
Ly.: *mane atque asta.*
Ol.: *omitte.*
Ly.: *servos sum tuos.*
Ol. *optumest.*
Ly. *opsecro te,*
Olympisce mi, mi pater, mi patrone.
Ol.: *em,*
sapis sane. 740
Ly.: *tuo' sum equidem.* 740ª
(Plaut. *Cas.* 734–40ª)

Ly.: I am master. 734–6
Ol.: What master?
Ly.: The one whose slave you are.
Ol.: I am a slave?
Ly.: Yes, mine in fact.
Ol.: Am I not free? Remember, remember. 737
Ly.: Wait and stand still. (*grabs him*)
Ol.: Let go.
Ly.: I am your slave.
Ol.: That is perfect.
Ly.: I entreat you, my dear little Olympio, my father, my patron.
Ol.: There you go, you really show sense. 740
Ly.: I am yours. 740ª

547 Line numbers follow Lindsay (ed. 1904/5); they differ from de Melo's (ed., trans. 2011–3) edition.

The role reversal which occurs in this scene is as clearly marked as, for instance, those in the seduction scene of Plautus' *Bacchides* or in Petronius' reconciliation episode: At the beginning, Lysidamus stresses the point that he is Olympio's master (*eru' sum,* 734–6); a little later, he claims to be Olympio's slave (*servos sum tuos,* 738) and addresses him in reverential terms such as *pater* and *patronus* (739). What is peculiar about this scene, however, is that it is remarkably brief and that the characters' words alone hardly seem to motivate the role reversal. This is why both Jane Cody (1976: 457) and David Christenson (2019: 63 f.) suggest that the performance of the scene must have relied on (more or less) sexually explicit byplay, i. e. on Olympio's and Lysidamus' gestures, tone of voice and their position vis-à-vis each other. Since there can be no doubt about the sexual nature of the first encounter between Olympio and Lysidamus,[548] I deem this supposition highly plausible. What can be said without conjecture is that the (sex) slave Olympio here assumes an outstandingly haughty attitude towards his owner. He apparently realises that, in the context of Lysidamus' scheme to get sexual access to Casina, the old man is much more dependent on Olympio than the other way around (*non sum ego liber? | memento, memento,* 734–6 f.). When Lysidamus resorts to humbling himself to his slave, Olympio adopts a condescending tone, suggesting that Lysidamus has finally come to his senses: *sapis sane* (740). Similarly to Giton and Bacchis, he induces – or seduces – his nominally more powerful lover to an outright surrender: *tuo' sum equidem* (740[a]).

IV.3 Interim Conclusion

My interpretation of the reconciliation episode has focused on how Giton twists Encolpius around his little finger, as it were, thereby bringing about a role reversal between the two. Giton starts off from a low and servile position: He takes the blame for his separation from Encolpius, sheds tears and begs his (former) lover for forgiveness. Encolpius, on his part, levels accusations at the boy while allowing his rekindled affection to shine through. As soon as Giton realises that Encolpius still loves him, he assumes a haughty attitude and swiftly turns the tables: In the second half of the episode, Encolpius is the one who sheds tears and

548 Cf. section II.2.2. The Evidence of Graeco-Roman Comedy.

who faces accusations. He not only accepts the blame for their separation but even comes to believe that Giton had acted in his best interest.

Next, I have discussed the parallels between the reconciliation episode and 'scenes of seduction' in Graeco-Roman comedy. More accurately, we should speak of comic scenes that involve both a strong sexual element and a role reversal. I have pointed out that there is one comic stock type who charms and manipulates men just as easily as Giton: the figure of the prostitute, most prominently so the so-called *mala meretrix* or *meretrix callida.* Similarly to what Encolpius feels towards Giton, the attraction comic *adulescentes* feel towards a particular prostitute is often tinged with a sense of moral outrage or indignation. Like Giton, the *meretrices* in question break the men's resistance; they exploit their emotions and even manage to make them feel splendid about it. Lastly, I have drawn attention to the fact that, at least occasionally, male characters on the comic stage wield the power of twisting other men around their little finger.

IV.4 Narrative Technique

As I have done with reference to the First Rivalry over Giton, I will now analyse the techniques Petronius employs for incorporating a wide range of comic elements into his narrative. Again, I will at first draw attention to narrative strategies that create the impression of a theatrical performance, followed by those that manipulate the story in ways that could not/hardly be reproduced on stage. Lastly, I will point out what the findings of this chapter may contribute to the broader debate about Encolpius as protagonist and narrator. Throughout this chapter, I will try to avoid redundancies. Rather than repeating much of what I stated about the First Rivalry over Giton, I will focus on those aspects of the reconciliation episode that set it apart from what we have seen before.

IV.4.1 A Narrative Emulating Stage Performances

IV.4.1.1 Μίμησις: Seeing and Hearing the Story

In an earlier section, I have introduced the idea of 'stage-like' storytelling, a technique whereby the narrator creates the impression of a theatrical performance before the inner eye of the audience.[549] I have remarked that this mode of storytelling is broadly in line with the Platonic concept of μίμησις and the Genettean concept of a 'narrative of events': The narrative provides the audience with detailed information about the action without foregrounding the presence of the narrator. When the narrator is (virtually) absent from the narrative, this is as close as readers/listeners can get to the experience of watching a play. When it comes to stage-like storytelling, the reconciliation episode is characterised by many of the same features as the First Rivalry over Giton.

The episode's theatricality is most obvious in its portions of dialogue: One hundred of the episode's 221 words are taken up by reported speech, the most 'mimetic' mode of speech representation. Three words mark Encolpius' and Giton's utterances as reported speech (*inquit,* § 91.2 and § 91.8; *inquam,* § 91.6). Much of what remains – i. e. the words the narrator speaks *in propria persona* – pertains to the visual and auditory aspects of the story. In other words: Just as if they were witnessing a theatrical performance, Petronius' audience is allowed to 'see' and 'hear' the story unfold. In the very first sentence of the episode (§ 91.1), the narrator describes in some detail what Giton looks like (*video*). He not only refers to the objects – or props – the boy is holding (*cum linteis et strigilibus*) but also to his posture (*parieti applicitum*), and to what I take to be his facial expression (*tristem confusumque,* cf. below). When Encolpius and Giton leave Eumolpus behind, we learn about the appearance of the exit they take (*per tenebrosum et sordidum egressum,* § 91.3).

Remarkably, the narrator also provides us with some information on the episode's soundscape: He lets us know that Eumolpus is reciting a poem when the two leave (*nam in balneo carmen recitabat,* § 91.3) and that – when Encolpius first embraces Giton – all was silent except for the boy's sobs (*diu vocem neuter invenit; nam puer etiam singultibus crebris amabile pectus quassaverat,* § 91.5). What is more, we learn that Encolpius' words at § 91.7 are accompanied by his groans (*inter gemitus,* § 91.8).

549 Cf. section III.5.1.1. Μίμησις, or: Narrative of Events.

Of course, the mention of Encolpius' silence and his groans does not simply fill the audience in on what the episode sounds like. Rather, the narrator displays an overall tendency to highlight the characters' emotions, may they be expressed through words or by means of non-verbal communication. Instead of spelling out what Encolpius and Giton think or feel, the narrator usually prefers to tell us how they express their emotions – thus rendering them 'visible' and/or 'audible': When Giton first sees Encolpius, the joy he feels causes him to change his facial expression (*convertit ille solutum gaudio vultum,* § 91.2). The boy's distress at having to beg for Encolpius' forgiveness is expressed through his tears (*perfusum os lacrimis,* § 91.4). Encolpius' affection for Giton, in turn, has him embrace the boy and wipe away these very tears (*invado pectus amplexibus et perfusum os lacrimis vultu meo contero,* § 91.4). In other words: He shows his feelings through (theatrical) gestures. The tension between the two characters is marked by their mutual silence (§ 91.5). A little later, a change in Giton's mood is once again expressed through his facial expression: *postquam se amari sensit, supercilium altius sustulit* (§ 91.7). As I have pointed out earlier, I take his raised eyebrow to signify haughtiness. Then, of course, the tables turn: Encolpius sheds tears of emotion, and Giton consoles him by wiping them away (§ 91.8). Lastly, Encolpius kisses and hugs Giton (*exosculatus pectus … inieci cervicibus manus … toto pectore adstrinxi,* § 91.9).

This last outburst of emotions is exceptional in that Encolpius (the narrator) actually spells out what his (past) behaviour was supposed to indicate: He meant to make Giton understand that, as far as he was concerned, the former bond between them had been fully restored (*ut facile intellegeret redisse me in gratiam et optima fide reviviscentem amicitiam,* § 91.9). In most other cases, however, Petronius' audience finds itself in a situation akin to that of theatregoers: They 'see' and 'hear' what the characters are saying and doing but are left alone to judge what their behaviour indicates. As in the First Rivalry over Giton, the narrator's 'objective' descriptions of facial expressions and emotive gestures may be seen to fulfil the function of stage directions in a dramatic script.

IV.4.1.2 Paralepsis: The Thin Line between Emotions and Appearances

In the course of the reconciliation episode, the narrator at times provides his audience with information that, technically, he has no access to. As noted earlier, this phenomenon is referred to as paralepsis in Genettean

terminology.[550] Same as in the First Rivalry over Giton, I argue, Petronius' narrator uses paralepses for the sake of efficient storytelling. As he puts the action before the inner eye of his audience, he occasionally dispends with (strict) narrative plausibility.

Let us begin with a minor case of paralepsis, one that is comparable to the phrase *inhorrescere se finxit Ascyltus* (§ 9.7) in the First Rivalry over Giton. The statement I have in mind is *video Gitona … tristem confusumque* (§ 91.1). Encolpius here assigns an emotion (*tristem*) and a state of mind (*confusum*) to Giton even though, strictly speaking, he has no way of knowing what exactly is going on in the boy's head. This goes for Encolpius the protagonist just as well as for the narrator.[551] However, seeing that the narrator in the same sentence tells us about Giton's posture and about the objects he is holding (*cum linteis et strigilibus parieti applicitum*), I deem it highly plausible that the reference to his 'emotion' and his 'state of mind' should be understood in the same light. In the mode of stage-like storytelling, the narrator tells us what Giton looks like: The boy's facial expression (and posture) make him appear sad and confused. The phrase, then, amounts to another 'stage direction' in Petronius' narrative: Same as in § 91.2 (*convertit ille solutum gaudio vultum*), the narrator's reference to Giton's feelings is not a true break of narrative plausibility but simply a succinct way of letting the audience know what the boy looked like at a given time.

The same basic explanation, I argue, applies to § 91.7 (*postquam se amari sensit, supercilium altius sustulit*), where the narrator also seems to know what was going in Giton's head. For now, it may suffice to say that we are likely dealing with another 'objective' description what Giton looked like at the time. The information that the boy felt loved by Encolpius is a concise way of telling the audience how exactly to imagine the movement of his eyebrow (which, of course, could signify something other than haughtiness in a different context). It is the kind of eyebrow movement that shows Giton (knows he) has gained the upper hand over Encolpius. We should not forget that, as we have observed earlier, it amounts to a commonplace of the comic tradition for a sex object to exploit the affection of his or her lover. In the following sections, we will see that § 91.7 is significant in several other regards.

550 Cf. section III.5.1.2. Paralepsis.

551 On the possibility that Giton told Encolpius about his feelings after the fact, cf. n. 474.

IV.4.2 A Narrative Emancipated from Stage Performances

As has been remarked before, the narrator's skill set is not restricted to techniques that increase the (perceived) theatricality of the *Satyrica.* In fact, he is equally capable of manipulating the story in ways that are quite alien to the stage. As far as the reconciliation episode is concerned, we may concentrate on matters of 1) emphasis and condensation, and 2) symmetry.

IV.4.2.1 Emphasis and Condensation: Focus on Emotions and Power Relations

As far as we can tell, the main focus of the reconciliation episode is on Giton – or, more exactly, on Encolpius' relationship with Giton. Accordingly, the narrator has fade into the background those aspect of the story that have little or no bearing on this relationship.

We have already noted that the beginning of the episode provides the audience with a rather detailed description of what Giton looks like. Apparently, the narrator's focus here ties in what the protagonist is feeling: Not having seen his beloved Giton for some time, Encolpius is keen on taking in every aspect of his appearance. In the same vein, the narrator reproduces everything the boy has to say when he addresses the protagonist (27 words of reported speech in § 91.2).

As soon as Giton has finished speaking (§ 91.3), there is a change in how the narrator tells his story. We learn that Encolpius tells Giton to stop his lamentation, but we do not learn what exact words the protagonist chooses for this purpose: *supprimere ego querellam iubeo,* § 91.3. The narrator presents his own past words in the mode of narratised speech, since they are apparently of little relevance to what he wants his audience to read/hear. The same is true for what comes next (§ 91.3): In a highly concise manner, Encolpius tells us that he was afraid of being overheard (*ne quis consilia deprehenderet*), and that they (therefore) left Eumolpus behind (*relicto Eumolpo*), taking advantage of the fact that the old man was distracted (*nam in balneo carmen recitabat*). He adds that he and Giton took a dark and dirty exit and then rushed to Encolpius' own place.

All these thoughts and events are conveyed to the audience in the space of a single sentence. The narrator presents them as background information that cannot be completely dispensed with, but that shall not direct the audience's attention away from what is (apparently) at the heart

of the story: the emotionally charged dialogue between Encolpius and Giton. Of course, this technique has the effect of accelerating the narrative. The two characters hypothetically need much more time to get to Encolpius' place (story time) than we need to read/hear about it (narrative time). It almost goes without saying that this kind of condensation of the story could not (easily) be reproduced on stage. When the protagonist and Giton can speak in private (§ 91.4–9), the narrator slows the narrative down again. As he did at the beginning of the episode, he makes sure to keep track of every aspect of Giton's (and his own) behaviour.

Before moving on, it is worth taking another close look at the phrase *postquam se amari sensit, supercilium altius sustulit* (§ 91.7). For, it is at this point that the narrative slows down even further. At § 91.6, the narrator presents the protagonist's words in the mode of reported speech. This means that, in terms of narrative speed, we are dealing with a 'scene' (story time = narrative time). The narrator then 'interrupts' his former self so as to let the audience know how his speech affected Giton – or, more precisely, how it affected Giton's facial expression. He zooms in, as it were, on one very specific element of the story, a seemingly minor event that occurs in the area around Giton's eyes.

We have observed, of course, that the boy's facial expression marks an important change in his attitude that will soon bring about a role reversal between him and Encolpius. What is crucial to point out here is that, if the reconciliation episode was to be performed on stage, the movement of Giton's eyebrow might easily go unnoticed by (many people in) the audience. This is the case even if we imagine a performance without masks (such as a mime), simply because the change of Giton's facial expression is described as very subtle.[552] As it is, however, the narrator makes sure that no reader/listener misses this key element of the story. The audience cannot help but direct their attention to what the narrator points to.

IV.4.2.2 Symmetry

In my discussion of how Giton twists Encolpius around his little finger, I divided the reconciliation episode into two parts. Arguably, Encolpius is in control over the situation in the first half of the text (§ 91.1–6),

552 On the presence of masks in different kinds of ancient theatrical performances, cf. I.3.1. Theatrical Performances in Petronius' Day. For a discussion of eyebrows and comic masks, cf. esp. Hughes (1992).

whereas Giton takes over in the second half (§ 91.7–9). I have argued that the first time this change in power dynamics comes into plain view is when Giton raises his eyebrow: The boy subtly displays haughtiness and thereby rings in the role reversal between Encolpius and himself. As we shall see now, Giton's act of turning the tables is strongly marked through the episode's structural design: The boy's realisation that he is being loved functions as the 'symmetry axis' of Petronius' text.

We may conceive of the reference to Giton's eyebrow as being at the centre of a symmetrical shape. It is surrounded by two halves that are almost an exact mirror image of each other. First of all, the mention of the eyebrow splits Encolpius' speech up into two parts: a) *o facinus … dignus hac iniuria fui?* (§ 91.6); b) *nec amoris … paenitentiam emendas* (§ 91.7). We have noted that the narrator 'interrupts' his former self so as to draw attention to Giton's point of view. If we consider Encolpius' speech as a whole (§ 91.6–7), we may notice that it is framed on both sides by references to sobs or groans, i. e. those of Giton (*puer etiam singultibus crebris amabilie pectus quassaverat,* § 91.5) and those of Encolpius (*haec cum inter gemitus lacrimasque fudissem,* § 91.8). Moving one step further to the outer edges of the symmetrical shape, so to speak, we encounter one character (first Encolpius, then Giton) wiping away the other one's tears (§ 91.4, § 91.8). This act is preceded/followed by bits of reported speech by Giton (§ 91.2, § 91.8), which, again, are framed on both sides by the words of the narrator (§ 91.1, § 91.9).[553] For the sake of clarity, we may represent the structure of the reconciliation episode in the form of a schematic outline:

a) remarks by the narrator (§ 91.1)
b) reported speech of Giton (§ 91.2)
c) wiping away tears (§ 91.4)
d) sobbing/groaning (§ 91.5)
e) reported speech of the protagonist (§ 91.6)
f) Giton raises his eyebrow (§ 91.7)
e) reported speech of the protagonist (§ 91.7)
d) sobbing/groaning (91.8)
c) wiping away tears (91.8)
b) reported speech of Giton (§ 91.8)
a) remarks by the narrator (§ 91.9)

553 Admittedly, the narrator's report on how Encolpius and Giton leave Eumolpus behind (§ 91.3–4) does not quite fit the otherwise symmetrical pattern. We should keep in mind, however, that this part of the episode is much more condensed than the rest.

There can be no doubt, then, that the structure of the reconciliation episode is characterised by a considerable degree of sophistication. Not only is the role reversal between Encolpius and Giton marked by a number of recurring elements, but these are also arranged in a way that is aesthetically stimulating: Petronius' text holds the appeal of symmetry.

Before we move on to discuss Encolpius' character, we should note that this effect is brought about by a deliberate narrative technique that has no one-to-one correspondence in the context of theatrical productions. While (much of) the episode's symmetry exists on the level of the story, i.e. on the level of the characters' words and actions, it is only brought to full effect by the narrator's selection, arrangement and accentuation of information.[554] In other words: Petronius' narrative agents and his narrator are here working hand in hand, as it were – a phenomenon that can hardly be reproduced on stage.

IV.4.3 The Character of Encolpius as *actor* and *auctor*

Can the reconciliation episode add anything to the discussion about Encolpius' character, i.e. a) about the distinction between the protagonist and the narrator, and b) about the aim the narrator pursues in telling his tale the way he does? Although we are dealing with a relatively small amount of text, the episode proves to be insightful in this regard. As it turns out, the most common hypotheses as to the narrative structure of the *Satyrica* – ranging from a 'wise' narrator to a 'playful' implied author – are of little help when it comes to explaining the dynamics of reconciliation between Encolpius and Giton.

IV.4.3.1 Irony in the *Satyrica*

In order to move our discussion beyond what we have said about the First Rivalry over Giton, we now need to tackle in more detail the difficult issue of (perceived) irony in the *Satyrica.* This is necessary because even though Petronian scholars regularly use the terms 'irony' or 'ironic',

554 We have noted, for instance, that the narrator makes sure no reader/listener misses the subtle movement of Giton's eyebrow.

it is often unclear what exactly they mean by it.[555] This is partly due to the fact that – at least in present-day English – 'irony' may refer to a variety of phenomena that can easily get conflated. For our purposes, we may confine our attention to 'rhetorical' and 'dramatic' irony.[556]

Rhetorical irony, i.e. irony used as a rhetorical device, can be defined as a kind of dissimulation (εἰρωνεία) whereby speakers say (or do) something that they do not truly mean. Typically, what ironic speakers say is the very opposite of what they have in mind.[557] In the First Rivalry over Giton, we have already encountered a characteristic example of this phenomenon. When Ascyltus finds Encolpius in bed with Giton, he addresses Encolpius in a way that seems to praise his impeccable character (*frater sanctissime,* § 11.3). The context makes clear, however, that Ascyltus means the very opposite: He is scolding Encolpius for having betrayed his trust. In a broader sense, a person may be said to assume an ironic attitude if they dissimulate what they truly think or feel about something. This may be limited to feigning ignorance of a certain topic – which is sometimes referred to as 'Socratic irony' – or may involve actively pretending to agree with somebody else.[558] This kind of attitude is in evidence, for instance, when Encolpius openly applauds Trimalchio's reflections on flatulences and defecation (§ 47.2–6) even though he clearly finds them ridiculous: *gratias agimus liberalitati indulgentiaeque eius, et subinde castigamus crebris potiunculis risum* ("We thanked him [sc. Trimalchio] for his generosity and consideration, and then suppressed our laughter by frequent little sips," § 47.7). It has been noted that Encolpius' way of stifling his laughter is reminiscent of Varius' behaviour in Horace's *cena Nasidieni.*[559] Incidentally, we may

555 In Jones' (1987) article on the narrator and the narrative of the *Satyrica,* for instance, these two terms occur no less than 18 times.

556 For an overview of other types of irony, cf. e.g. Kreuz (2020: 13–47) with references for further reading. His discussion includes 'cosmic', 'situational', 'historical', and 'Romantic' irony.

557 Cf. e.g. Quint. *Inst.* 9.2.44: εἰρωνείαν *inveni qui dissimulationem vocaret … contrarium ei quod dicitur intellegendum est* ("I have found authority for calling *eironeia* 'dissimulation' […] we are asked to understand the opposite of what is said"). Trans. Rusell (ed., trans. 2002). For a thorough discussion of the ancient sources, cf. Lausberg (2008: § 902.3b–§ 904). On modern definitions of 'verbal irony' (= rhetorical irony) and the related concept of 'sarcasm', cf. Kreuz (2020: 39–44).

558 For further discussion, cf. Lausberg (2008: § 902.1–2) and Kreuz (2020: 14–17).

559 Hor. *Sat.* 2.8.63–4: *Varius mappa conpescere risum | vix poterat* ("Varius could scarce smother a laugh with his napkin"). Trans. Faircloth (ed., trans. 1926). Cf. e.g. Plaza (2000: 124 f.) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad* § 47.7) with references for further reading.

add that this motif also occurs in the *fabula palliata.*[560] At any rate, when Petronian scholars refer to Encolpius the narrator as 'ironic', they usually seem to have in mind this type of ironic attitude: A perspective that involves a sense of detachment and perceived superiority and thus allows the narrator to (more or less) covertly mock those around him. Crucially, this attitude is said to characterise not only the relationship between the narrator and characters such as Trimalchio or the freedmen at the *cena,* but also the relationship between the narrator and his former self, Encolpius the protagonist. In other words: The narrator is said to display a penchant for 'self-irony', which may also be called self-deprecation or self-mockery.[561]

Of course, it remains debatable whether the narrator's self-irony alone makes him any 'wiser' or 'more mature' than the protagonist, as Beck (1973) asserts. Note, for instance, that in the above-quoted passage from the *cena Trimalchionis* (§ 47.7) it is the protagonist who assumes an ironic (i. e. detached and sneering) attitude towards Trimalchio. After all, it is Encolpius at the time of the action who has to stifle his laughter (*castigamus crebris potiunculis risum*). We should be careful about assuming, therefore, that irony (and even self-irony) is a feature exclusive to the narrator.

Nevertheless, it is certainly true that the narrator is sometimes aware of his (past) follies or shortcomings and that he deliberately presents himself in an unflattering light, usually for humorous effect. When discussing the First Rivalry over Giton, we have already encountered an instance where this is very clearly the case: When, after their altercation, Ascyltus has left Encolpius and Giton alone, the narrator tells us in hindsight that this hasty separation was caused by the lust he had felt for Giton at the time (*hanc tam praecipitem divisionem libido faciebat,* § 10.7). What the narrator hints at, of course, is that Ascyltus will be back shortly

560 In Plautus' *Miles gloriosus* (91–4), Pyrgopolinices' slave Palaestrio characterises his master in the following terms: *ait sese ultro omnis mulieres sectarier:* | *is deridiculost quaqua incedit omnibus.* | *ita hic meretrices, labiis dum nictant ei,* | *maiorem partem videas valgis saviis* ("He says that all women are running after him of their own accord; wherever he goes, he is everyone's laughingstock. That is why the prostitutes here, while alluring him with their lips, mostly have crooked mouths"). De Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3 *ad loc.*) rightly comments that the prostitutes have crooked mouths, since "while blowing him kisses they cannot suppress their laughter."

561 Cf. e. g. Veyne (1964: 306): "auto-ironie"; Codoñer (1995: 711): "auto-ironia"; Courtney (2001: 161): "self-irony"; Habermehl (ed. 2006: xxxiv): "Selbstironie". For some remarks on self-irony in the context of ancient oratory, cf. Lausberg (2008: § 1244 s. v. 'ironia II.B.2").

and that he will not hesitate to punish Encolpius for his 'betrayal' and/or his naivety (cf. § 11.2–4). Crucially, by telling the story in the mode of narrating focalisation (which is made clear by the use of hindsight knowledge), the narrator somewhat distances himself from the protagonist. This is the kind of distance or detachment that is usually assumed to be essential to an ironic attitude. Since the narrator foreshadows Ascyltus' comeback and since he emphasises the farcical aspects of the punishment, it appears that the narrator is in on the joke, i.e. that he relishes humour at his own expense. This, of course, amounts to nothing else than self-mockery or self-irony.

It is equally important to note that, by giving the audience a hint at what is to come later in the story, the narrator appears to invite his readers or listeners to share his ironic gaze at his own past. The difference in perspective becomes clear when we compare the experience of the protagonist to the reading/listening experience of the audience: When Ascyltus has left the trio's lodgings, Encolpius (the protagonist) is thoroughly happy to finally be alone with Giton; he is completely unaware (and unsuspicious) of the fact that Ascyltus will be back in the near future (cf. § 10.7–11.1). The situation is markedly different for Petronius' audience: Since the narrator has referred to Encolpius' separation from Ascyltus as precipitate, they are aware (or 'put on their guard') that something is about to destroy the protagonist's moment of bliss. The effect of this narrative technique may be a sense of suspense and a greater appreciation of the episode's farcical ending. The fact that he is poking fun at himself (albeit in the past) does not seem to bother the narrator – if anything, he seems to indulge in his self-mockery.

Lastly, we should note that the ending of the First Rivalry over Giton serves not only as an example for (rhetorical) self-irony but also for 'dramatic irony'. This type of irony arises when the audience of a story – be it presented as a drama, a narrative or in another form – knows more about the story than the characters within it, and when this difference in awareness adds a new layer of meaning to the events of the story.[562] If this phenomenon is exploited for humorous effect, it may also be referred to as 'comic irony'.[563] Note that this is exactly what we have observed above: By means of foreshadowing, the narrator hints at the outcome of the episode and thus brings about a discrepancy between the knowledge states of the protagonist and the audience. Consequently, Ascyltus'

562 This definition is a paraphrase of Pfister's (1988: 56); cf. also Kreuz (2020: 17).

563 Cf. Pfister (1988: 57) and Kreuz (2020: 19 f.).

arrival and his assault on Encolpius come as much less of a surprise to the audience than to the protagonist himself. Rather, Petronius' readers/listeners are in a position to fully enjoy the farcical punishment taking place before their (inner) eyes.

Remarkably, this means that the comic irony of this episode is the direct product of the narrator's self-irony – and it is this very overlap of different types of irony that makes it difficult to pinpoint the exact 'origin' of their effects. As we shall see, it is often nearly impossible to decide whether we are dealing with 1) ironic characters, 2) an ironic narrator, 3) an ironic (implied) author, or 4) a combination of the above.

IV.4.3.2 Distinguishing between the Protagonist and the Narrator

Beck (1973) was the first scholar to suggest that Encolpius the protagonist is a naïve simpleton, whereas his 'older self', the narrator, is a sophisticated storyteller deliberately trying to amuse his audience, not least by means of self-irony. Schmeling (1994/5; 2018) interprets the (perceived) rift between the two Encolpii in another way, arguing that the *Satyrica* as a whole amounts to a confession of past misdeeds made by the narrator.[564] Yet, does the reconciliation episode in particular contain any indication as to a difference in character between the protagonist and the narrator? In the following section, I will suggest that the evidence to this effect is weak, if not non-existent.

Firstly, we should note that (most of) the reconciliation episode is narrated in the mode of experiencing focalisation. When at the beginning of the episode, for instance, the narrator tells us that Giton was not a willing slave (*scires non libenter servire,* § 91.1), this assessment appears to be in line with what Encolpius was thinking at the time: The idea pops into the head when he sees the boy's attire, posture, and facial expression. Later on, it is even more obvious that the narrator sees the boy as if he was reliving the events as they occurred: Speaking *in propria persona,* the narrator describes Giton's breast as 'lovely' (*amabile pectus,* § 91.5) and as 'full of wisdom' (*pectus sapientia plenum,* § 91.9), thus making clear that Giton was successful at manipulating the protagonist and that, as far as we can tell, the narrator is none the wiser. When he tells us that

564 On these scholarly positions, cf. section I.5. Basic Premises for a Narratological Reading of the *Satyrica* as well as section III.5.3. The Character of Encolpius as *actor* and *auctor.*

he (in the past) hugged Giton so as to make him understand all pain was forgotten (*inieci cervicibus manus … reviviscentem amicitiam,* § 91.9), the narrator does not distance himself from the protagonist's point of view in any way whatsoever. This is despite the fact that, as we have observed in the section on (self-)irony, the narrator is perfectly capable of doing so. Judging from the text as we have it, the reconciliation episode suggests that Encolpius the narrator is still as mesmerised by Giton as on the very first day.

The only phrase that is at odds with the protagonist's perspective is what I have referred to as the 'symmetry axis' of the episode: *postquam se amari sensit, supercilium altius sustulit* (§ 91.7). Here (the voice of) the narrator draws attention to the change in Giton's attitude that will shortly bring about the role reversal between the boy and the protagonist. Does this mean that the narrator has 'seen through' Giton's manipulation after all? Does § 91.7 attest to the greater emotional maturity of the 'older' Encolpius as well as to the fact that he is trying to amuse the audience at his own expense? Though it is impossible to disprove this line of argumentation beyond doubt, it surely seems highly implausible. The reasons for my scepticism have been discussed in the section on paralepsis: The information about what is going on in Giton's head (*postquam se amari sensit*) is beyond what both the protagonist and the narrator can know with certainty. The reason why the narrator draws attention to Giton's eyebrow movement, I suggest, is not that he (as a 'person') understands the significance of it, but that he (in his function as the intermediary between the story and the audience) has to make sure no reader/listener misses this crucial moment. In short: Petronius here sacrifices (some) narrative plausibility for the sake of efficient storytelling.

Other scholars have tried to attribute the somewhat mixed signals we find in the text to the character and/or aims of the narrator. In his reading of the *Satyrica* as a confession made by Encolpius the narrator, Schmeling (2018: 83) writes about the reconciliation episode that "Encolpius recovers Giton who continues to manipulate him – a fact to which Encolpius confesses without wanting to believe it." I can only suppose that Schmeling's rather peculiar suggestion – confessing to something you do not want to believe – is an attempt to grapple with the problems I have outlined above, i.e. with the fact that the narrator does not distance himself from the naïve protagonist in this episode.

As far as we can ascertain, the narrator's sincere aim is to tell the audience about the exciting events when he met Giton for the first time after their separation and about how they finally managed to put this sad

chapter of their relationship behind them. What we can say with certainty is that the reconciliation episode – unlike other parts of Petronius' work – does not draw attention to the distinction between the narrator and the protagonist. If we insist on this distinction no matter what the context, we risk overlooking much of what the *Satyrica* has to offer.

IV.4.3.3 The Implied Author and the Issue of Comic Irony

If Encolpius the narrator is only interested in telling us about the (supposedly) splendid time when he reconciled with Giton, it is certainly not his main goal to amuse his audience. This is an important finding, not only because it contradicts the hypothesis of Beck (1973) and his followers, but also because it differs from what we have observed in the First Rivalry over Giton. For, there we had noted that the narrator emphasises the farcical aspects of the story and even adds some such elements of his own (for instance the pun on *amiculum/amiculus*, § 11.2). If in the case of the reconciliation episode, however, the narrator does not attempt to make his tale entertaining, how are we to account for all the comic elements we have identified in it? How is it that the relationship between Giton and Encolpius is so reminiscent of that between *meretrices callidae* and their customers?

One way of accounting for the episode's amusing aspects is to make use of Conte' (1996) idea of the 'hidden author' (= implied author).[565] Conceivably, Encolpius the narrator 'brags' before his audience of how he managed to get rid of his rival Ascyltus and how he regained his most cherished prize: Giton. The implied author, however, constructs the story in a way that reveals to the audience Encolpius' self-delusion and ineptitude, thereby making him the butt of the joke.

Importantly, the implied author's strategy for exposing Encolpius' shortcomings involves the creation of comic irony: By allowing readers/listeners to understand that Giton continues to cloud Encolpius' judgement, the implied author establishes a discrepancy between the knowledge states of Encolpius (as both protagonist and narrator) and the audience. Viewing the action from this 'superior' perspective – which, in effect, is the detached point of view of the implied author – the audience is able to appreciate the humorous mismatch between the 'reality' of the story and Encolpius' misreading of it. Crucially, these dynamics – i. e. the

565 Conte (1996) himself does not discuss the reconciliation episode.

'hidden communication' between the implied author and the audience – come to bear behind Encolpius' back, as it were. Encolpius (protagonist + narrator) is little more than the implied author's plaything, being tossed into a long sequence of situations (= the story of the *Satyrica*) that inevitably expose his self-deception to the watchful eyes of the readers/listeners.[566] Does this mean, then, that in Conte's hypothesis we have found the key to understanding the role of the narrator in the reconciliation episode?

At closer inspection, there are several difficulties with applying Conte's model to the episode at hand. Firstly, even though Encolpius may here strike us as 'deluded', he is far from displaying the kind of *mythomania* that Conte (1996: 2–5 and *passim*) deems to be central to the implied author's game. The term *mythomania* refers the narrator's obsession with literary myth: Whenever he finds himself in a situation that (however remotely) resembles the experiences of literary heroes or villains, he cannot help but identify with these role models and feel as if he was directly following in their footsteps. According to Conte (1996: 4), the implied author's strategy throughout the *Satyrica* is to give Encolpius 'narrative baits', i.e. vague points of contact with literary and/or mythological role models – and then to watch him humorously fail at every attempt at greatness. Through the creation of comic irony, the audience is invited to join the implied author's game.

The issue with the reconciliation episode, though, is that hardly any famous (or infamous) literary role models appear to be at play.[567] The only possible instance of *mythomania* occurs when Giton presents himself as another Lausus, as he takes it to be an honour to be killed by the great Encolpius/Aeneas.[568] However, this intertextual reference hardly sets the theme for the entire episode and, even more importantly, it is part of Giton's reported speech, not of what the narrator speaks *in propria persona.* As far as we can tell, then, Conte's idea of a *mythomaniac* narrator is of little help when trying to understand the dynamics of the reconciliation episode.

Another problem with applying Conte's model to this episode is that it runs the risk of overstating Encolpius' narrative unreliability. For, it is important to remember that Wayne Booth (1961) originally introduced

566 Cf. esp. Conte (1996: 35 f.), where he explains the implied author's 'game' with explicit reference to the concept of comic irony.

567 For a possible connection to tragedy, cf. n. 511.

568 Cf. section IV.2. The Charms of Comic Prostitutes and *pueri delicati.*

the concept of the implied author so as to more systematically analyse the function of unreliable narrators in literary works. He states that a narrator is "*reliable* when he speaks for or acts in accordance with the norms of the work (which is to say, the implied author's norms), *unreliable* when he does not."[569] This means that only an unreliable narrator can give rise to the kind of comic irony that Conte describes. Now, we have already seen that in the reconciliation episode Encolpius is not unreliable, inasmuch as that he is *mythomaniac.* Admittedly, his mode of storytelling may still be influenced by traits such as gullibility or naivety, which may bring about a similar sense of narrative unreliability.[570] Yet, it is worth taking a closer look at whether Encolpius the narrator truly 'misreports' the story underlying the reconciliation episode. Rereading the text, we will realise that none of the narrator's words amount to a downright lie or another significant misrepresentation of the story's events.

As I have pointed out above, most of § 91 is made up of 1) reported speech, 2) a (more or less) 'objective' report of what Giton and the protagonist do, and 3) descriptions of what the episode looks and sounds like. As far as we can tell, Encolpius 'really' met Giton (§ 91.1), listened to his apology (§ 91.2), went with him to his lodgings (§ 91.3), wiped away his tears (§ 91.4), made (mild) accusation (§ 91.6), and so on. All of these events are simply reported by the narrator.

When the narrator speaks *in propria persona,* he mostly refers to his own (past) thoughts and feelings: He tells us that he thought Giton was a miserable 'slave' as long as he was with Ascyltus (§ 91.1), that he was afraid of being overheard when the was talking to the boy (§ 91.3) and, finally, that he wanted Giton to understand he had forgiven him (§ 91.9). As far as we can tell, none of this is 'made up' (or otherwise interfered with) by the narrator either. He simply reports what he was feeling/thinking at the time (experiencing focalisation). Crucially, the narrator does not tell us something along the lines of 'In truth, Giton had always wanted to be with me rather than with Ascyltus. The boy had only gone with my rival because he had been afraid'. Neither the protagonist nor the narrator ever put forth this line of reasoning in as many words. Instead, we – as members of Petronius' audience – *infer* it from the characters' behaviour as well as from how the narrator (faithfully) describes Encolpius' thoughts and feelings.

569 Booth (1961: 158 f.), emphasis in the original.

570 Cf. Booth (1961: 156) and Shen (2014: 899 f.) with references for further reading.

All of this amounts to saying that the (humorous) contrast we may perceive in the reconciliation episode does not exist between the story – symbolised by the implied author – and the narrator's misrepresentation of it. Rather, the contrast exists on the level of the story itself: It is between the characters Giton and Encolpius, with the perspective of the latter being represented by the narrator.[571] In order to make sense of the comic irony in this episode, we need only consider the triangle consisting of Encolpius (protagonist + narrator), Giton, and the audience. As the text proceeds, readers/listeners gradually come to realise – through the various cues we have discussed in this chapter – that Giton is gaining the upper hand over Encolpius, and that the boy is using his lover's gullibility to his advantage. Once they have grasped what Giton is up to, the audience knows more than Encolpius (protagonist + narrator) and can appreciate the amusing contrast between the 'reality' of the story and what Encolpius believes to be going on. Of course, all characters of the *Satyrica* are ultimately the creation (and the reflection of) their maker, but in this case bringing in the concept of the implied author hardly does anything to deepen our understanding of Petronius' text.

IV.4.3.4 The Ever-Changing Function of the Narrator

I should emphasise the point that I do not suggest Conte's reading of Petronius' work to be faulty or fruitless. The same goes for scholars who highlight the distinction between Encolpius the protagonist and Encolpius the narrator. Rather, the point of my discussion is that there is no one-fits-all solution to the wide range of narratological 'problems' the *Satyrica* poses. In the case of the reconciliation episode, there is neither a pronounced presence of the narrator (in the sense that his perspective is clearly distinct from the protagonist's) nor a clash between the events of the story and the way they are represented by the narrator. Instead, the episode's (humorous) effect is created on the level of the story: What is at the heart of the text is Giton's way of tricking/seducing Encolpius – and the narrative voice does its best to put the boy's skills before the audience's inner eye.

As I have remarked in the preceding section, the sense of comic irony in the reconciliation episode is created by the mismatch between what

571 Booth (1961: 156) specifies that the narrator may not only be distanced from the implied author but also from the (implied) reader and/or characters in the story itself.

Giton knows and what Encolpius believes to know. By picking up on various cues – ranging from the character's words to their gestures and facial expressions – the audience eventually understands that Giton is being manipulative and that Encolpius is falling for the ploy. We have seen that the interaction between Encolpius and Giton strongly resembles that between comic *meretrices callidae* and their customers and, in fact, the experience of Petronius' readers/listeners is very similar to that of theatregoers watching a comic scene of seduction performed on stage. In the *Bacchides,* for instance, no character ever spells out the role reversal between Bacchis and Pistoclerus. For noticing it, Plautus' audience relies on the same kind of cues as Petronius'.

In this context, the function of Encolpius the narrator is twofold: On the one hand, his words represent the protagonist's point of view, making sure the audience understands he is being duped. As a matter of fact, the indications that the narrator is none the wiser than the protagonist emphasise Encolpius' gullibility even further. On the other hand, in his function as the intermediary between the story and the audience, the narrator puts Petronius' readers/listeners in a position to appreciate the role reversal between Encolpius and Giton. For this purpose, he does not rely on spelling out what the characters think and feel – though he occasionally does so for the protagonist – but he meticulously keeps track of the visual and auditory aspects of the story that pertain to this role reversal. In the reconciliation episode, then, stage-like storytelling emerges as the narrator's most powerful technique for bringing to bear the comicality of the story.