SEXUAL RIVALRY IN PETRONIUS' *SATYRICA*

A STUDY ON COMIC ELEMENTS AND NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE

KONRAD LÖBCKE

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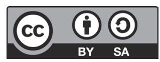

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Foreword:
Reading the *Satyrica* in the 21st Century

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I well remember the first time I read the *Satyrica.* I was an undergraduate, attending a seminar on the how Classical Latin developed into 'Vulgar Latin', the basis for the modern Romance languages. In my term paper there was a section on 'vulgar' expressions in Petronius, particularly in the freedmen's speeches during the *cena Trimalchionis* (§§ 41.10–46.8). Though this first encounter with the *Satyrica* had an exclusively linguistic focus, it got me excited about the text as a whole: I found it more intriguing than any ancient text I had read until then. I got myself a Loeb edition and, skipping the introduction, devoured the narrative in one go. It was years later that I took note of the scholarly discussions surrounding Petronius' work. For the time being, it was just a fun read – a curious sex and crime narrative that gave rise to amusing anecdotes.

While I am glad my excitement about the *Satyrica* has not worn off over the years, I now realise that the way I approached the text was rather unfortunate. For, what is worrisome about the book is that it can be read as a piece of entertainment by those who are generally interested in antiquity and/or literature but who – just as my undergraduate self – do not bother too much about the book's context. You can read the *Satyrica* just for fun, as you might read, for instance, Miguel de Cervantes' *Don Quixote* or Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*: Even with very limited knowledge about their socio-historical and literary background, these books make for a compelling read. What is more, they allow you to tick one more 'classic' off your bucket list. The downside of this approach is that, if you take the *Satyrica* to be a harmless piece of entertainment, you are very likely to be taken in by Petronius' masterly storytelling. You absorb, and quite possibly reproduce, the strong cultural biases the book hinges on in so many ways.

Let us take the First Rivalry over Giton (§§ 9–11) as an example:[1] Encolpius, the protagonist of the *Satyrica,* finds his beloved Giton in tears. Reluctantly, the boy tells Encolpius that their companion Ascyltus had raped him (or, at least, attempted to do so). Encolpius confronts Ascyltus, starting an altercation full of sexual insults. Eventually, Ascyltus agrees to leave. Once they are alone, Encolpius seizes the chance to have sex with Giton. Suddenly, Ascyltus comes back. He surprises the other two in bed, mocks Encolpius and beats him with a leather strap. Then, the episode breaks off.

If a story like the First Rivalry over Giton was to be published today, it would likely (and hopefully) feature several trigger warnings: 'This text contains depictions of sexual assault, sexual slurs, and physical abuse. Reader discretion is advised'. What is most problematic about the First Rivalry over Giton – as well as about many ancient comedies discussed in this study – is that it treats a case of (attempted) rape as a perfectly trivial matter. This effect is created through several 'techniques', some of which could easily be employed in narratives set in our own time: Firstly, Ascyltus (the rapist) never acknowledges he has done anything wrong. He treats the assault on Giton in a thoroughly light-hearted manner, even exploiting its potential for play-acting: *'"si Lucretia es" inquit "Tarquinium invenisti"'* ('"If you are Lucretia," he said, "you have found your Tarquinius!"', § 9.5). Secondly, Encolpius – Giton's 'spouse' – does little better: Though he is upset about Giton's distress (§ 9.3) and immediately confronts Ascyltus, his attempt at 'avenging' the rape is half-hearted at best. After all, he and Ascyltus soon end up laughing together (§ 10.3). Rather than comforting Giton when the rapist has finally left, the only thing on Encolpius' mind is to have sex with the boy himself (§ 10.7). Thirdly, there is no sense of 'divine justice' to the episode: Rather than being punished, the rapist Ascyltus ends up 'punishing' Encolpius, the one who set out to help Giton (§ 11.4). Fourthly, all of this is part of a sustained parody of the rape of Lucretia according to Livy's *ab urbe condita* (1.57.4–59) and Ovid's *Fasti* (2.685–852). The parodic contrast between the respective characters (Giton ~ Lucretia, Ascyltus ~ Tarquinius, Encolpius ~ Collatinus[2]) has the boy's suffering appear all the more insignificant. Fifthly, Petronius' narrator makes sure to bring to the fore the

1 For the text, my translation and a full discussion, cf. chapter III. First Rivalry over Giton: Encolpius versus Ascyltus (§§ 9–11).

2 As will become clear in chapter III.1.3. Sexual Rivalry between Two Tarquinii, there are also striking parallels between Encolpius and Tarquinius.

farcical aspects of the episode, having all else fade into the background. It is striking, for instance, that Giton's point of view is missing from most of the episode.

Among other things, the First Rivalry over Giton implies that what is truly interesting about cases of sexual violence is not the victim's suffering but the (male) guardian's attempt to 'make it right'; that you can prove to be a 'true man' by always standing your ground – regardless of whether this means to avenge an attack on your 'spouse' (Encolpius) or to follow through with the attack itself (Ascyltus). At the same time, though on a different level, the episode normalises the idea that rape is compatible with humour. Speaking in 21st-century terms, Petronius' text entrenches in readers' minds some basic tenets of toxic masculinity. This, I suggest, is the danger that lies in taking the *Satyrica* as a straightforward piece of entertainment.

Does this mean, however, that we should stop reading the *Satyrica* altogether? Should we accept that it is toxic beyond repair and that modern readers are better off ignorant of it? If I thought this to be the answer, I would surely not have written the study at hand. Rather, what we need to be – and what I failed to be when I first came into contact with Petronius – is *critical readers*: We need to constantly ask ourselves 'What is the basis for the claims made in the book?' – be they made by characters, the narrator, or indeed by the overall design of the story. Crucially, we need to acknowledge that any reading of the *Satyrica* is highly culture-dependent. On the one hand, we cannot help but project some of our own (modern) assumptions onto the text. If this bias is not kept in check, we end up with anachronistic readings of Petronius' work.[3] On the other hand, this study will show that the *Satyrica* cannot be properly understood without thorough knowledge of its cultural and historical background.

Again, we may look at the First Rivalry over Giton for exemplification. For, at close inspection, Petronius' trivialisation of sexual violence goes further than the modern eye will readily observe. Apart from matters of play-acting, parody and farce (cf. above), the episode is heavily dependent on matters of social status: One of Petronius' most effective techniques for playing down the seriousness of rape is that he casts Giton in the role of the rape victim; Giton, a slave(-like) character at the bottom of the social hierarchy. In the cruel logic of social status, such a character cannot give rise to a complex plot about regaining/avenging one's

3 For anachronistic perceptions of the same-sex element in the *Satyrica,* cf. note 337.

'sexual purity' (*pudicitia*) – the simple reason being that a slave(-like) character had no *pudicitia* to lose in the first place. There were no serious social and legal consequences to the rape of such a person. Arguably, this is the main reason why Giton's perspective – same as Casina's in Plautus' eponymous play – is assumed to be close to meaningless by the characters around him (and presumably by many contemporary readers/ listeners). The only ones who can make significant gains or losses in the affair are those in a position to exploit the victim: In the zero-sum game of sexual rivalry, one rival will eventually outperform the other. One rival loses, the other one wins. In this type of plot, the character we identify as the victim is not (required to be) a *subject* with own emotions and a distinct perspective. Rather, this character is (required to be) no more than the *object* of the rivals' desire.

In many shapes and forms, slavery remains a reality to this day. Still, for modern readers who are not confronted with such matters on a daily basis, the dynamics of social status are difficult to comprehend. Liberal societies distinguish between licit and illicit sexual intercourse on the basis of the partners' consent: We speak of rape if one partner forces themselves on the other. In Graeco-Roman antiquity, however, the legitimacy of sexual relationships mainly depended on the gender and the status of the persons involved: A citizen woman had to marry and have sex with the man chosen for her by her father or male guardian, virtually regardless of her wishes. A citizen man – no matter whether married or unmarried – was free to have sex with his own slaves as well as with prostitutes. A married woman, on the other hand, must not have sex with anyone other than her husband. For, in the eyes of (the male members of) her family, safeguarding the legitimacy of her children had the highest priority. Slaves had no say in this whatsoever; if anyone's consent was required, it was that of their owners. In short: The assessment as to whether sexual intercourse was deemed (il)licit depended on social norms, which can only be understood in the context of patriarchy and slavery.

Of course, these considerations are not new to Classical scholarship. In the past decades, various researchers have carefully analysed the interface between gender and social status in antiquity. The *Iphis* series, for instance, with its primary focus on gender studies in Classics, comprises no less than 17 publications.[4] Among other things, its discussions

4 B. Feichtinger, T. Fuhrer, C. Walde & G. Wöhrle (eds.), *Iphis. Gender Studies in den Altertumswissenschaften (series).* Trier.

of power relations and eroticism remain highly relevant to the questions touched upon above.[5] In recent years, some scholars have delved deeper than was previously thought possible into the dynamics of ancient sex, gender and slavery. The contributions in Kamen & Marshall (eds. 2021) skilfully read ancient texts 'against the grain', showing that slaves were not exclusively passive sex objects but that they retained a (limited) sense of identity and even autonomy in sexual matters. Serafim et al. (eds. 2022) draw on textual as well as non-textual sources so as to shed a brighter light on the specific physical acts of sexual intercourse performed in antiquity, ranging from voyeurism to sexual fantasies and the use of sex toys. One of the publications that proved most valuable to the study at hand is Amy Richlin's (2017) reassessment of Plautine comedy. Her investigation systematically accounts for the fact that Plautus' plays do not only feature slave characters but that these – as well as all other *dramatis personae* – were also played by real-life slaves or by other persons low in the social hierarchy. She succeeds at interpreting the *fabulae palliatae* as reflections of the slave experience in the Roman Republic, cataloguing not only the abuse they had to suffer but, crucially, also the desires they expressed and the hopes they cherished. Just as the contributions in Kamen & Marshall (eds. 2021), Richlin's work is a stark reminder that ancient slaves – despite their social marginalisation and exploitation – retained an identity of their own. As far as the intersection between gender and social status is concerned, it is worth highlighting Richlin's (2017: 252–310) chapter on 'Looking like a Slave-Woman': What did it mean to ancient audiences (as well as to actors and playwrights) that the roles of women in the *fabula palliata* were exclusively performed by male actors? Quite possibly, this arrangement had the effect of playing down the suffering of female characters (such as rape victims), while – somewhat paradoxically – it emphasised the (sexual) vulnerability of young, enslaved males. They, after all, were the ones putting sexual victimisation before the eyes of the audience.

When I first conceived of the study at hand, I did not expect much of it would centre around questions of gender and social status. As I tried to make sense of Petronius' comicality, however, I soon realised this could not be achieved without a thorough understanding of the sexual norms of Graeco-Roman society. One modest accomplishment of this study, perhaps, is that it draws attention to gender and power relations beyond

5 Cf. Feichtinger & Kreuz (eds. 2010).

the episodes where these are particularly salient, such as the *cena Trimalchionis* (§§ 26.7–78) or the events at Croton (§§ 124.2–141.11). The most astonishing figure in this regard is Giton, a character who covers nearly the full spectrum of what sex slaves or prostitutes experience in ancient comedy (and elsewhere). On the one hand, he is treated by other characters as they see fit, regardless of the boy's feelings or wishes. Both Ascyltus and Encolpius regularly treat Giton as a piece of personal property and/or a sex object. Among other things, the boy suffers (an attempted) rape (§ 9.1–5), is 'split up' between two interested parties (§ 11.4, 79.12–80.1), performs servile tasks (e.g. § 9.2, 26.10, 91.1), and endures physical violence (§ 79.11, 96.3).[6] On the other hand, Giton at times manages to use his (sex) appeal to his advantage, saving himself from harm (e.g. § 80.3–5, 98.7–9) or even establishing a sense of authority for himself over those who have fallen for him.[7] When it comes to his complex character and function in the *Satyrica*, then, Giton's case is no less intriguing than Encolpius' (who is the main focus of the study at hand). Though scholars such as George (1966), Makowski (2012) and Clark (2019) have gone a long way, Giton deserves considerably more attention, including – but certainly not limited to – his possible indebtedness to comic *pueri delicati*.[8]

Though the field of gender studies in Classics holds impressive achievements, it can hardly be stressed enough that the considerations of this section are not purely academic. While we may wish to believe otherwise, we have not left patriarchy behind for good (yet); the progress we have made is fragile. It will be noted, for instance, that the 'happy ending' of many ancient comedies is brought about by the rapist's decision to marry his victim.[9] Peruvian law incentivised rapists to marry their victims until as recently as 1997! Similar laws were in place in many Central and South American countries.[10] In Graeco-Roman antiquity, the gender and status of the persons involved determined whether their sexual relationship was legitimate or not. In the United Kingdom husbands were

6 Cf. my discussion of the relevant passages, esp. section III.1.2. Rape and Comic Slave Characters.

7 Cf. esp. section IV. Reconciliation: Encolpius and Giton (§ 91). As Panayotakis (2019b: 191–200) has shown, in the *Satyrica* a person's (perceived) beauty can be enhanced by their (supposedly) low social status.

8 Cf. section III.1.2. Rape and Comic Slave Characters as well as section IV.2.4. Parallels in Other Comedies.

9 Cf. section III.1.1. Sexual Violence in Petronius and in the Comic Tradition.

10 Cf. Harris (2004: 50).

not punished for having non-consensual sex with their wives until 1991. In Germany, my home country, marital rape did not enter the legal code until 1997. The gender-related discussions we are having today include, for instance, questions of self-identification and about places transgender people should, perhaps, be banned from (e.g. women's bathrooms or women's prisons). The point about the *Satyrica* is not that this ancient text holds the answers to these modern questions. Rather, the text makes us aware – sometimes painfully aware – that none of the attitudes currently on the table are 'natural', let alone 'God-given'. They are based on social constructions, cultural-dependent perceptions of the world we live in – and this is rarely as obvious, perhaps, as when we deconstruct a text that strikes us as peculiarly alien and familiar at the same time. As we keep on reading the *Satyrica* in the 21st century, its greatest potential lies in teasing out the contradictions of our own time.

I

Introduction: Theatricality and Narrative Structure in the *Satyrica*

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I.1 Aim

The purpose of this study is to bring into contact two prominent areas of Petronian scholarship that have never been systematically treated in combination: 1) the profound indebtedness of the *Satyrica* to the Graeco-Roman mime and other kinds of comic stage performances, 2) the character and function of the work's protagonist and narrator Encolpius. Investigating the interface between the two, I aim at describing the way in which Petronius adapts theatrical elements for narrative fiction, i.e. the way he creates Encolpius' first-person account out of characters, motifs, plots, and techniques associated with the comic stage.

Throughout this study, I will use the term 'comic' in a strictly generic sense, i.e. comic elements in the *Satyrica* are those elements that can also be found in the scripts of ancient comedy or are otherwise attested for this genre.[11] For reasons to be explained below, my notion of comedy comprises the 'literary' strand, represented by playwrights such as Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus, and Terence, as well as the 'popular' strand, including largely unscripted theatrical forms such as the *fabula Atellana* and the mime.

11 This means that I do not equate 'comic' with 'humorous', as many previous scholars have done; cf. e.g. Gagliardi (1980: 8) and Stöcker (1969: 1). On the problems of finding a coherent theory of humour, cf. e.g. Kindt (2017a; 2017b) with references for further reading. Studies on Petronius' humour and related phenomena include Canali (1986), Ruden (1993), Bessone (1993), Petersmann (1995), Napiorski (1996), Callebat (1998), Perutelli (1998), Ferreira (2000), Plaza (2000), and Schmeling (2001).

On the one hand, my comic reading will show that the theatrical subtext of the *Satyrica* is not limited to rather isolated occurrences of stage-like elements, as many past scholarly discussions might suggest. In fact, by investigating the incorporation of these elements into full-fledged narrative episodes, it will be shown that the parallels between the *Satyrica* and the plays of ancient comedy also pertain to large-scale effects created by the skilful combination of characters, situations and actions. I am using the term 'parallel' in a very broad sense, usually indicating the presence of a comic *topos* in the *Satyrica.* I do not suggest, however, that there is a 'direct' intertextual relationship between Petronius' work and the comedies discussed in this study.[12] Among other things, I will show that Eumolpus' excessive sexual appetite has clear forerunners in Aristophanes and Plautus, that Petronius' treatment of sexual violence should be understood against the backdrop of rape plots in New Comedy and the *fabula palliata,* that Giton possesses the seductive powers of comic prostitutes, and that the comic technique of role reversals is one of Petronius' favourites. As close parallels between the *Satyrica* and the comic tradition accumulate, we will observe that they render ever less likely Richard Heinze's (1899) influential hypothesis that Petronius' work constitutes, above all else, a parody of the Greek 'idealising' novel.

On the other hand, I will offer a comprehensive analysis of the narrative techniques employed by the first-person narrator Encolpius to represent theatrical action through the exclusive medium of words. While there are several strategies that bring about the impression of a stage performance, it will become clear that the *Satyrica* is not simply a narrative imitation of visual and auditory forms of entertainment. Instead, stage-like modes of representation exist side by side with such that exploit the full repertoire of a virtuoso storyteller, including manipulations of narrative speed and order as well as variations in focalisation. My study aims at showing that the techniques used in specific contexts are at times inconsistent not only with the viewpoint of Encolpius the protagonist, but also with any plausible intentionality on the part of Encolpius the narrator. This means that Petronius' narrator, who rarely emerges through the use of narrating focalisation but is of course present throughout his narrative, is neither exclusively *mythomanic,* as first proposed by Gian Biagio Conte (1996), nor exclusively detached and ironic, as asserted by Roger Beck (1973) and his followers. Rather, the narrator assumes either of these stances – and several other ones – according to the demands of

12 Cf. esp. chapter I.4. The *Satyrica* and the Graeco-Roman Literary Tradition.

the episode in question. In short, I will argue that the *Satyrica* is full of elements that seem to come straight out of ancient comic performances, and that Encolpius' narrative voice is Petronius' most versatile instrument for setting up a 'stage of words'.

I.2 Scope

My study will focus on three episodes of the *Satyrica*: 1) the First Rivalry over Giton, i.e. the conflict between Encolpius and Ascyltus near the beginning of the extant fragments (§§ 9–11), 2) the reconciliation between Encolpius and Giton after their breakup (§ 91), 3) the Third Rivalry over Giton, i.e. the conflict between Encolpius and the old poet Eumolpus in an apartment house (§§ 92–96). My close readings of these episodes will be preceded by some general observations on masculinity and male sexual desire in the *Satyrica,* in the 'idealising' novel, and in Graeco-Roman comedy.

I have selected these episodes for two reasons: Firstly, all three pertain to the overarching theme of sexual rivalry, allowing me to thoroughly investigate Petronius' treatment of this recurring motif. In the context of sexual rivalry, each episode involves a different set of characters and brings to the fore a distinct set of dynamics: The First Rivalry over Giton features three characters (Encolpius, Giton and Ascyltus), the reconciliation episode merely two (Encolpius and Giton), and the Third Rivalry over Giton revolves around an entire houseful of characters (Encolpius, Giton, Eumolpus, Ascyltus, and several minor characters). Since the Second Rivalry over Giton (§§ 79.8–82) involves many of the same elements as the First Rivalry (§§ 9–11), I have not devoted to it a separate chapter. Still, this passage will be part of the discussion at several points. It should be emphasised that – unlike the *cena Trimalchionis* (§§ 26.7–78) – the three episodes under investigation here have so far received comparatively little scholarly attention.

The second reason I have chosen these particular episodes is that they centre around Encolpius rather than other narrative agents and/or storytellers. This is essential to my study because I aim at investigating Encolpius as both a character in the story and as a narrator telling his story after the fact. Therefore, I will only treat in passing episodes of sexual rivalry that do not directly involve Encolpius, such as the fight between Fortunata and Trimalchio over the latter's affection for a beautiful slave boy (§ 74.8–17). Neither will I devote much attention to those parts

of the *Satyrica* that are exclusively related by intradiegetic narrators, such as Eumolpus' tale about the Pergamene youth (§§ 85–87) or his poems about the *Troiae halosis* (§ 89) and *bellum civile* (§§ 119–24). Still, other parts of the *Satyrica* will be taken into account whenever they are relevant to the discussion at hand. This is why, even though my investigation covers a fairly small portion of Petronius' text, it will allow for generalisations to be made about two interconnected issues: 1) Petronius' treatment of the motif of sexual rivalry and, 2) the role of Encolpius, as both character and narrator, in these rivalries.

A brief note on translations: Unless indicated otherwise, the translations of Aristophanes, Plautus and Terence are taken from the most recent Loeb editions, i.e. from Henderson (ed., trans. 1998–2007), de Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3) and Barsby (ed., trans. 2001) respectively. At times, I have made small alterations.[13] All translations of the *Satyrica* are my own.

I.3 Petronius and the Theatre

I.3.1 Theatrical Performances in Petronius' Day

One of the most basic presuppositions for a comic reading of the *Satyrica* is that its writer was aware of the theatrical culture of his time. Throughout this study, I will argue that Petronius' narrative was in many ways inspired by theatrical comedy in the broader sense, i.e. by characters, motifs, plots, and techniques associated with the manifold varieties of ancient comedy. In this regard, the term 'literary' comedy is conventionally employed to distinguish the genre's more sophisticated and scripted forms from the 'popular' and largely improvised ones.[14] The former category includes Greek Old, Middle, and New Comedy as well as the Roman *fabula palliata* and *fabula togata*.[15] The latter comprises the Graeco-Roman mime, the Greek *Phlyakes* and the Oscan/Latin *fabula Atellana*.[16]

13 Throughout this study, the Latin term *pudicitia* will be translated as 'sexual purity'; cf. n. 152.

14 Cf. e.g. Nicoll (1931) and Duckworth (1952).

15 It has been debated whether Middle Comedy should in fact be considered a category in its own right; cf. Hawkins & Marshall (2016: 3–7) with references to earlier literature.

16 For a comprehensive overview of the history of ancient comedy, cf. the contributions in Fontaine & Scafuro (eds. 2014) with references for further reading; on Roman comedy in particular, cf. Dinter (ed. 2019), Franko & Dutsch (eds. 2020) and Petrone (ed. 2020).

Of course, this distinction is schematic and hides the fact that several 'popular' forms acquired a literary status at some point in their development, such as the mime in the hands of Herodas and Theocritus or the *fabula Atellana* in the hands of Novius and Pomponius.[17] Below, I will argue that the considerable overlap between both strands of comedy allows for the use of a broad concept of comicality in this study. At this point, I will give a brief overview of the theatrical genres popular in Petronius' day and pay special attention to whether they were received through the medium of stage performances. The latter seems necessary because the *Satyrica* is usually assumed to emulate stage actions rather than dramatic scripts. This section will show that the evidence immanent in the *Satyrica* roughly corresponds to external sources in that they reveal the preeminent role of the Graeco-Roman mime in the early Roman Empire.

As so many other aspects of the text, the question of its theatrical context is complicated by the uncertain date and authorship of the *Satyrica.*[18] Most scholars assume that the narrative was written by emperor Nero's *arbiter elegantiae* Petronius, whose lavish lifestyle and extravagant death receive a memorable description in Tacitus' *Annales* (16.17–20).[19] However, it needs to be kept in mind that the identification with the consul mentioned by Tacitus is perhaps too appealing to be true and that the text's references to historical persons of the Neronian era provide us with no more than a *terminus post quem.* The earliest unambiguous *terminus ante quem* is a reference by Terentianus Maurus around 200 CE. Therefore, a later date cannot be ruled out and has been advocated by several scholars.[20]

17 Cf., e.g., Nicoll (1931) and Panayotakis (2019a: 35–39). Panayotakis (2019a) is more cautious in that he distinguishes between 'literary' and 'pre-literary' varieties of comedy.

18 Geue (2019: 201–34) has recently discussed how such uncertainties shape the way we engage with ancient literature.

19 The fullest discussion in favour of this view is still Rose (1971); cf. also the recent overview in Prag & Repath (2009: 5–9) and the references in Völker & Rohmann (2011: 660 n. 2).

20 For Terentianus Maurus' statement, cf. fragment XX in Müller's edition of the *Satyrica* (ed. 2009: 181). Völker & Rohmann (2011) offer a critical reanalysis of the evidence, including an important epigraphic find of 1989, and conclude that the *Satyrica* might have been written by several Neronian Petronii other than the one mentioned by Tacitus. Laird (2007) and Schwazer (2017) tentatively suggest that the narrative was written in the second century CE. Martin (1975; 1999; 2001), Ripoll (2002) and Henderson (2010) favour a date in the Flavian or early Hadrianic period. Dowden (2007: 141) and Holzberg (2009a: 108) also question the Neronian dating. Ratti (2011; 2015) asserts that Petronius was a freedman of Pliny the Younger's and that he wrote the *Satyrica* after 107 CE. For further reading and discussion, cf. Völker & Rohmann (2011: 660 n. 1) and Poletti (2022: 33–49).

Questions of dating and authorship, however, have only a limited bearing on theatrical interpretations of the *Satyrica,* as the popularity of public and private performances in the Empire did not substantially alter between the mid-first and late second century CE.[21] The clearest evidence for Petronius' knowledge of contemporary theatre is the fact that his narrative contains explicit references to all major genres popular in the period. Mentions of the mime amount to no less than seven and thus outnumber the allusions to all other forms of 'popular' entertainment.[22] As this genre will be addressed in more detail in the course of this introduction, a very brief account shall suffice at this point. The Graeco-Roman mime can be most adequately described by differentiating it from neighbouring theatrical forms: Other than 'literary' comedy, the humorous treatment of the mime was mainly concerned with low-life situations and was performed by unmasked actors, both male and female. In contrast to the pantomime, mime actors made use of words for their performances.[23] Between the first and the third centuries CE, there was an "explosion of the popularity of the mime-genre" (Panayotakis 2010: 30), which saw it supersede all other forms of comic theatre in the Empire. This does not mean, however, that these other genres were insignificant to the period and the composition of the *Satyrica.*

The text of the *Satyrica* attests to Petronius' knowledge of at least two other comic genres. At § 53.12, Trimalchio claims that *et comoedos [...] emeram, sed malui illos Atell⟨ani⟩am facere* ("I also bought comedians, but I preferred them to do Atellan plays").[24] Trimalchio declares his affinity for the *fabula Atellana,* originally an Oscan type of farce that was Romanised early on and was regarded as the native counterpart to the theatrical forms imported from Greece.[25] Same as for the mime of the Roman Imperial period, our evidence of Atellan farce mainly consists of various short references in other forms of literature. We learn

21 Augier-Grimaud (2014: 14) comes to the same conclusion.

22 Cf. § 19.1 (*mimico risu*); § 35.6 (*de Laserpiciario mimo canticum*); § 55.5 (*Pub⟨li⟩lium,* i. e. the mimographer Publilius Syrus, cf. Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*)); § 80.9 (*grex agit in scaena mimum*); § 94.15 (*mimicam mortem*); § 106.1 (*mimicis artibus*); § 117.4 (*mimum componere*). All citations of the *Satyrica* are taken from Müller's (ed. 2009) critical edition.

23 Cf. Panayotakis (2010: 1) for this definition of the mime.

24 There is another reference to the *fabula Atellana* at § 68.5 (*Atellanicos versus*).

25 On the *fabula Atellana,* cf. Nicoll (1931: 65–79), Duckworth (1952: 10–13), Kocur (2018: 257–67), and Panayotakis (2019a: 32–9). For the extant fragments, cf. Ribbeck (ed. 1898) and Frassinetti (ed. 1967).

that these largely improvised shows made use of stock characters distinguished by specific masks: 1) Maccus and 2) Bucco, both of whom were apparently associated with foolishness and gluttony; 3) Pappus, the gullible old man; and 4) Dossenus, the cunning trickster.[26] After the genre had been greatly popular in the early first century BCE, it apparently fell much behind the mime in the early Empire. We learn from Suetonius (*Nero* 39.3) and Juvenal (3.173–6), however, that Atellan farces were at least occasionally performed in the time relevant to this study.[27]

Though Trimalchio claims to prefer the *fabula Atellana,* his explicit mention of professional comedians (*comoedos,* § 53.12 (cited above)) is no less remarkable. In relative terms, our evidence of 'literary' comedy is abundant, as we can consult not only extensive fragments but also the (nearly) complete Greek plays of Aristophanes and Menander as well as the Latin *fabulae palliatae* of Plautus and Terence. Plays of Greek Old Comedy were apparently not staged under the Roman emperors, with the possible exceptions of Hadrian and Commodus.[28] Still, the works of Aristophanes, Cratinus and Eupolis, with their open criticism of contemporary politics, were known in literary circles and are regularly invoked by Roman satirists in particular.[29] New Comedy, whose plots revolve around domestic relations in bourgeois families and typically involve difficulties in love leading up to a happy ending, came to be associated first and foremost with Menander. The genre remained immensely popular in the Roman Imperial era, at least inasmuch as that the dramatic scripts of Menander's plays were widely read and used for school teaching. Live performances, however, appear to have been rare and to have taken the form of dinner entertainment rather than full-fledged productions in theatres.[30] Latin comedy in several regards shared the fate of Greek New Comedy, to which it was of course heavily indebted. For the early Empire,

26 Cf. Nicoll (1931: 69–73), Duckworth (1952: 11) and Kocur (2018: 259–61). The latter (*ibid.* 261–3) also discusses several minor characters.

27 Thereafter, the *Atellana* is briefly mentioned by the church fathers Tertullian (*spect.* 17.2) and Jerome (*epist.* 52.2, 147.5); cf. the discussion in Weismann (1972: 48–9).

28 Cf. Nervegna 2014: 394.

29 Various cases of the reception of Greek comedy in the Roman Empire are addressed in Hawkins & Marshall (eds. 2016); on the role of Old Comedy in Roman satire, cf. Ferriss-Hill (2015). Hanses (2020) discusses the afterlife of Roman comedy in oratory, satire and love elegy.

30 Nervegna (2013) is the most in-depth study of the reception of Menander in antiquity. For a concise summary of her discussion with regard to the Roman Empire, cf. Hawkins & Marshall (2016: 12–17). On Petronius' possible knowledge of Aristophanes, cf. also Panayotakis (2006: 495–8).

the only attested performance is of Afranius' *fabula togata* entitled *incendium* in the Neronian era (Suet. *Nero* 11.2). While Terence soon became a school author and was thus widely known, interest in Plautus only reemerged with the writers of the Second Sophistic, such as Fronto, Gellius and Apuleius. It is important to point out, though, that much of the renewed attention was paid to Plautus' vocabulary and therefore does not imply reperformances.[31]

Petronius' knowledge of tragedy is apparent not only from two explicit references but also from various unmistakable allusions.[32] Nevertheless, it is an exceptionally vexed question as to the kinds of tragic performances he might have watched during his lifetime. Most importantly, just as traditional comedy was gradually superseded by the mime in the Imperial era, the genre of tragedy was to a large extent replaced by the pantomime, the *tragoedia saltata*.[33] Keeping terminological difficulties in mind,[34] we may state that this increasingly popular form of theatrical entertainment centred around a male dancer who performed mythological stories without the use of words. He impersonated all important roles by changing different masks throughout the show. The solo performance could be complemented by more dancers and by the accompaniment of music provided by a single instrument or by a larger group.[35] Remarkably, when Encolpius realises that all of Trimalchio's servants burst into song when they tend to the guests' wishes, he compares them to a *pantomimi chorum* (§ 31.7). The more 'traditional' tragedies of the Roman era fall into two groups: 1) *fabulae crepidatae,* i.e. plays with subjects from Greek mythology as written by Seneca the Younger, and 2) *fabulae prae-*

31 The most comprehensive study in this area is Deufert (2002) on the reception of Plautus in antiquity; cf. the brief overviews in Ferri (2014) and Manuwald (2019). On the role of comedy in the Second Sophistic, cf. May (2014). Weismann (1972: 46) discusses the few references to comic performances made by the church fathers, the latest of which is Aug. *Civ.* 2.8.17–8 (early fifth century CE).

32 § 108.11 (*tragoediam implebat*), § 140.6 (*periclitabatur … tragoediam evertere*). § 80.9, for instance, contains a clear allusion to the tragic conflict between Eteocles and Polynices.

33 On the popularity of the pantomime in the Empire, cf. Webb (2008: 58–94) and Hawkins & Marshall (2016: 13–4).

34 Ancient sources often do not make clear distinctions between the mime and the pantomime, both of which appear to have been very heterogeneous genres (cf. Wiseman 2008a).

35 This definition of the pantomime follows Hall (2008: 3). Hall & Wyles (eds. 2008) comprise recent scholarly contributions in this field. For an overview, cf. also Kocur (2018: 303–33) with references for further reading.

textae, plays revolving around Roman myth or history. Of the latter category, our evidence is fragmentary.[36] As far as the *fabula crepidata* is concerned, plays were still occasionally put on stage in the first century CE, but they were more regularly read or recited by a single speaker.[37]

To sum up, the text of the *Satyrica* suggests that Petronius knew sophisticated comedies and tragedies as well as mimes, pantomimes and Atellan farces. It seems reasonable to assume that he encountered the performing arts at both public and private venues. He probably gained his knowledge of 'literary' theatre mainly through reading and recitals, while full stagings remain a possibility. Overall, the theatrical culture of his time was dominated by the pantomime and the Graeco-Roman mime, the latter of which is likely to have inspired much of his work's comicality. With regard to a comic reading of the *Satyrica,* the greatest problem remaining is that the mime's importance to the Roman Imperial era is not reflected in the quantity and quality of our primary evidence.

I.3.2 Farcical Elements in 'Popular' and 'Literary' Comedy

Many previous scholars understood that the theatrical context of 1st- and 2nd-century Rome as well as the text of the *Satyrica* itself call for a comparison between Petronius' work and the contemporary mime.[38] While the interconnections between the two continue to be discussed,[39] the most important study in this field remains Costas Panayotakis' (1995) *Theatrum Arbitri,* who reads the entire *Satyrica* "as if it were the narrative equivalent of a farcical staged piece with the theatrical structure of a play produced before an audience" (*ibid.* ix). In this section, I will argue that scarcity of evidence is the chief impediment to a comprehensive 'mimic' reading of the *Satyrica* and that this obstacle may in part be overcome

36 Manuwald (2001) offers a comprehensive discussion of the *fabula praetexta.*

37 Cf. Boyle 2006: 186. Particularly in the case of Seneca the Younger, it has been hotly debated whether and how his tragedies might have been staged. For an overview of the scholarly discussion, cf. e.g. Schiesaro (2008: 279) and Liebermann (2014: 408–9); one of the most recent contributions is Braun (2022).

38 The earliest discussions of comic – and particularly mimic – elements in the *Satyrica* include Collignon (1892), Rosenblüth (1909: 36–55), Moering (1915), and Preston (1915). Leading up to Panayotakis' (1995) seminal study, it is also worth consulting Walsh (1970: 24–8), Sandy (1974), Rosati (1983), Cicu (1992), and Boroughs (1993).

39 Cf. Callari (1995), Cucchiarelli (1999), Wolff (2003), Patimo (2007), Gianotti (2009), Kirichenko (2010: 185–99), Augier-Grimaud (2014), and Clark (2019: 99–122)

by acknowledging the substantial overlap between the different forms of ancient comedy. Therefore, I advocate broadening our scope beyond the mime-genre in the narrow sense, allowing us to also take into account farcical elements in the extant plays of 'literary' comedy. Even though an approach similar to mine has already been adopted by Panayotakis (1995), it has never received a full philological justification.[40] The latter is all the more necessary in my case, however, since I intend to complement the findings of Panayotakis and others by analysing the comic/farcical quality of more complex aspects of the *Satyrica* – matters of characterisation, interaction, plot development, and comic technique – and thus need to rely more heavily on the extant plays of Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus, and Terence.

Problematically, *μῖμος* or *mimus* are somewhat fluid terms in that they comprise at least two different varieties. In what corresponds to the conventional division of comic genres, 'mime' may refer to a 'literary' and a 'popular' or 'performative' strand.[41] The latter category denotes the mime as a form of theatrical entertainment in the narrower sense, i.e. the rather crude performances of low-life actions that largely relied on stock characters and improvisation.[42] As these shows were not only largely unscripted but also of low cultural esteem, our primary evidence is limited to a few papyrus finds that often give us no more than a rough sketch of the plays' plot and *dramatis personae.*[43] Otherwise, our knowledge of the 'popular' mime depends on archaeological evidence and (frequently disparaging) references in other genres.[44] The term 'literary mime', on the other hand, denotes those texts that transform the elements of the

40 Cf. Panayotakis (1995: xxv): "Throughout this book it will be demonstrated how the author of the novel [i.e. Petronius] does not confine himself to mimic techniques as his sole source of laughter, but experiments also with conventions of Plautine farce or, broadly speaking, with methods common to all kinds of comedy, from Aristophanic slapstick and the numerous indecencies of Atellan farce to role-playing in New Comedy and the organisation of games in Roman amphitheatres." Preston (1915) had drawn attention to the great overlap of elements between the mime and 'literary' comedy.

41 Cf. Panayotakis (2014: 379). Up-to-date introductions to the Roman mime are offered by Panayotakis (2010: 1–32) and Kocur (2018: 269–302); cf. also Sonnino (2014).

42 On the role of improvisation in the mime, cf. Wüst (1932: 1729–30 and *passim*) as well as Kocur (2018: 273–5).

43 Wiemken (1972) offers the most detailed discussion of these papyri; cf. also Rusten & Cunningham (eds., trans. 2003: 353–421).

44 Cf. Maxwell (1996) for the material evidence of the mime. The best overview of literary references is still Wüst (1932). On the Christian condemnation of the mime as part of the traditional Roman *spectacula,* cf. Weismann (1972).

'popular' mime into a sophisticated, often poetic genre which still retains the potential for theatrical performance.[45] The main representatives of this strand are the Greek writers Epicharmus, Sophron, Herodas, and Theocritus; as well as the Latin writers Laberius, Cn. Matius and Vergilius Romanus. Our most extensive evidence of the genre is provided by Herodas' *mimiamboi,* which, however, were perhaps never meant to be produced on stage.[46] Except for the three mime-like poems of Theocritus (Theoc. 2, 14, 15), all other 'literary' mimes have come down to us in fragments.[47]

The evidence we have provides us with a basic outline of the mime's general characteristics. For instance, we know that the mime was fond of humorous surprises, as it evidently featured sudden changes of fortune[48] and unexpected mix-ups.[49] It is certain that a bald-headed fool (μωρὸς φαλακρός or *mimus calvus*) made a regular appearance and that this stock character was commonly involved in an adultery plot.[50] To name but a few motifs and plot conventions, we learn of mimic shipwrecks,[51] indecency,[52] trickery,[53] slapstick scenes,[54] and of mime-plays' tendency to find abrupt endings.[55] However, we know next to nothing about how these elements were combined into full-fledged theatrical performances. With regard to the *Satyrica,* our knowledge of the mime allows us to

45 Cf. Panayotakis 2014: 379.

46 On the debate about the *mimiamboi* as pieces for stage performance, cf. the overview in Esposito (2014: 277–8; further reading on p. 281) as well as the recent contributions by Chesteron (2018) and Kutzko (2018).

47 On Theocritus' urban mimes, cf. Burton (1995), Krevans (2006) and Miles (2021) with references for further reading. The most recent edition of the Greek 'literary' mime is Rusten & Cunningham (eds., trans. 2003). It also includes Theophrastus' *Characters* and fragments of 'popular' mimes. For the fragments of Latin mimes, cf. Bonaria (ed. 1965) and Panayotakis (ed. 2010).

48 Cic. *Phil.* 2.27.65: *persona de mimo modo egens, repente dives.*

49 Aug. *Civ.* 6.1: *absurditate turpissima, qualis ioculariter in mimo fieri solet, peteretur a Libero aqua, a Lymphis uinum.*

50 On the mimic fool, cf. Nicoll (1931: 87–90). The adultery mime is discussed at length by Reynolds (1946) and Kehoe (1984).

51 Sen. *de ira* 2.2.5: *ad conspectum mimici naufragii contrahit frontem.*

52 Ov. *Tr.* 2.497: *mimos obscena iocantes.*

53 Cf., for instance, Juv. 6.41–4 on the mimic adulterer hiding in a chest.

54 See the references and discussion in Nicoll (1931: 88).

55 Cic. *Cael.* 65 (cited in section III.5.2.3. Condensation: Petronius' 'punchline'). For more ancient references to mimic stock elements, cf. Panayotakis (2010: 10–11 n. 19).

point out broad parallels in terms of theme, plot and characters, but we have almost no basis upon which to analyse matters of mimic discourse or characterisation, let alone the combination of structural elements to form a coherent composition. If we nevertheless wish to make assertion about these issues, as several scholars have done, it seems promising to search for parallels in other comic genres and use these for an indirect argument.

Adopting a somewhat broader perspective on the mime-like quality of the *Satyrica* seems to be justified by the fact that 'literary' and 'popular' comedies known in Petronius' day had a substantial number of elements in common. Among many others, these include the motifs of love and marriage, the stock characters of the trickster and the fool, as well as the comic techniques of slapstick and inversion. To make this case, I will for the most part draw upon the extensive literature on farcical elements in the Roman *fabula palliata*, i. e. elements likely inspired by or shared with the unscripted *fabula Atellana* and the mime. Although most scholarly arguments in question were originally advanced in the context of finding Plautine originality in Plautus' plays, they amply illustrate the enormous overlap between what we assume to be unsophisticated 'popular' comedy and what we find in the well-attested 'literary' varieties.

The cross-fertilisation between different comic genres up to Petronius' day was so strong that in many cases we cannot tell whether a specific element in the *Satyrica* derives from one or the other. In the first place, the mime in both Greece and Italy continuously borrowed elements from 'literary' comedy and *vice versa*.[56] Among the clearest indications of this convergence is the fact that several Church fathers – though, of course, writing later than Petronius – associate the mime with stock characters known from Menander, Plautus and Terence, such as the parasite, the wicked mother-in-law, the lovestruck old man, the naïve or lecherous father, as well as the rich young man in love with a prostitute.[57] Furthermore, the mimic theatre popular in 1st- and 2nd-century Rome was not identical with the mime of Hellenistic Greece, but the imported form had assimilated with the Italian *fabula Atellana* into a diverse Graeco-Roman genre.[58] To add to the general confusion, the Atellan farce itself had not only been influenced by the Greek *Phlyakes* of southern Italy, but by the

56 Cf. for instance Wüst (1932: 1738, 1740, 1743, 1751) and see the discussion below.

57 Cf. Weismann (1972: 49) with references to Novatian, Jerome, Augustine, and others.

58 Cf. Panayotakis 2014: 379.

1st century BCE it had also to some extent merged with 'literary' Roman comedy, i.e. the *fabula palliata* and the *fabula togata.*[59]

As our evidence in most cases does not allow for individual comic elements to be pinned down to a specific origin, some scholars working on Roman Comedy have closely focused on the basic distinction between 'literary' elements in the vein of Greek New Comedy and 'popular' elements felt to be inspired by unscripted contemporary performances. Initiated by Eduard Fraenkel's (1922) seminal study *Plautinisches im Plautus,* this new trend in scholarship acknowledged Roman Comedy as a literary genre in its own right and thus helped overcome the preoccupation with trying to restore the lost plays of Greek New Comedy.[60] Simply put, it was widely assumed at least until the 1990s that the Roman playwrights received sophisticated plays from their Greek forerunners and adapted them to their Roman audiences by making them more farcical, for instance by: 1) sacrificing the consistency of the overall plot for the sake of momentary humorous effects; 2) caricaturising the nicely drawn characters of the Greek plays and more heavily relying on 'low-life' characters (slaves and professional types, such as cooks, prostitutes and pimps); 3) superimposing Greek 'elegant humour' with simply ridiculous foolery (e.g. slapstick, wordplays and pointless quarrels).[61] All these farcical elements, then, were taken to be derived from unscripted comedy, as these forms presumably did not bother much about high artistic aspirations.[62] Of the extant *fabula palliata,* Plautus' plays are from this perspective clearly more indebted to 'popular' theatre than Terence's.[63]

It has to be borne in mind, however, that the arguments outlined above call for scepticism. First of all, Greek comedy itself is not free from the 'farcical' elements we find in Plautus; if anything, we can only argue

59 Cf., e.g., Nicoll (1931: 80), Duckworth (1952: 11–14).

60 For an overview of the history of Plautine scholarship from Fraenkel onwards, cf. Petrides (2014: 426–33).

61 These three categories correspond to Castellani's (1988: 57–67) discussion. In the context of Plautine originality, several representatives of the Freiburg School of Plautine scholarship have published articles in the same vein; cf. e.g. the contributions in Lefèvre et al. (eds. 1991) and Benz et al. (eds. 1995) as well as Vogt-Spira (1995; 1998), Lefèvre (1999; 2010), Benz (1999), and Blänsdorf (2003: 225).

62 At times, it is possible to identify Plautine additions to the Greek originals with reasonable certainty, e.g. when the action comes to a standstill and we encounter specifically Latin puns and/or references to things unambiguously Roman. A few such cases will be discussed in the course of this study.

63 Cf. e.g. Duckworth (1952: 17 and *passim*).

that such elements are more pronounced in the Roman plays.[64] The assessment, for instance, as to whether the personality of a given comic character is 'caricaturised' or not, of course, involves a subjective evaluation. Since our evidence, as we have seen, is insufficient to present a comprehensive picture of unscripted ancient theatre, many scholars have cautioned against overstressing Plautus' indebtedness to the 'non-literary' tradition.[65] Still, there is an overall consensus that Plautus is in many regards more farcical than New Greek Comedy – with the caveat that the complex relations between the comic genres remain too nebulous for modern scholars to determine the origin of specific elements with any satisfactory degree of certainty.[66] This very realisation, however, shows that the boundaries between different forms of ancient comedy are much less clear than many 20th-century scholars assumed. As all comic genres – each emphasising some aspects more than others – were arguably working along the same broad lines, I propose to apply this principle to the comic interpretation of Petronius' work.[67]

Throughout my analysis, I will point out parallels between the *Satyrica* and the elements we find in ancient comedy, may they relate to characters, motifs, plots, or techniques. Special attention will be paid to material that could be referred to as 'farcical', since it is most likely to have featured in the mime, the genre to which Petronius' text is most obviously indebted. The impression of farcical theatricality can be created, for instance, by low-life situations and characters, a general light spirit, slapstick, the prioritisation of humorous effects over matters of verisimilitude, and many more aspects attested to in extant comedies.

64 Castellani (1988: 53–4) acknowledges farcical elements in both Old and New Greek Comedy. On 'popular' comedy in Aristophanes, cf. Murphy (1972), MacDowell (1988) and Kaimio (1990). Riess (2012: 235–378) discusses interpersonal violence – including slapstick – in Aristophanes and Menander. Krieter-Spiro (1997: 185–8) points out that the few instances of slapstick and obscenity in Menander usually involve low-life characters, such as slaves and cooks.

65 Duckworth (1952) discusses the same farcical elements in Plautus as Castellani (1988) does but qualifies his findings (*ibid.* e.g. 137, 168, 198). Fontaine (2014: 416–18) argues that Plautus is far more dependent on the Greek comic tradition than on the native Italian one; cf. Hutchinson (2013: 30–3) on elements of Greek Old Comedy in Plautus. Petrides (2014: 433) also adopts a sceptical perspective.

66 Cf. Panayotakis 2019a: 45.

67 Cf. Panayotakis' (2010: 27) assessment of the parallels between the mimes of Laberius and the *fabulae palliatae* of Plautus.

I.4 The *Satyrica* and the Graeco-Roman Literary Tradition

I.4.1 Terminology and Preliminaries

I.4.1.1 Intertextuality, Transtextuality and 'Parallels'

One of the thornier issues of this study is how exactly to conceive of – and to describe – the presence of comic elements in the *Satyrica.* Does Petronius, having watched/read specific comic plays, deliberately incorporate some of their elements into his narrative? Are his (un)intentional references perhaps more general in nature, relating to the theatre as a broader phenomenon rather than to individual plays or dramatic scripts? Or, indeed, is the perceived connection between the *Satyrica* and comedy something of an illusion? Are the elements that strike us as 'comic' merely commonplaces of the genre the *Satyrica* belongs to – possibly the novel, (Menippean) satire or Milesian tales – meaning that there is no direct relationship whatsoever between Petronius and the plays of ancient comedy?

My aim is not to prove that Petronius deliberately draws on the very comedies discussed in this study. Rather, I will demonstrate the presence of comic – more exactly: farcical – *topoi* in the *Satyrica,* leaving open how exactly these *topoi* 'entered' Petronius' work. Put more abstractly, I am little interested in intertextuality in the narrow sense of the term, as defined, for instance, by Genette (1997: 1): Intertextuality as "a relationship of copresence between two texts or among several texts" i.e. "the actual presence of one text within another", as in the case of quotes, allusions or plagiarism. At no point in this study will I suggest that Petronius establishes such an intertextual relationship between the *Satyrica* and any specific piece of Graeco-Roman comedy we know of. For, as far as we can tell, Petronius neither quotes nor alludes to (nor plagiarises) the plays discussed here.[68] Notably, the case is different for a few non-comic texts: When discussing the First Rivalry over Giton, (§§ 9–11), for instance, Petronius' clear allusions to Livy's *ab urbe condita* and Ovid's *Fasti* will be the starting point for my analysis.

The relationship between the *Satyrica* and comedy should be conceived of in terms of intertextuality in a wider sense or, to use Genette's (1997: 1) coinage, in terms of 'transtextuality': "all that sets the text in

68 For one possible exception, cf. Panayotakis (2006: esp. 496–8), who argues that § 117.11–13 alludes to Aristoph. *Ran.* 1–10.

a relationship, whether obvious or concealed, with other texts". In Genette's understanding, intertextuality is but one of five varieties of transtextuality.[69] I argue that the presence of comic *topoi* in the *Satyrica* – such as (stock) characters, motifs, plot elements, and techniques – establishes close transtextual links between Petronius' work and the comic tradition. Throughout this study, I will refer to these links by the more familiar term of 'parallels' between the *Satyrica* and comedy.

In fact, although Genette's concept of transtextuality may seem to be almost all-encompassing, it makes sense to think of the relationship between the *Satyrica* and comedy in even broader terms. For, what I suggest here is not so much that Petronius' text is (in one way or another) indebted to other *texts* (which is what Genette focuses on), but rather to *theatrical performances*: He forms a narrative (i.e. a sequence of words presented to an audience) on the basis of stage action (i.e. a complex array of visual and auditory information presented to an audience).[70] This, then, is more akin to what Julia Kristeva has in mind when she describes the process of 'transposition', a term central to her own understanding of 'intertextuality'. Transposition is defined as the *"passage from one sign system to another,"* for instance from theatrical performance to narrative.[71] When I speak of 'parallels' between the *Satyrica* and comedy, then, I refer to transtextual links (in the Genettean sense) that may also be established across different media, as it were. In simpler terms, we may envision these parallels as 'overlaps' between the *Satyrica* and the ancient comic tradition.

I.4.1.2 Hypertextuality and Architextuality ('Genre')

The discussion above has shown that my approach to the comic quality of the *Satyrica* is to a significant extent an indirect one. By pointing to parallels with ancient – preferably farcical – comedy, I attempt to bring to the surface elements in Petronius' work that possibly go back to mime

69 The other four varieties are hypertextuality and architextuality (discussed below), as well as paratextuality (e.g. titles and marginalia), and metatextuality (e.g. commentaries); cf. Genette (1997: 1–7).

70 This issue will be further discussed in the context of Petronius' narrative technique.

71 The quote is taken from Kristeva (1984: 59), emphasis in the original. Kristeva (1970: 139–176) discusses the transpositions that shaped early modern novels; the sign systems transposed into narrative include (the clamour of) the marketplace as well as carnivalesque festivities.

performances in the early Imperial period or are otherwise inspired by the author's knowledge of comic theatre. While there is *per se* some degree of uncertainty to such an approach, the situation is complicated by the fact that many elements associated with (farcical) comedy also occur in other genres, both theatrical and non-theatrical. This is particularly relevant to a text with such a problematic literary background as the *Satyrica,* "a seemingly spontaneous isolated creation which lacks readily discernible ancestors and clearly related successors" (Scobie 1969: 83).

Speaking in Genettean terms, we can be certain that there is some 'transtextual' relationship between the *Satyrica* and comedy, i.e. that there is some interconnection, no matter how obscure or indirect, between Petronius' narrative and ancient comic stage plays. Yet, we are unable to reconstruct how this relationship came about. One possibility is that there is a 'hypertextual' link between the *Satyrica* and ancient comedies: Petronius grafts his narrative (the 'hypertext') upon earlier comedies (the 'hypotexts') – many of the latter, however, being lost to us.[72] In other words: Petronius *deliberately* invests his text with elements he associates with the comic stage. Another possibility is that the elements Petronius' text shares with the comic tradition go back to the genre of the *Satyrica,* i.e. to the category Genette calls 'architextuality'.[73] The idea is that elements known from comedy had long become commonplaces of the genre the *Satyrica* belongs to – whichever genre this may be – by the time Petronius was writing. This would mean that the presence of comic elements in the *Satyrica* does not result from Petronius' deliberate engagement with stage plays, but rather from the given generic repertoire he was working with. In fact, it is likely that both of the above possibilities are partly true.[74]

Ultimately, we are likely dealing with both: 1) comic elements in the *Satyrica* that were indeed inspired by theatrical productions, and 2) comic elements that have entered the *Satyrica* on 'indirect routes', i.e. through

72 Cf. Genette (1997: 5): "by hypertextuality I mean any relationship uniting a text B (which I shall call the *hypertext*) to an earlier text A (I shall, of course, call it the *hypotext*), upon which it is grafted in a manner that is not that of commentary."

73 Cf. Genette (1997: 1): "By architextuality I mean the entire set of general or transcendent categories – types of discourse, modes of enunciation, literary genres – from which emerges a singular text." Cf. also Genette 1992.

74 Cf. e.g. Genette's (1997: 7f.) remarks on the overlap between 'hypertextuality' and 'architextuality'.

genres other than comedy. As far as I can see, however, we have no reliable means for separating the former category from the latter. This caveat should be kept in mind at all times – not only when trying to identify comic elements in the *Satyrica,* but also when attempting to assign Petronius' work to a literary genre. As we shall see in the following section, the latter endeavour is made exceedingly difficult by the uncertainties surrounding the *Satyrica.*

I.4.2 The Genre of the *Satyrica*

This section will give an overview of the long-standing debate as to whether the *Satyrica* should be considered a (Menippean) satire, a novel, a Milesian tale, or indeed an extraordinary piece of artistic ingenuity. Rather than taking sides in this dispute, I will caution against applying loaded – and often anachronistic – genre labels to Petronius' work.

Most commonly, the *Satyrica* is still referred to as an ancient novel – or otherwise as a text parodying the ancient novel. This categorisation is problematic, not least because the ancients did not have a distinct term for what we now call a novel: In Greek, 'novelists' could be referred to as ἱστορικοί or δραματικοί; they could be said to write ἐρωτικά or δράματα, δραματικά, μυθιστορία, πλάσματα, συντάγματα, or διηγήματα.[75]. In Latin, *fabula* was the most common term for prose fiction.[76]

For contextualising the *Satyrica,* it is equally important to note that the long-held distinction between 'idealising' Greek and 'realistic' Latin novels has been seriously challenged in recent decades. Erwin Rohde (1914: 583–91) was the first scholar to argue that the ancient novelistic tradition was made up of two sub-categories: the 'serious' Greek novel of love and adventure on the one hand, and the burlesque and 'realistic' Latin novel on the other. The first group is mainly represented by the five extant Greek novels by Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, Achilles Tatius, Longus, and Heliodorus; the second group was said to comprise Petronius' *Satyrica* and Apuleius' *Metamorphoses.* After Rohde's view had been followed by the majority of scholars until at least the middle of the 20th century, the distinction has been called into question by recent papyrus finds, most importantly the *Iolaos* papyrus, the *Tinouphis,* and

75 Cf. Marini (1991).

76 Cf. Horsfall (1991/2: 135) with references in n. 77.

the fragmentary novel *Phoenicica* by Lollianus.[77] These texts render the clear-cut distinction obsolete in that they prove the existence of obscenity and a comic spirit in Greek novels, i.e. the existence of elements that were previously taken to be exclusive to the Latin strand.[78] Consequently, we have to assume that both 'serious' and 'burlesque' novels drew on the same stock of Graeco-Roman literary knowledge and that the generic composition of the extant Greek novels is closely linked to that of the extant Latin ones.

The same papyrus finds have given new impulses to the discussion about the genre of the *Satyrica.* Petronius' place in the novelistic and/or Menippean and/or Milesian tradition continues to be discussed.

I.4.2.1 Formal and Thematic Characteristics

Joachim Adamietz (1987) offers a systematic overview of the links between the *Satyrica* and the tradition of Menippean satire. The genre is commonly held to have been originated by the cynical philosopher Menippus of Gadara (3rd century BCE), our knowledge of whom is largely indirect.[79] His work is associated with the σπουδαιογέλοιον, i.e. with a mixture of serious and humorous elements, and with the *prosimetrum,* i.e. a combination of prose and verse insets that typically are the author's own creation. Menippus' most important Roman followers are said to include Varro (*Menippeae*) and Seneca the Younger (*Apocolocyntosis*).[80] Some scholars have understood Menippean satire to be a much broader category.[81]

77 The *Phoenicica* has been edited and discussed by Henrichs (1969; 1972); cf. also Stephens & Winkler (eds. 1995: 314–57). The obscure Greek model for Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* is also relevant to this discussion; cf. the overview in Pinheiro (2014: 204).

78 Pinheiro (2014: 205) offers an overview of the scholarly discussion with references to further literature. For the evidence of 'obscene' novels, cf. Stramaglia (1992: 141) and Henderson (2010: 489–90).

79 Cf. e.g. Coffey (1989: 162–3) and Relihan (1993: 39–48).

80 The most detailed discussion of Menippean satire is still Relihan (1993). We should note that Holzberg (2016) has recently called into question the conventional dating and the authorship of the text commonly referred to as *Apocolocyntosis.* He argues that the text was written by a *Seneca impersonatus* of the mid-second century CE. Freudenburg (2015: 93–8) also offers a critical survey of the evidence but tends towards the traditional view, i.e. that the *Apocolocyntosis* was authored by Seneca the Younger.

81 Bakhtin (1981[1941]: 27) famously stated that the "*Satyricon* of Petronius is good proof that Menippean satire can expand into a huge picture, offering a realistic reflec-

According to Adamietz (1987: 330), what most clearly marks the *Satyrica* as a piece belonging to the Menippean tradition is the *prosimetrum.* Petronius' peculiar mixture of prose and verse is said to be incompatible with the genre of the ancient novel, for instance Chariton's *Callirhoe,* where verse insets occur very rarely and usually take the form of quotations from esteemed authors.[82] In the opinion of other scholars, however, the aforementioned papyrus finds strongly hint at a tradition of Greek prosimetric fiction.[83] Still, these papyri hardly suffice to speak of a fully-fledged genre of prosimetric novels.[84] Seeing that the fragments are dated to the second century CE, we cannot exclude the possibility that they follow in Petronius' footsteps rather than the other way around.[85] Furthermore, it is possible that the Greek prosimetric texts were themselves inspired by the Menippean tradition.[86] Lastly, we should bear in mind that a mixture of prose and verse also occurs in other genres, notably in

tion of the socially varied and heteroglot world of contemporary life." As pointed out by Branham (2019: 86) Bakhtin's concept of Menippean satire – going back to the Renaissance – comprised more or less the entire category of the σπουδαιογέλοιον; furthermore, he stressed its close connection to carnivalistic folklore (cf. *ibid.* 83 and 93). Branham (*ibid.* 105–166) offers an in-depth investigation of the Bakhtinian concept of 'heteroglossia' – the intermingling of various voices from different cultural contexts – in the *Satyrica*; cf. also the earlier discussion by Goldman (2008).

82 Cf. Adamietz (1987: 338). On the use of the *prosimetrum* in Menippean satire, cf. Relihan (1993: 18): "What is crucial to Menippean satire is the creation of characters who do not merely quote but actually speak in verse, and of a narrative whose action is advanced through separate verse passages."

83 Cf. Parsons (1971) and Astbury (1977) on the *Iolaus* fragment as well as Stephens & Winkler (eds. 1995: 400–8) on the *Tinouphis.* Other ancient prosimetric narratives include Apuleius' *Hermagoras* as reconstructed by Perry (1927), the *Alexander romance* as well as the *Historia Apollonii regis Tyri*; cf. Stramaglia (1992: 138–9) with references for further reading. Stramaglia's list should now be complemented by *P.Oxy.* LXX.4762 (early third century CE), featuring a sexual encounter between an ass and a woman in prosimetric form; cf. May (2010: esp. 78).

84 Cf. Adamietz (1987: 342 n. 47), Conte (1996: 164), Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011: xxxiv).

85 Cf. Stephens & Winkler (eds. 1995: 365) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011: xxxi). Jensson (2004: 270), however, stresses the point that the date of the papyri gives us nothing but a *terminus ante quem* for the dating of the work itself.

86 Cf., e.g., the qualifications mentioned by Parsons (1971: 65). Though the *Iolaus* is commonly called a novel, it has also been read as a fragment of Menippus himself (cf. Cataudella 1975a; 1975b). The same is true for the *Tinouphis* (cf. Haslam 1981). Stragmalia (1992: 141: 79) objects to Cataudella's view, arguing that there might have been an "osmosis" between the novelistic and the Menippean tradition.

the Graeco-Roman mime.[87] Intriguingly, there are also some indications that Milesian tales, which will be discussed below, could take the prosimetric form.[88]

Apart from the formal element of the *prosimetrum,* most characteristics that could mark the *Satyrica* as a Menippean satire involve subjective evaluations.[89] Those advocating the satirical tradition have argued against novelistic aspects and *vice versa.*[90] In what amounts to a more fruitful approach, Adamietz (339–40) lists satirical *topoi* – particularly those known from the fragments of Varro's *Menippeae* – that have close parallels in the *Satyrica.* These include the criticism of poor rhetorical education (§§ 1–5), of superstition (§§ 15–26.6), the *poeta vesanus et libidinosus* (§§ 83–90), and the satirical banquet (§§ 26.7–79.7). To these we should add various elements from verse satire, such as Agamemnon's direct reference to Lucilius (§ 4.5), the motif of legacy-hunting (§ 116–7) and of course the satirical banquet yet again.[91] While these *topoi* establish close links between the *Satyrica* and the satirical tradition – not only the Menippean one – we need to bear in mind that a considerable portion of the narrative revolves around matters of love and intrigue, hallmarks of the novel.[92] Significantly, Macrobius mentions Petronius together with Apuleius, calls their works *fabulae,* and emphasises their erotic subject matter.[93]

87 Cf. Reich (1903: 569–74), Nicoll (1931: 127) and Kocur (2018: 297–9). It should be noted that the plotlines of the *Iolaus* and *Tinouphis* have been compared to comedies and mimes, cf. Stephens & Winkler (eds. 1995: 358, 400) and Conte (1996: 164).

88 For the evidence of the *prosimetrum* in Milesian tales, cf. Jensson (2004: 97).

89 In fact, Conte (1996: 144 n. 5) claims that in his volume on Menippean satire Relihan (1993) "cannot formulate definite formal constants beyond the mere prosimetric structure."

90 For the *Satyrica* as a satire, cf. esp. Adamietz (1987) and Relihan (1993: 91–9); for the work as a novel, cf. Conte (1996: 140–70) and Schmeling (1996).

91 For a detailed discussion of elements of verse satire in the *Satyrica,* cf. Rimell (2005: 170–2).

92 Cf. Conte 1996: 159, 161.

93 Macrob. *In Somn.* 1.2.7.8: *fabulae, quarum nomen indicat falsi professionem, aut tantum conciliandae auribus voluptatis, aut adhortationis quoque in bonam frugem gratia repertae sunt. auditum mulcent vel comoediae, quales Menander eiusve imitatores agendas dederunt, vel argumenta fictis casibus amatorum referta, quibus vel multum se Arbiter exercuit vel Apuleium non numquam lusisse miramur* ("Fables – the very word acknowledges their falsity – serve two purposes: either merely to gratify the ear or to encourage the reader to good works. They delight the ear as do the comedies of Menander and his imitators, or the narratives replete with imaginary doings of lovers in which Petronius Arbiter so freely indulged and with which Apuleius, astonishingly, sometimes amused himself"). Trans. Stahl (trans. 1952). Among others, this point has been stressed by Conte (1996: 160) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011: xxxi).

Among the most serious problems with both hypotheses, i.e. that the *Satyrica* is a Menippean satire or a novel, is the fact that these genre labels are anachronistic. As mentioned above, there is no ancient term for 'novel'.[94] Similarly, *saturae Menippeae* did not refer to a literary genre but to the satirical works of Varro only.[95] Some scholars, however, have attempted to be more historically accurate, arguing that contemporaries would have referred to the *Satyrica* as a *fabula Milesia.* We learn from ancient authors such as Ovid and Plutarch that these 'Milesian tales' were sexually explicit stories more or less closely associated with the city of Miletus.[96] As far as we know, Milesian tales were first given a literary form in the Μιλησιακά of Aristides (2nd century BCE), whose work was translated into Latin by a certain Sisenna (possibly the praetor of 78 BCE). Unfortunately, we possess only one fragment of Aristides and ten of Sisenna, which is why our understanding of the genre predominantly relies on indirect evidence. Most remarkably, it is referred to at the beginning of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (1.1.): *at ego tibi sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conseram* ("But I would like to tie together different sorts of tales for you in that Milesian style of yours").[97]

Traditionally, it was assumed that the Μιλησιακά was merely a collection of salacious short stories and that, if any, there was only a very loose connection between the individual tales.[98] More recently, Harrison (1998) and Jensson (2004: esp. 261–2) have suggested that Aristides' work was indeed a kind of travelogue in which a first-person narrator was told various stories that he inserted into the overall narrative. This is taken to mean that the Μιλησιακά constitute "the first ancient literary text that deserves the generic title of novel" (Jensson 2004: 296). Harrison and Jensson claim that the two crucial characteristics they have identified in Aristides, i.e. a first-person narrator and the technique of incorporating

94 Cf. n. 75. Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011: xxxiii) understand a novel to be work of "extended narrative prose fiction." In the case of the *Satyrica,* of course, we need to allow for the prose to be interspersed with verse.

95 For a full discussion, cf. Relihan (1993: 12–7).

96 Bowie (2013) offers the most recent survey of the surviving evidence; with reference to the *Satyrica,* cf. esp. Jensson (2004: 255–71, 293–301).

97 Trans. Hanson (ed., trans. 1989).

98 It was commonly asserted that some inset tales of the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius and the *Satyrica,* especially the story about the Pergamene youth (§§ 85–7) and of the widow of Ephesus (§§ 111–2), belonged to the Milesian tradition; cf. e.g. Courtney (2001: 137) and Benz (2001: 89–107). The latter's discussion also includes the episode revolving around Eumolpus, Philomela and her children (§ 140.1–11).

short stories into a larger frame, also mark the *Metamorphoses* and the *Satyrica* as Milesian tales.[99] Ultimately, Jensson's (*ibid.* 279–92) argument is that Petronius' work – just as Apuleius' – is an adaptation of an earlier text, a Greek Milesian tale entitled Σατυρικά or perhaps Μασσαλιωτικά (cf. *ibid.* 299).[100] Jensson's hypothesis is intriguing, but – seeing that it is extrapolated from only a few lines of ancient texts – it clearly belongs to the realm of speculation.

I.4.2.2 The *Satyrica* as a Parody

When it comes to the question of Petronius' place in literary history, the parodic readings of his work deserve particular attention. The most common interpretation, i.e. that the *Satyrica* amounts to a parody of the 'idealising' novel, goes back to Richard Heinze's 1899 article *Petron und der griechische Roman.* Therein Heinze argues that – contrary to what was the *opinio communis* at the time – the *Satyrica* is closely related to the extant Greek novels, albeit in terms of theme and plot rather than in terms of tone. There is the structural parallel that the action revolves around a pair of lovers whose travels are governed by τύχη/*fortuna* and/or a deity who present them with various threats to their relationship, such as sea storms and shipwrecks, scenes of jealousy, and suicide attempts. However, according to Heinze, the mode in which Petronius engages with the novelistic form is one of parody. He replaces the faithful male-female couple with an unfaithful male-male one and transposes most of the story into the low ranks of society. The parodic tone is also said to be evident in Encolpius' way of narrating his life, for instance in that he compares trivial events to heroic achievements or tragic scenes. Here, I will briefly summarise the objections other scholars have raised against Heinze's hypothesis; later on, I will criticise his (inverted) heteronormative reading of the *Satyrica* in particular.[101]

99 Harrison (1998) focuses on the *Metamorphoses,* Jensson (2004) on the *Satyrica.* Their argument can be considered a reformulation of Bürger's (1892) hypothesis. For different views on the narrative structure of Aristides' Μιλησιακά, cf. e.g. Walsh (1970: 14–7) and Bowie (2013: 247).

100 Prior to Jensson, scholars such as Collignon (1892: 323) and Veyne (1965: 321–3) had suggested that the *Satyrica* might have had a Greek model. For scepticism towards this view, cf. e.g. Henderson (2010: 488) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011: xxxi).

101 Cf. chapter II. Overall Aspects: Sexuality in the *Satyrica,* the 'Idealising' Novel and the Comic Tradition as well as chapter VII. Final Remarks: The Sex Life of Petronius' Characters.

While Heinze's hypothesis has been supported by many scholars and has recently been reformulated by Edward Courtney (2001: 24) and Aldo Setaioli (2011: 369–90), the most obvious objection against it is that we have no clear evidence that the genre of the 'idealising' novel even existed in Petronius's day, which most scholars – including Courtney – still believe to be the Neronian era. The problem is that Chariton's *Callirhoe,* our earliest representative of the genre, is probably no older than the mid-first century CE, possibly even younger.[102] For his hypothesis to make sense, Heinze (1899: 519) argues that the 'idealising' novel must have been established at the time Petronius was writing, while unfortunately our evidence of the genre surfaces only much later. The *Ninus* papyrus, which is likely somewhat older than *Callirhoe,* may be seen to corroborate this hypothesis.[103] Most of the chronological problems can be overcome by allowing for the *Satyrica* to have been composed in the second century CE.[104]

Other scholars, most recently John R. Morgan (2009), have argued that reading the *Satyrica* as a parody does not require any direct relation to the 'idealising' novel.[105] Apart from pointing to the issue of chronology, Morgan (*ibid.* 44) claims that the recent papyrus finds – rather than being forerunners of the *Satyrica* – show that the genre of the Greek novel was a much vaguer target for parody than Heinze suggests. His overall argument is that Petronius' humour is effective even if the *Satyrica* is not a parody of the 'idealising' novel, since in fact all elements commonly taken as parody are either "commonplaces of many literary forms, or straightforward reflections or reality" (*ibid.* 45). In other words: Petronius only seems to be parodying novelistic texts because he draws on largely the same stock of literary *topoi* as the extant 'idealising' novels. Morgan (2009: 45) stresses the point that parody of the 'idealising' novel – even if it were accepted – sheds light upon the love plot of the *Satyrica* only, whereas it fails to account for its other parts, most importantly the *cena Trimalchionis* and the discussions about literature.[106]

102 Cf. Courtney 2001: 16–7.

103 The *Ninus* dates from the early first century CE, cf. Stephens & Winkler (eds. 1995: 23). Adamietz (1987: 331) thinks that this gives a Neronian Petronius enough time to parody the genre of the 'idealising' novel; Henderson (2010: 490) takes the opposing view.

104 Cf. Henderson (2010).

105 Cf. also, e.g., Sullivan (1968: 92–8) and Henderson (2010: 485–7).

106 This concession is also made by Setaioli (2011: 384).

Since the exact target of Petronius' parody remains elusive, this element is inadequate to pin down the genre of his work.[107] Even if we consider the *Satyrica* to be a parody of the 'idealising' novel, this leaves open the question whether Petronius inaugurated the genre of the parodic novel or rather drew on pre-existing (Greek) models.[108] If the *Satyrica* is unrelated to the 'idealising' novel, it may still participate in a tradition of novelistic entertainment, represented by literary forms such as the *fabula Milesia* (cf. Morgan 2009: 45). While it is sometimes argued that the parodic element connects the *Satyrica* to the Menippean tradition,[109] this is clearly but one of several possibilities.[110]

I.4.2.3 Open Questions

As we have seen, some of the opposing views in Petronian scholarship are the result of subjective evaluations, particularly when it comes to questions of narrative coherence and authorial standpoint. Most of the remaining problems revolve around matters of chronology and the originality of Petronius' work. For the sake of clarity, we may picture the conceivable options in the form of a triangle, with the three extreme positions being the following:

1) The *Satyrica* is deeply rooted in the tradition of Menippean satire. The novelistic elements play a subordinate role at best. The satirical tradition has left its mark on the *Satyrica* in the form of familiar themes and, most importantly, in the form of the *prosimetrum.* Other prosimetric texts – narrative papyri of the second century, mimes and perhaps Milesian tales – are either unrelated to Petronius's work, or imitations of it, and/or themselves inspired by the Menippean tradition. 2) The

107 Apart from Heinze's (1899) and Morgan's (2009) position, we may note that Relihan (1993: 92) regards the *Satyrica* as a parody of verse satire.

108 Heinze (1899: 518 n. 3) thinks the latter option more likely. Courtney (2001: 26) points out that, if the *Satyrica* was the first work to parody the 'idealising' novel, we would have to "imagine Petronius in one language [sc. Latin] conceiving the original enterprise of parodying works written in another language [sc. Greek], which is not a very easy supposition." Jensson (2004: 246–55; 271–9) takes stock of the widespread idea that Petronius was an extraordinary literary innovator.

109 Cf. Adamietz (1987: 336). On parody in the Menippean tradition, cf. Relihan (1993: 25–8).

110 Of course, parody may occur in various genres, notably in Milesian tales (cf. Harrison 1998) and in comedy.

Satyrica is innovative inasmuch as it is the first work to parody the genre of the 'idealising' novel, and the first work to present a long piece of narrative fiction in the prosimetric form. The other prosimetric texts are either unrelated to it or follow in Petronius' footsteps. 3) The *Satyrica* belongs to the novelistic tradition; there is no direct link to Menippean satire. The *Iolaus* and *Tinouphis* are part of a genre of light-hearted prosimetric novels that was well established at the time Petronius was writing and that might have included prosimetric Milesian tales.

Likely, the truth lies somewhere in between these three extremes. The *Satyrica* may be regarded as a 'generic hybrid'[111] or indeed as a text that defies genre labels altogether.[112] As it stands, however, we have no means of drawing any far-reaching conclusions.[113]

A key fact to keep in mind about the literary background of the *Satyrica* is that a number of open questions are unlikely to be answered beyond doubt. Part of the problem is due to the scarcity of our evidence. In addition to the fragmentary state of the *Satyrica* itself, we are facing a high degree of uncertainty when it comes to its possible inspirations, such as Varro's *Menippea,* Aristides' *Μιλησιακά,* or indeed the Graeco-Roman mime.

The *Satyrica* has been described as "a work parasitic on almost every known literary form" (Rimell 2005: 160), ranging from the 'idealising' novel and Milesian tales to satire and iambic poetry, epic, historiography, comedy and mime, tragedy, love elegy, and oratory.[114] Arguably, however, a similar description can be applied to several literary forms that, in

111 The influential notion of *Kreuzung der Gattungen* was introduced by Kroll (1924: 202–24). Though originally concerned with the development of new literary genres out of older ones, 'generic crossing' now commonly refers to an author's technique of evoking several traditional genres within the same text (cf. Barchiesi 2001: 147; Walde 2009: esp. 17–20). When discussing the satirical and novelistic elements in the *Satyrica,* many scholars come to the conclusion that the work is a hybrid of both genres; cf. e.g. Walsh (1970: 29), Adamietz (1987: 345–6), Relihan (1993: 95).

112 Slater's (1990) analysis of the *Satyrica* puts forward the idea that the expectations a contemporary audience might have had about the work were constantly being frustrated as they read the text. Christesen & Torlone (2002: esp. 154) argue that it is unsatisfactory and potentially misleading to label Petronius' work a novel, a Menippean satire, or a unique (and strikingly modern) piece of literature. They (*ibid.* 135) argue that the *Satyrica* constitutes an extreme case of "a Roman literary tradition which privileged experimentation with and mixing of genres inherited from the Greeks." Only the *Apocolocyntosis,* they claim (*ibid.* 164–6), employs the same strategy of exploiting jarring generic juxtapositions for comic effect.

113 Cf. Stephens & Winkler (eds. 1995: 365–6), Conte (1996: 164), Courtney (2001: 26).

114 For this list of genres, cf. Holzberg's (2009b) bibliography; cf. also Vannini (2007).

turn, have been referred to for the contextualisation of Petronius' work. This is true for Roman satire, which bears rich variety in its very name and is not only known for its extensive parody of other genres but also for its indebtedness to comedy.[115] It is equally true for the notoriously 'polyphonic' Greek novel, which has been said to draw on epic (the reference point for all other ancient genres),[116] tragedy, New Comedy, lyric poetry and epigram, historiography, rhetoric, ecphrasis, epistolography, and oral storytelling – many of the same matrices as those discussed in Petronian scholarship.[117] Much of the same diversity is attested for the mime, whose heterogenous nature has already been addressed. We have to concede that many of the elements in Petronius' work – e.g. the motifs of jealousy and deception or plots of love and trickery – had long become literary commonplaces by the time he was writing and thus have very limited value for discussions of genre.

While this uncertainty cannot be eliminated, for the purposes of this study it is ultimately unimportant where exactly Petronius' comicality stems from. As has been stated at the beginning of this chapter, my aim is neither to prove a 'direct' intertextual relationship between the *Satyrica* and the extant plays of comedy, nor to show that comedy's impact on Petronius is greater than that of other genres. Instead, I wish to bring to the fore the close proximity between Petronius and extant comic playwrights in their treatment of characters, motifs and plot elements.

I.5 Basic Premises for a Narratological Reading of the *Satyrica*

Since – as Rimell (2005: 162) rightly points out – genre labels can function as self-fulfilling prophecies, throughout this study I will refer to the *Satyrica* simply as a (prosimetric) narrative. While this term does not

115 For a discussion of the evidence pertaining to the ancient *satura,* cf. Coffey (1989: 11–8). On the various authors evoked in the satires of Horace and Persius, cf. e.g. Freudenburg (2005: 13–14). Freudenburg (2013) explores the fuzzy boundaries between verse satire and the Menippean tradition. Ferriss-Hill (2015) discusses the relationship between satire and Old Comedy. On satire and New Comedy as well as the *fabula palliata,* cf. esp. Hor. *Sat.* 2.3.11–2 as well as Leach (1971), Hunter (1985), Hanses (2016), Traill (2020), and Manuwald (2020: 387–8).

116 Ambühl (2019: 167–75) gives an overview of the ways in which ancient theory and practice defined literary genres in terms of their proximity to epic. Ps.-Longinus' treatise *On the Sublime* (9.15), for instance, suggests a close connection between the comic tradition and Homer's *Odyssey.*

117 The seminal study on the generic composition of the Greek novel is Fusillo (1989).

help us in placing Petronius' text in Graeco-Roman literary history, it suffices to highlight one fundamental difference between the *Satyrica* and the various comedies I will compare it to: the difference in medium. Petronius' work is a narrative, i.e. a long sequence of words uttered by a narrator (or several narrators) – words that are meant to be read and/or listened to when recited. One aim of this study is to investigate how this narrative interacts with a text type that is not meant to be read or recited but *performed*: ancient comic stage plays. These are not confined to words – although the characters' dialogue is often crucial – but also pertain to a variety of *visual and auditory aspects,* including intonation and loudness, gestures and facial expressions, noise and music, lighting, props, and the design of the stage set. As we shall see in the chapters on narrative technique, Petronius needs nothing else than words to create the impression of a stage performance before the inner eye of his audience.

I.5.1 Protagonist vs. Narrator

Seeing that the *Satyrica* has frequently been read from a narratological point of view – and with markedly different outcomes – I shall briefly outline some basic assumptions that will be central to the main body of this study. My first assumption is that the extant *Satyrica,* though fragmentary, allows for meaningful statements to be made about its narrative structure. The lack of a beginning and an ending – in addition to everything else that has been lost – has to put us on our guard when debating such questions as Encolpius' narrative perspective and his possible development in the course of the story. We need to accept that assertions about the *Satyrica* as a whole always involve speculations about lost portions of the text, and that this applies to narratological approaches in particular. For instance, a reading that systematically distinguishes between the experience of first-time readers as opposed to those reading the text another time around – as Winkler (1985) has done for Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* – is simply out of the question for the *Satyrica.* Still, the text as we have it is at least substantial enough to compare to one another the representation of distinct episodes, most of which have a clear beginning and ending and all of which are held together by the presence of Encolpius as both protagonist and narrator.

My second assumption is that the principles of modern narratology can be applied to an ancient text such as the *Satyrica,* allowing me to

describe the structure of the work with the help of Genettean terminology.[118] At the most basic level, Encolpius the narrator can be classified as homodiegetic, since he is himself a character in his story,[119] and as extradiegetic, seeing that – as far as we know – his narrative is not itself framed by another narrative told by a different narrator.[120] Inasmuch as Encolpius is also the hero of his own narrative rather than a mere observer, he may be further classified as an autodiegetic narrator.[121]

Admittedly, such broad categorisations do not have much value for our understanding of the *Satyrica.* What is more pertinent is the distinction between Encolpius the protagonist and Encolpius the narrator as well as the latter's relationship to the implied author, issues that have received ample discussion in the past decades. First of all, Encolpius the protagonist is a character in the story, i.e. someone who performs acts in the story world of the *Satyrica.*[122] We can be sure to be dealing with the level of Petronius' characters when Encolpius *does* something in the story, e.g. striking Giton's head (§ 96.3) or speaking to Agamemnon (§§ 1–2) – for, a speech act amounts no less to an event in the story than a straightforward action. Another function of the protagonist is that the narrator may tell his narrative by means of focalisation through him (experiencing focalisation), i.e. by suppressing hindsight knowledge and recounting the action as it was perceived by the protagonist at the time of action.[123] In such cases, if the narrator makes use of the first person singular, we speak of the 'narrated I' rather than of the 'narrat-

118 Cf. Genette (1980; 1988). For a detailed discussion of how narratological concepts have been applied to ancient, medieval, and early modern texts, cf. the contributions in Contzen & Tilg (eds. 2019).

119 The alternative is a heterodiegetic narrator, i.e. one who is "absent from the story he tells" (Genette 1980: 244), such as the Homeric narrator in the *Iliad.*

120 Conversely, a narrator who tells a narrative within another narrative is called intradiegetic; cf. Genette (1980: 245). In the *Satyrica* this classification applies, among others, to Eumolpus at §§ 85–7 or § 89.

121 For the terminology, cf. Genette (1980: 245). The same classifications are made by Schwazer (2017: 75).

122 Story refers to "the succession of events, real or fictitious, that are the subjects of this [narrative] discourse, and to their several relations of linking, opposition, repetition, etc." (Genette 1980: 25). It is "a totality of actions and situations taken in themselves, without regard to the medium, linguistic or other, through which knowledge of that totality comes to us" (*ibid.*).

123 Focalisation is Genette's (1980: 186) reformulation of narrative 'perspective' or 'point of view'. Crucially, it should not be confused with narrative 'voice', i.e. with questions of *"who is the narrator?"* or simply *"who speaks?"* (Genette 1980: 186). Instead, focal-

ing I'.[124] The latter mode of storytelling (narrating focalisation) is clearly identifiable only when there is an indication as to the narrator's distinct standpoint, i.e. as to the difference between protagonist and narrator in terms of 1) time, 2) knowledge and 3) communicative situation.

For instance, at § 47.7, the narrator tells us that *nec adhuc sciebamus nos in medio [lautitiarum], quod aiunt, clivo laborare* ("Little did we know we were but halfway through [the delicacies] and were still climbing up the hill, as they say"). Here, the narrator not only refers to the temporal distance between himself and the protagonist by the use of past tense, but – more importantly – he also points to the difference in knowledge between the two Encolpii (*nec adhuc sciebamus*): The narrator, looking back in hindsight, hints at the further development of the *cena Trimalchionis,* which is beyond the capacities of the protagonist at the time of the action. Apart from paying attention to time and information, we may identify the narrating I when the narrator refers to the communicative situation he finds himself in, i.e. to the act of telling a narrative (*quicquid dixero, minus erit,* "Whatever I say will be too little," § 126.15) or to the act of remembering (*sexcenta huiusmodi fuerunt, quae iam exciderunt memoriae meae,* "There were six hundred of this kind, which have now escaped my memory," § 56.10).[125]

For the narratological discussion in the main part of this study, we need to keep in mind that such clear cases of narrating focalisation are very rare in the *Satyrica,* as experiencing focalisation is arguably the narrator's default option.[126] In the absence of such clear indications as exemplified above, the presence of the narrator cannot be gathered from *what* he tells, as he cannot change the events and characters of the story (cf. below), but only from *how* he tells it, since he may employ various methods of representing the story. The narrator's representation then

isation is exclusively concerned with questions such as *"who is the character whose point of view orients the narrative perspective? – or, more simply, the question who sees?"* (*ibid.*), all emphases in the original. Accordingly, it is mainly concerned with the flow of narrative information and its relationship to the knowledge of the characters in the story.

124 For these definitions, cf. Genette (1980: 199 and 252).

125 In this context, 'narrating' refers to "the act of narrating taken in itself" (Genette 1980: 26), i.e. to the fact that the narrator is telling a tale and to the circumstances surrounding this act of narration.

126 For passages indicative of the distance between Encolpius the protagonist and Encolpius the narrator, cf. Stöcker (1969: 136–8), Plaza (2000: 22), Goldman (2006: 4–8), and Schwazer (2017: 86–89). On the predominance of experiencing focalisation, cf. e.g. Plaza (2000: 20), Jensson (2004: 199), Breitenstein (ed. 2009: XVIII), and Schwazer (2017: 78).

gives rise to manifold questions as to the relationship between the narrative he tells and the story it is based on.[127] These questions are at the heart of narratology.

When it comes to the distinction between the protagonist and the narrator, Roger Beck's (1973; 1975; 1982) articles mark a milestone in Petronian scholarship. While previous scholars had often tried to find the perspective of Petronius himself in the *Satyrica,* Beck proposed a different way of explaining the, at times, radically different views expressed in the narrative.[128] Beck claims that there is not only a considerable temporal difference between Encolpius the protagonist and Encolpius the narrator, but that the two are also "very *different* characters. The narrator [...] is sophisticated and competent, while his former self is chaotic and naïve" (Beck 1973: 43, original emphasis). He argues that Encolpius the narrator establishes an ironic distance between himself and the protagonist, thus deliberately trying to amuse the audience of his autobiographical tale (cf. Beck 1973: 45).

Beck' hypothesis was accepted by many,[129] a noteworthy follow-up being Gareth Schmeling's (1994/95: 210) reading of the *Satyrica* as "a confession of past mistakes and sins" made by the narrator Encolpius. Schmeling (2018) has recently restated his interpretation, retelling the *Satyrica* as a seemingly endless succession of humiliations and shortcomings confessed to by Encolpius. Taking Beck's distinction between the two sides of Encolpius as a starting point, Gottskálk Jensson (2004: 29–83) proposes to read the *Satyrica* as a *narratio in personis,* i.e. as a speech characterised by the fact that Encolpius the narrator impersonates all other characters in the text, including the protagonist (*ibid.* 29–37). Jensson does not claim that the older Encolpius is more mature than

127 Narrative (or 'narrative discourse') refers to "the narrative statement, the oral or written discourse that undertakes to tell of an event or a series of events [i.e. of the story]" (Genette 1980: 25).

128 Veyne (1964) argued that, throughout the *cena Trimalchionis,* the narrator Encolpius functions as the mouthpiece of the author in that he directly expresses Petronius' critique of Trimalchio and his freedmen guests. In the rest of the narrative, however, Encolpius' narration is said to be full of self-mockery, resulting from the fact that Petronius increases the distance between himself and the narrator and thus has the latter become the butt of jokes. In many regards, Veyne's (1964) hypothesis is followed by Goga (1998) and Laird (1999: 216–7). For attempts to find Petronius' own voice in the *Satyrica,* cf. also Stubbe (1933: 150–3), Sullivan (1968: 98–9), Stöcker (1969: 141–5), and Slater (1990: 13).

129 Courtney (2001: 37 f. n. 31), for instance, claims that Beck's articles "despite some reservations remain fundamental for the distinction between actor and narrator." Cf. also Habermehl (ed. 2006: XX).

his younger self, but that they are merely differentiated by a temporal and cognitive distance – the narrator knowing the outcome of the story – as well as by the fact that the narrator tells his tale for the amusement of an audience.[130]

I.5.2 The Unreliable Narrator and the Implied Author

The views of Gian Biagio Conte (1996) oppose – or are at least partly incompatible with – those of Beck. He does not focus on the distinction between the narrator and the protagonist but argues that the ironic tension perceivable in the text ultimately stems from the 'hidden author' and his detached gaze at his literary creation. Conte's argument is based on the assumption that Encolpius is a *mythomaniac* narrator who "naively exalts himself by identifying with heroic roles among the great mythical and literary characters of the past" (*ibid.* 2). It is the hidden author's 'game' to have Encolpius live through adventures inevitably foiling every attempt at greatness. The author thus invites his readers/listeners to distance themselves from the narrator's point of view and to adopt the author's ironic perspective instead.[131]

By now, it has become a commonplace in Petronian scholarship that Encolpius the narrator tends to tell his narrative in a way that amounts to a misrepresentation of the story, a phenomenon that is commonly know as narrative unreliability.[132] As Conte (1996) has clearly shown, in such narratives it is helpful to expand our narratological model by the introduction of the implied author (whom Conte calls the 'hidden author'). This entity is not to be equated with the historical author Petronius, but it constitutes the moral, intellectual and aesthetic standard of the *Satyrica* that readers may reconstruct from the text.[133]

130 Jensson's interpretation has been taken up by Kirichenko (2010: 197–9), who adds that there must be yet another speaker, the ultimate mastermind, behind the mask of Encolpius the narrator.

131 Jones (1987: 811–2) had criticised Beck for virtually ignoring the potential of authorial irony.

132 A narrator is unreliable if she/he "misreports, -interprets or -evaluates, or if she/he underreports, -interprets or -evaluates [sc. the elements of the story]" (Shen 2014: 896). Prior to Conte (1996), Walsh (1970: 81) had characterised Encolpius as an unreliable narrator in more general terms; cf. also Rudich (1997: 186). On his 'self-delusion' by means of literary comparisons, cf. Sandy (1969: 295) and Beck (1973: 49).

133 This definition is based on Schmid (2014a: 288).

While this category can never be 'objective', since different readers will construct different implied authors, the concept is highly useful for analysing narratives told by an unreliable narrator. For, claiming that Encolpius misrepresents (part of) what he tells and that this amounts to a satire of self-delusion (cf. e.g. Sandy 1969) implies that there is some standard – not spelled out in the text but still somehow discernible – from which Encolpius deviates. This is most obvious when we perceive the narrator's representation to clash with the events of the story, for instance when Encolpius describes himself as an infuriated warrior whose 'rampage' is brought to an end by the sudden appearance of a common soldier (§ 82.1–4).[134] In this case it is, strictly speaking, unnecessary to refer to the implied author, as 1) the concept of 'story' as used by Genette (1980) is sufficient to explain the discrepancy between the fictional 'reality' and Encolpius' representation,[135] and 2) Encolpius himself admits that he got carried away by his *temeritas* (§ 82.4). Elsewhere, however, the case is different. When, for instance, Encolpius uses epic language to describe his killing of a goose and subsequently likens himself to Herakles (§ 136.4–6), nothing in the narrative nor in the story marks Encolpius' comparison as a self-deluded. If we nevertheless, as most scholars do, interpret this episode as another case of *mythomania,* what Encolpius' representation clashes with is an assumption we have about the text and its moral/intellectual/aesthetic background, e.g. about what it means to be a 'true hero' – and the sum of these assumptions is exactly what I will refer to as the implied author.

While I am aware of the possible circular argument underlying the concept of the implied author – pointed out in Jensson's (2004: 23) criticism of Conte (1996) –, I acknowledge the fact that a comprehensive interpretation of the *Satyrica* cannot be achieved without some such standard; one that is based partly on subjective evaluations and partly on circumstantial evidence. In Jensson's (2004: 210–3) case, this standard is provided by Encolpius' audience – or, more exactly: by what Jensson assumes/infers to have been Encolpius' audience. Modern narratology might refer to this concept as the implied reader.[136] Of course, then,

134 For a discussion, cf. Conte (1996: 1–14).

135 Cf. n. 122. On the other hand, of course, the story is part of what readers use to reconstruct the implied author.

136 The implied reader is "the idea, in the real author's head, of a possible reader" (Genette 1988: 149), more precisely, "the author's image of the recipient that is fixed and objectified in the text by specific indexical signs" (Schmid 2014b: 301).

Jensson's standard is no less a reconstruction than the implied author, and thus amounts to nothing but a relocation of the problem.

In short, in this study I will use the term 'implied author' to refer to a hypothetical instance between the historical author and the narrator. As described by Conte (1996: 24), this 'agent' may design the story in such a way as to systematically expose Encolpius' unreliability, thereby creating a sense of irony and inviting the audience of the novel to identify with the implied author, so to speak, behind the narrator's back.

I.5.3 Narrator vs. (Implied) Author

Before moving on, I need to point out another – though not unrelated – assumption underlying my narratological approach. As has already been hinted at, I suppose that Encolpius the narrator merely represents the story; he does not invent or alter it in any way, since the story as such – just as the narrator himself – is the creation of the author. I emphasise this point because it is not in line with how Schmeling (1994/95; 2018) and Jensson (2004) understand the function of the narrator.

According to Schmeling (2018: 78 and *passim*), the narrator puts words into the mouths of all characters in the story, which is why even what is said by characters other than Encolpius can be read as part of his deliberate confession. In Jensson's (2004: 29–37) view, the narrator can make alterations to the discourse uttered by other characters and, at least occasionally, he can also influence the plot in order to entertain his audience.[137]

I do not mean to suggest that their readings of the *Satyrica* are invalid: It is perfectly possible to interpret Encolpius the narrator as a confessor or entertainer; only, I believe, such readings need to account for the fact that the narrator himself is part of the author's literary creation. The practical reason for assuming that the narrator cannot alter the story – and for taking the characters' discourse as part of the story – is akin to the discussion of the implied author above: If we allow Encolpius to invent and/or change (parts of) the story, we forfeit the possibility to systematically analyse the discrepancies between the story, the 'reality'

137 Cf. e.g. Jensson (2004: 49): "The way in which he [Encolpius] organizes his narrative can also have significance for the over-all impact he wishes to create. At the dinner party of Trimalchio, the host tyrannizes the faculty of speech and **must, quite literally, be narrated to the pot** to enable the famous speeches of the freedmen to take place (41.9)" (emphasis added).

of the story world, and Encolpius' representation of it. It blurs the lines between story, narrative, and narrating, the clear distinction of which forms the basis for most previous work on Petronius' narrative technique,[138] be it on particular episodes,[139] narrative speed[140] or the relation between Encolpius as *actor* and *auctor.*[141]

I.6 Summary: My Methodological Approach

This study aims to investigate from a narratological perspective elements in the *Satyrica* that can be referred to as comic in a narrow sense of the term, i.e. characters, motifs, plots and techniques associated with performances of ancient comedy. The theatrical forms most relevant to Petronius' work can be roughly subsumed under the broad category of 'farce', whose elements, however, are not exclusive to 'popular' comedy but also occur in its 'literary' varieties, perhaps most conspicuously so in the *fabulae palliatae* of Plautus.

The relationship between such plays and the *Satyrica* is not assumed to be one of 'direct' intertextuality. Rather, I suggest that Petronius incorporates into his narrative a range of comic *topoi* – with the caveat that we often cannot tell whether he deliberately alludes to the theatre (as when he explicitly refers to theatrical genres), or whether he is merely reworking comic elements that had long become conventional to the kind of novel/satire/Milesian tale he is writing.

Throughout my analysis, I will adhere to basic principles of Genettean narratological theory, the most important of which are the clear distinction between the novel's characters, focalisers, narrators, and its author,

138 Callebat (1974), Plaza (2000: 19–27), Goldman (2006). Cf. also Laird (1999) and Rimell (2007) on the narrative representation of speech and writing. Puccini-Delbey (2004) and Wolff (2009) focus on the role of the (implied) reader and of reduplication and contrast respectively. Schwazer's (2017: 74–99) Genettean analysis of Petronius' narrative is incorporated into his overall argument that the *Satyrica* was probably not composed in the Neronian era but in the second century CE (cf. *ibid.* 13); therefore, the aim and structure of his study are entirely different from mine.

139 Cf. Brożek (1972) on the representation of scenery; Aragosti (1979) and van der Paardt (1996) on the market episode (§ 12–15).

140 Cf. Segura Ramos (1976), Barchiesi (1981), Petrone (1991), Gagliardi (1999), Branham & Kinney (2000/1), and Jurado (2005).

141 Cf. Knight (1989), Perutelli (1990), Callebat (1995), Codoñer (1995), Baier (2007), and Labate (2013). The terms *actor* and *auctor* for 'protagonist' and 'narrator' are indebted to Winkler's (1985) seminal study of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses.*

with the corresponding functions of 'doing', 'seeing/feeling', 'telling' and 'composing/writing' respectively. My focus lies on the techniques used to incorporate comic elements into full narrative episodes, whereby I wish to show that comic effects are not limited to isolated parallels between dramatic scripts and Petronius' work, but that they include large-scale matters of characterisation as well as the overall design of several episodes.

II

Overall Aspects: Sexuality in the *Satyrica,* the 'Idealising' Novel and the Comic Tradition

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In simplistic terms, the *Satyrica* can be said to revolve around Encolpius and his beloved Giton, whose relationship is constantly threatened by different rivals. The same-sex element permeating the plot is most commonly explained as being part of Petronius' engagement with the 'idealising' novel, as originally proposed by Heinze (1899): According to this view, Petronius' parody is not restricted to 1) the change from higher-class characters to lower-class ones and 2) the substitution of faithful lovers with unfaithful ones.[142] Rather, these two aspects are said to be brought to full effect by 3) "the conversion of the heterosexual erotic theme into a homosexual one" (Courtney 2001: 24).[143] In this chapter, I will argue that this hypothesis is insufficient to explain the complex issue of sexuality in the *Satyrica* – first and foremost because Petronius ostensibly does not ridicule homoeroticism as such. Giving an overview of references to male-male sexual relationships in Graeco-Roman comedy, I will suggest that the comic tradition paves the way for the *Satyrica* with regard to the character trait of indiscriminate lechery as well as a general interest in sex between males.

142 On the *Satyrica* as a parody of the 'idealising' novel, cf. section I.4.2.2. The *Satyrica* as a Parody.

143 Cf. Heinze (1899: 495 f.) and, most recently, Courtney (2001: 24, 49 n. 56) and Setaioli (2011: 374–5). For a discussion of sexuality in the Greek and Roman novel, cf. Konstan (1994: 14–138) and Morales (2008). Ingleheart (2015) and Endres (2015) discuss the modern reception of the *Satyrica* as a 'gay classic'.

II.1 Problems of Terminology and Categorisation

First of all, we need to be highly cautious when referring to 'hetero-' or 'homosexuality' in the *Satyrica,* since these terms are anachronistic. As Craig A. Williams (2010a: 20–9) has shown in his detailed discussion, rather than making a distinction as to whether a male was sexually interested in females or males, Romans considered a normal phenomenon what we would today refer to as 'bisexuality': Males could openly seek sexual relations with both sexes without being regarded as anything other than 'truly masculine'.[144] What mattered instead, and what Williams (2010a: 18) calls "the prime directive of masculine sexual behavior for Romans," is that a male must always (appear to) play the 'active' part in sexual intercourse. This means that he should be the one penetrating others, not the one being penetrated.[145] If a male did not comply with this directive, he lost (part of) his perceived masculinity and was liable to being seen as effeminate.[146] If he also fulfilled other criteria of effeminacy – e.g. a romantic disposition or a great concern for his outward appearance – he could be labelled a full-blown *impudicus, pathicus* or *cinaedus.*[147]

The principle underlying these social conventions – in both ancient Greece and Rome – is that penetration was conceived of as a type of subjugation, and that 'true males' were supposed to occupy the 'dominant' position rather than the 'submissive' one.[148] Viewed from this perspective, male-female sex (the male penetrating the female) is entirely unproblematic, inasmuch as it reaffirms men's 'natural superiority' over

144 Williams' (2010a) argument is based on a thorough analysis of virtually all references to (male) homoeroticism in ancient Roman sources, both textual and material. For the range of genres and authors taken into account, cf. Williams' (*ibid.* 455–66) index of passages cited; for the visual arts, cf. e.g. the images printed between p. 136 and 137. For a critical discussion of different theories on male-male relationships in antiquity (esp. in Greece), cf. Robson (2013: 59–63).

145 As Kamen & Levin-Richardson (2014: 449 f.) point out, the conventional terms 'active' and 'passive' can be misleading, inasmuch as they suggest a one-to-one correspondence between penetration and agency. In fact, Latin texts not infrequently cast penetrated males in active roles, be it in terms of morphosyntax and/or of movement and desire (cf. *ibid.* 452–5). The same is true for penetrated females (cf. Kamen & Levin-Richardson 2015).

146 Cf. Williams 2010a: 137.

147 Cf. Williams 2010a: 191–7. The most recent discussion of the *cinaedus* (κίναιδος) is Sapsford (2022).

148 Cf. Robson (2013: 60 f.) with references for further reading.

women. Male-male sex, however, is only uncontroversial if the insertive partner is socially superior to the receptive one. Ancient Greece – or at least some circles within ancient Greek society – knew the institution of pederasty, i.e. sexual relationships between two free citizen males, an ἐραστής ("lover") and an ἐρώμενος ("beloved").[149] The ἐραστής, who was superior in age and experience, was expected to be the 'active' partner in this constellation – not only in terms of penetration but also in terms of courtship. If the younger ἐρώμενος wanted to escape public censure, he had to avoid the impression that he enjoyed playing the receptive role[150].

In Rome, such 'Greek-style' relationships between free citizen males did not meet with approval. Rather, having sex with a freeborn boy constituted a case of *stuprum* ("illicit sexual intercourse"), a crime punishable under Roman law.[151] This is because free citizens enjoyed the right to physical inviolability, which did not only protect them against corporal punishment but also against sexual penetration. The only exception was sex between husbands and wives. If a citizen male allowed himself to be penetrated, he forfeited his sexual inviolability – which can be described as his *pudicitia* ('sexual purity')[152] – and thus approached the (sexual) status of slaves and other non-citizens.[153] These reservations, however, did not apply to other constellations of male-male sex, i.e. to those that were clearly in line with the hierarchy of ancient Roman society. Citizen males were free to penetrate their own slaves as well as prostitutes

149 Lear (2014) offers an up-to-date introduction to ancient Greek pederasty. Cf. also the discussion below.

150 Cf. e.g. Dover 1978: 90 f.

151 According to Festus (418.8–18), *stuprum* ("disgrace") did not have a sexual connotation in the time of Naevius and his contemporaries (2nd century BCE). The meaning "illicit sexual intercourse" becomes apparent from Plautus onwards, e.g. Plaut. Amph. 1015 f.: *nunc domum ibo atque ex uxore hanc rem pergam exquirere, | quis fuerit quem propter corpus suom stupri compleverit* ("Now I will go home and continue questioning my wife about this matter, who it was she filled her body with shame for"). For further discussion of the term, cf. Williams (2010a: 103–36) and Dixon (2012: 18–26).

152 The English words used to translate *pudicitia* – such as "chastity", "modesty", "honour", or "virtue" – typically reflect modern prejudices about gender roles, first and foremost about persons read as female. Throughout this study, I will therefore translate *pudicitia* with the deliberately cumbersome expression 'sexual purity', or occasionally simply 'purity'. I will always put the expression in inverted commas, even when quoting from translations published by other scholars, and indicate the Latin original in brackets. In case it is used (nearly) synonymously with *pudicitia,* I will also translate *pudor* and its derivatives as 'sexual purity' etc.

153 Cf. Williams 2010a: 106 f.

and other non-citizens of either sex.[154] Usually, the social inequality between the two partners was complemented by a certain age difference: Older citizen males tended to go after younger non-citizens. The latter were typically thought to be most desirable between the onset of puberty (around the age of thirteen) and the arrival of the full beard (around the age of twenty).[155] If their roles were reversed, i.e. if a freeborn male allowed himself to be penetrated by a non-citizen, this was perceived as a double humiliation: The citizen did not only subject himself to somebody else, but he did so with regard to a person low on the social ladder.

When it comes to these basic principles of Roman masculinity, the altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus at § 9.6–10 is a case in point. The insults they hurl at each other cover a broad spectrum of sexual activities: Encolpius accuses Ascyltus of being a prostitute and of playing the receptive, i.e. 'female', role in sexual intercourse (*muliebris patientiae scortum*; "submissive whore, playing the woman's part"). The reference to his bad breath (*cuius ne spiritus quidem purus est*) is probably meant suggest that Ascyltus had performed *fellatio,* which was thought to cause *os impurum.*[156] Encolpius repeats the accusation of prostitution and effeminacy later in the story, this time not only directed at Ascyltus (*cuius anni ad tesseram venierunt, quem tamquam puellam conduxit etiam qui virum putavit*; "whose youth you could buy with a ticket, who was hired as a girl even by those who thought him a man", § 81.4)[157] but also at Giton (*qui [tamquam] die togae virilis stolam sumpsit, qui ne vir esset a matre persuasus est, qui opus muliebre in ergastulo fecit*; "who, on the day to put on the *toga virilis,* took a woman's garment instead; who was persuaded by his mother not to be a man; who played the part of a woman in a slave-prison", § 81.5). Ascyltus, in turn, accuses Encolpius of having had intercourse with female *fellatrices,* i.e. with women 'tainted' by oral sex (*qui ne tum quidem, cum fortiter faceres, cum pura muliere pugnasti*; "even in your best days you did not manage to fight with a clean woman, § 9.9). Both *facere* and *pugnare* can be used as metaphors for sexual activity; *fortiter faceres* is perhaps meant to insinuate that Encolpius now experiences bouts of impotence, which means that he is altogether unable

154 Cf. Williams 2010a: 19.

155 Cf. Williams 2010a: 19; for further discussion, cf. *ibid.* 78–84.

156 For a detailed discussion of the altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus, cf. section III.2. Altercation (§ 9.6–10.7).

157 I take *tessera* to be a ticket for the distribution of corn or money; it may also refer to dice used in gambling (cf. Habermehl ed. 2006 *ad loc.*).

to perform sexually. What is important to note about these accusations and insults is that none of them concerns the question whether the opponent is into males and/or females. The mere fact that a male was sexually interested in other males – ideally young and beautiful ones – did not cause any raised eyebrows, neither in ancient Greece,[158] nor in Rome,[159] nor in the *Satyrica*. There is thus no basis for asserting that Petronius makes fun of male-male relationships *per se*.[160]

As T. Wade Richardson (1984: 117) has already pointed out, the lack of categorical criticism against 'homosexuality' in the *Satyrica* is not easy to reconcile with the widespread hypothesis that Petronius parodies the 'idealising' novel by turning the prototypical male-female couple into a male-male one. In fact, those who defend Heinze's theory have to acknowledge that Petronius' parody is literary above all else, inverting genre expectations without ridiculing homoerotic desire as such.[161] Yet, even this is not an easy supposition: For, of the five 'canonical' Greek novelists, no less than three – Longus, Xenophon of Ephesus and Achilles Tatius – present male-male relationships without any apparent disapproval.[162] Thus, in the words of Gerald Sandy (1969: 299), "the most fundamental reason for regarding the *Satyricon* as a parody of the Greek romances is without basis in fact."[163] Countering this argument, Heinze's followers point out that the Greek texts restrict male-male sex to secondary characters, whereas it is at the centre of the *Satyrica*.[164] Even if we accept this point, it becomes clear that Petronius' supposed parody of the 'idealising' novel is highly limited: It pertains to the conventional (male-female) protagonists only. We should also note that, in this formulation, the parody hypothesis is heavily dependent on our current state of evidence regarding the ancient novel. Findings such as the second-century

158 Cf. Dover 1978: 1, 66.

159 Cf. Williams 2010a: 17.

160 This point had already been made by Sullivan (1968: 96) and Richlin (1983: 190). We thus cannot follow the interpretation of § 9.8–10 proposed by Soverini (1976) and echoed by Lefèvre (2007: 160); cf. esp. note 337.

161 Cf. Courtney (2001: 49 n. 56). Heinze (1899: 497 n. 3) had made some cautious remarks in the same vein.

162 Cf. the stories of Hippothous and Hyperanthes (X. Eph. 3.1.4–3.2.14), Clinias and Charicles (Ach. Tat. 1.7.1–1.14.3), and Gnatho and Daphnis (Longus esp. 4.16.1–4.19.5); see Konstan (1994: 26–30) for further discussion.

163 Cf. also Wehrli (1965: 136–7).

164 Cf. Heinze (1899: 497 n. 3), Adamietz (1987: 332) and Setaioli (2011: 374 f.).

CE novel *Protagoras,* which apparently involved a strong homoerotic element, should caution us against drawing definite conclusions about what 'typical' novels might have looked like.[165]

Having called Heinze's hypothesis into question, Richardson's (1984: 118) own suggestion is that Petronius plays on clichés about pederastic relationships which "must have provoked appreciation, laughter, and perhaps even nostalgia in his own audience."[166] As the following discussion will show, Richardson's hypothesis is somewhat too narrow, inasmuch as it can only account for a small number of sexual interactions in the *Satyrica.* Most importantly, all hypotheses discussed so far do not take into consideration the full spectrum of sexual desire in Petronius' narrative: Although they openly express an interest in males, several major characters of the *Satyrica* are far from being straightforward 'homosexuals'.

II.2 Indiscriminate Lechery

II.2.1 The Evidence of the *Satyrica*

A number of Petronian characters engage – or are said to have engaged – in sexual relationships with both sexes. Encolpius, of course, is in love with Giton throughout the extant *Satyrica.* In their altercation, Ascyltus apparently hints at one or more sexual encounters between Encolpius and himself in the past: *cuius eadem ratione in viridario frater fui qua nunc in deversorio puer est* ("I was the same kind of brother to you in the garden, as the boy is now in the lodgings," § 9.10). Encolpius also shows a clear interest in Philomela's son (§ 140.11), and the fact that Lichas rec-

165 Alpers (1996) extracted 41 fragments of this novel from the ninth-century Byzantine *Etymologicum Genuinum.* Apparently, the parallels between the *Satyrica* and the *Protagoras* also include several other elements, such as robbery and lechery, sexual impotence, prostitutes, and a symposium; cf. also the brief discussion in Henderson (2010: 489). On the problematic distinction between 'idealising' and 'realistic' ancient novels, cf. section I.4.2. The Genre of the *Satyrica.*

166 For the existence of such clichés, Richardson (1984: 116), for instance, refers to Xen. *Symp.* 8.3–4, where Socrates mimics an ἐρώμενος in the following manner: σὺ δὲ μόνος, ὦ Ἀντίσθενες, οὐδενὸς ἐρᾷς; Ναὶ μὰ τοὺς θεούς, εἶπεν ἐκεῖνος, καὶ σφόδρα γε σοῦ. καὶ ὁ Σωκράτης ἐπισκώψας ὡς δὴ θρυπτόμενος εἶπε· Μὴ νῦν μοι ἐν τῷ παρόντι ὄχλον πάρεχε· ὡς γὰρ ὁρᾷς, ἄλλα πράττω ("'Are you the only person, Antisthenes, in love with no one?' 'No, by Heaven!' replied he; 'I am madly in love – with you.' And Socrates, banteringly, pretending to be coquettish, said: 'Do not pester me just now; I am engaged in other business, as you see'"). Trans. Todd (ed., trans. 1923).

ognises Encolpius by touching his genitals (§ 105.9) likely implies that they can look back at a sexual relationship of their own.[167] It is worth mentioning that – with the notable exception of Ascyltus – the males Encolpius desires are described as being somewhat younger than himself.[168] Since the protagonists' background is not entirely clear,[169] it is possible that Encolpius is Giton's superior not only in terms of his age but also in terms of his social status; otherwise, their relationship may constitute a case of Greek-style pederasty between two free citizens. Encolpius and Ascyltus appear to be of equal social status – they are probably either freeborn citizens or freedmen. Although the fragments of the *Satyrica* do not provide us with unambiguous evidence, it seems most likely that the protagonists' sexual intercourse is conventional, inasmuch as that Encolpius (and Ascyltus) penetrate Giton rather than the other way around.[170] Seeing that Ascyltus compares his past sexual role to that presently occupied by Giton (§ 9.10, cited above), he appears to have been penetrated by Encolpius. These questions will be more thoroughly addressed later in this study.[171] Lichas, in turn, is apparently older than Encolpius and might even be his former master.[172]

On the other hand, Encolpius is certainly not averse to females. Most obviously, he expresses great interest in Circe (esp. § 126.13–18). Although the sexual encounter with her is unsuccessful (§ 128.1–2), I cannot agree with Thomas K. Hubbard's (ed. 2003: 386) claim that Encolpius seems "genuinely incapable of erectile performance with women." Firstly, Encolpius experiences the same bouts of impotence with Philomela's son

167 Cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*) "Was diese Identifikation [i. e. by touching Encolpius' genitals] über das einstige Verhältnis der beiden aussagt, liegt auf der Hand." Cf. also § 109.3 and § 113.10 with Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 100.7).

168 Giton – just as Philomela's son (§ 140.11) – is called a *puer*, whereas Encolpius and Ascyltus are referred to as *adulescentes* (cf. section III.1.2. Rape and Comic Slave Characters).

169 Cf. section III.1.2. Rape and Comic Slave Characters.

170 Richlin (2009: 86) lists the episodes in which Encolpius and Giton appear to be a prototypical pederastic couple: "In the third rented-room scene, Eumolpus ogles Giton while Encolpius defends Giton against him (§ 92, § 94) and against recovery by Ascyltos (§ 97); Encolpius is jealous of Eumolpus, here and later (§ 100). Giton says he is to Encolpius what Alcibiades was to Socrates (§ 128.7); the gullible Encolpius gets Giton to swear that Ascyltos never forced him to have sex (§ 133.1–2)."

171 Cf. section III.2. Altercation (§ 9.6–10.7).

172 Cf. Courtney (2001: 49): "it may be that he [sc. Encolpius] and Giton were in fact freedmen of Lichas, and had run away without performance of the *operae* (duties, services) which such owed their patron."

(§ 140.11) and also with Giton (§ 128.7).[173] With regard to Encolpius' impotence, Proselenos says that *neque puero neque puellae bona sua vendere potest* ("He can sell his goods to neither boy nor girl," § 134.8). Secondly, the references to Encolpius' past relations to females do not indicate any erectile dysfunction. He calls Tryphaena his *amica,* refers to himself as her *amator,* and is jealous of the kisses she gives to Giton (§ 113.5–8). Furthermore, it is generally assumed that Lichas' wife Hedyle was seduced by Encolpius in some part of the novel now lost.[174] Encolpius also seems to be interested in Chrysis (§ 126.8) and refers to his old passion for a certain Doris (§ 126.18).

Similarly, Giton is not only with Encolpius and Ascyltus, but he is also not reluctant (*sine dubio non repugnaverat puer,* § 26.3) during his sexual encounter with the young girl Psyche. Moreover, he revives his past relationship with Tryphaena, which makes Encolpius jealous (cf. above).

Eumolpus informs Encolpius about his escapade with the Pergamene boy, apparently a freeborn youth from a wealthy family, whom he seduced in his capacity as a teacher (§§ 85–7). Eumolpus tried to keep this sexual relationship secret from the boy's father (cf. § 85.1), we have to presume, because it constituted the crime of *stuprum.*[175] As far as other males are concerned, Eumolpus shows his desire for Giton (§ 94.1–2) and Encolpius (§ 140.5, 140.13). We also have to note, however, that Eumolpus has sex with Philomela's daughter even though he could have chosen her son (§ 140.1–10). It is clear that all characters Eumolpus goes after are younger than himself.[176] Encolpius remarks that, even though he is already an *adulescens* (cf. e.g. § 3.1), Eumolpus thinks of him as a *puer* (the age category of highest sexual attraction which was occupied, for instance, by Giton and Philomela's son): *Eumolpus, qui tam frugi erat ut illi etiam ego puer viderer* ("Eumolpus, who was so temperate that, to him, even I seemed to be a boy," § 140.5). Encolpius' word choice (*frugi*) is, of course, ironic: Rather than being able to keep his sexual appetite in check, he suggests, Eumolpus is so lecherous that he desires even those who are past the prime of youth.[177]

173 What is more, Encolpius – quite intentionally – does not get an erection in response to the efforts of a *cinaedus* at Quartilla's orgy (§ 23.5).

174 Cf. § 106.2 and § 113.3 with Courtney (2001: 46), Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 100.7) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad* § 113.3).

175 Cf. Habermehl ed. 2006 *ad loc.*

176 Eumolpus is introduced as a *senex* (§ 83.7).

177 Cf. Schmeling & Setaioli eds. 2011 *ad loc.*

Trimalchio presents himself as no less promiscuous: On the one hand, he is married to Fortunata and stresses the point that they sleep together (§ 47.5, § 75.9). On the other hand, he also owns a *puer delicatus* (cf. § 28.4, 64.5–6), manumits one *puer speciosus* (§ 41.6) and kisses another (§ 74.8, 75.4).[178] Habinnas, who is married to Scintilla, also has a sexual relationship with one of his slave boys (§ 67.12, 68.6–69.6). Lastly, Trimalchio boasts that, when still a young slave, he used to perform sexual services for both his master and his mistress (cf. § 75.11).

We may summarise that most male-male sexual relationships in the *Satyrica* – in accordance with the paradigms known from other sources – are characterised by an inequality in terms of age and social status. A fact that has received too little attention is that several major characters of Petronius' text (esp. Encolpius, Eumolpus, Trimalchio, and Habinnas) openly express their desire for both sexes. Their excessive sexual appetite has aptly been termed by Augier-Grimaud (2014: 117) as "hyper-sexualité." The modern tendency to identify Petronius' protagonists, particularly Encolpius, as straightforward 'homosexuals' may in part be owing to the mutilation of the *Satyrica*: Encolpius' (likely) sexual encounters with Tryphaena, Hedyle and Doris are lost; his relationship with Circe is plagued by impotence. It is important to note that common explanations concerning the issue of sexuality in the *Satyrica* – i.e. either that Petronius plays on clichés about pederasty (Richardson) or that he parodies male-female relationships in the 'idealising' novel (Heinze and his followers) – do not take into account the character trait of indiscriminate lechery. In the remainder of this chapter, I will argue that the excessive sexual desire characterising Encolpius and others can most adequately be explained by acknowledging the considerable evidence of such indiscriminate sexual appetite in the comic tradition.

178 Trimalchio's *deliciae* ("darling") is described as a *puer vetulus* ("an elderly boy," § 28.4). The oxymoron is apparently meant to emphasise the youth's ugliness (cf. Smith ed. 1975 *ad loc.*; Schmeling & Setaioli eds. 2011 *ad loc.*). Richlin (2009: 89–90) points to some other male sex objects with whom Trimalchio surrounds himself. These include *pueri capillati* (§ 27.1, 34.4, 70.8) and *pueri Alexandrini* (§ 31.3, 68.3). On sex with slaves in the *Satyrica,* cf. also Augier-Grimaud (2014: 118–21).

II.2.2 The Evidence of Graeco-Roman Comedy

When it comes to sex in the *Satyrica,* few scholars have drawn a connection to comedy. Patrick G. Walsh (1970: 26–7) briefly remarks that the homoerotic theme occurs in the mime and in the *fabula togata.* Roderick J. C. Boroughs (1993: 30–50), noting Eumolpus' "indiscriminate promiscuity" (*ibid.* 38), shows that Petronius' poet is a 'dirty old man' in the comic vein, perhaps best comparable to Philocleon in Aristophanes' *Wasps.* With regard to New Comedy and the *fabula palliata,* he notes that the Plautine *senex amator* is one of Eumolpus' closest literary relatives, since "every time Eumolpus attempts to seduce a girl or a boy, he ends up, like the Plautine old lovers, either being totally humiliated or, at least, looking quite ridiculous" (*ibid.* 49). A similar argument is made by Augier-Grimaud (2014: 112, 121), who adds that the *senex amator* comes close to the sexual extravagances of Trimalchio and Habinnas. She does not discuss the point in detail, however, since she believes the *senex amator* to be 'heterosexual'.[179] Yet, as the following survey will show, indiscriminate desire is far from uncommon in the comic tradition.

While it is true that elderly lovers in comedy usually chase after young women, we need to point out that several of these old men openly display an interest in both sexes. *Senes amatores* make an appearance in Plautus' *Asinaria, Bacchides, Casina, Cistellaria, Mercator,* and *Stichus*; they are also attested for the mime of the imperial period.[180] As Jane M. Cody (1976) has shown, Lysidamus, the *senex amator* of the *Casina,* defies categorisation along the lines of 'hetero-' or 'homosexuality'. Apart from lusting for the slave girl Casina – and apart from being married to Cleostrata –, he has a sexual relationship with his male slave Olympio. During their first homoerotic encounter in the play, the slave Chalinus

179 Augier-Grimaud (2014: 112): "il faut garder à l'esprit que le *senex amator* est hétérosexuel." There is a similar remark in Engels (2014: 122): "Neben dem Modell des *senex,* welches der Mimus Petron lieferte, wird ebenso die Zeichnung des lüsternen Alten durch Plautus auf die Darstellung des Eumolpos Auswirkungen gehabt haben. Petron lässt sich zwar vom Mimus und der Komödie inspirieren, verleiht der Figur jedoch eine unkonventionelle Note: Zwar wird Eumolpos wie der *senex* bei Plautus durch ein geradezu nie versiegendes sexuelles Begehren nach jugendlichen, hübschen Liebhaberinnen charakterisiert. Eumolpos zeichnet allerdings ebenso eine Vorliebe für junge Männer aus."

180 Cf. Ryder (1984) for an overview of Plautine *senes amatores.* As Duckworth (1952: 246) remarks, no such character exists in Terence. Ps.-Cyprian (*de spect.* 6) mentions lecherous old men in the mime; cf. Benz (2001: 106).

is eavesdropping on them. The initial topic of their conversation is, of course, securing Casina for Lysidamus:

Olympio: *erit hodie tecum quod amas clam uxorem.*
Lysidamus: *tace.*
ita me di bene ament ut ego vix reprimo labra
ob istanc rem quin te deosculer, voluptas mea.
Chalinus: *quid, deosculere? quae res? quae voluptas tua?*
credo hercle ecfodere hic volt vesicam vilico. 455
Olympio: *ecquid amas nunc me?*
Lysidamus: *immo edepol me quam te minus.*
licetne amplecti te?
Chalinus: *quid, 'amplecti'?*
Olympio: *licet.*
Lysidamus: *ut, quia te tango, mel mihi videor lingere!*
Olympio: *ultro te, amator, apage te a dorso meo!*
Chalinus: *illuc est, illuc, quod hic hunc fecit vilicum:* 460
et idem me pridem, quom ei advorsum veneram,
facere atriensem voluerat sub ianua.
Olympio: *ut tibi morigerus hodie, ut voluptati fui!*
Lysidamus: *ut tibi, dum vivam, bene velim plus quam mihi.*
Chalinus: *hodie hercle, opinor, hi conturbant pedes:* 465
solet hic barbatos sane sectari senex.
(Plaut. *Cas.* 451–66)

Olympio: Today you will have the object of your love behind your wife's back.
Lysidamus: Be quiet. As truly as the gods may love me well, I can barely hold my lips in check because of this and not kiss you, my darling.
Chalinus: What, you would kiss him? What on earth? What, "your darling"? I do believe he wants to dig out the overseer's bladder.
Olympio: Do you love me at all now?
Lysidamus: Yes, I love myself less than you. Can I hug you?
Chalinus: What? "Hug" him?
Olympio: You can.
Lysidamus: How I seem to be licking honey now that I am touching you!

Olympio: Away with you, lover, get off my back!
Chalinus: That is it, that is why he made him overseer. And some time ago, when I had come to meet him, he also wanted to make me the doorkeeper down by the back entrance.
Olympio: How submissive I have been to you today, how much pleasure I have given you.
Lysidamus: So much so that I should be more of a friend to you than to myself as long as I live.
Chalinus: Today they will conjoin their feet, I think. This old man really has a habit of chasing after bearded men.

Cody (1976: 455–6) is right in pointing out that this homoerotic encounter between Lysidamus and Olympio – together with their second one (Plaut. *Cas.* 723–41) – goes considerably beyond most other Plautine references to sexual relationships between masters and their male slaves. Lysidamus explicitly voices his desire to kiss and embrace Olympio (*deosculer … amplecti,* 453–7) and expresses his satisfaction when allowed to touch him (*mel mihi videor lingere,* 458). Olympio's question (*ecquid amas nunc me?,* 456) makes clear that this is not the first time he was thus approached by his master. Chalinus not only spells out the sexual innuendos (*ecfodere hic volt vesicam vilico … hi conturbant pedes,* 455 and 465), but also suggests that he himself had once been the target of Lysidamus' sexual advances (*et idem me … facere atriensem voluerat,* 461 f.). Similarly to what we have observed about Eumolpus, this old man's indiscriminate and excessive lust is further emphasised by the fact that he goes after males past the prime of their youth (*solet hic barbatos sane sectari senex,* 466).[181]

While it is true that Plautus devotes more attention to the relationship between Lysidamus and Olympio than to any other liaison between a master and one of his male slaves, it is certainly not uncommon for comic slave-owners to have *pueri delicati.*[182] Paegnium in the *Persa* is a prototypical case, as he has a telling name ("Plaything"), his remarks are full of saucy wit, and he makes an appearance in three major scenes of the play. Another such *puer* is Pinacium in the *Stichus,* a 'toy boy' who resembles

181 On Lysidamus' interest in bearded men, cf. also Williams (2010a: 86).

182 On *pueri delicati* in Roman comedy, cf. Lilja (1983: 16–20), Williams (2010a: 36–8) and Richlin (2017: 105–15).

the young Trimalchio in that he appears to please both his master and his mistress.[183] Although some *pueri* have grown up to be adult men at the time of the plays' action, as in the case of Olympio (cf. above), the close relation to their masters remains palpable.[184] The parallels between Giton and Plautine *pueri delicati* will be addressed in a later section.[185] What is important to remember here is that most comic masters in question are also in a relationship with females (their wives), which goes to show that their desire is not restricted to one sex.[186]

Senes amatores, however, are not the only comic characters openly expressing their interest in both sexes: In Plautus' *Asinaria,* the *adulescens* Argyrippus is in love with the female prostitute Philaenium. In a scene somewhat comparable to the homoerotic encounters in the *Casina,* Argyrippus allows his slave Libanus to ride on his back (699–710), strongly suggesting a sexual relationship between the two.[187] In the *Persa,* the central slave character Toxilus is not only in love with the *meretrix* Lemniselenis, but he also has an erotically charged friendship with his fellow-slave Sagaristio; additionally, he has Paegnium for his *puer delicatus.* The fact that Toxilus, himself a slave, owns another slave (a *servus vicarius*) can be explained by two factors: Firstly, Toxilus holds the relatively high position of an *atriensis,* the manager of his master's house. Secondly, in terms of comic stock types, he combines the features of a *servus callidus* and of a (usually freeborn) *adulescens* in love.[188] The plot of the *Miles gloriosus* is set in motion when the soldier Pyrgopolinices abducts the beautiful woman Philocomasium; he will later want to abandon her for another female, Acroteleutium. Pyrgopolinices' indiscriminate lechery is unambiguously expressed in a conversation with his slave Palaestrio. When the latter mentions Philocomasium's (imaginary) sister, Pyrgopolinices immediately asks him: *ecquid fortis visast?*

183 Cf. Lilja 1983: 18. While some other boys display comparable features (e.g. in the *Miles gloriosus* and the *Mostellaria*), there is no precise information as to any sexual relationship with their masters; cf. Lilja (1983: 18–9).

184 This is true, e.g., for Stalagmus in the *Captivi* (esp. 954–66); cf. Lilja (1983: 20–4) on adult *delicati* in Plautus and Williams (2010a: 84–90) on mature males as objects of desire in more general terms.

185 Cf. section III.1. Rape (§ 9.1–5).

186 Cf. Lilja 1983: 24.

187 Cf. Lilja 1983: 22–3.

188 For a detailed discussion of Toxilus' status as well as his sexual relationships, cf. Woytek (1982: 43–5).

("Did she seem good-looking?", Plaut. *Mil.* 1106). When, only a few lines later, Palaestrio informs the soldier about the ship's captain who had supposedly conveyed the sister, Pyrgopolinices' reaction is virtually identical: *quid is? ecquid fortis?* ("What about him? Is he good-looking?", Plaut. *Mil.* 1111). It is worth mentioning that, since the captain is surely not a beardless boy, the soldier resembles Lysidamus and Eumolpus in that his lust even pertains to males past their prime.[189] Finally, Palaestrio conveniently spells out Pyrgopolinices' excessive lechery: *abi sis hinc, nam tu quidem | ad equas fuisti scitus admissarius, | qui consectare qua maris qua feminas* ("Go away, will you? You would have made a proper stallion for the mares, you who pursue both males and females," Plaut. *Mil.* 1111–3).

We should note that – while many references to homoeroticism have been considered Plautine additions to the Greek originals[190] – the soldier Thraso in Terence's *Eunuchus* is in no way inferior to Pyrgopolinices when it comes to sexual desire for both females and males.[191] The last case in point is the *adulescens* Diniarchus in Plautus' *Truculentus,* who openly admits to having had contact with prostitutes of both sexes, and then proceeds to compare their respective (dis)advantages.[192] We should also point out that Plautus' relative emphasis on indiscriminate sexual appetite has a forerunner in Aristophanes. In the *Wasps,* Philocleon's lechery pertains not only to a slave girl (1342–53) and even his own daughter (607–9) but also to boys' genitals (578).[193] This point supports Boroughs' (1993) claim that there is a close resemblance between Philocleon and Eumolpus. In the *Acharnians,* Phales, the phallus personified, is associated with pederasty (265) just as well as with chasing after pretty slave girls (271–5). At the end of the *Knights* (1384–91), Demos is presented with sex objects both male and female. In the *Clouds* (1071–4), Worse Argument does not distinguish between the pleasures brought by boys and women.

We have observed that several major characters in the *Satyrica* openly express their desire for both sexes, a desire that regularly amounts to excessive lechery. On the one hand, this trait renders problematic the com-

189 For further discussion of Pyrgopolinices' interest in older males, cf. Williams (2010a: 87 f.).

190 Cf. section I.3.2. Farcical Elements in 'Popular' and 'Literary' Comedy.

191 Thraso is the lover of the female prostitute Thais, but also treats as sexual prey a young boy from Rhodes (Ter. *Eun.* 420–6).

192 Plaut. *Truc.* 147–57 (quoted in section III.2.2.3. The Dynamics of Comic Altercations). For an overview of such comparisons in Roman literature, cf. Williams (2010a: 22–4).

193 For a discussion of indiscriminate desire in Old Comedy, cf. Dover (1978: 135–7).

mon hypothesis that Petronius parodies the 'idealising' novel by substituting a male-female couple with a male-male one. On the other hand, it strengthens the ties between the *Satyrica* and the comic tradition, where indiscriminate desire is not an unusual phenomenon. While, at first sight, most extant comedies appear to focus on male-female love, the following section will demonstrate that male-male relationships (beyond those already discussed) were never absent from the ancient comic stage.

II.3 Other Male-Male Relationships in the Comic Tradition

In her discussion of the homoerotic element in the *Satyrica,* Augier-Grimaud (2014: 111) briefly remarks that we find numerous references to male-male sexual relationships in the comic tradition. She does not go into any detail, however, claiming that these references do not go beyond mere allusions. Rather, she suggests, it is only in the later genre of Roman satire that homoeroticism becomes a major motif, particularly through the satirists' condemnation of effeminate males characterised by sexual 'passivity'.[194] In this section I attempt to show that, in fact, the comic tradition paves the way for all central aspects of Petronius' representation of male-male relationships. We have already seen that this applies to master-slave relationships – as between Trimalchio, Habinnas, and their respective *puer delicatus* – and to the indiscriminate lechery displayed by several Petronian characters. It will also be seen to apply to homoeroticism between free citizens, as seems to be the case between Encolpius and Ascyltus and possibly – in the form of Greek-style pederasty – between Encolpius and Giton.[195] Furthermore, it is true for various insults hinting at sexual submission (as at § 9.6–10 and § 81.4–6), and for the very fact that penetrated males – Giton, (allegedly) Ascyltus, and Encolpius[196] – occupy central positions in the story. Lastly, there are comic forerunners of the sexual teacher-student relationship between

194 Augier-Grimaud (2014: 111): "Mais ces évocations [sc. in comedy] ne sont que des allusions, et il faut attendre la satire pour que la problématique des relations masculines devienne un motif majeur, au travers de la figure repoussoir de l'efféminé que les satiristes condamnent pour sa passivité sexuelle."

195 This will be discussed in more detail in the course of this study; cf. esp. chapter III. First Rivalry over Giton: Encolpius versus Ascyltus (§§ 9–11).

196 There is no scholarly consensus about whether Encolpius penetrates Giton (and Ascyltus) or whether it is the other way around (cf. section III.2. Altercation (§ 9.6–10.7)). Note that, at Quartilla's orgy, a *cinaedus* penetrates Encolpius and Ascyltus by force: *ci-*

Eumolpus and the Pergamene youth (§ 85–7). For reasons laid out in the general introduction, my survey will pay special attention to farcical forms of comedy, i.e. the mime, the *fabula Atellana,* and Plautine plays likely inspired thereby.[197]

Aristophanes' *Knights* is the earliest extant comedy to feature a penetrated male in a major role. The Sausage Seller, i.e. the character who outdoes the demagogue Paphlagon, openly professes that he used to be a prostitute in his youth, playing the receptive role for his male clients.[198] In the remaining Aristophanic plays, references to the receptive role in male-male sex mainly take the form of insults hurled against one's opponent. Such verbal abuse exploits every kind of perceived effeminacy.[199] While Aristophanes does not portray any sexual and/or love relationships between males, we know that other Old Comedy playwrights

naedus … extortis nos clunibus cecidit ("a *cinaedus* pulled our buttocks apart and banged us," § 21.2). On the sexual meaning of *caedere* and related verbs, cf. Adams (1982: 144–9). Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*) and Kamen & Levin-Richardson (2014: 453 f.) discuss the unusual phenomenon of a *cinaedus* penetrating males. Note also that Oenothea penetrates Encolpius' anus with a leather dildo (§ 138.1).

197 In accordance with what has been pointed out in the general introduction, I do not wish to suggest that comedy is the *only* genre Petronius' representation of male-male relationships is indebted to. In her discussion of the literary forms that may have inspired the portrayal of love, sexuality and gender in the *Satyrica,* Engels (2014: 45–161) includes the Greek novel, epigram, comedy, satire, the Milesian tale, and love elegy. The standard works on male-male sexual relationships in ancient Greece and Rome are Dover (1978) and Williams (2010a) respectively; for an overview, cf. also Hubbard (ed. 2003), Robson (2013: 36–66) and the contributions in Hubbard (ed. 2014).

198 Aristoph. *Equ.* 1242: ἠλλαντοπώλουν καί τι καὶ βινεσκόμην ("I sold sausages, and now and then I also sold my arse"). Cf. also Dover's (1978: 141) discussion of this line. For all references to male-male relationships in the *Knights,* cf. Hubbard (ed. 2003: 89–93).

199 Cf. Dover 1978: 145; on sexual insults in Athenian comedy, cf. also Kamen (2020: 49–52). While Old Comedy usually appears to be in line with other kinds of contemporary literature in that it (positively) acknowledges the penetrative role in male-male sexual acts and condemns the receptive one (cf. Dover 1978: 139), Hubbard (1998) claims that Aristophanes attacks the aristocratic institution of pederasty as a whole, not sparing the penetrative partners. One important underlying argument is that in Old Comedy, "active/ passive roles were widely imagined as interchangeable […], in part because any active pederast had himself most likely played the passive role at some point in his development" (Hubbard ed. 2003: 8). Lear's (2014a: 113) assessment is closer to Dover's when he asserts that Aristophanes' mockery of pederasty is comparatively mild. For a critical discussion, cf. also Robson (2013: 49–52), Lear (2014b) and Shapiro (2015). Robson (2013: 66) rightly stresses the point that, even if Aristophanes' works reflect certain suspicions against elite pederasty, "this is not the same as saying that the masses were ill-disposed towards all forms of homosexuality. Indeed, the occasional homoerotic fantasy in a popular genre such as Old Comedy […] – not to mention homoerotic themes in poetry, the existence of homoerotic graffiti, and so on – suggests a widespread recognition and acceptance in classical Athens of same-sex attraction as a fact of life."

did. The rape of the beautiful boy Chrysippus was likely the topic of an eponymous play by Strattis; the *Λάιος* by Plato Comicus probably followed the same plotline.[200]

Though evidence is scarce, Middle Comedy appears to have maintained a certain interest in homoerotic themes. Apart from various scattered references to effeminacy and to penetrated males, we find three titles suggesting that male-male sexual relationships occasionally took centre stage: Eubolus and Antiphanes each wrote a *Γανυμήδης*; the latter chose the unequivocal title *Παιδεραστής* for another play.[201] In contrast to the preceding periods, allusions to homoeroticism are almost completely absent from New Comedy. Apart from *Παιδερασταί,* a play title attributed to Diphilus, the only unambiguous reference detected by Lilja (1983: 35) is to be found in a fragment by Damoxenus. Plutarch states that Menander's plays were altogether free from pederastic love.[202] In the Roman *fabula palliata,* Terence follows the restraint of New Comedy: Mentions of male-male relationships amount to no more than three, one of which pertains to the lecherous soldier in the *Eunuchus* mentioned above.[203]

As has already become clear in the discussion of indiscriminate sexual desire, male-male relationships experience a rise in importance on the Plautine stage. Not only do several *pueri delicati* appear in person, but numerous characters insult their opponents by suggesting that they play the receptive role in sexual encounters. Most commonly, a slave insinuates that another slave has succumbed to the sexual advances of his master (e.g. *Asin.* 627–8, *Epid.* 66, *Mostell.* 894, *Rud.* 1074).[204] At times, such allegations are made by citizen characters, as when the old man Simo and the pimp Ballio mock Harpax (a *cacula,* "soldier's servant") for performing sexual services for the *miles* he follows (*Pseud.* 1175–81). It is worth pointing out, however, that Plautine references to homoeroticism go beyond free citizen masters and their servants: In the *Mostellaria*

200 Cf. Hubbard ed. 2003: 88.

201 For an overview of references to homoeroticism in Middle Comedy, cf. Lilja (1983: 36–8) and Hubbard (ed. 2003: 88).

202 Plut. *Mor.* 712c: οὔτε παιδὸς ἔρως ἄρρενός ἐστιν ἐν τοσούτοις δράμασιν ("In all these plays there is no one enamoured of a boy"). Trans. Minar et al. (eds., trans. 1961), with slight adaptations. On homoeroticism in New Comedy, cf. also Dover (1978: 151–3) and Hubbard (ed. 2003: 88).

203 Cf. Lilja 1983: 34; the other two allusions occur in the *Adelphoe* (214–5, 532).

204 For a detailed overview, cf. Lilja (1983: 25–8) and Richlin (2017: 106–10).

(718–24), the slave Tranio pretends not to understand the obvious sexual advances of Simo, a *senex* who is not his master.[205] In the *Persa,* the *puer delicatus* Paegnium belongs to Toxilus, who is a slave himself (cf. above). The latter also has a homoerotically coloured friendship with his fellow slave Sagaristio.[206] Furthermore, sex between two male slaves is insinuated at the end of the *Stichus.*[207] There is an unnamed male prostitute in the *Pseudolus* (767–89). He complains about having to perform *fellatio* (782) and fears having to endure anal penetration (785–7). In the *Curculio,* there are no less than three references to male prostitutes.[208] Several citizen characters insult others by suggesting that they are *pathici*: The parasite Ergasilus thus abuses the old man Hegio (*Capt.* 867), and the pimp Cappadox insults the soldier Therapontigonus (*Curc.* 584). Not infrequently, there is an innuendo that parasites allow themselves to be penetrated in order to gain another man's favour (cf. e.g. *Curc.* 400–3 and *Pers.* 132).[209] In exceptional cases, slaves hurl such insults at free characters: once at an old man (*Aul.* 637) and twice at a pimp (*Pers.* 848, *Pseud.* 313–4). Lastly, there are numerous jokes hinting at the receptive role, usually made by slaves, once by a cook.[210] For instance, the slave Lampadio amuses the audience by stating that *faciundum est puerile officium: conquiniscam ad cistulam* ("Now I have to do a boy's part: I will bend over and pick up the casket"). Of course, there are also references to effeminacy that do not explicitly indicate *pathici.* Such may be puns made by cooks[211] or insults exchanged by citizen characters.[212] Comic allusions and insults hinting at sexual submission will be revisited later on.[213]

Taking the references to homoeroticism together with the indiscriminate lechery discussed above, it is fair to say that male-male sex plays a

205 Cf. Lilja 1983: 19.

206 cf. Woytek 1982: 46–7.

207 Esp. *Stich.* 729–32; cf. Lilja (1983: 31 n. 73).

208 *Curc.* 382–3, 473, 482. Further references can be found in *Truc.* 150–3 and possibly in *Poen.* 690 (cf. Lilja 1983: 30) as well as in a fragment of Plautus' *Gemini Lenones* (cf. Richlin 2017: 117).

209 Cf. Lilja (1983: 25) for a few more references and Fontaine (2009: 223–46) for a thorough discussion.

210 *Amph.* 348–9 (slave), *Aul.* 283–6 (cook), *Merc.* 203–4 (slave), *Poen.* 611–12 (*vilicus*).

211 *Aul.* 402 and 422 (the cooks Anthrax and Congrio respectively).

212 *Men.* 513 (an *adulenscens* insulting a parasite), *Poen.* 1317–8 and *Truc.* 609–11 (a soldier insulting *adulescentes*).

213 Cf. section III.2. Altercation (§ 9.6–10.7).

significant role in the Plautine oeuvre. It is most pronounced in the *Casina,* in the meetings of Lysidamus and Olympio as well as in the transvestite finale of the play, where sexual contact between males is all the more important.[214] It is equally prominent in the *Persa,* where the outspoken *puer delicatus* Paegnium appears in three scenes of considerable length. In most other plays, the homoerotic element takes the form of erotically charged encounters and/or of various jokes and insults. Only two of Plautus' twenty extant comedies are altogether devoid of references to male-male sexual relationships.[215]

There are two aspects in which Plautus' treatment of homoeroticism appears to break with the Greek comic tradition. Firstly, the relevant references in his work vastly outnumber those in New Comedy and in Terence. Secondly, many Plautine allusions to male-male sex appear to be his own additions to the Greek originals. With regard to the latter proposition, the conversation between the parasite Curculio and the moneylender Lyco is a case in point (*Curc.* 400–3):

Curculio: *quaeso ne me incomities.*
Lyco: *licet inforare, si incomitiare non licet?*
Curculio: *non inforabis me quidem, nec mihi placet*
tuom profecto nec forum nec comitium.

Curculio: I ask you not to bug me in public.
Lyco: Can I bugger you in your privates if I cannot bug you in public?
Curculio: You will certainly not bugger me in my privates, and I really do not like your public or your privates.

As pointed out by Williams (2010a: 38), Lyco's homoerotic allusion involves two puns that are unambiguously Roman: He links "the words *incomitiare* ("to insult as one might in a public assembly") and the Comitium (the place of public assembly itself) on the one hand, and *inforare* ("to bore into", a handy sexual metaphor) and the Forum on the other". Since these Latin puns cannot be straightforward translations from the Greek, this passage is in all likelihood a Plautine element. The same argument can be made for references to male-male sex which pun on the

214 This Plautine scene will be further discussed in section III.3. Punishment (§ 11.1–4).

215 The plays in question are the *Bacchides* and the *Trinummus.* The fragments of the *Vidularia* are equally free of such references.

verb *comprimere* ("to keep in check", "to penetrate anally").[216] Lastly, two of the three references to male prostitutes in the *Curculio* (473, 482) appear to be genuinely Plautine, as these belong to a description of different places in the city of Rome.[217] Apart from these rather straightforward cases, there are several homoerotic allusions that occur in passages commonly thought to be Plautine additions, i.e. in passages that do not advance the plot and are generally characterised by farcical humour.[218]

Since Plautus' relative emphasis on the same-sex element is at odds with Greek New Comedy, some scholars have sought out connections to Roman forms of 'popular' entertainment.[219] In general terms, there is ample evidence to suggest that male-male relationships were a common element on the Roman stage. Though the extant fragments of the *fabula togata* – i.e. comedies with a Roman setting – contain nothing but a handful of references to effeminacy, we learn from Quintilian (*Inst.* 10.1.100) that pederastic love was a hallmark of the playwright Afranius: *togatis excellit Afranius: utinam non inquinasset argumenta puerorum foedis amoribus* ("Afranius excels in the *togata*: if only he had not defiled his plots with shameful love affairs with boys").[220] Williams (2010a: 103) stresses the point that Quintilian must refer to love affairs with freeborn boys, not with slaves. Remarkably enough, although the mime is notorious for its indecency, the surviving fragments are almost completely free from references to homoeroticism.[221] Perhaps, this is owing to the fact that the mime allowed female actors to perform on stage.[222]

216 *Cas.* 361–2 and *Rud.* 1072–6; cf. Jachmann (1931: 58 n. 2), Lilja (1983: 24) and Williams (2010a: 38).

217 Cf. Lilja (1983: 30) and Williams (2010a: 36).

218 On the criteria for identifying Plautine elements, cf. section I.3.2. Farcical Elements in 'Popular' and 'Literary' Comedy. For instance, Fraenkel (1922: 116) – without referring to the same-sex element – considers *Asin.* 591–745 to be largely Plautine. Krieger (1915: 23 n. 4), Burck (1956: 267–8) and Dohm (1964: 244) think the same of *Aul.* 283–6. Cody (1976: 472–6) argues that all homoerotic encounters in the *Casina* were added by Plautus. Fraenkel (1922: 257–8) and Jachmann (1931: 188–9) regard as genuinely Plautine the joke revealing Pyrgopolinices to be interested in both sexes (*Mil.* 1104–13). For further discussion, cf. Lilja (1983: 16–33).

219 On the link between Plautus and 'popular' theatre, cf. above section I.3.2. Farcical Elements in 'Popular' and 'Literary' Comedy.

220 Translation based on Williams (2010a: 103). For possible homoerotic allusions in the *togata,* cf. Lilja (1983: 40–1).

221 Lilja (1983: 44–5) finds three such allusions in the fragments of Laberius (around 150 lines in total).

222 Cf. Lilja 1983: 45.

When it comes to the relative frequency of homoerotic allusions, the *fabula Atellana* outdoes every other genre of ancient comedy: In the roughly 300 extant lines, Lilja (1983: 41–4) detects no less than twenty references to male-male sex. Some of the fragments in question present an unambiguously Roman perspective, such as the following line attributed to Pomponius' *Prostibulum,* a play dedicated to a male prostitute performing services for other men: *continuo ad te centuriatim current qui penem petent* ("Right away they will run up to you, arranged by voting-group, looking for a penis").[223] As Williams (2010a: 316–7 n. 87) points out, the "adverb *centuriatim* introduces the humorously incongruous image of the Roman citizenry assembled in the *comitia centuriata* to enact laws or elect magistrates." It is equally important to remark that, while Greek sources never mention male prostitutes hired to play the penetrative role, the *fabula Atellana* does so very bluntly.[224] A comparable fragment is to be found in the *Pappus Praeteritus* by Novius: *dum istos invitabis suffragatores, pater, | prius in capulo quam in curuli sella suspendes natis* ("As long as you encourage those supporters, father, you will be putting your behind on a sword-hilt before you put it in the magistrate's chair").[225] In this case, the reference to the *sella curulis* firmly locates the statement in a Roman setting; the image of a penis as a sword or a hilt (*in capulo*) is twice attested in Plautine comedy (*Cas.* 910, *Pseud.* 1181).[226] We may add a few more striking parallels between Plautus and the *fabula Atellana*: In Pomponius' *Prostibulum,* someone – presumably the title character – makes the following statement: *ut nullum civem pedicavi per dolum | nisi ipsus orans ultro qui ocquinisceret* ("I have not butt-fucked a single citizen by deceit – only when he himself came up to me begging to bend over").[227] Apart from the clear reference to free citizens (*civem*), we may note the use of 'bending over' for 'playing the receptive role in

223 Pomponius fr. 149 Frassinetti = 153 Ribbeck. Trans. Williams (2010a: 30), slightly adapted. The manuscripts read *panem,* but Frassinetti has convincingly emended to *penem.* His emendation is followed by Lilja (1983: 42 n. 119) and Williams (2010a: 316–7 n. 87).

224 Cf. Williams (2010a: 90) with references for further reading.

225 Novius fr. 74–5 Frassinetti = 75–6 Ribbeck. Trans. Williams (2010a: 30).

226 On weapons representing the phallus, cf. Adams (1982: 19–22). This imagery occurs in Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* (632, 985); for further discussion, cf. Philippides (2015: 248 f. n. 17 and 18).

227 Pomponius fr. 154–5 Frassinetti = 148–9 Ribbeck. Trans. Williams (2010a: 30), slightly adapted.

sex', a metaphor that also occurs in Plautus' *Cistellaria* (657, cited above) and in Pomponius' *Pistor.*[228] What is more, in Novius' *Exodium* we find a comparison between boys and women as objects of sexual desire, comparable to Plaut. *Truc.* 147–57 mentioned above.[229]

These striking parallels have led both Cody (1976: 45) and Lilja (1983: 48–9) to conclude that Plautus' emphasis on homoeroticism likely stems from his close engagement with Roman 'popular' comedy, particularly with the *fabula Atellana.* Bearing in mind the numerous points of contact between the *Satyrica* and farcical stage productions, it seems plausible that Petronius' treatment of male-male sex was at least partly inspired by this strand of the comic tradition.

When Augier-Grimaud (2014: 111, cited above) remarks that the condemnation of penetrated males is more pronounced in satire than in comedy, she ignores the fact that Roman satire itself was likely influenced by the 'popular' theatre.[230] In the case of Juvenal 9, a satire revolving around an impoverished client who must sexually please his patron, Susanna M. Braund (1988: 174) has argued for a "sustained allusion" to Pomponius' *Prostibulum.* Therefore, we must not jump to conclusions when detecting parallels between the *Satyrica* and the tradition of Roman satire. For instance, Juvenal mentions a teacher fond of having sex with his students, a reference that might remind us of Eumolpus seducing the Pergamene youth (§§ 85–7) and offering to become Giton's *paedagogus et custos* (§ 94.2).[231] However, such a sexual teacher-student relationship is already attested to in the *Maccus Virgo* by Pomponius: *praeteriens vidi Dossenum in ludo reverecunditer | non docentem condiscipulum, verum scalpentem natis* ("As he walked by I saw Dossenus in school not respect-

228 *nisi nunc aliquis subito obviam occurrit mihi, | qui ocquiniscat, quo conpingam terminum in tutum locum* ("Unless someone suddenly comes up to me now to bend over, so I can plant my boundary-post in a safe place"). Pomponius fr. 124–5 Fras. = 125–6 Ribbeck. Trans. Williams (2010a: 30), slightly adapted.

229 *puerum mulieri praestare nemo nescit, quanto melior | sit cuius vox gallulascit, cuius iam ramus roborascit?* ("Everyone knows that a boy is superior to a woman, and how much better is one whose voice is breaking, whose branch is just growing"). Novius fr. 22–3 Frassinetti (cf. 20–1 Ribbeck with a slightly different reading). Trans. Williams (2010a: 23), slightly adapted.

230 On the close relationship between Roman satire and comedy, cf. n. 115.

231 Juv. 10.219–224: *quorum si nomina quaeras | promptius expediam, quot amaverit Oppia moechos | … quot discipulos inclinet Hamillus* ("If you ask their names, I could sooner state the number of Oppia's lovers, […] the number of pupils laid by Hamillus"). Trans. Braund (ed., trans. 2004).

fully teaching his fellow student but 'scratching' his butt").[232] These common elements demonstrate once again that we cannot neatly separate the satirical tradition from the comic one; at least in the case of the *fabula Atellana,* comedy's treatment of penetrated males is no less blunt than satire's.

This chapter started out from the common assumption that Petronius' parody of the 'idealising' novel includes the replacement of a male-female couple with a male-male one. We have seen that there are serious objections to this interpretation. Most importantly, the hypothesis that Petronius turns heteronormative narratives on their head is hardly compatible with the fact that several key characters – particularly Encolpius, Eumolpus, Trimalchio, and Habinnas – clearly display an interest in both sexes. Elaborating on this point, I argued that we do not need the 'idealising' novel to account for the treatment of male-male relationships in the *Satyrica.* The indiscriminate (and often excessive) desire of Petronius' characters has forerunners in Aristophanic lechers and particularly in the Plautine *senex amator.* In fact, it could be shown that all major constellations of male-male sex in the *Satyrica* – master-slave relationships, Greek-style pederasty, ridicule of penetrated males, teacher-student relationships – are attested in Graeco-Roman comedy well before Petronius' lifetime. It is significant that comedy's uninhibited approach to homoeroticism appears to have been particularly pronounced in the *fabula Atellana.* Seeing that Plautus' treatment of male-male sex may well be indebted to this form of 'popular' entertainment, it is tempting to speculate that Petronius tapped into the same strand of farcical comedy. Scarcity of evidence, however, should caution us against suspecting a case of direct reception. We cannot tell whether the extant fragments of the *fabula Atellana* are representative of the genre as a whole, not to speak of whether complete Atellan plays resembled the *Satyrica* in aspects more than superficial. Despite these reservations, it has emerged as a distinct possibility that Petronius' treatment of male-male relationships was inspired by the comic tradition. If anything, parody of the 'idealising' novel has to be considered a complementary element functioning on a strictly literary level.

232 Pomponius fr. 71–2 Frassinetti = 75–6 Ribbeck. Trans. Williams (2010a: 82), slightly adapted. Augier-Grimaud (2014: 122) mentions this Dossenus in her discussion of Eumolpus. Several Roman authors, such as Quintilian (*Inst.* 1.2.4) and Pliny (*Ep.* 3.3.4), are concerned with shielding young male students from sexually predatory teachers; cf. Williams (2010a: 81 f.) for further discussion.

III

First Rivalry over Giton: Encolpius versus Ascyltus (§§ 9–11)

— ※ —

At the beginning of the extant *Satyrica* (§§ 1–5), we meet Encolpius in deep conversation with a rhetoric teacher named Agamemnon. At some point (§ 6.1), Encolpius realises that his companion Ascyltus has left, and – taking a detour (§ 6.2–8.4) – he makes his way back to the lodgings where he is staying together with Ascyltus and his beloved Giton:

[**9**.1] *quasi per caliginem vidi Gitona in crepidine semitae stantem et in eundem locum me conieci …*
[2] *cum quaererem numquid nobis in prandium frater parasset, consedit puer super lectum et manantes lacrimas pollice extersit.* [3] *perturbatus ego habitu fratris quid accidisset quaesivi. at ille tarde quidem et invitus, sed postquam precibus etiam iracundiam miscui,* [4] *'tuus' inquit 'iste frater seu comes paulo ante in conductum accucurrit coepitque mihi velle pudorem extorquere.* [5] *cum ego proclamarem, gladium strinxit et "si Lucretia es" inquit "Tarquinium invenisti".'*
[6] *quibus ego auditis intentavi in oculos Ascylti manus et 'quid dicis' inquam 'muliebris patientiae scortum, cuius ne spiritus ⟨quidem⟩ purus est?'* [7] *inhorrescere se finxit Ascyltos, mox sublatis fortius manibus longe maiore nisu clamavit:* [8] *'non taces' inquit 'gladiator obscene, quem †de ruina† harena dimisit?* [9] *non taces, nocturne percussor, qui ne tum quidem, cum fortiter faceres, cum pura muliere pugnasti,* [10] *cuius eadem ratione in viridario frater fui qua nunc in deversorio puer est?' 'subduxisti te' inquam 'a praeceptoris colloquio'.* [**10**.1] *'quid ego, homo stultissime, facere debui, cum fame morerer? an videlicet audirem sententias, id est vitrea fracta et*

somniorum interpretamenta? [2] *multo me turpior es tu hercule, qui ut foris cenares poetam laudasti'.* [3] … *itaque ex turpissima lite in risum diffusi pacatius ad reliqua secessimus*

*

[4] *rursus in memoriam revocatus iniuriae 'Ascylte' inquam 'intellego nobis convenire non posse. itaque communes sarcinulas partiamur ac paupertatem nostram privatis quaestibus temptemus expellere.* [5] *et tu litteras scis et ego. ne quaestibus tuis obstem, aliquid aliud promittam; alioqui mille causae quotidie nos collident et per totam urbem rumoribus different'.* [6] *non recusavit Ascyltos et 'hodie' inquit 'quia tamquam scholastici ad cenam promisimus, non perdamus noctem. cras autem, quia hoc libet, et habitationem mihi prospiciam et aliquem fratrem'.* [7] *'tardum est' inquam 'differre quod placet'*

*

hanc tam praecipitem divisionem libido faciebat; iam dudum enim amoliri cupiebam custodem molestum, ut veterem cum Gitone meo rationem reducerem

*

[**11**.1] *postquam lustravi oculis totam urbem, in cellulam redii osculisque tandem bona fide exactis alligo artissimis complexibus puerum fruorque votis usque ad invidiam felicibus.* [2] *nec adhuc quidem omnia erant facta, cum Ascyltos furtim se foribus admovit discussisque fortissime claustris invenit me cum fratre ludentem. risu itaque plausuque cellulam implevit, opertum me amiculo evolvit* [3] *et 'quid agebas' inquit 'frater sanctissime? quid? †verti† contubernium facis?'* [4] *nec se solum intra verba continuit, sed lorum de pera solvit et me coepit non perfunctorie verberare, adiectis etiam petulantibus dictis: 'sic dividere cum fratre nolito'*
(§§ 9.1–11.4)

[**9**.1] As though through a fog I saw Giton standing on the kerb of the road, and I rushed to the exact same spot. …
[2] When I asked my brother if he had prepared anything for us to eat, the boy sat down and wiped away a stream of tears with his thumb. [3] I was shocked at my brother's looks and asked what had happened. The boy spoke slowly and unwillingly, in fact only after I had added anger to my entreaties: [4] "That brother or companion of yours ran into our lodgings a little earlier and wanted to rob me of my 'sexual purity' (*pudorem*).

[5] When I shouted out, he drew his sword and said: 'If you are Lucretia, you have found your Tarquinius!'"

[6] On hearing this, I raised my hands to Ascyltus' eyes and said: "What do you say, you submissive whore, playing the woman's part? Not even your breath is clean!" [7] Ascyltus pretended to be horrified, and soon raised his hands even more vigorously, shouting much louder: [8] "Will you not shut up, you filthy gladiator, who was discharged from the arena †on account of a downfall†? [9] Will you not shut up, you midnight assassin? Even in your best days you did not manage to fight with a clean woman. [10] I was the same kind of brother to you in the garden, as the boy is now in the lodgings." "You sneaked away from the conversation with the teacher", I replied. [**10**.1] "What should I have done, you idiot, when I was dying of hunger? Should I have listened to his views, that is broken glass and interpretation of dreams? [2] By Hercules, you are far worse than me, praising a poet to get a dinner invitation." ... [3] And so our fierce quarrel dissolved into laughter, and we turned peaceably to other things.

*

[4] When his wrongdoing had come back into my head, I said: "Ascyltus, I understand we cannot get along. Let us divide our belongings and try to defeat our poverty, each with our own designs. [5] You are a man of letters as well as me. As I do not want to stand in the way of your business, I promise to do something else. Otherwise, a thousand things will bring us into conflict and will fuel rumours about us all over the town." [6] Ascyltus did not object, saying: "Since we, as *scholastici,* have promised to attend a dinner today, let us not waste the night. Tomorrow, however, I shall be pleased to find myself new lodgings and another brother." [7] I answered: "It is stupid to delay what has been agreed upon."

*

My lust was responsible for this hasty separation; for I had long wanted to remove that annoying chaperon, so that I might reestablish the former bonds with my Giton.

*

[**11**.1] After I looked everywhere in the town, I went back to our little room. I finally asked for kisses openly. I held the boy as closely as I could and enjoyed what I had wished for to the degree that anyone would have envied me. [2] And we had not even finished when Ascyltus came

sneaking up to the door, forcefully broke the bolts and found me playing around with my brother. He filled the room with laughter and applause, rolled me out of the cloak I was lying in [3] and said: “What were you up to, my purest brother? What? Are you †ruining† our companionship?” [4] And he did not limit himself to words alone, but pulled a strap off his bag and began giving me a proper flogging, adding sarcastic words: “You shall not share with your brother in this way!”

One of the most impressive aspects of this episode is Petronius’ parody of the rape of Lucretia by Sextus Tarquinius, as it is known from Livy’s *ab urbe condita* (1.57.4–59) and Ovid’s *Fasti* (2.685–852).[233] Unlike the parallels between the *Satyrica* and comedy, Petronius’ references to Livy and Ovid may be regarded as intertextual in the narrow sense of the term: Petronius uses clear allusions, i.e. formulations which point to other texts without explicitly naming them, and which are (partly) unintelligible without the knowledge of these reference texts. In this sense, Livy’s *ab urbe condita* and Ovid’s *Fasti* are ‘present’ in the *Satyrica.*[234]

§ 9.5:	*gladium strinxit et “si Lucretia es” inquit “Tarquinium invenisti”.*
Liv. 1.58.2:	*stricto gladio ad dormientem Lucretiam venit sinistraque manu mulieris pectore oppresso ‘Tace, Lucretia’ inquit; ‘Sex. Tarquinius sum; ferrum in manu est; moriere, si emiseris vocem.’*
	Drawing his sword, he came to the sleeping Lucretia. Holding the woman down with his left hand on her breast, he said: “Be still, Lucretia! I am Sextus Tarquinius. My sword is in my hand. Utter a sound, and you die.”

233 For a discussion of how Petronius parodies Livy and Ovid, cf. e.g. Ruden (1993: 21–2), Courtney (2001: 63), Schmeling (2001: 53–4), and Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*).

234 Cf. Genette’s (1997: 1) definition of intertextuality (cited above in section I.4.1.1. Intertextuality, Transtextuality and ‘Parallels’) and his definition of allusions (*ibid*). Beyond the realm of verbal echoes, the parodic relationship between the *Satyrica* and these two earlier texts should be understood as one of hypertextuality, cf. Genette (1997: 10 and *passim*) as well as section I.4.1.2. Hypertextuality and Architextuality (‘Genre’).

Fast. 2.793–6: *surgit et aurata vagina liberat ensem*
et venit in thalamos, nupta pudica, tuos;
utque torum pressit, 'ferrum, Lucretia, mecum est'
natus ait regis, 'Tarquiniusque loquor.'

He gets up, frees his sword from its gilded sheath, and comes, 'pure' (*pudica*) wife, into your chamber. And when he has mounted the bed, the king's son says: "Lucretia, I have my sword with me, and I who speak am Tarquinius."[235]

Ascyltus explicitly recalls his literary role model, characterising Giton as another Lucretia, and himself as another Tarquinius. At the same time, Ascyltus' words neatly fit the structure of Livy's and Ovid's text, since in both cases Tarquinius announces himself by name and addresses Lucretia by hers.[236] Another clear allusion may be seen in the fact that Ascyltus draws his sword; the verbal parallel between *gladium strinxit* (§ 9.5) and *stricto gladio* (Liv. 1.58.2) is particularly salient. Encolpius, in turn, takes the role of Lucretia's husband Collatinus, who arrives at the scene some time after the crime:

Liv. 1.58.6–7: *Sp. Lucretius cum P. Valerio Volesi filio, Collatinus cum L. Iunio Bruto venit, cum quo forte Romam rediens ab nuntio uxoris erat conventus. Lucretiam sedentem maestam in cubiculo inveniunt. Adventu suorum lacrimae obortae quaerentique viro: 'Satin salve?' 'Minime' inquit; 'quid enim salvi est mulieri amissa pudicitia?'*

Spurius Lucretius came with Publius Valerius, Volesus' son. Collatinus brought Lucius Junius Brutus with whom he chanced to be returning to Rome when he was met by the messenger from his wife. Lucretia they found sitting sadly in her chamber. The entrance of her friends brought the

235 All translations of Livy are taken from Foster (ed., trans. 2002[1919]), those of Ovid from Wiseman & Wiseman (trans. 2011). At times, I have made alterations.

236 Possibly, Ascyltus' *non taces* (§ 9.8 and 9.9) recalls Tarquinius' *tace, Lucretia* (Liv. 1.58.2).

tears to her eyes, and to her husband's question, "Is all well?" she replied, "Far from it; for what can be well with a woman when she has lost her 'sexual purity' (*pudicitia*)?"

Fast. 2.813–28: *iamque erat orta dies: passis sedet illa capillis,*
ut solet ad nati mater itura rogum,
grandaevumque patrem fido cum coniuge castris
evocat: et posita venit uterque mora.
utque vident habitum, quae luctus causa, requirunt,
cui paret exsequias, quoque sit icta malo.
illa diu reticet pudibundaque celat amictu
ora: fluunt lacrimae more perennis aquae.
hinc pater, hinc coniunx lacrimas solantur et orant
indicet et caeco flentque paventque metu.
ter conata loqui ter destitit, ausaque quarto
non oculos ideo sustulit illa suos.
'hoc quoque Tarquinio debebimus? eloquar' inquit,
'eloquar infelix dedecus ipsa meum?'
quaeque potest, narrat; restabant ultima: flevit,
et matronales erubuere genae.

And now the day had dawned. She sits with her hair loose, as a mother does when about to go to her son's funeral pyre, and she summons from their camp her aged father and her faithful husband. Each of them came, letting nothing delay them. And when they see the state she is in, they ask the reason for her grief. Whose funeral is she preparing, what misfortune has struck her? For a long time she is silent, and full of shame hides her face with her robe. Her tears flow like a never-ending stream. Her father on one side, her husband on the other comfort her tears and beg her to speak out; they are weeping and pale with blind fear. Three times she tried to speak, three times she stopped. She summoned her courage a fourth time, but even so she did not raise her eyes. "Shall we owe this too to Tarquinius?" she says. "Shall I speak it aloud – myself, unhappy

woman, speak aloud my own disgrace?" What
she can, she tells. The last part stayed untold. She
wept, and the cheeks of a married lady blushed.

Giton clearly resembles Lucretia in that he takes a sitting position (§ 9.2: *consedit puer*; Liv. 1.58.6: *Lucretiam sedendem*; Ov. *Fast.* 2.813: *sedet illa*), and sheds tears (§ 9.2: *manantes lacrimas*; Liv. 1.58.7: *lacrimae obortae*; Ov. *Fast.* 2.820: *fluunt lacrimae*). Encolpius recalls Collatinus' behaviour in that he finds his 'spouse' in distress, is disturbed by his *habitus* (§ 9.3; cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.817) and asks him about what occurred. Likely, Giton's reference to his *pudor* (§ 9.4) is another allusion to Lucretia, as she is closely associated with the concepts of *pudicitia* and *pudor.*[237]

A few more parallels will be discussed in the course of this chapter. At this point, two more possible allusions are worth mentioning: The meal Encolpius asks Giton about may be seen to recall the meal Lucretia prepares for Tarquinius in Ovid (*cum quaererem numquid nobis in prandium frater parasset,* § 9.2; cf. Ov. *Fast.* 2.789–90: *parat inscia rerum | infelix epulas hostibus illa suis*; "Unaware of what is happening, the luckless woman prepares a meal for her own enemies").[238] When Ascyltus catches Encolpius and Giton in bed (§ 11.2–4), we may be reminded of Tarquinius' dire threat against Lucretia, claiming that he will place her corpse next to that of a naked slave, so that she will appear to have been caught in the act of adultery.[239] We should also note, however, that not all elements in the *Satyrica* follow their literary antecedents this closely: As Natalie Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*) points out, Giton's cry for help (*proclamarem,* § 9.5) has no equivalent in what we learn about Lucretia.[240]

237 Cf. Liv. 1.58.4 (*pudicitia*), 1.58.7 (*pudicitia*), 1.58.10 (*impudica*); Ov. *Fast.* 2.757 (*pudica*), 794 (*pudica*), 819 (*pudibunda*).

238 This link has been pointed out by Courtney (2001: 63). In Livy's version, it remains unclear whether Lucretia prepared Tarquinius' meal herself, cf. Liv. 1.58.2: *Ubi exceptus benigne ab ignaris consilii cum post cenam in hospitale cubiculum deductus …* ("Being kindly welcomed, for no one suspected his purpose, he was brought after dinner to a guest-chamber").

239 Cf. Liv. 1.58.4 and Ov. *Fast.* 2.807–9; this will be further discussed in section III.3. Punishment (§ 11.1–4).

240 According to Livy, Lucretia is asleep when Tarquinius approaches (cf. Liv. 1.58.2 *ad dormientem Lucretiam,* cited above). Once Tarquinius has spoken, Ovid (*Fast.* 2.797–8) stresses the fact that Lucretia is unable to respond: *illa nihil, neque enim vocem viresque loquendi | aut aliquid toto pectore mentis habet* ("Nothing from her, for she has no voice, no power to speak and no thought in all her heart").

In general terms, Petronius' parody consists in substituting high-born figures out of mythic history with the low-life characters populating the *Satyrica*. These characters react to the rape in a radically different manner: While Lucretia commits suicide because she cannot live with the disgrace (cf. Liv. 1.58.10–11; Ov. *Fast.* 2.830–4), Giton remains decidedly passive during the episode as we have it; later in the story, he will even choose the rapist over his 'husband' (§ 80.6). The correspondences between Ascyltus and Tarquinius may be just as superficial. In fact, the sword Ascyltus draws is often interpreted as a metaphor for his penis.[241] Whereas Collatinus joins Brutus in taking revenge on Tarquinius and his family (cf. Liv. 1.59.2), Encolpius merely stirs up a battle of words that quickly dissolves into laughter (§ 9.6–10.3). The fact that Lucretia's role is played by a male character may be seen to intensify the parodic effect.[242]

Scholars investigating comic elements in the *Satyrica* have rightly stressed that episodes revolving around love matters, such as the three quarrels over Giton, need not solely be interpreted as parodies of the 'idealising' Greek novel. This point, first made by Preston (1915: 265–6), has received its most thorough discussion in Panayotakis' study (1995: 10–11). In this context, Panayotakis (*ibid.*) notes, Encolpius takes the role of the jealous spouse, the *zelotypus* known from Herodas' fifth mimiamb, Juvenal (8.196–7) and a mime papyrus.[243] Encolpius, however, is not the only one striking theatrical poses: It has been argued that Ascyltus' reference to himself as Tarquinius amounts to a case of role-playing, just as he *pretends* to be horrified a little later on (*inhorrescere se finxit Ascyltos,* § 9.7).[244] A similar case can be made for Giton. Panayotakis (1995: 14) claims that "everything in his [i. e. Giton's] behaviour shows that the way he expresses his feelings is entirely artificial and false." For corroboration, Panayotakis (*ibid.* 14–15) refers to some clear instances of role-playing in the *fabula palliata* (e.g. Plaut. *Merc.* 599–600, *Mostell.* 640–2) and to Seneca's description of how actors imitate *verecundia* (*Ep.* 11.7). Seeing

241 Cf. the discussion in section III.2. Altercation (§ 9.6–10.7).

242 For further remarks on Giton's feminisation and objectification, cf. Makowski (2012), Clark (2019: 64–8) as well as the discussion below. Williams (2010b: 28) refers to a few other cases in Roman literature where men cast their opponents (or themselves) in the role of females.

243 Cf. also Preston (1915: 266). For the mime fragments revolving around a jealous adulteress, cf. Wiemken (1972: 81–106) and Rusten & Cunningham (eds., trans. 2003: 390–400). Fantham (1986) gives an overview of ζηλοτυπία in ancient literature.

244 Cf. Wooten (1976: 71), Slater (1990: 34) and Panayotakis (1995: 15–16).

Giton's predilection for mythological role models,[245] George (1966: 341) has even suggested that "we can imagine his approval of the terms, if not of the substance, of Ascyltos' threat," i.e. of being forced to play Lucretia's part.[246] Overall, Panyotakis (1995: 16) thinks that Petronius' intertextual engagement with mythic history is in line with the parodic tendencies of the *Phlyakes* and the mime.[247]

Whereas most previous scholars have given precedence to matters of role-playing and parody, my theatrical reading of the First Rivalry over Giton will focus on its relationship to the *fabula palliata.* Essentially, I will interpret the episode as an amalgam of three conventional comic plot elements: 1) a rape, 2) an altercation, and 3) a punishment. Subsequently, I will investigate the narrative techniques that create the impression of a stage production, concentrating on what may appear to be inconsistencies in Encolpius' narrative stance. Far from denying that Livy and Ovid are major points of reference for this episode, I will show that Petronius' parodic treatment fits neatly into the tradition of comic rape plots.

III.1 Rape (§ 9.1–5)

III.1.1 Sexual Violence in Petronius and in the Comic Tradition

For modern readers, one of the most disturbing aspects of ancient comedies is how they routinely treat rape as a youthful indiscretion. In contrast to Old Comedy, where rape is only imagined or threatened and where these threats are almost exclusively made against slaves, in New Comedy rape is always carried out, the victims always being free citi-

245 Cf. e.g. § 80.3.: *infelicissimus puer tangebat utriusque genua cum fletu petebatque suppliciter ne Thebanum par humilis taberna spectaret* … ("The poor boy held on to our knees in tears and begged us not to let this lowly tavern witness a Theban duel").

246 Cf. also Panayotakis (1995: 110): "the lascivious couple, Ascyltus and Giton, imitate Tarquinius and Lucretia, in order to justify their sexual desires within a ridiculously sophisticated context."

247 There are fourth-century BCE *phlyax*-vases depicting mythological figures such as Cassandra and Antigone; cf. Panayotakis (1995: 16 n. 57) with references for further reading. We know that such figures did not only appear in 'literary' comedy (e.g. Plaut. *Amph.*) but also in the mime; cf. Wüst 1932: 1752 for the evidence. In the case of the *fabula Atellana,* mythological themes are attested to by play titles such as *Agamemno suppositus, Ariadne* and *Sisyphus* by Pomponius, and *Andromacha, Hercules coactor* and *Phoenissae* by Novius.

zen girls.[248] About one third of all Menandrian plays feature rape.[249] It usually takes place at night and in the context of a religious festival, the malefactor later claiming that – under the influence of wine and uncontrollable sexual passion – he could not help raping the girl he desired. As the rape always entails pregnancy, it poses the problem of a child born out of wedlock and thus sets in motion the plot of the play.[250] Eventually, the rapist will marry his victim, thus both rescuing the girl from her disgrace and legitimising the child.[251] It is important to note that the rape never occurs on stage, but rather belongs to the backstory of the play and is only hinted at in euphemistic terms.[252]

While the Greek pattern applies to most *fabulae palliatae* featuring rape, Terence's *Eunuchus* constitutes a striking exception to the rule.[253] Here, the rape not only takes place during the day, but it is also premeditated, thus lacking some 'mitigating factors' associated with sexual violence in ancient comedy.[254] Equally importantly, the *Eunuchus* is the only extant comedy in which the rape takes place *during* the play: The perpetrator is the young Athenian citizen Chaerea, who, having spotted the beautiful girl Pamphila, claims to have fallen in love (307) and decides that he must "take possession" of her (*potiar,* 320 and 362). Together with his slave Parmeno, he devises the plan to change places with the eunuch who is supposed to guard Pamphila in her chamber (365–90).

248 On the different contexts of rape in Old and New Comedy, cf. Sommerstein (1998). Riess (2012: 279–85) gives an overview of all instances of anticipated rape in Aristophanes; cf. also Robson (2014). On rape in other (non-)literary texts, cf. Doblhofer (1994), Riess (2012), Harris (2004), Robson (2013: 102–13), as well as the contributions in Deacy & Pierce (eds. 1997).

249 Cf. James 2013: 194 n. 2. For a detailed discussion of rape in New Comedy and the *fabula palliata,* cf. Rosivach (1998).

250 Riess (2012: 355) stresses the fact that the illegitimate child is much more problematic than the rape as such; cf. also Pierce (1997: 166) and Robson (2013: 109).

251 On rape affecting the victim's social status in ancient comedy, cf. Konstan & Raval (2018: 55–7).

252 In the Menandrian oeuvre, only the *Epitrepontes* addresses rape more openly, cf. Riess (2012: 341).

253 Rape is an element in five plays by Plautus (*Amphitruo, Aulularia, Cistellaria, Epidicus, Truculentus*) and in four plays by Terence (*Adelphoe, Andria, Eunuchus, Hecyra*).

254 In fact, Harris (2004: 45–8) demonstrates that Athenian law did not consider drunkenness and youthful passion to be legitimate excuses for serious crimes such as rape. Rather, he (*ibid.* 74 f.) suggests, the guilt of many comic rapists was lessened by the fact that they had acted out of love rather than malevolence and that they proved their 'good intentions' by marrying the rape victim.

Chaerea wrongly assumes the girl to be a slave (321, 366); his justification for the trick is that he wishes to take revenge on all prostitutes (381–5).[255] Having put the plan into effect, Chaerea is full of joy and, still wearing the eunuch's costume, tells his friend Antipho about his great success (578–606): Indeed, the girl's guardian Thais and all servants took Chaerea to be the eunuch; they laid Pamphila on her bed and left him alone with her. Finding the girl asleep and without any guard but himself, he seized the opportunity and raped her (601–6). While Chaerea stops short of describing the act of sexual violence as such, his is still by far the most explicit account of a girl's rape in all extant comedy. Only towards the very end does the play reorient itself toward the typical New Comedy plot: Having learned that Pamphila is not a slave but a citizen (858), Chaerea apologises to Thais, claiming that he acted out of love rather than arrogance (877–8). He pledges to marry the girl (888), thus ringing in the 'happy ending' of the play.

In the following section, I will argue that the First Rivalry over Giton has clear parallels with the comic rape plot, most specifically so with Plautine plays revolving around non-consensual sex with slaves. However, since Petronius' parodic engagement with Livy and Ovid usually attracts most scholarly attention, the starting point of my discussion is that Ascyltus is not the first literary rapist to compare himself with a famous role model. While the *Satyrica* allows only a glimpse at what might be going on in Ascyltus' head, Terence's *Eunuchus* gives ample space to the thought processes of Chaerea. Telling his friend about his achievement, Chaerea elaborates on what happened in Pamphila's room a little while before the rape:

> *dum adparatur, virgo in conclavi sedet*
> *suspectans tabulam quandam pictam. ibi inerat pictura haec, Iovem*
> *quo pacto Danaae misisse aiunt quondam in gremium imbrem aureum.*
> *egomet quoque id spectare coepi, et quia consimilem luserat*
> *iam olim ille ludum, inpendio magis animu' gaudebat mihi,*

255 As a matter of fact, Pamphila's social status is by no means clear. Her guardian Thais says that her mother had been given Pamphila as a present, i.e. as a slave (Ter. *Eun.* 108–10). However, there are strong indications, she relates, that the girl was a free citizen who should be restored to her family (*ibid.* 110–118). At any rate, Thais treats Pamphila like a citizen, as she has a eunuch guard the girl in her room; cf. Christenson (2013: 264): "in the sexual code of New Comedy, Pamphila is a virgin and potentially eligible for marriage."

> *deum sese in hominem convortisse atque in alienas tegulas*
> *venisse clanculum per inpluvium fucum factum mulieri.*
> *at quem deum! "qui templa caeli summa sonitu concutit."*
> *ego homuncio hoc non facerem? ego illud vero ita feci – ac lubens.*
> (Ter. *Eun.* 583–91)

> While things were being got ready, the girl sat in the room, looking up at a painting; it depicted the story of how Jupiter sent a shower of gold into Danae's bosom. I began to look at it myself, and the fact that he had played a similar game long ago made me all the more excited: a god had turned himself into human shape, made his way by stealth on to another man's roof, and came through the skylight to play a trick on a woman. And what a god! The one who shakes the lofty vaults of heaven with his thunder! Was I, a mere mortal, not to do the same? I did just that – and gladly.

Several parallels between the rapists in Petronius and Terence stand out. Just as Ascyltus presents himself as a new Tarquinius (*Tarquinium invenisti,* § 9.5), Chaerea comes to think of himself as directly following in Jupiter's footsteps (*ego homuncio hoc non facerem?*).[256] In the *Eunuchus,* the parodic contrast is just as obvious as in the *Satyrica,* since Chaerea has as much in common with a god as Ascyltus has with a mytho-historical prince. Furthermore, in both cases parody is not restricted to the rapists themselves: In the *Satyrica,* verbal echoes of Livy are not only found in Ascyltus' words but in the entire passage (cf. above). In the *Eunuchus,* Chaerea's musings are inspired by a painting in Pamphila's room, i. e. by a part of Terence's 'stage design' that lends a certain irony to the scene

256 Arguably, Chaerea puts into action a line of reasoning that is already attested in Aristophanic comedy. In the debate between Better Argument and Worse Argument, the latter gives the following advice to lecherous men (Aristoph. *Nub.* 1076–82): ἥμαρτες, ἠράσθης, ἐμοίχευσάς τι, κᾆτ' ἐλήφθης· | ἀπόλωλας· ἀδύνατος γὰρ εἶ λέγειν. ἐμοὶ δ' ὁμιλῶν | χρῶ τῇ φύσει, σκίρτα, γέλα, νόμιζε μηδὲν αἰσχρόν. | μοιχὸς γὰρ ἢν τύχῃς ἁλούς, τάδ' ἀντερεῖς πρὸς αὐτόν. | ὡς οὐδὲν ἠδίκηκας· εἶτ' ἐς τὸν Δί' ἐπανενεγκεῖν, | κἀκεῖνος ὡς ἥττων ἔρωτός ἐστι καὶ γυναικῶν· | καίτοι σὺ θνητὸς ὢν θεοῦ πῶς μεῖζον ἂν δύναιο ("Say you slip up, fall in love, engage in a little adultery, and then get caught. You are done for because you are unable to argue. But if you follow me, go ahead and indulge in your nature, romp, laugh, think nothing shameful. If you happen to get caught *in flagrante,* tell him this: that you have done nothing wrong. Then pass the buck to Zeus, on the grounds that even he is worsted by lust for women, so how can you, a mere mortal, be stronger than a god?"). In the case of Plautus' *Amphitruo,* of course, we have an entire comedy revolving around a divine sexual predator and his mortal victim.

as a whole. As the references to historiography give an air of sophistication to the low-life action in Petronius' work, Terence's comedy creates the same effect through clear allusions to tragedy and possibly to epic: In his fourth-century commentary on the *Eunuchus,* Donatus asserts that *sonitu concutit* (590) constitutes a *parodia de Ennio* ("a parody of Ennius") and that *templa caeli summa* (*ibid.*) was *tragice, sed de industria, non errore* ("tragic, but by design, not by mistake").[257] Lastly, we may point out that Chaerea, being dressed as a eunuch and excited about playing tricks (*luserat,* 586; *ludum,* 587; *fucum,* 589), is in no way inferior to Ascyltus in terms of role-playing.[258]

These parallels show that a comic and a parodic reading of Petronius' episode are not mutually exclusive alternatives, but that they really go hand in hand. The rape plot in the *Satyrica* can be envisioned as functioning on two levels, as it were, complementing each other by means of contrast. The 'lower level' revolves around the day-to-day matters of selfish, impulse-driven characters from the bottom end of society. As I will show in the following section, this plotline bears close resemblances to farcical comedies involving sexual desire for slaves. The 'upper level', in turn, is constituted by the sustained parody of the rape of Lucretia according to Livy and Ovid. This intertextual dimension, bringing to mind a decisive moment in Roman history, is deliberately introduced so as to clash with the 'reality' of the story. The striking point about the *Eunuchus* is not only that it presents rape through the same kind of parody, but also that the contrast between the two levels in Terence is just as much a matter of social status as it is in Petronius.

I should emphasise that, by referring to a 'lower' and an 'upper' level, I do not mean to imply a sense of hierarchical order, i. e. that the intertextual level is more significant than the farcical one. Rather, both levels – or 'layers' – make an equally important contribution to the complexity of Petronius' work. I should also add that I do not deem the two levels to be independent of each other. As we shall see later on, the comic (and farcical) tradition itself is fond of allusions to elevated texts and genres. Speaking of two levels merely allows me to describe two phenomena that occur at the same time in the same text passage.

257 My translation. Barsby (ed. 1999 *ad loc.*) lists a few Ennian fragments to which Donatus might be referring. On Terence's use of tragic intertexts in general, cf. Sharrock (2013: 55–61).

258 On the metatheatrical quality of Chaerea's deception, cf. Christenson (2013: 265, 269–73).

III.1.2 Rape and Comic Slave Characters

Although Encolpius, Ascyltus and Giton obviously make a living as tricksters and parasites and thus hold a low rank in society, their exact status remains shadowy. The information that can be gathered from the text is inconclusive, not least owing to the fragmentary state of transmission and the continuous role-playing by various characters. Most scholars think it likely that the three protagonists are free citizens, while it remains uncertain whether they are freeborn or freedmen.[259] What is essential to my interpretation of the rape episode is that Giton frequently occupies a subordinate position among the trio. In general terms, he is younger than his two companions[260] and appears to play the receptive role in his sexual relationships with them.[261] More specifically, he is twice referred to as a slave or slave-like character by Encolpius: *Gitona libentissime servile officium tuentem* ("Giton, who was very willingly acting as our servant", § 26.10); *scires non libenter servire* ("You could tell he was not a willing slave", § 91.1).[262] When Ascyltus demands Giton back from Encolpius, he asserts that the boy was *fugitivum suum* ("his own runaway slave", § 97.10).[263] Moreover, Giton is assumed to be a slave by characters outside the trio, namely by Quartilla (§ 24.5) and Hermeros (§ 58.1–2).[264] We should also note that the term *puer* – which is applied

259 Habermehl (ed. 2006: XVIII–XIX), Breitenstein (ed. 2009: XVI–XVII) and Panayotakis (2019b: 184) suppose that Encolpius, Ascyltus and Giton are freeborn Roman citizens, whereas Courtney (2001: 41) argues that they belong "to the large class of educated freedmen, of undetermined ethnic background." Jensson (2004: 110) takes them to be (Greek) *exules* from outside the Roman territory. For an overview of the relevant passages and the questions they entail, cf. esp. Richlin (2009: 86–8) and Panayotakis (2019b: 182–6) with references for further reading.

260 Giton is referred to as a *puer* (cf. below) and is explicitly said to be around sixteen years old (cf. § 97.2). Encolpius and Ascyltus are called *adulescentes* (e.g. § 3.1, 20.6), i.e. "sexually-mature youth[s]" (Richardson 1984: 112).

261 Cf. Richlin (2009: 85): "Everything in the novel suggests that Encolpius and Giton conform to the normative man/boy pair, thus that Encolpius penetrates Giton, though we never see this." Cf. also section II.2.1. The Evidence of the *Satyrica.*

262 Much more problematic is Encolpius' statement that Giton once stayed in an *ergastulum,* a slave-prison (§ 81.5); cf. Courtney (2001: 41) and Habermehl (ed. 2006: XIX) for two contrasting interpretations.

263 Earlier, Ascyltus had said that Giton should *at least* have the freedom to choose his 'brother' (*sit illi saltem in eligendo fratre [salva] libertas,* § 80.5).

264 I have left aside references to the events taking place at Croton, where Encolpius and Giton are deliberately pretending to be slaves (cf. § 117.6). For further discussion of Giton's slave-like characteristics, cf. Panayotakis (2019b: 183) and esp. Clark (2019: esp. 25–50).

to Giton throughout the *Satyrica* (e.g. § 9.2, 9.10, 11.1) – regularly means as much as '(young) male slave' in Roman literature.[265] In a more narrow sense, the term may denote a 'boy favourite', i.e. a male slave who performs sexual services for his master.[266] As mentioned before,[267] such *pueri delicati* make up a distinct character type in Plautine comedy; the group's most prototypical representatives are Paegnium of the *Persa* and Pinacium of the *Stichus.* In the cast lists of their plays, these characters are simply called *pueri.* Their names – Παίγνιον ("Plaything") and Πινάκιον ("Little Picture") – are usually understood in an erotic sense, which is no less true for Giton (Γείτων, "Neighbour").[268]

While Giton's 'servile aspects' do not prove his legal status, their considerable number is significant in itself – perhaps nowhere more so than in the *Satyrica,* a work in which appearances often matter more than facts. What I aim at showing is that if we acknowledge Giton's slave-like characteristics, it becomes almost impossible to overlook the striking parallels between Petronius' episode and a certain strand in the comic tradition. In the hands of both Plautus and Petronius, rape plots turn into light-spirited farce.

In ancient Greece and Rome, the assessment of rape was highly dependent on the victim's social status. While the sexual abuse of a free citizen constituted a crime with serious consequences, abusing a slave was a radically different matter: From a legal perspective, owners were completely within their rights to have sex with the slaves they possessed, with or without their consent.[269] As mentioned above, Plautine slave masters often take this liberty with boys, their *pueri delicati.* When owners make sexual advances to their slave girls, the conflicts arising

265 Cf. *OLD* s.v. "puer 5"; *TLL* s.v. "puer II.B.1.b." In the *Satyrica,* cf. e.g. § 54.5: *venit decretum Trimalchionis quo puerum iussit liberum esse* ("There came Trimalchio's decree that the boy should be free"). For a thorough discussion of how Petronius' narrator employs the term *puer,* cf. Panayotakis (2019b: 188 f.).

266 Cf. *OLD* s.v. "puer 3"; *TLL* s.v. "puer II.B.1.d."

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

268 Πινάκιον is the diminutive of πίναξ ("drawing- or writing-tablet; picture"), thus likely alluding to the boy's beauty (cf. Schmidt 1902: 379); note that the parasite Gelasimus compares Pinacium to a picture (*pictura,* Plaut. *Stich.* 271) when he makes his first appearance on stage. On Giton's name, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006: XVI n. 20) with references for further reading. Clark (2019: 99–122) discusses some further links between Giton and Plautine slave characters (*servi callidi* in particular).

269 Cohen (2014) gives an overview of slaves' sexual rights in antiquity. On sex with slaves in Plautine comedy, cf. Richlin (2017: 105–26) and Witzke (2020: 343–4) with references for further reading.

thereof are restricted to their own family: In his comparison of Caecilius Statius' *Plocium* to the Menandrian original, Aulus Gellius (*NA* 2.23.8) mentions that the play featured an old man lamenting the loss of a beautiful slave girl; his wife had made him sell the potential mistress. We find similar plotlines in Plautus' *Mercator* and *Casina,* both taking for granted that slaves are sexually available to their owners.[270] In the *Mercator*, the *senex* Demipho falls in love with the *meretrix* Pasicompsa, who is incidentally the beloved of his son, and decides that he must buy her. Being afraid of his jealous wife, Demipho has his friend Lysimachus take the girl into his house so as to avoid suspicion. When Lysimachus' wife Dorippa turns out to be no less jealous than Demipho's, the tables turn against the old man and eventually induce him to give the girl to his son. The *Casina,* in turn, presupposes that a master is free to have sex with a slave girl who is 'married' to a male slave he owns.[271] In promoting the relationship between his slave Olympio and the beautiful Casina, the *senex* Lysidamus insists on his right to spend the wedding night with her himself. The old man's problem, again, is that his own son Euthynicus is in love with the same girl. As Euthynicus is absent from the play, however, his interests are represented by his mother Cleostrata, Lysidamus' wife. Cleostrata wants Casina to marry the slave Chalinus, as this would make the girl sexually available to Euthynicus and simultaneously keep her away from Lysidamus. In the wedding night, when both Olympio and Lysidamus think they can finally force themselves on Casina, whom they encounter in bed is not her but Chalinus wearing a concealing veil – a trap laid by Cleostrata. In the end, Olympio and Lysidamus get a beating and are thoroughly mocked by their opponents.[272]

270 On the similarities between Plautus' *Mercator* and *Casina,* cf. O'Bryhim (1989: 85–7).

271 On 'slave marriage' in ancient comedy, cf. Cox (2013: 171 f.) with references for further reading.

272 As we learn from some brief remarks in the play's prologue (Plaut. *Cas.* 81–2) and coda (1013–4), Casina will eventually turn out to be a free citizen and marry Euthynicus. Throughout the action as we have it, however, she is clearly treated as a piece of personal property; cf. e. g. Cleostrata's complaint about Lysidamus' insolence (193–95): *quin mihi ancillulam ingratiis postulat, | quae mea est, quae meo educta sumptu siet, | vilico suo se dare, | sed ipsus eam amat* ("He demands to give my slave girl, who is mine, who was brought up at my expense, to his overseer, against my will; but he himself is in love with her"); cf. also 260–2. Her friend Myrrhina replies that, since Lysidamus is the *pater familias,* Cleostrata does not have any claim to personal property (202): *hoc viri censeo esse omne quidquid tuom est* ("I believe that everything that is yours is your husband's"). On Cleostrata's rights as an *uxor dotata,* cf. Schuhmann (1977) and Gold (2020: 168–9). The revelation of Casina's citizenship does not problematise the men's behaviour, since they never actually have physical contact with her; cf. 81–3: *ea invenietur et pudica et*

The point of these summaries is to show that comic plots revolving around non-consensual sex with slave girls have more in common with the *Satyrica* than with the traditional New Comedy rape plot. Whereas plays in the Menandrian vein are essentially concerned with the respectability of citizen girls and with the legitimacy of children, such issues simply do not arise from the rape of slave girls. For, same as Giton, comic slave victims cannot fall any further down the social ladder to begin with. As there are no serious legal and/or social consequences to the sexual abuse of a slave, the plays in question do not work towards a resolution through marriage but instead focus on conflicts within the family. It is in this context that we encounter the motif of marital unfaithfulness, from where Panayotakis (1995: 10–11) has rightly drawn a connection to the *Satyrica*.[273] In broad terms, Ascyltus takes the role of the lecherous husband (Demipho, Lysidamus), Encolpius that of the jealous wife (Dorippa, Cleostrata), and Giton plays the part of the slave girl (Pasicompsa, Casina). The parallels, however, do not end there. While the element of sexual rivalry is present in many New Comedy plots, it is perhaps nowhere as pronounced as in the *Casina,* where we find no less than three pairs of rivals: Firstly, Lysidamus and his son compete over who gets sexual access to Casina, the son being represented by Cleostrata. Secondly, there are the two slave rivals Olympio and Chalinus, who are themselves eager to marry the girl and who engage in several insult matches in the course of the play. Thirdly, although Lysidamus supports Olympio and although they can look back at a sexual relationship of their own,[274] the two compete against each other during the wedding night over who gets to have sex with Casina first.

Sexual rivalry, as I will elaborate on below, is also at the heart of several Petronian episodes involving Giton. I will also show that Plautus' *Casina* comes remarkably close to the arrangement of plot elements in

libera, | *ingenua Atheniensis, nec quicquam stupri* | *faciet profecto in hac quidem comoedia* ("She [i.e. Casina] will turn out to be both 'pure' (*pudica*) and free, a freeborn Athenian, and indeed she will not commit anything in the way of fornication, at least not in this comedy"). Most scholars think that the coda's brief reference to a more conventional ending, i.e. Casina's recognition by her parents and her wedding to Euthynicus, is the result of a *contaminatio* of some sort; cf. Konstan (2014: 3–4) with references for further reading.

273 Of course, this motif is not limited to masters' sexual desire for their own slaves. In Plautus' *Asinaria* and *Menaechmi,* for instance, the wives' suspicions are aroused by prostitutes who – though paid for their services and often of slave status – are not the property of the men in question. On prostitutes in the comic tradition, cf. section IV.2. The Charms of Comic Prostitutes and *pueri delicati.*

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

the First Rivalry over Giton: Both feature an attempt at non-consensual sex, verbal duelling as well as a slapstick punishment concluding the action. As far as rape is concerned, it is significant that Petronius and Plautus treat the sexual abuse of 'low' characters in a similar manner: Just as in comedy non-consensual sex with slaves is considered a 'crime' only inasmuch as it affects the central relationship between husband and wife (or father and son), the focus in the *Satyrica* is not on the rape and its victim but on the fight between Encolpius and Ascyltus that follows. Rather than giving rise to a complex plotline, raping a slave(-like) character is exploited for farcical entertainment.

A last point worth noting is that in order to read Petronius' episode in the light of comedies involving the sexual abuse of slaves, we need not necessarily assume that Encolpius or Ascyltus indeed own Giton. For, between the two extremes of a) raping a citizen, which was a crime with serious consequences, and b) raping one's own slave, which had no legal ramifications whatsoever, there is a middle scenario: If a man raped somebody else's slave, this did not constitute a crime as much as "an infringement on a master's property."[275] Such a 'minor offence', then, takes us back to Terence's *Eunuchus.* After the rape, when Chaerea is confronted by Pamphila's guardian Thais and her *ancilla* Pythias, the rapist makes the following excuse:

Thais: *quid feceras?*
Chaerea: *paullum quiddam.*
Pythias: *eho, "paullum," impudens?*
an paullum hoc esse tibi videtur, virginem
vitiare civem?
Chaerea: *conservam esse credidi.*
Pythias: *conservam! vix me contineo quin involem in*
capillum, monstrum: etiam ultro derisum advenit.
(Ter. *Eun.* 856–60)

Thais: What had you done?
Chaerea: Nothing very much.
Pythias: Hey, nothing very much, you shameless creature?
Does it seem to you nothing very much to rape a
citizen girl?

275 Cohen (2014: 194). The punishments for rape and adultery will be discussed in section III.3. Punishment (§ 11.1–4).

Chaerea: I thought she was a fellow slave.
Pythias: A fellow slave! I can scarcely restrain myself from flying at your hair, you monster! (*to Thais*) On top of it all he comes here to mock us.

Chaerea's assertion that Pamphila was a *conserva* is based not only on his misconception that she was a slave but also on his own pretence of being the eunuch who was supposed to guard the girl, i.e. another slave.[276] He bluntly dismisses the rape of a *conserva* as a matter of little significance (*paullum quiddam*). Perhaps even more remarkably, Pythias' words focus on Pamphila's social status just as much as Chaerea's do: As Donatus points out, Pythias *bene intulit civem, quod plus est etiam virginem vitiare:* αὔξησις *gradatim facta* ("She nicely introduced (the word) *civem* [citizen], which is even more serious than *virginem vitiare* [to rape a girl]: the αὔξησις [increase/amplification] is brought about step by step").[277] Pythias thus implicitly agrees with Chaerea's assumption that the rape of a slave amounts to a comparatively small offence. She leaves no doubt that a person's (perceived) social status was essential to how a sexual attack against them was categorised. This is true for the comic tradition no less than for the *Satyrica.*

III.1.3 Sexual Rivalry between Two Tarquinii

As outlined above, I intend to read Petronius' rape plot as an episode functioning on two levels. On the one hand, there is a plotline akin to Plautus' *Mercator* and *Casina,* in which the abuse of slave characters does not entail serious consequences but petty conflict: sexual rivalry. On the other hand, there is Petronius' intertextual engagement with Livy and Ovid. Evoking mytho-historical malevolence (Tarquinius) and virtue (Lucretia), the 'upper' level is carefully designed to contrast with the 'lower'.

It has already been remarked that Giton's demeanour at the beginning of the episode recalls Lucretia's tears and her sitting position when she is found by her husband Collatinus. This is the intertextual dimension of the episode. On the more basic level, it is interesting to note

276 Chaerea uses the same word at Ter. *Eun.* 366.

277 Donatus *ad* Ter. *Eun.* 857. My translation.

that the brief exposition of Giton's emotions is in line with the little we learn about female rape victims in comedy.[278] Again, the closest parallel is to be found in Terence's *Eunuchus.*[279] As we are informed by the *ancilla* Pythias, shortly after the rape Pamphila is in tears and unable to speak: *virgo ipsa lacrumat neque, quom rogites, quid sit audet dicere* ("The girl is crying and does not dare say what happened if you ask her", Ter. *Eun.* 659); this is reaffirmed by the girl's guardian Thais: *virgo conscissa veste lacrumans obticet* ("The girl's dress is torn, she is weeping, and she will not say a word", 820).[280] Giton's reaction resembles the girl's not only with regard to his tears but also with regard to his inability or unwillingness to speak about what occurred:

> *consedit puer super lectum et* ***manantes lacrimas pollice extersit****. perturbatus ego habitu fratris quid accidisset quaesivi.* ***at ille tarde quidem et invitus, sed postquam precibus etiam iracundiam miscui****, 'tuus' inquit 'iste frater seu comes paulo ante in conductum accucurrit coepitque mihi velle pudorem extorquere.* (§ 9.3–4)

Taken together with the points made in the previous section, these similarities allow us to read Giton's part in the episode as that of a rape victim in the comic tradition. To this basic role, then, Petronius adds the refinement of learned allusions: As will be elaborated on below, some verbal correspondences are indicative of a direct reception of Livy. In this case, however, it is intriguing to suspect a close relation to Ovid's *Fasti*

278 Reflecting social convention, New Comedy does not feature unmarried young women from bourgeois families speaking in public, i.e. in the street represented by the stage (cf. e.g. Riess 2012: 358 n. 384). In Plautus, we find two notable exceptions to this rule: The first one is the *virgo* in the *Persa,* who is, however, the daughter of a parasite and thus of relatively low social status (cf. Duckworth 1952: 254). The second exception is the small group of 'pseudo-meretrices' (cf. James 2013: 183–4), women who were raised to be prostitutes – thus being allowed to speak in public – and who turn out be free citizens only at the very end of the play.

279 On the problematisation of rape in Menander, cf. Riess (2012: 346–50). Terence's emphasis on the victims' perspective is the starting point for James (1998) to argue that the playwright presents rapists in an overall negative light; cf. also Christensen (2013: 266–8).

280 Cf. also Ter. *Eun.* 646, where Pythias says that Pamphila's dress was ripped and her hair torn. In comedy, the victims' dishevelled appearance is regularly emphasised so as to make clear that the women were raped rather than seduced (cf. Pierce 1997: 166 and *passim*).

(2.819–28), which places a great emphasis on Lucretia's initial inability to speak about the crime.[281]

At the beginning of this chapter, I claimed that Ascyltus' role can also be interpreted as functioning on two complementary levels. On the one hand, Ascyltus bears a striking resemblance to comic rapists, particularly to Chaerea in Terence's *Eunuchus.* On the other, he openly presents himself as another Tarquinius, an identification that is reinforced by further clear allusions in Petronius' narrative. In the remainder of this section, I will show that this comic/parodic interpretation can also be applied to Encolpius, the last member of the trio. In the second half of the episode, Petronius gives a twist to the initial constellation of characters: Instead of Ascyltus, he lends Encolpius the characteristics of a comic rapist and links him to Livy's Tarquinius by means of intertextual references.

Several scholars have noted that one of the most remarkable aspects of Petronius' episode is the role reversal between Encolpius and Ascyltus.[282] At the outset, Ascyltus desires to have sex with Giton. Encolpius appears and makes accusations against Ascyltus (§ 9.6). When Encolpius raises his hands to Ascyltus' eyes and hurls insults at him (*intentavi in oculos Ascylti manus et 'quid dicis' inquam* ..., § 9.6), Ascyltus mirrors both the gesture and the verbal attack, even exaggerating them (*sublatis fortius manibus longe maiore nisu clamavit,* § 9.7). In the ensuing verbal duel, Ascyltus turns Encolpius' accusations against him: Having been called the worst kind of effeminate male (*muliebris patiaentiae scortum,* § 9.6), Ascyltus throws the insult right back at Encolpius: *ne tum quidem, cum fortiter faceres, cum pura muliere pugnasti* (§ 9.9–10). A detailed discussion of their altercation will follow in a later chapter.[283] The inversion is complete when Encolpius takes up the role Ascyltus previously held with regard to Giton: After the split-up, Encolpius is the one eager to have sex with the boy (§ 10.7), and Ascyltus is the one interrupting and making accusations (§ 11.2–4).

In general terms, of course, the techniques of inversion and mirroring are commonplaces of the comic tradition. For instance, we may think

281 Cf. the quote in section III. First Rivalry over Giton: Encolpius versus Ascyltus (§§ 9–11); esp. *illa diu reticet* (2.819); *ter conata loqui ter destitit* (2.823); *quaeque potest, narrat; restabant ultima: flevit* (2.827). In Livy (1.58.7), Collatinus' question is directly followed by Lucretia's reply.

282 Cf. e.g. Ciaffi (1955: 28), Gagliardi (1980: 48), Lefèvre (2007: 162), Breitenstein (ed. 2009: 119–20), and Williams (2010b: 31).

283 Cf. section III.2. Altercation (§ 9.6–10.7).

of Dionysus and Xanthias repeatedly exchanging their disguises in the course of their *katabasis* (Aristoph. *Ran.* 494–673), and of Jupiter and Mercury taking up the exact appearance of Amphitruo and Sosia respectively (Plaut. *Amph.*). More examples will be discussed in the course of this study. A parallel that is closer to the context of the *Satyrica* comes from Plautus' *Casina.* In the play's rivalry plot, we find the same tit-for-tat moves that also define Petronius' episode. For instance, when Lysidamus finds out that Chalinus could thwart his plans, he offers the slave's manumission under the condition that he back away from Casina (Plaut. *Cas.* 290–2). Counteracting her husband, Cleostrata makes the same offer to Olympio shortly afterwards (314–6). The same pattern can be observed in minute details: When Lysidamus tells Olympio to hit Chalinus (404), Cleostrata tells her slave to hit Olympio in return (*feri malam, ut ille, rusum,* "Hit his cheek in return, like him," 407). The inversion is clearly marked through verbal cues: *quid tibi instunc tactio est?* (406) ~ *quid tibi tactio hunc fuit?* (408). Olympio having referred to his master as his Jupiter (*quia Iuppiter iussit meus,* 406), Chalinus retaliates by calling Cleostrata his Juno (*quia iussit haec Iuno mea,* 408).[284] In short, Plautus' *Casina* brings together the same techniques that are at play in Petronius' episode.

What has not been noted by previous scholars is that the role reversal between Encolpius and Ascyltus is foreshadowed on the intertextual level. For, while most allusions draw a connection between Tarquinius and Ascyltus, there is one clear verbal echo that casts Encolpius in the role of the Livian rapist: Before Tarquinius forces himself on Lucretia, he confesses his love to her and, in his plea, mingles threats with entreaties (*miscere precibus minas,* Liv. 1.58.3).[285] Asking Giton about what occurred, Encolpius' behaviour is clearly modelled upon Tarquinius': *precibus etiam iracundiam miscui* (§ 9.3).[286] If we understand Giton's meal for Encolpius to allude to Lucretia's meal for Tarquinius (cf. above), this establishes an even closer link between the two.

The intertextual level foreshadows the inversion on the 'lower' one. Having taken Ascyltus' role, it is now Encolpius who displays the behav-

284 At Plaut. *Cas.* 230, Lysidamus had already referred to himself as Jupiter, and to his wife as Juno.

285 Cf. also Ov. *Fast.* 2.805–6: *instat amans hostis precibus pretioque minisque: | nec prece nec pretio nec movet ille minis* ("An enemy as a lover, he persists, with prayers and bribery and threats; but neither with prayer nor bribery nor threats does he move her").

286 Without further explication, Courtney (2001: 63) notes that this allusion is "functionally different" from the other ones in § 9.1–5.

iour of a comic rapist. In fact, Encolpius strongly resembles Chaerea in his anticipation of sexual satisfaction: Just as Chaerea claims that, being alone with the girl lying in bed, he could not help but rape her, Encolpius tells us in retrospect that his agreement with Ascyltus was brought about by his sexual desire: *hanc tam praecipitem divisionem* ***libido*** *faciebat; iam dudum enim amoliri cupiebam custodem molestum, ut veterem cum Gitone meo rationem reducerem* (§ 10.7).[287] One the one hand, this shows that Encolpius' behaviour is similar to that of comic characters not only in terms of his jealousy but also in terms of his lechery.[288] On the other, it is worth pointing out that Encolpius' new role, again, is marked on the intertextual level: Highlighting his *libido* clearly strengthens the connection between Encolpius and Tarquinius, since Livy associates the latter with this trait no less than three times: *Ibi Sex. Tarquinium mala libido Lucretiae per vim stuprandae capit* ("Sextus Tarquinius was seized with a wicked desire to debauch Lucretia by force," Liv. 1.57.10); *Quo terrore cum vicisset obstinatam pudicitiam velut victrix libido* ("At this dreadful prospect her resolute 'purity' (*pudicitia*) was overcome by his victorious lust," 1.58.5); *Ibi oratio habita … de vi ac libidine Sex. Tarquini* ("There he made a speech … about the violence and lust of Sextus Tarquinius," 1.59.8).[289]

Once they are alone with the object of their desire – having got rid of the house servants and Ascyltus respectively – Encolpius and Chaerea again resemble each other in their preparation for sex. The rapist in the *Eunuchus* first looks around to make sure everyone else has left, then bolts the door:[290]

> *interea somnu' virginem opprimit. ego limis specto*
> *sic per flabellum clanculum; simul alia circumspecto,*
> *satin explorata sint. video esse. pessulum ostio obdo.*
> (Ter. *Eun.* 601–3)

287 The *lacuna* directly before this passage hardly affects my interpretation. Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*) suspects that what is missing is the separation itself as well as Ascyltus' departure from the lodgings.

288 Lechery is characteristic not only of (some) *adulescentes* but also of *milites* and *senes amatores*; cf. section II.2.2. The Evidence of Graeco-Roman Comedy.

289 We may note that Ovid never uses the term *libido* with reference to Tarquinius' desire for Lucretia. Instead, we find expressions such as *caecus amor* (*Fast.* 2.762), a form of *cupere* (2.766), *amor* (2.778), *iniustus amor* (2.779), and *amans* (2.805).

290 Locking the door was part of the wedding ritual Terence may be parodying here, cf. Christenson (2013: 265).

> Meanwhile the girl fell asleep. I looked at her sideways through the fan, like this, and at the same time had a good look round to make sure that the coast was clear. I saw it was, and bolted the door.

Similarly, Encolpius goes outside to see whether Ascyltus has really left before rejoining Giton in the lodgings (*postquam lustravi oculis totam urbem, in cellulam redii,* § 11.1).[291] Encolpius does not tell us whether he locked the door, but we may infer as much from the fact that Ascyltus forcefully breaks the bolts when he enters unexpectedly (*discussisque fortissime claustris,* § 11.2). Once again, Encolpius' behaviour at the same time recalls that of Tarquinius, who makes sure the coast is clear before approaching Lucretia: *cum post cenam in hospitale cubiculum deductus esset, amore ardens, postquam satis tuta circa sopitique omnes videbantur, stricto gladio ad dormientem Lucretiam venit* ("he was brought after dinner to a guest-chamber. Burning with passion, he waited till it seemed to him that all about him was secure and everybody fast asleep; then, drawing his sword, he came to the sleeping Lucretia.", Liv. 1.58.2).[292] This allusion reinforces Encolpius' identification with Tarquinius one last time, before Ascyltus catches Encolpius red-handed and thus completes the role reversal.

Petronius' parody becomes all the more apparent when we take stock of the rivalry plot evolving on the lower level of the episode. The closest parallel, as far as I can tell, comes from Plautus' *Casina.* Looking back at the event, Olympio recounts what happened during the 'wedding night' with Chalinus, whom he believed to be Casina:

> *ubi intro hanc novam nuptam deduxi, recta via in conclave abduxi.*
> *sed tamen tenebrae ibi erant tamquam in puteo; dum senex abest*
> *'decumbe' inquam.*
> *conloco, fulcio, mollio, blandior,*
> *ut prior quam senex nup⟨tias perpetrem⟩.*
> […]
> *respecto identidem, ne senex* * * *
> […]

291 I follow Köntges (ed. 2013 *ad loc.*) in taking *totam urbem* to be a hyperbole. Of course, the interpretation is complicated by the *lacuna* before § 11.1.

292 This element is absent from the Ovidian version.

enim iam magis adpropero, magi' iam lubet in Casinam inruere *
cupio illam operam seni surrupere, forem obdo, ne senex me opprimeret.
(Plaut. *Cas.* 881–890/91)

When I led this new bride inside, I took her straight to a bedroom. But there was darkness in there like in a dungeon. While the old man was away, I said, "Lie down." I got her placed, supported her with pillows, soothed her, and coaxed her, in order to consummate the marriage before the old man. [...] I looked back again and again so that the old man would not ***. [...] Then I hurried to her more insistently, I was keener to throw myself upon Casina then. I wished to steal that job from the old man; I bolted the door so that my old master would not surprise me.

Despite the mutilation of Plautus' text, several parallels with Encolpius' situation are clearly discernible. Most obviously, Olympio resembles Encolpius in that he makes sure he is alone with the object of his desire (*respecto identidem*) and bolts the door (*forem obdo*). While these elements are also present in Terence and Livy, it is significant that Encolpius and Olympio do not want to avoid unwanted witnesses – as do Chaerea and Tarquinius – but to shut out one specific rival (*custodem molestum,* § 10.7; cf. *respecto identidem, ne senex ... forem obdo, ne senex me opprimeret*). Just as Encolpius could not wait for Ascyltus to leave (*iam dudum enim amoliri cupiebam,* § 10.7), Olympio seizes the opportunity opened up to him by Lysidamus' absence (*dum senex abest 'decumbe' inquam*). When they are finally able to enjoy some time alone with Giton and 'Casina' respectively, they cannot help thinking about the rival on their heels (*fruorque votis usque ad invidiam felicibus,* § 11.1; cf. *cupio illam operam seni surrupere*). Ultimately, of course, both characters are unable to achieve the sexual gratification they long for: Encolpius is interrupted by Ascyltus, and Olympio eventually finds out he was in bed with Chalinus.

In the previous sections, I have delved deeply into two aspects of the First Rivalry over Giton: Petronius' intertextual engagement with the Lucretia story on the one hand, and his incorporation of theatrical elements on the other. One important question remaining is whether these two aspects should be conceived of as independent of each other, or whether there is an overlap between the two. In other words: When writing this episode, could Petronius have had in mind theatrical versions of the Lucretia story? As we shall see, there is indeed some evidence that

ancient audiences came to associate Lucretia with the theatrical stage long before Petronius' lifetime.

III.1.4 Lucretia on the Ancient Roman Stage

We know that the story revolving around the rape of Lucretia and the overthrow of king Tarquinius Superbus long predated Livy's *ab urbe condita.* As we learn from Dionysius of Halicarnassus (4.64), the events in question had already been discussed by Fabius Pictor, Rome's first historian (fl. late 3rd century BCE).[293] More importantly to the study at hand, we know that Lucius Accius (c. 170–84 BCE) treated the story in the form of a stage play, a *fabula praetexta* entitled *Brutus.* The reference, of course, is to Lucius Junius Brutus, who is present at Lucretia's suicide and subsequently brings about the expulsion of Tarquinius Superbus, the father of the rapist Sextus Tarquinius.[294]

Four, possibly five, fragments of Accius' *Brutus* survive. The first two of these (Cic. *Div.* 1.43–4, 1.45) are the longest fragments of any Republican *fabula praetexta.* They deal with a dream Tarquinius Superbus has had, warning him of someone he assumes to be dumb and who will eventually cause his downfall. The person in question can be no other than Lucius Junius Brutus, who – before witnessing Lucretia's suicide – feigns being slow-witted in order to free himself from suspicion.[295] The other two fragments (Varro *Ling.* 5.80; Cic. *Sest.* 123) are comparatively short, each focusing on one specific word or phrase. Interestingly, though, the latter of these fragments tells us that Accius' *Brutus* was restaged in Cicero's lifetime.[296]

293 Cf. e.g. Ogilvie (1965: 218 f.).

294 Cf. e.g. Liv. 1.59–60 and Ov. *Fast.* 2.849–52. Wiseman (2008b: 271–92) argues that historians such as Livy merged into one the previously unrelated stories about Lucius Junius Brutus on the one hand and Lucretia on the other. However, if and when this merger really occurred cannot be proved.

295 Cf. e.g. Liv. 1.56.8.

296 Cic. *Sest.* 123: *utrum igitur haec Aesopum potius pro me aut Accium dicere oportuit, si populus Romanus liber esset, an principes civitatis? nominatim sum appellatus in Bruto: Tullius, qui libertatem civibus stabiliverat. miliens revocatum est* ("Ought then Aesopus or Accius to have pleaded thus for me, had the Roman People been free, or ought the chief men of the State? In the *Brutus* I was mentioned by name: 'Tullius, who stablished safe the people's freedom.' The line was encored a thousand times."). Trans. Gardner (ed., trans. 1958), slightly adapted. While Accius' text must refer to king Servius Tullius, the prede-

For our purposes, the most remarkable piece of evidence is the fifth surviving fragment, the one that cannot definitively be attributed to Accius. In his *de lingua Latina* (6.7), Varro discusses the expression *nox intempesta* ("in the dead of night") in the following terms:

> *Inter uesperuginem et iubar dicta nox intempesta, ut in Bruto Cassii quod dicit Lucretia: Nocte intempesta nostram deuenit domum.*

> Between the evening star and the morning star one speaks of the *nox intempesta,* as Lucretia says in the *Brutus* of Cassius: "In the *nox intempesta* he came to our house."[297]

Varro quotes the same line at *Ling.* 7.72, where he also attributes it to a certain Cassius. Many scholars believe Varro's text to be faulty, and that the name 'Cassius' should be emended to 'Accius', which would make the above quote the fifth extant fragment of Accius' *Brutus.*[298] Among other things, these scholars doubt that there were two *fabulae praetextae* of the same name. Others argue that the manuscripts' reading should be preserved.[299] Gesine Manuwald (2001: 239 f.) suggests that the Cassius in question is C. Cassius Parmensis (fl. 50–40 BCE), an author who is known to have written *fabulae crepidatae.*

Regardless of whether we attribute the play to Accius or Cassius, the fact of the matter remains that Varro quotes a line from a character called Lucretia (*dicit Lucretia*). There can be no doubt that we are dealing with the wife of Collatinus: She is the only famous Lucretia known to us, and she alone has a close connection to Brutus' story.[300] In the fragment, Lucretia says that somebody came into her house late at night (*Nocte intempesta nostram deuenit domum*). Likely, she is referring to no other than the rapist Sextus Tarquinius; as she is speaking of him in the third

cessor of Tarquinius Superbus, Cicero suggests that it refers to himself (M. Tullius Cicero); cf. also Schol. Bob. *ad* Cic. *Sest.* 123, cited in Manuwald (2001: 62). The fact that Cicero names a famous actor of his own time (Aesopus) makes clear that Accius' play had been restaged in the recent past. For further discussion, cf. Manuwald (2001: 63, 234).

297 Trans. de Melo (ed., trans. 2019 *ad loc.*), slightly adapted.

298 Cf. most recently de Melo (ed., trans. 2019 *ad loc.*) and see Manuwald (2001: 238 n. 272, 273) for further references.

299 Cf. e.g. Ogilvie (1965: 218) and esp. Manuwald (2001: 237–9).

300 Cf. Manuwald (2001: 240).

person, we might be getting a glimpse at how she describes the rape (to her husband and/or others) after the fact.[301]

The fragments of Accius' *Brutus* – and possibly of Cassius' eponymous play – prove that the rape of Lucretia had been the subject of ancient theatrical productions well before Petronius' day. The fact that Accius' *fabula praetexta* was restaged in Cicero's lifetime speaks for the story's popularity. Of course, this does not necessarily mean that Petronius' First Rivalry over Giton was directly inspired by such a play. It does show, however, that contemporary readers/listeners plausibly associated the rape of Lucretia with the stage. Petronius, then, did not conjure up out of thin air theatrical renderings of Lucretia, Collatinus and Sextus Tarquinius.

In this chapter, I aimed to show that the comic rape plot is one important part of the literary tradition that the First Rivalry over Giton makes use of. Petronius' rape narrative functions on two levels: The first one bears a close resemblance to sexual rivalries in Plautus, particularly because some of these also involve non-consensual sex with characters low in the social hierarchy. Superimposed on this farcical plotline is the intertextual level, constantly inviting a comparison with the rape of Lucretia according to Livy and Ovid. Petronius' parody pertains not only to the rapist Ascyltus but also to the lecherous Encolpius in the second half of the episode. We have not only seen that Petronius' parodic treatment of a rape plot has precedents in the comic tradition, but also that contemporary readers/listeners of the *Satyrica* plausibly associated the Lucretia story itself with theatrical performances. In the following sections, I will investigate two further comic plot elements discernible on the 'lower level' of Petronius' text: an abusive verbal duel and a spectacular punishment.

301 These points have been made by Manuwald (2001: 241).

III.2 Altercation (§ 9.6–10.7)

The quarrel between Encolpius and Ascyltus (§ 9.6–10.3) has been briefly addressed in the preceding section as well as in the discussion of indiscriminate lechery in the *Satyrica* and in the comic tradition.[302] In this section, I will elaborate on the points of contact between this altercation and verbal duels performed in front of an audience – a plot element known from Aristophanes, Plautus, and other comic playwrights.

As my analysis will take into account a number of minute details, I shall begin by giving an overview of the motifs and the structure of the Petronian passage. In general terms, the insult match can be said to comprise 'two rounds', each consisting of an accusation by Encolpius against Ascyltus followed by the latter's reply.[303] Having listened to Giton's account of the rape (attempt), Encolpius confronts Ascyltus (*quid dicis ...*). He raises his hands to his opponent's eyes (*intentavi in oculos Ascylti manus*), a gesture that he will reuse later in the story so as to underpin a threat against Tryphaena.[304] Encolpius accuses Ascyltus of being a prostitute (*scortum*) and of playing the disgraceful 'passive', i. e. receptive and 'feminine', part in sexual intercourse (*muliebris patientiae*).[305] Already at this point, Encolpius' words make it difficult to distinguish between what is based on the 'facts' of the story and what may be considered an insult pure and simple. We cannot categorically exclude the possibility, for instance, that Ascyltus sold his body in some lost portion of the *Satyrica*.[306] We know for certain, however, that *scortum* could be used as a term of

302 Cf. section II.1. Problems of Terminology and Categorisation as well as section II.2. Indiscriminate Lechery.

303 Cf. Lefèvre 2007: 159.

304 Cf. § 108.5: *intentans in oculos Tryphaenae manus usurum me viribus meis clara voce clamavi* ("Raising my hands to Tryphaena's face, I said loudly and clearly that I was going to use force ..."). This gesture will be further discussed below, cf. n. 351.

305 On the unwritten rule that 'true males' should always be the ones penetrating others, never the ones being penetrated, cf. section II.1. Problems of Terminology and Categorisation. *pati* is the *terminus technicus* for the receptive role (cf. Adams 1982: 189–90). The phrase *muliebris patientia* recurs at § 25.3 when Encolpius states that the girl Pannychis was too young to have sex with Giton; for related expressions in Latin literature, cf. Williams (2010a: 157, 192, 225).

306 At § 8.3–4 Ascyltus tells Encolpius that he refused to accept money for sex. However, the fact that the *pater familiae* (§ 8.2) apparently takes him to be a prostitute may be significant in itself.

abuse without any reference to established facts.[307] The same is true for words hinting at the receptive role.[308] The second part of Encolpius' statement mentions Ascyltus' bad breath (*cuius ne spiritus ⟨quidem⟩ purus est*). In this sexual context, it seems clear that Encolpius accuses his opponent of having performed *fellatio,* a practice that was thought to cause *os impurum.*[309]

In response to Encolpius' verbal attack, Ascyltus pretends to be horrified and exaggerates his opponent's gesture[310]. His first reply has received much scholarly attention, since part of it possibly sheds light on lost episodes of the *Satyrica.* The first controversial expression is *gladiator obscene.* Taking the words at face value, some scholars surmise that Encolpius had once been condemned to fight in an amphitheatre[311] and/or that he had been a member of the *pars obscena* of a gladiatorial school.[312] In some regards, this supposition seems to be confirmed by Encolpius' own words at § 81.3: *harenae imposui* ("I cheated the arena"). Assuming that there is some truth to this, *quem †de ruina† harena dimisit* – if the reading can be maintained – could mean as much as "whom the arena dismissed on account of its collapse."[313] It has been speculated that the arena's destruction might have been caused by an earthquake, as had been the case with the amphitheatre at Fidenae in 27 CE

307 In his *Philippics* (2.44), for instance, Cicero refers to the young Mark Antony as a *vulgare scortum*; for more references, cf. Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad* § 9.6).

308 On verbal abuse referring to various sexual activities, cf. Opelt (1965: 154–7) and the discussion below.

309 Cf. already Wouveren and Erhard in Burman (ed. 1743 *ad loc.*). On the 'staining' of the mouth through oral sex, cf. Richlin (1983: 26–9), Obermayer (1998: 214–31) and Krenkel (2006: 219–20).

310 Cf. section III.1.3. Sexual Rivalry between Two Tarquinii.

311 Paratore (1933: 167), for instance, suggests that Encolpius had at some point been condemned to be a gladiator. This assumption has been criticised by Bagnani (1956: 25 f.), pointing out that freeborn Romans could not receive this punishment; if anything, he claims, Encolpius could have been condemned to fight against wild beasts in the amphitheatre.

312 Cf. Cerutti & Richardson (1989: 594). They (*ibid.* 589 f.) argue that such a *pars obscena* (cf. Sen. *Q Nat.* 7.31.3) may have consisted of effeminate fighters and served the purpose of comic relief in the course of extended *spectacula.* Taking up this line of thought, Jensson (2004: 158) speculates that the gladiatorial school in question might have belonged to the character called Lycurgus, who is mentioned at § 83.4 and 117.3.

313 For a discussion of this expression and for various conjectures, cf. Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*) and Köntges (ed. 2013 *ad loc.*).

(cf. Suet. *Tib.* 40), and that this had afforded Encolpius the opportunity to escape.[314]

Other scholars – cautioning against literal readings[315] – interpret Ascyltus' words as insults that may or may not refer to lost episodes of the *Satyrica*.[316] *gladiator* is amply attested as a term of abuse; the adjective *obscene* arguably marks it as a sexual slur.[317] Apart from the fact that gladiators were generally associated with sexual activity,[318] it may be significant that *gladius*, same as the names of various other elongated weapons, was a common metaphor for the *phallus*.[319] As mentioned before, the same *double entendre* may be at play at § 9.5, where Ascyltus draws his *gladius* and announces that he will rape Giton.[320] Assuming that the expression *gladiator obscene* is meant to make a point about Encolpius' sex life, it has been argued that *ruina* does not refer to the collapse of an amphitheatre but to a 'sexual collapse' on Encolpius' part.[321] Rather than denoting a brick-and-mortar building, *harena* would then designate the place of sexual intercourse, i.e. the bed. The entire phrase (*quem de ruina harena dimisit*) could then mean something along the lines of "the (sexual) arena let him go on a charge of impotence" (Schmeling 1994/5: 216).

A similar range of interpretations, literal and/or figurative, can be applied to Ascyltus' second accusation: *nocturne percussor*. It has often been read in connection with Encolpius' words at § 81.3 (*hospitem occidi*;

314 This hypothesis, first proposed by Bagnani (1956: 26), is advocated by Cerutti & Richardson (1989: 594), Courtney (2001: 47), and Jensson (2004: 140 f.).

315 In Bagnani's (1956: 25) view, Encolpius' words at § 81.3 (*effugi iudicium, harenae imposui*; "I escaped my trial, I cheated the arena") prove that he was never really condemned to the arena. Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*) claim that it would be "out of character for E. [sc. Encolpius] ever to have fought any person or animal in an arena."

316 For a metaphorical reading of the entire altercation, cf. Mulroy (1970) and Schmeling (1994/5). While Mulroy asserts that this kind of verbal abuse does not tell us anything about past events, Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad* § 9.8) claim that "there must have been something embarrassing which E. [sc. Encolpius] suffered and of which Ascyltus now makes fun."

317 On *gladiator* as mere abuse, cf. Bagnani (1956: 26) and Pack (1960: 31). For similar usage in other texts, cf. Opelt (1965: 136). Mulroy (1970: 255) points out the significance of the adjective *obscene*.

318 Cf. Schmeling 1994/5: 212 n. 18.

319 Cf. Schmeling (1994/5: 212) and note 226.

320 This was first suspected by Adams (1982: 21); *contra*: Courtney (2001: 63 n. 16).

321 Cf. Schmeling (1994/5: 215 f.). A similar argument is made by Obermayer (2003: 75).

"I killed my host") so as to refer to the fact that he committed a murder in some lost episode of the *Satyrica.*[322] It should be kept in mind, however, that Encolpius' words in his prayer to Priapus (§ 133.3) appear to contradict this hypothesis.[323] The alternative is to regard *nocturne percussor* as mere abuse, with the verb *percutere* as a euphemism for penetration and the adjective *nocturnus* as another marker of the sexual realm.[324]

As the following sections will make clear, my interpretation of the Petronian altercation tends to be metaphorical rather than literal in that I take it to be replete with sexual slurs. The narrative's state of transmission, however, does not allow us to summarily dismiss speculations about lost parts of the *Satyrica.* It is quite possible that Encolpius and Ascyltus are in some way referring to past events of the story. Significantly, though, these possibilities are not incompatible with figurative readings of the quarrel. The sexually 'active' connotations of *gladiator* and *percussor,* for instance, exist regardless of whether Encolpius ever was a gladiator or an assassin in the narrow sense.

Naturally, the different readings discussed above have an impact on how scholars understand the remainder of Ascyltus' first reply. Let us first consider the phrase *qui ne tum quidem, cum fortiter faceres, cum pura muliere pugnasti.* Those who take Ascyltus' words literally, i.e. that Encolpius had been some kind of gladiator, think it conceivable that he actually fought against a woman in the amphitheatre.[325] Others point out that both *facere* and *pugnare* are common metaphors for sexual activity.[326] It has been argued that Ascyltus makes a distinction between Encolpius' highly potent past (*cum fortiter faceres*) and his less potent – perhaps

322 Pack (1960: 31), for instance, claims that Encolpius "killed a man by night"; cf. Jensson (2004: 142 n. 324): "I simply take it [sc. *nocturne percussor*] to refer to a murder committed by Encolpius at night or at least in a secretive, non-virile manner." Paratore (1933: 168) went as far as to suggest that the person killed by Encolpius was Lycurgus. Though this link clearly belongs to the realm of speculation (cf. Pack 1960: 32), Paratore's hypothesis has recently been reformulated by Jensson (2004: 159); cf. also Courtney (2001: 48).

323 § 133.3: *non sanguine tristi | perfusus venio* ("I do not come to you stained with dark blood"); cf. Mulroy (1970: 256).

324 Cf. Opelt (1965: 46), Mulroy (1970: 255) and Schmeling (1994/5: 217). On the sexual connotation of Latin verbs meaning 'to beat' or 'to strike', cf. Adams (1982: 145–9).

325 Cf. Cerutti & Richardson (1989: 594) and Jensson (2004: 143).

326 Cf. Adams (1982: 204) on *facere* and *ibid.* (147) on *pugnare* in this Petronian passage. *fortiter facere,* a military expression, can be used to describe heroic, manly action (cf. Breitenstein ed. 2009 *ad loc.*).

even impotent – present.[327] The expression *pura muliere* is sometimes understood to refer to a 'decent woman' in general terms, the implication being that Encolpius was sexually more successful with 'indecent' women.[328] The more convincing interpretation, I believe, is that Ascyltus uses the imagery of (im)purity in the same way Encolpius does, i.e. that he accuses his opponent of having made use of a *fellatrix.*[329] At last, Ascyltus reminds Encolpius of the fact that they once had a (sexual) relationship of their own (*cuius eadem ratione in viridario frater fui qua nunc in deversorio puer est*); his reference to a garden (*viridarium*) has led to some speculations about non-extant parts of the *Satyrica.*[330]

After Ascyltus' elaborate reply, Encolpius abruptly changes the subject: He reproaches his opponent for sneaking away from the conversation with the teacher (*subduxisti te … a praeceptoris colloquio*), who can with some confidence be identified as Agamemnon.[331] In response, Ascyltus insults Encolpius (*homo stultissime*) and excuses himself by referring to his hunger (*cum fame morerer*) and the inanity of Agamemnon's talk (*vitrea fracta et somniorum interpretamenta*). Finally, he accuses Encolpius of having engaged in insincere flattery in order to receive a dinner invitation (*ut foris cenares poetam laudasti*).[332] Thereafter, the fierce quarrel dissolves into laughter (*itaque ex turpissima lite in risum diffusi*).[333] As most items addressed so far, the ending of the altercation has received divergent explanations. For the sake of a comprehensive

327 Cf. Obermayer (2003: 74 f.). Several other scholars, including Richardson (1984: 114), Schmeling (1994/5: 213) and Köntges (ed. 2013 *ad* § 9.8), also argue that Ascyltus is hinting at Encolpius' impotence. We need to note, however, that Encolpius' erectile dysfunction at this early point of the story is a matter of speculation (cf. e.g. Jensson 2004: 138 f.). McMahon (1998) discusses male sexual dysfunction in ancient Greece and Rome; on the *Satyrica,* cf. esp. *ibid.* 80–5, 92–7, 192–215 as well as Obermayer (2003) and Hallett (2012).

328 Cf. e.g. Mulroy (1970: 255) and Richardson (1984: 114). Without corroborating evidence, Soverini (1976: 105 f.) speculates that *impura mulier* might refer to a *pathicus.*

329 Cf. Soverini (1976: 103) and, for instance, Lefèvre (2007: 159 f.), Richlin (2009: 85) and Williams (2010b: 30 n. 14).

330 Jensson (2004: 147) suggests that this *viridarium* might have been located on Lycurgus' property.

331 Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*) suspect a *lacuna* after Ascyltus' first reply; *contra*: Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*).

332 For a thorough discussion of Ascyltus' words about Agamemnon, cf. Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*) and Köntges (ed. 2013 *ad loc.*).

333 Some scholars, deeming the transition to be too abrupt, have argued in favour of a *lacuna* after the words *poetam laudasti*; cf. Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*) for a discussion and for references for further reading.

overview, it makes sense to briefly discuss the possible rationale behind Encolpius' and Ascyltus' accusations.

III.2.1 The Dynamics of Petronian Quarrelling

Many scholars, not only those taking the passage quite literally, suggest that it is Ascyltus who 'wins' the altercation. For instance, Jensson (2004: 139) argues that Encolpius – having been called a *gladiator*, a *percussor* and an aficionado of oral sex (§ 9.8–10) – "says no more about the issue and thus implicitly acknowledges that his case has been destroyed." Accordingly, Jensson's (*ibid.* 140) interpretation of the quarrel's ending is that "Encolpius is outwitted and all he can do is to laugh in embarrassment at having been seen through. Ascyltos, who has won the argument with the help of his quick wit, joins him in the laughter." Others emphasise the artificiality and playfulness of the altercation, thus rendering (almost) immaterial questions about winners and losers. Before aligning myself with the latter group of scholars, in this section I will attempt to outline the 'strategies' Encolpius and Ascyltus appear to adopt in the course of the altercation.

As has been touched upon before, it seems clear that Ascyltus beats Encolpius at his own game, as it were. Ascyltus not only mirrors and exaggerates his opponent's gesture, but he also copies and multiplies the syntactical structure of his accusation: One term of abuse (*muliebris patientiae scortum*) in combination with a relative clause (*cuius …*) is answered by two such terms (*gladiator obscene … nocturne percussor*) and three such relative clauses (*quem … qui … cuius …*).[334] We may also note the anaphora (*non taces … non taces*) and the chiasmus – *gladiator* (A) *obscene* (B) … *nocturne* (B) *percussor* (A) – in Ascyltus' words. Walsh (1970: 87) is right to call them a "studied riposte" and to refer to the entire altercation as a rhetorical battle. How exactly, however, may Ascyltus be seen to come out victorious? His strategy is more readily discernible in the second round of the quarrel, particularly in the phrase *multo me turpior es tu.* Firstly, it shows that Ascyltus understands as an accusation Encolpius' reference to their conversation with Agamemnon (*subduxisti te … a praeceptoris colloquio*). Evidently, he thinks that Encolpius reproaches him for being *turpis* ("dishonourable" or "morally reprehen-

334 On the symmetry between the accusations, cf. e.g. Lefèvre (2007: 87) and Breitenstein (ed. 2009: 119 f.).

sible").[335] Secondly, the phrase shows that Ascyltus turns the accusation against his opponent, claiming that Encolpius' character is more reprehensible than his own (*me turpior*). The preceding two sentences apparently constitute Ascyltus' justification for his own behaviour: He was hungry (*cum fame morerer*) and saw no point in listening to Agamemnon (*vitrea fracta et somniorum interpretamenta*). The last phrase of Ascyltus' reply (*qui ut foris cenares poetam laudasti*) serves as evidence for Encolpius' *turpitudo.*

It is more difficult to assess Ascyltus' rationale in the first round of the altercation. Most scholars agree that his words involve a strong sexual element and may thus be considered an 'appropriate' response to Encolpius' slur. At least one expression rather plainly picks up on Encolpius' words: Having been called a *fellator* by reference to his impurity, Ascyltus turns the accusation around, reproaching his opponent for having used 'impure' *fellatrices* (cf. above). Problematically, however, while Encolpius clearly casts Ascyltus in the receptive role, Ascyltus appears to attribute the *insertive* role to his adversary: Whereas Encolpius claims that Ascyltus allows his mouth to be penetrated by other males, Ascyltus asserts that Encolpius has penetrated the mouths of females. The terms *gladiator* and *percussor* are also suggestive of the insertive rather than the receptive role.[336] The same applies to the last item of Ascyltus' first reply, in which he compares himself to the *puer* Giton, who – as we have seen – must be expected to play the receptive role with Encolpius. Can it really be Ascyltus' strategy to portray himself as a penetrated male and his opponent as a penetrating one? As Williams (2010b: 30 n. 15) rightly points out, "this would be a particularly ineffective stance for Ascyltos to take in a dispute, and would not have the obviously desired effect of insulting Encolpius."

335 Several scholars have argued that what Encolpius means to say by *subduxisti te a praeceptoris colloquio* is something along the lines of 'You sneaked off on purpose so as to have sex with my Giton!', cf. e.g. Ciaffi (1955: 25) and Jensson (2004: 139). Although they suspect that some words spoken by Encolpius might have fallen out, the interpretation proposed by Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*) is very similar. While this line of argument is intriguing, one important caveat remains: If Encolpius' words really entail criticism of his opponent's behaviour toward Giton, Ascyltus does not pick up on it but talks about food and nonsensical teachings instead. In the extant passage, Encolpius makes no special effort to direct the conversation toward the alleged rape.

336 Cf. the remarks above as well as Williams (2010b: 30): "The two roles in which Ascyltos casts his accuser … are described by agent nouns (*gladiator, percussor*) which are morphologically and culturally coded as masculine, male and active." For some exceptional cases of ambivalent and/or effeminate gladiators, cf. *ibid.* with n. 13.

Trying to account for this difficulty, some scholars have argued that Ascyltus' accusation is less concerned with insertive and receptive roles than with the sexual partners one pursues. However, as such hypotheses are incompatible with what we know about Roman perceptions of 'true masculinity', they need to be dismissed.[337] Other scholars, rightly emphasising that Romans were little concerned with whether a male was sexually interested in females or males, have called attention to different ways of looking at the altercation. Schmeling (1994/5: 213) suggests that there is a sense of irony to Ascyltus' words: Calling Encolpius a (highly virile) gladiator, he claims, is meant to highlight the fact that he is the very opposite: a man plagued by bouts of impotence (cf. above). Williams (2010b: 30) goes as far as to question our understanding of the relationship between Encolpius and Giton:

> Yet the point of Ascyltos' remark seems to be to make distinctions with regard to *how* they were 'brothers' (*eadem ratione … qua …*) and it is hard to avoid the conclusion that he is alluding to sexual role: in a previous encounter in a garden, Ascyltos had played the masculine, penetrating role with Encolpius and the young Giton is now doing the same in the inn. The remark scores a further point against Encolpius by implicitly casting him in the feminine penetrated role – even, quite against the norms of Roman masculinity, in his relationship with the young Giton.

337 Cf. section II.1. Problems of Terminology and Categorisation. The reason I am devoting any attention to such hypotheses is that certain elements thereof have found their way into recent discussions of the *Satyrica.* Soverini (1976: 103) claims that – by referring to their past sexual relationship – Ascyltus reminds Encolpius of his ongoing "pervertimento omosessuale," i.e. of the fact that Encolpius' 'depraved' interest in boys is not limited to the present (*nunc*) but also pertains to the past, the time when he was with Ascyltus. According to Soverini (*ibid.* 104), the period in which Encolpius was still 'full of strength' (*fortiter faceres*) is tantamount to the time when he still had 'normal' sex – albeit oral – with women. Having abandoned women for men, Encolpius is said to have lost part of his strength, thus attracting criticism from Ascyltus. Lefèvre (2007: 160) suggests that Ascyltus has in mind a hierarchy of male-female and male-male relationships: "Ascyltos stellt offenbar eine absteigende Rangfolge sexueller Betätigungen auf: zwischen Männern (erfordert viel Kraft), zwischen Mann und Frau (erfordert weniger Kraft), zwischen Mann und Knaben (erfordert am wenigsten Kraft)." Although Jensson (2004: 139 n. 311) explicitly criticises Soverini (1976) for his "anachronistic insistence that the boys are accusing each other of 'homosexuality,'" certain parts of his interpretation sound remarkably similar. He (*ibid.* 139) claims that, in Ascyltus' view, "the dominant male […] earns his reputation for sexual virility primarily by engaging in vaginal intercourse" and that "Encolpius' dominance […] over Ascyltos in the *viridarium* and Giton in the *deversorium,* fail to qualify him as a dominant male, since buggery does not really register in this respect."

By reversing the sexual role Encolpius is usually assumed to play, Williams attempts to 'normalise' the thrust of Ascyltus' insult, as we would expect him to throw the charge of effeminacy right back at his opponent. This hypothesis is plausible, inasmuch as there is no direct evidence of Encolpius penetrating Giton rather than the other way around. Yet, since several passages portray the two as a traditional man/boy pair, following Williams' suggestion might pose more questions than it is able to answer.[338]

The interpretation that seems most convincing to me is the one proposed by Niall W. Slater (1990: 34), claiming that the "basic strategy Ascyltus employs is to destroy each moral posture Encolpius tries on." In the second part of the argument, when referring to Agamemnon, Encolpius is said to present himself as a "lover of true learning" (*ibid.* 35) – a pose which Ascyltus is quick to destroy by pointing out his opponent's true motive: hunger. The same strategy can be detected in the first part of the altercation: "Encolpius is angry over Ascyltus's desire for Giton – but Ascyltus points out that he and Encolpius have had the same kind of relationship" (*ibid.* 34–5).

One of the strong points of Slater's argument is that it allows us to explain Ascyltus' particular emphasis on the phrase *non taces.* It may be seen to imply something along the lines of 'You are in no position to make such accusations', as in the proverb 'people who live in glass houses should not throw stones'. Considering the points made above, I shall attempt to complement Slater's interpretation in a few regards. The most important realisation, I believe, is that Ascyltus does not simply copy the accusation of sexual 'passivity' – as suggested by Williams – but rather points out the ways in which Encolpius' behaviour and character undercut his posture of moral outrage. Following this line of thought, part of Ascyltus' first reply may be summarised thus: 'On the one hand, you reproach me for having performed *fellatio,* even as you yourself are known to have used the services of *fellatrices.* As you enjoy other peoples' 'impurity', you have no right to open your mouth about this (*non taces*). On the other hand, you criticise me for playing the receptive role in sex, even as you are a known lover of penetrated males. Not only are you in a relationship with a penetrated male now (Giton), but in the past you also took advantage of my sexual submission. Since you are therefore complicit in my 'debauchery', you are in no position to disapprove of it'. With

338 For the relevant passages, cf. above section II.2.1. The Evidence of the *Satyrica* and section III.1. Rape (§ 9.1–5).

this addendum, Slater's interpretation of the passage 1) attributes a reasonable and consistent strategy to Ascyltus' replies, 2) accounts for the fact that Ascyltus appears to win the argument, and 3) is compatible with the apparent nature of the sexual relationship between the protagonists, i.e. that Encolpius plays the insertive role, whereas Giton and Ascyltus (at least with Encolpius) play the receptive one.

III.2.2 Verbal Duelling in the Comic Tradition

After this digression into the minutiae of Petronian quarrelling, in this section I aim to show that major aspects of the altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus have forerunners in Graeco-Roman comedy. As has already been mentioned, previous 'theatrical' readings of the passage have stressed the artificiality of the protagonists' accusations as well as their penchant for role-playing.[339] Apart from the rhetorical nature of the argument, such interpretations are supported by the explicit reference to Ascyltus' insincerity (*se finxit*) and by the laughter concluding the altercation.[340] While the quarrel is thus regularly understood as a kind of performance given by theatrical minds, palpable parallels with the ancient stage have received very little attention. Elaborating on some passing remarks by Eckard Lefèvre (2007: 161) and Amy Richlin (2009: 85), I will place the dispute between Encolpius and Ascyltus in the context of comic insult matches. Specifically, I will demonstrate that the accusations and discursive strategies of Petronius' characters strongly resemble those of verbal duellists in Aristophanes and Plautus.

From the very outset, comedy has featured characters trying to outdo one another by means of arguments and/or threats and insults. Such verbal duels frequently occur in Aristophanes, most prominently so in the form of the so-called epirrhematic agon, a type of altercation that is composed of corresponding metrical portions and involves not only the quarrellers themselves but also the chorus (cf. e.g. *Eccl.* 571–709; *Lys.* 467–607; *Ran.* 895–1098).[341] Though not bound to the epirrhematic formula

339 Cf. Walsh (1970: 87), Slater (1990: 34 f.), Panayotakis (1995: 16), and Williams (2010b: 27–31).

340 Cf. Panayotakis 1995: 16.

341 Cf. Gelzer's (1960: 3 f.) definition of the epirrhematic agon. He (*ibid.* 11–36) offers a full discussion of the extant examples in Aristophanes. For a brief overview of altercations in Old Comedy, cf. also Wallochny (1992: 99–101).

and referring to different themes, similar quarrels also play a significant role in Middle and New Comedy plots as well as in the *fabula palliata.*[342] Crucially, verbal duels in a broader sense, i.e. exchanges between two parties “that challenge each other to a performative display of verbal skilfulness in front of an audience” (Pagliai 2009: 63), are by no means restricted to ‘literary’ comedy but constitute a form of ‘popular’ entertainment common to many cultures across the world. One of its best-known modern varieties is the rap battle.[343] In Greek ‘popular’ comedy, such altercations appear to have occurred as early as in Epicharmus.[344] In a Roman context, the most important piece of evidence for verbal duels as a form of ‘popular’ spectacle is a passage from Horace’s *Iter Brundisinum*: Having arrived at the villa of L. Cocceius Nerva, the satiric persona recounts how his company was entertained at dinner by an insult match between the *scurra* Sarmentus and Messius Cicirrus (Hor. *Sat.* 1.5.50–70). It has been suggested that Horace’s description was inspired by the *fabula Atellana,* and there are some indications that verbal duels were a regular feature of this genre.[345] In extant Roman literature, entertaining quarrels are nowhere as frequent as in the Plautine oeuvre, where they occur in virtually every play.[346] They are commonly held between slaves but may also involve other ‘low-life characters’ such as parasites and pimps.[347] Since many verbal duels in Plautus are but loosely connected to the overall plot, they are often suspected of being farcical additions to the New Comedy originals.[348]

342 Gelzer (1960: 179–288) examines the development of the epirrhematic agon in the history of Greek comedy. Cf. Wallochny (1992: 102–27) on disputes in Middle and New Comedy.

343 On verbal duelling as a global phenomenon, cf. e.g. Richlin (2017: 156 n. 26) with references for further reading.

344 Titles such as Γᾶ καὶ Θάλασσα (“Earth and Sea”) and Λόγος καὶ Λογίνα (“Mr and Mrs Word”) may suggest as much; for a discussion, cf. e.g. Wallochny (1992: 99 f.).

345 For a detailed examination of Hor. *Sat.* 1.5.50–70 and its possible relationship to the *fabula Atellana,* cf. Petersmann (1989). Novius’ title *Mortis et vitae iudicium* may hint at a verbal duel (cf. Wallochny 1992: 99); for further discussion, cf. also Richlin (2017: 155).

346 For a detailed discussion of verbal duels in Plautus, cf. Wallochny (1992: 128–93) and Richlin (2017: 155–71).

347 Cf. Wallochny 1992: 62 f.

348 Cf. e.g. Wallochny (1992: 133): “Auseinandersetzungen, die sich zwangsläufig und folgerichtig aus einer Zuspitzung der Ereignisse ergeben, sind bei Plautus in der Minderheit.” She (*ibid.* 189–93) also discusses possible connections to the *fabula Atellana* and the mime. For general remarks on farcical elements in Plautus, cf. section I.3.2. Farcical Elements in ‘Popular’ and ‘Literary’ Comedy.

III.2.2.1 Mirroring and Exaggeration

Taking the insult matches in Aristophanes and Plautus as prototypical examples, I will argue that the altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus is heavily indebted to the tradition of verbal duelling on the comic stage. For the sake of clarity, I shall proceed from broader aspects to small details.

It has been pointed out that, in basic terms, Ascyltus responds to Encolpius' first accusation by mirroring and exaggerating his behaviour. This strategy, i.e. outdoing one's opponents at their own game, is very common in comic verbal duels, not least in Aristophanes' *Knights,* where Paphlagon and the Sausage Seller compete over the favour of Mr Demos. Their lengthy dispute (cf. *Equ.* 225–481, 691–1252) contains several of the same phenomena we have observed in Petronius. For instance, the Aristophanic altercation contains a literal shouting match, with the Chorus Leader explaining the 'rules' to Paphlagon beforehand:

Κορυφαῖος·	ἀλλ᾽ ἐὰν μέντοι γε νικᾷς τῇ βοῇ, τήνελλος εἶ·	276
	ἢν δ᾽ ἀναιδείᾳ παρέλθῃ σ᾽, ἡμέτερος ὁ πυραμοῦς.	
	[…]	
Ἀλλαντοπώλης·	τριπλάσιον κεκράξομαί σου.	285
Παφλαγὼν·	καταβοήσομαι βοῶν σε.	
Ἀλλαντοπώλης·	κατακεκράξομαί σε κράζων.	
	(Aristoph. *Equ.* 276–87)[349]	

Chorus Leader:	Well, if you manage to beat him with your shouting, you are the man of the hour; but if he outdoes you in brazenness, we take the cake.
	[…]
Sausage Seller:	I will shout three times as loud as you!
Paphlagon:	I will outbellow you with my bellowing!
Sausage Seller:	I will shout you down with my shouting!

349 For the names of the Aristophanic characters, I follow the edition by Henderson (ed., trans. 1998–2007). The text edition by Hall & Geldart (eds. 1900–1) has Κλέων for Παφλαγὼν and Χορός for Κορυφαῖος.

This scene resembles Ascyltus outdoing Encolpius by his more vigorous gesture and his more forceful shouting: *intentavi in oculos Ascylti manus et 'quid dicis' inquam* (§ 9.6) vs. *sublatis fortius manibus longe maiore nisu clamavit* (§ 9.7).[350] Incidentally, we may note that Encolpius' threat against his opponent's eyes is reminiscent of various conflicts in the *fabula palliata.*[351] The basic principle of the quarrel in the *Knights* – as of many other ones in the comic tradition – is that the Sausage Seller hears out Paphlagon's statements, only to throw even more daring claims or insults right back at him.[352] Just as Ascyltus asserts that Encolpius is worse than himself (*multo me turpior es tu*), the Sausage Seller exaggerates Paphlagon's accusations, e. g.:

Παφλαγὼν·	οὔτοι μὰ τὴν Δήμητρ', ἐὰν μή σ' ἐκφάγω ἐκ τῆσδε τῆς γῆς, οὐδέποτε βιώσομαι.
Ἀλλαντοπώλης·	ἢν μὴ 'κφάγῃς; ἐγὼ δέ γ', ἢν μή σ' ἐκπίω κἀπεκροφήσας αὐτὸς ἐπιδιαρραγῶ. (Aristoph. *Equ.* 698–701)

Paphlagon:	I will not go on living, by Demeter I will not, if I do not devour you right off this earth!
Sausage Seller:	If you do not devour me? Same goes for me if I do not guzzle you down, even if swallowing you makes me burst!

350 In another act of non-verbal competition, Paphlagon and the Sausage Seller try to outrun each other on their way into the house (Aristoph. *Equ.* 1109–10).

351 Encolpius' gesture (*intentavi in oculos Ascylti manus,* § 9.6) can be understood as an act of aggression in general terms, or more specifically as a threat to gouge out Ascyltus' eyes (cf. Breitenstein ed. 2009 *ad loc.*). Referring to Prop. 4.5.15 and Chariton 6.5.8, Habermehl (2004: 65 n. 46) argues that the latter type of attack was coded as feminine. At least as far as the *fabula palliata* is concerned, however, this is not the case (cf. Williams 2010b: 29 n. 10). In fact, most comic characters making such threats are males, cf. Plaut. *Aul.* 53 (the *senex* Euclio), *Capt.* 464 (the parasite Ergasilus), *Mostell.* 203 (the *adulescens* Philolaches), *Pers.* 794 (the *puer* Paegnium), *Rud.* 759 (the *servus* Trachalio), *Trin.* 463 (the *adulescens* Lesbonicus), Ter. *Ad.* 318 (the *servus* Geta), *Eun.* 648 (the *ancilla* Pythias), *Phorm.* 989 (the parasite Phormio nonchalantly suggesting that Demipho's slave may gouge out his eyes). For Petronius' expression, cf. also Sen. *Ep.* 71.22 (*in oculos nunc mihi manus intentat*), where the gesture is not coded as feminine either. For further references, cf. Sittl (1890: 44–5).

352 With reference to Plautus, Wallochny (1992: 65) explains that "Bei der *verbivelatio* ["word-skirmishing", cf. Plaut. *Asin.* 307] kommt es darauf an, eine als Herausforderung gedachte Bemerkung nicht auf sich sitzen zu lassen, sondern Kontra zu geben. […] Wie Libanus und Leonida in der *Asinaria* vorführen, kann das Kontern in freier Form […] oder in kunstvoller Entsprechung […] geschehen."

In the above example – as Ascyltus twists around Encolpius' reference to impurity – the Sausage Seller explicitly picks up on his opponent's words: ἐὰν μή σ' ἐκφάγω … ἢν μὴ 'κφάγῃς;[353] Yet, as we have seen, Ascyltus' strategy of mirroring and exaggeration also pertains to the area of syntax, answering Encolpius' formula (term of abuse + relative clause) with an amplified version of it (two terms of abuse + three relative clauses). While such syntactically corresponding insults also occur in Aristophanes (cf. e.g. the threats at *Equ.* 286–7 cited above), the most virtuoso example of mirroring occurs in Plautus' *Persa,* namely in a verbal duel between the slave Toxilus and the pimp Dordalus:

Toxilus:	*oh, lutum lenonium,*	
	commixtum caeno sterculinum publicum,	
	inpure, inhoneste, iniure, inlex, labes popli,	
	pecuniai accipiter avide atque invide,	
	procax, rapax, trahax – trecenis versibus	410
	tuas inpuritias traloqui nemo potest –	
	accipin argentum? accipe sis argentum, inpudens,	
	tene sis argentum, etiam tu argentum tenes?	
	possum te facere ut argentum accipias, lutum?	
	non mihi censebas copiam argenti fore,	415
	qui nisi iurato mihi nil ausu's credere?	
Dordalus:	*sine respirare me, ut tibi respondeam.*	
	vir summe populi, stabulum servitricium,	
	scortorum liberator, suduculum flagri,	
	compedium tritor, pistrinorum civitas,	420
	perenniserve, lurcho, edax, furax, fugax,	
	cedo sis mi argentum, da mihi argentum, inpudens,	
	possum [a] te exigere argentum? argentum, inquam, cedo,	
	quin tu me argentum reddis? nihilne te pudet?	
	leno te argentum poscit, solida servitus,	425
	pro liberanda amica, ut omnes audiant.	
	(Plaut. *Pers.* 406–26)	

Toxilus: Oh, you pimp dirt, you public dungheap mixed with filth, dirty, dishonest, unjust, unlawful crea-

353 In the *Knights,* cf. also e.g. 702–4 and 965; for further discussion of this technique, cf. Wallochny (1992: 17).

ture, downfall of the people, greedy and hateful money hawk, daring stealing, thieving – in three hundred verses no one could list your dirty tricks completely – will you not take the money? Take the money, will you, you impudent person! Have the money, will you have the money now? Can I make you take the money, you piece of dirt? You did not think I would have the opportunity to get hold of the money, did you? You did not dare trust me until I gave you an oath.

Dordalus: Let me catch my breath so that I can reply you. You most respected man of the people, brothel for slave girls, liberator of prostitutes, sweating chamber of the whip, wearer-away of shackles, inhabitant of the mills, eternal slave, swilling, guzzling, thieving runaway, give me my money, will you, give me my money, you impudent person! Can I get the money out of you? Give me my money, I insist! Why will you not give me the money? Do you not have any shame at all? The pimp is demanding money from you, you embodiment of slavery, for setting your girlfriend free, so that everybody can hear.

Most conspicuously, Dordalus copies the overall structure of Toxilus' verbal attack: He answers four lines of insults (406b–410a) with four lines of his own (418–21); Toxilus' five lines of questions (412–6) receive five lines of requests and counter-questions in reply (422–6). What is more, several individual items of Dordalus' tirade closely correspond to his opponent's words: For instance, the expression *stabulum servitricium* (418) harks back to Toxilus' *sterculinum publicum* (407), and *edax, furax, fugax* (421) clearly recalls *procax, rapax, trahax* (410).[354] Although this scene from the *Persa* is more elaborate than most other examples in extant comedy, the technique of mirroring can be regarded as a *topos* of verbal duelling on the ancient stage.[355] Equally importantly, we may

354 For a detailed analysis of the correspondences, cf. Woytek (1982 *ad loc.*) and Richlin (2017: 158–60).

355 For similar altercations, cf. e.g. Plaut. *Asin.* 297–9 with Richlin (2017: 165) as well as *Asin.* 167–70, *Cas.* 604–9 or *Cas.* 404–8 (cited above in section III.1.3. Sexual Rivalry between Two Tarquinii).

note that Dordalus' words are at least as much a "studied riposte" (Walsh 1970: 87, cited above) as Ascyltus'. The artificiality, the rhetorical nature, of the entire altercation is even more blatant than in the *Satyrica.*[356] Furthermore, both opponents add some metatheatrical remarks to their insults – Toxilus: *trecentis versibus | tuas inpuritias traloqui nemo potest* (410 f.); Dordalus: *sine respirare me, ut tibi respondeam* (417) – thereby reminding the audience that this is a good-humoured performance rather than serious business. As we have seen, a similar effect has been attributed to Ascyltus' role-playing and to the laughter at the end of the Petronian quarrel. The fact that they appear to enjoy quarrelling for its own sake is one more aspect connecting Encolpius and Ascyltus to verbal duellers of the comic tradition.[357]

III.2.2.2 Sex and Food

The altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus resembles comic verbal duels not only in terms of its structure but also in terms of its subject matter. A look back at the quarrel between Paphlagon and the Sausage Seller makes clear that Aristophanes is in no way inferior to Petronius when it comes to sexually explicit insults:

Ἀλλαντοπώλης·	ἐγὼ δὲ βυνήσω[358] γέ σου τὸν πρωκτὸν ἀντὶ φύσκης.
Παφλαγὼν·	ἐγὼ δέ γ' ἐξέλξω σε τῆς πυγῆς θύραζε κύβδα. (Aristoph. *Equ.* 364–5)

Sausage Seller:	And I will stuff your arsehole like a sausage skin.
Paphlagon:	And I will drag you outside by the butt, upside down.

356 Cf. Wallochny (1992: 63): "Wie wenig ernst das alles gemeint ist, geht meist schon aus der künstlerisch-komischen Formulierung hervor." For references for further reading, cf. *ibid.* n. 16.

357 For a discussion of Plautine characters who do not take altercations seriously, cf. Wallochny (1992: 63–4, 142). With reference to the ending of the altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus, Lefèvre (2007: 161) rightly points to the abrupt endings of several verbal duels in Plautus, e.g. *Rud.* 583.

358 I follow Henderson (ed., trans. 1998–2007 *ad loc.*), who prefers Jackson's conjecture βυνήσω to the manuscripts' readings κινήσω or βινήσω.

Similar to Encolpius' verbal attack against Ascyltus (*muliebris patientiae scortum*), the Sausage Seller's threat against Paphlagon hinges on the unwritten law that a 'true male' should never allow himself to be sexually penetrated. As has been shown in an earlier section, such slurs are not uncommon in ancient comedy.[359] As far as parallels between the *Satyrica* and Plautine comedy are concerned, the verbal duel between the slaves Pinacium and Phaniscus in the *Mostellaria* may serve as a typical example. Their altercation, which is only very loosely connected to the overall plot, revolves around Phaniscus' sexual relationship with their master Callidamates:

	manesne ilico, impure parasite?	887[a]
Phaniscus:	⟨*dic tu*⟩[360]	
	qui parasitus sum?	
Pinacium:	*ego enim dicam: cibo perduci poteris quovis.*	
Phaniscus:	*mihi sum, lubet esse. quid id curas?*	
Pinacium:	*ferocem facis, quia te erus amat.*	890
Phaniscus:	*vah!*	
	oculi dolent.	
Pinacium:	*qur?*	
Phaniscus:	*quia fumu' molestust.*	
Pinacium:	*tace sis, faber, qui cudere soles plumbeos nummos.*	
Phaniscus:	*non ⟨pol⟩ potes tu cogere me ut tibi male dicam.*	
	novit erus me.	894–5
Pinacium:	*suam quidem [pol] culcitulam oportet.*	
Phaniscus:	*si sobriu' sis, male non dicas.*	
Pinacium:	*tibi optemperem, quom tu mi nequeas?*	
	at tu mecum, pessume, ito advorsus.	
Phaniscus:	*quaeso hercle apstine*	
	iam sermonem de istis rebus.	
	(Plaut. *Mostell.* 887[a]–98)	

Pinacium:	Will you not stop at once, you dirty parasite?[361]
Phaniscus:	Tell me, how am I a parasite?

359 Cf. section II.3. Other Male-Male Relationships in the Comic Tradition.

360 This conjecture is de Melo's (ed., trans. 2011–3 *ad loc.*).

361 While de Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3 ad loc.) translates *parasitus* with "hanger-on," I prefer the straightforward rendering "parasite."

Pinacium:	Yes, I will tell you: With food you can be enticed anywhere.
Phaniscus:	That is my own business, I like to be one. Why do you care?
Pinacium:	You are playing the hard man because master loves you.
Phanicus:	Bah! My eyes hurt.
Pinacium:	Why?
Phaniscus:	Because your gas is a nuisance.
Pinacium:	Be quiet, you moneyer who always mints base coin.[362]
Phaniscus:	You cannot force me to insult you. Master knows me.
Pinacium:	He ought to know his little pillow.
Phaniscus:	If you were sober, you would not insult me.
Pinacium:	Should I obey you when you cannot obey me? But do go with me and fetch him, you worst of all creatures.
Phaniscus:	Please keep the conversation away from those topics.

Let us begin by pointing out some minor, though significant, resemblances between this verbal duel and the one in Petronius. In very basic terms, the fact that Pinacium uses a superlative adjective for an insult (*pessume,* 897) may remind us of a similar superlative used by Ascyltus: *homo stultissime* (§ 10.1). Indeed, such expressions are not infrequent in comedy; in Terence's *Phormio* (218) a slave – verbally abusing a pimp – uses almost the exact same words as Ascyltus: *hominum homo stultissime.*[363] On another note, Pinacium's imperative *tace* (892) may bring to mind Ascyltus' *non taces* (§ 9.8, 9.9), an expression that makes a regular appearance in the *fabula palliata.*[364]

362 Cf. de Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3 *ad loc.*): "his jokes are stale." For further discussion, cf. Lorenz (ed. 1883 *ad loc.*).

363 At § 65.5, Agamemnon also addresses Encolpius as *homo stultissime.* Augier-Grimaud (2014: 339) offers a full list of similar formulations in Plautus and Terence. For general remarks on the resemblances between insults in Petronius and in the *fabula palliata,* cf. Paschall (1939: 18–22) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011: 29 f.). Lilja (1965) is the standard work on terms of abuse on the Roman stage; on verbal abuse elsewhere, cf. Opelt (1965).

364 Cf. e.g. Plaut. *Amph.* 700 and *Asin.* 931. In fact, for the period until around 200 CE, the *Library of Latin Texts – Series A* (Brepolis) delivers sixteen hits for the phrase *non*

More importantly, the verbal duel in the *Mostellaria* is concerned with two themes that also play a dominant role in the Petronian altercation: sex and food. Pinacium claims that Phaniscus is the beloved of his master (*erus te amat,* 890) and that he acts as the master's pillow (*culcitulam,* 894–5), thereby clearly implying that Phaniscus allows himself to be penetrated by Callidamates. This verbal attack differs from the Sausage Seller's (βυνήσω γέ σου τὸν πρωκτὸν), inasmuch as the latter threatens to penetrate Paphlagon *himself,* whereas Pinacium hints at Phaniscus' sexual submission to a third party. In this regard, Pinacium's insult – being the more common type in Plautus[365] – functions along the same lines as Encolpius' *(muliebris patientiae …)*. The denigration associated with men performing *fellatio* – as implied in Encolpius words (*ne spiritus ⟨quidem⟩ purus est*) – is also not unheard of on the comic stage.[366] Neither are insults implying that one's opponent engages in prostitution (*scortum*).[367]

For the analysis at hand, the most significant term of abuse in the quarrel between Pinacium and Phaniscus is *impure parasite* (887[a]). Most obviously, it contains the notion of impurity which is so prominent in Petronius (§ 9.6 and § 9.10). Though there is no link to Phaniscus' mouth and thus to oral intercourse, the expression clearly has a sexual connotation: Pinacium explains that an *impurus parasitus* is someone who will do anything for food (*cibo perduci poteris quovis,* 888), more precisely, we may deduce from the context, someone who receives food in exchange for sexual favours for his master. The idea that parasites perform sexual services for the men who feed them occurs several times in the Plautine

taces. Twelve of these are to be found in Plautus, two in Terence, and the remaining two are those in Petronius. In Ter. *Phorm.* 1004, we encounter a quarrel between two old men, making use of the same verbal material as Encolpius (*quid dicis*) and Ascyltus (*non taces*): Demipho's question (*hem quid ais?*) is answered by Chremes' counter-question (*non taces?*). Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011: 29) have already noted that Encolpius' question is reminiscent of *quid ais?,* a frequent expression in Plautus.

365 Cf. section II.3. Other Male-Male Relationships in the Comic Tradition. Paegnium's insult hurled at the slave Sagaristio constitutes an exception to this rule: *non hercle, si os perciderim tibi, metuam, morticine* ("I would not be afraid if I broke into your mouth today, you cadaver", Plaut. *Pers.* 283). Most likely, Paegnium implies that he would force Sagaristio to play the receptive role in oral sex, cf. Woytek (1982 *ad loc.*) and Lilja (1983: 17).

366 Cf. e.g. Aristoph. *Equ.* 166–7, 375 as well as Plaut. *Pers.* 283 (cited in note 365), *Amph.* 348 f. and *Pseud.* 782.

367 The slave Grumio refers to his fellow-slave Tranio as *deliciae popli* ("darling of the people", Plaut. *Mostell.* 15), i.e. a common prostitute (cf. Lilja 1983: 25); cf. also Plaut. *Aul.* 285 (cited in section III.3. Punishment (§ 11.1–4)).

oeuvre.[368] Strikingly, Pinacium's insult thus brings together two themes at the centre of the altercation in the *Satyrica*: The themes of sexual denigration (*impure*) and of putting one's appetite before all other concerns (*parasite*). We should note that the latter point not only occurs in Ascyltus' accusation levelled against Encolpius (*ut foris cenares poetam laudasti*), but that Ascyltus also justifies his own actions with reference to the needs of his belly (*quid ego … facere debui, cum fame morerer?*). A little later, the quarrellers put their differences aside for the sake of a free dinner: *non recusavit Ascyltos et 'hodie' inquit 'quia tamquam scholastici ad cenam promisimus, non perdamus noctem'* (§ 10.6). Though Petronius' text lacks the *terminus technicus,* then, both Encolpius and Ascyltus are portrayed as parasites, people for whom food is a number one priority.[369]

While Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad* § 10.2) is right to point out that parasites occur in epigrams and satires, we must not forget that they are first and foremost associated with the comic stage, where they had been a stock type from Middle Comedy onwards.[370] The defining characteristic of parasites is their desire to dine at somebody else's expense, for which they are willing to entertain their benefactors in various ways: by flattering, telling jokes or even by enduring physical abuse.[371] When Encolpius commends Agamemnon (*poetam laudasti*), he resembles comic parasites who play the yes-men to those extending dinner invitations.[372] As noted by Rosenblüth (1909: 55), the same applies to the protagonists' behaviour

368 Cf. section II.3. Other Male-Male Relationships in the Comic Tradition. Opelt (1965: 102–4) offers an overview of the insults comic parasites have to endure.

369 The word *parasitus* occurs nowhere in the extant *Satyrica.*

370 Similarly, Augier-Grimaud (2014: 96) argues that the Petronian protagonists are closer to the parasites of satire than to those of comedy. Cf. her (*ibid.* 129–31) broader discussion of parasitism in the *Satyrica.*

371 On parasites in the comic tradition, cf. Damon (1997: 23–101), Tylawsky (2002), Antonsen-Resch (2005), and most recently the contributions in Bandini & Pentericci (eds. 2019). The type occurs in an adultery mime; cf. Wiemken (1972: 81–106) and Rusten & Cunningham (eds., trans. 2003: 390–400). Note that several stock types of the *fabula Atellana* are associated with gluttony, cf. Kocur (2018: 259–61) and section I.3.1. Theatrical Performances in Petronius' Day. For an overview of what a parasite's occupation entails, cf. e.g. Ter. *Eun.* 232–64. The physical abuse they have to endure will be discussed in section V.3.2.1. Jugs, Jars and Pots.

372 In Terence's *Eunuchus* (251–3), the parasite Gnatho spells out this principle: *quidquid dicunt laudo; id rursum si negant, laudo id quoque; | negat quis: nego; ait: aio; postremo imperavi egomet mihi | omnia adsentari. is quaestus nunc est multo uberrimus* ("Whatever they say, I praise it; if they then say the opposite, I praise that too. They deny, I deny; they affirm, I affirm. In short it is my self-imposed rule to agree to everything. It is by far the most profitable way to earn a living these days").

at Trimalchio's banquet.[373] We may add that Ascyltus' unwillingness to let a free dinner go to waste (*quia… ad cenam promisimus, non perdamus noctem*) closely corresponds to one of the principles of a parasite's vocation, as put into plain words by Curculio: *vocat me ad cenam; religio fuit, denegare nolui* ("he invited me to dinner; it would have been against my principles, so I did not want to refuse," Plaut. *Curc.* 350). Moreover, as Ascyltus defends his actions with reference to his hunger, so do comic parasites. We may consider, for instance, Artotrogus' explanation as to why he tolerates, even encourages, the soldier Pyrgopolinices' vaingloriousness: *venter creat omnis hasce aerumnas: auribus | peraudienda sunt, ne dentes dentiant, | et adsentandumst quidquid hic mentibitur* ("My belly is creating all this misery: I have to hear this with my ears so that my teeth will not grow toothy from inactivity, and I have to agree with whatever lies he dishes up," Plaut. *Mil.* 33–5). Both Ascyltus and Artotrogus refer to the alleviation of hunger as a fundamental necessity that justifies their behaviour. A last point worth making is that the need to procure food is not restricted to parasites but also determines the actions of slaves and various other poor characters on the comic stage. In Plautus' *Asinaria,* when explaining why she intends to prostitute her daughter Philaenium to the highest bidder, the *lena* Cleareta uses nearly the exact same words as Ascyltus: *ne nos moriamur fame* ("lest we die of hunger," 531).[374]

III.2.2.3 The Dynamics of Comic Altercations

Apart from structural matters and overall themes, Petronius' quarrellers resemble comic ones in terms of the argumentative strategies they employ. Above, we have observed that – not unlike Ascyltus – verbal duellers commonly beat their opponents at their own game. Additionally, some comic characters resemble Encolpius in that they point out their adversaries' shortcomings even though, strictly speaking, they are in no position to voice such disapproval. For example, we may consider a quar-

373 Cf. Rosenblüth (1909: 55): "ganz wie professionelle parasiten benehmen sich nun bei Petron Agamemnon und die als seine schüler eingeführten Encolp und Ascyltus, wenn sie dem hausherrn in jeder weise schmeicheln, sein bild küssen, seine dummsten witze belachen; auch die übrigen gäste geben dem nicht viel nach (vgl. Hermeros cap. 57,2)." For the praise Trimalchio receives from his guests, cf. § 34.5 (*laudatus propter elegantias dominus*; "our host was complimented on these elegant arrangements") and *passim.*

374 On hunger as a motivating factor in Plautine comedy, cf. Richlin (2017: 126–36).

rel between the slaves Olympio and Chalinus in Plautus' *Casina,* a later portion of which has already been discussed.[375] Having endured a verbal attack from his opponent (359), Chalinus tells their master Lysidamus that he should 'keep in check' Olympio: *comprime istunc* (362). The latter picks up on another possible meaning of the verb *comprimere* ('to sexually penetrate')[376] and throws the insult right back to where it came from: *immo istunc qui didicit dare* (literally: "No, *him* [sc. you should 'keep in check'], who has learned how to give," 362). Answering one *double entendre* with another, Olympio says that Chalinus should be the one suffering penetration, as he already knows how to 'put out' (*dare*), i.e. how to play the receptive role with his master.[377] Olympio launches this insult despite the fact that – as the audience will learn a little later – he himself has a sexual relationship with Lysidamus.[378] Apparently, when it comes to verbal duelling, Olympio is as little concerned with the validity of his indignation as Encolpius.

While Olympio – at least for the time being – gets away with his hypocrisy, other comic characters are not as lucky. The conversation between the *adulescens* Diniarchus and the *ancilla* Astaphium in Plautus' *Truculentus* is a case in point. Diniarchus (Di.) used to be the main customer of the prostitute Phronesium, Astaphium's mistress, but lost this position to a wealthier rival. In this passage, he complains to Astaphium (As.) about the large amount of money he has spent at their brothel:

Di.: *vos mihi dedistis otium.*
As.: *qui, amabo?*
Di.: *ego expedibo.*
rem perdidi apud vos, vos meum negotium apstulistis.
si rem servassem, fuit ubi negotiosus essem. 140
As.: *an tu te Veneris publicum aut Amoris alia lege*
habere posse postulas quin otiosus fias?
Di.: *illa, haud ego, habuit publicum: pervorse interpretaris;*
nam advorsum legem meam ob meam scripturam pecudem
cepit.

375 Cf. Plaut. *Cas.* 404–8 and section III.1.3. Sexual Rivalry between Two Tarquinii.

376 Adams (1982: 182 f.) discusses the sexual meaning of *comprimere.* The same word play, with a similar reply, occurs at Plaut. *Rud.* 1073–5.

377 On this meaning of the verb *dare,* cf. Williams (2010a: 312 n. 51).

378 Cf. the discussion in section II.2.2. The Evidence of Graeco-Roman Comedy.

As.: *plerique idem quod tu facis faciunt rei male gerentes:* 145
ubi non est scripturam unde dent, incusant publicanos.
Di.: *male vortit res pecuaria mihi apud vos: nunc vicissim*
volo habere aratiunculam pro copia hic apud vos.
As.: *non arvos hic, sed pascuost ager: si arationes*
habituris, qui arari solent, ad pueros ire meliust. 150
hunc nos habemus publicum, illi alii sunt publicani.
Di.: *utros pergnovi probe.*
As.: *em istoc pol tu otiosu's,*
quom et illic et hic pervorsus es. sed utriscum rem esse mavis?
Di.: *procaciores esti' vos, sed illi peiiuriosi;* 154
illis perit quidquid datur neque ipsis apparet quicquam:
vos saltem si quid quaeritis, exhibitis et comestis.
postremo illi sunt inprobi, vos nequam et gloriosae.
As.: *male quae in nos ais, ea omnia tibi dicis, Diniarche,*
et nostram et illorum vicem.
Di.: *qui istuc?*
As.: *rationem dicam:* 159
quia qui alterum incusat probri, sumpse enitere oportet.
tu a nobis sapiens nihil habes; nos nequam aps te habemus.[379]
Di.: *o Astaphium, haud istoc modo solita es me ante appellare,*
sed blande, quom illuc quod apud vos nunc est apud med habebam.[380]
(Plaut. *Truc.* 138–63)

Di.: You have given me free time.
As.: How, please?
Di.: I will explain. I lost my possessions at your place, you have taken my business away from me. If you had saved my possessions, I would have somewhere to do business.
As.: Do you really expect to be able to occupy the public land of Venus or Love except on the terms of becoming a man of leisure?

379 Enk (ed. 1953) – followed by de Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3) – convincingly emended the manuscripts' reading *habeamus* to *habemus.*

380 Following Enk (ed. 1953), Hofmann (ed., trans. 2001) and de Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3), I prefer the emendation *habebam* to the manuscripts' *haberem.*

Di.: She occupied the public land, not me. You are giving it a wrong twist: against the law she impounded my cattle in lieu of pasture tax.

As.: Most people do the same as you when they are unsuccessful: When they do not have the means to pay the pasturage tax, they blame the tax collectors.

Di.: Your land for grazing cattle has turned out poorly for me; now in turn I want to have a little plow land here at your place, as far as circumstances allow.

As.: This is not land for plowing, but for grazing. If you are keen on having plow land, you should better go to boys, who are used to being plowed. We occupy this public land, but over there are other tax collectors.

Di.: I know both very well.

As.: There, that is why you are a man of leisure, because you are misguided both there and here. But which of the two do you prefer to have dealings with?

Di.: You are more licentious, while they are addicted to perjury. Whatever is given to boys is lost to those who give it, and the boys themselves do not have anything to show for it. You at least drink and eat it up when you get something. In short, they are shameless, you are wicked and conceited.

As.: All the insults you utter against us you utter against yourself instead of us and them, Diniarchus.

Di.: How so?

As.: I will tell you the reason: Because a man who accuses another of an offense ought to be blameless himself. You, the wise man, have nothing from us, we, the bad women, have it from you.

Di.: O Astaphium, that is not the way you used to address me before, but flatteringly, when I had the property at my place which is at yours now.

In this altercation, argumentative skills – rather than mere ingenuity in the area of verbal abuse – play a greater role than in the comic insult matches discussed above. Before pointing out parallels with the *Satyrica,* a few aspects of the quarrel in the *Truculentus* deserve elucidation: Both Diniarchus and Astaphium make use of an extended metaphor in which, broadly speaking, activities in the field of agriculture stand for activities in the field of sexual intercourse. Most obviously, the verbs *arare*

('to plough')[381] and *pascere* ('to graze') refer to (anal) sex with boys and (vaginal) sex with women respectively (148–50).[382] The same imagery is employed to describe the relationship between prostitutes and their customers. Diniarchus portrays himself as a 'farmer' whose natural interest in 'ploughing' and 'grazing' is thwarted by greedy 'tax collectors' (*publicani*), i.e. prostitutes, who have illegitimately taken away all his property (144).[383] He not only blames Phronesium for the financial losses he has endured but also launches a tirade of insults against prostitutes in general (154–7).

In the following analysis, I suggest that Astaphium 'wins' the altercation with Diniarchus in roughly the same way as Ascyltus prevails against Encolpius.[384] Astaphium's triumph over her opponent, I argue, finds its expression in a role reversal marked by various textual cues. At the beginning of the passage Diniarchus accuses Astaphium, and by implication also Phronesium, of 'giving things a wrong twist' (*pervorse interpretaris,* 143) by placing the blame for his financial difficulties on him (141 f.).[385] Later, it is Astaphium who calls her opponent 'twisted' (*pervorsus es,* 153) on account of his promiscuity. After Diniarchus has claimed that the fault was not with him but with Phronesium (*illa, haud ego,* 143), Astaphium points out that the exact opposite is true: *male quae in nos ais, ea omnia tibi dicis, Diniarche,* | *et nostram et illorum vicem* (158 f.). While accusing everyone else around, Diniarchus is blind to his own flaws. He reproaches the prostitutes for his money problems even though he must have been aware of their terms of business: Customers have to pay up.[386] After all, Diniarchus – without discerning the link to his financial ruin – admits to having used the services of prostitutes very frequently

381 For the sake of consistency, I use the British English spelling "plough" rather than the American English "plow" in de Melo's (ed., trans. 2011–3) translation.

382 Cf. e.g. de Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3: *ad loc.*). On sexual metaphors drawing on agricultural implements and/or activities, cf. Enk (ed. 1953 *ad* Plaut. *Truc.* 148) as well as Adams (1982: 24 f., 82–5, 154 f.). In Plautus' *Asinaria* (874), the *matrona* Artemona uses this imagery to complain about her husband's secret affair with the prostitute Philaenium: *fundum alienum arat, incultum familiarem deserit* ("He is ploughing someone else's field and leaves his own uncultivated"). Note that *arare* apparently refers to vaginal intercourse here.

383 For some remarks on the pasturage tax in Plautus' day, cf. Hofmann (ed., trans. 2001 *ad* Plaut. *Truc.* 136).

384 We may note, however, that their conversation continues until Plaut. *Truc.* 208.

385 Note also Diniarchus' *advorsum legem* (144) and *male vortit* (147).

386 In this regard, Diniarchus resembles debtors who blame the tax collectors for their own failure (cf. 145–6).

(*utrosque pergnovi probe,* 152). In the end, the role reversal comes around full circle: At the beginning, Astaphium asked 'why?' (*qui, amabo,* 138) and Diniarchus offered explication (*ego expedibo,* 138). Now, it is Diniarchus' turn to ask this question (*qui istuc,* 159) and Astaphium's to give an explanation (*rationem dicam,* 159).[387]

There are significant parallels between the argumentative strategies of Astaphium and Ascyltus. Essentially, both destroy the moral postures their opponents try on.[388] Since the first round of the Petronian altercation concerns the protagonists' sex life, it is here that we find the closest resemblances to the *Truculentus.* As Encolpius reproaches Ascyltus for (allegedly) being an impure, effeminate *pathicus* up for sale (*muliebris patientiae scortum* ...), Diniarchus accuses prostitutes – among other things – of being shameless, wicked and conceited (*illi sunt inprobi, vos nequam et gloriosae,* 157). The case each of them is making has the same weakness: Both Encolpius and Diniarchus are themselves deeply implicated in what they are criticising their opponents for. As Ascyltus and Astaphium remind them, they are fond of surrounding themselves with the kind of people they insult and, therefore, are in no position to feel superior to them. In Plautus, this principle is conveniently spelled out in the form of an aphorism that can loosely be rendered as 'because people who live in glass houses should not throw stones' (*quia qui alterum incusat probri, sumpse enitere oportet,* 160). Thereafter, Diniarchus appears to have run out of arguments and speaks of different matters: He reminds Astaphium of the pleasant times when he was still the brothel's most cherished customer (162 f.), a move that may remind us of Encolpius' change of the subject at § 9.10.

This section started out from a thorough discussion of how previous scholars have interpreted the altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus. While questions as to lost episodes of the *Satyrica* could not entirely be left aside, my analysis focused on the structure, themes and argumentative strategies discernible in the quarrel. In a next step, I tried to demonstrate that all major aspects of the Petronian passage have forerunners in the comic tradition. From Aristophanes onwards, verbal duellers regularly mirror and exaggerate their opponents' words and actions. Matters

387 In her final blow against Diniarchus, Astaphium picks up one of his terms of abuse and, ironically, applies it to prostitutes such as herself: *tu a nobis sapiens nihil habes; nos nequam aps te habemus* (161; cf. *nequam* in line 157). Obviously, Diniarchus is the opposite of a wise man (*sapiens*) for failing to see his own shortcomings.

388 For this formulation, cf. Walsh (1990: 34), cited in section III.2.1. The Dynamics of Petronian Quarrelling.

of sex and food are as common to the ancient stage as they are to the *Satyrica.* Even specific details of the Petronian altercation, such as the protagonists' playfulness and Ascyltus' technique of exposing Encolpius' hypocrisy, could be shown to have close parallels in extant comic scripts.

III.3 Punishment (§ 11.1–4)

In the first part of this chapter, I pointed out a number of parallels between the First Rivalry over Giton and comic plotlines revolving around non-consensual sex with slave characters, as in Plautus' *Mercator* and *Casina.* Taking up this line of argument, I will interpret the last part of Petronius' episode against the backdrop of comedies culminating in spectacular scenes of punishment. Again, the *Casina* will prove to be an important point of reference.

It has been noted that the First Rivalry over Giton features a role reversal between Encolpius and Ascyltus. At the beginning, Ascyltus wants to have sex with Giton; Encolpius comes into the lodgings and reproaches Ascyltus. At the end, it is Encolpius who is eager to get into bed with Giton; Ascyltus enters and makes accusations against Encolpius. More specifically, Ascyltus' first action inside the room is to laugh and to applaud (*risu itaque plausuque cellulam implevit,* § 11.2). Maria Plaza (2000: 67) interprets his laughter as an expression of *Schadenfreude,* a "celebration of his power to destroy the unfortunate Encolpius' happiness."[389] The description of Ascyltus' next action (*opertum me amiculo evolvit*) contains a sexual pun: As *amiculo* may refer to a 'cloak' (*amiculum*) as well as to a 'little friend' (*amiculus*), Ascyltus may be seen to take away Encolpius' cover and/or to break up his embrace with Giton.[390] A similar case can be made for Ascyltus' question *quid agebas,* where the verb *agere* may be seen to refer to sexual activity.[391] When Ascyltus commends Encolpius for his morally upright character (*frater sanctissime*), his word choice is clearly ironic, suggesting that he feels betrayed.[392] The following phrase is corrupt: The manuscripts' reading *verti contubernium*

389 For other possible readings and for further discussion, cf. Plaza (2000: 67–9).

390 The pun has been noted, e.g., by Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*).

391 Adams (1982: 205) discusses the sexual connotations of *agere* and its derivatives.

392 Cf. Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*). For *sanctus* in the sense of "scrupulous, upright, blameless, virtuous etc.," cf. *OLD* s.v. "sanctus 4."

facis could mean as much as 'Are you ruining our companionship?'[393] Ascyltus proceeds to pull a strap (*lorum*) off his bag and to beat Encolpius with it (*me coepit non perfunctorie verberare*). His last words, aptly characterised as *petulantibus dictis,* hold yet another sexual pun: *sic dividere cum fratre nolito.* On the one hand, the verb *dividere* refers back to Encolpius' proposal to split up their belongings (*itaque communes sarcinulas partiamur,* § 10.4). Ascyltus insists that this agreement be honoured with regard to Giton, i.e. that Encolpius should not try to keep the boy to himself. Note that Giton is here clearly treated as a piece of personal property. Later in the story, Ascyltus takes this line of reasoning one step further, suggesting that they literally cut Giton in half.[394] On the other hand, the verb *dividere* can have a sexual meaning which, remarkably enough, is first attested in a conversation between the slave Strobilus and the two cooks Anthrax and Congrio in Plautus' *Aulularia*:

Strobilus:	*postquam obsonavit erus et conduxit coquos*	280
	tibinasque hasce apud forum, edixit mihi	
	ut dispertirem opsonium hic bifariam.	
Anthrax:	*mequidem hercle, dicam ⟨pro⟩palam, non divides;*	
	si quo tu totum me ire vis, operam dabo.	
Congrio:	*bellum et pudicum vero prostibulum popli.*	285
	post si quis vellet, te hau non velles dividi.	
Strobilus:	*atque ego istuc, Anthrax, aliovorsum dixeram,*	
	non istuc quod tu insimulas.	
	(Plaut. *Aul.* 280–8)	

393 As Petersmann (1977: 213 f.) explains, the verb *facere* must here mean 'to cause' (to destroy our companionship). For a detailed discussion of this phrase, cf. Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*), Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*) and Köntges (ed. 2013 *ad loc.*) with references for further reading. The conjecture that has received most scholarly approval is *vesticontubernium,* a neologism denoting 'a companionship under the covers'.

394 Cf. § 79.12–80.1: *postquam optima fide partiti manubias sumus, 'age' inquit 'nunc et puerum dividamus'. iocari putabam discedentem. at ille gladium parricidali manu strinxit et 'non frueris' inquit 'hac praeda, super quam solus incumbis. partem meam necesse est vel hoc gladio contemptus abscidam'* ("After we had most faithfully divided our spoils, he [sc. Asclytus] said: 'Come on, let us now split up the boy, too.' I thought this was a parting joke. But he drew his sword with a murderous hand and said: 'You will not enjoy this booty you are sitting on alone. Though I have been slighted, I must have my share, even if I have to cut it off with this sword.'").

Strobilus:	After the master did the shopping and hired cooks and these flute-girls in the market, he decreed that I should split the shopping here in two parts.
Anthrax:	I will tell you openly, you will not split me. If you want me to go somewhere complete, I will oblige.
Congrio:	What a charming and 'pure' (*pudicum*) common whore indeed! If anyone wanted to do so afterwards, you would not say no to being split.
Strobilus:	Now now, Anthrax! I said this in a different sense, not the one you allege.

When Strobilus says that he intends to 'split' (*dispertirem*) what he got on the market (280–2), Anthrax and Congrio take this to refer not only to the food (*opsonium*) but also to the personnel, i.e. to the flute-girls and to the cooks themselves (*coquos tibinasque*). In the latter context, the verbs *dispertire* and *dividere* evidently mean 'to sexually penetrate'.[395] Strobilus conveniently spells out the fact that – just as in the *Satyrica* – we are dealing with a *double entendre* (*aliovorsum dixeram, | non istuc quod tu insimulas*).[396]

It has been argued that Ascyltus' behaviour in this passage amounts to a kind of punishment exacted upon Encolpius. For instance, Walsh (1970: 87 f.) claims that "Ascyltus becomes a *Remus redivivus,* taking a comic revenge on Romulus."[397] This interpretation, of course, refers to the intertextual level of Petronius' narrative.[398] The 'lower level', as we have

395 For further discussion, cf. Maclennan & Stockert (eds., trans. 2016 *ad loc.*). Adams (1982: 149–51) discusses the sexual connotations of Latin words meaning 'to cut' and 'to split'. Cicero (*Fam.* 9.22.4) mentions the obscene quality of the noun *divisio.*

396 The connection between Ascyltus' words and the Plautine conversation cited above was noted as early as in Burman (ed. 1743 *ad loc.*).

397 Walsh (1970: 88 n. 1) points to the archaic word form *sic* in Petronius (§ 11.4) – further emphasised by *nolito* (*ibid.*) –, which may be seen to recall Romulus' formulation in Livy (1.7.2): *sic deinde, quicumque alius transiliet moenia mea* ("*So* perish whoever else shall leap over my walls!"). Although Walsh does not explicitly mention it, the possible link between Ascyltus/Encolpius and Romulus/Remus may owe something to the fact that Petronius' protagonists refer to each other as *fratres.*

398 Courtney (2001: 64 n. 18) proposes another intertextual reading, suggesting that Ascyltus' final words (*sic dividere cum fratre nolito,* § 11.4) constitute a parody of Sen. *Ep.* 88.11: *quid mihi prodest scire agellum in partes dividere, si nescio cum fratre dividere?* ("What good does it do me to know how to divide a small estate into shares, if I do not know how to divide it with my brother?"). Trans. Courtney *ibid.*; cf. already Burman (ed. 1743 *ad loc.*).

seen, revolves around matters of sexual rivalry and unfaithfulness, stock motifs of the ancient comic stage. While at the beginning of the episode Ascyltus presents himself as a rapist and meets an outraged 'spouse' (Encolpius), at the end he casts himself as a cuckolded husband who catches an 'adulterer' (Encolpius) *in flagrante delicto* and takes it upon himself to castigate the offender.[399] In a footnote, Panayotakis (1995: 18 n. 70) mentions that the physical violence Ascyltus inflicts upon Encolpius should be seen "in the tradition of pseudo-violence in the comedies and the mime." Taking up this cue, my analysis will place Ascyltus' attack on Encolpius in the context of comic slapstick punishments. It will be shown that the punitive measures exacted against Encolpius closely resemble those suffered by adulterers and other wrongdoers on the comic stage.

III.3.1 Μοιχεία and *adulterium*

Similarly to what has been remarked on the issue of rape, Greek and Roman attitudes towards 'adultery' (μοιχεία, *adulterium*) were intricately linked to questions of gender and social status.[400] When it came to questions of marital fidelity, ancient morality was characterised by a double standard: On the one hand, wives were considered adulteresses if they engaged in any sexual activity outside their marriage. Husbands, on the other hand, were free to have sex with their own slaves as well as with prostitutes and concubines. A man was only deemed to be an adulterer if he had sexual relations with a citizen woman married to another man.[401]

If a case of adultery came to light, punishment could be severe: According to the *lex Iulia de adulteriis* introduced by emperor Augustus, an *adultera* was to suffer the confiscation of half her dowry and a third of her property; she should then be relegated to an island. The *adulter* was to have half his property confiscated and be relegated to another island.[402] Our evidence of the pre-Augustan period is less clear. Apparently, cases

399 This interpretation, implied in Panayotakis' (1995: 9–19) reading of the episode, is concisely summarised by Williams (2010b: 31).

400 For a recent overview of the concept of μοιχεία, cf. Robson (2013: 90–115) with references for further reading. On *adulterium,* cf. Treggiari (1993: 262–319) and Dixon (2012: 17–88).

401 On this double standard, cf. e.g. Treggiari (1993: 299–309) and Robson (2013: 92).

402 Cf. Treggiari 1993: 290.

of adultery were predominantly dealt with in family councils rather than in public courts.[403] When we learn of punishments, they are often even harsher than those imposed in the Imperial era. In Livy's account of the rape of Lucretia, for instance, Tarquinius intimidates his victim by suggesting that she might meet the fate of an *adultera*:

> *Ubi obstinatam videbat et ne mortis quidem metu inclinari, addit ad metum dedecus: cum mortua iugulatum servum nudum positurum ait, ut in sordido adulterio necata dicatur. Quo terrore cum vicisset obstinatam pudicitiam velut victrix libido …*
> (Liv. 1.58.4–5).

> When he found her obdurate and not to be moved even by fear of death, he went farther and threatened her with disgrace, saying that when she was dead he would kill a slave and lay him naked by her side, that she might be said to have been put to death in adultery with a man of base condition. At this dreadful prospect her resolute 'purity' (*pudicitia*) was overcome, as if with force, by his victorious lust.

Tarquinius threatens that, should Lucretia continue to resist his sexual aggression, he will kill her and make it look as if she had committed *adulterium* with a slave.[404] This procedure would not only add to Lucretia's disgrace (*dedecus*) but might also allow Tarquinius to get away with murdering her. For, Graeco-Roman customs – at least under certain circumstances – considered death to be an appropriate punishment for adulterers caught in the act. According to the *lex Iulia de adulteriis,* for instance, a woman's father had the right to kill both the adulterer and his own daughter if he caught them together in his house or in the house of his son-in-law.[405] Under similar circumstances, the *lex Iulia* allowed the woman's husband to kill the adulterer (though not his wife),

403 For references and further discussion, cf. Benke (2012: 287 f.) and Dixon (2012: 27–48).

404 Cf. also Ov. *Fast.* 2.807–9: *nil agis: eripiam' dixit 'per crimina vitam: | falsus adulterii testis adulter ero: | interimam famulum, cum quo deprensa fereris'* ("'It is no good,' he said. 'I will take your life through accusations. I, the adulterer, will be false witness to adultery. I will kill a slave, and it will be said you were caught with him'").

405 Cf. Treggiari 1993: 282. We should add that, for a father to have the right to kill his daughter, she needed to be *alieni iuris* (rather than *sui iuris*), which meant she was legally subject to her father or her husband (cf. Benke 2012: 286, 289). Benke (*ibid.* 292 f.) suggests

granted that the man he had caught was a person of low and/or disreputable status.[406] In the Second Rivalry over Giton (§§ 79.8–82), Encolpius wakes up to realise Giton is no longer in bed with him (§ 79.10). Finding the boy together with Ascyltus – in another case of perceived adultery –, Encolpius contemplates killing both of them in their sleep: *si qua est amantibus fides, ego dubitavi an utrumque traicerem gladio somnumque morti iungerem* ("If there is any faith in lovers, I was uncertain whether to run them both through with my sword and make sleep and death one," § 79.10).[407]

The conviction that *adulteri* and *adulterae* must be purged from society, perhaps, finds nowhere as drastic an expression as in the story of Lucretia. Once she has told her relatives about what had occurred, she asks them to swear that Tarquinius will get what he deserves:[408]

> *'Sed date dexteras fidemque haud impune adultero fore. Sex. est Tarquinius qui hostis pro hospite priore nocte vi armatus mihi sibique, si vos viri estis, pestiferum hinc abstulit gaudium.' … 'Vos' inquit 'videritis quid illi debeatur: ego me etsi peccato absolvo, supplicio non libero; nec ulla deinde impudica Lucretiae exemplo vivet.' Cultrum, quem sub veste abditum habebat, eum in corde defigit, prolapsaque in volnus moribunda cecidit.*
> (Liv. 1.58.7–10)

> "But pledge your right hands and your words that the adulterer shall not go unpunished. Sextus Tarquinius is he that last night

that the narrow definition of the father's *ius occidendi* likely meant that it was very rarely put into practice. In fact, our sources mention only one specific case in which this provision of the *lex Iulia de adulteriis coercendis* came into play (cf. *Dig.* 48.5.33(32) pr.).

406 Cf. Treggiari 1993: 283 f. Greek laws permitted a woman's κύριος – i.e. the man under whose protection she was, usually her father or husband – to mete out punishment to the adulterer (regardless of his social status). If he killed the adulterer after catching him in the act, his vengeance could be considered a case of justifiable homicide (cf. esp. Dem. *Or.* 23.53–4 and Lys. 1.30); for further discussion, cf. Cole (1984: 100–4), Carey (1995: 408–13) and Robson (2013: 93–4).

407 For a discussion of possible intertextual references in this passage, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*). Panayotakis (1995: 111 n. 2) compares Encolpius' words to those of a cuckolded husband in the adultery mime (Chor. *Apol. Mimorum* 55).

408 Indeed, Lucretia's meeting with her husband and his companions may be interpreted as a traditional family council, convened so as to come up with an appropriate response to the crime that has occurred in the private realm (cf. Treggiari 1993: 265).

> returned hostility for hospitality, and armed with force brought ruin on me, and on himself no less – if you are men – when he worked his pleasure with me." […] "It is for you to determine," she said, "what is due to him; for my own part, though I acquit myself of the sin, I do not absolve myself from punishment; not in time to come shall ever 'impure' (*impudica*) woman live through the example of Lucretia." Taking a knife which she had concealed beneath her dress, she plunged it into her heart, and sinking forward upon the wound, died as she fell.

At first sight, it seems clear that the Lucretia story centres around the issue of rape, since Tarquinius forces himself on her against her will. In *ab urbe condita,* Tarquinius' violent act is three times described as *stuprum,* i.e. as a case of 'illicit sexual intercourse'.[409] At this crucial point, however, Lucretia calls the aggressor an adulterer (*adultero*), thereby presenting the crime as an instance of *adulterium.* Her formulation finds an echo in Ovid's *Fasti* (2.808), where Tarquinius refers to himself as an *adulter.*[410] This choice of words is not easy to understand from a modern perspective. Unlike today, where the partners' consent determines whether a sexual encounter constitutes rape, ancient laws were little concerned with women's (or boys') point of view. Rather, what mattered was the consent of their father, guardian, or husband: Having sex with an unmarried woman or with a boy behind their fathers' back was considered a crime against the father; sex with a married woman was regarded as a crime against her husband. Accordingly, some Roman jurists claim that the distinction between a *stuprator* and an *adulter* solely depends on the gender and marital status of the other person involved: Illicit sexual intercourse with a married woman constitutes a case of *adulterium,* whereas it is *stuprum* with an unmarried woman or with a boy.[411] This means that Lucretia may conceive of Tarquinius as an *adulter* simply because she is a woman married to another man.

409 Cf. Liv. 1.57.10 (cited in section III.1.3. Sexual Rivalry between Two Tarquinii) as well as 1.59.8 and 3.44.1. On the concept of *stuprum,* cf. section II.1. Problems of Terminology and Categorisation.

410 Cited above in note 404.

411 Cf. Modestinus in *Dig.* 48.5.35.1: *Adulterium in nupta admittitur: stuprum in vidua vel virgine vel puero committitur* ("Adultery is committed with a married woman; *stuprum* is committed with a widow, a virgin, or a boy"). Trans. Watson (trans. 1998); cf. also Papinian in *Dig.* 48.5.6.1 and the discussions by Dixon (2012: 20). Note that these legal provisions relate to free persons only.

While women's (and boys') consent was of little importance to the guilt of the *stuprator* or *adulter,* it was essential to determining whether the wives, daughters or sons themselves deserved punishment. Since Lucretia made every attempt to stop Tarquinius' sexual attack, she is legally innocent of any wrongdoing.[412] In the light of this, it is striking that Lucretia regards herself as a potential role model for *impudicae,* i.e. for women who have intentionally forfeited their *pudicitia* through an act of *struprum* or *adulterium.*[413] For free Roman citizens, losing one's *pudicitia* meant to give away one's right to physical inviolability and thus to approach the (sexual) status of slaves.[414] Even though her relatives point out that the guilt lies with Tarquinius alone (cf. Liv. 1.58.9; Ov. *Fast.* 2.829), Lucretia feels she cannot go on living.[415] By committing suicide, she inflicts on herself the same punishment she wishes her rapist to receive.[416] Tarquinius is expelled from Rome and – having fled to Gabii – meets his death at the hands of some old enemies (cf. Liv. 1.60.2).

As has been elaborated on above, the First Rivalry over Giton is characterised by a sustained parody of the Lucretia story. Apart from the links between Ascyltus and Tarquinius as well as between Encolpius and Collatinus (and Tarquinius), there is a strong connection between Giton and Lucretia. Giton's reference to his *pudor* (§ 9.4), for instance, clearly evokes Lucretia's *pudicitia* and her concern about *impudicae* who might 'follow her example'. It is not too far-fetched, then, to argue that the ending of Petronius' episode – Ascyltus catching Encolpius and Giton in bed – parodies Tarquinius' threat to implicate his victim in a case of *sordidum adulterium* (Liv. 1.58.4).[417] In fact, as we have seen, the motif of adultery goes beyond Tarquinius' menacing words, since both Livy and Ovid give overtones of *adulterium* to the Lucretia story as a whole.

412 On this legal principle, cf. Treggiari (1993: 279). However, as Christine Walde reminded me, Lucretia has no way of proving her innocence after the fact.

413 In Roman legal texts, both *stuprum* and *adulterium* are treated as the opposite of *pudicitia* (cf. Dixon 2012: 25).

414 Cf. Williams (2010a: 107) and section II.1. Problems of Terminology and Categorisation.

415 As Robson (2013: 112) makes clear, even rape victims were sometimes regarded as 'stained'.

416 On other rape victims or adulteresses who committed suicide, cf. Dixon (2012: 40 f.) and Robson (2013: 103). Augustine (*Civ.* 1.16–9), quite ahead of his time, points out that there is no reason for rape victims to feel ashamed, let alone committing suicide. He (*ibid.* 1.19) explicitly criticises the pagan *exemplum* of Lucretia, the woman who 'saved her virtue' by killing herself. For further discussion, cf. Feichtinger (2018: 71–6).

417 This connection has been drawn by Ruden (1993: 22).

Therefore, when I now proceed to interpret the First Rivalry over Giton against the backdrop of spectacular punishments in the comic tradition, this is not to suggest that theatrical elements in the *Satyrica* supersede allusions to historiography, elegy or other genres. Rather, the latter type of references may be envisioned as taking place on the intertextual level of Petronius' narrative. In the remainder of this section, however, my discussion will concentrate on the 'low', the farcical level of the *Satyrica.*

III.3.2 Adultery and Punishment in the Comic Tradition

Fines, relegation and death are not the only punishments adulterers may fear. Among other things, we learn of men who were detained for ransom or subjected to physical abuse.[418] Crucially to the study at hand, adultery and its consequences repeatedly take centre stage in ancient comedy. For instance, the practice of (ἀπο)ραφανίδωσις, i.e. the insertion of a radish or other phallic objects into the adulterer's anus, is first attested in Aristophanes' *Clouds.*[419] The most drastic punishments occur

418 For an overview of Greek punishments for adultery, cf. Cole (1984) and Robson (2013: 93–9); Dixon (2012: 62–77) discusses Roman cases. Valerius Maximus (6.1.13) offers an impressive compilation of examples: *Sed ut eos quoque qui in vindicanda pudicitia dolore suo pro publica lege usi sunt strictim percurram, Sempronius Musca C. Gellium deprehensum in adulterio flagellis cecidit, C. Memmnius L. Octavium similiter deprehensum †pernis† contudit, Carbo Attienus a Vibieno item Pontius a P. Cerennio deprehensi castrati sunt. Cn. etiam Furium Brocchum qui deprehenderat familiae stuprandum obiecit. quibus irae suae indulsisse fraudi non fuit* ("But to run briefly over those who in avenging 'sexual purity' (*pudicitia*) made their own hurt stand for public law: Sempronius Musca scourged C. Gellius, whom he had caught in adultery, with lashes, C. Memmius beat L. Octavius, similarly caught, with thigh bones, Carbo Attienus and Pontius were caught and castrated by Vibienus and P. Cerennius respectively, the man who caught Cn. Furius Brocchus gave him to his slaves to be raped. None of these was penalized for indulging his anger"). Trans. Shackleton Bailey (ed., trans. 2000), slightly adapted.

419 Worse Argument having suggested that an adulterer caught in the act could always use the example of Zeus as an excuse (Aristoph. *Nub.* 1076–82, cited above in note 256), Better Argument replies (1083 f.): τί δ' ἢν ῥαφανιδωθῇ πιθόμενός σοι τέφρᾳ τε τιλθῇ, | ἕξει τινὰ γνώμην λέγειν τὸ μὴ εὐρύπρωκτος εἶναι; ("But say he listens to you and then gets violated with a radish and depilated with hot ash; what line of argument will he have on hand to avoid becoming wide-arsed?"). Of course, references to such punishments are not restricted to comic scripts. In Catullus 15, for instance, the speaker asks his friend Aurelius to guard his darling boy (1–5). In case Aurelius was to lay hands on the boy, the speaker threatens that he will be penetrated with radishes and mullet fish (*raphanique mugilesque,* 19); cf. O'Bryhim (2017). Juvenal (10.314–7) also mentions adulterers punished by the insertion of mullet fish. For a detailed discussion of (ἀπο)ραφανίδωσις, cf. Philippides (2015); Espach (2018: 105–12) gives an overview of further sexual punishments inflicted on adulterers.

in Herodas' fifth mimiamb and in a mime papyrus of the second century CE.[420] Herodas' text revolves around the mistress Bitinna, who accuses her slave Gastron of having abandoned her for another woman (1–3). In her jealous rage, she orders her slaves to tie Gastron up (11), strip him of his cloak (18), give him a proper beating (32–4), and tattoo his forehead (65 f., 79). At the end, Bitinna is persuaded to show some leniency (80–5). The beginning of the mime fragment (1–16 Rusten & Cunningham) is remarkably similar. An unnamed mistress reproaches her slave Aesopus for ignoring her sexual needs and for having a relationship with a slave girl called Apollonia. She handles a whip (9 f.), threatens to knock out Aesopus' teeth (11) and orders both him and Apollonia to be killed (16).

While these texts provide us with important evidence on the motif of ζηλοτυπία in the comic tradition, they do not involve 'penalties for adultery' in the narrow sense of the term. The mistresses do not punish Gastron and Aesopus by virtue of having been betrayed – i.e. with the help of legal and/or customary privileges for those wronged by μοιχεία/*adulterium* – but by virtue of owning them. As we are dealing with master-slave relationships, the mimiamb and the mime fragment are somewhat removed from comic plots featuring the exceptional phenomenon of corporal punishment exacted upon citizens. Here, as in the *Satyrica,* free characters inflict violence on their peers.

When it comes to the punishment of free citizens, two types of scenes from the *fabula palliata* are particularly relevant. The first group involves the chastisement of pimps (*lenones*), prototypically evil characters on the comic stage.[421] For instance, in Plautus' *Rudens* (656–63 and 706–891) the pimp Labrax is punished for trying to forcefully drag two of his slave girls out of the temple of Venus, thereby violating a priestess.[422] In the final scene of Plautus' *Persa* (789–858) the pimp Dordalus, who has already been sentenced in court for buying a freeborn citizen girl (cf. 738–52; 777–82), is extensively mocked and physically abused by the play's protagonists.[423]

420 For the papyrus, cf. note 243. Panayotakis (1995: 18 n. 70) mentions these two texts in the context of "pseudo-violence" in the First Rivalry over Giton.

421 On the stock character of the *leno* in Plautus and Terence, cf. e.g. Duckworth (1952: 262–4). Pomponius wrote a *fabula Atellana* entitled *leno* (cf. Frassinetti ed. 1967: 38).

422 For Labrax' crime, cf. especially Plaut. *Rud.* 641–55 and 839–40. Konstan & Raval (2018: 58–60) discuss the legal background of the scene.

423 The punishment of a pimp also plays a role in Plaut. *Curc.* 679–729. In Plaut. *Poen.* 1338–1422, the *leno* Lycus gives up without putting up a fight.

The second group of scenes – more immediately relevant to the First Rivalry over Giton – concerns the punishment of *adulteri* or *moechi.* Minor references to this motif occur in Plautus' *Amphitruo,*[424] *Bacchides,*[425] and *Poenulus,*[426] as well as in Terence's *Eunuchus.*[427] It is a central plot element in Plautus' *Miles gloriosus* and *Casina.* Both cases will be discussed in more detail in the following sections. In the *Miles gloriosus,* the soldier Pyrgopolinices is keen on having a sexual relationship with a woman – the *meretrix* Acroteleutium playing the role of a *matrona* – whom he believes to be married to another man.[428] As soon as he enters the house of the supposed husband, he falls into the trap that had been laid for him and faces penalties worthy of a *moechus.* In the *Casina,* the *senex* Lysidamus and his slave Olympio are punished for trying to have sex with Casina against the will of Cleostrata, Lysidamus' wife. Although

424 Towards the end of the play, Amphitruo decides to break into his own house and kill the adulterer he is certain to find there. In his rage, he threatens to kill everyone else in the house with him (Plaut. *Amph.* 1048–50): *certumst, intro rumpam in aedis: ubi quemque hominem aspexero, | si ancillam seu servom sive uxorem sive adulterum, | seu patrem sive avom videbo, optruncabo in aedibus* ("I am resolved to burst into the house. Anyone I see there, maid or slave, wife or adulterer, father or grandfather, I will slay in the house").

425 The *senex* Nicobulus is tricked into believing that his son Pistoclerus is having an affair with the wife of the soldier Cleomachus. When Nicobulus meets the soldier, he is afraid that he will kill Pistoclerus as an adulterer. Therefore, he instructs his slave Chrysalus to buy his son off (Plaut. *Bacch.* 866 f.): *pascisce ergo, opsecro, quid tibi lubet, | dum ne manifesto hominem opprimat nive enicet* ("Settle the issue, then, please, on any terms you like, so long as he [i. e. Cleomachus] does not surprise the chap [i. e. Pistoclerus] in flagrante and kill him").

426 In a conversation with his fellow-slave Milphio, Syncerastus makes the following joke (Plaut. *Poen.* 862 f.): *facio quod manufesti moechi hau ferme solent. | … refero vasa salva* ("I am doing what adulterers caught in the act usually do not do. […] I am carrying my utensils back safe and sound"). As *vasa* may refer to the male sexual organs, the formulation hints at the castration of adulterers caught in the act; cf. Maurach (1988 *ad loc.*) and the discussion below.

427 Rather than Chaerea, who had entered Thais' house in disguise and raped Pamphila without any scruples (cf. section III.1.1. Sexual Violence in Petronius and in the Comic Tradition), the character who receives a punishment in this play is Chaerea's slave Parmeno (Ter. *Eun.* 923–1024). Thais' *ancilla* Pythias, believing that he put Chaerea up to the rape (cf. 944, 965 f., 1013 f.), decides to take revenge on Parmeno (940). She does so by making him believe that Chaerea had been caught by Pamphila's brother, who – being of a violent disposition (955) – has tied up the rapist (956) and is now preparing to treat Chaerea as an 'adulterer' (957 f.): *nunc minatur porro sese id quod moechis solet: | quod ego numquam vidi fieri neque velim* ("Moreover he is now threatening to do what they do to adulterers, a thing I have never seen and would not wish to see").

428 For her alleged status as a married woman, cf. Plaut. *Mil.* 964 f. At line 1276, Pyrgopolinices makes clear that he is concerned about what he is about to do: *egon ad illam eam quae nupta sit? vir eius me deprehendat* ("I should go to the place of a woman who is married? Her husband might get hold of me").

the old man's attempt to rape the slave girl does not constitute adultery in the legal sense, he is called a bigamist (*dismarite,* Plaut. *Cas.* 974) and is said to have been caught *in adulterio, dum moechissat Casinam* (literally: "in the act of adultery, while committing adultery with Casina," 976).[429] A close analysis will bring to light striking parallels between Ascyltus' treatment of Encolpius and the punishments inflicted upon adulterers (and some other characters) in the comic tradition.

III.3.2.1 Laughter

As noted above, the first thing Ascyltus does once he has taken up the role of the cuckolded husband is to laugh and to applaud: *risu itaque plausuque cellulam implevit* (§ 11.2). In comic scenes of punishment, laughter is a very common element. In the *Casina,* for instance, when Lysidamus and Olympio have just walked off with Chalinus (whom they believe to be Casina), Cleostrata's friend Myrrhina professes to be full of glee:

> *acceptae bene et commode eximus intus*
> *ludos visere huc in viam nuptialis.*
> *numquam ecastor ullo die risi adaeque,*
> *neque hoc quod relicuom est plus risuram opinor.*
> (Plaut. *Cas.* 855–8)

> After we [i.e. Myrrhina, Cleostrata and her *ancilla* Pardalisca] have been entertained well and pleasurably we are going outside here into the street to watch the wedding games. I have never, on any day, laughed as much, nor do I think I will laugh more during all the rest of my life.

Myrrhina describes the unfolding spectacle as *ludi nuptiales,* a metatheatrical reference to the fact that Plautus' audience is about to witness a play-within-a-play.[430] This may remind us of Ascyltus, who – upon entering the trio's room – acts "as if he were watching a scene on stage" (Williams 2010b: 31). In fact, Myrrhina's explicit mentions of laugh-

429 Dixon (2012: 142) comments on the somewhat exceptional use of the term *adulterium* in this passage. For a detailed analysis of the ending to the *Casina* in the context of adultery and its punishment, cf. Philippides (2015).

430 For further discussion, cf. e.g. Christenson (2019: 70 f.).

ter (*risi*; *risuram*) can be attributed to the same kind of *Schadenfreude* Ascyltus expresses toward Encolpius.[431] One of the women's expressed aims is to hold Lysidamus and Olympio up to mockery.[432] After his unexpected encounter with the he-bride (*nuptum,* 859) Chalinus, Olympio realises that he and his master have become laughing stocks:

> *ita nunc pudeo atque ita nunc paveo atque ita inridiculo sumus ambo.*
> …
> *operam date, dum mea facta itero: est operae pretium auribus accipere,*
> *ita ridicula auditu, iteratu ea sunt quae ego intus turbavi.*
> (Plaut. *Cas.* 877–80)

> So much am I ashamed now, so much am I afraid now, and so much have we both made fools of ourselves. […] Pay attention while I recount my deeds; it is worthwhile to take it in with your ears: the mess I made inside is so funny to hear and recount.

Olympio confirms Myrrhina's assessment: Witnessing a humiliating (though appropriate) punishment can be an excellent source of laughter (*inridiculo*; *ridicula*). There is a considerable number of similar formulations in other scenes of punishment.[433]

III.3.2.2 Applause

Usually, the only time dramatic scripts mention applause is when it is demanded from the audience at the very end of the play. Note, for instance, the last line of Plautus' *Menaechmi* (1162): *nunc, spectatores, valete et nobis clare plaudite* ("Now, spectators, farewell and give us your loud applause"). During the punishment of the pimp Dordalus in the *Persa,* how-

431 Cf. section III.3. Punishment (§ 11.1–4).

432 Note Pardalisca's words about Lysidamus at Plaut. *Cas.* 685–8: *ludo ego hunc facete; | nam quae facta dixi omnia huic falsa dixi: | era atque haec dolum ex proxumo hunc protulerunt, | ego hunc missa sum ludere* ("I am fooling him wittily: what I told him has happened was a lie from first to last. My mistress and this woman from next door have hatched this trick, and I have been sent to fool him"); cf. also Plaut. *Cas.* 868 (*ludibrio*).

433 Cf. Plaut. *Pers.* 803 (*ludos*), 807 (*inridere*), 847 (*ludificari*), 850 (*inrides*) as well as Ter. *Eun.* 1004 (*ridiculo*), 1007 (*rides*), 1008 (*ridendo*), 1010 (*ludos*), 1017 (*rides*), 1018 (*inridere*).

ever, we encounter a reference to applause that does not pertain to the audience but to the characters on stage. Towards the end of the play, the slave Toxilus has already achieved everything he could have wished for: Firstly, he has managed to buy the freedom of his girlfriend Lemniselenis. Secondly, the pimp Dordalus, Lemniselenis' former owner and Toxilus' archenemy,[434] has fallen for the trick that had been devised for him. He was persuaded to trust the words of a 'Persian merchant' (actually the parasite Saturio in disguise) and bought at his own risk a girl whom he believed to be a slave kidnapped from Arabia (cf. Plaut. *Pers.* 470–710). Almost immediately afterwards, Dordalus was confronted by Saturio (now undisguised), stating that the girl was his daughter and a freeborn Athenian citizen who, of course, could not be sold or bought by anyone. Saturio summons Dordalus to court (745 f.), where he is sentenced to return the girl without compensation. When Dordalus re-enters the stage, Toxilus, together with Lemniselenis and his friend Sagaristio, has already begun celebrating his victory. Seeing the miserable pimp approach, Toxilus asks Dordalus to join their party, insincerely heaping praise upon him: *homo lepidissume, salve* ("Dordalus, most charming chap, my greetings," 791).[435] Incidentally, this formulation may remind us of Acyltus' ironic laudation of Encolpius' character (*frater sanctissime,* § 11.3).[436] Most remarkably, and equally disingenuously, Sagaristio calls upon his friends to give the pimp a round of applause: *agite, adplaudamus* ("Go on, let us give him a big hand," 791).

This cheerful acknowledgement of Dordalus' dismal re-entry upon the stage,[437] I suggest, is a close parallel to Ascyltus' applause for Encolpius in the First Rivalry over Giton. In both cases, clapping one's hands amounts to a form of mockery, no less an expression of *Schadenfreude* than the laughter discussed above. In the *Persa,* it even extends to the conventional request for applause at the very end of the play: Toxilus bids the audience farewell (*mei spectatores, bene valete. leno periit,* "My spectators, goodbye. The pimp has perished," 858), and the troupe replies *plaudite* ("Give us your applause," 858).

434 Cf. their verbal duel in section III.2.2.1. Mirroring and Exaggeration.

435 The irony has been noted by Woytek (1982 *ad loc.*).

436 For more such ironic remarks in the context of comic punishments, cf. e.g. Plaut. *Pers.* 849 or Plaut. *Cas.* 977.

437 Cf. Woytek 1982 *ad loc.*

III.3.2.3 Physical Abuse

Ascyltus does not content himself with mockery but resorts to violence: *nec se solum intra verba continuit, sed lorum de pera solvit et me coepit non perfunctorie verberare* (§ 11.4). As has already been mentioned, ancient texts regularly refer to brutal punishments for adulterers. As far as the comic tradition in concerned, the treatment of the soldier Pyrgopolinices in Plautus' *Miles gloriosus* is particularly striking. Shortly after he has entered the house of the *'matrona'*, the supposed husband Periplectomenus (Peri.) has Pyrgopolinices (Pyrg.) manhandled by a group of slaves and a cook named Cario:

Peri.: *ducite istum; si non sequitur, rapite sublimem foras,*
facite inter terram atque caelum ut siet, discindite. 1395
Pyrg.: *opsecro, hercle, Periplectomene, te.*
Peri.: *nequiquam hercle opsecras.*
vide ut istic tibi sit acutus, Cario, culter probe.
Cario: *quin iamdudum gestit moecho hoc abdomen adimere,*
ut faciam quasi puero in collo pendeant crepundia.
Pyrg.: *perii!* 1400
Peri.: *haud etiam, numero hoc dicis.*
Cario: *iamne ⟨ego⟩ in hominem in-*
volo?
Peri.: *immo etiam priu' verberetur fustibus.*
Cario: *multum quidem.*
…
Peri.: *qur es ausus subigitare alienam uxorem, inpudens?* 1402
Pyrg.: *ita me di ament, ultro ventumst ad me.*
Peri.: *mentitur, feri.*
…
Peri.: *qur ire ausu's? em tibi!* 1405
Pyrg.: *oiei! sati' sum verberatus. opsecro.*
Cario: *quam mox seco?*
Peri.: *ubi lubet: dispennite hominem divorsum et distendite.*
Pyrg.: *opsecro hercle te ut mea verba audias priu' quam secat.*
…
Peri.: *iura te non nociturum esse homini de hac re nemini,* 1411
quod tu hodie hic verberatu's aut quod verberabere,
si te salvom hinc amittemus Venerium nepotulum.
Pyrg.: *iuro per Iovem et Mavortem me nociturum nemini,*

quod ego hic hodie vapularim, iureque id factum arbitror; 1415
et si intestatus non abeo hinc, bene agitur pro noxia.
Peri.: *quid si id non faxis?*
Pyrg.: *ut vivam semper intestabilis.*
Cario: *verberetur etiam, postibi amittendum censeo.*
(Plaut. *Mil.* 1394–1418)

Peri.: Bring him along; if he does not follow, lift him up and carry him out, make sure that he is between earth and heaven, tear him apart.
Pyrg.: I entreat you, Periplectomenus!
Peri.: You are entreating me in vain. Make sure that that knife is properly sharp, Cario.
Cario: Indeed, it has been keen for a long time now to cut off the adulterer's lower parts, so that I can make them hang round his neck like a child's rattle.
Pyrg.: I am dead!
Peri.: Not yet, you are saying this too early.
Cario: Am I to fly upon him now?
Peri.: No, first he should be beaten with cudgels.
Cario: And a lot.
…
Peri.: Why did you dare to make a move on another's wife, you shameless creature?
Pyrg.: As truly as the gods may love me, advances were made to me without encouragement on my part.
Peri.: He is lying, hit him.
…
Peri.: Why did you dare to go? Take that!
Pyrg.: Ow! I have been beaten enough. I entreat you!
Cario: How soon am I to cut him?
Peri.: As soon as you like. [to servants:] Spread him out and stretch him.
Pyrg.: I beg you to listen to my words before he cuts me!
…
Peri.: Swear that you will not harm anyone for having been beaten here today and for being beaten later on, if we let you go away from here safely, you little grandson of Venus.

Pyrg.: I swear by Jupiter and Mars that I will not harm anyone for having been beaten here today, and I think it serves me right. And if I do not go away from here without the power to bear witness as a man, I am getting off lightly.
Peri.: What if you do not keep your word?
Pyrg.: Then may I always live without that power.
Cario: Let him get another beating; after that I think he ought to be let off the hook.

It can hardly be stressed enough that it is extraordinary for a free person to be treated in such a violent manner. Normally, corporal punishment could only be inflicted upon slaves, whereas free persons – by virtue of their status – were entitled to bodily integrity.[438] Pyrgopolinices, however, is tied up and carried out of the house (1394 f.), thereby losing all control over his body and being reduced to begging for mercy (1396, 1406, 1408, 1425).[439] Being repeatedly beaten with cudgels (1401, 1403, 1405, 1418), he resembles Encolpius receiving blows from Ascyltus. Most drastically, Pyrgopolinices is threatened with castration by the hands of Cario, who appears to take some cruel enjoyment in his task (1398 f., 1407). Once the soldier has sworn not to take revenge for what he has suffered (1414 f.) – thereby escaping the most imminent danger – he comments on his situation in the manner of a pun: *si intestatus non abeo hinc, bene agitur pro noxia* (1416). His words play on the two meanings of the noun *testis,* i. e. either 'witness' or 'testicle': At first sight, Pyrgopolinices claims that he does not want to be "incapable (because of wrong-doing) of giving evidence" (Hammond et al. eds. 1963 *ad loc.*). More to the point, he wishes to avoid castration and thus being 'without testicles'.[440] This type of sexual *double entendre* does not only find a parallel in the punishment of Olympio in the *Casina* (909 f.)[441] but may also remind us of

438 Cf. e. g. Quint. *Inst.* 1.3.14 on the punishment of pupils: *Caedi vero discentis … minime velim, primum quia deforme atque servile est et certe (quod convenit, si aetatem mutes) iniuria* ("I disapprove of flogging […] because in the first place it is a disgraceful form of punishment and fit only for slaves, and is in any case an insult, as you will realise if you imagine its infliction at a later age"). Trans. Butler (ed., trans. 1920–2). For further references and a detailed discussion, cf. Walters (1997: 37–9).

439 At line 1425, Periplectomenus makes clear that the soldier had been tied up inside the house: *solvite istunc* ("untie him").

440 Cf. also Plaut. *Mil.* 1417 (*intestabilis*), 1420 (*salvis testibus*), 1426 (*carebis testibus*). The same pun occurs at Plaut. *Curc.* 30–1; cf. also Cic. *Fam.* 9.22.4.

441 When Olympio recounts his encounter with Chalinus (whom he thought to be Casina), he mentions that he grabbed something that reminded him of a hilt (Plaut.

the word play on *amiculus/amiculum* (§ 11.3) and on *dividere* (§ 11.4) in the *Satyrica.*

Pyrgopolinices' humiliation is complete when he is ordered by Cario to hand over the symbols of his status and profession: *de tunica et chlamyde et machaera ne quid speres, non feres* ("As for your tunic, cloak, and sword, do not fool yourself, you will not take them with you," Plaut. *Mil.* 1423). Notably, the removal of clothes also plays a role in Petronius (*opertum me amiculo evolvit,* § 11.2) and in the punishment scene of the *Casina.* Fleeing from Chalinus, Olympio leaves his cloak (*palliolum,* 934) inside the house, thus entering the stage in a tunic, "the Roman equivalent of underwear" (Christenson 2019: 71). Under the same circumstances, Lysidamus loses his cloak (*pallium,* 975) and his walking stick (*scipione,* 975), tokens of his status.[442] While it is possible to interpret the violence against Pyrgopolinices in the context of his profession as a foreign mercenary or more generally in the context of the Second Punic War, it is important to keep in mind that Plautus' characters portray his treatment as an appropriate punishment for an adulterer.[443] The soldier is referred to as an *adulter* or *moechus* throughout the play.[444] The threat of castration fits sexual offenders and is mentioned elsewhere in the comic tradition and beyond.[445]

Although Pyrgopolinices' case is particularly drastic, he is not the only free man to (nearly) suffer corporal punishment in the *fabula palliata.* In Plautus' *Persa,* the pimp Dordalus not only endures various

Cas. 909 f.): *dum gladium quaero ne habeat, arripio capulum. | sed quom cogito, non habuit gladium, nam esset frigidus* ("While I was checking that she does not have a sword, I got hold of a hilt. But when I think about it, she did not have a sword, because it would have been cold"). Pardalisca (and the audience) understand the *capulus* to be Chalinus' penis; for further discussion, cf. e.g. Christenson (2019: 72, 85 f.). Note that Ascyltus' sword (§ 9.5) is also commonly interpreted as a metaphor for his penis, cf. section III.2. Altercation (§ 9.6 – 10.7).

442 For further discussion, cf. e.g. Christenson (2019: 72) and Gold (2020: 173).

443 Pyrgopolinices is a military commander, sent to Ephesus by king Seleucus of Syria for the sake of raising troops (cf. Plaut. *Mil.* 75 – 7 and 948 – 50). If the mention of king Seleucus goes back to the Greek original, it may refer to Seleucus I, who reigned between 306 and 281 BCE; cf. Hammond et al. (eds. 1963 *ad loc.*) for further discussion. Leach (1980) argues that Pyrgopolinices can be read as a Hannibal figure. Konstan & Raval (2018: 51) rightly point out that Plautus' text puts the emphasis on domestic matters, specifically on an outsider threatening the sanctity of the citizen household.

444 For Pyrgopolinices as an *adulter,* cf. Plaut. *Mil.* 90 and 802; for him as a *moechus,* cf. 775, 924, 1131, 1390, 1398, 1436.

445 Cf. e.g. Plaut. *Poen.* 862 f. with note 440 above as well as Hor. *Sat.* 1.2.44, 1.2.132 f. and Val. Max. 6.1.13 (cited above, note 418).

kinds of mockery (cf. above) but also takes a beating from Toxilus and his companions (esp. Plaut. *Pers.* 809 f. and 846). The pimp Labrax in the *Rudens* receives an equally violent treatment.[446] During their off-stage encounter in bed, Chalinus kicks Olympio in the chest and punches him in the face (Plaut. *Cas.* 930 f.). The danger of rape and ῥαφανίδωσις looms over Olympio's head.[447] Though Lysidamus is spared such an attack – the slave Olympio, in a way, standing in for his master[448] – he faces several serious threats, including the breaking of his loins.[449] At the end of the *Casina,* Lysidamus acknowledges that he has wronged Cleostrata and begs for her forgiveness (997, 1000). Making clear that the power dynamics between husband and wife have radically changed in the course of the play, he allows Cleostrata to inflict corporal punishment on him in the future: *si umquam posthac aut amasso Casinam aut occepso modo, | ne ut eam amasso, si ego umquam adeo posthac tale admisero, | nulla caussast quin pendentem me, uxor, virgis verberes* ("If I ever make love to Casina hereafter or if I only begin to do so, yes, as soon as I make love to her, if I ever become guilty of such a deed hereafter, there is no reason why you should not hand me up and beat me with rods, my wife", Plaut. *Cas.* 1001–3).[450]

446 Cf. section III.3.2. Adultery and Punishment in the Comic Tradition.

447 Cf. Plaut. *Cas.* 909–14, where Olympio relates how he mistook Chalinus' penis for a sword or a hilt and Pardalisca asks him whether it might have been radish or a cucumber. For further discussion, cf. Philippides (2015: 247–9). When, during Quartilla' orgy, a *cinaedus* penetrates both Encolpius and Ascyltus (§ 22.1), this can be interpreted as a sexual punishment; cf. Adams (1982: 146) and the discussion in n. 418.

448 Cf. Christenson (2019: 85 f.): "Decorum in a society in which masters' bodies must remain inviolable prevents the representation, either onstage or in (offstage) reported narrative, of Lysidamus suffering a beating or sexual violation, but Olympio's description of his experience with Chalinus is suggestive enough." For other scenes in which slaves arguably suffer their masters' punishment, cf. Ter. *Eun.* 923–1024 with note 426 as well as Plaut. *Mostell.* 1064–1181, discussed by Konstan & Raval (2018: 52 f.).

449 Cf. Lysidamus' words at Plaut. *Cas.* 967 f.: *perii! fusti defloccabit iam illic homo lumbos meos. | hac iter faciundumst, nam illac lumbifragiumst obviam* ("I am dead! He [i.e. Chalinus] will smash my loins with his club now. I have to turn this way [i.e. towards Cleostrata]; that way a loin wreck is facing me"). The verb *defloccare* might also refer to the plucking of Lysidamus' pubic hair, another common punishment for adulterers; cf. Philippides (2015: 251 n. 27).

450 Cf. also Plaut. *Cas.* 950. Just as Lysidamus humbles himself to his wife, the *senex amator* Demipho humbles himself to his son and his neighbour at the end of Plautus' *Mercator* (1001 f.): *opsecro, | sati' iam ut habeatis. quin loris caedite etiam, si lubet* ("I beg you two to consider it enough now. Beat me with straps too if you want"); cf. the section below on *lora.*

III.3.2.4 The *lorum* and the *lorarius*

A last point worth making concerns the instruments (or props) and the personnel of comic punishments. In the *Satyrica,* Ascyltus beats Encolpius with a *lorum* (or *lorus*), which – as the passage (§ 11.4) neatly illustrates – can not only refer to a leather strap used for tying something up but also to a leather whip.[451] Interestingly enough, Quintilian (*Inst.* 5.10.88) – discussing different argumentative strategies – connects *lora* to the punishment of adulterers: *si adulterum occidere licet, et loris caedere* ("If it is lawful to kill an adulterer, it is lawful to flog him").[452] In the only specific discussion of Ascyltus' *lorum* I am aware of, Thomas Köntges (ed. 2013 *ad loc.*) interprets it in the context of an important reference point in the *Satyrica*: At § 134.9 the priestess Proselenos uses the expression *lorum in aqua* ("a leather strap in water") to describe Encolpius' impotence. A similar meaning appears to be implied in the words of the freedman Hermeros at § 57.8.[453] With reference to the First Rivalry over Giton, Köntges (ed. 2013 *ibid.*) concludes that *lorum in aqua* "was a 'floppy cock' and Petronius produces a pun if Ascyltus (the 'never-failing') looses his *lorus* and whips Encolpius with it. Encolpius' diction presents the scene as some kind of priapic punishment."[454] His reading is not incompatible with the points made above, particularly since Olympio's encounter with Chalinus' sword-penis, for instance, can also be understood as a Priapic punishment (cf. note 418). Nevertheless, in the remainder of this section, I will propose another line of interpretation.

In the *fabula palliata,* several masters are said to use *lora* for the chastisement of their slaves.[455] In Terence's *Adelphoe* (180–2), the *adulescens* Aeschinus threatens to have the pimp Sannio whipped to death with *lora.*

451 Cf. *OLD* s.v. "lorum 1" and "lorum 2"; *TLL* s.v. "lorum 1a" and "lorum 1c." At § 102.8, Eumolpus suggests disguising Encolpius and Giton as pieces of luggage, tying them up with *lora.*

452 Trans. Rusell (ed., trans. 2002). Val. Max. 6.1.13 (cited above, note 418) speaks of *flagella* used for the punishment of an adulterer.

453 For further discussion, cf. Adams (1982: 42) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*). *lorum* for penis occurs twice in Martial's epigrams (7.58.3 f.; 10.55.5).

454 For further discussion of Ascyltus' name – derived from ἄσκυλτος ("undisturbed, unwearied") –, cf. e.g. Habermehl (ed. 2006: XVII) with references for further reading.

455 The pimps Dordalus in the *Persa* (731 f.) and Ballio in the *Pseudolus* (143–7) talk about whipping their slaves with *lora.* The prologue speaker of the *Poenulus* (23–7), addressing the audience of the play, claims that slaves will be punished with *lora* for taking up seats assigned to free citizens. On the use of whips in Greek comedy, cf. Diggle (1974: 91).

The latter objects *loris liber?* ("The whip for a free man?"),[456] making plain that flagellation – just as other kinds of physical abuse discussed above – was associated with slaves, not with free citizens. More importantly, the *lorum* marks (and lends the name to) a stock character of the Roman comic stage: the *lorarius*. Slaves referred to as *lorarii* are distinguished from other household slaves by the function they perform, i. e. by the fact that they look after their masters' interest by means of brute force. Previous scholars have referred to them as "disciplinary and punitive agents" (Prescott 1936: 100) or simply as "thugs" (Diggle 1974: 90). We have already encountered them in an earlier section: When we discussed the slaves who drag Pyrgopolinices out of the house, tie him up and beat him (Plaut. *Mil.* 1394–1427), we were dealing with *lorarii* belonging to Periplectomenus. At line 1424, one of them addresses his master directly: *verberon etiam, an iam mittis?* ("Am I to beat him [i. e. Pyrgopolinices] once more or are you letting him off in peace now?"). To be exact, we should note that the word *lorarius* does not occur in the text of any extant play but only in the scene superscripts and other marginal notes in the manuscripts.[457] While these *notae personarum* may not go back to the playwrights themselves, there is some further indication that ancient audiences recognised *lorarii* as a distinct character type.[458] Discussing a speech by Cato the Elder entitled *de falsis pugnis* ("On Sham Battles"), Gellius (*NA* 10.3.19) notes that – after the end of the Second Punic War – the Romans punished the Bruttii for having colluded with Hannibal:

> *Romani ... Bruttios ignominiae causa non milites scribebant nec pro sociis habebant, sed magistratibus in provincias euntibus parere et praeministrare servorum vicem iusserunt. Itaque hi sequebantur magistratus, tamquam in scaenicis fabulis qui dicebantur lorarii, et quos erant iussi, vinciebant aut verberabant;*

> The Romans [...] by way of ignominious punishment refused to enrol the Bruttii as soldiers or treat them as allies, but commanded them to serve the magistrates when they went to their provinces, and to perform the duties of slaves. Accordingly, they accom-

456 My translation.

457 For a full list of references, cf. *TLL* s. v. "lorarius". Prescott (1936: 99–103) and Richlin (2017: 452–4) offer an overview of the role of *lorarii* in the *fabula palliata*. Diggle (1974: 90 f.) and Lowe (1991: 31) discuss a few further points.

458 Bader (1970: 152) tentatively suggests that the relevant superscripts go back the period between the late first century CE and the middle of the second century CE.

> panied the magistrates in the capacity of those who are called "floggers" in the plays, and bound or scourged those whom they were ordered.[459]

Gellius not only associates *lorarii* with theatrical plays (*in scaenicis fabulis*),[460] but he also mentions the same kinds of activities we can observe in the *fabula palliata*: At their masters' behest, these slave characters tie people up or beat them (*vinciebant aut verberant*). In Plautus' *Captivi,* for instance, the *senex* Hegio instructs his three *lorarii* to bring out their straps (*ecferte lora,* 658), to handcuff the captive slave Tyndarus (659, 667) and lead him to the quarry (721–3).[461] In the punishment scene of the *Rudens,* the old man Daemones orders his *lorarii* to drag the pimp Labrax out of the temple of Venus (660). Directly afterwards, the slave Trachalio comments (661): *audio tumultum. opinor, leno pugnis pectitur* ("I can hear an uproar. I think the pimp is being combed with fists"). At line 710, Daemones instructs a *lorarius* to punch the pimp (*pugnum in os impinge*). He later orders them to fetch two cudgels (*duas clavas,* 799) and to make sure Labrax stays away from the girls Palaestra and Ampelisca in the temple (807–13). They do so by threatening Labrax with violence in case he dared to approach any further (821–36, esp. 833). The main characteristic of the *lorarii* is their physical strength – rather than their rhetorical skill[462] – and their readiness to use it against their master's adversary. They are all "comic muscle" (Richlin 2017: 452), being one of the most visible manifestations of power on the Roman stage (cf. *ibid.* 454).

With regard to the First Rivalry over Giton, I suggest that we appreciate the parallels between Ascyltus and the comic stock character of the *lorarius.* The fact that Ascyltus makes use of a *lorum,* of course, is the most obvious connection between the two.[463] More specifically, a) he employs the strap for beating, which is what *lorarii* do, and b) he uses it in the context of a punishment, which is when *lorarii* are most likely to

459 Trans. Rolfe (ed. trans. 1927), slightly adapted.

460 Cf. also Donatus' commentary on Terence's *Andria* (860), where the author evidently uses the term *lorarius* to refer to a stock character of the comic stage.

461 For further discussion of the *lorarii* in Plautus' *Captivi,* cf. esp. Lowe (1991).

462 Cf. Richlin (2017: 454): "When they [i.e. *lorarii*] speak at all, they often say something stupid that underscores their own brute powerlessness, making a joke of a real-life terror. It is a surprise when they speak." Prescott (1936) discusses *lorarii* in an article entitled "Silent Rôles in Roman Comedy."

463 As Diggle (1974: 91) points out, even though *lorarii* sometimes use cudgels or other weapons, their closest association is with *lora.*

make an appearance on stage. Arguably, Ascyltus casts himself not only as the cuckolded husband but also as the punitive agent charged with rectifying the harm that has been done. In an act of improvisation, he transforms the strap of his bag into a weapon closely associated with comic violence. Ascyltus becomes the *lorarius* of the *Satyrica.*

III.4 Interim Conclusion

I have divided the First Rivalry over Giton into three sections, each of which, I argue, includes one or more plot elements known from the Graeco-Roman comic tradition. The first paragraph (§ 9.1–5) has been interpreted against the backdrop of comic rape plots, may they involve citizen victims or slave(-like) ones. The middle part (§ 9.6–10.7) has been shown to be akin to verbal duels in the vein of Aristophanes, Plautus and the *fabula Atellana.* Finally, I have suggested the last section of the episode (§ 11.1–4) to be in line with spectacular punishments displayed on the comic stage, particularly those meted out against (perceived) adulterers.

As far as (stock) types and their characteristics are concerned, we have seen that Giton bears a close resemblance to *pueri delicati* and other (perceived) 'low' characters on the comic stage. In terms of their appetite for both food and sex, Encolpius and Ascyltus are in no way inferior to comic parasites and lechers. What is more, at the very end of the episode (§ 11.4) Ascyltus arguably turns himself into a comic thug, a *lorarius.* Various other elements have been touched upon. As so many extant comedies, this episode revolves around the themes of adultery, rivalry and, of course, sex – the considerable number of *double entendres* is worth emphasising. We have also observed that Petronius' way of representing violence – be it sexual, verbal or physical – is akin to what we find in the many branches of Graeco-Roman comedy.

I have paid much attention to Petronius' allusions to the Lucretia story according to Livy and Ovid. On the one hand, I have shown that Petronius' parody functions along the same lines as the parody of mythological figures and literary predecessors in Terence's *Eunuchus.* On the other, I have argued that the intertextual dimension is not only central to the first paragraph of Petronius' text (§ 9.1–5), but that it adds a layer of sophistication to the episode as a whole: Both Ascyltus and Encolpius are cast as parodic reincarnations of Sextus Tarquinius. As to other comic techniques, we have seen that Ascyltus' penchant for role-playing and

exaggeration connects him to rapists and verbal duellers of the comic tradition. The episode brings about a role reversal between its protagonists – a *topos* of ancient comic scripts.

In the remainder of this chapter, I will focus on one aspect of Petronius' episode that sets it clearly apart from comic plays. The audience of a theatrical performance sees, hears (and feels) what is unfolding: They have direct visual and auditory contact, as it were, with the actors, their words and actions, as well as with the objects and the very stage in front of them. For the audience of a narrative, however, the situation is entirely different: Rather than having immediate access to the story – i.e. to the 'reality' of what is going on in the narrative – they receive their information in a filtered form. In the case of the *Satyrica,* the one who does the (immediate) seeing, hearing and feeling is Encolpius, the narrator and focaliser of the narrative.

III.5 Narrative Technique

Having identified a wide range of theatrical elements in the First Rivalry over Giton, I will now address the question of *how* Petronius adapts these elements for narrative prose fiction. For the most part, my analysis will focus on two specific categories of narrative techniques or strategies. On the one hand, there are those techniques that, somewhat paradoxically, use the narrator's voice so as to create the impression of a stage performance, seemingly allowing the audience to have an unadulterated look at the unfolding story. These strategies give further substance to Panayotakis' (1995: ix) claim that the *Satyrica* is "the narrative equivalent of a farcical staged piece." On the other hand, there are narrative techniques that tend to bring about the opposite effect. They use Encolpius' voice in a way that is peculiar to narratives and could not (easily) be brought to bear on stage. In other words: They make the audience aware of the fact that they are *not* dealing with a theatrical performance but with a piece of virtuoso storytelling. Lastly, I will address the question of whether the narrative patterns we have observed may allow for conclusions to be drawn as to the character of Encolpius as protagonist and/or narrator.

III.5.1 A Narrative Emulating Stage Performances

III.5.1.1 Μίμησις, or: Narrative of Events

In Plato's *Republic* (*Resp.* 392c–394), Socrates makes one of the earliest contributions to what we today call narratology. He notes that the poet (i.e. the narrator) of an epic can choose between two ways of storytelling: On the one hand, the narrator may speak in his own voice, as it were, thereby drawing the audience's attention to the fact that there *is* a narrator. The Platonic term is διήγησις ("narration"). This is the case, for instance, when the narrator directly comments on the story or when he represents the words of the story's characters in the form of indirect speech. Since this mode of storytelling tends to emphasise the narrator's words rather than (the events of) the story as such, Genette (1980: 166) refers to the outcome as a 'narrative of words'. On the other hand, the narrator may impersonate the story's characters and thus make it appear as if they were speaking for themselves: The Platonic term is μίμησις ("imitation"); it is part of Genette's concept of a 'narrative of events' (cf. below). What is important to point out here is that Plato's Socrates and his interlocutor Adeimantus explicitly link the latter mode of storytelling to the theatrical stage. They agree that μίμησις proper belongs to tragedy and comedy (*Resp.* 394b–c).

The connection between narrative 'imitation' and stage plays is most obvious, of course, in the area of speech representation.[464] In fact, Genette (1980: 164) points out that true narrative μίμησις can only exist when the object of imitation is language (i.e. words). In all other cases – e.g. when representing events, object or character traits – a narrative can, at best, give the *"illusion of mimesis."*[465] As far as speech representation is concerned, though, the narrator may create something very similar to a dramatic script simply by reproducing all of the characters' words in the form of reported speech,[466] without adding further information in between.[467] Taking this finding as a starting point, I will argue that Petronius' nar-

464 Speech representation refers to the different ways in which the narrator may reproduce the words of characters in the story; cf. Genette (1980: esp. 170–4).

465 Genette (1980: 164), emphasis in the original.

466 We are dealing with reported speech when "the narrator pretends literally to give the floor to his character" (Genette (1980: 172). This is the case, for instance, when the narrator quotes Agamemnon's words at §§ 3–5.

467 In the case of §§ 79.11–80.6, Panayotakis (1995: 112 f.) has shown how easily some parts of Petronius' narrative could be turned into a dramatic script.

rator, at times, emulates theatrical performances by a) foregrounding the words and actions of the story's characters, and b) reducing his own (perceived) presence to the bare minimum.

This technique, as it were, is most clearly discernible in the dialogue between Encolpius and Ascyltus, i.e. in their altercation and the ensuing discussion about their break-up (§ 9.6–10.7). The passage comprises 200 words, 159 of which are taken up by reported speech. Some of the remaining phrases simply mark the quarrellers' words as reported speech (e.g. *inquam,* § 9.6; *inquit,* § 9.8). It almost goes without saying that, in terms of narrative speed, we are here dealing with a 'scene' – a term aptly borrowed from drama –, which means that story time virtually equals narrative time:[468] Encolpius and Ascyltus (hypothetically) need about the same time to interact as we need to read (or hear) about their interaction. This, of course, is similar to what the audience of a theatrical performance would experience if the two were quarrelling on stage.

Yet, the above-mentioned finding constitutes but a superficial connection with the stage. While a long succession of reported speech may easily be seen as an emulation of a *dramatic script,* this is not necessarily true for a *dramatic performance.* The latter specifies matters such as the play's setting and musical accompaniment as well as the characters' costumes, movements, and tone of voice – thus going far beyond the information provided by the script. Keeping this in mind, it becomes clear that – as far as narrative techniques are concerned – speech representation alone will inevitably fall short of the rich variety of impressions theatrical performances have to offer. This, I argue, is where the additional remarks made by Petronius' narrator come into play. To a large extent, the words the narrator speaks *in propria persona* fill the audience in on what the First Rivalry over Giton looks and sounds like: The narrator describes Encolpius' angry gesture (*intentavi in oculos Ascylti manus,* § 9.6) and Ascyltus' exaggerated reaction (*sublatis fortius manibus,* § 9.7). He also specifies that Ascyltus' reply was spoken much louder than Encolpius' initial accusation (*longe maiore nisu clamavit,* § 9.7). Similarly, the references to laughter (§ 10.3, 11.2) and applause (§ 11.2) provide the audience with information about the episode's soundscape.

468 Story time is the duration of the story, i.e. the amount of time taken up by an event or a section within the story "measured in seconds, minutes, hours, days, months, and years" (Genette 1980: 88). Narrative time, on the other hand, is the time it takes to read or listen to a section of the narrative and is thus "measured in lines and in pages" (*ibid*). Narrative speed is the relationship between story time and narrative time.

Often enough, rather than naming an emotion felt by one of the characters, the narrator prefers to describe how they *physically express* these emotions.[469] For instance, rather than simply stating that Giton was sad and/or distraught, the narrator describes how the boy sits down and wipes away his tears with his thumb (*consedit puer super lectum et manantes lacrimas pollice extersit,* § 9.2). Just as the mention of Encolpius' and Ascyltus' gestures, this finding may be interpreted as an emulation of stage performances: Although the narrator could provide us with his own take on what is going on, in these cases he merely tells us what the situation looked and sounded like. Just as if they were watching a play, the audience is left alone to judge what the characters' words and actions signify.

It is worth noting that the narrator's tendency to describe physical reactions rather than name feelings is not due to Encolpius' limited knowledge – no matter whether we are referring to Encolpius as *actor* or *auctor.* Even when the narrator talks about his past self – whom, of course, he knows better than anyone else –, he alternates between simply spelling out his emotions (e. g. *perturbatus ego,* § 9.3) and describing his own emotive gestures (e. g. *intentavi in oculos Ascylti manus,* § 9.6). My argument, therefore, is that the narrator's strong emphasis on the visual and auditory aspects of the story is to be understood as part of Petronius' narrative technique. Its effect – among other things – is to reinforce the impression that we are dealing with a stage performance in narrative guise.

Lastly, we may add that these findings are in line with what Genette refers to as a 'narrative of events'. This mode of storytelling is not restricted to direct speech representation but, in more general terms, refers to texts characterised by a high "quantity of narrative information (a more developed or more *detailed* narrative) and the absence (or minimal presence) of the informer – in other words, of the narrator."[470] I claim that the points made above neatly characterise the dialogue between Encolpius and Ascyltus as a narrative of events. The narrator provides the audience with details about the action – information aiding its visualisation (gestures, laughter, loudness) – without foregrounding his own presence: The narrator's 'intrusions' into the words of the characters are comparatively brief, and – at least in the cases discussed so far – they are limited to 'objective' descriptions of what is going on. What I mean is that, as far as we can tell, the narrator does not manipulate the story

469 With reference to §§ 1–9.1, this point has been made by Ruden (1993: 18).

470 Genette (1980: 166), emphasis in the original.

in any significant way: His words are not shaped by Encolpius' feelings towards the action (as is the case elsewhere, as we will see). To use a theatrical metaphor, then, we may conceive of the narrator's brief intrusions into the dialogue between Encolpius and Ascyltus as 'stage directions' in a stage-like narrative.

III.5.1.2 Paralepsis

In the preceding section, we have discussed rather straightforward instances of stage-like storytelling. I will now proceed to cases in which Petronius' emulation of theatrical performances goes as far as to strain narrative plausibility. What I mean is that the narrator Encolpius occasionally discloses more information than he can (technically) possess; in Genettean narratology, this phenomenon is known as paralepsis (derived from λαμβάνω, "to take (up)").[471]

Let us begin by referring once more to Panayotakis' seminal study on theatrical elements in the *Satyrica.* Apart from identifying several comic motifs and character types in the First Rivalry over Giton, Panayotakis (1995: 18 f.) points out an important structural parallel between Petronius' work and the Graeco-Roman comic tradition: Occasionally, comic characters do something on stage that goes unnoticed by other characters present, for instance when Chalinus eavesdrops on a conversation between Lysidamus and Olympio (Plaut. *Cas.* 451–66)[472] or when the *matrona* Artemona watches her husband Demaenetus enjoying himself with the prostitute Philaenium (Plaut. *Asin.* 878–910).[473] Such scenes follow what Panayotakis (*ibid.* 18) refers to as a "'double audience-spectacle' pattern:" The audience watches both parties simultaneously – registering, e.g., the husband's actions and his wife's *re*-actions – and appreciates the complications arising from this constellation. The same structure, Panayotakis (*ibid.* 19) elaborates, characterises the ending of Petronius' episode when "Ascyltus is behind the door and silently watches Giton and Encolpius making love. The audience of the novel watches not only the homosexual couple but Ascyltus and his movements [...] at the same time" (*furtim se foribus admovit discussisque fortissime claustris,* § 11.2).

471 Cf. Genette 1980: 195 and see the discussion below.

472 Cited in section II.2.2. The Evidence of Graeco-Roman Comedy.

473 Cf. Panayotakis (1995: 19 n. 72 and 73) for more examples.

I suggest that Panayotakis' remarks on the double audience-spectacle pattern in the *Satyrica* are broadly in line with Petronius' 'stage directions' discussed in the preceding section: The narrator informs the audience about Ascyltus' actions without directing their attention to the fact that there is a narrator 'filtering' the elements of the story. In that he describes Ascyltus' actions as being simultaneous with what Encolpius and Giton were doing (*nec adhuc quidem omnia erant facta, cum,* § 11.2), the narrator allows the audience to 'watch' both parties at the same time – an effect that, as Panayotakis points out, comes close to what the audience of a theatrical performance would experience.

The narratological difficulty with this interpretation is that, strictly speaking, the narrator has no way of knowing what Ascyltus is (or was) doing outside the room. It seems clear that Encolpius the protagonist cannot see what is happening behind the door. Neither does it seem likely that he hears Ascyltus approaching; not only because Encolpius is deeply preoccupied with Giton (§ 11.1) but also because Ascyltus is explicitly said to approach stealthily (*furtim,* § 11.2). Apparently, then, we are not dealing with the knowledge of the protagonist (i.e. with a case of experiencing focalisation). Does this mean that Encolpius the narrator is stepping in and providing the audience with hindsight knowledge (narrating focalisation)? Of course, this is not altogether impossible, but it certainly requires some scholarly ingenuity: We have to assume, for instance, that Ascyltus told Encolpius about his actions after the fact, or that Encolpius the narrator simply surmises what must have happened.[474]

A more straightforward proposition is that – in order to achieve the desired (stage-like) effect – the narrator is here allowed to give more information "than is authorized in principle in the code of focalization governing the whole [narrative]" – which is Genette's (1980: 195) definition of paralepsis. This means that, for a brief moment, Encolpius tells the story as if he was an omniscient narrator.[475] The latter explanation is all the more plausible because this is by far not the only case of par-

474 Cf. Jones' (1987: 815) remarks on the same narratological difficulty at § 97.7: "the narrator describes Ascyltos' growing excitement in his search for Giton, although Ascyltos is on the other side of a door. This is a slight case of extended perspective: signs of the excitement could doubtless be heard through the door and Encolpius' perception or imagination will have been magnified by his fear." Goldman (2006: 19) is right to dismiss this explanation as overly complicated.

475 Cf. Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad loc.*): "Hier findet ein kurzer Wechsel von der personalen zur auktorialen Erzählsicht statt." In Genettean terms, we may speak of zero focalisation, "where the narrator knows more than the character, or more exactly *says* more than any of the characters knows" (Genette 1980: 189), emphasis in the original.

alepsis in the extant *Satyrica.* The clearest instance occurs during the orgy at Quartilla's, when Encolpius (the protagonist) falls asleep (§ 22.2), but he (as narrator) nevertheless tells his audience in detail about how two Syrians break into the place and try to steal some valuable items (§ 22.3–5).[476]

Such passages make clear that Petronius may sometimes 'sacrifice' narrative plausibility for the sake of narrative efficiency (among other things). As far as the particular case of § 11.2 is concerned, I suggest that the paralepsis is in line with my findings on μίμησις: The narrator – despite Encolpius' restricted perspective – allows the audience to witness the actions of all narrative agents virtually at the same time: Encolpius and Giton on the one hand, Ascyltus on the other. The brief moment of an 'outside perspective' – i.e. the supply of information that is beyond Encolpius' knowledge – bridges the gap between Encolpius' point of view and what the audience would see if they were watching a theatrical performance.

Before moving on, I will address another (minor) instance of paralepsis in the First Rivalry over Giton. When discussing the motif of role-playing in this episode, I have stressed the point that Ascyltus is said to *pretend* to be horrified when he is confronted by Encolpius (*inhorrescere se finxit,* § 9.7). We may now add that, strictly speaking, Encolpius the narrator cannot know whether Ascyltus was being sincere or not. Again, I believe it is beside the point to ask how Encolpius might have acquired this piece of information. Rather than breaking up the scene by the addition of an elaborate explanation, the narrator is simply allowed to spell out what the audience is supposed to learn: Claiming that Ascyltus was faking his indignation, in a matter-of-fact way, is a succinct way of presenting the ensuing altercation in a farcical light.

III.5.2 A Narrative Emancipated from Stage Performances

In the preceding sections, I have discussed narrative techniques in the First Rivalry over Giton, particularly in the dialogue between Encolpius and Ascyltus (§ 9.6–10.7), that create the impression of a stage performance. As we shall see now, however, such techniques are only one part of Petronius' narrative repertoire. For, elsewhere in the episode the experi-

476 For further discussion of this and other instances of paralepsis in the *Satyrica,* cf. Goldman (2006: 12–20).

ence of Petronius' audience is markedly different from that of theatregoers. Rather than providing us with a steady flow of visual and auditory information – as a theatrical performance would do – the narrator of the *Satyrica* manipulates the story by means of emphasis, condensation, subjective storytelling, and foreshadowing.

III.5.2.1 Emphasis: Variations in Speech Representation

While the dialogue between Encolpius and Ascyltus is characterised by a high portion of reported discourse, the beginning of the episode employs different modes of speech representation. When the narrator tells us about Encolpius' conversation with Giton (§ 9.2–5), he presents Encolpius' (i.e. his own) words in an indirect mode. Both questions he poses to Giton are rendered in transposed speech, i.e. "in an indirect style, more or less closely subordinated" (Genette 1980: 170): *cum quaererem numquid nobis in prandium frater parasset,* 9.2; *quid accidisset quaesivi,* § 9.3. His angry entreaties (*precibus etiam iracundiam miscui,* § 9.3) present us with an instance of narratised speech:[477] The narrator treats Encolpius' speech act as one among many events of the story, without indicating what exactly Encolpius was saying.[478] In both cases, then, the narrator rephrases Encolpius' words and thereby increases the perceived presence of himself (as the intermediary between the story and the audience). This is also evident in the fact that the narrator – by (partly) summarising Encolpius' words – accelerates the pace of the narrative (story time > narrative time).

In contrast to these indirect modes of representation, Giton's words are spelled out in full (reported speech, § 9.4–5), which has the effect of slowing down the pace of the narrative (story time = narrative time) and reducing the distance between the audience and the character's statement. This narrative pattern – in which Encolpius' words, in a way, function as a prelude to Giton's – places great emphasis on Giton's accusation against Ascyltus. Strikingly, a very similar pattern can be observed in the way Giton represents his own words and those of Ascyltus: He

477 Admittedly, this only holds true if we are to imagine Encolpius' angry entreaties to consist of words rather than mere gestures.

478 Cf. Genette's (1980: 170) definition of narratised speech. Of course, we need to remember that Petronius' text refers to a very similar phrase in Livy's *ab urbe condita* (*miscere precibus minas,* Liv. 1.58.3).

presents his own shouting as a kind of background information (*cum ego proclamarem,* § 9.5) and leaves the prominent end position of his statement to Ascyltus' words: *"si Lucretia es" inquit "Tarquinium invenisti"* (*ibid.*). Giton's statement thus enhances the dramatic effect of Ascyltus' rape threat.[479]

It is important to note that this narrative technique runs contrary to what we have observed in the preceding section. Rather than allowing all characters to speak in their own words – as we would expect them to do on stage – Petronius' narrator places different weights on the statements of his narrative agents. Even though such variations in speech representation are not inconceivable in theatrical productions, Petronius' narrative technique is here clearly not meant to emulate the stage but to bring to the fore a few choice elements of the story. As we will see in the following section, this is part of a broader tendency in the First Rivalry over Giton.

III.5.2.2 Condensation: Matters of 'Visibility'

In many regards, Petronius' episode condenses into a narrative of less than 400 words a range of elements (plots, characters, motifs) that could fill entire stage plays. One important instrument making this condensation possible is ambiguity: As we have seen, much of the First Rivalry over Giton can be read in different ways – or on different levels, as it were –, as it presents us with a complex interplay of intertextual references and sexual innuendos. For now, I will point out a few more ways in which Petronius foregrounds certain aspects of the story while having others fade into the background.

Apart from the area of speech representation, variations in emphasis are most obvious in the 'visibility' of Petronius' characters. It has been noted that Giton, having set in motion the conflict between Encolpius and Ascyltus, remains decidedly passive for the most part of the episode. Arguably, this inaction enhances the parodic contrast between the boy and the heroic figure of Lucretia. On closer examination, however, we may note that we have no way of telling whether Giton really remains passive during the conflict between Encolpius and Ascyltus. The only thing we can say with certainty is that, in the last two thirds of the epi-

479 These corresponding patterns of speech representation have been noted by Laird (1999: 218 f.). He refers to this narrative technique as 'angled narration of dialogue'.

sode, we learn next to nothing about what the boy is doing (let alone thinking or feeling). This is an important distinction. Although – as far as we can tell – Giton is with Encolpius and Ascyltus the entire time, the narrator chooses to tell us precious little about him after his accusation against Ascyltus. He is only present, inasmuch as that Ascyltus talks about replacing him (*mihi prospiciam et aliquem fratrem,* § 10.6) and that Encolpius refers to him as the object of his sexual desire (§ 10.7–11.1). At the end of the episode, the boy is nothing but a reference point in sexual jokes (*opertum me amiculo evolvit,* § 11.2; *sic dividere cum fratre nolito,* § 11.4).

The fact that Giton is (almost) invisible for a large portion of the episode can be interpreted as the result of a deliberate narrative strategy – a strategy which, incidentally, sets the *Satyrica* clearly apart from what would be possible in the context of a theatrical production. If the episode was performed on stage, Giton would have to be seen *doing something* during the conflict between Encolpius and Ascyltus. Perhaps, we would have to image the boy standing (awkwardly) in the background whilst the two rivals are engaging in their verbal duel and whilst Ascyltus is punishing Encolpius for having sex with Giton behind his back. Throughout the scene, the actor playing Giton would have to indicate how the boy feels about what is happening, for instance by means of gestures and/or by stepping away from the quarrellers. Giton's behaviour, then, might have some effect on those watching the play – be it that they (are more likely to) empathise with Giton or that they (further) appreciate the ways in which he fails to live up to the role model of Lucretia.

While these considerations clearly belong to the realm of speculation, it is crucial to note that, on stage, Giton's character might direct the audience's attention away from the farcical conflict between Encolpius and Ascyltus. In Petronius' text, however, the narrator pre-empts this potential diversion: He simply omits Giton's part in the story when he sees fit, thus making sure the audience focuses exclusively on what is (apparently) deemed to be at the heart of the story: the farcical rivalry between Encolpius and Ascyltus. In narratological terms, we may here speak of a paralipsis (derived from λείπω, "to leave (aside)"), i.e. the "omission of one of the constituent elements of a situation in a period that the narrative does generally cover" (Genette 1980: 52). This technique entails the condensation of Petronius' text, inasmuch as that, of course, his narrative would necessarily slow down (story time < narrative time) if it meticulously took stock of every character's behaviour at all times. Petronius' narrator disposes of information he deems unimpor-

tant, which helps him fit a relatively high amount of (relevant) information into a relatively short narrative episode.

Strikingly, the technique of paralipsis may also be observed with reference to Ascyltus. At the beginning of the episode, Encolpius finds Giton in tears and asks him about what has occurred. Eventually, Giton tells him that "a little earlier" (*paulo ante,* § 9.4) Ascyltus came into the room, wanting to rob the boy of his 'sexual purity' (*pudorem*). Upon hearing this, Encolpius immediately makes a threatening gesture towards Ascyltus and starts to hurl insults at him (§ 9.6). Does this mean that Ascyltus was inside the room with Giton and Encolpius the entire time? Is Ascyltus' presence (part of) the reason why Giton hesitates to answer Encolpius' questions (§ 9.3)? Or are we to imagine that Encolpius and Giton are (somehow) talking in private? The answer to these questions is that we do not know: The beginning of the narrative as we have it simply does not specify where Ascyltus is and what he is doing during the conversation between Encolpius and Giton. As these pieces of information are apparently not relevant to what the narrator wants the audience to learn, he simply omits – or 'sidesteps'[480] – Ascyltus' part in this section of the story. Here, Ascyltus is just as invisible as Giton will be for most of what follows.

III.5.2.3 Condensation: Petronius' 'punchline'

On a similar note, I argue that the narrator has the episode break off exactly where it is supposed to break off – he has it end in a sudden twist that forces the audience to re-evaluate what has come before.[481]

As has been stated before, the entire episode revolves around the rivalry between Encolpius and Ascyltus; the two compete over who gets to have sex with Giton without the interference of the other. About midway through the text, Encolpius suggests that the two 'brothers' part ways and split up their belongings (*communes sarcinulas partiamur,* § 10.4). At the very end of the episode, Ascyltus revisits this idea in the form of a *double entendre: sic dividere cum fratre nolito* (§ 11.4).[482] On the one hand, Ascyltus' statement suggests that Giton is part of the belongings they

480 Cf. Genette 1980: 52.

481 Although this cannot be proved beyond doubt, I here assume/argue that the ending of the First Rivalry over Giton is complete.

482 Cf. section III.3. Punishment (§ 11.1–4).

had agreed to share. On the other hand, the sexual meaning of *dividere* refers to the situation in which Ascyltus has just caught Encolpius: He found him 'playing' (i.e. having sex) with Giton (*ludentem,* § 11.2). Since Ascyltus here 'twists arounds' what Encolpius said a little earlier, his words also mark the comic role reversal between the two rivals we have discussed above. My point is that the last sentence of the episode performs the function of a punchline at the end of a joke.[483]

Apart from noting that there is a punchline, however, we have to emphasise the fact that this is exactly where Petronius' narrator has the episode break off. We do not get any information on what happens immediately afterwards, e.g. on when Ascyltus stops beating Encolpius – which he must do eventually – and on how Encolpius reacts to Ascyltus' pun (as well as the beating). Since, therefore, a certain amount of story time here corresponds to no narrative time whatsoever, we are dealing with a temporal ellipsis.[484] Apparently, it is employed by the narrator so that the First Rivalry over Giton – just as so many jokes – may end precisely where its comic effect is most powerful.

Remarkably enough, this technique is not easy to categorise with regard to whether it amounts to an emulation of stage performances. At first sight, it seems as if such an abrupt break-off was impossible to achieve in the context of a theatrical production. Ascyltus – after delivering the punchline – would eventually have to leave Encolpius alone simply to allow all characters (including himself) to go off the stage. The mere fact that actors need to make entrances and exits is a hindrance to sudden 'joke-like' endings. On closer inspection, however, we may remember that Cicero (*Cael.* 65) associates abrupt endings with the mime, even claiming that this is one aspect that clearly distinguishes mime performances from other theatrical productions:

> *mimi ergo est iam exitus, non fabulae; in quo cum clausula non invenitur, fugit aliquis e manibus, deinde scabilla concrepant, aulaeum tollitur.*

483 Cf. Schmeling's (1991: 364) remarks on Petronian episodes such as the ones about the widow of Ephesus (§ 111–2) and the Pergamene youth (§§ 85–7): "It seems (but not to the first-time reader) that a goal of each story is to conclude with a brilliant line or an outrageous scene. It is almost as if Petronius had heard or had composed a witty statement and then worked backwards to build a story around it. Not that the stories are badly constructed, but that the purpose and structure of the stories seem to be contrived to conclude with a clever or witty punch-line."

484 Cf. Genette (1980: 106–9).

> This, then, is now the end of a mime, and not of a play, in which, when an ending cannot be found, someone flees from another's hands, then the clappers rattle and the curtain is pulled.[485]

Arguably, then, the abrupt ending of the First Rivalry over Giton is the narrative equivalent of mime actors suddenly fleeing off the stage or the curtain closing unexpectedly.

III.5.2.4 Subjective Storytelling and Foreshadowing

Foreshadowing *per se* is not exclusive to narratives. Hints at what is to come later in the story can be given in a variety of ways, for instance through what the audience of a theatrical performance is told by the play's chorus, its prologue speaker, or any other character. One important way in which Petronius employs the technique of foreshadowing, however, does not have a one-to-one correspondence on the stage.

I have already remarked that the distinction between Encolpius the protagonist and Encolpius the narrator is often difficult to draw, since the narrator usually chooses to tell his story in the mode of experiencing focalisation (= narrated I). This is also the case for most of the First Rivalry over Giton. Let us, for instance, consider § 10.7, where the narrator tells us why he (in the past) agreed to part ways with Ascyltus:

> *hanc tam praecipitem divisionem libido faciebat; iam dudum enim amoliri cupiebam custodem molestum, ut veterem cum Gitone meo rationem reducerem*
>
> *

It is immediately clear that these statements are not an 'objective' description of the story's events – unlike the Petronian 'stage directions' we have discussed earlier. Rather, the narrator's words are coloured by what Encolpius felt at the time. Seeing that the protagonist wants to have sex with Giton as soon as possible, the narrator refers to Ascyltus as an annoying chaperon (*custodem molestum*); his word choice gives expression to the protagonist's aversion towards Ascyltus. Similarly, the fact that Giton is called "my Giton" (*Gitone meo*) marks the protagonist's affection for the boy as well as his 'claim of ownership' over him.

485 Trans. Marshall (2006: 10).

It is crucial to note that the narrator does not indicate whether he still sees Ascyltus and Giton in this way. As far as we can make out, the narrator tells the story as if he was (again) looking through the protagonist's eyes. This subjective representation of the story, of course, is in itself a phenomenon rather alien to the stage. When watching a play, the audience has direct access, as it were, to the events of the story (e.g. to the words and actions of the characters). The only scenes in which there is a similar 'filtering' of information are those featuring a messenger, a prologue speaker, or a similar type of character who then functions as a narrator on stage.[486]

My point, however, goes beyond this rather basic distinction between narratives and theatrical productions. For, there is one instance in the above quote where the narrator actually reveals his distinct standpoint, telling his story – for a brief moment at least – in the mode of narrating focalisation (= narrating I). The formulation in question is *hanc* ***tam praecipitem*** *divisionem libido faciebat.* Referring to the split-up between Encolpius and Ascyltus as hasty or precipitate means to judge the protagonist's decision by its outcome, i.e. by the fact that their separation will only last for a very short time and that Encolpius will receive a beating for trying to outmanoeuvre Ascyltus.

This evaluation cannot possibly represent the point of view of the protagonist, who, at the time, is simply glad to have gotten rid of Ascyltus. Rather, it is based on the hindsight knowledge of Encolpius the narrator, who thereby gives the audience a subtle hint at what is to come later in the story. He puts his readers/listeners on their guard, as it were, having them watch out for a sudden change of fortune. This kind of foreshadowing, of course, is hardly conceivable on stage. It is (almost) the narrative equivalent of a *deus ex machina* giving hints at the outcome of the play.

III.5.3 The Character of Encolpius as *actor* and *auctor*

In many regards, the findings of this chapter touch upon a long-standing dispute in Petronian scholarship: The debate 1) on whether there is a (significant) difference in character between Encolpius the protagonist and Encolpius the narrator, and 2) on what aim, if any, the narrator

486 For a narratological analysis of such scenes in ancient tragedy, cf. Goward (1999) and de Jong (2014: 198–203) with references for further reading.

pursues in telling his tale the way he does. Among other things, this debate concerns the following questions: Is Encolpius the protagonist a naïve simpleton? Is he (at least) more of a naïve simpleton than his 'older' counterpart, the narrator? If so, does the narrator deliberately make fun of his former self?

Beck (1973; 1975; 1982) answers all three questions in the affirmative.[487] Jensson (2004) – while agreeing with Beck's broader argument – asserts that the narrator is not really any 'wiser' than the protagonist. Rather than having learned from his past mistakes, the narrator is said to distinguish himself from the protagonist merely by speaking after the fact and (therefore) by knowing the outcome of the story. In Schmeling's (1994/95; 2018) view, Encolpius the narrator is not so much concerned with making fun of the protagonist as with openly confessing to his past mistakes and/or shortcomings and humiliations.

On the other end of the spectrum, Conte (1996) claims that Encolpius the narrator is *not* the master of his own narrative. Rather, he is said to be characterised by a condition called *mythomania,* which means that he constantly tries to present the petty events of his (past) life as a tale of mythical and/or literary greatness. According to Conte, however, these attempts are inevitably thwarted by the *hidden author* (= implied author), who has the narrator's delusions clash with the 'reality' of the story.

All scholars agree that there is a sense of irony to the *Satyrica.* They disagree, though, as to whether this irony is created by the narrator – in what we could call an act of self-deprecation – or by the implied author, who invites the audience to amuse themselves at the expense of Encolpius (as protagonist and narrator) behind his back.

Of course, I will not be able to answer the above questions once and for all – not only because I am dealing with a rather small text sample, but also because some parts of Petronius' narrative technique simply cannot be ascertained beyond doubt. Nevertheless, the findings amassed in the preceding sections allow for some conclusions to be drawn as to the character and/or function of Encolpius the narrator and his relation to the story he tells.

487 For a more detailed overview of previous research, cf. section I.5. Basic Premises for a Narratological Reading of the *Satyrica.*

III.5.3.1 *Mythomania*

As we have observed above, the First Rivalry over Giton is remarkable for Petronius' intertextual engagement with the rape of Lucretia according to Livy and Ovid. Giton is cast in the role of Lucretia, Ascyltus (and Encolpius) in that of Tarquinius, and Encolpius in that of Collatinus. At first sight, then, the episode appears to present us with a prototypical case of Conte's (1996) *mythomaniac* narrator: Encolpius tries to make his audience believe that his past deeds were worthy of a figure as exalted as Collatinus, but the events of the story (through the work of the implied author) counteract the narrator's misrepresentation of them. At the end, rather than accepting Encolpius as a second Collatinus, the audience perceives the two figures to be connected by a parodic contrast. In other words, the readers/listeners of the First Rivalry over Giton share the implied author's ironic gaze at the narrator's follies.

This is certainly a valid argument. What needs to be pointed out, though, is that the narrator's *mythomania* is only one part of Petronius' intertextual game. It is true that the narrator recounts some aspects of the story in a way that clearly evokes the *ab urbe condita* and the *Fasti.* For instance, he mentions Giton's tears and his sitting position, thereby reminding us of Lucretia's behaviour.[488] He even inserts a verbal echo of Livy into his text (*precibus etiam iracundiam miscui,* § 9.3; cf. Liv. 1.58.3). This technique, however, is not only employed by the narrator but also by the narrative agents Ascyltus and Giton.

The most obvious reference to the episode's mytho-historical role models – the one that no one will miss – is to be found in the words of Ascyltus, quoted by Giton (and requoted by the narrator): *si Lucretia es … Tarquinium invenisti* (§ 9.5). We have no reason to believe that Giton (or Encolpius) wrongly puts these words into Ascyltus' mouth: The latter, though given the chance, never objects to this insinuation; nor does the narrative contain any other indication to this effect. This means that, at least in this episode, Ascyltus is no less of a *mythomaniac* than the narrator: He casts himself as a second Tarquinius, even more bluntly so than Encolpius presents himself as a second Collatinus. In fact, I argue that the intertextual references made by the narrator (*in propria persona*) here function to prepare, and to enhance, the parodic effect created by Ascyltus' words. Rather than trying to identify a single source of irony in the First Rivalry over Giton, I suggest that we appreciate the

488 Cf. section III. First Rivalry over Giton: Encolpius versus Ascyltus (§§ 9–11).

ways in which the different layers of Petronius' text (its events, narrative agents, and narrator) work hand in hand, as it were.

We may note that this 'collaboration' can also be observed in the way Giton quotes Ascyltus' threat. The latter's allusion to the Lucretia story is not only prepared by the formulations of the narrator but also by a clear reference to Livy in the words of Giton: The boy's description of how Ascyltus drew his sword (*gladium strinxit,* § 9.5) is clearly reminiscent of how Livy's narrator describes Tarquinius' attack on Lucretia (*stricto gladio,* Liv. 1.58.2). We may also note Giton's reference to his *pudor* (§ 9.4), a term harking back to Lucretia's *pudicitia.*[489] This means that, just as the narrator, Giton chooses his words in accordance with what (he knows) Ascyltus has to say.[490] I argue, therefore, that all three – Ascyltus, Giton and the narrator – are in on the intertextual joke defining this episode; in a way, they are all *mythomaniacs.*[491] The only question that remains open is whether Encolpius the protagonist is aware of the (perceived) links with the Lucretia story before they are made explicit by Ascyltus. The narrative simply does not provide us with conclusive information on this point.

III.5.3.2 The Aim of the Narrator: A Confession or a Piece of Entertainment?

Schmeling (2018) argues that the *Satyrica* amounts to a confession of Encolpius' past mistakes. With regard to the First Rivalry over Giton, he (*ibid.* 79) makes the following suggestion:

> Ascyltos' unchallenged indictment of Encolpius, that he had never laid a decent woman and that he, Ascyltos, had been Encolpius' female partner just as Giton is now, is in reality a confession by Encolpius of the nature of his sex-life, the words being put into

489 Cf. note 237.

490 This does not necessarily mean that Giton deliberately casts himself in the role of Lucretia. As I will argue throughout this study, we need not (always) equate the effects achieved by an episode with the 'agendas' of its characters.

491 Notably, this is not the only time characters other than Encolpius (the narrator) strike us as *mythomaniacs.* Giton, for instance, likens a quarrel between Encolpius and Ascyltus to the conflict between Eteocles and Polynices (§ 80.9). Both Encolpius the protagonist (§ 97.4) and Eumolpus (§ 101.7) compare their party's difficulties to those encountered by Ulysses in the Cyclops' cave.

> Ascyltos' mouth. After a lacuna Encolpius is caught in bed with Giton by Ascyltos who in good humour flogs him. This is the first of many confessions of sexual humiliation [...].

Although I do not assume that the narrator can freely put words into Ascyltus' mouth,[492] I accept Schmeling's as a valid interpretation of the First Rivalry over Giton. However, two reservations remain: Firstly, when referring to their past sexual relationship, Ascyltus casts Encolpius in the penetrating role and himself in the receptive one (cf. § 9.10 and the quote from Schmeling above). Since Encolpius is thus said to have acted in accordance with the norms of Roman masculinity,[493] I fail to see how this amounts to the confession of a mistake and/or shortcoming. I have proposed my own reading of Ascyltus' accusation against Encolpius in an earlier section: Having been called a *pathicus* and a *fellator,* Ascyltus reminds Encolpius of the fact that he is a lover of *pathici* and *fellatores/ fellatrices.* In a nutshell, Ascyltus tells Encolpius that 'people who live in glass houses should not throw stones'.[494]

My second reservation with Schmeling's interpretation is that it can only account for a few of the findings presented in this chapter: It takes some ingenuity to explain, for instance, why the *confessor* Encolpius tells us about the (attempted) rape of Giton by Ascyltus, only to virtually ignore the boy's point of view for most of the episode; or why he bothers to turn the story of his past sins into a parody of the Lucretia story.

The most plausible explanation, I believe, is that it is the narrator's aim to amuse his audience. The First Rivalry over Giton strikes me as a piece of entertainment rather than a confession because, as I have shown at length, it foregrounds the farcical aspects of the story. The ending of the episode, for instance, not only highlights Encolpius' sexual humiliation, but it also performs the function of a punchline. In addition to what has already been said about this matter, we should stress the point that the narrator's word choice prepares the audience for the pun to be delivered by Ascyltus: By introducing Ascyltus' words as being wanton or lascivious (*petulantibus dictis,* § 11.4), the narrator clearly hints at their sexual overtones. The ending of the episode is thus presented as a joke, not (primarily) as an act of humiliation.

492 Cf. section I.5.3. Narrator vs. (Implied) Author.

493 Cf. section II.1. Problems of Terminology and Categorisation.

494 Cf. section III.2.1. The Dynamics of Petronian Quarrelling.

The punchline, of course, marks the role reversal between Encolpius and Ascyltus, which accounts for much of the episode's comicality. This may exemplify, once more, the ways in which the different layers of Petronius' text work towards the same effect. For, we should note that the role reversal is undoubtedly a feature of the story as such: At first, Ascyltus desires to have sex with Giton; Encolpius makes accusations. Later, Encolpius wants to have sex with Giton; Ascyltus makes accusations. This is the level of the characters' words and actions, i. e. of the story proper. The narrator, then, does not 'create' the role reversal – he does not misrepresent the story so as to make it fit this comic pattern –, but he merely emphasises the aspects of the story that pertain to this role reversal. As far as the narrator's selection of information is concerned, the relevant techniques have been discussed under the headings of 'condensation' and 'foreshadowing'.

In some cases, however, the narrator's penchant for entertainment goes beyond emphasising what the story provides. As has been mentioned above, at § 11.2 the narrator introduces a *double entendre* (*opertum me amiculo evolvit,* punning on the ambiguity of *amiculo*). This is not part of the story as such: In 'reality', Ascyltus either takes away Encolpius' cover (his *amiculum*) or Giton (his *amiculus*). The (amusing) ambiguity as to what happened is the product of the narrator's word choice. His formulation makes clear that the narrator, at least occasionally, adds entertaining elements to a story that is already entertaining in itself. At any rate, since the episode is full of sexual *double entendres,* the narrator certainly does not counteract the general thrust of the story; he merely enhances it.

III.5.3.3 The Function of the Narrator

Why does Encolpius the narrator tell the story in a way that casts a poor light on his past self? Why does he, for instance, allow Ascyltus to deliver a punchline at his expense (although he could have chosen to omit this part of the story)? Why does he go as far as to enhance the thrust of Ascyltus' joke through his particular way of storytelling? As I have argued above, the narrator's *mythomania* (Conte 1996) or his "confession-compulsion" (Schmeling 1994/5: 221) can be no more than part of the answer. In the First Rivalry over Giton, at least, Encolpius' narrative techniques evidently aim at bringing to the fore the farcical aspects of the story: He is actively involved in creating the comic effects that characterise the episode as a whole.

This amounts to suggesting, as Beck and Jensson do, that it is the narrator's aim to entertain his audience. As long as we are referring to the basic stance of the narrator, this conclusion is certainly correct for the First Rivalry over Giton. Nevertheless, I wish to warn against the assumption that there is a one-to-one correspondence between what the narrative techniques of the episode achieve and what its narrator 'wants'. In other words: We should not overstress the agency of Encolpius the narrator. As the instances of paralepsis in the First Rivalry over Giton show, Petronius occasionally sacrifices the consistency of Encolpius' perspective for the sake of narrative efficiency. This is a finding we should heed at all times. Very likely, it is not possible – not to speak of necessary – to fit every narrative technique we find in the *Satyrica* into a neat character description of Encolpius the narrator. Sometimes, Encolpius' is simply the *vox sine qua nulla fabula est*[495] – he is allowed (or made) to say what the audience is meant to hear, almost regardless of what this implies for (the credibility of) his character.

Incidentally, we may note that it is not uncommon for ancient comedies to put aside certain technicalities – such as consistency in the depiction of a character – for the sake of farcical fun. We have discussed, for instance, the scene in Plautus' *Miles gloriosus* in which Pyrgopolinices is punished for trying to sleep with a married woman. When he is seriously beaten up and threatened with castration, the soldier – rather surprisingly – puns on his situation: He claims that he does not want to leave this place *intestatus,* i.e. either "incapable of giving evidence" or "without testicles".[496] I have compared Pyrgopolinices' sexual joke to Encolpius' pun on *amiculum/amiculus* and, in fact, the two puns give rise to similar questions: Why does the soldier joke about being robbed of what is most dear to him (i.e. his penis)? Why does Encolpius joke about being robbed of what is/was most dear to him (i.e. his Giton)? Is this not completely out of character? Quite possibly, the answer is as simple as this: When the opportunity presented itself, neither Plautus nor Petronius could resist having their characters pun on the subject.

495 I borrow this formulation from Schmeling (2007: 449).

496 Cf. section III.3.2.3. Physical Abuse.

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 Rivalry 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: 109 f.) 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; 45
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.* 50
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.* 55
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; 60
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?* 65
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, 70
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? 40
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. 45
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. 50
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: 55
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. 60
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? 65

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, 70
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, 80
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.* 85
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. 90
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; 95
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. 100
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. 75
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? 81
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. 85
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? 91
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. 95
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. 100
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 vidensque 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 (732[a]). 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.* 740[a]
(Plaut. *Cas.* 734–40[a])

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. 740[a]

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.

V

Third Rivalry over Giton: Encolpius versus Eumolpus (§§ 92–96)

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The reconciliation episode (§ 91) is immediately followed by a sequence of further events taking place at Encolpius' lodgings (§§ 92–99). As it bears some close similarities with the First and the Second Rivalry over Giton,[572] I will refer to this section of the *Satyrica* as the Third Rivalry over Giton. One major aspect that sets this episode apart from those that came before is that Encolpius now faces not one but two rivals: Not only does Ascyltus demand Giton back after the boy has reconciled with Encolpius (cf. esp. § 97.1–98.1), but the old man Eumolpus now also shows a clear interest in snatching the boy away from Encolpius (§§ 92–96). It is this section of the episode, i.e. the one in which Eumolpus takes centre stage, that my discussion will focus on.[573]

[**92**.1] *et iam plena nox erat mulierque cenae mandata curaverat, cum Eumolpus ostium pulsat.* [2] *interrogo ego: 'quot estis?' obiterque per rimam foris speculari diligentissime coepi, num Ascyltos una venisset.* [3] *deinde ut solum hospitem vidi, momento recepi. ille ut se in grabatum reiecit viditque Gitona in conspectus ministrantem, movit caput et 'laudo' inquit 'Ganymedem. oportet hodie bene sit'.* [4] *non delectavit me tam curiosum principium timuique ne in contubernium recepissem Ascylti parem.* [5] *instat Eumolpus, et cum puer illi potionem dedisset, 'malo te' inquit 'quam balneum*

572 For a summary of the Second Rivalry over Giton (§§ 79–82), cf. section IV. Reconciliation: Encolpius and Giton (§ 91).

573 Schmeling (1991: 366–8) also interprets §§ 92–6 as a more or less independent episode. The same applies to Panayotakis' (1995: 122–30) discussion.

totum' siccatoque avide poculo negat sibi umquam acidius fuisse. [6] *'nam et dum lavor' ait 'paene vapulavi, quia conatus sum circa solium sedentibus carmen recitare, et postquam de balneo [tamquam de theatro] eiectus sum, circuire omnes angulos coepi et clara voce Encolpion clamitare.* [7] *ex altera parte iuvenis nudus, qui vestimenta perdiderat, non minore clamoris indignatione Gitona flagitabat.* [8] *et me quidem pueri tamquam insanum imitatione petulantissima deriserunt, illum autem frequentia ingens circumvenit cum plausu et admiratione timidissima.* [9] *habebat enim inguinum pondus tam grande, ut ipsum hominem laciniam fascini crederes. o iuvenem laboriosum: puto illum pridie incipere, postero die finire.* [10] *itaque statim invenit auxilium; nescio quis enim, eques Romanus ut aiebant infamis, sua veste errantem circumdedit ac domum abduxit, credo, ut tam magna fortuna solus uteretur.* [11] *at ego ne mea quidem vestimenta ab officioso ⟨custode⟩ recepissem, nisi notorem dedissem. tanto magis inguina quam ingenia fricare.'* [12] *haec Eumolpo dicente mutabam ego frequentissime vultum, iniuriis scilicet inimici mei hilaris, commodis tristis.* [13] *utcumque tamen, tamquam non agnoscerem fabulam, tacui et cenae ordinem explicui*

*

[**93**.1] *'vile est quod licet, et animus errore laetus iniurias diligit.*

[2] *ales Phasiacis petita Colchis*
atque Afrae volucres placent palato,
quod non sunt faciles: at albus anser
et pictis anas involuta pennis
plebeium sapit. ultimis ab oris
attractus scarus atque arata Syrtis
si quid naufragio dedit, probatur:
mullus iam gravis est. amica vincit
uxorem. rosa cinnamum veretur.
quicquid quaeritur, optimum videtur.'

[3] *'hoc est' inquam 'quod promiseras, ne quem hodie versum faceres? per fidem, saltem nobis parce, qui te numquam lapidavimus. nam si aliquis ex is, qui eodem synoecio potant, nomen poetae olfecerit, totam concitabit viciniam et nos omnes sub eadem causa obruet. miserere et aut pinacothecam aut balneum cogita.'* [4] *sic me loquentem obiurgavit Giton, mitissimus puer, et negavit recte facere, quod seniori conviciarer simulque oblitus officii mensam, quam humanitate posuissem, contumelia tollerem, multaque alia moderationis verecundiaeque verba, quae formam eius egregie decebant*

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[**94.**1] [*Eumolpus ad Gitonem*] *'o felicem' inquit 'matrem tuam, quae te talem peperit: macte virtute esto. raram fecit mixturam cum sapientia forma. itaque ne putes te tot verba perdidisse, amatorem invenisti.* [2] *ego laudes tuas carminibus implebo. ego paedagogus et custos etiam quo non iusseris sequar. nec iniuriam Encolpius accipit, alium amat.'* [3] *profuit etiam Eumolpo miles ille, qui mihi abstulit gladium; alioquin quem animum adversus Ascylton sumpseram, eum in Eumolpi sanguines exercuissem.* [4] *nec fefellit hoc Gitona. itaque extra cellam processit tamquam aquam peteret, iramque meam prudenti absentia extinxit.* [5] *paululum ergo intepescente saevitia 'Eumolpe' inquam 'iam malo vel carminibus loquaris quam eiusmodi tibi vota proponas. et ego iracundus sum et tu libidinosus es: vide quam non conveniat his moribus.* [6] *puta igitur me furiosum esse, cede insaniae, id est ocius foras exi'.* [7] *confusus hac denuntiatione Eumolpus non quaesiit iracundiae causam, sed continuo limen egressus adduxit repente ostium cellae meque nihil tale expectantem inclusit, exemitque raptim clavem et ad Gitona investigandum cucurrit.*
[8] *inclusus ego suspendio vitam finire constitui. et iam semicinctio ⟨lecti⟩ stantis ad parietem spondam vinxeram cervicesque nodo condebam, cum reseratis foribus intrat Eumolpus cum Gitone meque a fatali iam meta revocat ad lucem.* [9] *Giton praecipue ex dolore in rabiem efferatus tollit clamorem, me utraque manu impulsum praecipitat super lectum ⟨et⟩* [10] *'erras' inquit 'Encolpi, si putas contingere posse ut ante moriaris. prior coepi; in Ascylti hospitio gladium quaesivi.* [11] *ego si te non invenissem, petiturus praecipitia fui. et ut scias non longe esse quaerentibus mortem, specta invicem quod me spectare voluisti.'* [12] *haec locutus mercennario Eumolpi novaculam rapit et semel iterumque cervice percussa ante pedes collabitur nostros.* [13] *exclamo ego attonitus, secutusque labentem eodem ferramento ad mortem viam quaero.* [14] *sed neque Giton ulla erat suspicione vulneris laesus neque ego ullum sentiebam dolorem. rudis enim novacula et in hoc retusa, ut pueris discentibus audaciam tonsoris daret, instruxerat thecam.* [15] *ideoque nec mercennarius ad raptum ferramentum expaverat nec Eumolpus interpellaverat mimicam mortem.*

[**95**.1] *dum haec fabula inter amantes luditur, deversitor cum parte cenulae intervenit, contemplatusque foedissimam iacentium volutationem* [2] *'rogo' inquit 'ebrii estis an fugitivi an utrumque? quis autem grabatum illum erexit, aut quid sibi vult tam furtiva molitio?* [3] *vos mehercules ne mercedem cellae daretis fugere nocte in publicum voulistis. sed non impune. iam enim faxo sciatis non viduae hanc insulam esse sed M. Mannicii.'* [4] *exclamat Eumolpus 'etiam minaris?' simulque os hominis palma excus-*

sissima pulsat. [5] *ille †tot hospitum potionibus liber† urceolum fictilem in Eumolpi caput iaculatus est solvitque clamantis frontem et de cella se proripuit.* [6] *Eumolpus contumeliae impatiens rapit ligneum candelabrum sequiturque abeuntem et creberrissimis ictibus supercilium suum vindicat.* [7] *fit concursus familiae hospitumque ebriorum frequentia. ego autem nactus occasionem vindictae Eumolpum excludo, reddita scordalo vice sine aemulo scilicet et cella utor et nocte.*
[8] *interim coctores insulariique mulcant exclusum et alius veru extis stridentibus plenum in oculos eius intentat, alius furca de carnario rapta statum proeliantis componit. anus praecipue lippa, sordidissimo praecincta linteo, soleis ligneis imparibus imposita, canem ingentis magnitudinis catena trahit instigatque in Eumolpon.* [9] *sed ille candelabro se ab omni periculo vindicabat.* [**96**.1] *videbamus nos omnia per foramen valvae, quod paulo ante ansa ostiole rupta laxaverat, favebamque ego vapulanti.* [2] *Giton autem non oblitus misericordiae suae reserandum esse ostium succurrendumque periclitanti censebat.* [3] *ego durante adhuc iracundia non continui manum, sed caput miserantis stricto acutoque articulo percussi.* [4] *et ille quidem flens consedit in lecto. ego autem alternos opponebam foramina oculos iniuriaque Eumolpi velut quodam cibo me replebam advocationemque commendabam, cum procurator insulae Bargates a cena excitatus a duobus lecticariis in mediam rixam perfertur; nam erat etiam pedibus aeger.* [5] *is ut rabiosa barbaraque voce in ebrios fugitivosque diu peroravit, respiciens ad Eumolpon* [6] *'o poetarum' inquit 'disertissime, tu eras? et non discedunt ocius nequissimi servi manusque continent a rixa?'*

*

[7] [*Bargates procurator ad Eumolpum*] *'contubernalis mea mihi fastum facit. ita, si me amas, maledic illam versibus, ut habeat pudorem'*

*

[**92**.1] It was now completely dark, and the woman had taken care of our orders for dinner, when Eumolpus knocked at the door. [2] I asked, "How many of you are there?", and meanwhile began looking very carefully through a chink in the door to see whether Ascyltus had come with him. [3] When I saw that he was the only guest, I let him in immediately. He threw himself on the bed, and as he saw Giton before his eyes waiting at table, he nodded his head and said: "I approve of this Ganymede. It should be a nice day." [4] I was not pleased at this officious opening; I was afraid I had taken on another Ascyltus as a companion. [5] Eumolpus persisted, and when the boy had given him a drink, he said: "I like you

better than an entire bathhouse." And once he had greedily emptied his cup, he said he had never had a more sour time: [6] "For, even while I was taking my bath," he said, "I was almost beaten up, just because I tried to recite a poem to those sitting around the tub. And after I was thrown out of the bathhouse, I began going round every corner and calling out 'Encolpius' in a loud voice. [7] On the other side of the place, a young man who had lost his clothes called out for a Giton with equally indignant shouts. [8] And while the boys were making fun of me with the most insolent imitations as if I were a lunatic, a huge crowd surrounded him with applause and most humble admiration. [9] For, he had such an enormous load of genitalia that you would think the man was just an attachment to his penis. Oh, what a man for the job: I think he could start on the day before and finish on the day after. [10] So he found assistance at once: Someone or other – a disreputable Roman knight, they said – covered him with his own clothes as he was wandering around and took him off home, I think, in order to enjoy this great fortune alone. [11] But I should not even have got my own clothes back from the zealous overseer if I had not produced someone to vouch for me. It is so much more useful to rub your groins rather than your brains." [12] As Eumolpus was saying this, I very often changed my facial expression. For, of course, I rejoiced at my enemy's misfortunes and was saddened by his successes. [13] At any rate, I remained silent as if I did not know what the story was about, and I explained the order of the courses for dinner.

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[**93**.1] "We hold cheap what is legitimate; our minds delight in folly and love wrongdoing.

> [2] The bird won from Colchis on the Phasis river and fowls from Africa are pleasant to the palate, since they are not easy to get. But the white goose and the duck bedecked with colourful feathers are of a lowly taste. The parrot-wrasse brought from far-off shores and the fish of the furrowed Syrtis gain praise – if only they come at the price of a shipwreck. The mullet is by now a weariness. The mistress wins over the wife; the rose fears the cinnamon. Whatever must be sought after seems to be the best."

[3] "Is this how you keep your promise," I said, "not to produce any verse today? Please, at least spare us, who have never stoned you. For, if anyone drinking in the same house we are in smells the suggestion of a poet, he will rouse the whole neighbourhood and bury us alive for the same reason. Have pity on us and remember the art gallery or the bathhouse."

[4] Giton, the gentlest of boys, reproached me when I spoke in this way, saying that it was wrong to rebuke an older man. He said that I had forgotten my duty as host and that I let my insults spoil the meal I had provided in all kindness. He added more words of moderation and modesty, which very well became his beauty.

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[**94.**1] "Oh, how fortunate is the mother who bore a son such as you," he said. "Bravo to your excellence. Beauty and wisdom have made a rare combination. So do not think all your words have been wasted: You have found a lover. [2] I will fill poems with your praises. I will follow you as your teacher and guardian, even if you do not ask me to. Encolpius does not suffer an injustice; he is in love with somebody else." [3] That soldier who took away my sword did Eumolpus a good turn, too. Otherwise, I would have used the anger I had raised against Ascyltus to draw the blood of Eumolpus. [4] This did not go unnoticed by Giton. So he went out of the room as if to fetch some water, and quenched my anger by his prudent withdrawal. [5] Therefore, as my fury cooled a little, I said: "Eumolpus, I would prefer even that you should speak in verse rather than harbour such hopes. I am hot-headed and you are lecherous: You can see how these temperaments do not go together. [6] So think of me as a madman, yield to my insanity – that means: Get out quickly!". [7] Baffled by this announcement, Eumolpus did not ask the reason for my anger, but at once going out over the threshold, he suddenly slammed the door of the room. He shut me in, who was not expecting anything of this sort, removed the key and ran off to look for Giton.

[8] Having been locked in, I decided to end my life by hanging myself. I had just tied a belt to the frame of a bed standing against the wall,[574] and was inserting my neck in the noose, when the door was unlocked, Eumolpus came in with Giton and called me back to light from the brink of death. [9] Giton in particular passed from grief to rage. He raised a shout, pushed me with both hands and threw me on the bed, crying: [10] "You are wrong, Encolpius, if you think you could possibly die be-

574 My understanding is that Encolpius puts the bed upright against the wall, which is what the *deversitor* later refers to when he says: *quis autem grabatum illum erexit …?* (§ 95.2); cf. e.g. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*). However, a few translators suggest that the bed is merely standing "by the wall" (Heseltine & Warmington (eds., trans. 1969 *ad loc.*), cf. Kline (trans. 2018 *ad loc.*)), which might make it easier for Giton to throw Encolpius on the bed at § 94.9. Neither can we exclude the possibility that there are several beds in the room.

fore me. I tried first: I looked for a sword in Ascyltus' lodgings. [11] If I had not found you, I would have hurled myself over a precipice. And so you realise death is not far away from those who seek it, watch in your turn what you wanted me to see. [12] Having said this, he snatched a razor from Eumolpus' servant, slashed his throat once and then twice, and collapsed at our feet. [13] Thunderstruck, I let out a cry. I rushed to him as he fell and sought the road to death with the same steel. [14] But Giton was not marked with any trace of a wound, nor did I feel any pain myself. For, in the sheath there had been a practice razor, blunted so as to give the courage of a barber to boys learning the trade. [15] And so the servant had not panicked when the steel was snatched, nor had Eumolpus interrupted the farcical death scene.

[**95**.1] While this drama among lovers was being performed, an inmate of the house came in with part of our little dinner. Looking at us rolling about on the floor in the filthiest fashion, he said: [2] "I ask you: Are you drunk, or runaway slaves, or both? Who turned that bed up, and what is this hidden contrivance supposed to mean? [3] By Hercules, you wanted to run off into the open at night without paying for your room. But you will not get away with it. For, I will teach you that this apartment house does not belong to some widow, but to Marcus Mannicius." [4] Eumolpus yelled, "Are you threatening us?", and at the same time he hit the man hard in the face with the flat of his hand. [5] †Reckless from so much drinking with the guests,† the man hurled an earthenware jug at Eumolpus' head, split his forehead in the midst of his clamour, and rushed out of the room. [6] Eumolpus did not put up with the insult: He grabbed a wooden candlestick, followed the man out of the room and avenged his pride with a shower of blows. [7] The whole household gathered around, as well as a crowd of drunk guests. I took the opportunity for my revenge and shut Eumolpus out. Having paid the brawler back in his own coin, I was without a rival and enjoyed the room as well as the night. [8]

Meanwhile the cooks and lodgers beat up Eumolpus, who had been locked out. One thrust a spit full of sizzling meat at his eyes, another took a fork from a meat rack and got in position for a fight. Above all, a blear-eyed old woman – dressed in a very dirty linen wrap and wearing odd wooden clogs – dragged along a dog of enormous size on a chain and set it on Eumolpus. [9] But he defended himself from all danger with the candlestick. [**96**.1] We were watching everything through a hole left in the door leaf when the handle had been broken a little while before, and I

was cheering as Eumolpus got thrashed. [2] But Giton had not forgotten his compassion for Eumolpus: He said we ought to open the door and help him in his peril. [3] As my anger was still fresh, I did not restrain my hand but smashed the compassionate boy on the head with my clenched fist. [4] He sat down on the bed in tears. I applied each eye alternately to the hole and gorged myself on Eumolpus' miseries as if on some rich food. I was recommending legal assistance, when Bargates, the manager of the apartment house, having been disturbed at his dinner, was carried into the centre of the brawl by two litter bearers. For, he had gouty feet. [5] In a furious and vulgar language he spoke at length against drunkards and runaway slaves, then seeing Eumolpus, he said: [6] "Oh, you most learned of poets, was that you? And these completely worthless slaves do not get off and keep their hands away from quarrelling?"

*

"The woman I am living with despises me. So, if you love me, abuse her in verse and put shame into her."

*

As soon as the brawl has ended, an entirely new development occurs: A crier and a municipal slave enter the house, accompanied by a large crowd of people (§ 97.1). The crier announces that a handsome slave boy named Giton has run away from his owner and that anyone who can give information about the boy's whereabouts will receive a reward of a thousand sesterces (§ 97.2). Ascyltus stands nearby, holding the promised reward in his hands (§ 97.3). Encolpius tells Giton to hide under the bed, and to cling to its frame just as Ulysses clung to the belly of a ram when escaping from Polyphemus' cave (§ 97.4–5). Encolpius makes sure the bed looks as if he had been lying in it alone (§ 97.6). When Ascyltus and the municipal slave enter the room by force, Encolpius pretends not to have seen Giton. Falling at Ascyltus' feet, he claims that Ascyltus must have come to kill him and, so as to make his feigned entreaties more credible, he offers him his neck (§ 97.7–9). Ascyltus responds that he does not wish to kill Encolpius, but that he merely wants to have back his runaway slave Giton (§ 97.10). The municipal slave, however, is unperturbed by Encolpius' words: He examines the entire room, poking under the bed with a cane. Giton barely manages to remain undetected (§ 98.1). There follows a *lacuna* in the text; when the narrative resumes, Ascyltus and the municipal slave have left. Eumolpus enters the room, saying that he will inform the crier about Giton's whereabouts and claim the reward

(§ 98.2). Encolpius tries to convince Eumolpus that Giton has already left, but the boy suddenly sneezes three times under the bed, thereby giving away his location (§ 98.3–5). Eumolpus is angry at having been deceived, but Giton and Encolpius eventually succeed at ingratiating themselves with the old man (§ 98.6–99.4). Suddenly, a sailor arrives and tells Eumolpus that he must hurry to the ship he intended to board (§ 98.5). Encolpius and Giton join Eumolpus on his voyage (§ 98.6); the next episode of the *Satyrica* is set aboard the ship (§§ 100–115).

The Third Rivalry over Giton has received a fair amount of scholarly attention, not least because Giton's and Encolpius' fake suicide (§ 94.8–15) is one of Heinze's (1899: 505) main reference points for arguing that the *Satyrica* amounts to a parody of the 'idealising' novel (cf. below). Panayotakis (1995: 122–30) has devoted a thorough discussion to the episode's theatrical elements, focusing on parallels with the Graeco-Roman mime.

My reading of the Third Rivalry over Giton will concentrate on the resemblances between the *Satyrica* and the *fabula palliata,* the large extant corpus of which allows us to investigate matters of characterisation and plot development. Among other things, I will argue that Eumolpus' role in this episode can be understood as that of a *senex amator* in the Plautine vein, and that much of Encolpius' and Giton's behaviour corresponds to that of (desperate) lovers in the comic tradition. For the sake of clarity, I will divide the episode into three sections, each of which is characterised by a specific set of comic features: 1) a lecherous old man (§ 92.1–94.7), 2) suicidal lovers (§ 94.8–15), 3) a spectacular brawl (§ 95.1–96.7). Thereafter, I will once more examine Petronius' narrative technique, concentrating on its effects on the episode's theatricality.

V.1 Lecherous Old Men (§ 92.1–94.7)

V.1.1 Eumolpus

In the first part of the episode, Encolpius is greatly concerned that his old rival Ascyltus will re-enter the scene and try to take Giton away from him once more. Encolpius' fears are not unfounded, but – as it turns out – Ascyltus will appear somewhat later than he expects (§ 97.1–98.1). In the passage at the heart of this chapter (§§ 92–6), Encolpius comes to find a new rival in someone he did not suspect: the old poet Eumolpus, whom he had met at an art gallery some time earlier (§§ 83–90).

When Eumolpus knocks at the door, Encolpius is instantly anxious that the old man might have brought along Ascyltus (*num Ascyltos una venisset,* § 92.2). This is why Encolpius peeks through a chink in the door (*per rimam foris speculari diligentissime coepi,* § 92.2),[575] and asks *quot estis?* ("How many are there", *ibid.*) rather than the usual *quis est?* ("Who is it?").[576] While he is deeply preoccupied with Ascyltus, Encolpius is completely unsuspicious of Eumolpus: Once he has seen the old man has come alone, he immediately lets him in (*deinde ut solum hospitem vidi, momento recepi,* § 92.3).

Eumolpus throws himself on the bed and, seeing Giton waiting at table, says that he approves of this Ganymede (*laudo … Ganymedem,* § 92.3). His words are likely to have several effects on Petronius' audience: On the one hand, readers/listeners may think of Encolpius' and Eumolpus' first meeting in the art gallery, where there was on display a picture of Ganymede being carried off by an eagle (§ 83.3). On the other hand, they may be reminded of the fact that Eumolpus is a self-professed lover of young and beautiful boys (boys like Ganymede), as his tale about the Pergamene youth (§§ 85–7) had made abundantly clear. We may also note that Ganymede serves as the prototype of handsome young males in erotic poetry[577] and that, at least in a Roman context, he is often depicted as Zeus' (sex) slave.[578] Encolpius does not fail to notice the sexual overtones of Eumolpus' remark. It is now that he first thinks of the old man as another Ascyltus: *non delectavit me tam curiosum principium timuique ne in contubernium recepissem Ascylti parem* (§ 92.4).

Why does Encolpius not sooner realise that Eumolpus poses a threat to his relationship with Giton? After all, the old man had shared with him the story about the Pergamene youth when they were alone in the art gallery. Was Encolpius not put on his guard by Eumolpus' tale of how he tricked a handsome boy into having sex with him? One possible ex-

575 Petronius' characters repeatedly look through chinks or keyholes, cf. § 26.4 f., § 96.1, § 140.11.

576 Cf. e.g. § 16.1–2: *ostium [non] satis audaci strepitu exsonuit impulsum … et cum et ipsi ergo pallidi rogaremus quis esset* … ("A very aggressive knock sounded at the door … And when we, having turned pale, asked who it was […]"). Cf. also Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 92.2).

577 The authors of the twelfth book of the *Anthologia Palatina* regularly compare their beloved boys to Ganymede, e.g. Dioscorides at *A.P.* 12.37 and Meleagros at *A.P.* 12.65; cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 92.3) for further references. On Ganymede in the comic tradition, cf. section II.3. Other Male-Male Relationships in the Comic Tradition.

578 Cf. e.g. Mart. 1.6 and Juv. 5.59, and see Williams (2010: 59–64) for further discussion. On Giton's slave-like features, cf. section III.1.2. Rape and Comic Slave Characters.

planation for Encolpius' 'forgetfulness' is that he is so preoccupied with Ascyltus that the danger posed by Eumolpus simply slips his memory. Only the mention of Ganymede makes him remember that Eumolpus is not an 'innocent' old man. If we find this explanation unsatisfactory, we might be inclined to admit that Petronius here – as he does elsewhere – 'sacrifices' narrative plausibility or verisimilitude for the sake of the episode's momentary effect: In order to present his audience a comedy of errors, as it were, Petronius has Encolpius know (or 'forget') just as much as is necessary for this purpose. Related questions of verisimilitude will be addressed in the section on Petronius' narrative technique; Encolpius' slow-wittedness will also be part of the discussion.

Though Encolpius now conceives of Eumolpus as a sexual rival, he does not raise his voice but allows the old man to continue talking to Giton. The old man's tale about what occurred at the bathhouse is a superb piece of storytelling (§ 92.6–11). Its humour relies on the symmetry (and contrast) between Eumolpus' and Ascyltus' experience – thereby foreshadowing that Eumolpus will take up Ascyltus' place in the *Satyrica.*[579] What I would like to emphasise here, though, is that the story means much more to Encolpius and Giton than it means to Eumolpus himself. As far as we can tell, to Eumolpus the events at the bathhouse are simply the stuff of an amusing tale, a means of ingratiating himself with the handsome boy he has just met. For, he does not know he has just seen a man named Ascyltus, who used to be Encolpius' and Giton's companion. To Eumolpus, whom the two know to be Ascyltus is just a *iuvenis nudus, qui vestimenta perdiderat* (§ 92.7).[580] Even more importantly, the old man is not aware that the Giton this stranger was looking for (*Gitona flagitabat,* § 92.7) is the very 'Ganymede' he is telling the story.[581]

While we do not learn what Giton thinks about the tale, we get a clear picture of what is going on in Encolpius' head as he listens to Eumolpus: *haec Eumolpo dicente mutabam ego frequentissime vultum, iniuriis scilicet inimici mei hilaris, commodis tristis* (§ 92.12). Encolpius feels *Schadenfreude* when he hears about Ascyltus having a bad time (having lost his

579 Cf. Courtney (2001: 145). For a thorough discussion of this passage, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*) with references for further reading.

580 Note that the name Ascyltus does not come up in Eumolpus' story (§ 92.6–11). Petronius' readers/listeners – same as Encolpius and Giton – only infer Ascyltus' identity from how Eumolpus describes the *iuvenis.*

581 Cf. e.g. Courtney (2001: 145) and Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 92.7).

clothes and his Giton) and feels miserable when Ascyltus is said to experience something positive (receiving help from a Roman knight). Yet, Encolpius decides to leave Eumolpus in the dark as to what the story means to him: *utcumque tamen, tamquam non agnoscerem fabulam, tacui et cenae ordinem explicui* (§ 92.13). When examining the rest of the episode, we need to keep in mind this discrepancy between the knowledge states of Encolpius and Giton on the one hand, and Eumolpus on the other.

Eumolpus recites a poem (§ 93.2), apparently inspired by the frugal *cena* the trio is having, and Encolpius scolds him for it as soon as he has finished (§ 93.3). It is quite implausible that Encolpius gets angry because the poem is Eumolpus' way of driving a wedge between Encolpius and Giton.[582] Rather, Encolpius is 'justified' in criticising the old man, since the latter had earlier promised to refrain from reciting poetry for the entire day.[583] Encolpius now reminds Eumolpus of his promise (*hoc est … quod promiseras,* § 93.3) and of the way he is usually treated by his 'audience' when reciting poetry: He had been stoned after his recital of the *Troiae halosis* (§ 90.1), and he had been thrown out of the bathhouse when he had tried to put on another performance (§ 92.6). Encolpius believes something similar is bound to happen in the apartment house they are in now; and more importantly, Encolpius is certain that he himself will be beaten up on account of being a poet's companion (§ 93.3).[584] Giton speaks up, reproaching Encolpius for talking to their elderly guest in this manner (§ 93.4). Although Giton takes Eumolpus' side against Encolpius, the latter finds the boy's empathy and modesty most appropriate to his beauty (*formam eius egregie decebant,* § 93.4). He seems to be incapable of finding fault with Giton.

582 *Pace* Panayotakis (1995: 125), who states the following: "In the poem that he composes so easily at 93.2, Eumolpus mentions all sorts of exotic birds as implicit objects of desire, that is Giton, and goes as far as the explicit statement or sexual invitation that a mistress surpasses a wife (*amica vincit* | *uxorem,* lines 8–9), implying, of course, himself and Encolpius, respectively;" cf. also Slater (1990: 102 n. 32). This interpretation can only be upheld if we assume that Eumolpus learned about the (sexual) relationship between Encolpius and Giton in some lost portion of the *Satyrica* (cf. my discussion below). Furthermore, note that Encolpius later tells Eumolpus that he would prefer him to speak in verse rather than to flirt with Giton (§ 94.5). Apparently, this statement refers back to Encolpius' anger at § 93.3. For different reasons, Panayotakis' reading of Eumolpus' poem has been criticised by Setaioli (2011: 129–32).

583 § 90.6: *ceterum ne [et] tecum quoque habeam rixandum, toto die me ab hoc cibo abstinebo* ("But so as not to quarrel with you as well, I will keep off this food [sc. poetry] for a whole day").

584 Encolpius had expressed the same concern at § 90.2.

Apparently, Eumolpus takes Giton's friendly words as an invitation to flirt with him.[585] He praises Giton's mother for having given birth to such a boy, extolling his beauty as well as his wisdom (§ 94.1). The old man's words clearly hark back to literary and/or philosophical role models. According to Courtney (2001: 145 f.), for instance, Eumolpus here refers to two passages of Virgil's *Aeneid,* casting Giton in two different roles. On the one hand, the praise of Giton's mother is said to be reminiscent of how Aeneas addresses Dido: *qui tanti talem genuere parentes?* ("What glorious parents gave birth to so noble a child?", Verg. *Aen.* 1.606). On the other hand, Courtney suggests that *macte virtute esto* (§ 94.1) alludes to the ninth book of the *Aeneid* (9.641), where Apollo speaks to Ascanius in this manner: *macte nova virtute, puer* ("A blessing, boy, on your young valour!").[586] Next, Eumolpus tells Giton that he has found a new lover (*amatorem invenisti,* § 94.1) and promises that he will praise him in verse (§ 94.2). Significantly, Eumolpus pledges to be Giton's *paedagogus et custos* (§ 94.2), which is, of course, what he had been to the Pergamene youth.[587]

Eumolpus' concluding remark is the most baffling one. He tells Giton that Encolpius will not suffer an injustice (sc. from the relationship between the boy and the old man), since Encolpius is in love with somebody else: *nec iniuriam Encolpius accipit, alium amat* (§ 94.2).[588] Of course, it is possible that some clue as to these words was lost in the course of our text's transmission. As it is, however, we are left with two alternative interpretations: Encolpius "must have told Eumolpus about Giton but omitted his name, or Eumolpus invents (he is a ποιητής) this on the spot to move Giton away from him" (Schmeling & Setaioli eds. 2011 *ad loc.*). I deem the latter possibility[589] highly unlikely, since – as I have pointed out above – Eumolpus does not yet know there is any reason to move Giton away from Encolpius. If he was intimately acquainted with the relationship between the two, the old man would have grasped the wider significance of the events at the bathhouse, and Encolpius would have had no reason to feign ignorance about the matter.

585 For a discussion of the *lacuna* after § 93.4, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*). Likely, only a few words have fallen out.

586 For further possible literary/philosophical echoes, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 94.1).

587 Cf. § 85.3 and Courtney (2001: 146).

588 Slater (1990: 102): "Eumolpus's claim that Encolpius loves another (94.2) is very puzzling. Who can this be?"

589 It has also been advanced by Aragosti et al. (1988: 368 n. 278).

The interpretation that remains is that Eumolpus knows something about Encolpius' love life, but that he is not aware it involves Giton, i.e. the boy whom he has just met and whose name he still does not know. In order to maintain this hypothesis, we need not even speculate about lost sections of the *Satyrica.* In the text as we have it, the last time Encolpius talked about Giton – rather than *with* him, as in § 91 – was in the art gallery, where he contemplated various pictures of deities and the mortal boys they desired. Inspired by these depictions, Encolpius spoke out loud as if he was alone (§ 83.4): *ergo amor etiam deos tangit* ("So love affects the gods, too!"). All these deities had found their loved ones – only he had lost his boy to a rival (§ 83.4–6). It is exactly at this point that Eumolpus enters the scene (§ 83.7), and it is not implausible that this is the last (and only) piece of information about Encolpius' love life that the old man receives before § 92. Eumolpus knows that Encolpius was separated from his beloved, and he is not aware that the two have already become reconciled.[590] Therefore, it makes perfect sense for the old man to assume that the 'Ganymede' in Encolpius' room cannot possibly be the boy Encolpius so recently lamented about.

Although Eumolpus apparently does not intend as much, his advances towards Giton make Encolpius jealous. The narrator refers to an earlier episode in which a soldier had prevented Encolpius from going on a killing spree (§ 82.2–4), Encolpius' target being Ascyltus and Giton (cf. § 81.6). We may also be reminded of § 79.10, where Encolpius catches Ascyltus in bed with Giton and contemplates murdering them both. Now the narrator claims that, had the soldier not taken away his sword back then, Eumolpus would have to pay for his flirt with his blood (§ 94.3). Notably, Encolpius claims that he would have used against Eumolpus "the anger I had raised against Ascyltus" (*quem animum adversus Ascylton sumpseram,* § 94.3), thereby concealing the fact that his past anger was also aimed at Giton.[591]

The boy senses that the jealous Encolpius is about to resort to violence (*nec fefellit hoc Gitona,* § 94.4). According to the narrator, Giton's method of withdrawing from this dangerous situation is to use his talent

590 Remember that, at § 91.3, Encolpius makes sure nobody (including Eumolpus) overhears his conversation with Giton.

591 Note also that Encolpius beats Giton at § 79.11, and that he will do so again at § 96.3 (cf. below).

for play-acting and improvisation: He pretends to fetch some water from outside (*tamquam aquam peteret,* § 94.4).[592]

Now that he is alone with Eumolpus, Encolpius tells the old man that he would prefer him to speak in verse rather than to behave in this manner. He alleges that Eumolpus 'harbours hopes' for Giton (*tibi vota proponas,* § 94.5), a formulation that once more echoes the old man's story about the Pergamene youth.[593] Encolpius declares himself to be hot-headed (*iracundus,* § 94.5) and Eumolpus to be lecherous (*libidinosus, ibid.*). His conclusion is that the two are incompatible (*vide quam non conveniat his moribus, ibid.*), just as he had found himself to be incompatible with Ascyltus in the First Rivalry over Giton.[594] As we have observed elsewhere in the *Satyrica,* Encolpius' words sound somewhat too artificial to be the product of true emotion: Slater (1990: 102) has rightly pointed out that Encolpius' formulation (*puta igitur me furiosum esse,* § 94.6) appears to give away the fact that he is merely putting on a role.

Encolpius having told Eumolpus to leave (*foras exi,* § 94.6), the narrator relates how the old man reacted: *confusus hac denuntiatione Eumolpus non quaesiit iracundiae causam, sed … me[…] nihil tale expectantem inclusit* (§ 94.7). Note that the narrator does not only tell us what Eumolpus did (shutting Encolpius in) but also what he *did not* do (asking why Encolpius minded his flirt with Giton). Again, the narrator's words suggest that Eumolpus – up to this point – did not know about the (sexual) relationship between Encolpius and Giton. Otherwise, there would be no reason for Eumolpus (to be expected to) inquire about Encolpius' anger (*non quaesiit iracundiae causam*). The old man is much more quick-witted than Encolpius had thought (*nihil tale expectantem*). He seizes the opportunity to get rid of his rival (which he has now found Encolpius to be) – and locks him in.

Of course, some readers may object that I cannot conclusively prove Eumolpus' ignorance of the sexual relationship between Encolpius and Giton. It is equally possible, one might argue, that the old man is aware of their relationship and deliberately feigns ignorance of it, his aim being to win Giton over from Encolpius. This is to see Eumolpus as a 'master of

592 Cf. Slater (1990: 102 n. 34).

593 Eumolpus' euphemism for having sex with the boy is *in unum omnia vota coniunxi* ("I united all my desires into one," § 86.5).

594 Cf. § 10.4: *intellego nobis convenire non posse.* Courtney (2001: 146) rightly notes that Encolpius is using the language of divorce.

disguise' and/or as the 'mastermind' behind the entire episode.[595] While it is true that I cannot disprove this possibility, I would like to emphasise that – in the sense of Ockham's Razor – it is much more complicated than the interpretation I have presented above: While my reading is consistent with Petronius' text as we have it, the 'dissimulation hypothesis' needs to make several assumptions about lost portions of the *Satyrica.* After all, for Eumolpus to be in a position to slyly make advances toward Giton, the boy whom he knows to be Encolpius' boyfriend, he must somehow have learned about their relationship in the course of the story. However, Encolpius cannot have (deliberately) told him himself, as Encolpius evidently assumes the old man to be ignorant of the matter (cf. esp. § 92.13, § 94.7). Moreover, we are told that Eumolpus could not overhear the conversation between Encolpius and Giton when the two were about to reconcile (§ 91.3). Since Eumolpus never has a chance to be alone with Giton (before § 94.8), the only character who could plausibly have told him about Encolpius' and Giton's relationship is Ascyltus. Did Ascyltus and Eumolpus speak about the other two at the bathhouse (§ 92.6–11)? If this is our assumption, we also have to postulate that Eumolpus' story about what happened at the bathhouse is entirely made up – for, in the story he does not tells us he ever spoke to Ascyltus, but simply that he saw a *iuvenis nudus* (§ 92.7). If we follow this path, then, there is no limit to Eumolpus' dissimulation – and we soon run out of plausible explanations for why he acts the way he does. While I am sure one may think of several other ways Eumolpus might have learned about the relationship, my point is that any of these 'reconstructions' likely poses more questions than it answers.

I shall prefer, therefore, to go with the simpler explanation: At the beginning of the episode, Eumolpus is not aware of the sexual relationship between Encolpius and Giton; he only learns of it in the course of the passage at hand (§ 92.1–94.7). The effect of the Third Rivalry over Giton relies in part on the complications arising from this discrepancy between the knowledge states of Petronius' characters – and it is this structure of an 'comedy of errors' that most clearly links this episode to the ancient theatrical tradition.

595 This idea of Slater's (1990: 103) will be taken up once more in the section on Petronius' narrative technique.

V.1.2 Lecherous Old Men in Comedy

It is not far-fetched to read the Third Rivalry over Giton against the backdrop of ancient comedy. As will be discussed in more detail below, the words of the narrator at § 94.15 (*mimicam mortem*) and § 95.1 (*fabula inter amantes luditur*) clearly portray the action as a kind of performance. What is more, the episode involves several instances of role-playing: 1) Giton pretends to fetch water (§ 94.4); 2) Encolpius tells Eumolpus to think of him as a madman (§ 94.6); 3) Encolpius and Giton attempt to outperform each other in the role of the desperate, suicidal lover (§ 94.8–15; cf. below).

The most comprehensive theatrical reading of the Third Rivalry over Giton has been advanced by Panayotakis (1995: 122–30).[596] Among other things, he draws attention to the sheer number of times that Petronius' characters enter, leave or re-enter the centre of the action.[597] Panayotakis (1995: 123) rightly suggests that these movements may remind us of long series of entrances and exits in farcical plays, as in Aristophanes' *Wasps* (138–210) or *Birds* (851–1057). For other parts of the episode, his interpretation relies on the scarce evidence of the (adultery) mime: He argues, for instance, that Encolpius takes the role of the jealous spouse, as exemplified by the mistresses in Herodas' fifth mimiamb and in a later mime papyrus.[598]

Taking Panayotakis' findings as a starting point, I will now focus on the connections between the Third Rivalry over Giton and the *fabula palliata*. I will argue that the relationship between Eumolpus and Encolpius is reminiscent of that between Plautine *senes amatores* and their younger rivals, who are usually no other than their own sons.

596 For references to earlier discussions, cf. Panayotakis (1995: 122 n. 2).

597 Eumolpus enters the room (§ 92.3); Giton leaves (§ 94.4); Eumolpus leaves (§ 94.7); Eumolpus and Giton re-enter (§ 94.8); the inmate of the house enters (§ 95.1); the inmate leaves (§ 95.5); Eumolpus leaves (§ 95.6); members of the household and drunk guests arrive (§ 95.7); Bargates arrives with his litter bearers (§ 96.4).

598 Cf. Panayotakis (1995: 123) as well as my discussion in section III. First Rivalry over Giton: Encolpius versus Ascyltus (§§ 9–11).

V.1.2.1 The *senex amator*

In an earlier chapter,[599] we have observed that Eumolpus' character is reminiscent of lecherous old men known from the ancient stage, such as Philocleon in Aristophanes' *Wasps* or Lysidamus in Plautus' *Casina.* This comic stock type is commonly referred to as the *senex amator.* It is worth bearing in mind, for instance, that the narrator introduces Eumolpus as a *senex canus* (§ 83.7), that one of the first things the old man talks about is how he used his cunning to seduce an attractive citizen boy (§§ 85–7), and that – at § 94.1 – he explicitly calls himself Giton's *amator.* We have also noted that, apart from his age, the most important link between Eumolpus and *senes amatores* is their excessive sexual desire – a desire for males and females alike, and even for (some) individuals past the prime of youth. In this section, we will see that Eumolpus' comicality is not restricted to his character traits but also pertains to the way he interacts with those around him and *vice versa.*

We have noted that Encolpius' rivalry with Eumolpus – other than his rivalry with Ascyltus – features a significant discrepancy between the knowledge states of the two. Neither does Encolpius suspect Eumolpus of threatening his relationship with Giton, nor is Eumolpus aware that Encolpius and Giton even have an intimate relationship. Situations as such – i. e. constellations in which at least one sexual rival is not aware of the full story he is involved in – are very common in comedies starring a *senex amator.*[600]

In Plautus, lecherous old men typically desire the same women as their own sons. In the *Cistellaria* (305–21), for instance, a *senex* flirts with the very prostitute whom he (wrongly) believes to 'corrupt' his son.[601] Similarly, at the end of the *Bacchides* (1120–1206), the two *senes* Nicobulus and Philoxenus are seduced by the same prostitutes their sons are in love with. In the *Casina,* the old man Lysidamus desires the same slave girl as his son Euthynicus.[602] The comedies most relevant to our

599 Cf. section II.2. Indiscriminate Lechery.

600 For an overview of these plays, cf. Ryder (1984) as well as section II.2.2. The Evidence of Graeco-Roman Comedy.

601 Owing to the scene's fragmentary transmission, however, there is little more we can say about this *senex amator.* For an up-to-date discussion, cf. the introduction to the *Cistellaria* and the accompanying notes in de Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3).

602 This is despite the fact that Euthynicus never appears on stage; cf. my plot summary of the *Casina* in section III.1.2. Rape and Comic Slave Characters.

discussion are Plautus' *Mercator* and *Asinaria*. For, both plays rely on a discrepancy between the knowledge states of the *senex amator* (the father) and his young rival (his own son).

V.1.2.2 Plautus' *Mercator*: A Comedy of Errors

At the outset of Plautus' *Mercator* we learn that, while on a business trip to Rhodes, a young man called Charinus fell in love with the slave girl Pasicompsa and consequently bought her for himself. Since Charinus' father Demipho had always disapproved of his son's affairs with prostitutes, Charinus does not dare to tell his father about the purchase.[603] When Demipho first sees Pasicompsa at the harbour, Charinus' slave makes up a lie so as to keep his master's secret: He tells Demipho that Charinus bought the girl as a maid for his mother, i.e. Demipho's wife (*Merc.* 200–2). The old man feels strongly attracted to Pasicompsa and starts to fondle her.[604] Clearly, Demipho is just as unrestrained as Eumolpus when it comes to expressing his amorous and/or sexual intentions.[605] The remainder of the play centres around Demipho's attempts to have sex with Pasicompsa behind the back of his wife.[606]

Crucially, Demipho's scheme does not involve the deception of his son. Having received false information as to what occurred in Rhodes, the old man is completely unaware that he desires the same woman as his son Charinus. As far as his son is concerned, Demipho may find his advances toward Pasicompsa are just as 'innocent' as Eumolpus finds his flirt with Giton (§ 92.3; § 94.1–2). Remember that Eumolpus, similar to Demipho, was not in a position to know about the true relationship between Encolpius and Giton: *nec iniuriam Encolpius accipit, alium amat* (§ 94.2). In other words: Both Demipho and Eumolpus, driven by their sexual appetite, are unaware of the young rival (Charinus and Encolpius respectively) directly under their noses.

603 Cf. the prologue to the *Mercator*, esp. 100–7.

604 At least, this is what Charinus' slave tells his master after the fact: *sed scelestus subigitare occepit* ("But the criminal [sc. Demipho] began to bestow his caresses," Plaut. *Merc.* 203). On this meaning of the verb *subigitare*, cf. Adams (1982: 156).

605 Cf. § 92.3, § 94.1–2 as well as, e.g., Plaut. *Cist.* 306–8.

606 Cf. my plot summary of Plautus' *Mercator* in section III.1.2. Rape and Comic Slave Characters.

When father and son first meet on stage (*Merc.* 335–468), both conceal their desire for Pasicompsa. Demipho wants to avoid that this piece of information reaches his wife, and Charinus is still anxious about his father's disapproval of his new affair with a prostitute. Both come up with excuses for why they want to be in charge over what happens to Pasicompsa. Just as when Eumolpus talks about the events in the bathhouse (§ 92.6–11), Plautus' characters speak without being aware of the full significance of what they are saying. In both cases, only the audience is in a position to appreciate the mutual misapprehension.

Only at the very end of the play does Demipho learn he had been chasing after his own son's *amica* (*Merc.* 972–3). The old man neatly spells out the fact that the entire plot of the *Mercator* hinged on the discrepancy between the knowledge states of father and son: *si hercle scivissem sive adeo ioculo dixisset mihi | se illam amare, numquam facerem ut illam amanti abducerem* ("If I had known or if he had told me merely in jest that he was in love with her, I would never have taken her away from her lover," Plaut. *Merc.* 993 f.).

V.1.2.3 Plautus' *Asinaria*: An Unexpected Rival

The parallels between the Third Rivalry over Giton and Plautus' *Asinaria* are no less striking. As the *Mercator,* this play relies on a difference in awareness between two main characters. Just like Encolpius, the young man Argyrippus comes to find a sexual rival in someone he did not suspect: the old man Demaenetus, who is no other than Argyrippus' own father.

As in the Third Rivalry over Giton, sexual rivalry in the *Asinaria* is not restricted to two rivals. At the beginning of the play, the *adulescens* Argyrippus is desperate to find money so as to pay for the exclusive services of the prostitute Philaenium. Apart from his desire for Philaenium, Argyrippus is motivated by the fact that he has a rival named Diabolus, another impecunious young man. The latter tries to buy Philaenium off her procuress before Argyrippus can do so.[607] If we compare the *Asinaria* to the Third Rivalry over Giton, Diabolus takes the role of Ascyltus: He is the obvious rival, the one with whom the protagonist (Argyrippus/Encolpius) is constantly preoccupied.

607 Cf. the conversation between Diabolus and the *lena* Cleareta (Plaut. *Asin.* 127–242).

From the very outset of the play, Argyrippus' father Demaenetus is aware of his son's desire for Philaenium. Announcing that parents have to indulge their children's wishes, he orders his slaves Libanus and Leonida to get hold of the money for Argyrippus behind the back of his wife (who poses the chief obstacle).[608] For the time being, it looks as if Demaenetus' only wish was to ensure the happiness of his son. Argyrippus is just as unsuspicious of Demaenetus as Encolpius is of Eumolpus. Importantly, Argyrippus' expectations are later confounded just as drastically as Encolpius'.

First of all, Argyrippus has to defend his claim on Philaenium against the slaves Libanus and Leonida, who also display a keen sexual interest in her.[609] Before receiving the money from the two slaves, Argyrippus has to endure various insults and provocations. Among other things, he has to witness Philaenium sweet-talk and kiss Leonida (*Asin.* 662–9). The situation gets even worse for Argyrippus. Having endured the slaves' insolence, he is surprised to learn that his father has one condition for handing the money over to him: Demaenetus wants to have sex with Philaenium himself (*Asin.* 736). Just like Encolpius, Argyrippus had a blind spot about the sexual desires of old men.

A little later, Argyrippus has to witness his father flirting with Philaenium and demanding kisses from her (*Asin.* 891). Argyrippus and Encolpius resemble each other not only in that they are both confronted with an elderly rival, but also in that they both (at least for a time) grudgingly bear the pangs of jealousy this rival causes.[610] Argyrippus is finally 'rescued' by his mother. Having been tipped off by Diabolus' parasite, she interrupts her husband's party and drags him back home (*Asin.* 909–41). In the play's epilogue (942–7), the members of the troupe express their sympathy for the *senex amator.*

608 Cf. esp. Plaut. *Asin.* 64–84.

609 Cf. also the plot of Plautus' *Casina,* where the father-son rivalry is complemented by the rivalry between the slaves Olympio and Chalinus.

610 For Argyrippus' jealousy, cf. Plaut. *Asin.* 837–9, 842–5, 882; cf. also *Asin.* 669, where Argyrippus is jealous of Leonida. For Encolpius' (silent) jealousy, cf. § 92.4, § 94.3.

V.1.2.4 Other Parallels between Eumolpus and Comic *senes amatores*

There are several other regards in which Petronius' depiction of Eumolpus resembles comic portrayals of *senes amatores.* Firstly, there is the basic notion that love/sex and old age do not go well together. As we have seen, at the beginning of the Third Rivalry over Giton Encolpius seems quite incapable of thinking of Eumolpus as a sexual rival. This is despite the fact that Encolpius had already listened to an elaborate story about the old man's sexual appetite (§§ 85–7). When – after the events in the apartment house – Encolpius and Giton have joined Eumolpus on his sea voyage, Encolpius comes to contemplate the group's new situation: *molestus est quod puer hospiti placet* ("It is annoying that our new acquaintance likes the boy", § 100.1). Although this passage is immediately preceded by a *lacuna,* the context makes clear that the *hospes* is Eumolpus and that the *puer,* of course, is Giton.[611] Encolpius is aggrieved by the fact that he finds himself in yet another sexual triangle – will he ever get to have Giton for himself? Encolpius' thoughts drift on: Having pondered that a thing (i.e. Giton) is only worth having if it fills others with envy, he comes to think that Eumolpus does not really pose a serious threat: *unus, et senex, non erit gravis; etiam cum voluerit aliquid sumere, opus anhelitu prodet* ("One rival, and he too an old man, will not be troublesome; even if he wished to try something, he will give himself away by his panting", § 100.1).

Encolpius' expression (*voluerit aliquid sumere*) euphemistically describes Eumolpus' sexual advances toward Giton.[612] Notably, *anhelitu* echoes Eumolpus' exhaustion after his three-times-in-a-row sexual encounter with the Pergamene youth: *inter anhelitus sudoresque tritus* ("ground between panting and sweating," § 87.8). Encolpius suggests that, if Eumolpus was to attempt having sex with the boy, the old man's heavy breathing would immediately alert Encolpius to what is going on. In other words: Encolpius mocks Eumolpus for aspiring to be sexually active at his old age – and this very mockery amounts to a commonplace of the comic tradition.

Senes amatores on the comic stage have to endure all sorts of disparaging remarks and/or plain insults. In Plautus' *Mercator,* for in-

611 For further discussion of the *lacuna,* cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*). Encolpius here clearly thinks of Eumolpus as a rival, just as he had done, for instance, at § 92.4 (*Ascylti parem*) and § 95.7 (*sine aemulo*).

612 For references and further discussion, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 ad *loc.*).

stance, Demipho's friend Lysimachus comments on the old man's desire to kiss Pasicompsa: *iaiunitatis plenus, anima foetida,* | *senex hircosus tu osculere mulierem?* | *utine adveniens vomitum excutias mulieri?* ("On an empty stomach, with stinking breath, you goaty old man would kiss a woman? In order to make her throw up when you approach her?", Plaut. *Merc.* 574–6). Somewhat earlier, Lysimachus succinctly expresses the idea that love simply is not for old men: *tun capite cano amas, senex nequissime?* ("You with your gray head are in love, you wicked old man?").[613] Similar mockery and/or reproaches can be found in Aristophanes' *Wasps* (1364–6), Plautus' *Casina* (239 f.), *Asinaria* (920 f.), or *Bacchides* (1152). All these passages express the idea that old men should not or plainly cannot pursue amorous/sexual relationships. It is the very notion Encolpius uses to reassure himself at § 100.1–2.

Even though it does not involve a *senex amator,* another striking parallel with the comic oeuvre is worth mentioning. In Plautus' *Menaechmi,* Sosicles (Menaechmus I) comes to Epidamnus in order to find his lost twin brother (Menaechmus II). Having arrived in the city, Sosicles' slave Messenio warns his master that Epidamnus is full of tricksters and various allurements, such as prostitutes (*Men.* 258–64). After this warning, Sosicles (So.) tells Messenio (Me.) to hand over the wallet he had entrusted to him:

So.: *ego istuc cavebo. cedodum huc mihi marsuppium.* 265
Me.: *quid eo veis?*
So.: *iam aps te metuo de verbis tuis.*
Me.: *quid metuis?*
So.: *ne mihi damnum in Epidamno*[614] *duis.*
tu amator magnus[615] *mulierum es, Messenio,*
ego autem homo iracundus, animi perciti,[616]
id utrumque, argentum quando habebo, cavero, 270
ne tu delinquas neve ego irascar tibi.
(Plaut. *Men.* 265–71)

613 Plaut. *Merc.* 305. For this sentiment, cf. also the epilogue to the *Mercator* (1015–26).

614 Of course, this is a pun, suggesting that the Greek city Ἐπίδαμνος derived its name from the Latin word *damnum* ("harm, damage"); cf. Thoresby Jones (ed. 1918: *ad* Plaut. *Men.* 263–4).

615 Lindsay's (ed. 1904/5) edition reads *tu magis amator mulierum.* I follow the reading of manuscript *P,* as does de Melo (ed., trans. 2011–3).

616 *perciti* is an emendation by Lipsius; the manuscripts read *perditi.*

So.: I will be on my guard against it. Give me the wallet.
Me.: What do you want with it?
So.: Because of your words I am afraid of you now.
Me.: What are you afraid of?
So.: That you may cause me some damnification in Epidamnus. You are a great lover of the ladies, Messenio, but I am an irascible man, with a quick temper. When I have the money I will prevent both these things: you committing an offense and me being angry with you.

Although the context is different, the dialogue between Sosicles and Messenio sounds remarkably similar to the one between Encolpius and Eumolpus.[617] Encolpius and Sosicles accuse Eumolpus/Messenio of lechery:

tu libidinosus es (§ 94.5) ~ *tu magnus amator mulierum es* (*Men.* 268)

Both think of themselves as hot-headed:

ego iracundus sum (§ 94.5) ~ *ego autem homo iracundus* (*Men.* 269)

Both argue that these character traits are incompatible. They tell Eumolpus/Messenio that they should do as they are told if they want to avoid a furious outburst:

puta igitur me furiosum esse, cede insaniae, id est ocius foras exi. (§ 94.6)

~

id utrumque, argentum quando habebo, cavero,
ne tu delinquas neve ego irascar tibi. (*Men.* 270 f.)

In short: When Encolpius' jealousy causes him to lash out against Eumolpus, his words seem to come right out of a comic script.

We may now briefly summarise the points made in this section: While earlier scholars have noted that Eumolpus bears some resemblance to the figure of the *senex amator*, these studies have often examined him in isolation. I have tried to broaden our scope, looking at how characters such as Demipho, Demaenetus and Eumolpus fit into the overall struc-

617 Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 94.5) briefly mentions this verbal echo.

ture of their plays/episodes. We have seen that, just like Eumolpus, *senes amatores* have to contend with much younger sexual rivals. In Plautine comedy, these young men are typically the *senes*' own sons. As in the *Satyrica,* the dynamics between the two rivals are regularly determined by misapprehensions and/or false expectations: Like Eumolpus, comic old men unwittingly stumble into the amorous affairs of young men (Plaut. *Merc.*), or – again like Eumolpus – they surprise their unwitting rivals with their enormous sexual appetite (Plaut. *Asin.*). What is more, Eumolpus resembles comic *senes amatores* in that he is mocked for trying to be sexually active at his old age. Lastly, we have examined a passage from Plautus' *Menaechmi,* a dialogue between an 'irascible' and a 'libidinous' man, which has close verbal correspondences with § 94.5–6.

V.2 Suicidal Lovers (§ 94.8–15)

V.2.1 Encolpius and Giton

Having been locked inside the room (and thus having been separated from Giton once again), Encolpius decides to end his life by hanging (§ 94.8). When he has already inserted his neck in the noose, Eumolpus and Giton come back at exactly the right point to stop him (*ibid.*). Giton gets angry and tells Encolpius that he could never be the first of them to die. He himself, the boy claims, had tried to commit suicide when he had been with Ascyltus (§ 94.9–10). Now, he announces to show Encolpius exactly what Encolpius wanted him to watch (sc. his lover dying), and immediately puts his words into action: He snatches a razor from Eumolpus' servant, repeatedly slashes his throat and falls to the ground (§ 94.11–12). Encolpius cries out and seeks to end his life with the same razor (§ 94.13). Since the *deversitor* later refers to more than one person lying on the ground (*iacentium volutationem,* § 95.1), it appears that Encolpius collapses after 'cutting' his throat. Thereafter, the narrator tells us that nothing was as it seemed: Neither Giton nor Encolpius was hurt, since the supposedly deadly weapon in their hands was in fact a blunted practice razor (§ 94.14). This is why Eumolpus and his servant had done nothing to stop the suicide attempt (§ 94.15).

According to Schmeling (1971: 336 f.), the key to understanding this passage is that Petronius parodies the widespread literary motif of the παρακλαυσίθυρον. Whereas – for instance in Roman love elegy – the distraught lover usually finds himself shut out of the house of his

beloved (*exclusus amator*), the situation is different for Encolpius: "Eumolpus had not locked Encolpius out but in, and taken the key with him. In one of the wildest turns of the plot the *amator* wishes he were *exclusus*" (Schmeling 1971: 337). Notably, Schmeling refers to *exclusi amatores* who threaten or actually commit suicide at the doorstep of their loved ones. These include the speaker of Theocritus' third Idyll (esp. 52–4, suicide threat) and Iphis in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (14.733–8, suicide by hanging).[618] Possibly, then, Encolpius' and Giton's double suicide attempt amounts to another twist on the παρακλαυσίθυρον motif.

It is another line of interpretation, however, that has received most scholarly attention: Heinze (1899: 496 f.) was the first to note that – just as Encolpius and Giton – the protagonists of the Greek 'idealising' novel regularly contemplate killing themselves because they believe to have lost their beloved partner. As in the *Satyrica,* their suicide attempt is often stopped at the last moment.[619] It is also striking that in Achilles Tatius' novel the apparent death of the heroine Leucippe is brought about by a sword that turns out to be a stage prop (Ach. Tat. 3.20.7) – a weapon remarkably similar to the practice razor used by Giton and Encolpius. To Heinze, who argues that Petronius parodies the 'idealising' novel throughout his work, the passage at hand is a case in point: He suggests that the episode mocks the trite *topos* of suicidal lovers in the novelistic tradition.[620]

Many scholars have followed Heinze's lead; more recent discussions in this vein include those by Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 94.8) and Setaioli (2011: 379 f.). Others remain sceptical and/or propose alternative readings. Courtney (2001: 147), for instance, speaks of "remarkable parallel[s]" with the 'idealising' novels but falls short of calling Petronius' episode a parody of the latter.[621] As far as Conte (1996: 77 f.) is concerned, parody is only one aspect of what this passage is about. In accordance with his overall reading of the *Satyrica,*[622] he claims that Giton's romantic gesture (i. e. his suicide attempt) triggers Encolpius' *mythomania*: Seeing his lover

618 For further references, cf. Schmeling (1971: 337 n. 19).

619 For suicide attempts in the 'idealising' novel, cf. e.g. Chariton 5.10.6–10 and Ach. Tat. 3.16.2–17.7; for further references, cf. Heinze (1899: 497 n. 2) and Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 94.8).

620 On Heinze's (1899) influential reading of the *Satyrica,* cf. section I.4.2.2. The *Satyrica* as a Parody.

621 Elsewhere, Courtney (2001: 24) unequivocally supports Heinze's hypothesis.

622 Cf. section I.5.2. The Unreliable Narrator and the Implied Author.

dying at his feet, Encolpius imagines himself to be another Nisus, and decides that he must follow Giton (another Euryalus) to the grave.[623] In a way, Conte's interpretation is compatible with Slater's (1990: 102) view that Encolpius engages in play-acting (cf. above). Other scholars have pointed to tragic suicides.[624] Adopting a different perspective, Valerie Hope (2009: 144) suggests that Petronius does not parody novelistic suicide attempts but rather "the ideal noble suicide bravely met in the face of real adversity," as exemplified by Marcus Junius Brutus or Seneca the Younger. Her reading should remind us of the fact that Petronius possibly did not know any 'idealising' novels.[625] What is more, Henderson (2010: 486) deems the differences between the *Satyrica* and the novelistic suicide attempts to be too profound to allow for effective parody:

> In the Greek novels, however, the beloved is never on hand; no hero or heroine fakes death in order to deceive or manipulate the beloved; and cutting one's *own* throat appears only here [sc. at § 94.12–13] and in an episode of Apuleius that evidently recalls this very passage.[626]

In his discussion, Henderson (2010: 485 f.) rightly points out that the evidence as to Petronius' parodic technique is inconclusive. Lovers' suicide attempts are a widespread literary motif – as well as a serious real-life act – that is far from exclusive to the 'idealising' novel.[627] In the following section, we shall see that the comic tradition is almost as full of suicidal lovers as the novelistic one.

Before moving on, it is worth placing § 94.8–15 in the context of Petronius' plot. Firstly, we may recall that Encolpius had already contemplated suicide somewhat earlier in the story: When Giton leaves Encolpius for Ascyltus at the end of the Second Rivalry over Giton (§§ 79.8–82), we learn that Encolpius was thunderstruck and thought about killing

623 Cf. esp. Verg. *Aen.* 9.444 f. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*) notes that Encolpius might have other mythological role models in mind, for instance Pyramus and Thisbe.

624 Cf. George (1966: 339) and Panayotakis (1995: 126 f. with n. 18).

625 Cf. section I.4.2.2. The *Satyrica* as a Parody.

626 The Apuleian passage that Henderson has in mind is *Met.* 9.38.7: In one of the many inset tales, a man first kills his enemy and then commits suicide with the same blade. Apuleius' formulation is *iugulum sibi multis ictibus contrucidat,* which Henderson finds strikingly similar to Petronius' *semel iterumque cervice percussa* (§ 94.12).

627 Henderson's argument is similar to Morgan's (2009), who, however, does not discuss § 94 in particular.

himself. According to the narrator, the only reason Encolpius did not end his own life was that this would have amounted to another triumph for Ascyltus.[628] We may keep in mind, then, that § 94.8–15 is not the first time a Petronian suicide attempt comes to nothing.[629]

Secondly, there is another passage in the *Satyrica* where Encolpius and Giton come close to dying together, albeit not through suicide: When the two find themselves in a sea storm, on a ship that is about to sink, Encolpius is afraid that the sea will separate their loving embrace (*ecce iam amplexus amantium iratum dividet mare,* § 114.9). Giton, being as smart as ever, fastens a belt around Encolpius and himself, thus making sure the two will remain together even in death (§ 114.10–11). Thereafter, Encolpius is no longer afraid of dying: *patior ego vinculum extremum, et veluti lecto funebri aptatus expecto mortem iam non molestam* ("I submitted to the final bond and as though laid out on a bier I awaited death – no longer an enemy," § 114.12).[630] Clearly, then, the notion of 'being without one's lover equals being dead' is a recurring motif in the *Satyrica.*

Lastly, it cannot be stressed enough that Encolpius and Giton appear to be playing yet another role in the passage at hand. This time around, it is the role of desperate lovers.[631] The fact that they are play-acting is most obvious in the case of Giton: He falls to the floor even though, as he must feel, the razor does not do him any harm (*cervice percussa ante pedes collabitur nostros,* § 94.12).[632] As far as Encolpius is concerned, his disingenuousness had already been hinted at by the way he expressed his anger towards Eumolpus (§ 94.6, cf. above).

Keeping these findings in mind, my suggestion is that Encolpius' and Giton's behaviour in this passage is just as staged as that of Encolpius and Ascyltus during their shouting match in the First Rivalry over Giton. (§ 9.6–10.3). In fact, I argue that there is another striking parallel between the two episodes: In both cases, Petronius' characters try to outdo one another by means of mirroring and exaggeration. Re-entering the room, Giton finds Encolpius in the act of hanging himself (§ 94.8). The boy's

628 § 80.7: *et attulissem mihi damnatus manus, si non inimici victoriae invidissem.*

629 We should also remember that Encolpius threatens to commit suicide at § 108.11, using the same fake razor Giton employed at § 94.12.

630 On the theatrical aspects of this passage, cf. Slater (1990: 112) and esp. Panayotakis (1995: 156).

631 Panayotakis (1995: 127) briefly mentions a similar idea: "adopting the role of the faithful concubine, he [sc. Giton] voluntarily cuts his throat […] in order to show his devotion to his companion in life and death."

632 Cf. e. g. Jones (1987: 813 n. 16).

first reaction is to get angry at Encolpius, to shout out and to throw him on the bed (§ 94.9). Thereafter, Giton begins to beat Encolpius at his own game, as it were. He tells Encolpius that his own devotion (and desperation) is greater than his in two regards: Firstly, the boy claims that he thought of suicide much earlier than Encolpius: *prior coepi* (§ 94.10).[633] Secondly, while Encolpius has only thought of one way of killing himself (hanging), Giton has thought of two: stabbing himself with a sword (*gladium quaesivi,* § 94.10) and jumping off a cliff (*petiturus praecipitia fui,* § 94.11).[634]

Words not being enough, Giton now *acts* faster and more resolutely than Encolpius. The concepts of mirroring and role reversal are clearly expressed in the boy's words: *specta invicem quod me spectare voluisti* (§ 94.11). He snatches a razor and actually slashes his throat with it (§ 94.12). Encolpius, having met his match in the game they are playing, has no way of outdoing the boy. His only remaining option is to reach a draw, as it were: He mirrors the boy's behaviour, slashing his own throat just as Giton had done: *secutusque labentem eodem ferramento ad mortem viam quaero* (§ 94.13).

Only at this point – both actors having played their part to the fullest – does the narrator make explicit it was all something of a farcical performance (§ 94.15–95.1), thereby rendering a theatrical reading of the passage more plausible than ever.

V.2.2 Suicidal Lovers in the Comic Tradition

V.2.2.1 Deadly Desperation

According to the narrator, the 'death scene' performed by Encolpius and Giton is one that you would expect to encounter in a mime (*mimicam mortem,* § 94.15); it is a 'drama among lovers' (*fabula inter amantes,* § 95.1). Through these labels, the narrator strongly suggests that the entire passage should be understood in a theatrical context. This applies, for instance, to the (inversion of the) *exclusus amator* motif that has been

633 In fact, we know that Encolpius was first, since he contemplated suicide as soon as Giton had left him (§ 80.7, cf. above). However, Giton does not give Encolpius any time to make this point.

634 Cf. Courtney (2001: 146): "So between them the two [sc. Encolpius and Giton] have run through three standard forms of suicide in the ancient world, ξίφος, ἀγχόνη, κρημνός." For numerous references, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*).

observed by Schmeling (1971). As Panayotakis has pointed out, this is not least because the παρακλαυσίθυρον occurs in several *fabulae palliatae,* and there is even fragmentary evidence for its existence in the mime.[635] In this section, I will focus on another theatrical aspect of the Third Rivalry over Giton: I will argue that Encolpius' and Giton's behaviour is reminiscent of that of desperate lovers on the ancient comic stage, the most striking example being Argyrippus and Philaenium in Plautus' *Asinaria.*

It has been noted that, since lovers' suicide attempts occur in many literary genres (as well as in real life), it is virtually impossible to pinpoint the inspiration and/or parodic target of Petronius' episode. While this point remains valid, I intend to show that the 'suicidal contest' between Encolpius and Giton has significant forerunners in comedy. We should note from the very outset, though, that although the text of the *Satyrica* points us directly to the mime (*mimicam mortem*), this genre does not help us much in making sense of Petronius' passage: The scarce evidence of the mime-genre does not contain references to suicides, not to speak of a (fake) double suicide performed directly before the eyes of the audience. This is why, as it stands, we can assert nothing more than that Encolpius "visualizes the scene clearly as *mimicam mortem* (95.15), a farcical incident containing the motifs which were employed especially by the popular mimic stage" (Panayotakis 1995: 128). However, if we remember that the mime shares various motifs with the rest of the comic tradition, we will not fail to encounter significant parallels.

We know that Diphilus wrote a comedy entitled Συναποθνήσκοντες ("those dying together"), and that this play was the inspiration for Plautus' *Commorientes.* Unfortunately, Diphilus' play has been lost altogether, and of the *Commorientes* no more than one fragment survives. Nevertheless, these may be the kind of plays that Petronius' audience thought of as a *fabula inter amantes* (§ 95.1).[636] It is also worth mentioning that the motif of apparent death occurs in an extant mime fragment, one that we have already noted for the 'jealous spouse' it features.[637]

635 Cf. esp. Plaut. *Curc.* 1–164 and Plaut. *Pers.* 564–72, two passages that Schmeling (1971: 336) does not fail to mention. Sandy (1974: 342) and Panayotakis (1995: 126) offer some further discussion.

636 Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 95.1) and Henderson (2010: 486 n. 9) mention these two plays in their discussions.

637 Cf. lines 34–36 in Rusten & Cunningham (eds., trans. 2003: 394) and see note 243. The parallel has been noted by Courtney (2001: 147).

Yet, the evidence of suicidal lovers in New Comedy and in the *fabula palliata* does not end here.[638] In Menander's *Perikeiromene* (504, 977), the soldier Polemon twice speaks of dying/committing suicide because his beloved Glycera has left him.[639] Similar references to suicidal lovers occur in Menander's *Misoumenos* (710 f.) and, as far as we can tell from Donatus, in Menander's *Adelphoi*.[640] Plautine suicidal lovers include Alcesimarchus in the *Cistellaria* (639 f.), Charinus in the *Mercator* (471–3) and Calidorus in the *Pseudolus* (88–90; 348 f.).[641]

On the comic stage, it is a common notion that love is worth dying for. In Plautus' *Casina*, for instance, this is what the slave Chalinus tells his rival Olympio: *tun illam ducas? hercle me suspendio | quam tu eius potior fias satiust mortuom* ("You should marry her [sc. Casina]? I would rather die by hanging than let you get hold of her," Plaut. *Cas.* 111 f.). Similar sentiments are expressed in Plautus' *Mercator* (857–63) and *Miles gloriosus* (1239–41) as well as in Terence's *Phormio* (483). Notably, once he has actually lost Casina to his rival in the drawing of the lots, Chalinus is much more pragmatic about such life-and-death matters:

> *si nunc me suspendam, meam operam luserim*
> *et praeter operam restim sumpti fecerim*
> *et meis inimicis voluptatem creaverim.*
> *quid opus est, qui sic mortuos?*
> (Plaut. *Cas.* 424–7)

> If I were to hang myself now, I would have wasted my effort, and besides the effort I would have spent money on a rope, and I would have made my enemies happy. What is the point? I am dead as it is.

638 Dutsch (2012) offers an overview of suicide threats in the ancient comic tradition.

639 Wrongly believing that Glycera was unfaithful to him, Polemon cut off Glycera's hair, thus causing her to flee from him.

640 In Terence's *Adelphoe,* the dialogue between the two brothers Aeschinus and Ctesipho implies that Ctesipho was about to go into exile because he could not be together with the girl he desired (275). In his fourth-century commentary, Donatus (*ad* Ter. *Ad.* 275) notes: *Menander mori illum voluisse, Terentius profugere* ("Menander (writes that) he [sc. Ctesipho] wanted to die, Terence (writes that) he wanted to run away"); my translation.

641 Plaut. *Pseud.* 348 f. is reminiscent of a fragment of Menander's *Misoumenos*; cf. fragment 4 in Arnott (ed., trans. 1979–2000 vol. 2: 356).

Strikingly, Chalinus' line of reasoning (*meis inimicis voluptatem creaverim*) is identical to Encolpius' at § 80.7, where he refrains from committing suicide because he begrudges Ascyltus yet another victory: *attulissem mihi damnatus manus, si non inimici victoriae invidissem.*

We should also mention that in Terence's *Eunuchus* (57–70) the slave Parmeno mocks the weakness and indecision of lovers (as exemplified by his master Phaedria).[642] One of the follies Parmeno criticises is that desperate lovers contemplate killing themselves in order to prove they are 'true men'.[643] This motif is also the object of ridicule in Plautus' *Cistellaria*: The young man Alcesimarchus is angry at himself because he left his beloved *meretrix* Gymnasium alone for a couple of days; when Alcesimarchus asks his slave for advice on how to make it up to her, the latter replies: *supplicium illi des, suspendas te, ne tibi suscenseat* ("Give her satisfaction, hang yourself, so that she will not be angry with you," Plaut. *Cist.* 250). Notably, Stockert (ed. 2012 *ad loc.*) thinks the slave's ironic suggestion to be genuinely Plautine, i.e. to be an element of farcical humour that does not go back to the Greek original.[644]

The above-mentioned passages prove that suicide threats of star-crossed lovers constitute a *topos* of the ancient comic tradition – even a *topos* ripe for mockery. What is more, the passages plainly show that – when interpreting suicide attempts in Petronius – we should not overestimate the importance of the 'idealising' novel. For, if Terence and Plautus were able to parody this motif without the knowledge of 'idealising' novels, why should Petronius not have been able to do the same?

V.2.2.2 A Suicidal Contest in Plautus' *Asinaria*

The parallels between suicide threats in Petronius and in comedy go even further than we have seen so far. As noted above, it is commonly assumed that Petronius' treatment of the suicide motif parodies the 'idealising' novel. Among other things, critics of this hypothesis object that – unlike

642 The scene in question has been discussed above, cf. section IV.2.4. Parallels in Other Comedies.

643 Parmeno 'quotes' Phaedria's thoughts about his beloved Thais: *"egon illam, quae illum, quae me, quae non …! sine modo, | mori me malim: sentient qui vir siem"* ("I – her? when she – him? when she – me? when she will not –? Just let it be, I would prefer to die, she shall realise what sort of man I am," Ter. *Eun.* 65 f.).

644 On farcical elements in Plautus and their possible connection to the mime and the *fabula Atellana,* cf. section I.3.2. Farcical Elements in 'Popular' and 'Literary' Comedy.

Encolpius and Giton – novelistic lovers are never *together* when contemplating or attempting suicide. For, the reason why novelistic lovers think about killing themselves is that they have been separated from their beloved. It is crucial to point out, however, that the situation is different for ancient comedy: In Plautus, we encounter two lovers who play with the idea of a *double suicide* during their dialogue.

In the second half of Plautus' *Asinaria,* the young man Argyrippus believes he can no longer be together with his beloved Philaenium because he does not have the means to buy her off her mother.[645] The slaves Libanus (Li.) and Leonida (Leo.) overhear Argyrippus and Philaenium as they (believe they) see each other for the last time. Both lovers shed tears (Plaut. *Asin.* 587); Philaenium (Ph.) holds on to Argyrippus' (Arg.) cloak as he gets ready to depart:

Arg.:	*qur me retentas?*	591
Ph.:	*quia tui amans abeuntis egeo.*	
Arg.:	*vale, ⟨vale⟩.*	
Ph.:	*aliquanto amplius valerem, si hic maneres.*	
Arg.:	*salve.*	
Ph.:	*salvere me iubes, quoi tu abiens offers morbum?*	
Arg.:	*mater supremam mihi tua dixit, domum ire iussit.*	
Ph.:	*acerbum funus filiae faciet, si te carendum est.*	595
Li.:	*homo hercle hinc exclusust foras.*	
Leo.:	*ita res est.*	
Arg.:	*mitte quaeso.*	
Ph.:	*quo nunc abis? quin tu hic manes?*	
Arg.:	*nox, si voles, manebo.*	
	[...]	
Leo.:	*ne iste hercle ab ista non pedem discedat, si licessit,*	603
	qui nunc festinat atque ab hac minatur sese abire.	
Li:	*sermoni iam finem face tuo, huius sermonem accipiam.*	605
Arg.:	*vale.*	
Ph.:	*quo properas?*	
Arg.:	*bene vale: apud Orcum te videbo.*	
	nam equidem me iam quantum potest a vita abiudicabo.	
Ph.:	*qur tu, opsecro, inmerito meo me morti dedere optas?*	

645 Cf. my plot summary of the *Asinaria* in section V.1.2.3. Plautus' *Asinaria*: An Unexpected Rival.

Arg.: *egon te? quam si intellegam deficere vita, iam ipse*
vitam meam tibi largiar et de mea ad tuam addam. 610
Ph.: *qur ergo minitaris tibi te vitam esse amissurum?*
nam quid me facturum putas, si istuc quod dicis facis?
[mihi] certum est ecficere in me omnia eadem quae tu in te faxis.
Arg.: *oh melle dulci dulcior tu es.*
Ph.: *certe enim tu vita es mi.*
complectere. 615
Arg.: *facio lubens.*
Ph.: *utinam sic ecferamur.*
Leo.: *o Libane, uti miser est homo qui amat!*
Li.: *immo hercle vero*
qui pendet multo est miserior.
Leo.: *scio qui periculum feci.*
(Plaut. *Asin.* 591–617)[646]

Arg.: Why are you holding me back? 591
Ph.: Because I pine away for you when you go away, I love you so.
Arg.: Farewell, farewell.
Ph.: I would fare somewhat better if you were to stay here.
Arg.: Be well.
Ph.: You are telling me to be well? By going away you make me ill.
Arg.: Your mother said this would be my last hour, she told me to go home.
Ph.: She will celebrate a dire funeral for her daughter if I have to be without you. 595
Li.: That chap has been shut out from here.
Leo.: Indeed.
Arg.: Let me go please.
Ph.: Where are you off to now? Why do you not stay here?
Arg.: I will stay at night if you want me to.
[...]
Leo.: He would not go one foot away from her if he were allowed to stay, but now he is in a hurry and threatening to leave her.

646 Panayotakis (1995: 127 n. 17) briefly mentions this scene in his discussion.

Li.: Put an end to your talk now, I will listen to his. 605
Arg.: Farewell.
Ph.: Where are you rushing?
Arg.: Fare very well: I will see you in the Underworld: I will now deprive myself of life as quickly as possible.
Ph.: Why, I entreat you, do you wish to hand me over to death even though I do not deserve it?
Arg.: Me doing such a thing? If I were to see you running out of life, I would immediately donate my life to you and add from mine to yours. 610
Ph.: Then why are you threatening me with throwing away your life? What do you think I will do if you do what you say? I have set my mind on doing to me everything you do to yourself.
Arg.: Oh, you are sweeter than sweet honey.
Ph.: Certainly you are sweeter than my life to me. Embrace me. 615
Arg.: I do so with pleasure.
Ph.: I wish we could be carried to the grave like this.
Leo.: O Libanus, how miserable a chap is when he is in love.
Li.: No, a chap is much more miserable when he is hanging.
Leo.: I know it, I have tried it.

In a way, this Plautine scene is a forerunner of Encolpius' and Giton's (fake) double suicide (§ 94.8–15) as well as of their attempt to die together in a sea storm (§ 114.8–12). Just like in the *Satyrica,* the dialogue revolves around the idea that being without one's lover equals being dead, or even that being without one's lover leads directly to suicide.

Philaenium holds on to Argyrippus' cloak because she cannot bear to see him leave (591). She starts out by comparing his departure to an illness that greatly affects her (*morbum,* 593). Then, her words quickly become more drastic: She claims that her mother – being responsible for the separation – will soon have to attend her own daughter's funeral (*acerbum funus filiae faciet,* 595), the implication being that the loss of her lover will cause Philaenium's death. While she leaves open how exactly her death will come about, Argyrippus openly announces that he himself will be the one ending his life: *me iam quantum potest a vita abiudicabo* (607). Note that, even at this point, Argyrippus appears to conceive of the conversation as a kind of contest – like the one we have seen in the *Satyrica*: a contest in which star-crossed lovers try to outdo each

other through (the announcement of) ever more desperate measures. In this competition, Argyrippus tries to be always one step ahead of Philaenium. What is more, we should note that Argyrippus' suicidal determination equals Encolpius' at § 94.8: *inclusus ego suspendio vitam finire constitui.*

Let us remember that, when Giton finds Encolpius in the act of inserting his neck in a noose, the boy's reaction is to pass from grief to rage (§ 94.9). He scolds Encolpius for even considering leaving his lover alone in this world: *'erras' inquit 'Encolpi, si putas contingere posse ut ante moriaris'* (§ 94.10). Similarly, Philaenium's reaction to Argyrippus' suicide threat is to reproach him: *qur tu, opsecro, inmerito meo me morti dedere optas?* (608). Her point is that, since she cannot live without him, *his* suicide would also entail *her* death. She asserts that the lives of Philaenium and Argyrippus are interlinked, just as Giton's and Encolpius' (supposedly) are.

Argyrippus throws Philaenium's suggestion right back at her: If he were to learn of her death, he would immediately take his own life as well (609 f.). In trying to prove that he is no less faithful (and desperate) than Philaenium, he takes up her own proposition (mirroring) and – by spelling out what had been implicit in her words – exaggerates it. These are the same techniques that Giton uses in the suicidal contest with Encolpius.

However, Philaenium is no less talented at this 'game': She twists Argyrippus' words around, suggesting that his announcement amounts to a threat to her own life (611 f.). She also uses the technique of mirroring, neatly expressing the idea at line 613: *certum est ecficere in me omnia eadem quae tu in te faxis.* Her announcement comes very close to what Giton says right before snatching the razor and slashing his throat: *specta invicem quod me spectare voluisti* (§ 94.11).

Unlike Giton and Encolpius, Argyrippus and Philaenium restrict themselves to words. Plautus' characters do not actually (pretend to) commit suicide on stage. Rather, their dialogue takes a different turn, one that – remarkably enough – may also remind us of the *Satyrica*: Argyrippus takes as a compliment Philaenium's readiness to die for/with him; he tells her that she is sweeter than honey (614). Philaenium responds in the same vein (614). Finally, the two embrace each other, wishing they could be carried to the grave like this: *utinam sic ecferamur* (615). This, of course, is the same desire we encounter at § 114.8–12 in the *Satyrica.* When Encolpius and Giton think they are about to die in a sea storm, the boy fastens a belt around the two, thereby causing Encolpius to lose

his fear of dying: *patior ego vinculum extremum, et … expecto mortem non iam molestam* (§ 114. 12).

Lastly, what is the function of the slaves Libanus and Leonida in Plautus' scene? I argue that they lend a farcical air to the melodramatic dialogue between Argyrippus and Philaenium, which is what Giton's and Encolpius' fake suicide does to Petronius' (otherwise) melodramatic passage. When Argyrippus and Philaenium embrace, believing to have found bliss in the face of death, the two slaves destroy this harmonious picture: At first, Leonida comments on the lovers' embrace, noting that a man in love is a miserable creature (616). Libanus jokingly responds that there is much greater misery in hanging (i.e. in actually dying, 616 f.). Turning from jokes to the brutality of ancient slavery, Leonida signals his agreement: He himself once came close to being hanged – a common punishment for people of his social class.[647] The slave's plight – cruelly enough – reminds Plautus' audience of how petty the 'life-and-death troubles' of bourgeois lovers are.[648] This kind of 'comic relief' is similar to what we have seen in Terence's *Eunuchus* (65 f.) and Plautus' *Cistellaria* (250; cf. above): It draws attention to the fact that killing oneself does not bring lovers any closer to each other. The idea of a lover's suicide is a folly of the privileged.

Petronius' passage starts out from the same notion – that it is not worth living if one cannot be with one's beloved – but creates a farce in a different mode. Petronius has Giton and Encolpius take the lovers' reasoning to its logical end: a double suicide. Actually going through with this, of course, is absurd because the two lovers do not have anything to gain from dying. Rather, the 'act of love' brings about their eternal separation. Petronius briefly conjures up this image before the eyes of his audience – only to tell us after the fact that it was all but a charade. After all, when Encolpius and Giton talk about committing suicide out of love, they are just as serious about it as Chalinus in Plautus' *Casina* (424–7, cf. above). Encolpius and Giton are not truly desperate lovers, but it is one of the many roles they play in the course of the *Satyrica.*

647 For some further discussion, cf. Hurka (ed. 2010 *ad loc.*).

648 This is also how Dutsch (2012: 192) understands this passage.

V.3 A Spectacular Brawl (§ 95.1–96.7)

V.3.1 Eumolpus against the Rest

After Encolpius' and Giton's theatrical suicide attempt, new characters complicate the action. Upon entering the room, an inmate of the house sees the two lying on the floor (§ 95.1). At first, he suspects the group of being drunk or fugitive slaves (§ 95.2). Then, believing that they were planning on leaving the house without paying, he announces that they will not go unpunished (§ 95.3).

The man's accusations set in motion a series of events that, in several regards, constitute a reversal of what happened before. While a little earlier it had been Encolpius' role to be furious (*puta igitur me furiosum esse,* § 94.6), it is now Eumolpus' turn to become enraged: He asks the man whether his tirade was meant to be a threat, and hits him in the face (§ 95.4). The man retaliates by throwing a jug at Eumolpus' face, thereby splitting his forehead, and then leaves the room (§ 95.5). We may note that this is not the first time one of Petronius' characters is hit by such an object. During the orgy at Quartilla's place, a cup falls down from a considerable height and hits a slave woman on the head (§ 22.4). In the course of the *cena Trimalchionis,* Fortunata scolds her husband Trimalchio for lavishly kissing a slave boy (§ 74.8–9). Trimalchio becomes angry and throws a cup in her face (§ 74.10).

Eumolpus grabs a wooden candlestick and follows the man out of the room. With the help of this 'weapon', the old man avenges his *supercilium* (§ 95.6), which – as we may remember from § 91.7 – refers not only to his eyebrow but also to his pride. Ruden (1993: 169–71) rightly observes that this passage is characterised by a sustained contrast between its subject matter and the way it is represented. This applies, for instance, to how Eumolpus delivers the first punch to the other man's head: *os hominis palma excussissima pulsat* (§ 95.4). The (otherwise unattested) superlative *excussissima* is derived from *excutere,* a verb which is usually used for 'throwing' or 'brandishing' a javelin, thereby giving a martial and/or epic ring to the lowly brawling.[649] The same is true for the arrival of the other drunk guests: The phrase *fit concursus* appears to come right out of an epic poem or a work of historiography.[650]

649 Cf. Ruden (1993: 169) and Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*) for further references.

650 Ruden (1993: 170) points to Verg. *Aen.* 1.725: *fit strepitus.* Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*) refer to Caes. *B Gall.* 1.76.2: *fit celeriter concursus.*

The fact that Eumolpus has left the room gives Encolpius an advantage over the old man, whom he (as narrator) now plainly refers to as his rival (*aemulo,* § 95.7). Encolpius' way of taking revenge is to lock Eumolpus out, just as the latter had locked him in earlier. This reversal has been remarked upon, for instance, by Schmeling (1971: 337). We may note, then, that the rivalry between Encolpius and Eumolpus is characterised by the same kind of tit-for-tat moves we have observed between Encolpius and Ascyltus.[651] The idea of 'mirroring' is made explicit in the way the narrator describes Encolpius' revenge: *reddita scordalo vice* (§ 95.7).

We are now offered a closer look at the other drunk guests, who set out to give Eumolpus a thrashing: There are not only cooks and lodgers, equipped with a spit and a fork, but also – at the climax of the narrator's description – a blear-eyed old woman with an enormous dog (§ 95.8).[652] Ruden suggests that each of these brawlers corresponds to a specific type of gladiator known from ancient amphitheatres.[653] Of course, the 'weapons' these characters wield clash with the text's epic tone just as much as Eumolpus' candlestick does.[654]

Encolpius and Giton watch the brawl through a hole in the door; Encolpius cheers as Eumolpus gets beaten up (*favebamque ego vapulanti,* § 96.1). It has rightly been observed that the verb *favere* is closely associated with the Roman games: Encolpius behaves as if he was watching a public spectacle.[655] It almost goes without saying that he feels *Schadenfreude* – just as he had done when Eumolpus told him about the misfortunes of his (old) rival Ascyltus (§ 92.12). Yet, Giton does not share Encolpius' enthusiasm. In accordance with his earlier sympathy for Eumolpus (§ 93.4), the boy suggests that he and Encolpius open the door and come to the old man's assistance (§ 96.2). Encolpius' reaction to this proposal comes as a surprise: While he found Giton's compassion most charming a little earlier (§ 93.4), he now becomes angry and smashes the

651 Cf. section III.1.3. Sexual Rivalry between Two Tarquinii.

652 Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*) rightly remarks that the passage has a climactic structure.

653 Ruden (1993: 74): "the man with the sword-like spit is the *murmillo* or Samnite, the man with the trident-like fork the *retiarius*; and the old woman with her dog turns the victim into the *bestiarius.*"

654 For further discussion, cf. Ruden (1993: 73, 169–71).

655 The idea that Encolpius behaves like a *fautor* at the public games was first proposed by Rowell (1957: 225); cf. also Panayotakis (1995: 129 f.) and Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad loc.*).

boy on the head with his fist (§ 96.3).[656] Clark (2019: 86) rightly notes that Encolpius here treats Giton like a slave. Having made the boy cry and thus having got rid of the nuisance he posed, Encolpius continues watching the spectacle outside the room even more intently (§ 96.4).

Thereafter, yet another new character brings the brawl to a sudden end: Bargates, the manager of the house, is carried in. He complains about drunkards and fugitive slaves – which is what the inmate of the house had done at § 95.2 – and eventually recognises Eumolpus (§ 96.4–5). Since the old poet usually does not delight but rather infuriate his audience, it comes as a surprise that Bargates commends Eumolpus for his eloquence: *'o poetarum' inquit 'disertissime'* (§ 96.6). Unfortunately, much of the remaining episode has been lost in *lacunae.* It seems likely that Bargates causes the other guests to leave Eumolpus alone. Plausibly, Bargates' words at § 96.7 reflect his motive for coming to the old man's aid: He wants Eumolpus to abuse his partner (*contubernalis*) in verse.[657]

V.3.2 Spectacular Brawls in Comedy

When it comes to identifying theatrical elements in § 95.1–96.7, Panayotakis (1995: 128–30) has already gone a long way. Among other things, he has noted that the authoritarian *deversitor* at § 95.2–3 may remind us of Plautine *senes* addressing their slaves. He and others[658] have observed that Eumolpus' fight against the drunk guests should be conceived of as a comic/mimic battle, not least because the old man suffers no more than a slight wound to his eyebrow (cf. § 98.7). It has also been noted that this type of slapstick violence has forerunners, for instance, in Aristophanes' *Wasps* (254 f.) and *Knights* (411–4) as well as in Plautus' *Amphitruo* (esp. 370–462).[659] Lastly, Panayotakis mentions that Petronius' 'fighters' – cooks, lodgers and an old woman with a dog – seem to come right out of Choricius' list of mime characters.[660] In my own discussion of slapstick violence in § 95.1–96.7, I will repeat neither the points made

656 Encolpius' sudden change of mood toward Giton has been commented upon by Codoñer (1995: 711).

657 For further discussion, cf. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*).

658 Cf. my summary of Ruden's (1993) discussion above.

659 For further references, cf. Panayotakis (1995: 129 n. 21).

660 Cf. Chor. *Apol. Mimorum* 110 as well as Panayotakis (1995: 129 n. 22 and 23).

by Panayotakis nor the ones already touched upon in earlier sections.[661] Rather, I will focus on three aspects that so far have received little or no scholarly attention.

V.3.2.1 Jugs, Jars and Pots

Firstly, it is worth commenting upon the earthenware jug the *deversitor* throws at Eumolpus: *urceolum fictilem in Eumolpi caput iaculatus est solvitque clamantis frontem* (§ 95.5). While Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad loc.*) has rightly noted that jugs or jars are regularly used as weapons in ancient literature – cf. e.g. Prop. 2.6.17 f. and Ov. *Met.* 5.82–4 – the role of such objects in comedy has not been fully taken into account.[662] For, as Richlin (2017: 97) has noted, having a jar broken over one's head is "perhaps the equivalent of the clown's cream pie in the face" in modern slapstick performances. In the *fabula palliata* this form of violence is typically suffered by parasites, whose job description apparently included physical abuse:[663] In Plautus' *Curculio,* the eponymous parasite poses as the freedmen of a soldier; his plan is to trick the banker Lyco out of the soldier's money. When Lyco sees Curculio wearing an eye patch – which is part of his disguise – the banker contemptuously suggests that Curculio's eye might have been knocked out by a broken pot of ashes (*aula quassa cum cinere ecfossus,* 396). In an aside, the parasite comments that there is some truth to Lyco's assumption: *superstitiosus hicquidem est, vera praedicat;* | *nam illaec catapultae ad me crebro commeant* ("He is a prophet, he is telling the truth: Such missiles often wind their way toward me," Plaut. *Curc.* 397 f.). A statement made by the parasite Ergasilus in Plautus' *Captivi* is even more striking. In his opening monologue, in which he elaborates on the profession of parasites, he mentions some of the indignities people like him have to endure: *et hic quidem hercle, nisi qui colaphos perpeti* | *potes parasitus frangique aulas in caput,* | *vel ire extra portam Trigeminam ad saccum licet* ("And here at any rate, unless as a parasite you

661 Cf. esp. section III.3.2.3. Physical Abuse.

662 Most scholarly comments are highly unspecific; cf. e.g. Preston (1915: 262): "The breaking of dishes is more than once employed for comic effect [sc. in the *Satyrica*]; cf. 22.3, 64.10, 70.5."

663 In Plautus' *Captivi* (472) Ergasilus refers to parasites such as himself as *plagipatidae* ("blow-sufferers"), a word that is otherwise associated with slaves; cf. Richlin (2017: 97) for further discussion. Some connections between comic parasites and Petronius' characters have been noted in section III.2.2.2. Sex and Food.

can bear blows, and pots being broken on your head, you can just as well go outside the Three-Arch Gate to carry a porter's bag," Plaut. *Capt.* 88–90). The Porta Trigemina led to Ostia; Ergasilus' point is that parasites can choose between suffering physical abuse on the one hand and living the life of a poor labourer or beggar on the other.[664]

What these passages make clear is that having an earthenware vessel broken over one's head amounts to a commonplace of ancient comic (slapstick) violence. Ergasilus mentions it in the same breath as slaps or blows (*colaphos*). This is the context in which we should interpret the jug thrown at Eumolpus (§ 95.5) as well as the ones hitting people at § 22.4 and § 74.10.

V.3.2.2 Armies, Battles and Weapons

The second aspect I wish to highlight concerns the brawl between Eumolpus on the one hand, and *coctores, insularii* and the *anus lippa* on the other (§ 95.8–9). As noted above, scholars such as Ruden (1993) and Panayotakis (1995) have already discussed the humorous/comic characteristics of this passage. However, so far one important point of comparison has not been taken into consideration. What I am referring to is the presence of 'armies' and 'battles' in the comic tradition.

In Aristophanes' *Birds,* Euelpides and Peisetaerus initially meet with resistance when proposing to establish a bird *polis.* When the chorus of birds attacks them, the two Athenians defend themselves with the kitchen utensils they have at hand: kettles (χύτραι), a skewer (ὀβελίσκον), a saucer (ὀξύβαφον), and a bowl (τρύβλιον).[665] Of course, these items belong to the same class of 'weapons' as the candlestick (*candelabrum*), the spit (*veru*) and the fork (*furca*) in Petronius. In Menander's *Perikeiromene,* the soldier Polemon 'besieges' a house in order to recover the girl Glycera. Although, unfortunately, the scene only survives in fragments, it appears that Polemon's 'army' consists of a few slaves and a flute-girl;[666] it is clear that some of the combatants are as drunk as the *ebrio-*

664 For a detailed discussion, cf. Richlin (2017: 98 f.).

665 Cf. Aristoph. *Av.* 343–450, esp. 356–61.

666 Cf. Men. *Pk.* 354–406 and esp. 467–85. For a detailed discussion and for possible reconstructions of the plot, cf. Gomme & Sandbach (ed. 1973 *ad loc.*), Arnott (ed., trans. 1979–2000 *ad loc.*) and Furley (ed. 2015 *ad loc*).

rum frequentia (§ 95.7) in the *Satyrica*.[667] Incidentally, we may note that Ascyltus' later attempt to recover Giton with the help of a crier (§ 97.1–98.1) is reminiscent of how Polemon tries to 'take back by force' the person he desires.

While much of the 'siege' in Menander's *Perikeiromene* has been lost, a comparable scene survives in Terence's *Eunuchus*.[668] Towards the end of the play, the soldier Thraso tries to take back by force the girl Pamphila, whom Thraso believes to be his property. Together with his parasite Gnatho (Gn.), the slave Sanga (Sa.) and a few more followers, Thraso (Thr.) sets out to attack the house of Thais, who has taken Pamphila in.

Thr.: *hacin ego ut contumeliam tam insignem in me accipiam, Gnatho?*
mori me satiust. Simalio, Donax, Syrisce, sequimini.
primum aedis expugnabo.
Gn.: *recte.*
Thr. *virginem eripiam.*
Gn.: *probe.*
Thr.: *male mulcabo ipsam.*
Gn.: *pulchre.*
Thr.: *in medium huc agmen cum vecti, Donax;*
tu, Simalio, in sinistrum cornum; tu, Syrisce, in dexterum. 775
cedo alios: ubi centuriost Sanga manipulus furum?
Sa: *eccum adest.*
Thr.: *quid ignave? peniculon pugnare, qui istum huc portes, cogitas?*
Sa.: *egon? imperatoris virtutem noveram et vim militum;*
sine sanguine hoc non posse fieri: qui abstergerem volnera?
Thr.: *ubi alii?*
Gn: *qui malum "alii"? solu' Sannio servat domi.* 780
Thr.: *tu hosce instrue; ego hic ero post principia: inde omnibus signum dabo.*
(Ter. Eun. 771–81)

667 Cf. esp. Men. *Pk.* 469–73.

668 For a plot summary of this play, cf. section III.1.1. Sexual Violence in Petronius and in the Comic Tradition.

Thr.: The very idea that I should put up with such a palpable insult, Gnatho! I would rather die. Simalio, Donax, Syriscus, follow me. First I will storm the house.
Gn.: Right!
Thr: I will carry off the girl.
Gn.: Excellent!
Thr: I will give the mistress a good thrashing.
Gn.: Brilliant!
Thr.: Donax, in the centre of the line with your crowbar. You, Simalio, on the left wing. You, Syriscus, on the right. Bring on the others. Where is the centurion Sanga and his company of thieves?
Sa.: Present.
Thr.: What, you useless creature? Are you proposing to fight with a sponge? I see you are carrying one with you.
Sa.: Me? I knew the valour of the general and the violence of the soldiers. This operation cannot take place without blood. How else was I to wipe the wounds?
Thr.: Where are the others?
Gn.: What others, damn it? There is only Sannio and he is on duty at home.
Thr.: You draw up these. I will be here behind the front line. I will give the signal to everyone from there.

Admittedly, there is no one-to-one correspondence between the siege in the *Eunuchus* and the brawl in the *Satyrica.* The focus of Terence's scene is on Thraso's character: He likes to play the role of the military commander as long as this means to bully people about (771–6). When this role requires him to fight, however, he prefers to remain in the rear (781).[669] In fact, as soon as he is approached by Thais, Thraso tells Gnatho to call off the attack (814).

Still, there are significant parallels between Terence's scene and Petronius' episode. As in the *Satyrica,* the fighters – other than the coward Thraso – are not professional soldiers but ill-prepared slaves and/or cooks.[670] Sanga, ostensibly a cook (cf. 816), apparently did not have time to get hold of any 'weapon' other than a sponge (777). The only other

669 For a detailed discussion of this scene, cf. Barsby (ed. 1999 *ad loc.*).

670 *manipulus furum* (776) likely refers to a group of cooks, who were notorious for thieving in ancient comedy; cf. Barsby (ed. 1999 *ad loc.*) for references.

weapon we learn of is a crowbar (*vecti,* 774). Just like Petronius' *coctores insulariique* – and just like Euelpides and Peisetaerus in Aristophanes' *Birds* – Terence's characters make use of whatever comes to hand: the everyday items that surround them.

Sanga makes up for his blunder through his resourcefulness and his willingness to flatter Thraso (779 f.). When the attack is called off, Sanga admits that his mind had been on his pans for some time (816). Clearly, this character could never seriously hurt anyone. He is like the 'fighters' in the *Satyrica,* who give Eumolpus a 'thrashing' (*mulcant,* § 95.8; *vapulanti,* § 96.1) but let him get away with no more than a slight wound to his eyebrow nevertheless. In the *Eunuchus,* of course, the 'army' is dismissed without having inflicted any violence whatsoever (814).

Furthermore, just as Petronius' narrator gives an epic ring to the lowly brawling at § 95.8–9, Thraso speaks to/about his followers in a grandiloquent style. His military *termini techniqui* – e.g. *agmen* (774), *centurio* (776) and *manipulus* (776) – fulfil the same function as the martial vocabulary and the allusions to epic/historiography in the *Satyrica.* Both texts create a contrast between their subject matter (lowly brawling) and their means of representation (high-flown language).

V.3.2.3 *Schadenfreude* and Ill-Timed Compassion

Schadenfreude does not only play a role in the First Rivalry over Giton[671] but also in the episode at hand: Encolpius rejoices when he hears about Ascyltus' misfortunes in the bathhouse (§ 92.12), and he is full of glee when he witnesses Eumolpus taking a beating (§ 96.1, 96.4). What I wish to focus on here is the interesting moment when Giton comes in the way of Encolpius' *Schadenfreude*: While he had first praised Giton's empathy for Eumolpus (§ 93.4), Encolpius smashes the boy on the head when he expresses this empathy a second time (§ 96.3). Strikingly, Encolpius' sudden change of mood has a close parallel in the *fabula palliata.*

Plautus' *Persa* ends with the spectacular punishment of Toxilus' archenemy: the pimp Dordalus.[672] Although these two characters are not sexual rivals in the narrow sense, their relationship is comparable to the one between Encolpius and Eumolpus. Initially, Toxilus does not have the means to buy the girl Lemniselenis off the greedy Dordalus. The pimp

671 Cf. section III.3.2.1. Laughter as well as section III.3.2.2. Applause.

672 For a plot summary, cf. section III.3.2.2. Applause.

thus stands in the way of Toxilus' pleasure, just as Eumolpus stands in the way of Encolpius' during the Third Rivalry over Giton. However, Toxilus eventually manages to trick Dordalus and to buy Lemniselenis' (Lem.) freedom. At the very end of the play, Dordalus (Do.) suffers the verbal and physical abuse of Toxilus (Tox.), his friend Sagaristio, and his *puer delicatus* Paegnium (Pae.):

Do.: *ludos me facitis, intellego.*
To.: *vin cinaedum novum tibi dari, Paegnium?*
quin elude, ut soles, quando liber locust hic. 805
hui, babae! basilice te intulisti et facete.
Pae:. *decet me facetum esse et hunc inridere*
lenonem lubidost, quando dignus ⟨es⟩t.
To.: *perge ut coeperas.*
Pae.: *hoc, leno, tibi.*
Do: *perii! perculit me probe.* 810
Pae.: *em, serva rusum.*
[…]
To.: *agite sultis, hunc ludificemus.* 833
Lem.: *nisi si dignust, non opust.*
et me hau par est.
To:: *credo eo quia non inconciliat, quom te emo.*
Lem.: *at tamen non – tamen –* 835
To.: *cave ergo sis malo et sequere me.*
te mihi dicto audientem esse addecet, nam hercle apsque me
foret et meo praesidio, hic faceret te prostibilem propediem.
sed ita pars libertinorum est: nisi patrono qui advorsatust,
nec sati' liber sibi videtur nec sati' frugi nec sat honestus,
ni id ecfecerit, ni ei male dixit, ni grato ingratus
repertust. 840
Lem.: *pol bene facta tua me hortantur tuo ut imperio paream.*
To.: *ego sum tibi patronus plane qui huic pro te argentum dedi.*
* *graphice hunc volo ludificari.*
Lem.: *meo ego in loco sedulo curabo.*
(Plaut. *Pers.* 803–43)

Do: You are mocking me, I realize.
Tox.: Do you want to get a new catamite, Paegnium? Have your fun, as you always do, since you have a free field here.
Hey, wow! That was a fantastic, fine movement!

Pae.: I ought to be fine and I am keen to make fun of this pimp, since he deserves it.
To.: Continue the way you began.
Pae.: Take this, pimp.
Do.: I am dead! He almost knocked me over.
Pae.: There, watch out again.
[...]
To.: Go on, please, let us have our fun with him.
Lem.: There is no need if he does not deserve it; and it is not appropriate for me.
To.: No doubt because he did not create any trouble when I bought you.
Lem.: But still, I do not – still –
Tox.: Do watch out for trouble and then follow me. You ought to be obedient to me, because if it had not been for me and my protection, he would have turned you into a prostitute without delay. But that is how some freedmen are: Unless one has opposed his patron, he does not consider himself free enough or useful enough or decent enough. Unless he has done this, unless he has been rude to him, unless he has been found to be ungrateful to his benefactor.
Lem.: Yes, your good turns spurn me on to obey your command.
To.: I am clearly your patron as I have paid him for you. I want him mocked beautifully.
Lem.: For my part I will do my best.

Toxilus and his friends mock and beat Dordalus throughout the final scene of the *Persa* (777–858); the above quote is only a small sample. What becomes clear is that Toxilus enjoys the violence inflicted on Dordalus no less than Encolpius enjoys Eumolpus' suffering. For instance, Toxilus spurs on Paegnium (*perge ut coeperas,* 809), just as Encolpius cheers as Eumolpus gets thrashed (*favebamque vapulanti,* § 96.1). Equally importantly, Toxilus' mood swing toward Lemniselenis may remind us of Encolpius' mood swing toward Giton.

In the scene directly preceding Dordalus' punishment, Toxilus had finally managed to buy the freedom of his beloved Lemniselenis. His attitude towards her was helplessly romantic: When she embraces him, he tells her that nothing is sweeter as her (*oh, nil magi' dulcest,* 764),

and he uses several terms of endearment (*amabo, oculus meu',* 765).[673] Of course, this may remind us of Encolpius, who is usually completely infatuated with Giton (cf. e.g. § 93.4). However, both Toxilus and Encolpius only appreciate their lovers' affection when it is convenient to them.

As far as we can tell, it is one of Lemniselenis' character traits to be conciliatory. When Dordalus furiously berates Toxilus for having tricked him (795 f.), she tries to calm the pimp down: *stultitiast, | quoi bene esse licet, eum praevorti | libitu'* ("It is stupidity if someone who can have a good time turns to fights instead," 798–800). She attempts to de-escalate the conflict between the two men fighting over her – not unlike Giton, who speaks up for Eumolpus so as to calm Encolpius' anger (*sic me loquentem obiurgavit Giton…*, § 93.4). However, when Lemniselenis shows some scruples about mocking/humiliating the pimp (833 f.), Toxilus quickly becomes angry at the girl he claims to love: He accuses her of being a conceited, ungrateful freedwoman (836–40), a rebuke that, incidentally, is reminiscent of how Trimalchio scolds his wife Fortunata when she once dares to criticise him (§ 74.13). More significantly, Toxilus threatens Lemniselenis with physical punishment if she continues to disagree with his judgement: *cave ergo sis malo et sequere me* (835).[674] He comes close to doing what Encolpius does when he is annoyed by Giton's scruples: Giving his beloved a smack on the head in order to shut them up: *ego durante adhuc iracundia non continui manum, sed caput miserantis stricto acutoque articulo percussi* (§ 96.3). The motivation of Toxilus and Encolpius is the same: They will not allow anyone to spoil their *Schadenfreude* – not even their beloved partner whom they took enormous pains to be with.

V.4 Interim Conclusion

Having divided the Third Rivalry over Giton in three sections, my reading has focused on the dynamics between Encolpius and Eumolpus ('the rivals') on the one hand, and between Encolpius and Giton ('the lovers') on the other. We have observed that the first part of the episode (§ 92.1–94.7) heavily relies on wrong expectations and, more generally, on a discrepancy between the knowledge states of Petronius' characters. Fur-

673 Cf. also Plaut. *Pers.* 773 f.

674 For further discussion of this line, including the social ramifications of what Toxilus (himself a slave) is threatening, cf. Woytek (ed. 1982 *ad loc.* and p. 44).

thermore, the passage at hand is characterised by reversals: 1) Encolpius tries to outsmart Eumolpus by mirroring his behaviour (locking in vs. locking out), 2) Giton copies and exaggerates Encolpius' suicide threat, 3) Encolpius, who usually adores Giton, suddenly smashes him on the head. Overall, the last part of the episode abounds with slapstick violence and *Schadenfreude.*

In the second step of my analysis, we have seen that the misapprehension between Eumolpus and Encolpius is in line with that between *senes amatores* and their younger rivals on the ancient stage. It has also become clear that reading Encolpius' and Giton' double suicide attempt as a parody of the 'idealising' novel is only one of many possible ways to understand this passage. I have emphasised that notions such as 'being without one's lover equals being dead' or 'the separation from one's lover leaves no option other than suicide' were commonplaces of comedy long before the ('idealising') novel came into existence. With regard to the brawl at the end of the episode, I have drawn attention to a few less obvious comic elements: 1) Eumolpus shares the fate of comic parasites when he is hit with an earthenware jug; 2) the cooks and lodgers who brawl with Eumolpus resemble 'fighters' or 'armies' in Aristophanes, Plautus and Terence; 3) there is a striking connection between Encolpius in the Third Rivalry over Giton and the slave Toxilus at the end of Plautus' *Persa*: When it comes to seeing their rival suffer, Encolpius' and Toxilus' *Schadenfreude* gets the better of their infatuation with their beloved.

V.5 Narrative Technique

At this point, I believe it is unnecessary to give a full narratological analysis of the Third Rivalry over Giton. This is not only because such an analysis would be disproportionally long but, more importantly, because most findings of the preceding chapters can be applied, *mutatis mutandis,* to the episode at hand. I will therefore restrict my discussion to a single portion of the Third Rivalry over Giton, not least because this bit has by far received most scholarly attention: Encolpius' and Giton's double suicide attempt (§ 94.8–15). As before, I will first address narrative techniques that create the impression of a theatrical performance, followed by those that do not have a one-to-one correspondence on stage. Lastly, I will delve into the scholarly debate as to who 'is behind' the fake suicide(s) and whether Encolpius the narrator tells his story from an ironic point of view.

V.5.1 A Narrative Emulating Stage Performances

Through detailed information about the visual and auditory aspects of the action, certain parts of the double suicide passage create the impression of a stage performance before the inner eye of the audience. For instance, the narrator tells us about several objects in the room he was trapped in (the 'scenery'): There is a bed standing against the wall with a belt fastened to its frame (§ 94.8). Encolpius relates how he inserted his neck into the noose and – taking his time to mention the unlocking of the door (*reseratis foribus,* § 94.8) – how Giton and Encolpius saved him at the last moment (*ibid.*). Next, the narrator names Giton's feelings (*ex dolore in rabiem efferatus,* § 94.9)[675] and, more importantly, describes how the boy physically expresses these feelings: He shouts out (*tollit clamorem,* § 94.5) and throws Encolpius on the bed by pushing him with both hands (*me utraque manu impulsum praecipitat super lectum, ibid.*). As noted before, the amount of detail devoted to such emotional gestures may remind us of stage directions in dramatic scripts.

Giton's accusation against Encolpius is quoted in full (38 words of reported speech at § 94.10–11). In terms of speech representation, of course, this is as close as a narrative can get to a theatrical performance. Thereafter, the narrator recounts rather graphically how Giton commits (a fake) suicide: The boy is said to snatch a razor, to slash his throat once and again, and to collapse at the others' feet (§ 94.12). Unlike elsewhere in the passage, the narrator's words here amount to an 'objective' description of what Giton said and did. Rather than manipulating the story in one way or another, the narrator allows the audience to see Giton's suicide for themselves, as it were. The last portion of the passage contains another reference to the episode's soundscape (*exclamo ego attonitus,* § 94.13) as well as a detailed description of a 'stage prop', the blunt razor that is key to the entire charade.

675 My understanding is not that Encolpius can here look into Giton's head, as it were, but rather that this piece of information is meant to help the audience visualise Giton's demeanour; cf. section IV.4.1.2. Paralepsis: The Thin Line between Emotions and Appearances.

V.5.2 A Narrative Emancipated from Stage Performances

V.5.2.1 Emphasis and Condensation: Giving the Stage to Giton

Despite the stage-like elements listed above, the suicide passage is most remarkable for how Petronius' narrator manipulates the story. His technique is most obvious in terms of narrative speed: Encolpius (as narrator) devotes no more than six words to the fact that he (as protagonist) decided to kill himself: *inclusus ego suspendio vitam finire constitui* (§ 94.8). The narrator's terseness is all the more striking if we remember that this is not the first time Encolpius thinks to have lost Giton to a rival (cf. §§ 80–81). Back then, the protagonist had delivered – and the narrator had quoted in full! – a long monologue about the moral turpitude of Giton and his new lover Ascyltus (§ 81.3–6). Only after this elaborate warm-up, so to speak, had Encolpius (the protagonist) been ready to resort to violence (§ 82.1–2). The suicide passage stands in a sharp contrast to this. While the narrator's words focused on the protagonist's emotions at § 81.3–6, his concise language at § 94.8 hints at the fact that here Encolpius' emotions are *not* at the heart of what he wants to tell his audience. Rather, the protagonist's decision to end his life appears to be no more than a prelude to what is to come.

The same applies to Encolpius' preparations for hanging himself and to Eumolpus' and Giton's sudden arrival. Despite the significant amount of detail (cf. above), it is crucial to note that the narrator summarises all these pieces of information in a single sentence: *et iam semicinctio … revocat ad lucem* (§ 94.8). Story time is clearly longer than narrative time. The narrative slows down, however, as soon as its focus shifts to Giton: The boy's angry outburst (§ 94.9) and the words that accompany it (§ 94.10–11) are presented in the mode of a 'scene' (story time = narrative time).

It is worth remembering that these narrative movements, i.e. variations in narrative speed, have no (obvious) equivalent on stage. A stage director cannot simply fast-forward Encolpius' suicide preparations and then slow down for Giton's speech. The effect of this narrative technique is that it emphasises Giton's role in the episode. To use a theatrical metaphor, it shines a spotlight on the boy and has the other characters fade into the background.

After Giton's words, the narrative speeds up again: We do not need as much time to read/listen to § 94.12–3 as Giton and Encolpius hypothetically need to each grab the razor, slash their throats (repeatedly), and

collapse. Thereafter, the narrative comes to a complete standstill. In a descriptive pause, the narrator tells us that neither Giton nor Encolpius were hurt, and that the blade was in fact a blunted practice razor (§ 94.14). What is more, the narrator now looks back at something that happened a little earlier (analepsis) and that he failed to mention at the time (paralipsis): He tells us that – knowing that the razor was blunt – neither had the *mercennarius* feared for Giton's safety, nor had Eumolpus stopped the boy's suicide attempt (§ 94.15).

Again, things would look different in a theatrical performance. If this was a suicide scene acted out on stage, the audience would be able to see Eumolpus' and the servant's unimpassioned demeanour whilst Giton snatches the razor and cuts his throat. This would not only (potentially) turn the audience's attention away from Giton, but it might also alert the spectators to the fact that the boy's action is not as serious as it seems. The effect of Petronius' narrative technique, then, is to create suspense. By sidestepping information that is central to the understanding of the passage – both that the razor is blunt and that Eumolpus and his servant know about this – the narrator initially creates the impression that Giton has actually killed himself. By means of analepsis, the narrator provides these key pieces of information only when he sees fit – thereby releasing the tension no sooner than it has reached its peak. The narrator's technique will be further discussed in the section on Encolpius as *actor* and *auctor.*

Before moving on, it is worth noting that this passage contains an even more blatant case of paralipsis: The *mercennarius,* i. e. the person from whom Giton suddenly snatches the razor, had never been mentioned before in the extant *Satyrica.* He (including his mere presence) will not be commented upon again until the very end of the episode (§ 99.6). The narrator fails to mention this character even though – as scrupulous readers might note – the *mercennarius* must have entered the room at some point, and he must be *somewhere* whilst Eumolpus gets beaten up (§ 95.6–96.7).

Schmeling & Setaioli (eds. 2011 *ad* § 94.12) state that this servant – who is called Corax, as we learn at § 117.11 – is apparently introduced simply for "reasons of plot": Later in the story, Encolpius and Giton will need to disguise themselves in order to avoid the attention of their old acquaintance Lichas; in this context, they will need a barber to shave their heads and eyebrows (§ 103.1–2). According to Schmeling & Setaioli (*ibid.*), Petronius chooses the "convenient setting" of the suicide passage to introduce the figure of a barber. While I do not disagree with this in-

terpretation, it is important to note that Corax has a small but significant task to fulfil in the suicide passage: His function is to provide Giton with a (fake) weapon – and it is in this function only that the servant is ever mentioned!

There is hardly a point in asking – or trying to explain – when exactly Corax entered the room, or what he did whilst Eumolpus was getting thrashed; not to speak of asking how a poor poet like Eumolpus can even afford a personal servant.[676] The fact of the matter appears to be that Corax is only important, inasmuch as the figure of a barber 'plausibly' introduces a (fake) razor to the plot. Since he is irrelevant to what follows (as well as to what came before), the narrator has him 'disappear' by means of paralipsis.[677] In line with what I have pointed out above, my belief is that had the narrator devoted any further attention to Corax, this would have risked shifting the audience's attention away from Giton and his charade of a suicide.

V.5.2.2 Subjective Storytelling: Encolpius Making Sense of the World around Him

I have noted that some of the narrator's words in this passage amount to an 'objective' description of the action. What I mean is that, as far as we can tell, the narrator relates the events of the story without any additions, omissions, or other significant manipulations. In the preceding section, then, we have observed that the narrator at times reveals his presence through manipulations of narrative speed and order. Yet, this is not the only way in which Encolpius (the narrator) can give away the fact that he is not an impartial observer. At times, his word choice is clearly the product of what we may call subjective storytelling.

This phenomenon is most obvious, perhaps, when Encolpius (the narrator) describes his own suicide attempts by means of language that is metaphorical and melodramatic: Rather than saying something along the lines of 'Eumolpus and Giton stopped me from hanging myself', the narrator tells us that they 'called me back to life from the brink of death' (*meque a fatali iam meta revocat ad lucem,* § 94.8). Rather than saying 'I slashed my throat with the razor just as Giton had done', he relates

676 Cf. for instance the speculations indulged in by van Thiel (1971: 41 f.), which Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 94.12) finds 'ingenious'.

677 This roughly corresponds to the interpretation proposed by Courtney (2001: 147).

that 'I sought the road to death with the same steel' (*eodem ferramento ad mortem viam quaero,* § 94.13). Clearly, these words are not 'objective descriptions' – spoken as if the narrator was completely detached from the action –, but they reveal Encolpius' personal standpoint: He apparently conceives of his actions as extraordinary and therefore as worthy of elevated language.

Still, another manifestation of 'subjective storytelling' may be even more significant. It seems clear that throughout (most of) this episode the narrator tells his story in the mode of experiencing focalisation: Encolpius (the narrator) describes the action in accordance with what he (the protagonist) perceived and felt at the time. The narrator does not make use of hindsight knowledge – which he might have done, for instance, in order to forewarn the audience about the blunt razor. A few cases in which the distinct standpoint of the narrator might shine through will be discussed later on. For now, it is crucial to note that the narrator's manipulations of narrative time and order appear to correspond to the protagonist's thought process at the time the story is unfolding.

As we have observed above, the pace of the suicide passage slows down ('scene', i.e. story time = narrative time) when Giton delivers his speech, telling Encolpius that he could never be the first one to die and that Encolpius shall now witness the boy's own suicide (§ 94.10–11). I suggest that this mode of storytelling reflects what is going on in the protagonist's head: He can hardly believe what he is hearing from his beloved Giton. The boy says that he tried to kill himself in the recent past, and that he will go through with it this time. Encolpius (the protagonist) pays close attention to Giton, making sure not to miss a single word. Accordingly, the narrator quotes Giton's speech in full.

Afterwards, the narrative accelerates (story time > narrative time), as the narrator tells us how Giton and Encolpius each grab the razor, slash their throats, and fall to the ground. This narrative movement corresponds to how the protagonist struggles to keep up with what is going on around him. 'Everything happened so fast' is a modern-day commonplace of how people describe unforeseen accidents or similar events – and it is along these lines, I suggest, that we should understand the fast pace of Petronius' narrative. The protagonist is overwhelmed by what is happening before his eyes and by how he (instinctively?) reacts: Seeing the supposedly dead Giton at his feet, he immediately follows the boy's example.

The narrative comes to a complete standstill – with some narrative time corresponding to no story time whatsoever – once both Giton and

Encolpius are lying on the floor, supposedly dead (§ 94.14–5). Just as the 'scene' and the acceleration, the narrative pause appears to reflect the protagonist's thought process: Having struggled to keep up with Giton's action and his own reaction, the protagonist now finally has time to stop and think: 'Wait a minute. Something is not right here': *sed neque Giton ulla erat suspicione vulneris laesus neque ego ullum sentiebam dolorem* (§ 94.14). It is crucial to realise that this statement is not made by the narrating I (narrating focalisation) but that it still represents the point of view of the protagonist (experiencing focalisation). Rather than telling us what happened – Giton and Encolpius lying on the ground, both alive – the narrator tells us what did *not* happen (*neque … neque*), indicating by *sed* that all of this stood in contrast to something. This 'something', of course, is the protagonist's expectation at the time: He expected Giton to be marked by a wound (*suspicione vulneris laesus*) and himself to feel pain (*sentiebam dolorem*) – but neither of these expectations was met.

In short, what I suggest is that the narrator's mode of storytelling corresponds to the protagonist's (slow) process of understanding the world around him. Viewed in this light, the suicide passage fits a common pattern in the *Satyrica,* one that has been best described by Mario Labate (2013): Encolpius regularly struggles to make sense of what he sees, hears or feels – be it Trimalchio's 'riddles' during the *cena* (e.g. § 41.5), Quartilla's 'practical jokes' during the orgy (e.g. § 24.1–2), or nearly countless other situations. The prime example of this phenomenon occurs early on in the extant *Satyrica*: When an old woman tricks Encolpius into entering a brothel, the narrator spells out the fact that it took him (the protagonist) a long time to realise his mistake: *tarde, immo iam sero intellexi me in fornicem esse deductum* ("Slowly, indeed too late, I became aware that I had been led into a brothel," § 7.4). My suggestion is that this is exactly what is going on at the end of the suicide passage: The protagonist slowly comes to understand that nothing is as he thought it would be, and the narrator makes sure to share his (past) thought process with the audience.

V.5.3 The Character of Encolpius as *actor* and *auctor*

V.5.3.1 The 'Mastermind' behind the Charade

Several scholars have debated matters of agency in the suicide passage. Which character(s) came up with the idea of staging a fake suicide? Which characters are 'in on the joke', and what role does the narrator play in all of this?

Most scholars agree that Giton never truly intended to commit suicide, i.e. that he is fully aware he is putting on a show. After all, the boy falls to the ground even though, as he must realise, the razor is blunt.[678] It is more difficult to assess Eumolpus' role in the suicide performance. Slater (1990: 103) has gone as far as to suggest that:

> The whole scene has been staged for Encolpius' benefit by Eumolpus and Giton. Perhaps they have been observing him through the door […]. Probably the idea is Eumolpus's, as the farce turns on the stage prop of the blunted razor, which only he is likely to know his servant has.

Slater proposes that the suicide charade was ultimately Eumolpus' idea – a view that might have been inspired by Eumolpus' role as the 'mastermind' behind the legacy-hunting plot in Croton (§ 117.4–10). As it stands, however, Slater's suggestion clearly belongs to the realm of speculation: Not only is Giton (hypothetically) resourceful enough to think of the practice razor himself, but postulating Eumolpus to be a 'master of deception' also leads us to a never-ending series of assumptions, each one less likely than the one that came before.[679] Even more importantly, perhaps, we should be cautious about assuming that there is a 'strict logic' underlying every episode of the *Satyrica*. We should remember, for instance, that the narrator has the *mercennarius* 'appear' and 'disappear' as he sees fit – arguably, this type of storytelling shows that Petronius did not prioritise verisimilitude down to the last detail.

Put another way: It is important to acknowledge that the text as we have it simply does not hold any clear indication as to the 'originator'

678 § 94.12. For further discussion, cf. e.g. Habermehl (ed. 2006 *ad* § 94.15) and Setaioli (2011: 380).

679 Cf. the discussion in section V.1.1. Eumolpus.

of the suicide charade. Perhaps, this question is simply beside the point. What the text does tell us, however, is that both Giton and Eumolpus (as well as his servant) are 'in on the joke': The boy falls to the ground for no other reason than to give credence to his performance, and the other two do not intervene because they know the razor in Giton's hand is blunt (§ 94.15). Rather than around 'masterminds', the passage revolves around matters of awareness: It is about who knows what is truly going on, and who does not.

V.5.3.2 The Presence of the Narrator

As we have observed above, most of the passage is conveyed in the mode of experiencing focalisation. We are invited to see through the narrator's eyes, as it were, as he decides to end his life, is stopped by Giton and Eumolpus, witnesses Giton's (supposed) suicide, and follows the boy's example. Encolpius (the narrator) even shares with the audience his (the protagonist's) slow process of realising something is wrong: Contrary to his expectations, Giton and himself are unhurt by the razor (§ 94.14). At this point, however, the mode of storytelling changes: *rudis enim novacula et in hoc retusa, ut pueris discentibus audaciam tonsoris daret, instruxerat thecam* (§ 94.14). Here, the point of view of the narrator is revealed through the use of hindsight knowledge: At the time, the protagonist was in no position to know he was dealing with a practice razor meant to be used by apprentice barbers.[680] There can be no doubt, therefore, that this is a case of narrating focalisation.

It seems clear that the narrator's intrusion continues a bit further: *ideoque nec mercennarius ad raptum ferramentum expaverat nec Eumolpus interpellaverat mimicam mortem. dum haec fabula inter amantes luditur* (§ 94.15–95.1). Though the protagonist was in a position to see Eumolpus' and Corax' unimpassioned reaction to Giton's fake suicide, it appears that he either did not pay attention to the two, or that he failed to grasp the meaning of their behaviour (i.e. that there was no real danger to Giton). However, the significance of their demeanour is apparent to the narrator (after the fact). Much of the same applies to the idea of a theatrical suicide (*mimicam mortem*; *fabula inter amantes*; cf. below). Since the protagonist does not know about the blunt razor (yet), he cannot tell

680 This has rightly been noted by Courtney (2001: 147).

that Giton is merely play-acting. Rather, this interpretation of the events must have been made with the benefit of hindsight.[681]

V.5.3.3 Self-Irony and the Character of the Narrator

The effect of the narrator's intrusion is threefold. Firstly, the narrator provides his readers/listeners with the key piece of information they need to make sense of the story. Having created the impression that Giton has actually killed himself, he now gives away the fact that the razor is blunt; it cannot do any harm. What is more, the narrator describes Giton's suicide as 'mimic' (*mimicam mortem,* § 94.15), in the sense that it is the product of play-acting. This message is reinforced by another theatrical metaphor immediately afterwards: *dum haec fabula inter amantes luditur* (§ 95.1). The narrator thus releases the tension he built up in the course of the passage, allowing the audience to enjoy it as a 'farce in prose'.

Secondly, the narrator's intrusion has an effect on how we perceive the relationship between the two Encolpii: the protagonist and his 'older' counterpart, the narrator. By categorising Giton's suicide as theatrical – which the protagonist would not have been able to do (yet) – the narrator joins the perspective of 'those who know better', i. e. of Giton, Encolpius and Corax. This creates a certain distance between the narrator and the protagonist: The joke is exclusively on the protagonist, and the narrator's 'bemused detachment' from his past self may rightly be referred to as self-irony.[682]

Lastly, it is worth noting that the narrator is not the only one who joins 'those who know better': His readers/listeners do the same. Having received hindsight knowledge from the narrator, the audience is in a position to understand the suicide charade before the protagonist does so himself – in fact, we never learn when/how the protagonist manages to put the clues together. At any rate, the narrator's self-ironic stance is only completed by the fact that he brings the audience over to his side, as it were.

Other than in the reconciliation episode, the narrator is here fully aware he was made a fool of by Giton. In fact, by poking fun at his credulity at the time, the narrator presents himself as the 'more mature' coun-

681 Cf. Courtney (2001: 147), who concisely notes that both *mimicam mortem* and *fabula inter amantes* "are naturally later interpretations by the narrator Encolpius."

682 Cf. esp. Codoñer (1995: 710 f.) and Conte (1996: 78 f.).

terpart of his past self. This is as close as we get to Beck's (1973) much-cited distinction between the two Encolpii.

Still, we should not go as far as to speak of a significant 'difference in character' between the two. For, what the narrator does here amounts to nothing more than using the benefit of hindsight – and (even) the protagonist is not unable to see through his plain stupidity after the fact. When the protagonist is stopped from his killing spree by a soldier, for instance, he soon realises that it was for the better: *despoliatus ergo, immo praecisa ultione retro ad deversorium tendo paulatimque temeritate laxata coepi grassatoris audaciae gratias agere* ("So I was not only robbed, but my revenge was nipped in the bud. I walked back to the lodgings and gradually, as my rashness decreased, I began to feel grateful for the thug's audacity," § 82.4). Note that the protagonist starts to thank the solider at the time of the action (*coepi … gratias agere*); this is not a retrospective interpretation by the narrator. Later, when Encolpius tries to play down the threat Eumolpus poses as a rival, he himself – i.e. the protagonist at the time – does not fully believe what he is suggesting: *haec ut infra fiduciam posui fraudavique animum dissidentem, coepi somnum obruto tunicula capite mentiri* ("When I had made these points without much confidence, deceiving my sceptical spirit, I covered my head with my little tunic and pretended to sleep," § 100.2).

All these points should caution us against postulating a clear-cut distinction between the narrator and the protagonist. I suggest we regard self-deprecation as a (narrative) technique rather than a character trait; it is one of the many stances the narrator may assume towards his 'younger' self.

V.5.3.4 Summary: The Function of the Narrator

As we have seen, the narrator fulfils a complex set of functions in the suicide passage. Apart from putting the action before the inner eye of the audience, he allows his readers/listeners to see, hear and feel as the protagonist does. In the case at hand, this type of 'subjective storytelling' pertains to the narrator's word choice as well as to his manipulations of narrative speed. The effect of this technique is not only the depiction of the protagonist's credulity and slow-wittedness, but also the creation of suspense.

At the end of the passage, the narrator reveals his presence by using knowledge that is unavailable to the protagonist at the time of the action.

By giving away the nature of the razor, the narrator allows himself and the audience to 'join the alliance' of Giton, Eumolpus and Corax. As this alliance knows nothing is as it seems (i.e. that Giton is not truly dying), the protagonist alone remains the butt of the joke. The ironic distance between the narrator and the protagonist is a significant addition to his narrative repertoire, but it does not constitute a true difference in character between the 'younger' and the 'older' Encolpius.

VI

Synopsis and Conclusion

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This study set out to advance our understanding of the *Satyrica* in two interconnected regards: 1) Petronius' indebtedness to the theatrical culture of his time, more exactly to (farcical) comic stage productions; 2) the character and function of Encolpius the narrator, particularly his role in adapting theatrical elements for narrative fiction. In this chapter, I will outline my findings in both fields, trying to paint a unified picture, as it were.

VI.1 Comic Elements

Before summarising the parallels between the *Satyrica* and the comic tradition, I should stress once more that many of the elements listed below are far from exclusive to comedy. Many of them also occur in (Menippean) satire, the ('idealising') novel, iambic poetry, epic, historiography, tragedy, love elegy, oratory, and likely elsewhere. The aim of this study was not to show that Petronius directly drew on extant comedies (intertextuality in the narrow sense) but to demonstrate that there is a strong presence of comic *topoi* in Petronius' work. These *topoi* constitute parallels (or: transtextual links) between the *Satyrica* and the comic tradition, regardless of whether Petronius deliberately engaged with stage productions or whether he drew on comic elements that had long become commonplaces of other literary genres. In both cases, Petronius may be envisioned as working along the same lines as ancient comic playwrights.[683] To be clear, my analysis does suggest that some elements

683 Cf. esp. section I.4.1. Terminology and Preliminaries.

in the *Satyrica* were indeed inspired by theatrical performances of the Imperial era – but we have no way of (dis)proving this with regard to any specific element. I should also emphasise that I do not suggest comedy to be the most important – let alone the only – genre the *Satyrica* is worth comparing to. Rather, investigating parallels other than comic was merely beyond the scope of this study. Comicality is but one of many facets to the complex artifact that is the *Satyrica.*

I will now provide a synopsis of the comic elements I have identified in Petronius' work. Though this summary contains stock characters, plot elements, motifs, and techniques, I shall not try to divide them into neat categories. Rather, my overview is meant to show that all these elements are closely intertwined. I will use bold print for a few of the more prominent comic *topoi.*

Like so many plays from New Comedy onwards, the First Rivalry over Giton (§§ 9–11) is set in motion by (an attempted) **rape**. The rapist Ascyltus looks at this crime with the same light-hearted arrogance as the rapist Chaerea in Terence's *Eunuchus* (583–91). Both Ascyltus and Chaerea compare themselves to mythological/literary role models: Sextus Tarquinius and Jupiter respectively. In both cases, several factors come together to enhance the **parodic contrast** between these figures. The suffering of the rape victims, i.e. of Giton and Pamphila, is consistently downplayed, particularly with reference to their (perceived) low social status. In this regard, the First Rivalry over Giton strongly resembles comedies that revolve around **non-consensual sex with slave (-like) characters**, such as Plautus' *Casina* or *Mercator.* Just like Petronius' episode, these plays do not centre on the (social) consequences of rape but on the themes of **adultery and jealousy**. The analysis of Giton's (relatively) low status has also shown that he has many characteristics of comic ***pueri delicati***, such as Olympio in Plautus' *Casina* or Paegnium in his *Persa.*[684]

The rape (attempt) leads to an altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus, a **verbal duel** in the vein of Aristophanes (e.g. *Equ.* 276–87) and Plautus (e.g. *Pers.* 406–26). As in many comedies, there is a strong sense of playfulness, even **role-playing**, to the altercation in the *Satyrica*: None of the quarrellers appears to take the 'fight' seriously. In terms of theme, Encolpius' and Ascyltus' conversation revolves around matters of **sex and food**. In this regard, they do not only resemble 'low-

684 For some reflections on how to approach an episode like the First Rivalry over Giton in the 21st century, cf. Foreword: Reading the *Satyrica* in the 21st Century.

life' verbal duellers (e.g. the slaves Pinacium and Phaniscus in Plaut. *Mostell.* 885–98) but also the comic stock type of the **parasite** (e.g. Artogrotus in Plaut. *Mil.* 33–5). Ascyltus 'wins' the argument with Encolpius by **mirroring and exaggerating** his opponent's behaviour and by destroying every moral posture he tries on. The same dynamics are at play, for instance, in the altercation between the *adulescens* Diniarchus and the (prostitute) *ancilla* Astaphium in Plautus' *Truculentus* (138–63).

The verbal duel brings about a **role reversal**: Encolpius now plays the role of the rapist/adulterer, and Ascyltus plays that of the jealous spouse. The way Ascyltus now treats Encolpius resembles **spectacular punishments** meted out against adulterers or other disreputable characters on the comic stage: It features *Schadenfreude* in the form of laughter (cf. Plaut. *Cas.* 855–8), mocking applause (cf. Plaut. *Pers.* 791) as well as slapstick violence (cf. e.g. Herodas' fifth mimiamb or the ending of Plaut. *Cas.* and Plaut. *Mil.*). By using the strap of his bag for a whip, Ascyltus becomes a comic ***lorarius*** (cf. e.g. Plaut. *Rud.* 821–36). The passage is replete with (sexual) **puns and *double entendres*** (e.g. § 11.2, § 11.4), hallmarks of ancient comedy (e.g. Plaut. *Aul.* 280–8, Plaut. *Mil.* 1416).

The reconciliation episode (§ 91) can be read as a **'scene of seduction'** in the comic vein. Giton takes the role of the so-called *meretrix mala* or ***meretrix callida*** (cf. e.g. the Athenian Bacchis in Plaut. *Bacch.* or Phronesium in Plaut. *Truc.*). As these prostitutes do with reluctant customers, Giton twists Encolpius around his little finger, thereby bringing about another role reversal: The man 'in charge' ends up 'surrendering' to the seductress (cf. esp. Plaut. *Bacch.* 39b–104). The *puer delicatus* Olympio (Plaut. *Cas.* 734–40a) proves that Giton is not the first male character wielding the power of seduction. Encolpius is an ***adulescens amans*** torn between his desire and his 'better judgement' (cf. esp. Phaedria in Ter. *Eun.* 51–55).

In many regards, Eumolpus strikes us as a ***senex amator***. He is an old man (*senex canus,* § 83.7) with a strong sexual interest in almost any (young) person he comes across, such as the Pergamene youth (§§ 85–7), Giton (§ 94.1–2), Encolpius (§ 140.5, 140.13), and Philomela's unnamed daughter (§ 140.1–10). As this list shows, in his lechery, Eumolpus does not make a difference between male and female objects of desire. The same is true, for instance, for Philocleon in Aristophanes' *Wasps* and Lysidamus in Plautus' *Casina.* In the Third Rivalry over Giton (§§ 92–96) Eumolpus unwittingly stumbles into a **sexual rivalry** with a much younger man (§ 92.1–94.7), which can also be said, for instance, about the *senex* Demipho in Plautus' *Mercator.* In the *Satyrica* the role of the

young rival – typically the *senex'* own son – is taken up by Encolpius. Just like Argyrippus in Plautus' *Asinaria,* he is an *adulescens* (e.g. § 3.1) in love who finds himself in a rivalry with someone he thought to be entirely harmless: an old man who endures **mockery** for attempting to be sexually active at his age (§ 100.1, cf. e.g. Plaut. *Merc.* 574–7). As these comedies, Petronius' episode heavily relies on a **difference in awareness** between its characters.

Believing to have lost Giton to Eumolpus, Encolpius attempts to commit a **lover's suicide** (§ 94.8–15). He is guided by the comic notion that being without one's beloved equals being dead (e.g. Plaut. *Cas.* 111 f., Plaut. *Merc.* 857–63). Lovers' suicides had been common at least since Menander (*Pk.* 504, 977; *Mis.* 710 f.). Encolpius and Giton engage in a playful **'suicidal contest'**, an extraordinary passage that has a (less drastic) forerunner in the conversation between Argyrippus and Philaenium in Plautus' *Asinaria* (591–617). Again, both Petronius and Plautus rely on the techniques of mirroring and exaggeration.

Having turned the tables against Eumolpus (another role reversal), Encolpius enjoys watching the old man getting caught up in **a slapstick brawl**. When Eumolpus is hit by an earthenware jug (without being seriously hurt), he resembles comic parasites such as Curculio (Plaut. *Curc.* 397 f.) and Ergasilus (Plaut. *Capt.* 88–90). He is beaten up by cooks, (drunk) lodgers and a blear-eyed old woman – all 'armed' with everyday items. This is the stuff of 'battles' in the comic tradition (e.g. Aristoph. *Av.* 343–450, Men. *Pk.* 469–73). Having regained his Giton, we learn that Encolpius' love for the boy is not without limits: When Giton threatens to spoil his ***Schadenfreude***, Encolpius hits him on the head (§ 96.3), just as Toxilus snaps at his beloved Lemniselenis in Plautus' *Persa* (803–43).

As this overview shows, comic elements in the *Satyrica* do not occur in isolation but are deeply entrenched in the structure of Petronius' work. For the parallels between Eumolpus and the *senex amator,* for instance, it does not suffice to say that Eumolpus is old and lecherous. Equally importantly, other Petronian characters interact with him as comic *dramatis personae* interact with *senes amatores* (e.g. by mocking them or by underestimating their abilities). We should also note that, when becoming aware of Eumolpus' flirt with Giton, Encolpius readily puts on the role of the jealous madman (§ 94.6): Histrionic postures are never far from his mind. What is more, the entire plot of the Third Rivalry over Giton is carefully designed so as to bring about a clash between the expectations of Eumolpus and Encolpius: The episode is no less a 'comedy of errors' than Plautus' *Mercator* or *Asinaria.*

It does not come as much of a surprise, perhaps, that the *Satyrica* shares particularly many elements with Plautus' oeuvre. I suggest that this is due to the fact that Plautine plays tend to be farcical – farcicality being the common denominator between 1) the *Satyrica,* 2) Plautine comedy, and 3) the Graeco-Roman mime, the comic genre Petronius' text most clearly evokes (e.g. § 19.1, § 80.9, § 94.15). From the very outset this study faced the challenge that the mime, though it was dominant in Petronius' day, is almost entirely lost to us. I attempted to show that appreciating the 'farcical overlap' between all known forms of ancient comedy can be a useful workaround, as it were, for approaching the 'mimic' quality of the *Satyrica.*[685] The sum of my findings suggests that the presence of comic *topoi* in Petronius' narrative is far from incidental: We are dealing with a plot that seems to come right out of dramatic scripts, performed by characters inclined to play-act, presented to an audience imbued with the theatrical culture of their time.

VI.2 Narrator and Narrative Technique

VI.2.1 Stage-Like Storytelling

My analysis did not stop at identifying comic elements in the *Satyrica.* I was equally interested in how Petronius forms fully-fledged narrative episodes out of characters, plots, motifs, and techniques associated with the theatre. We have observed that, throughout a large portion of the episodes discussed here, Petronius employs what I have called stage-like storytelling: By emphasising the visual and auditory aspects of the story, the narrator creates the impression of a stage performance before the inner eye of the audience. Again, I will use bold print to highlight key findings or concepts.

Most features of stage-like storytelling can be subsumed under what Plato refers to as **μίμησις** (*Resp.* 392c–394) or what Genette (1980: 166) refers to as a **'narrative of events'**: Encolpius the narrator foregrounds the words and actions of the story's characters, thereby reducing his own (perceived) presence to the bare minimum. This phenomenon is most obvious in the area of speech representation: The altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus in the First Rivalry over Giton (§ 9.6–10.7), for instance, largely consists of **reported speech** (159 of 200 words). The

685 Cf. section I.3. Petronius and the Theatre.

narrator 'quotes' the quarrellers' words in full even though – as the intermediary between the story and the audience – he is in a position to represent them in a number of different (less 'mimetic') ways. In terms of narrative speed, the result is a 'scene', i.e. a passage in which **story time equals narrative time**: Encolpius and Ascyltus hypothetically need about the same time to argue as we need to read/listen about it. The same would be the case, of course, if theatregoers were to watch the altercation performed on stage. When the narrator 'intrudes' into the characters' conversation, he keeps his remarks brief and 'objective': He does not manipulate the story but merely gives the audience an idea of what the episode **looks and sounds** like (e.g. *intentavi in oculos Ascylti manus,* § 9.6; *longe maiore nisu clamavit,* § 9.7).

The above-mentioned technique pertains to what I have called 'stage directions' in a stage-like narrative: Petronius' narrator usually does not spell out what characters feel (by naming their emotions), but he describes how these characters **physically express their emotions**, typically through gestures and facial expressions. In the reconciliation episode, for instance, the narrator does not simply state that Giton was glad when he saw Encolpius, but he describes that the boy *convertit … solutum gaudio vultum,* § 91.2. He does not state that Encolpius was overwhelmed by his rekindled affection for Giton as well as by the pain their separation had caused. Rather, the narrator recounts *invado pectus amplexibus et perfusum os lacrimis vultu meo contero,* § 91.4. Since the narrator's emphasis on emotive gestures can be observed throughout the corpus analysed here, I am convinced that we are not dealing with coincidences but with a deliberate narrative technique. The result, again, is that the action of the *Satyrica* is put before the inner eye of the audience. In terms of the impressions it creates, Petronius' narrative is about as close as it can get to a stage performance.

Another, perhaps less obvious, phenomenon in this field is **paralepsis**, which means that the narrator occasionally discloses more information than he can technically possess. In other words: Encolpius briefly tells his story as if he was **omniscient**. In the First Rivalry over Giton, for instance, Encolpius tells us what Ascyltus was doing outside the room (*furtim se foribus admovit discussisque fortissime claustris,* § 11.2) even though he – as both protagonist and narrator – is not in a (plausible) position to know about this. I have stressed that we should not overinterpret such (minor) paralepses with regard to the 'character' of the narrator. Nor should we try to explain them away by coming up with elaborate theories as to how Encolpius might have gained the information after the

fact. My own suggestion is that paralepses bridge the gap between what Encolpius experienced at the time and what the audience would experience if they watched the *Satyrica* on stage. For, theatregoers would naturally be able to see not only Encolpius and Giton inside the room, but also Ascyltus approaching from the outside (this is what Panayotakis (1995) has called the 'double audience-spectacle pattern'). For the sake of stage-like storytelling, Petronius here **dispenses with strict narrative plausibility**.

VI.2.2 Manipulations of the Story

We would not do justice to the *Satyrica,* however, if we claimed it was a stage-like narrative through and through. Equally importantly, Petronius' narrator regularly manipulates the story in ways – or: to an extent – theatrical productions could not.

Several of Petronius' narrative techniques **emphasise** specific elements of the story by directing the audience's attention toward them. Typically, this is achieved through **variations in speech representation** and/or **variations in narrative speed**. When Encolpius finds Giton at the beginning of the First Rivalry over Giton, for instance, the narrator does not simply 'give the stage' to the characters of the *Satyrica.* Rather, he conveys the protagonist's words in indirect modes of representation: transposed speech (*quid accidisset quaesivi,* § 9.3) and narratised speech (*precibus etiam iracundiam miscui,* § 9.3). This increases the perceived presence of the narrator and simultaneously accelerates the pace of the narrative (story time > narrative time). As soon as it is Giton's turn to speak, however, the narrative slows down to a 'scene' (story time = narrative time), as the narrator presents the boy's words in the mode of reported speech (*'tuus' inquit 'iste frater ...',* § 9.4). The effect of this technique – which has no (readily available) equivalent on stage – is to highlight Giton's rape accusation against Ascyltus (*'coepitque mihi velle pudorem extorquere ...',* § 9.4). As the rape (threat) sets in motion the plot of the First Rivalry over Giton, the narrator's emphasis is clearly in line with the overall design of the episode. As so often, **the story and its narrative representation work hand in hand**, as it were.

This technique can also pertain to actions rather than words. In the suicide passage of the Third Rivalry over Giton, for instance, Encolpius the narrator 'spends' only two sentences on telling us how he (in the past) decided to kill himself, made preparations for the suicide, and was

saved by Eumolpus and Giton at the last moment (§ 94.8). The narrator 'fast-forwards' the story (story time > narrative time) in a way theatrical productions could not. The narrative slows down as soon as Giton arrives. Rather than dwelling on his own (desperate) action, the narrator directs the audience's attention to Giton's *reaction* (the 'suicidal contest').

The opposite of emphasis is what I have called the **condensation** of the story, i.e. fitting a large amount of story elements into a relatively short episode. Apart from accelerating the pace of the narrative, Petronius' narrator accomplishes this by means of **paralipsis**, i.e. by omitting elements of the story that are otherwise within the scope of the narrative. During the altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus (§ 9.6–10.7), for instance, Giton is strikingly 'absent' – even though the quarrel was sparked by the boy's rape accusation against Ascyltus! The point is not that Giton is absent from the story (as far as we can tell, he must be in the room the entire time), but that he simply is not mentioned. The boy becomes '**invisible**': The narrator omits (or 'sidesteps') his presence, arguably because it might 'spoil the fun' of Encolpius' and Ascyltus' verbal duel. Incidentally, we may remember that the two do not mention Giton and/or the rape (attempt) themselves; they prefer to quarrel about sexual roles and dinner invitations. Again, then, the narrator's representation enhances the effect that is inherent in the words and actions of Petronius' characters. Similarly, Ascyltus is strangely absent when Giton accuses him of rape (§ 9.1–5), and Corax somewhat awkwardly 'appears' and 'disappears' in the course of the Third Rivalry over Giton (esp. § 94.12). In such cases, Petronius dispenses with characters deemed irrelevant to the passage at hand. Again, he **prioritises narrative efficiency rather than verisimilitude**.

At the end of the First Rivalry over Giton, the narrator condenses the story by means of a temporal **ellipsis**: The episode breaks off rather abruptly when Ascyltus, giving Encolpius a beating with his *lorum,* tells him: *sic dividere cum fratre nolito* (§ 11.4). On the one hand, Ascyltus' words mark the role reversal between Encolpius and himself: Encolpius having suggested to split up their belongings (*communes sarcinulas partiamur,* § 10.4), Ascyltus now asserts that this agreement should include Giton, their 'brother' or male sex partner. On the other hand, Ascyltus' words contain a *double entendre* (*dividere* meaning 'to sexually penetrate'), hinting that he is punishing Encolpius for having sex with Giton behind his back. In a way, Ascyltus' final remark fulfils the function of a **punchline** at the end of joke – and it should not come as a surprise, then, that this is where the episode suddenly comes to an end. Rather

than telling us how the situation eventually deescalated (which it must have done in the logic of the story), the narrator has the First Rivalry of Giton break off when the tension has reached its peak, creating the greatest possible effect.

Particularly sophisticated manipulations of the story can be found in the reconciliation episode (§ 91). As Giton slowly gains the upper hand over Encolpius, the elements of the episode's first half closely correspond to those of the second half (wiping away tears, sobbing/groaning, speaking etc.). While this **symmetry** already exists on the level of the story, the narrator brings it to full fruition, as it were. Perhaps most significantly, he makes sure no reader/listener misses the turning point of the action – the 'symmetry axis': Giton raises his eyebrow (*supercilium altius sustulit,* § 91.7), his re-awakened haughtiness ringing in the role reversal between Encolpius and himself. The narrator 'zooms in' on a slight movement in the area around Giton's eyes – an effect that has no one-to-one correspondence on stage.

Further manipulations belong to the realm of **subjective storytelling**. As he tells his story, Encolpius the narrator regularly allows his personal standpoint or (past) emotions to shine through. Since this feature will also be relevant to the next section, I will confine myself to one example here: Often, Encolpius' narration is coloured by what he felt at the time of the action. This should be understood in the context of **experiencing focalisation** (= narrated I), which is clearly the narrator's default option for telling the story. After Encolpius' separation from Ascyltus in the First Rivalry over Giton, for instance, the narrator does not describe the matter in 'objective' – i. e. detached and disinterested – terms: Rather, he calls Ascyltus a *custodem molestum* (§ 10.7) and Giton *Gitone meo* (*ibid.*) – two subjective evaluations that correspond to how Encolpius the protagonist felt at the time. In the same breath, the narrator refers to his (past) split-up from Ascyltus as hasty and precipitate (*hanc tam praecipitem divisionem libido faciebat,* § 10.7). This is not only a subjective evaluation, but – more importantly – it is an evaluation that judges the separation by its outcome (**narrating focalisation** or narrating I). Other than the protagonist, the narrator knows that Ascyltus' withdrawal was insincere, that he will be back shortly and punish Encolpius for his credulity (§ 11.2–4). The effect of the narrator's word choice, then, is to **foreshadow** the sudden turn of events the story holds, thereby building up **suspense**. Intriguingly, this technique not only involves a manipulation of the story, but it also tells us something about the stance and/or character of Encolpius the narrator.

VI.2.3 The Character and Function of Encolpius the Narrator

In the past decades Petronian scholars have put forward three major hypotheses as to the stance and/or character of Encolpius the narrator. The earliest of these is Roger Beck's (1973; 1975; 1982) view that Encolpius the protagonist and Encolpius the narrator should be regarded as markedly different characters: According to Beck, we are dealing with a sophisticated and ironic narrator who tries to amuse his audience at the expense of his past self, the naïve protagonist. Taking Beck's articles as a starting point, Gareth Schmeling (1994/95; 2018) argues that Encolpius is a *confessor gloriosus* and that the *Satyrica* is his elaborate confession of past sins and mistakes. According to Gian Biagio Conte (1996), however, the distinction between the protagonist and the narrator is much less pronounced. He claims that, above all, it is the function of the 'hidden author' (= implied author) to establish an ironic tension between Encolpius (as both protagonist and narrator) and himself. Typically, the implied author achieves this by exposing Encolpius' *mythomania,* i.e. his hubristic desire to identify himself with great mythical or literary role models. In Conte's view, then, it is not (primarily) the narrator but the implied author who tries to amuse the audience at Encolpius' expense.

This study has shown that each of these hypotheses – though being (in part) mutually exclusive – has considerable value for our understanding of Petronius' work. It has also emerged, however, that none of them can be fruitfully applied to the *Satyrica* as a whole.

VI.2.3.1 Encolpius Making a Confession

The most specific of the three hypotheses, perhaps, is Schmeling's suggestion that the narrator is a *confessor.* At first sight this interpretation is quite plausible, seeing that most of the *Satyrica* somehow puts Encolpius in a bad light. Encolpius tells us, for instance, about how he endured verbal abuse (§ 9.6–10.3) and physical violence (§ 11.4), lost his beloved Giton to a companion (§ 80.6–9), and failed at punishing both of them for their 'betrayal' (§ 82.1–4). If we imagine the narrator to have a "confession-compulsion" (Schmeling 1994/5: 221), this could explain why he – though he is in a position to do otherwise – places particular emphasis on his own failures and shortcomings.

Having a closer look at individual episodes, however, Schmeling's suggestion ceases to be thoroughly convincing. First of all, for his hy-

pothesis to make sense, Schmeling needs to assume that Encolpius the narrator can put words into the mouths of the story's characters. According to this view, for instance, it is the narrator who has Ascyltus call the protagonist a *gladiator obscene* and *nocturne percussor* (§ 9.8–9). In the introduction, I made clear that I find this methodological approach rather unfortunate, not least because it prevents us from systematically analysing the 'objective' story on the one hand and the narrator's (mis)representation of it on the other.[686]

Even if we accept Schmeling's methodology, however, considerable difficulties remain. In the First Rivalry over Giton (§§ 9–11), for example, how does it amount to a 'sin' or a 'mistake' on Encolpius' part that Ascyltus casts him in the penetrating role (e.g. *gladiator obscene* and *nocturne percussor,* § 9.8–9), i.e. the role that is in line with the norms of Roman masculinity? Possibly, the narrative about Giton's rape by Ascyltus amounts to a confession of how Encolpius failed to keep his beloved safe from harm. If this is the case, however, why does the narrator have the boy 'disappear' by means of paralipsis for the most part of the episode? Why does the narrator emphasise the farcical aspects of the story rather than Giton's suffering? In the reconciliation episode (§ 91), Schmeling must assume that the narrator – by the time he is telling the story – has seen through Giton's seductive ploy. Why, then, does the narrator not distance himself from the protagonist's gullibility but creates the impression that he is still as infatuated with Giton as on the first day? In short: While Schmeling's reading has some appealing qualities, it is insufficient to account for the wide range of narrative techniques we find in the *Satyrica.* At times, it is quite incompatible with the overall thrust of Petronius' episodes.

VI.2.3.2 *Mythomaniac* Encolpius

In a similar vein, I need to express reservations about Conte's hypothesis about the *mythomaniac* narrator and the implied author. At first sight, the First Rivalry over Giton (§§ 9–11) seems to confirm Conte's overall reading of the *Satyrica.* After all, the entire episode is modelled on an infamous mytho-historical precedent: the rape of Lucretia by Sextus Tarquinius according to Livy and Ovid. Arguably, Encolpius tries to identify himself with Lucretia's husband Collatinus, who plays an important

686 Cf. esp. section I.5.3. Narrator vs. (Implied) Author.

part in avenging the crime. The implied author, however, puts the resourceful Ascyltus in Encolpius' way, thus making sure Encolpius' attempt at greatness comes to nothing.

On closer inspection, however, the case is not as straightforward. While it is true that the narrator is responsible for some references to the Lucretia story (e.g. *precibus etiam iracundiam miscui,* § 9.3. ~ *miscere precibus minas,* Liv. 1.58.3), the clearest reference of all is made by Ascyltus (quoted by Giton): *si Lucretia es … Tarquinium invenisti* (§ 9.5). Clearly, then, the character who most arrogantly identifies himself with a mytho-historical role model is not Encolpius but Ascyltus. At the very least, we need to acknowledge that here, as in other cases, the characters around Encolpius are no less *mythomaniac* than himself. Claiming that the implied author's game pertains only to Encolpius does not do justice to Petronius' work. It might be more accurate to state that in the *Satyrica* there is some *mythomania* in the story itself (displayed by Petronius' characters) and some additional *mythomania* in its representation (displayed by the narrator). Both 'layers' of *mythomania* complement each other, enhancing their parodic effect.

My findings concerning the reconciliation episode (§ 91) are of a different nature. Here, it seems very clear that Petronius' readers/listeners are allowed to amuse themselves at Encolpius' expense: Giton twists the protagonist around his little finger, making him – quite unwittingly – take the blame for their separation earlier in the story. Arguably, again, this is part of the implied author's game: He exposes Encolpius' gullibility to the watchful eyes of the audience. Yet, several features of Conte's model are missing. Apart from a minor reference to Virgil's Lausus (§ 91.7 ~ Verg. *Aen.* 10.829 f.), the passage holds virtually no sign of *mythomania.* Equally importantly, as I have shown at length, using the implied author to explain the reconciliation episode means to break a butterfly on a wheel, as it were. For, if we are looking for the 'mastermind' of this episode, we need not look any further than Giton: He is the one exploiting Encolpius' gullibility to his own advantage. The (amusing) contrast does not lie between the story and the narrator's misrepresentation of it – which is when the concept of the implied author is truly helpful –, but it lies between Giton's perspective on the one hand and Encolpius' perspective on the other. Picking up on various cues in the text, the audience eventually comes to share Giton's 'superior' point of view – and this, incidentally, is exactly what theatregoers would do if they watched the reconciliation episode performed on stage.

VI.2.3.3 Self-Ironic Encolpius

At several points in this study, my reading has been broadly in line with that of Beck and his followers. I have argued, for instance, that Encolpius' narrative techniques throughout the First Rivalry over Giton (§§ 9–11) work toward the amusement of his audience: The narrator foregrounds the farcical aspects of the story even if it is at the expense of his past self. We may remember, for instance, the slapstick punishment meted out by Ascyltus, in combination with the episode's 'punchline' (§ 11.4). At § 11.2 the narrator even introduces an amusing *double entendre* that is not part of the story as such: *opertum me amiculo evolvit,* punning on the ambiguity of *amiculo* ("cloak" and/or "little friend"). In this case, as in many others, it is indisputable that the narrator intentionally enhances the entertaining qualities of the story.

My findings concerning the suicide passage (§ 94.8–15) are equally compatible with Beck's views. At the end of the passage, the narrator divulges a key piece of information that the protagonist is not aware of at the time: the fact that the 'deadly' razor is blunt (§ 94.14–5), making clear that Giton's suicide attempt is nothing but a charade. What is more, the narrator explicitly describes the protagonist's suicide as 'mimic' (*mimicam mortem,* § 94.15) and as the product of play-acting (*fabula inter amantes luditur,* § 95.1). He thereby joins those who 'know better' (Giton, Eumolpus, Corax, and the audience) and makes his past self the sole butt of the joke. This, in fact, is a prototypical example of Beck's distinction between the naïve protagonist and the self-ironic narrator.

Yet, we have also observed that there are limits to Beck's reading. In the reconciliation episode (§ 91), for instance, there is no indication whatsoever as to an (ironic) distance between the two Encolpii. As far as we can tell, the protagonist is hopelessly infatuated with Giton, and the narrator – albeit 'older' – is none the wiser: It is the narrator's sincere aim to share his happy memory of having been reunited with his beloved Giton. The amusing qualities of the episode are not created by the narrator's ironic detachment, but (primarily) by Giton's manipulative skills and by the symmetry of the story elements.

Even in the case of the suicide passage, Beck's hypothesis requires qualification. For, we should not go as far as to posit a significant difference in character between the two Encolpii: The narrator's techniques outlined above do not amount to true 'maturity', but they are largely restricted to poking fun at one's own stupidity/gullibility after the fact. This is a 'character trait', however, that the narrator has in common with

the protagonist. It is Encolpius at the time of the action, for instance, who starts to thank a strange soldier for stopping his haphazard 'killing spree' (*coepi grassatoris audaciae gratias agere,* § 82.4). Self-irony, then, is clearly not restricted to the narrator. It is merely the case that the 'older' Encolpius – by virtue of looking back at the story – enjoys the benefit of hindsight much more frequently than his 'younger' counterpart.

VI.2.3.4 The Function of the Narrator

Throughout this study, I have pointed out that there are (at least) two sides to Petronius' narrator that deserve scholarly attention. On the one hand, the narrator is the 'older version' of Encolpius the protagonist. As such, he has certain emotions and/or character traits that may shine through his words. As outlined above, we may sometimes gain the impression that the narrator is making a confession and/or trying to unduly exalt himself and/or aiming at amusing his audience. It can hardly be stressed enough, though, that clear cases of narrating focalisation are exceedingly rare, i.e. that in the vast majority of cases the narrator's standpoint is indistinguishable from that of the protagonist.

On the other hand, we need to acknowledge that – simultaneously to being a (more or less distinct) character – Encolpius the narrator fulfils the basic function of being the intermediary between the story and the audience. Since Petronius chose to have a homodiegetic narrator tell the story, this narrator must do more than simply reflect his own (and/or the protagonist's) point of view. In more general terms, he must make sure Petronius' readers/listeners receive all information they need for understanding (and enjoying) the *Satyrica.* In other words: Encolpius the narrator needs to be the audience's eyes and ears at all times.

This dual function of the narrator – being/representing a character in the story and being the audience's only informer – is responsible for many of the inconsistencies that have stimulated scholarly debates.[687]

687 Cf. e.g. Winkler's (1985: 75) remarks on similar phenomena in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*: "we may now say that *The Golden Ass* tries to get a combined maximum effect out of both heterodiegesis (sheer storytelling) and the several forms of homodiegesis (accountable narration of what happened)." Cf. also *ibid.* 81: "In modern mystery novels, even when there is a detective, the principle that governs the construction of the text is not the detective figure but the understanding of the reader. The function of the detective is that of an ideal reader, present in the text as a representative of the reader to review facts, draw partial conclusions, and pose the challenge of understanding the whole. The function is necessary, the character is not."

This is the case for all paralepses mentioned in this study – these being prototypical examples of what happens when a homodiegetic narrator is required to look beyond his (plausible) field of vision. Other such inconsistencies include the fact that Encolpius, who is otherwise vainglorious, emphasises the farcical aspects of his own punishment at § 11.2–4; or that in the reconciliation episode (§ 91) the narrator brings out the symmetry of the story elements even though he (as a 'character') apparently has not understood that Giton turned the tables against him; or that in the suicide passage the narrator devotes only a few words to his own suicide attempt (§ 94.8) even though, not much earlier, his lament about a very similar situation had filled an entire chapter (§ 81). None of this makes sense if we assume that the narrator's mode(s) of storytelling solely depend on Encolpius' character or agenda. We need to acknowledge that the narrator's stance, at least in part, changes according to the nature of the episode he is presenting to the audience. The effects certain narrative techniques create are not necessarily the same as what the narrator 'wants'.

While my suggestion might seem unsatisfactory to those who seek a sense of 'order' in the *Satyrica,* it is important to note that the stance of the narrator is not the only area in which Petronius sacrifices strict plausibility for the sake of momentary effects. How else can we explain that Giton, when he finally talks about the rape (attempt) by Ascyltus, highlights the rapist's penchant for role-playing (*si Lucretia es …,* § 9.5) more so than his own suffering? Or that Encolpius the protagonist 'has forgotten' about Eumolpus' excessive sexual appetite in the Third Rivalry over Giton (§ 92.1–94.7) even though he had listened to the old man's tale about the Pergamene youth shortly before (§§ 85–7)? Or that Eumolpus, otherwise a desperately poor poet, can afford a personal servant exactly when the plot calls for a barber (§ 94.12)? The list could be much longer. My point is that, often enough, Petronius is concerned with creating certain effects – such as suspense, surprise or comic irony – much more than with creating a story/narrative of perfect verisimilitude.

Much of the same, of course, is true for many comedies discussed in this study. In Plautus' *Miles gloriosus* (1416) the soldier Pyrgopolinices, who relishes nothing more than his 'manliness', makes an out-of-character pun about losing his testicles. Numerous slaves in the *fabula palliata* joke about sexual (and other forms of) exploitation even though they should be painfully aware of the suffering this entails (e.g. Plaut. *Mostell.* 894 or *Rud.* 1074). In Plautus' *Menaechmi,* Sosicles travels around the world in order to find his twin brother; when people start mistaking

him for somebody else, however, it never occurs to Sosicles that these people must know the very person he is looking for. In comedies such imperfections are taken for granted, whereas in the case of the *Satyrica* scholars (myself included) often wish to resolve them through ever greater ingenuity.

My point is certainly not that the *Satyrica* is 'flawed' – after all, if you look closely enough, you will find inconsistencies in almost any extended piece of fiction. Rather, I hope to have shown that there is no one-fits-all answer to the (narratological) questions raised by Petronius' text. The narrator shapes the story as much as the story shapes the narrator. As early as 1968, J. P. Sullivan noted this very fact about Encolpius – albeit about the protagonist rather than the narrator:

> The character of Encolpius, alternately romantic and cynical, brave and timorous, malevolent and cringing, jealous and rational, sophisticated and naïve, is composed of *those traits, even if contradictory, which are appropriate responses to the demands of the particular episode.*[688]

I may conclude this study by adapting Sullivan's words to the stance of Encolpius the narrator:

> The narrator of the *Satyrica,* alternately sober and sentimental, witty and outwitted, censorious and flattering, omniscient and forgetful, self-abasing and complacent, is composed of *those traits, even if contradictory, which are appropriate responses to the demands of the particular episode.*

688 Sullivan (1968: 119), original emphasis.

VII

Final Remarks: The Sex Life of Petronius' Characters

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My study did not set out to settle the question about the genre of the *Satyrica.* In fact, it may have added to the uncertainties about Petronius' place in Graeco-Roman literary history. For, even though I have identified a wide range of comic *topoi* in the *Satyrica,* my conclusion naturally cannot be that Petronius' work *is* a comedy. No matter how much the *Satyrica* may remind us of stage productions, it will always remain a written narrative. My suggestion here is of a different nature: As far as I can see, Petronian scholarship should not overstress the importance of assigning the *Satyrica* to a specific genre. After all, as we have observed, no scholar seriously believes the *Satyrica* to be a 'typical' representative of any genre (known or unknown). No matter what you assume to have been Petronius' 'starting point' – be it the novel, (Menippean) satire or Milesian tales – it seems clear that he developed his text into something that defies pre-defined categories.[689]

The potential of *Quellenforschung* – beyond what has long been common knowledge – is highly limited in the case of the *Satyrica.* We need to acknowledge that, by the time Petronius was writing, a large proportion of the elements he uses had become commonplaces of various literary forms, many of which are 'generic hybrids' themselves. This is why when we encounter a specific element in the *Satyrica* – for instance the theme of sexual rivalry – we cannot be sure whether Petronius is parodying a certain genre (e.g. the novel, historiography or tragedy) or whether he is drawing on a genre that did not treat the element seriously in the first place (e.g. satire or comedy). Unless we find clear verbal echoes of specific reference texts – as in the case of Livy's *ab urbe condita* in the

689 Cf. section I.4. The *Satyrica* and the Graeco-Roman Literary Tradition.

First Rivalry over Giton (§§ 9–11) – we are quite at a loss as to identifying Petronius' sources or inspirations.

This caveat should caution us against hastily assigning any given element in the *Satyrica* to a definite 'genre of origin'. When Johana Augier-Grimaud (2014: 111), for instance, asserts that the mockery of *pathici* must go back to (verse) satire, she forgets that satire itself had incorporated elements from various other genres and that, in fact, the derision of penetrated men had been a *topos* of comedy from Aristophanes onwards.[690] Much of the same is the case when Natalie Breitenstein (ed. 2009 *ad* § 10.2) compares Encolpius to the parasites of satire and epigram: There is no mention of comedy, where the parasite had been a stock character much longer.[691] Again, my point is not that the *Satyrica* is more (likely) indebted to comedy than to other genres, but merely that in most cases we cannot make definite assertions.

One hypothesis that deserves particular attention is Richard Heinze's (1899) widely held view that the *Satyrica* amounts to a parody of the 'idealising' novel, i.e. the genre represented by the works of Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, Achilles Tatius, Longus, and Heliodorus.[692] The 'idealising' novel is said to star a man and a woman in love who are of a bourgeois background and who are faithful to each other throughout the narrative. According to Heinze, Petronius parodies this pattern by having the *Satyrica* star Encolpius and Giton, two low-life characters who are unfaithful to each other and who, significantly, are both males. A number of objections against Heinze's hypothesis have been raised by previous scholars in the course of the past decades: Firstly, it is unclear whether Petronius even knew any 'idealising' novels. Secondly, recent papyrus finds suggest that the novel is a much vaguer parodic target than Heinze assumed. Thirdly, even if accepted, Heinze's interpretation can only account for certain sections of the *Satyrica*; it cannot fruitfully be applied, for instance, to the *cena Trimalchionis* (§§ 26.7–78).

In this study I have objected, above all, against the last part of Heinze's hypothesis, i.e. that Petronius parodies the 'idealising' novel by substituting a male-female couple with a male-male one.[693] Essentially, this view hinges on sexual norms that are modern rather than ancient:

690 Cf. section II.3. Other Male-Male Relationships in the Comic Tradition.

691 Cf. section III.2.2.2. Sex and Food.

692 Cf. section I.4.2.2. The *Satyrica* as a Parody.

693 Cf. section II. Overall Aspects: Sexuality in the *Satyrica,* the 'Idealising' Novel and the Comic Tradition.

Unlike many people of the past centuries and decades, ancient Romans were little concerned with whether males – who are at the centre of the *Satyrica* – were sexually interested in females or males. Desiring young and beautiful bodies was the norm, regardless of the person's sex. What mattered in the eyes of Roman society was that a 'true male' must always (appear to) play the insertive part in sexual intercourse. Allowing oneself to be penetrated was considered shameful, as it meant to approach the sexual status of women and slaves or other non-citizens. Male-male sex was only regarded as unproblematic if its dynamics reflected the social hierarchy (e.g. if a citizen male penetrated his own slaves or non-citizen prostitutes).

I have emphasised that in the *Satyrica,* the altercation between Encolpius and Ascyltus (§ 9.6–10.7) being a prime example, no male character is ever mocked or criticised for being interested in sex with other males. Rather, the insinuation is that they fail(ed) to perform the penetrative role (with whatever partner). Since, therefore, Petronius does not make fun of male-male sexual relationships *per se,* there is little basis for arguing they are integral to his parodic technique. The only way to uphold Heinze's hypothesis is to claim that Petronius' parody functions on a strictly literary level: He ridicules genre expectations rather than homoeroticism as such.

However, even this revised version of Heinze's interpretation is little convincing. The basic claim that Petronius turns heteronormative narratives on their heads is incorrect. It is not only that the extant 'idealising' novels themselves treat male-male sex without any apparent disapproval;[694] equally importantly, the sexual interests of Petronius' characters are plainly not restricted to males. For instance, Encolpius' (desired) sex partners include not only men – Giton, likely Ascyltus (§ 9.10) and Philomela's son (§ 140.11) – but also several women: Hedyle (§ 106.2, 113.3), Tryphaena (§ 113.7–8), Chrysis (§ 126.8), Circe (esp. § 126.13–18), and Doris (§ 126.18). The same kind of indiscriminate desire is clearly attested for Eumolpus, Trimalchio, Habinnas, and even Giton. Rather than by a predilection for other males, Petronian men are characterised by an indiscriminate – and often excessive – sexual appetite.

My suggestion is that Petronius' depiction of male characters should be interpreted against the backdrop of indiscriminate sexual desire in the comic tradition. Apart from *senes amatores,* this trait is displayed, for instance, by Toxilus in Plautus' *Persa* and Pyrgopolinices in the *Miles*

694 Cf. n. 162 for references.

gloriosus (esp. 1104–13). In fact, I was able to show that all major constellations of male-male sexual relationships in the *Satyrica* have striking forerunners in ancient comedy, ranging from Aristophanes to Plautus and the *fabula Atellana*: master-slave relationships, Greek-style pederasty, ridicule of penetrated males, and teacher-student relationships. Still, I must advise caution: While it is tempting to speculate that the sex life of Petronius' characters was inspired by (farcical) comedies, I cannot prove this hypothesis beyond doubt. What can be stated with a high degree of confidence, however, is that Heinze's long-established interpretation can no longer be taken for granted. It must be re-evaluated and, quite possibly, laid to rest.

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If Petronius' *Satyrica* were published today, we would advise our children not to read it. Speaking in 21st-century terms, the book is a manifesto of toxic masculinity. Men in positions of power treat others as mere sex objects, viewing as trifles incidents of sexual denigration, exploitation, and violence. Still, if we put the *Satyrica* in its proper literary and socio-historical context, the text helps tease out the contradictions of the past and the present.

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