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THE SATYRICON OF PETRONIUS

AND NERONIAN 'TASTE'

PETRONIUS' SATYRICON AS EVIDENCE FOR DOCTRINES OF
'TASTE' IN THE AGE OF NERO

By

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this dissertation is to provide a critical analysis and evaluation of the Satyricon of Petronius, by placing it in its historical, literary, and artistic context. Neronian taste therefore becomes the unifying theme around which the chapters are organized. Chapter One immerses Petronius within the cultural pursuits of Nero's aula, while Chapter Two pursues the question of court literary taste. Chapter Three consists of a Campanian Commentary to the Cena Trimalchionis and thus explicates the Neronian arts of etiquette and leisure. The Appendix re-evaluates the strong evidence for a Neronian dating of the work and for the identification of the consular T. Petronius Niger as both author of the Satyricon and Nero's elegantiae arbiter.

This dissertation reflects the position that the Satyricon is an example of literary παίγνιον, a non-serious court amusement, which takes as its central theme the παιδικὸς ἔρως motif so typical of ancient symposium literature and likewise appropriate to the emperor's own predilections. The work fits well within the tastes of Roman σατυρικοί, the unbroken line of aristocrats, who, from the period of the late Republic, left the Capitol to pursue pleasures both cultural and physical in the resort cities of Campania.

The thesis is advanced that Petronius came to prominence as Seneca faded from favour, and that the Satyricon replaced Seneca's worthier tragedies and treatises as a court entertainment. Evidence from the Epistulae Morales of Seneca, written after his retirement, indicates that the former tutor of Nero made plaintive criticisms against the low habits both of language and lifestyle in which the aula indulged under the influence of Tigellinus and Petronius.

The nature of the Neronian literary Renaissance is surveyed with special emphasis upon the impact of Nero's personal taste upon letters. Neronian literature, regardless of the author or genre in question, strives to achieve the effect of pathos, nostalgie de la boue, theatrical exaggeration, and naturalism naive to the point of embarrassment. Petronius displays all of these characteristics as he narrates his tale of the graeculus, Encolpius, who, like the artist-emperor, finds himself trapped within the constraints of the Roman cultural climate. Petronius combines the genres of Roman Menippean satire and Greek prose fiction into a graphic mélange of the foibles of his age.

Chapter three comprises a social commentary to the Cena Trimalchionis in which the Cena is described against the backdrop of its Campanian locale. The many homely details of his life, his house and its furnishings,

which Trimalchio relates, are compared to the extant archaeological evidence for life at Pompeii, Herculaneum, Puteoli, and the other towns of the Phlegraean Fields. The commentary is intended for use in the classroom at the university level.

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CHAPTER ONE

PETRONIUS ARBITER AND NERO ARTIFEX

This chapter will survey and speculate upon the political and cultural touch points which existed between Petronius and Nero as evidenced by the Satyricon. It will be demonstrated that the Satyricon is a singular example of court literature, geared to the rapidly shifting tastes and predilections of an undisguised and unfettered, yet remarkably impressionable, autocrat. Nero was the first Roman ruler ever to style himself as an artist-emperor. His interest in aesthetics led him to foster a literary and artistic renaissance which rivalled the efforts of Augustus himself. But whatever his artistic temperament had built, his personal vanity and insecurities would subsequently destroy with a despot's chaotic thoroughness.¹

¹This is not meant to suggest that Nero was by any means totally incompetent or incapable of functioning in the realm of politics. Nero's personal habits had, in fact, very little impact on the well-governed state, prior to the fire of A.D. 64. Despite their exaggerations of the excesses of Nero, Tacitus, Suetonius and Dio Cassius clearly indicate that Rome was prospering peacefully in Nero's first ten years, the senate was functioning with some autonomy, the frontiers were well-guarded, and Italy and the provinces were thriving amidst good administration and peaceful security. See B.W. Henderson, The Life and Principate of the Emperor Nero (London: Methuen and Co., 1903), p. 14.

Nevertheless, his encouragement of the arts was prodigious, for it cannot be an accident that more literature has survived from the reign of Nero than from any other reign after Augustus.

Serious research is needed in order to estimate the full impact of Nero's changeable nature on Roman history and literature. As O. Murray states in his review of Brian H. Warmington's Nero: Reality and Legend, little further progress can be made toward a true assessment of Nero's reign until his personal vices are analysed as phenomena worthy of historical importance:

Nero and his personal vices were directly responsible for the overthrow of a dynasty, and for the greatest crisis of the early Empire.²

Like his most esteemed advisers, Seneca and Petronius, Nero was a curious blend of litterateur and active politician, who certainly understood Roman politics and the "system."³ Unlike his advisers, he lacked sufficient self-control not to succumb to the license provided by the totalitarian nature of his rule. One

²O. Murray, review of Nero: Reality and Legend (London: Chatto and Windus, 1969), by B.H. Warmington. Gnomon 43 (1971): 833.

³It is not my intention in this paper to accept the persona of Nero as depicted by Gilbert Charles-Picard, Auguste et Néron (Paris: Librairie Hachette, 1962) or Hans Peter L'Orange, Studies in Cosmic Kingship in the Ancient World (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1953). Charles-

almost wishes that Seneca had never taken the opportunity provided by the De Clementia to advise Nero of his omnipotence. In that work, Seneca portrayed him as the enforcer of fate with the power of life and death, vitae necisque gentibus arbiter (1.2). From the death of his mother in A.D. 59, Nero exercised his omnipotence to satisfy his personal whims and perversions. That those perversions were neither feigned nor controllable is clearly demonstrated by the rise of Ofonius Tigellinus, who appealed to Nero's lower instincts and used them for political and monetary gain as Nero himself alone could not.

Such intellectuals as Persius and, eventually, Seneca and his nephew Lucan were driven to seek solace from their lack of creative libertas in the cold and unreal perfection of Stoic dogma, with its vague theories of manly resolution in the face of loss of personal control. As Seneca and Lucan faded from the Neronian inner circle Petronius Arbiter emerged to prominence around A.D. 62,

Picard, p. 139, contends that Nero's Hellenism made him "un étranger à la tradition Romaine," while L'Orange, p. 28ff., sees Nero as having elevated himself to the status of a god, Nero-Helios, enshrined in his own personal Sonnenplast. See also H.P. L'Orange, "Domus Aurea der Sonnenplast," Symbolae Osloenses suppl. fasc. 9 (1942): 68-100. Nero's strong admiration for Hellenistic poetry, art, and architecture did not make him that anomalous among other wealthy Romans of his day, and does not validate his intention of converting the principate into a theocratic monarchy on the Hellenistic model. See A. Boëthius, The Golden House of Nero (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960), pp. 109-110, and J. Ward Perkins, "Nero's Golden House," Antiquity 30 (1956): 210-211.

apparently succeeding Seneca as one of Nero's advisers. The Satyricon may well have superseded Seneca's didactic tragedies as a long-running court entertainment.⁴ Its many levels of literary texture and social criticism would best befit a learned coterie. Its low comic and sub-literary romance elements were sufficiently removed from the emperor's own higher and more fanciful literary motives as to cause no immediate jealousy. The realistic and earthy tone of the work was calculated to harmonize with Nero's own inclinations:

A search for new 'realism' can be seen in his own nocturnal excursions, in the artful portrayal of low life by Petronius, in the interest in nature which found its expression in the Golden House.⁵

⁴P.G. Walsh, "Was Petronius a Moralist?" G&R 21 (1974): 190. Although Walsh accepts this premise, he is still hesitant to allow Nero a participatory knowledge of the work. Cf. Walsh, The Roman Novel (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), p. 70, pp. 137-139, where the Satyricon is likewise viewed as a roman à clef. Kenneth F.C. Rose, The Date and Authorship of the Satyricon (Leiden: Brill, 1970), pp. 69-74 and 82-94, puts forward the view that one of Petronius' chief aims in writing the Satyricon was to dig at Seneca and Lucan. See this monograph for extensive lists of possible instances of parody of both authors. John P. Sullivan's views concur with Rose's both in The Satyricon of Petronius (London: Faber and Faber, 1968), pp. 193-213, and in "Petronius, Seneca and Lucan: A Neronian Literary Feud?" TAPA 99 (1968): 456. See also William Calder, "Seneca, Tragedian of Imperial Rome," CJ 72 (1976): 1-11.

⁵Murray, "Review of Warmington," p. 833. Encolpius and the Miles: Sat. 82.4. For Nero as nocturnus grassator: Suet. Nero 26.2; Tac. Ann. 13.25; Dio Cass. 61.8.1. Nero's relative, Marc Antony, and Cleopatra practised a similar form of amusement: Plut. Ant. 29.

i. Changes in the character of Nero's aula ca. A.D. 62.

There is no implication in the Tacitean biography that Petronius Arbiter⁶ ever lamented his position at court or ever considered stepping aside as Seneca had done, not even when, after the questionable death of Sextus Afranius Burrus, Ofonius Tigellinus became Prefect of the Praetorian Guard.⁷ Tacitus vividly chronicles this low-born Sicilian's career of cruelty, adultery, and delation, and paints him in Sejanus-like hues, emphasizing his total determination to dominate the personality and whim of Nero and to direct his vacillating policies.⁸ Tigellinus took advantage of Nero's ever-present fears and suspicions in order to exterminate many of the scions of the few remaining illustrious houses of Rome.⁹

In A.D. 62, Tigellinus encouraged Nero in his plan to set aside Octavia in favor of Poppaea Sabina. Despite

⁶For the testimonia on Petronius see Appendix I below, p. 209-211.

⁷Dio Cass. 42.13.3. As an advisor, Burrus was always blunt with Nero: ὅτι ὁ Τιγελλῖνος διεδέξατο τὸν Βοῦρρον, ἀσελγείῃ καὶ μαιφονίῃ πάντας τοὺς καθ' αὐτὸν ἀνθρώπους ὑπεράρας. Note also Tac. Ann. 14.51, where Nero is blamed for Burrus' death instead of Tigellinus; his death may well have been caused by illness.

⁸Tac. Ann. 14.49-50.

⁹Tac. Ann. 14.57-59, the deaths of Sulla and Rubellius Plautus; Ann. 14.65, Doryphorus and Pallas were eliminated in A.D. 62 as well. Doryphorus, because as Nero's former lover he resented Poppaea; Pallas, because of his enormous personal wealth.

the loyalty which Octavia incited in the Roman population, Poppaea succeeded in achieving Octavia's banishment on a patently false charge of adulterium with the ever-helpful Anicetus, who had facilitated Agrippina's demise three years earlier. After a few days' residence in exile on Pandateria, Octavia, vicesimo aetatis anno, was killed by a combination of opened veins and suffocation. The unnecessary decapitation of Octavia's body may reflect more about Poppaea's cruelty than Nero's, if the incident is true:

Additurque atrocior saevitia, quod caput
amputatum latumque in urbem Poppaea vidit.
(Tac. Ann. 14.64)

Although Tigellinus' initial appeal for Nero may have lain in his knowledge of debauchery, in which he was a student of Agrippina, and in his interest in horses and chariot-racing, the rise of Tigellinus did not occur without the support of others at court. One must, as Ronald Syme states, also surmise "the quiet operations of persons superior in birth, rank, and talent."¹⁰ Syme suggests as possible co-operators Vibius Crispus (Cos. suff.

¹⁰ Ronald Syme, Tacitus, 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 1:387, confirms his support for the identification of Petronius elegantiae arbiter as T. Petronius Niger Cos. suff. A.D. 62 (n. 6 above). For a full treatment of the Petronian authorship controversy, see n. 6 above and Appendix I.

A.D. 62), Eprius Marcellus (Cos. suff. A.D. 62), and Petronius (who may be T. Petronius Niger, Cos. suff. A.D. 62). The new circle of intimates also included A. Vitellius, Cos. A.D. 48, the sycophantic gourmand and future emperor, and another Petronius, Petronius Turpilianus, Cos. A.D. 61, who served Nero faithfully in the Pisonian Conspiracy and as governor of Britain.¹¹ Dio Cassius impugned the loyalty of Turpilianus' actions as commander against the rebellious forces in A.D. 68, but the issue is far from resolved.¹² The Petronii had a proven record of surviving the transition of emperors as exemplified by P. Petronius, legate of Syria in Gaius' last days, but Turpilianus was eventually eliminated by Galba.

The two Petronii in Nero's service, Turpilianus and the Arbiter, found themselves amid remarkably inauspicious and degenerate company. Eprius Marcellus was a man of mean origin who was best known for his violent and scabrous oratory, and for his frequent and virulent attacks upon the Stoic leader Thrasea Paetus. His appearances in Tacitus underline his role as a mouth-piece for the anti-

¹¹For A. Vitellius: Tac. Ann. 11.23 and 14.49; for Petronius Turpilianus: Ann. 14.29, 39; 15.72.

¹²Dio Cass. 63.27.1; Plut. Galba 15.17.

Stoic views of the post-Senecan aula.¹³ The death of Rubellius Plautus which occurred at Tigellinus' urging in A.D. 62 marks the beginning of that trenchant opposition to the Stoics which typifies the last years of Nero. Rubellius Plautus was doomed from the moment of the appearance of the comet in A.D. 60, which was considered to presage a change of rulers. At that time, Nero banished this great-great grandson of Augustus to his Asian properties, despite which action, Plautus continued to deport himself with seditious Stoic arrogance. Later, under the spell of Tigellinus and his new supporters, Nero eliminated Plautus, both as a political threat and as a potential source of revenue. It is clear that at any given time, Nero was neither any worse nor any better than those who were advising him.¹⁴

The author of the Satyricon clearly detected an anti-Stoic and anti-aristocratic mood among his intended readership. Trimalchio's crowning achievement as inscribed on his monumental tomb is the declaration: ex parvo crevit; sestertium reliquit trecenties, nec umquam philosophum audivit, vale: et tu. (71.12)

¹³Tac. Dial. 1.8; Tac. Ann. 12.4; 13.33; 16.22, 26, 28, 33.

¹⁴Tac. Ann. 13.19. Agrippina was rumoured seeking a new alliance with Rubellius Plautus after Britannicus' death. For the comet, see Ann. 14.22 and see above n. 9.

In the aftermath of Seneca's expulsion in A.D. 62, Tigellinus may have controlled the strings of government, but the Senecan literary style with its Asian phrasings and resounding rhetorical point was far too ubiquitous to be quickly expunged. Nero himself was indelibly coloured by its lilting, delicate brush and lack of adherence to classical models.¹⁵ Lucan may have fallen out of official favour, but his style was still greatly imitated and echoed by lesser poets.

The Arbiter seems to have filled the cultural vacancy created by the forcible departure of the Annaei by offering an alternative literary aesthetic which was as tasteful as it was contemporary. His literary doctrines prescribed a return to the veneration of the classics of Augustan literature while also favoring the Neoteric movement and the preservation of that line of Hellenistic

¹⁵For criticism of Seneca, see Quint. Inst. 10.125-31 and for the fragments of Nero's poetry see Willy Morel, Fragmenta Poetarum Latinorum (Leipzig: Teubner, 1927), pp. 131-2, and Persius' imitations of Nero in Pers. 1.99-102. Seneca gives a sample line of Nero's poetry: colla Cytheriacae splendent agitata columbae, QNat. 1.5.6. Tacitus deplores the expense of the Neronia of A.D. 60 and states that the festival provided unneeded opportunity for Roman youths to hear fractos sonos et dulcedinem vocum (Ann. 14.21). Tacitus (Ann. 14.16.2) is of the opinion that Nero did not write his own poetry, but Suetonius (Nero 52.3) has the copybooks in hand to disprove this. Philostratus (Vita Apollonii 4.39) records that Apollonius of Tyana was almost not quick enough to applaud when he passed a musician singing songs composed by Nero.

vitality and emotionalism which immediately preceded the great and golden works of Vergil and Horace. There was good precedent for combining the two literary impulses at court, since Vergil himself was once a participatory Neoteric, who had lived and studied his art with Siro and Philodemus at Naples.¹⁶ What better influence could Nero follow in his intended epic on the history of Rome than Romanus Vergilius himself?¹⁷ Petronius' literary aesthetic afforded the artist-emperor a means of being Greek and

¹⁶ Servius (ad Ecl. 6.13) states that Vergil had studied with the Greek Epicurean Siro whose home was at Neapolis. The Bay of Naples area with its strong Greek tradition and love of leisure played a constant role in Vergil's life. He wrote the Georgics there between 36 and 29 B.C., and he was buried there. If Catalepton 8 is correctly attributed to Vergil, he at one time owned a villa there purchased from Siro. See John D'Arms, Romans on the Bay of Naples (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 230-1. otiosa Neapolis (Hor. Epod. 5.43) was "a perennial favorite for tourists, bohemians, philosophers, writers and dilettantes of all nationalities and backgrounds," Alexander G. McKay, Vergil's Italy (Greenwich, Conn.: New York Graphic Society, 1970), p. 196. Nero's grecophilism, although admittedly extreme, was well within the lifestyle of many Roman aristocrats who made the journey to Southern Italy for pleasures both intellectual and physical.

On Nero's shift to classicism, Suet. Nero 54.1, states that he came to admire Vergil in his later years. See also Sullivan, The Satyricon of Petronius, p. 87, and A.V. Soady, "Romance Elements in Vergil's Aeneid I-IV," in Erotica Antiqua, Acta of the International Conference on the Ancient Novel, ed. B.P. Reardon (Bangor, Wales, 1976), pp. 40-42, and below chap. 2, pp. 79ff.

¹⁷ Romanusque Vergilius, Sat. 118. Towards the end of his life Nero planned to appear as an actor and dance Vergili Turnum, Suet. Nero 54. For Nero's historical epic which was never realized, see A. Momigliano, "Nero," The Cambridge Ancient History vol. 10, chap. 21, p. 719, and Suet. Nero 43. The Cambridge Ancient History is henceforth abbreviated as CAH.

Roman at the same time, a way of satisfying the strictures of his public duties as emperor while privately indulging his love of Hellenistic culture with its promise of greater intellectual and personal freedom.

Petronius Arbiter aptly put the two-faced, posturing, moralizing Stoics in their places when, with Ovidian precision, he pointed up the blatant discrepancy between their personal actions and their public utterances:

quid me constricta spectatis fronte Catones
 damnatisque novae simplicitatis opus?
 sermonis puri non tristis gratia ridet,
 quodque facit populus, candida lingua refert.
 nam quis concubitus, Veneris quis gaudia nescit?
 quis vetat in tepido membra calere toro?
 ipse pater veri doctos Epicurus amare
 iussit et hoc vitam dixit habere τέλος.
 (132.15)

This elegiac indictment is followed by a most appropriate apothegm:¹⁸ nihil est hominum inepta persuasione falsius nec ficta severitate ineptius. (132.16)

Seneca must have cringed with righteous familiarity when Eumolpus, the greedy old poetaster and tutor, first appeared in Petronius' work:

intravit pinacothecam senex canus, exercitati
 vultus et qui videretur nescio quid magnum
 promittere. (83.7)

Eumolpus proceeds to describe to Encolpius how he is a poet non humillimi spiritus and that he is poorly dressed because

¹⁸ The intervening lacuna in the text is noted, but must have provided further words in the same vein.

amor ingenii neminem umquam divitem fecit. This is a direct slap at the prodigious wealth of Seneca, but, as Nero informed his old tutor, some freedmen were worth even more than Seneca.¹⁹

Eumolpus' (and Seneca's) amor divitiarum becomes clearer as he describes how qui solas extruere divitias curant, nihil volunt inter homines melius credi quam quod ipsi tenent (84.2). Despite his apparent scorn for lucre Eumolpus makes certain that Encolpius is quite aware that he was a salaried staff member when he went into Asia: a quaestore (essem) stipendio eductus. His subsequent telling of the tale of the Pergamene Boy ends on an unexpected note as well: that the young boy is more honest and generous than his paedagogus, Eumolpus, in his attitudes toward both material gain and sexual pleasure. This denouement must have raised a smile from Nero.

The relentless guying of Seneca continues as Eumolpus proceeds to deliver a ringing declamation concerning how financial greed is causing the current decline in the arts: pecuniae cupiditas instituit haec tropica (88.2). Anyone even vaguely familiar with Seneca's Naturales Quaestiones, a work of his early retirement, could not help but be struck by the similarity in tone and

¹⁹For the masterfully paired speeches, set upon the occasion of Seneca's "retirement," see Tac. Ann. 14.52-56.

stuffiness, as Eumolpus delivers his exegesis on the great scientists and artists of the past. If P.G. Walsh is correct and Eumolpus has indeed fed Encolpius misinformation concerning Democritus and Lysippos and Myron, then the joke is all the more amusing, since Seneca's accuracy as a scientific researcher is also called into question.²⁰

Nero would of course have agreed that financial meanness and a shortage of money in general were indeed the causes of the decline in his ability to provide sufficient funds for his artistic endeavors. He felt that Augustus and Julius Caesar had forwarded the arts and so should he.²¹ Many of the proscriptions undertaken by Tigellinus and Nero were implemented in order to acquire stipends for the building and decoration of the Golden House.

²⁰For Seneca's scorning of sumptuous domestic decorations, see Ep. 115.10-12; for his "scientific style," QNat. 7.31. Walsh, Roman Novel, pp. 94-95, uses the Elder Pliny's similar compendium to reveal the flaws in Eumolpus' judgment. Cf. Pliny HN 34.7, where Lysippos is described as a rapid, not dilatory sculptor and HN 34.58, where Myron's aesthetic realism is criticized. The Halosis Troiae which follows is also a gibe at Seneca's tragic style, which is discussed in chapter 2, below.

²¹See Pliny HN 35.21, 26-28 on the generous patronage which Augustus and Julius Caesar offered to painters. Encolpius' lament about the decline in painting is more suited to the principates of Tiberius and Claudius when few new trends were introduced, than it is to Nero's time. See K. Schefold, La peinture pompéienne: Essai sur l'évolution de sa signification, trans., rev., and augmented by J.M. Croissille, Latomus, 108 (Brussels, 1972), pp. 163-64; W.J.T. Peters, Landscapes in Romano-Campanian Mural Painting, (Assen: Van Gorcum, 1963), pp. 161ff.; also, J.J. Pollitt, The Art of Rome, c. 753 B.C. - 337 A.D.; Sources and Documents (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966), esp. p. 116.

Nero's lavish tours and stage performances in Southern Italy and later in Greece were also a drain on the Imperial fiscus.²² In addition, his troupe of Equites Augustiani and the Alexandrian claqueurs had to be maintained, not to mention the demands of the Praetorian Guard.²³

Throughout his reign, amidst ever-mounting imperial expenses, Nero had been subjected to Seneca's continuous groushings against luxuria. Seneca's philosophical writings reveal that the richer he became, the more he felt compelled to decry wealth. After A.D. 62, in the period of his enforced retirement, Seneca used the medium of the Epistulae Morales through which to express his displeasure at Nero's profligacy, especially in connection with Nero's architectural projects.²⁴ Seneca often returned to the stock theme of the superiority of philosophy over art as a respectable source of pleasure in life, while hoarding a personal cache of wealth which the artist-emperor direly needed in

²²Tac. Ann. 15.33; 16.10; Suet. Nero 20.

²³Tac. Ann. 14.15; Suet. Nero 20. Dio Cass. 61.20 claims that he later added 4,000 sturdy plebeians (soldiers), with fixed salaries for the leaders, a standardized system of applause, and uniform dress which included the pomaded hair which Petronius gives to his cinaedus (pathicus) in the Quartilla episode: per frontem sudantis accaciae rivi (Sat. 23.5).

²⁴Seneca Ep. 88.6. Cf. Trimalchio's bath Sat. 73.1, a tawdry and cramped converted bakery. Cf. Mart. 7.34: Quid Nerone peius, quid thermis melius Neronianis?

order to finance his new aesthetic. Under the circumstances, the wonder is not that Nero eventually ordered Seneca's suicide, but rather that Seneca was allowed to live as long as he did.

Seneca and Nero had often run at cross purposes on the issue of life's summa bona. Seneca had written on the uselessness of Corinthian bronze,²⁵ the pleasures of simple rooms unadorned with gold and silver furnishings and bronzes.²⁶ Yet a careful follower of Seneca's career might recall that in the Consolatio ad Helviam he had admitted his desire for aureis fulgentem vasis, supellectum et antiquis nominibus artificum argentum nobile, aes paucorum insania pretiosum.²⁷ On this, as on most issues, Seneca had difficulty with taking one position and holding to it, both in philosophical discourse and in life.

²⁵De Brev. Vit. 12.2. Augustus collected Corinthian pieces and T. Petronius consularis broke a myrrhine vase to keep Nero from acquiring it after his death (Pliny H.N. 37.20). When Nero heard that the armies had revolted in A.D. 68, he broke some crystal goblets with Homeric scenes: duos scyphos gratissimi usus, quos Homerios a caelatura carminum Homeri vocabat (Suet. Nero 47). Cf. Trimalchio's Homeric fetishes: paintings, Sat. 29, and cups 52, and Homeristae 59; also Trimalchio's ignorant dissertation on the origins of Corinthian bronzes, Sat. 50.

²⁶Tranq. 9.4.

²⁷Consol. ad Helv. 11.3.

ii. Evidence for a possible dating of the composition of certain episodes of the Satyricon.

Petronius abetted or perhaps exacerbated the emperor's disregard for Seneca's moralizings by taking continuous hits at Seneca's philosophical phrasings in the episodes of the Satyricon. A. Collignon, and more recently, K.F.C. Rose and J.P. Sullivan have worked on the compilation of literary parallels between Seneca and Petronius.²⁸ Rose and Sullivan discovered that when one discounts instances of general Stoic truisms where no absolute one to one instance of parody can be established, most of the remaining parallels come from the Epistulae Morales, the letters to Lucilius which occupied the last years of Seneca's life from a time near the beginning of his removal from Nero's court until at least September-October of A.D. 64 or early into A.D. 65.²⁹

The evidence of similarities between the sentiments of the Epistulae Morales and those expressed in the Satyricon can be used to establish some idea of the dates of composition of the Arbiter's lengthy work. If literary echoes of Seneca's letters can be firmly established as

²⁸A. Collignon, Étude sur Pétrone: La critique littéraire, l'imitation et la parodie dans le Satyricon (Paris: Hachette, 1892), pp. 291-303; Rose, Date and Authorship, pp. 70-74; and Sullivan, "Neronian Literary Feud," pp. 461-62.

²⁹Rose, Date and Authorship, p. 72.

appearing in any section of the Satyricon then there would be a strong indication of a terminus post quem for that passage in the Satyricon. Since the Epistulae Morales may be dated by means of internal evidence to the years A.D. 62-65, one can attempt to pair the two works with a certain degree of confidence. Rose³⁰ feels that the most incontrovertible evidence of literary rapprochement occurs between Seneca's Ep. 27.1.10 and Sat. 70.11-71,3, where, in a drunken state, Trimalchio imitates Seneca's high-minded reflections on the brotherhood of man:

Hoc prudentiam tuam, hoc eruditionem decet.
'Servi sunt.' Immo homines. 'Servi sunt.'
 Immo contubernales. 'Servi sunt.' Immo
 conservi, si cogitaveris tantundem in
 utrosque licere fortunae.
 (Ep. 47.1.10)

In the parallel passage in the Satyricon, Fortunata is preparing to dance the Cordax once again, and the slaves have been invited to join the banqueters when Trimalchio bursts forth with high philosophy in

³⁰ Ibid., p. 74, and Sullivan, Satyricon of Petronius, pp. 133-35. Martin S. Smith, ed., Petronii Arbitri Cena Trimalchionis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), p. 218, rejects this parallel but for no strong reason. I do agree with his caution that seekers after "Senecan echoes" should tread with care. See my remarks on the Maecenas parallel below, pp. 39-43. The parallel between the mock funerals is indeed weak, but the case for Calvisius Sabinus is made somewhat stronger by the vivid literary evocation which he is given (Seneca Ep. 27.5).

fractured Latin:

diffusus hac contentione Trimalchio 'amici'
inquit 'et servi homines sunt et aequae unum
lactembiberunt, etiam si illos malus fatus
oppresserit. tamen me salvo cito aquam
liberam gustabunt. ad summam, omnes illos
in testamento meo manu mitto. (Sat. 71.3)

Seneca expatiates further on why men think it
degrading to dine with one of their slaves (cum servo
suo). The slaves look on, Seneca states, standing at
their posts while the master fills himself to the point
of evacuation:

at infelicibus servis movere labra ne in
hoc quidem, ut loquantur, licet. Virga
murmur omne compescitur, et ne fortuita
quidem verberibus excepta sunt, tussis
sternamenta, singultus. Magno malo ulla
voce interpellatum silentium luitur. Nocte
tota ieiuni mutique perstant. (Ep. 47.2)

Contrast this with Petronius' description of the
actions of the slaves. When Trimalchio invites them to
join his cena, Encolpius is almost trampled under:

quid multa? paene de lectis deiecti
sumus, adeo totum triclinium familia
occupaverat. certe ego notavi super
me positum cocum, qui de porco anserem
fecerat, muria condimentisque fetentem.
nec contentus fuit recumbere, sed continuo
Ephesum tragoedum coepit imitari et
subinde dominum suum sponsione provocare
'si prasinus proximis circensibus primam
palmam'. (Sat. 70.11-13)

Petronius appears to be poking fun at Seneca in
this portion of the Satyricon by offering an example of
what this sort of liberality can lead to. The silent,
obedient servants of Seneca contrast brilliantly with the
loud and cheeky convivae of Trimalchio. Other instances

of possible literary cross-references between Petronius and Seneca have long been recognized, such as the similarities of character and behaviour between Seneca's Calvisius Sabinus and Petronius' Trimalchio.³¹ Seneca's description of Maecenas in Ep. 114 is also often mentioned as exhibiting elements of Trimalchio. There is no way of determining which came first, Petronius' Cena, with its boorish host and vulgar speakers, or Seneca's letter, which is a long harangue against current court life and cultural taste.

If Seneca's Epistulae Morales are preserved in their approximate order of composition, as they appear to be, Ep. 114 may have been written to counter the allurements and popularity of Petronius' Trimalchio and to criticize the general direction in which court letters were drifting under Petronius' influence. Rose dates Seneca's Ep. 104 to late summer or early autumn of A.D. 64 and Ep. 122 to September-October of the same year. The strong parallel between events in chapter 70 of Petronius and Ep. 47 of Seneca indicates that the character of Trimalchio was established some time before the composition of Ep. 114. Rose sets the approximate terminus post quem of chapter 70 of the Satyricon as mid A.D. 63. Of eight other

³¹Seneca Ep. 27.5. Gilbert Bagnani, "Trimalchio," Phoenix 8 (1954): 77-78; Sullivan, Satyricon of Petronius, pp. 129-132; Walsh, Roman Novel, p. 136.

strong parallels which he cites between Seneca's Epistles and the Cena, only one parallel refers to any letter written subsequent to Ep. 47. Sullivan's earliest relevant parallel cites Sat. 88 and Ep. 115.10-12.³²

It is Rose's purpose in so arguing to establish that contrary to the assumptions of some scholars, Petronius wrote the Carmen de bello civili portion of his work after Lucan's death in April, A.D. 65. His thesis is attractive and is based, once again, upon parallels between the Carmen de bello civili and Seneca's Epistulae Morales. But such a thesis is valuable for several other reasons; for, in addition to allowing Petronius knowledge of the full ten books of Lucan's work which many critics have tried to show,³³ such a thesis would also place Petronius within the aula Neronis prior

³²Rose, Date and Authorship, p. 73: Ep. 8.8, Sat. 55.5; Ep. 12.8, Sat. 52.9 and Sat. 78.5; Ep. 27.5, Sat. 48.4, 50.5; Ep. 40.2, Sat. 76.10; Ep. 47.1.10, Sat. 70.11-71.7; Ep. 47.9, Sat. 47.11; Ep. 88.44, Sat. 56.7. Sullivan, "Literary Feud," p. 461.

³³Florence T. Baldwin, The Bellum Civile of Petronius (New York: Columbia University Press, 1911); A.F. Sochatoff, "Imagery in the Poems of the Satyricon," CJ 65 (1970): 340-44; idem, "The Purpose of Petronius' Bellum Civile: A Re-examination," TAPA 93 (1962): 449ff., and Georg Luck, "On Petronius' 'Bellum Civile,'" AJP 93 (1972): 133-41, all assume that Petronius had knowledge of the entire work, with concentration upon Books 1-3 and 10.

Frederick Ahl suggests that books 9-10 of Lucan's work were composed amid the fervour and confidence created by the burgeoning Pisonian Conspiracy, therefore, largely

to the fire of A.D. 64 and retain him there for participation in the gathering of art works and the many other decisions on taste and style that had to be made in association with that undertaking. It may not be coincidental or totally owing to the conventions of the mime that Trimalchio's cena ends with the arrival of the fire brigade.³⁴ The Cena may have been completed shortly after the fire of A.D. 64.

If chapter 88 to the end of the Satyricon as we know it has a composition date of April A.D. 65 to Petronius' death in A.D. 66, the pessimistic and unusually anxious mood of the Croton episode might be explained. Perhaps like his characters, Encolpius and Eumolpus, Petronius could hear the footsteps of the captatores making their way to his door in reality. He may have sensed that he too was playing out one more farcical scene in the mime of life. Croton, Italy's oldest, and once one of its largest cities, was known for its riches and fertility.

before April, A.D. 65. See Frederick Ahl, Lucan: An Introduction (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976), p.351.

The Vacca life of Lucan states that the final seven books of the Bellum Civile were not revised by the poet himself, but this fact does not preclude the private circulation of the later books of Lucan's work even after Nero's ban, see K.F.C. Rose, "Problems of Chronology in Lucan's Career," TAPA 97 (1966): 387. The Neronian court circle was obviously familiar with Lucan's Bellum Civile at some point prior to Petronius' death in A.D. 66, or there would have been no reason for the Arbiter to satirize the work.

³⁴Smith, Cena Trimalchionis, p. 212 and Gerald N. Sandy, "Scaenica Petroniana," TAPA 104 (1974): 345.

It was replete with reminiscences of Pythagoras, Herakles, and Hera Lacinia. However, Petronius states that Croton was reduced to a ghost-town by virtue of its many wars, and Livy states that the site was abandoned in 215 B.C., when, as a result of Hannibal's occupation, its inhabitants transferred themselves to Locri Epizephyrrii.³⁵ The stagnation and infertility of Croton parallel the impotence of Encolpius, but the larger metaphor implies that Croton is Rome itself. The vilicus whom Eumolpus and Encolpius encounter as they begin their ascent to the city, warns them that they need not proceed unless they are urbanioris notae homines, city-wise and able to survive the pressures of a society divided against itself:

In hac enim urbe non litterarum studia celebrantur,
non eloquentia locum habet, non frugalitas sanctique
mores laudibus ad fructum perveniunt, sed quoscumque
homines [in hac urbe] videritis, scitote in duas
partes esse divisos. nam aut captantur aut captant.
(Sat. 116.6-7)

If Croton is Rome, as it certainly appears to be, Petronius' remarks about the rejection of literary study are telling. Nero himself never stopped versifying until the hour of his death, but the passage indicates that Petronius may have lost influence over court literary

³⁵G. Giannelli, Culti e miti della Magna Grecia, (Naples, n.d.), p. 135ff.; Liv. 24.5; Sat. 116.3: post attritas bellis frugentibus. Paulys Realencyclopädie der Classischen Altertumswissenschaft, new edition, ed. George Wissowa, s.v. "Kroton," 11.2: 2020-2026. Paulys Realencyclopädie is henceforth abbreviated as RE.

practices. Like Seneca before him, he probably sensed a gradually increasing loss of control over the artist-emperor. It is clear from Nero's treatment of Lucan that from late A.D. 64 onward, he intended to brook no poetic rivals.³⁶

Petronius maintained the appearance of interest in court activities by penning the Carmen de bello civili which Eumolpus recites in order to pass the time on the climb to Croton. The Arbiter prefaced his poem with a conservative and aesthetically sound statement of the canons of Augustan poetry. He then applied the strictures therein to Lucan, in order to demonstrate the literary shortcomings of the Annaei in deference to Nero's new-found Classicism. Petronius' criticisms hit strikingly close to Lucan's style without having to mention the poet by name. The contemporary writer of epic, the Arbiter contends, is more an orator than a poet; is not sufficiently grounded in the great literature of the past; excludes the traditional divine machinery of epic from his work. He therefore does not achieve an epic at all, but can do nothing more than versify history into a series of highly-coloured and largely non-integrated scenes, with little

³⁶Tac. Ann. 15.49, 56, 70; Suet. Vit. Luc., and Frederick Ahl, "Lucan's De incendio urbis, Epistulae ex Campania and Nero's Ban," TAPA 102 (1971): 8.

regard for the integrity of the whole work.³⁷

Rhetorical cleverness and the inclusion of *recherché* deities are faults to be found in Petronius' imitation of Lucan as well.³⁸ Neither Petronius nor Nero was untouched by the stylistic excesses of post-Augustan literature, but the point is, that when Petronius wrote the Carmen and the Croton episode which follows, he was feeling rather old and outmoded, as if his moment had passed him by. This feeling of weariness well accounts for his conservative plaintiveness and eulogy of litterae temporis acti. For, although his Carmen unquestionably satirizes Lucan, set up as it is by the low comic scene of the farting contest between Corax and Giton,³⁹ the Carmen also digs at Nero's Rome. Upon closer examination, one finds that the main theme of Carmen is not the civil war at all, but rather Rome's love of luxuria and avaritia and how its endless

³⁷Lucan's rhetorical excesses include: the fulsome "praise?" of Nero, Luc. 1.57-66; Erichtho, 6.569-587, 625-6; the ranking of himself with Homer, 9.980-6; the serpents of Africa, 9.810-21; Pompey's head, 9.1010-34. Petronius aptly criticizes these kinds of poetry as: et omnia dicta factaque quasi papavere et sesame sparsa, Sat. 1.3.

³⁸See chap. 2 below. Cf. Luc. 6.40ff.; for the description of Dis, and Sat. 119.76ff. where Fortuna in Petronius is as broadly drawn as Erichtho in Lucan.

³⁹Sat. 117.12. The obscenus strepitus no doubt is meant to recall Lucan's misuse of a line of Nero's poetry in the baths at Rome: sub terris tonuisse putes (Suet. Vit. Luc.)

quest for new riches and pleasures has jaded the population, demoralized the senate and consequently caused the rivalry of Caesar and Pompey.⁴⁰ Petronius might well have been reacting to Nero's heightened prodigality immediately following the Pisonian Conspiracy, at which time the emperor was taken in by Caesellius Bassus' scheme to search for the Treasure of Dido and lavished funds and man-power on that endeavour. Nero also tried to purchase himself a new set of allies by giving away money and art treasures in great quantities.⁴¹ Nero, for his part, was more deeply involved in chariot-racing and debauchery than ever before; his dependence upon Tigellinus was greater and even more desperate after the enforced death of Faenius Rufus and so many other decent Romans.

Petronius' own despair and frustration is mirrored in the plight of his ego-narrator, Encolpius, at Croton. Encolpius is degraded by the mask of servility which he has freely opted to assume, and his relentless condition

⁴⁰Sat. 119.14: ultimus Hammon; 119.33: ingeniosa gula est; 119.39: empti Quirites; 119.41: venalis populus; 119.45: victus Cato.

⁴¹Caesellius Bassus, Tac. Ann. 16.1.3; prodigal generosity: luxuria spe inani, Ann. 3.1.Cf. Petronius on "get-rich-quick" schemes:

nocte soporifera veluti cum somnia ludunt
errantes oculos effossaque protulit aurum
in lucem tellus, versat manus improba
furtum thesaurosque rapit... (Sat. 128.6)

of sexual impotence condemns him to a life of unfulfillment and failure of connection with men and women alike. His assumption of the name Polyaenus with its associations of Odyssean strength and virility only serves to heighten the irony and sense of frustration. Some of Petronius' best verses appear in this section of his work, as his flights of poetic escape allow Encolpius to soar momentarily high above the sordid and humiliating circumstances of his existence at Croton.⁴²

Alexandrian elegy, Milesian ribaldry, Roman satiric realism, and Greek epic associations all blend harmoniously in this final extant episode of the Satyricon. No longer is there the feeling of a jerky and uneven shifting from genre to genre. Here, Petronius writes with the strength of his expressed convictions that an author must be plenus litteris and that the mind neque concipere aut edere partum potest nisi ingenti flumine litterarum inundata (Sat. 118.4).

Ovid's influence can be strongly felt in the Croton episode, with its textured interweaving of human pathos and mythological exempla:

⁴²Πολύαινος Οδυσσεύς tarried for a year at Aeaea with Circe, Homer Od. 12.184. Effective poetic passages inserted within the narrative include: 126.18 Quid factum est quod tu proiectis (elegiac couplets); 127.9 Idaeo quales fudit (dactylic hexameters); 128.6 Nocte soporifera (dactylic hexameters); 132.15 Quid me constricta (elegiac couplets); 133.3 Nympharum Bacchique Comes (dactylic hexameters); 137.9 Quisquis habet nummos (elegiac couplets).

praeterea curandum est ne sententiae emineant
extra corpus orationis expressae, sed intexto
vestibus colore niteant. (Sat. 118.4)

Ovid's Heroides clearly provides the inspiration for Petronius' epistolary interchange between Circe and Polyaenus (Encolpius).⁴³ Inevitable are comparisons between the relative positions of Ovid and Petronius vis à vis their relationships with Augustus and Nero. If Ovid was too promiscuous for Augustus' tastes, Petronius Arbiter was probably not promiscuous enough for Nero's.

iii. 'Voluptas cum dignitate'

The intellectual and sensitive Arbiter was certainly no Stoic prude, unfamiliar with the pleasures of the flesh, but his descriptions of sexual encounters, although numerous, variegated, and perhaps at times a little sadistic, when judged by current norms, are never as graphic and explicit as one might expect. His descriptions are far more literary than they are pornographic.

⁴³The poetry of Ovid was very much on Petronius' mind as he patterned the Croton episode. The main theme of impotence is treated in Ovid, Am. 3.7, although Ovid is potent with women other than the one in question; the exchange of amatory epistles parallels the Heroides and Propertius 4.3, but they are in prose; see L.P. Wilkinson, Ovid Recalled (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1955), p. 86. Walsh, Roman Novel, p. 42, compares the drunken priestess Oenothea to Ovid's Dipsas. See also G. Schmeling, "Studies in Petronius" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Wisconsin, 1968) for Petronius' use of the exclusus amator motif and comparisons of erotic vocabulary in the two authors.

Christopher Gill states that:

Contrary to what one might suppose (in the face of the rich variety of sexual practices described) the language of these episodes contains comparatively few of the words which recur in the 'obscene insult poems' of Catullus, the Priapaea and Martial.⁴⁴

That Petronius' language is more literary than literal can be substantiated from the text. The deflowering of Pannychis is lightened by Quartilla's observation that in sex as in all things one should start small: [ut dicatur] posse taurum tollere, qui vitulum sustulerit (Sat. 25.7). Eumolpus, when commenting upon the size of Ascyrtos' member makes a pun upon the nature of his times: tanto magis expedit inguina quam ingenia fricare (92.12). Even the disgusting activities of the cinaedus are described periphrastically as Encolpius complains that Ascyrtos solus ferias agit, at which prompting the pasty old eunuch equum mutavit (24.4). Circe refers continually to Encolpius' loss of nervum

⁴⁴C. Gill, "The Sexual Episodes in the Satyricon," CP 68 (1973): 177, where he is highly critical of Sullivan's Freudian interpretations of the scopophilic tendencies of the author as revealed in his work. See Sullivan, "Satire and Realism in Petronius," in Satire: Critical Essays on Roman Literature, ed. John P. Sullivan (London: Routledge, Kegan and Paul, 1963), pp. 73-92. See also J. Fisher, "Métaphore et interdit dans le discours érotique de Pétrone," CEA 5 (1976): 6.

Here the question of "community standards" is most vital. The now disclosed contents of the Pornographic Collection of the Naples Museum make it quite clear that viewing the male member or scenes of copulation was no unusual occurrence in late-Republican and Julio-Claudian

and remarks in her epistle to him that negant enim medici sine nervis homines ambulare posse (129.6). Eumolpus encourages the far from reluctant daughter of Philomela to take her seat on the commendatam bonitatem (140.7) and hails the restoration of Encolpius' powers by running his hands over the deorum beneficia (140.13).

The Circe-Polyaenus episode provides many examples of such amusing periphrases. One of the best is the clever Vergilian cento in which Encolpius describes his ailing member. The first two lines derive from the Aeneid 6.469-470, while the third line is a combination of Eclogue 5.16 and Aeneid 9.436:

Illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat,
Nec magis incepto vultum sermone movetur
Quam lentae salices lassove papavera collo.
(Sat. 132.11)

Petronius' circumlocutory methods of describing sexual scenes are evident also in the literary techniques of Tacitus, Suetonius and Dio Cassius (to list the historians in ascending order of vividness). Constraints

times, given the number of ithyphallic figures, drinking vessels, lampstands, sauce-pots, and the great popularity of the garden-god Priapus and his association with Bacchus and Mutunus-Titinus at Rome. If Tigellinus' public debaucheries were any indication of the candor with which Romans of the early empire approached matters sexual, then far from seeming perverted, Petronius' discretion seems tantamount to prudishness. For the artifacts, see Michael Grant, Eros in Pompeii (New York: William Morrow and Co., 1975), *passim*. For Priapus and Mutunus-Titinus, see Robert E.A. Palmer, Roman Religion and the Roman Empire: Five Essays (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1974), pp. 187-206.

of literary decorum do prevail in other authors as well, but when one looks ahead to Juvenal and Martial, it would seem that the creative poetic medium is not as inhibited as the more pedestrian (and factual) medium of prose. Women likewise receive the same "bad press" in the historians as they do in Petronius and the Milesiaca, if Apuleius' interludes may be taken as examples of that genre. The Satyricon is actually fairly progressive in its consideration of women's sexual needs, to the extent that, like Latin love elegy, it portrays the female libido to be at least as urgent, if not more so, than the male.⁴⁵

A survey of the Carmina Priapaea and the sexual practices of the emperors as depicted in the historians and even the various wall scribblings from Pompeii leaves one with the impression that in the first century A.D., sex was a rather mindless physical exercise enjoyed by all, with no great degree of emotion attached. Yet, Encolpius is forever yearning after a fulfilling and satisfactory relationship with someone, be it Giton or

⁴⁵ Judith P. Hallett, "The Satyricon and the Sexual Climate of the Early Empire," paper presented to the Petronian Society at the annual meeting of the American Philological Association, New York, December 1976, pp. 9-10. Saara Lilja, The Roman Elegists' Attitude to Women (Helsinki: Suomalainen Tiedekatemia, 1965), pp. 224-25, states that Ovid equates the needs of the two sexes, esp. in Ars 2.683ff.

Circe.⁴⁶ He romantically proclaims his willingness to be a slave to love. Love clearly includes a suggestion of physical abuse and pain for him, and he willingly, or rather anxiously, submits to such humiliation at the hands of Circe's familiae and at the hands of the anus and Oenothea. Yet after these tortures he is ashamedly discreet and does not wish for others to know of his humiliation.⁴⁷

Encolpius' expressed yearning for privacy and the importance attached to sexual acts is reminiscent of Tacitus' description of how Petronius Arbiter sent Nero a detailed account of the emperor's own private indiscretions and the names of those who were involved with him:

ne codicillis quidem, quod plerique pereuntium,
Neronem aut Tigellinum aut quem alium potentium
adulatus est, sed flagitia principis sub
nominibus exoletorum feminarumque et novitatem
cuiusque stupri perscripsit atque obsignata
misit Neroni. (Tac. Ann. 16.19)

This itemized list of persons, pathics, persuasions, and positions seems as matter of fact and detailed as the

⁴⁶Hallett, "Sexual Climate," p. 10.
[Encolpius:] Invenies religiosum si te adorari
permiseris. Ac ne me iudices ad templum Amoris
gratis accedere, dono tibi fratrem meum.

(Sat. 127.2)

For sex as a more casual undertaking, cf. CIL 4.10197; 4.8899; 4.10150(!). See also the Carmina Priapaea, esp. 83 and 88 and H.D. Rankin, "Petronius, Priapus and Priapeum LXVIII," in Petronius the Artist: Essays on the "Satyricon" and its Author (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), pp. 52-67.

⁴⁷Sat. 132.6.

Satyricon seems periphrastic and illusory. Its accuracy troubled Nero enough to cause him to punish Petronius' supposed informant, Silia. Such behaviour seems quite strange for a man who had staged public debauches as early as the Juvenalia of A.D. 59 and the Neronia of A.D. 60, and who had secured the services of Tigellinus as a kind of Master of Revels for even greater spectacles of this sort.⁴⁸ Tacitus narrates the progress of one such epula from the many which Tigellinus reportedly staged:

a Tigellino paratas ut exemplum referam,
ne saepius eadem prodigientia narranda sit.
(Tac. Ann. 15.37)

Tacitus proceeds to describe how Tigellinus placed a raft on the Pool of Agrippa and gave a banquet there. The raft was towed along by other vessels. As the revelries took place, the raft floated past brothels built along the shores of the lake. Dio Cassius confirms Tacitus' information that these brothels were filled with every class of woman imaginable:

⁴⁸ Juvenalia: Ann. 14.15; 15.33; 16.21; Suet. Nero 11.1. Neronia: 14.20; Suet. Nero 12.3. These games were held in the Graecus modus and senators and patrician youths were forced to compete in the athletic competitions on the analogy of the Olympics. Nero regularly competed both in the chariot-racing events and in the poetic competitions. A senatorial move to give him the crown without the shame of performance was graciously declined by the emperor at the Neronia of A.D. 65 (Tac. Ann. 16.4).

δοῦλαὶ τε καὶ ἐλεύθεραι, ἑταῖραι, παρθένοι,
 γαμεταὶ τινων·οὐ γὰρ ἐξῆν αὐταῖς οὐδένα
 ἀπαρνῆσασθαι (Dio Cass. 42.15)

Tacitus states that the homosexual tastes of the court were satisfied as well by the bank of oarsmen:

Naves auro et ebore distinctae, remigesque
 exoleti per aetates et scientiam libidinum
 componebantur. (Ann. 15.37)

There was evidently court precedent then for the cataloguing and ranking of one's minions before Petronius wrote his parodic codicillus. Nero, Tacitus assures us, was the life of the party:

Ipsae per licita atque inlicita foedatus
 nihil flagitii reliquerat, quo corruptior
 ageret, nisi paucos post dies uni ex illo
 contaminatorum grege (nomen Pythagorae fuit)
 in modum sollemnium coniugiorum denupsisset.
 (Ann. 15.37)

The ceremony was performed with all the legal niceties of a Roman marriage, except that the consummation was public:

Inditum imperatori flammeum, missi auspices,
 dos et genialis torus et faces nuptiales,
 cuncta denique spectata, quae etiam in femina
 nox operit. (Ann. 15.37)

One suspects that this dramatized ceremony might be connected to mystery worship, but none of the sources indicates whether this marriage rite had any ritual connections to either the cult of Isis or to that of Bacchus. Messalina's treasonous second marriage may have been in reality only a "worshipful" ceremony dedicated to

Bacchus.⁴⁹ Pannychis too is likewise veiled and deflowered at Quartilla's Priapic rite (Sat. 26). Mystery worshippers were required to pass through various stages of physical sensations in order to achieve a state of detachment from things of the flesh and enter into proper communion with the godhead. The scene panel depicting the flagellation of the initiate in the Villa of the Mysteries frieze reflects the stages required in this sort of transformation.⁵⁰

Nero's love of the arts, especially the theatre, made him no doubt highly susceptible to the attractions of Bacchism and its cult practices. The Ptolemies had been the first to build such floating palaces in which to hold banquets, having derived the idea from the Pharaohs. A Dionysiac idea of royalty took shape at Alexandria, its most perfect expression being the refined court life of Cleopatra and Marc Antony. The Donations of Alexandria

⁴⁹ Charles-Picard, Auguste et Néron, pp. 130-1. Messalina was impersonating Ariadne, and Silius was Bacchus. See also Frederick C. Grant, Hellenistic Religions: The Age of Syncretism (New York: Liberal Arts Press, 1953), pp. 124ff.

⁵⁰ Grant, Hellenistic Religions, pp. 144-9. Franz Cumont, After Life in Roman Paganism (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1922; reprint ed., New York: Dover Publications, 1959), pp. 202, 211. Quartilla, Sat. 24, may be initiating Pannychis into the rites of the Priapic secreta. Cumont states (p. 132) that:

pueri and puellae are found admitted at the most tender age among the adepts of the secret cults... a child who has taken part in a ceremony of Bacchus lives endowed with eternal youth in the Elysian Fields in the midst of Satyrs.

represented such a ceremony, and during his struggle with Octavian, Antony drew a great number of the Bacchic sects of Italy into his service whose activities in Italy were quite troublesome to Octavian during the war of propaganda. Southern Italy in particular was deeply devoted to Bacchic worship and was not to be dissuaded from its practice.⁵¹

In order to counter Antony, especially in Southern Italy and the Eastern portions of the Roman holdings, Octavian began, in 36 B.C., to cultivate the Pythagoreans, and their patron deity, Apollo, remained his own for the rest of his years. From this time forward, Bacchism was associated in a vague way with all the revolutionary or rebellious elements in Rome despite the fact that Augustus eventually sanctioned the tamer attributes of Bacchus for official worship.⁵²

Nero was a descendant of Marc Antony through Antonia and thus fell heir to the tendencies for high living which Antony had typified. By Nero's time, Dionysiac worship bore no political connotations at all, having

⁵¹A.H.M. Jones, Augustus (London: Chatto and Windus, 1970), pp. 37-8. Hor. Odes 3.3.13-15. Seneca called Baiae a deversorium vitiorum, Ep. 51.4. See D'Arms, Romans on the Bay of Naples, p. 119, and McKay, Vergil's Italy, pp. 220-3. For the melding of mystery religions into the Dionysiac garden chapels of Southern Italy, see Pierre Grimal, Les jardins romains (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1969), pp. 319-20.

⁵²Hor. Odes 3.3.13-15.

largely become a naturalistic excuse for sumptuous living and liberalized sex. The coastline of Baiae offered a permanent trysting spot with all the amenities which Tigellinus had laboured to contrive at Rome. Seneca once visited Baiae and left the following description of the diversions of a typical day there:

Videre ebrios per litora errantes et comessationes
 navigantium et symphoniarum cantibus strepentes
 lacus et alia quae velut soluta legibus luxuria non
 tantum peccat sed publicat, quid necesse est?
 (Ep. 51.4)

In light of the public secreta and public dramatic performances of which Nero was so fond, it is indeed difficult to see why he cared whether Petronius knew of his sexual practices intra cubicula, unless these affairs also contained an air of religious sanction. Suetonius records that Nero scorned all religious cults except that of the Syrian goddess Atargatis who is identified with the Magna Mater. Nero's flirtations with mystery worship make it possible that his submission to Pythagoras as a bride in marriage symbolized some kind of Attis-like devotional. His zeal for Atargatis faded too, to be replaced by the image of a girl given to him by a Roman plebeian. Nero was, according to all sources, extremely superstitious, and, since the reception of this amulet had been followed upon closely by the discovery of a conspiracy against him, the numen of the image was

venerated three times daily.⁵³

Petronius, for his part, reveals himself in the Satyricon to be totally rational and totally pessimistic about religion. The slaughtered goose of Priapus became an afternoon meal just as soon as Encolpius offered coins to Oenothea. Quartilla, the priestess of Priapus, is a harridan and voyeur.⁵⁴ Fragment 30 has often been taken as evidence of Petronius' Epicurean disdain for traditional Roman religion:

somnia, quae mentes ludunt volitantibus umbris,
non delubra deum nec ab aethere numina mittunt,
sed sibi quisque facit. (fr. 30, Buecheler)⁵⁵

Oskar Raith has tried to demonstrate that passages such as this one, when combined with the so-called Epicurean circumstances of Petronius' death, constitute proof that he was a thoroughgoing Epicurean, trying to amend Nero's excesses in keeping with the rules of the Garden. Raith is both right and wrong. The Epicurean elements

⁵³ Suet. Nero 56.

⁵⁴ Geese: Sat. 137.8; Quartilla: Sat. 22-26.

⁵⁵ Franz Buecheler, ed., Petronii Saturae et Liber Priapeorum, 4th ed., (Berlin: Weidmann, 1904), p. 115. For Petronius' supposed Epicureanism, see Oskar Raith, Petronius: Ein Epikureer, Erlanger Beiträge zur Sprach- und Kunstwissenschaft Band 14 (Nuremberg: Hans Carl, 1963), p. 7.

certainly exist in the Satyricon, as William Arrowsmith has amply demonstrated,⁵⁶ but they appear in a most unsystematic manner and in a work that totally avoids dogmatism of any kind. Furthermore, Petronius does allow the power of certain gods, but they are the guardian deities of love and low-life vagabonds, such as Venus, Priapus, and Mercury, who suit his work. What Arrowsmith and Raith have failed to see is that the true joke in the Cena is not that Trimalchio is a profane Epicurean, but rather that he is ignorant, uncultured, and totally unsuccessful not only at Epicureanism, but at every other upper-class habit which he tries to imitate.⁵⁷

G. Bagnani came closer to defining Petronius' true character when he remarked that he "skillfully adopted the nihil admirari attitude that always fascinates the young."⁵⁸ Bagnani bases his theory of feigned nonchalance upon Tacitus' description of how Petronius came to prominence at court. After serving capably as proconsul in

⁵⁶William Arrowsmith, "Luxury and Death in the Satyricon," Arion 5 (1966): p. 305 calls the work an "Epicurean satire." Highet had stated this view earlier: G. Highet, "Petronius the Moralizer," TAPA 72 (1941): 176-194.

⁵⁷Arrowsmith, "Luxury and Death," p. 320: I thoroughly disagree with Arrowsmith's remark that "he [Petronius] is telling also, I think, of the failure of a Mandarin culture to diffuse itself." If so, the highest Mandarin of all is indicting himself!

⁵⁸Gilbert Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance: A Study of the Life and Works of C. Petronius, Phoenix Supplement, vol. 2, (Toronto, 1954), p. 65.

Bithynia and consul at Rome, Petronius strove to capture the emperor's attention:

dein revolutus ad vitia seu vitiorum imitatione
inter paucos familiarum Neroni adsumptus est,
elegantiae arbiter, dum nihil amoenum et molle
adfluentia putat, nisi quod ei Petronius ad-
probavisset. (Tac. Ann. 16.18)

Tacitus, with his conservative pro-Republican stance is loath to admit that anyone could be elegant and efficient at the same time. Yet, C. Maecenas, the cultural minister and diplomatic advisor of Augustus, provides a perfect example that such men did exist. Maecenas had definitely mastered the art of voluptas cum dignitate⁵⁹ many years before Petronius was even born. Maecenas was a skillful politician, but in every way a self-styled individual who did not let his close relationship to the princeps dictate his personal habits.⁶⁰ He was a descendant of old Etruscan lineage who dressed effeminately in purple and jewelry; he lived in a palatial house and owned the huge gardens from the tower of which Nero is reported to have sung while Rome burned. There was a special wine named after him, and, although he dallied with Epicureanism, he

⁵⁹Cic., Cael. 17.41

⁶⁰He accompanied Augustus at Philippi, negotiated his marriage with Scribonia, represented him at discussions on the Treaty of Brundisium, undertook a diplomatic mission to Antony and helped to negotiate the Treaty of Tarentum, often represented Octavian at Rome and ran the court literary circle.

was never thought to be a serious philosopher.⁶¹

Maecenas was also notorious for his affairs with women and for his delicate style of writing. He was a cultivated Neoteric who loved to search after

les termes rares, pittoresques, curieux, il égrène les sonorités étrangères et place les mots selon le rythme d'une harmonieuse sonorité.⁶²

Augustus, who wrote in the plain style, elegans et temperatum, and hated affectation in literature, made fun of Maecenas' phrases such as: myrobrechis cincinnos.⁶³ A sample of Maecenas' poetry will illustrate his style and its great similarity to that of Nero:

Lucentes, mea vita, nec smaragdus beryllos
mihi, Flacce, nec nitentes (nec) percandida
margarita quaero.⁶⁴ (Fr. 2 Morel)

Like Maecenas, Petronius was eruditus luxu and for this reason appealing to Nero, but indeed not for this reason only. Like Seneca before him, Petronius was also a competent statesman, someone capable of indulging Nero's private desires while also making sure that affairs at Rome ran smoothly. Nero was not so totally debauched before the

⁶¹Dress: Juv. 12.39; Jewelry: Macr. 2.4.12; Palace: Suet. Aug. 72.2; Gardens: Suet. Nero 38.2; Wine: Pliny HN 14.67; Epicureanism: Pliny HN 8.170, where he initiated a young donkey. Women: Dio Cass. 54.30.5.

⁶²H. Bardon, La littérature latine inconnue, vol. 2 (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksienck, 1956), p. 14.

⁶³Suet. Aug. 86.3

⁶⁴Cf. Ep. 114, for Seneca's criticism of Maecenas' style.

events of the Pisonian Conspiracy of A.D. 65, that he was without care for the city of Rome. After the conspiracy, it appears that fear and self-indulgence got the better of him, but that year may well mark the end of the Arbiter's influence, as argued above.

iv. Petronius' Influence on Nero's Taste

If Petronius Arbiter rose to importance at Nero's court ca. A.D. 62, his chief attraction for Nero would have been, as mentioned earlier, his dissimilarity to Nero's former tutor Seneca. Seneca's Epistulae Morales 114 could well offer a double attack upon Petronius and upon his great satiric creation, Trimalchio. Seneca is discoursing upon how appearance should mirror ability, and how Maecenas never deigned to speak or dress the part he played. The first barb may be aimed by Seneca at Petronius' characterization of Trimalchio:

Non statim, cum haec legeris, hoc tibi
occurrent, hunc esse, qui solutis tunicis
in urbe semper incesserit?...Hunc esse,
qui in tribunali, in rostris, in omni
publico coetu sic apparuerit, ut pallio
velaretur caput exclusis utrimque auribus,
non aliter quam in mimo fugitivi divitis
solent. (Ep. 114.6)

But the next part takes up issues of life's elegances which seem better directed at the Arbiter himself:

Motum illi felicitate nimia caput. Quod
vitium hominis esse interdum, interdum
temporis solet. Ubi luxuriam late felicitas
fudit, cultus primum corporum esse diligentior

incipit. Deinde suppellectili laboratur. Deinde in ipsas domos impenditur cura, ut in laxitatem ruris excurrant, ut parietes advectis trans maria marmoribus fulgeant, ut tecta varientum auro, ut lacunaribus pavementorum respondeat nitor.

(Ep. 114.9)

This passage appears to contain a criticism of the Golden House which took up more space than a country house (in laxitatem ruris) and was carefully decorated to the last detail with gilded ceilings and inlaid floors.⁶⁵

Seneca proceeds to attack novitas in language, the use of obsolete words and the coining of new words, and "misshaping" of old ones. This would constitute an apt criticism of Petronius' style in the speeches spoken in distinctive dialects by the freedmen at the Cena:

quaerit et modo antiqua verba atque exsoleta revocat ac profert, modo fingit et ignota ac deflectit... (Ep. 114.10)

Finally Seneca complains of the current popularity of this corrupt speech among the upper classes:

Mirari quidem non debes corrupta excipi non tantum a corona sordidiore, sed ab hac quoque turba cultiore, togis enim inter se isti, non iudiciis distant. (Ep. 114.12)

⁶⁵Suet. Nero 31:

In the rest of the house all parts were overlaid with gold and adorned with gems and mother of pearl. There were dining rooms with fretted ceilings of ivory, whose panels could turn and shower down flowers and were fitted with pipes for sprinkling the guests with perfume. (Suetonius, de Vita Caesarum, trans. J.C. Rolfe, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1914; reprinted 1970), p. 137.)

Nero and Petronius were both guilty of the kind of "slumming" which Seneca describes.

For whatever reason, which cannot now be recalled from the passage of years, Petronius had an insatiable interest in the lower classes of Rome and their activities. He was an acute observer of the contemporary social and economic life on all levels. This is evident from the minute details of their lives which Trimalchio's freedmen guests provide: Echion is a centonarius and guild member who is looking forward to public epulae to be supplied by a candidate for local office (45.5); Hermeros came to Italy and undertook slavery to avoid being a tributarius, although not expecting to wait forty years for his freedom (57.5); Trimalchio who is himself a member of the Augustales (71.12), is working to improve his food crops in the face of economic decline (38.2-3), and supports the need for buying and wearing local woolen products (54.4); Habinnas finds a way to educate his pet slave cheaply and brags about it (68.6); Seleucus hates baths and feels that frequent ones are unhealthy (42.1).⁶⁶

One senses here that Petronius knew the common people of the empire first hand, that both in Italy and

⁶⁶For a further look at the many realistic details of Campanian life included in the Cena, see "A Campanian Commentary to the Cena Trimalchionis of Petronius," Chapter 3, below.

Bithynia he had been a careful and sensitive observer of human nature, but beyond that he seems to have had direct dealings with the déclassé mercantile element of the Roman world. He understands not only their lifestyle but their financial needs and motivations. As Sullivan states:

Whether the same nostalgie de la boue that drove Nero to slumming in Rome led to an intimate acquaintance with Puteoli and its mercantile inhabitants is a matter of speculation, even though he had a villa at nearby Cumae; but his presentation, as far as we can check it from contemporary evidence and the excavations at Pompeii and Herculaneum, is accurate and thorough.⁶⁷

That Nero was interested in the lower classes and often behaved worse than the lowest of them needs no further elaboration. But he personally styled himself a Greek artist, inhibited and even threatened by the constraints and cruelties of the Roman reality. It is possible that his derangement made him genuinely unable to see why Roman patricians resented being forced to take part in athletic competitions. When he bothered to rationalize his actions, he certainly must have felt that his personal aesthetic would raise the quality of life for all concerned. Like Petronius' ego-narrator, the

⁶⁷ Sullivan, Satyricon of Petronius, p. 139

graeculus Encolpius, Nero was forced to live in the Roman environment and be continually unappreciated for his literary gifts and superior awarenesses. Encolpius' tramp-like freedom of movement from place to place may have provided vicarious thrills for the uneasy autocrat in his guilt-lined Italian prison. The comic adventures of the graeculi find their pictorial equivalents in the light and unbounded figures which danced brightly on the walls of the Golden House.⁶⁸

Are we to postulate that the emperor spent one night discussing his collection of myrrhine ware over dinner with Petronius; the next, discussing someone's verse or reading his own; and the next, for relaxation, closeted with Silia, Tigellinus, Sporus, and other disreputable orgiasts of that ilk?⁶⁹

Sullivan's question can only be answered with a yes, considering the hostile nature of most of the source material which has come down to us. The biography of Petronius found in Tacitus most likely takes its descent from the Exitus Illustriorum of C. Fannius or Titinius

⁶⁸ Nero did not venture out of Italy until A.D. 66, when he finally made his often postponed Grand Tour of Greece, (Momigliano, CAH, 10: 735). On the paintings of the Golden House:

On voyait en eux l'expression du caprice, de l'imagination pure, libérée des règles rigides des peintures à programme et, d'une manière plus large, dégagée de l'imitation de la nature.

(Nicol Dacos, La découverte de la Domus Aurea et la formation des grotesques à la Renaissance (London: The Warburg Institute, University of London, printed by Leiden: E.J.Brill, 1969), p. vi)

⁶⁹ Sullivan, "Neronian Literary Feud," p. 458.

Capito, or some other writer who favoured the Stoic opposition over Nero.⁷⁰ If so, Fannius was most likely following the anti-Neronian line of Pliny's history.⁷¹ The occasional injections of Nero's good points are assumed to be largely due to the works of Cluvius Rufus.⁷²

Petronius, it appears from the biography, was never forced into life at Nero's aula. He worked to reach the position that he attained and, if the Satyricon is evidence, enjoyed making the pronouncements on art, literature and taste which were his province. The remarks in Plutarch's Moralia indicate that he knew how to handle Nero as well as anyone.⁷³

Like the Stoic sympathizers who white-washed his character in the first place, modern researchers have been at pains to remove Petronius from the gaudy taint of Nero's Golden House. They look at the scanty pieces of art criticism contained in the Satyricon, read these against the background of his Atticizing and Augustan tastes in literature and conclude that in the decoration and innovative architecture and decor of the Golden House he could have had no part.

⁷⁰ Ibid., and Rankin, "On Tacitus' Biography of Petronius," in Petronius the Artist: Essays on the Satyricon and its author, p. 99.

⁷¹ Syme, Tacitus, 1:292

⁷² Ibid.

⁷³ See Appendix I, p. 210-211.

Gilbert Bagnani feels that Petronius may have been responsible for some of the gadgetry of Nero's banquet halls, such as the wooden skylight of the kind found in the House of Menander through which gifts could be passed down to the guests below;⁷⁴ however, he involves him only in the building of the Domus Transitoria: "in the charming Nymphaeum and of the few rooms that have been preserved we may perhaps see a specimen of his taste."⁷⁵ Bagnani is forced, in a way, to associate Petronius with the older effort only, because of the fact that he dates the Satyricon to the Neronia of A.D. 60 and confines Petronius' time of influence to that earlier period.

There are only two passages of artistic criticism in the Satyricon. The first is the famous reference to compendiaria:

Pictura quoque non alium exitum fecit postquam
Aegyptiorum audacia tam magnae artis compendiarium
invenit. (Sat. 2.9)

Here Petronius is criticizing either the development of the encaustic technique in painting or the impressionistic paintings so common in Roman art of the smaller

⁷⁴ Gilbert Bagnani, "The House of Trimalchio," AJP 75 (1954): 32, n. 54. See also n. 65 above.

⁷⁵ Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 66.

decorative panels employed in the Third and Fourth Styles. Bagnani assumes that Petronius is expressing his dislike for this style and therefore would spurn the delicate, free-hand figures of Fabullus' work in the Golden House.⁷⁶

But Pliny uses an equivalent phrase (quasdam picturae compendiarium invenit) to describe the invention of the encaustic method of painting. At HN 35.109, he says of Nichomachus: nec fuit alius in arte velocior. Aristides is named as the inventor of the method (HN 35.122), and another painter, Pausias, when criticized for painting too slowly, used this method and completed an entire picture of a boy in one day (HN 35.124). However, Pliny also mentions an Antiphilus of Alexandria who was regarded as one of the pioneers of impressionism in painting (HN 35.114) without directly linking him to the encaustic method.⁷⁷

If the reference is indeed a stylistic slur, as seems most likely, Petronius might well be referring not so much to the Nilotic scenes and villa-scenes of the inserted pictures but rather to the abuses which the impressionistic suffered in plebeian art. Simple crafts-

⁷⁶ Gilbert Bagnani, "Pictura Compendiaria," AJA 66 (1962): 194, and S. Settis, "Qui multas facies pingit cito..." A&R 15 (1970): 121.

⁷⁷ Evan T. Sage, Petronius: The Satiricon, revised and expanded by Brady B. Gilleland, 2nd ed. (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1969), pp. 226-7, and K. Jex-Blake, trans., The Elder Pliny's Chapters on the History of Art, with Commentary and Introduction by E. Sellers (Chicago: Argonaut Publishers, 1968), pp. 35-172.

men executed such scenes as the Amphitheatre Riot at Pompeii, some of the roughly painted household lararia, tavern-scenes, and shop signs. Although it is not impressionistic in style, Petronius would probably not have liked the Venus Marina either and on the same grounds: it is pedestrian interior decoration, not art. On the other hand, Room 61 of the Golden House is said by Nicol Dacos to have contained impressionistic paintings on white-ground which were comparable to the impressionistic method used in the monumental paintings at Stabiae.⁷⁸

Picard feels that Petronius is criticizing popular art and native artists but not the Hellenistic originals.⁷⁹ The Fourth Style in painting offered too many attractions which Petronius could not resist: the re-opening of the wall to the vistas and architectural perspectives of Style IIb; the vivid new depths of colours, red, white, blue; the finely outlined figures with their dramatic expressions and classical clarity of line.⁸⁰ Theatrical themes pervaded, as the House of Apollo and the House of Pinarius Cerialis demonstrate.

Petronius' other comment on art occurs when Encol-

⁷⁸Dacos, La découverte de la Domus Aurea, p. 33, and Gilbert Charles-Picard, Roman Painting (London: Elek Books, 1970), p. 101.

⁷⁹Picard, Roman Painting, p. 103.

⁸⁰Cf. the south triclinium of the House of the Vettii, which contains scenes of Heracles and scaenographic architecture.

pius is alone at the pinacotheca:

Nam et Zeuxidos manus vidi nondum vetustatis iniuria victas, et Protogenis rudimenta cum ipsius naturae veritate certantia, non sine quodam horrore tractavi. Iam vero Apellis, quem Graeci μονόχρωμον appellant etiam adoravi. Tanta enim subtilitate extremitates imaginum erant ad similitudinem praecisae ut crederes etiam animorum esse picturam. (Sat. 83.1-3)

Encolpius is so caught up in the mythological scenes of Jupiter and Ganymede, Hylas and the Naiad, Apollo and Hyacinth that he exclaims: Ergo amor etiam deos tangit (Sat. 83.4). These paintings recall the so-called Old Masters copies which were reproduced throughout the styles of Roman painting, but these works experienced an increase in popularity in conjunction with the transition to the Fourth Style.⁸¹ The myth of Jupiter and Ganymede formed the subject matter for the main decorative motif of the Volta Dorata in Nero's Golden House (Room 60). Satyrs sit crossed on rocks and play their pipes as maidens look on in dreamy attitudes while Jupiter holds Ganymede in his arms and the winged eagle sits at his foot. The figures are gold on a blue background.⁸²

It is interesting that Petronius is so keenly aware of the condition of the painting by Protogenes. He

⁸¹K. Schefold, La peinture pompéienne, see Plates XXXIV-LVI, all of which he dates to ca. A.D. 65 or later.

⁸²Dacos, La découverte de la Domus Auréa, pp. 22-24.

comments that it is nondum vetustatis iniuria victas. Presumably the Arbiter, in his capacity as Nero's adviser, had seen many objets d'art that were much the worse for wear. In order to decorate the city in general and his palace in particular, Nero used the art treasures that his freedman Acratus had been collecting for some years in Greece and Asia; Secundus Carrinas had been added to the task to speed up appropriations after the fire. It is impossible to know how extensive these expropriations really were, but Pausanias reported that five hundred statues were removed from Delphi alone.⁸³

Two other functions that Petronius might have performed as elegantiae arbiter include involvement in the canal project which Severus and Celer attempted before the building of the Golden House. Contrary to Tacitus' views, a navigable canal connecting Lake Avernus to the mouth of the Tiber would have been an inestimable boost both to the failing economy of Campania and to Rome which never had adequate food supplies.⁸⁴

Petronius might have been involved as well in Nero's debasement of the brass and copper coinage in A.D. 64. Nero made his first issue of purely brass coins in that

⁸³Momigliano, CAH, 10: 724.

⁸⁴Tac. Ann. 15.42.

year. Soon after copper coins were appearing once again.

"They were, artistically, the finest coins ever produced at Rome and among the finest the world has ever seen."⁸⁵

The coins were excellently wrought and ranged from portrait pieces with Nero's hair arranged as a charioteer, to the emperor addressing the Praetorian Guard, to Augustan motifs such as scenes of the Goddess Victory and a revamped coin of Apollo the Lyre-Player, bearing Nero's image. The coinage betrays a clever master scheme in which the various aspects of Nero's personality were tastefully presented to the Roman people.

In A.D. 66 Petronius Arbiter died at his Cumaeian estate, unable to effect his desire to see Nero for one last time. He died among his friends and slaves, a leisurely death, at his own hands, in the most natural way possible, as befitted his jester's mask. Two years later, Nero faced the same end, alone but for a single attendant; the Artifex gave his most pathetic performance without an audience.

⁸⁵Michael Grant, Nero (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970), p. 199. See Appendix, pp. 238-243.

CHAPTER TWO

PETRONIUS AND NERONIAN LITERARY TASTE

Taste becomes a sense of what is harmonious, appropriate, or beautiful, a kind of critical tact and as such it designates a quality essential to the artist, the critic and serious student.¹

Doctrines of taste and decorum, in literature and in life, require a necessary compromise, a balance, between the aesthetic or social opinions of the individual and the normative pressures exerted collectively by society. One cannot stray too far from those instinctive guidelines without being considered either avant-garde or simply gauche. The stringencies of totalitarian rule complicate rather than simplify the quest for an individual aesthetic, since the often changeable propensities of the absolute ruler then carry the force of law. If, as in the case of Nero, the tyrant is also an artist, the creative libertas of the litterateur is even further restricted, unless one intends to live a covert life as Persius apparently did, writing only for a close-knit and protective coterie.

¹William F. Thrall and Addison Hibbard, A Handbook to Literature, 2nd ed., rev. and enl. by C. Hugh Holman (New York: The Odyssey Press, 1960), p. 483.

The young satirist resignedly acknowledged his predicament to his patron, Cornutus, when he wrote: secrete loquimur.²

The liberal application of the lex maiestatis, as employed by Tiberius and to a lesser degree by Caligula, had demonstrated that the bosom of the opposition was the most obvious and therefore the most perilous refuge for a poet to seek.³ Young Persius was indeed fortunate to be writing in the early years of Nero's reign when the toleration of freedom of speech achieved its highest peak since the end of the free Republic. Nero, in the period of the famed Quinquennium, while under the tutelage of Seneca, recognized the fact that emperors required the services of poets to the same degree that poets needed the patronage of emperors. The reign of Augustus had amply demonstrated the effectiveness which the careful "organization of opinion"

²Persius rejected involvement in the stylistic controversies of his day and opted rather to criticize the flaws in man's moral existence from within the comfort of the Stoic circle of Cornutus. He was aware of his self-enforced isolation when he wrote:

secrete loquimur; tibi nunc hortante camena.
excutienda damus praecordia, quantaque nostrae
pars tua sit, Cornute, animae, tibi dulcis amice,
ostendisse iuvat. (Pers. 5.21-24)

See J.C. Bramble, Persius and the Programmatic Satire: A Study in Form and Imagery (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974), pp. 3-7; 137ff.

³See Frederick H. Cramer, "Bookburning and Censorship in Ancient Rome: A Chapter from the History of Freedom of Speech," JHI 6 (1945): 157-96 passim. Tiberius ordered the deaths of A. Saturninus, Sextius Paconianus, M. Aemilius Scaurus, and Cremutius Cordus.

could provide to the proliferation of the imperial programme. For this reason, Calpurnius Siculus was apparently employed to be one of the harbingers of the new aurea aetas which Nero's accession had initiated:

aurea secure cum pace renascitur aetas
 et redit ad terras tandem squalore situque
 alma Themis posito iuvenemque beata sequuntur
 saecula, maternis causam qui vicit Iulis.⁴
 (Ecl. 1.42-5)

Calpurnius' imitative and classical style might not have been innovative or Hellenistic enough for Nero's personal taste in poetry, but his Eclogues were functional, harmless, and laudatory in their old-fashioned way.⁵ They seemed to make the senate feel more at ease, more in control again, especially so, since proper reiteration had been given to Augustus' old, long-in-the-tooth notion of additional Saturni regna yet to come. Calpurnius cleverly reminded the

⁴The reference is to an early oration delivered by Nero, but written by Seneca, on behalf of the residents of Ilium (Suet. Nero 7; Tac. Ann. 12.58). There is a textual problem in Calpurnius, Ecl. 1.45, on the word iulis. Nicolaus Angelius' readings from a now lost manuscript of German origin read in ulnis for Iulis; however, three other authoritative manuscripts (N, G, and P), in addition to one inferior manuscript (V), all read iulis. See Dietmar Korzienewski, ed. Hirtengedichte aus neronischer Zeit (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1971), pp. 13-14. Charles H. Keene, ed., The Eclogues of Calpurnius and Nemesianus with Introduction, Commentary, and Appendix (Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 1969), p. 56, reads in ulnis, but still interprets the line as referring to Nero's early development of oratorical skills.

⁵I do not accept E.W. Leach's suggestion in "Corydon Revisited: An Interpretation of the Political Eclogues of Calpurnius Siculus," Ramus 2 (1973): 53-97, that Calpurnius'

senatorial class of its former servitude by way of touting the newly forecasted freedom:

nulla catenati feralis pompa senatus
 carnificum lassabit opus, nec carcere pleno
 infelix raros numerabit Curia patres.
 plena quies aderit, quae stricti nescia ferri
 altera Saturni referet Latialia regna.
 (60-4)

Writers of both prose and poetry had little choice in the early Empire but to pay literary homage to the current despot in whatever literary mode he demanded. As Frederick M. Ahl pointed out in his book, Lucan: An Introduction, there was no safe place in the world for a political dissident or reluctant writer to take up alternate residence if he was possessed of ambitions either political or literary.⁶ Ahl states that "by and large they cooperated silently and

remarks on Nero are ironically intended. If such was the case, as Leach herself admitted in a later publication, Calpurnius' lines could have been mistaken for true encomium by other readers. See E.W. Leach, "Neronian Pastoral and the World of Power," Ramus 4 (1975): 227, n.3. H. Bardon and Eugen Cizek both view Calpurnius as a propagandist: H. Bardon, "Bucolique et Politique," RhM 95 (1972): p. 13; Eugen Cizek, L'Époque de Néron et ses controverses idéologiques (Leiden: E.J. Brill, 1972), pp. 370-75. Cizek's unorthodox dating of Calpurnius' Eclogues to a period after A.D. 60 is very tenuous. Eclogue 1 clearly reflects the conditions of a new principate, and none of the allusions in Eclogues 4 and 7 confirm or require a date later than A.D. 60. For the chronology see Charles H. Keene, The Eclogues of Calpurnius and Nemesianus, pp. 2-14, and Leach, "Corydon Revisited," pp. 85-87.

⁶Frederick M. Ahl, Lucan: An Introduction, pp. 22-23. Residence in Parthia or Carthage was no longer considered attractive or advisable.

resentfully, saving their wrath for histories, letters, and poetry."⁷ A poet such as Lucan, with his burning desire to write and be recognized, could do nothing but allow his career to run its inevitable course. Nero singled Lucan out for distinction because of the many similarities between the young poet and himself. There was only two years' difference in their ages; both were totally devoted to their poetic craft; both had studied under Seneca. Ahl suggests that Nero wanted Lucan as a kind of "Apostle to the Senate," as someone born amidst their own numbers who could thus more properly explain and extend the message of the new Neronian aesthetic to the emperor's conservative detractors.⁸ In the years that followed, Lucan either came to take his responsibilities too seriously, or Nero's growing jealousy of his talent and the subsequent checks which were placed upon the epic poet's creative freedom drove him to abandon his loyalty to the new culture.

As the influence of the Annaei waned, Nero became less concerned with the political aspect of his life; he cared less and less for the maintenance of a viable relationship with the Roman senatorial class since it was clear that they could do little but follow his whims regardless of their

⁷Ibid., p. 21

⁸Ibid., p. 40. See also M.P.O. Morford, "The Neronian Literary Revolution," CJ 68 (1973): 213.

attitude to his actions.⁹ After A.D. 62, Nero thus immersed himself fully in his artistry and in his new aula which now included both Tigellinus and Petronius. Like Seneca and Lucan, Petronius too was senatorial in origin, but his leisurely and luxurious life-style made it extremely unlikely that he would abandon the amenities of his tenure at court, which he had so patiently won, in favour of the ineffectual and crabbing righteousness of a Thrasea or a Seneca re-born.¹⁰ Petronius possessed a certain old-style elegance the appeal of which the thoroughly modern and eclectic, if rather non-selective, artifex could not deny. Nero thus came to follow Petronius' advice as trustingly as he had Seneca's before:

Dein revolutus ad vitia, seu vitiorum imitatione,
inter paucos familiarium Neroni adsumptus est,
elegantiae arbiter, dum nihil amoenum et molle
adfluentia putat, nisi quod ei Petronius adpro-
bavisset. (Tac. Ann. 16.18)

In order to achieve the freedom necessary to stamp Nero's court with his own impressions of what constituted proper taste in the realms of art and literature, Petronius needed a means of capturing Nero's fickle attention and

⁹C.E. Manning, "Acting and Nero's Conception of the Principate," G&R (1976): p. 169, contends that after Seneca's departure, Nero scorned the Senate and turned his full attention to "becoming the idol of the populace."

¹⁰For the details of Petronius' rise to prominence, see the Appendix below, pp. 209-252.

holding it, while not giving rise to opportunities for accusations of rivalry or deliberate insult. The Arbiter thus chose to compose a special kind of high-brow farce, an extremely contemporary yet timeless fantasy, evocative of the artistic, literary and social milieu of Nero, but shrouded also in the safe universality of the generic constraints of Greek and Latin literary composition. By staying as far away as he could from the higher genres of tragedy and epic, which were the major pre-occupations of the emperor, Petronius hoped to display his own literary gifts without giving opportunities for offense, and yet still have the chance of poking slight fun at and taking occasional exception to the imperial quirks and foibles.

This chapter will explore the elusive quality of Neronian taste and attempt to estimate Petronius' contribution to the Neronian aesthetic. The material will be organized under two headings:

- i. The Neronian Literary Renaissance.
- ii. The Generic Nature of the Satyricon.

i. The Neronian Literary Renaissance

Nero, artifex and autocrat, incredibilium cupitor,¹¹

¹¹Tac. Ann. 15.42.2.

fostered a literary revival comparable to that of the Augustan Age. The practice of letters was once again encouraged, at first by Seneca, who hoped to divert the young emperor's attention away from ruling and towards artistic endeavours. The new literary surge began almost immediately upon Seneca's return from exile in A.D. 49, when he commenced his duties as tutor to the young heir apparent. The educational future of Nero was henceforth decided according to the combined prejudices of his mother, Agrippina, and of Seneca. Agrippina refused to have him instructed in philosophy, regarding such studies as ill-befitting a future emperor; while Seneca is said to have kept Nero away from the works of other orators out of deference to himself.¹² If there is any truth to the accusation against Seneca, it is more likely that he thought that an emperor should cultivate the latest and most striking style.¹³ Seneca changed the prevailing taste from the classicism which had dominated the limited literary scene under Tiberius, Gaius, and Claudius to his own freer, more colloquial, less symmetrical, pointed style.

¹²Suet. Nero 52 for both references. However, the Suda states that the Peripatetic, Alexander of Aegae and the Stoic, Chaeremon were teachers of Nero, while Tacitus states that Nero enjoyed hearing philosophers argue as after-dinner entertainment (Ann. 14.16).

¹³George Kennedy, The Art of Rhetoric in the Roman World (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1972), pp. 467-68.

Young Nero and his early comrades were educated upon a steady diet of color, vigor, brevitas, and varietas. Oratory increased rapidly in popularity as its practitioners strove to achieve striking sententiae, antitheses and other tricks of figurative speech.¹⁴ The Senecan style encouraged new interest in deliberative oratory which was practised not only in the form of school suasoriae, but also in the form of speeches inserted into historical works, or into the great numbers of epic and dramatic poems which were being composed. Under Seneca's guidance, Nero's curriculum included the teaching of poetry and history, as artes amoenae, subjects less demanding than rhetoric to be prescribed for students whose choleric spirits needed to be assuaged.¹⁵ Seneca's loose and learned style lent itself to frequent and récherché digressions into exempla from history and mythology;¹⁶ and many writers of epic emerged, all trying to

¹⁴Eugen Cizek, L'Époque de Néron, p. 272.

¹⁵M.P.O. Morford, "The Training of Three Emperors," Phoenix 22 (1968) pp. 58-59 and Kennedy, Art of Rhetoric, p. 434. The new political liberalism promised by Seneca and Nero greatly benefitted literary productivity. Nero took legislative steps to ensure freedom of speech: the Lex Cincia was renewed in A.D. 58 for use against venal orators; the prosecutions of Vibius Secundus in A.D. 60 (Tac. Ann. 14.28) and Fabricius Veiento in A.D. 62 appear to have been genuine (Tac. Ann. 14.50).

¹⁶Seneca's tragedies provide the best examples of the infusion of prose techniques into poetry. See Medea's long and factual pharmacopeia, (Medea 740-848); Creon's description of Tiresias' reading of the exta (Oedipus 530-658).

surpass Vergil in poetic flight, while incidentally camouflaging ethical and political criticisms within the dazzling metaphors of the new style.¹⁷

Despite the many names of poets which survive from the age of Nero, it must be remembered that the number of orators, rhetors, grammarians, and antiquarians was greater still. The writing of prose was considered to be a higher pursuit and a more fitting occupation for the leisure time of the Roman senatorial class. Of the known prose writers from the late Republic through the second century A.D., over one-half of them were of the senatorial class, while of all the known poets, only the Annaei, Petronius, and Silius Italicus are of senatorial origin.¹⁸ Nero revealed, of course, an eager preference for poetry over the more aristocratic inclination of oratory. Tacitus bemoaned the fact that Nero was the first emperor who did not compose his own speeches:

Adnotabant seniores, quibus otiosum est
vetera et praesentia contendere, primum
ex iis, qui rerum potiti essent, Neronem
alienae facundiae eguisse. (Ann. 13.3)

¹⁷ Quintilian mentions in this connection the names of Lucan, Saleius Bassus, and Serranus (Inst. 10.1.89-90).

¹⁸ Ahl, Lucan: An Introduction, p. 38. See also H. Bardon, La littérature latine inconnue, vol. 2: L'Époque Impériale (Paris: Librairie C. Klincksieck, 1956), p. 124. For the stock complaint concerning the poverty of poets, see Eumolpus' remarks, Sat. 83.7.

In his youth, Nero wrote religious poems and lascivious ditties;¹⁹ then advanced to tragic compositions.²⁰ Nero's philhellenism was apparent in his youth, as was his histrionic inclination toward vivid and seductive metrical patterns in poetry. His excessive Alexandrianism is strikingly revealed in a line of his poetry which Seneca quoted:

Colla Cytheriacae splendent agitata columbae.
(QNat. 2.5.6 or Morel, 368B)

Otho, Germanicus, and the other young aristocrats who comprised Nero's earliest coterie, like their Augustan counterparts before them, regarded poetry as nothing more than a playful amusement, a clever way of passing the time, but Nero was completely serious about his art and would not relent when Seneca and the Senate pressed him to refrain from public appearances. The Juvenalia of A.D. 59 provided his first grand excuse to perform in public and to receive the praise of the citizenry. Roman magistrates and patricians were forced to take part in the dramatic contests

¹⁹ Mart. 9.26.9-10.

²⁰ In A.D. 59, Burrus and Seneca stood beside him like teachers (καθάπερ τινὲς διδάσκολοι ὑποβάλλοντές τι παρειστήκεσαν), prompting him, as he sang some piece called "Attis" or "The Bacchantes" (Dio Cass. 62.20). A scholiast to Persius 1.128 claims that the lines quoted at 99-102 in plaintive imitation of Nero's style are genuine and were taken from the lost "Attis."

torua Mimalloneis impleuerunt cornua bombis
et raptum uitulo caput ablatura superbo
Bassaris et lyncem Maenas flexura corymbis
euhion ingeminat: reparabilis adsonat echo. (1.99-102)
H. Bardon, La littérature inconnue, 2:132, believes that the lines are genuine.

and to act out roles which were considered indecent to their rank.²¹ Their protestations in no way daunted Nero, who, in the following year, A.D. 60, initiated a triple competition at the Neronia, in Graeco modo: equestrian, gymnastic, and literary events were held.

All of the crowns were not yet of necessity required to pass to the emperor himself. Lucan, Seneca's nephew, won the prize for poetry and was asked to join the cohors amicorum.²² A senator-poet was as rare a phenomenon as an artist-emperor, and Nero may have hoped that Lucan could aid him in maintaining better relations with the Senate.²³ Lucan was a prodigiously productive poet who, in addition to the ten books of the Pharsalia, produced fourteen Fabulae Salticae, an unfinished Medea, Epistolae ex Campania, several prose orations, prose or poetic works entitled Iliacon, Saturnalia, Catachthonion and Silvae, and a mysterious document entitled De Incendio Urbis. Statius states in the Genethliacon Lucani, which

²¹Tac. Ann. 14.14-15; Dio Cass. 62.19-20. For a fuller discussion, see Chapter 1, p.33above.

²²Vacca Vit. Luc. The Vaccan and Suetonian Lives of Lucan are printed along with Statius' Genethliacon in C.E. Haskins, ed. M. Annaei Lucani Pharsalia, with an Introduction by W.E. Heitland (London: George Bell and Sons, 1897), pp. xiii-xviii.

²³Ahl, Lucan: An Introduction, p. 40.

was dedicated to Lucan's widow, Polla, that Lucan accused Nero of starting the fire of A.D. 64:²⁴

ingratus Nero dulcibus theatri
et noster tibi proferetur Orpheus.
dices culminibus Remi vagantis
infandos domini nocentis ignes
(Silv. 7.58-61)

If Nero was indeed innocent of starting the fire, one can see why an ultimate breach with Lucan was precipitated. Suetonius records how Nero and Lucan became progressively intolerant of one another. Nero walked out on one of Lucan's recitations in order to indicate his disenchantment with his work, and this slight prompted the sensitive young poet to retaliate in ways that could only seal his doom. Not only did Lucan quote a Neronian hemistich in the latrine, but he also tongue-lashed the emperor and his most powerful friends by means of a famosum carmen, which might well have been the De Incendio Urbis.²⁵ Vacca's Vita Lucani mentions an official ban as having been placed on Lucan's work by Nero, as a result of the publication of three, presumably the first three, books of the Bellum Civile.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 338-43; Stat. [Genethliacon =] Silv. 2.7.58-61.

²⁵ Suet. Vit. Luc. Frederick Ahl, "Lucan's De Incendio Urbis," pp. 8-9 sets forth the evidence that the De Incendio Urbis might have been written in verse and therefore might have been the famosum carmen. M.J. McGann, "Lucan's De Incendio Urbis," TAPA 105 (1975): 213-217 opposes this view and contends that the work was in prose.

Vacca is also the source for the story of the supposed jealousy which Nero felt toward Lucan. While there is little doubt that Nero resented Lucan's superior artistic accomplishments, it would appear that if indeed Nero did ban Lucan's epic circa A.D. 63-64, his motives were likely as political as they were personal; the first three books of Lucan's epic, though not as pro-Republican as the books to follow, were a fair indication of the ideological slant to be followed in the rest of the work. If it was Lucan's intention to try to differentiate between his general hatred of Caesarism while maintaining his personal loyalties to a particular Caesar, Nero, such subtlety could not be tolerated in light of the growing estrangement between Nero and the senatorial order. Seneca was not keeping as low a profile as Nero might have wished in his retirement either. The small but keen barbs which were emerging regularly from the Epistulae Morales could only exacerbate Nero's suspicions that, in the events of A.D. 65, the Annaei had more on their minds than belles-lettres.²⁶

This is not to conclude that literature played no part in the strife between Lucan and Nero. In fact, Nero's literary ambitions eventually obliterated the cultural revo-

²⁶Tac. Ann. 15.60-61, 65. O.A.W. Dilke, "Lucan's Political views and the Caesars," Chapter 3 of Neronians and Flavians, Silver Latin I ed. Donald R. Dudley (London and Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1972), pp. 62-82.

lution which began with his reign. Shortly after the Neronia of A.D. 60, Nero began the composition of his Troica,²⁷ the famed epic on Troy. Nero is also rumoured to have sung a Trojan theme as Rome burned in A.D. 64. The singing of the Halosis Troiae may be a vicious fabrication, but the epic on Troy, from all accounts, actually existed. In seeming rivalry with Lucan's smaller historical effort, Nero had originally wanted to compose an epic on all of Roman history, but he was dissuaded from this desire by Cornutus.²⁸ He then turned to a legend which would give proper expression to his philhellenism while likewise glorifying his family connections as a descendant of Venus and Aeneas. For these purposes, the Trojan legend was, of course, ideal.

Nero gave his personal touch to the traditional and popular theme of Troy by adopting the legend according to which Paris was considered to have been the bravest man at Troy.²⁹ A scholiast on Lucan has preserved three lines from Book I of the epic which describe the river Tigris:

Quique pererratam subductus Persida Tigris
deserit et longo terrarum tractus hiatu
reddit quaesitas iam non quaerentibus undas
(Schol. Ad Luc. 3.261 or Morel, 368B)

²⁷The name Troica is attested at Juv. Sat. 8.221 and Serv. Ad Georg. 3.36.

²⁸Suet. Nero 43; Dio Cass. 62.29.

²⁹Serv. Ad Aen. 5.370.

The lines abound with Alexandrianisms.³⁰ The metre is musical, with many long sibilant sounds used to keep the long syllables flowing. The words are delicate and obscure; a certain superficial romanticism pervades the tone. Nero has clearly chosen a banal subject tailored to his personal tastes. By emphasizing the role of Paris over the more martial figures at Troy, he gave himself the opportunity to avoid to a great extent the narration of battle-scenes and to concentrate upon the more delicate aspects of life at luxurious Troy. The painted ceilings of his Golden House confirmed his preference for idyllic rather than martial themes. One ceiling featured the reunion of Hector and Andromache, while another room depicted satyrs cruelly chained amidst the Roman spoils of war.³¹

The epic was most likely composed within the years from A.D. 60-64, and therefore was being unveiled gradually within the same time-frame as Lucan's historical epic. The first Einsiedeln Eclogue, which is usually dated to A.D. 60 in conjunction with the Neronia of that year, contains a

³⁰ Mart. 8.70.8 calls Nero a doctus poeta. For a fuller discussion of Nero's poetic merits, see H. Bardon, Les empereurs et les lettres latines d'Auguste à Hadrien (Paris: Société d'Édition des Belles Lettres, 1968), pp. 206-208.

³¹ Dacos, La découverte de la Domus Aurea, for Hector and Andromache, pp. 118-20, Plate V; for the satyrs, pp. 37-38, Plate XXXI.

praise of Nero as Apollo, nursling (alumnus) of Troy, come to revivify its fame:

hic Heliconis opes florent, hic vester Apollo est.
 tu quoque Troia sacros cineres ad sidera tolle
 atque Agamemnoniis opus hoc ostende Mycenis.
 iam tanti cecidisse fuit! gaudete, ruinae,
 et laudate rogos: vester vos tollit alumnus.
 (37-41)

Troy is fortunate to have fallen so that Nero could sing her praise and, in the next lines, Mantua begins to shred the pages of the Aeneid out of despair at the superiority of Nero's efforts. If Nero was accustomed to servile poets of this ilk, it is no wonder that he had difficulties with the talented and proud Lucan.

The rivalry between Nero and Lucan became, it appears, a kind of competition in aesthetics, with Nero representing the Hellenists and Lucan the Latinists. Lucan became concomitantly more pro-Republican with each successive book, and ever more enamoured of Cato, with his stern qualities of virtus and pietas, in contrast to Nero's dissolute and doubtlessly effeminate Paris. The problems between Lucan and Nero could not have turned essentially on style, for as E. Cizek states:

Ces vers montrent que Néron situait son sujet dans son milieu, dans son décor, adhérait donc au mouvement qui poussait les poètes, tel Lucain, à utiliser pour l'épopée, comme éléments d'intérêts, le pittoresque, joint à une précision de tendance scientifique.³²

³²Cizek, l'Époque de Néron, p. 210.

Interestingly, Petronius' attack on Lucan's epic in the Carmen de bello civili largely avoids the true issue of subject matter beyond the blanket statement that the facts of history, dry and unadorned, are not the most fitting material for epic:

Non enim res gestae versibus comprehen-
dendae sunt, quod longe melius historici
faciunt. (118.6)

Here Petronius associates Lucan's work with what Petronius feels were the unrefined and inelegant Roman epics of the past. By referring to such works as mere res gestae turned into verse, he dismisses the annalistic approach of Naevius, Ennius, and, in his opinion, Lucan, in deference to the loftier scope of the Homeric and Vergilian epic style.³³

Petronius takes up some of Lucan's stylistic failings while overlooking others. He condemns his failure to keep the classical canons of epic composition with regard to elevation of diction, inclusion of the gods, and adds the more personal caution that his sententiae should be woven more closely into the thought of the passage. Petronius, in his epic lines, corrects these faults rightly enough, but the

³³For the significance of res gestae in this context, see Cic. Ad Fam. 5.12: perpetuam rerum gestarum historiam, and M.L.W. Laistner, The Greater Roman Historians (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), pp. 33-35. For early Roman epic, see Brooks Otis, Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 20-24.

overall structure of his poem is tinged with Silver tendencies as well.³⁴ The prosaic, near-Sallustian prologue on the theme of avaritia as the cause of Rome's degeneration into civil strife (118-119) is greatly amplified from Lucan's mention of the theme and reads more like a versified suasoria than epic. A sample will suffice:

Pellitur a populo victus Cato; tristior ille est,
 qui vicit, fascesque pudet rapuisse Catoni.
 Namque--hoc dedecoris populo morumque ruina--
 non homo pulsus erat, sed in uno victa potestas
 ipsa sui merces erat et sine vindice praeda.
 (119 vv. 45-50)

The diction is prosaic, the metre is monotonous; the tone is too rhetorical and inflammatory for proper epic.

On the question of epic machinery, the unusual triad of Dis, Fortuna and Discordia do not normally contend in the panoply of epic. The geographical locale of the Phlegraean Fields and Petronius' near scientific concentration upon its yawning volcanic chasms, while fascinating, are once again more factual than poetic in treatment.³⁵ The careful description of the Maritime Alps suffers from the same flaw (144-151).

³⁴P.G. Walsh, Roman Novel, p. 49, agrees and contends that the flaws are meant to be those of the poetizer Eumolpus. J.P. Sullivan, The Satyricon of Petronius, pp. 165-186, considers the work largely Vergilian in imitation and expressive of Petronius' own views.

³⁵Petronius could be toying with Vergil's description of the underworld, or writing in support of Nero's proposed tunnel project in the area. See P. Grenade, "Une Exploit de Néron," REA 49 (1948): 272-87.

Petronius has given his own personal stamp to the epic fragment which he produced. It may have been written shortly after Lucan's death in order to satisfy Nero that no immortality was due the writer or his tarnished epic, but Petronius' Carmen reveals a great deal about the state of mind of the Arbiter himself. The poetic fragment shares with the Croton Episode which follows it, the overriding themes of avarice, gluttony, and death.³⁶ It was suggested in Chapter I, above, that in the composition of this last extant episode of the Satyricon, Petronius' tone shifts considerably. His personal anxiety and disillusionment are reflected in his narrative. His great and demonstrated sensitivity to the events surrounding him must have led him to absorb the general feelings of fear and hysteria which the Pisonian Conspiracy had generated within the inner circle of the court.

Rome, as portrayed in Petronius' Carmen de bello civili, shares many features with the ghost-town of Croton which the characters of the Satyricon are about to enter. The Roman people and their leaders are portrayed as for sale to the highest bidder, just like the captatores of Croton:

Nec minor in campo furor est, emptique Quirites
ad praedam strepitumque lucri suffragia vertunt.
Venalis populus, venalis curia patrum,
est favor in pretio. (39-42)

³⁶ In the remarks which follow, I am influenced by Froma Zeitlin, "Romanus Petronius: A Study of the Troiae Halosis and the Bellum Civile," Latomus 30 (1971): 56-82.

Eumolpus' suggestion that his predators indulge in a cannibal feast upon his body is likewise mirrored in the despair at Rome:

Nulla est certa domus, nullum sine pignore corpus,
sed veluti tabes tacitis concepta medullis
intra membra furens curis latrantibus errat.
Arma placent miseris, detritaue commoda luxu
vulneribus reparantur. (53-57)

As Zeitlin points out, Fortuna even encourages pallida Tisiphone to feed upon Rome's ruin:³⁷

Tuque ingenti satiare ruina,
pallida Tisiphone, concisaeque vulnera mande:
ad stygios manes laceratus ducitur orbis.
(121 vv.120-2)

Sexual ambiguity, impotence, and infertility pervade both portions of the work:

Heu, pudet effari perituraque prodere fata,
Persarum ritu male pubescentibus annis
surripuere viros exsectaque viscera ferro
in venerem fregere, atque ut fuga nobilis aevi
circumscripita mora properantes differat annos,
quaerit se natura nec invenit.
(119 v. 19-24)

Petronius satisfied his court obligations to Nero, for the Carmen is critical of Lucan and is closely imitative of passages in the Bellum Civile but the epic also expresses the feelings of apprehension which surrounded the Arbiter. His sensitive artist's mind was highly susceptible to suggestion and his poet's ear was as attracted to the poetic sounds and rhythms of his own age as it had been to the works of

³⁷Ibid., p. 70; cf. Sat. 141.10-11.

Publilius Syrus, Lucilius and other poets of the past whose works he had mimicked with considerable expertise.³⁸ The sentiments and style of presentation employed in the Carmen de bello civili are very much his own, in spite of the fact that they are put into the mouth of Eumolpus.

The latent pessimism, the occasional periphrases of style and expression which occur in Petronius, are symptomatic of the works of the Neronian literary revival. More than years separated the Neronian literary figures from their golden past. Rome's proud image of itself was shattered by the events of the early Empire, by the loss of personal control and self-government which the change from free Republic to autocracy had naturally entailed. Nero's encouragement of letters, in the early years of his reign, provided poets with the impetus to attempt once again the genres which were so well-served by the authors of the Augustan Age. But the mere declaration in words of a vaunted return to the Saturnia regna of the past, could not reconstitute the Roman will, could not provide the self-confidence and fresh optimism which had typified the authors of the Augustan age. Seneca soon discovered that no leader, not even Augustus, could simply legislate a revitalization of culture along politically

³⁸ Imitation of Lucilius: Sat. 3.5; imitation of Publilius Syrus: Sat. 55; E.J. Barnes, "The Poems of Petronius," (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1971), pp. 44-56.

acceptable lines, if there was lacking a latent confidence among the litterati that such a resuscitation was either possible or desirable.

Nero's new aesthetic for Rome encouraged, as one of its elements, but merely as one of its elements, a conscious revival of the great literary genres of the Greco-Roman past. Seneca himself attempted the writing of tragedies in imitation of the Greek masters, especially Aeschylus and Euripides. Lucan tried to reinvigorate the pre-Vergilian strain of Roman historical epic, while Calpurnius Siculus wrote Bucolica in imitation of Vergil. Petronius, in the course of his long work, playfully evoked verbal reminiscences of almost every Roman author of note, with concentration upon Horace, Vergil, Livy, and Ovid. The fact that Nero himself turned his muse to epic indicates his basic appreciation of tradition, but he may have approached the Trojan theme with poetic efflatus more suited to an ἔπος τυτθόν. However, in spite of his personal preference for Alexandrianism, a liberal eclecticism typified the artist-emperor's conception of a fresh cultural outlook for the Empire.

Innovation was the keynote of the emperor's taste both in literature and in art and architecture. Creative artists were encouraged to give free rein to their emotions, to forfeit the universality of ideal classicism in favour of the particularity of human pathos, the expression of which

could take any form from mundane realism to pure fantasy. Nero's Hellenistic predilections reached back in time across the programmatic classical ambience of the Augustan Age and back into the self-indulgent milieu of the dissolute aristocrats of the late Republic. His poetic outlook reflected the doctrines of the Neoterói, while his architectural experimentations in the Golden House reprised elements in Italian villa architecture which the conservatism of Augustus and Tiberius had suppressed at Rome.³⁹

The renewed impetus to creativity also effected changes in the style of Roman wall painting, as Nero's artists reopened the long stretches of flat-wash of the Third Style, and reintroduced the perspective of a dream-world. The re-emergence of the mythological and architectural motifs of the Second Style which the disposition of the Fourth Style displayed is likewise explained by Nero's cultural affinities with the late Republic. The Second Style with its themes of evasion, escape, and fantasy had disappeared as a consequence

³⁹ Gilbert Charles-Picard, Augustus and Nero: Emperors of Glory and Decay, trans. Len Ortzen (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell, Apollo edition, 1968), pp. 115-116. Axel Boëthius and J.B. Ward-Perkins, Etruscan and Roman Architecture (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1970), p. 251. The nymphaeum of the Domus Transitoria recalled earlier artificial and natural grottoes within Rome itself. See Boëthius and Ward-Perkins, Part I, Chapter 6, "Hellenized Rome 'Consuetudo Italia'," pp. 115-180. For the "Cave of the Muses" on the Palatine, see Pliny, HN 34.19.

of Augustus' revival of traditional values. The more sedate and orderly Third Style made, in fact, its apparent first emergence in dwellings belonging to members of the imperial family.⁴⁰ The accession of Nero put an end to the stagnant neo-Classicism which had persisted under Tiberius and Claudius and freed Roman art to explore once again its most original trend.

The rhetoric of the new paintings paralleled that of Neronian literature with its emphasis upon a heightened stress of the emotional and theatrical aspects of human existence. Mythological motifs were carefully chosen and consciously combined in order to express a theme, or to reflect the personal interests of the commissioner of the paintings. The thematic nature of the Ixion room in the House of the Vettii has been mentioned in this regard; the industrious cupids to be found in the triclinium of this "modern" house clearly advertise the commercial preoccupations of its owners. The sumptuous tablinum of the House of the Dioscuri took as its main theme the heroism of Achilles and featured a painting which typifies the Fourth Style at its most expressive: the

⁴⁰ Schefold, La peinture pompéienne, p. 239, the Pyramid of Cestius was painted in the pure Third Style and dates from before the death of Agrippa in 12 B.C., since he is mentioned in the inscription as an heir. Augustus' Ara Pacis also has decorative affinities with the Third Style. For correspondences between Horace's Odes and the Third Style, see Schefold, pp. 128-140. For Vitruvius' rejection of fantastic architectural motifs, de Arch 7.5.4.

Discovery of Achilles among the daughters of Lycomedes. Here, in luminous colours is portrayed the dramatic moment when Achilles' heroism overcomes him, his feminine vestments fall away as he reaches for the shield which a wise Odysseus and a confused Diomedes display before him, while Lycomedes and Deidamia, distraught with their individual concerns, observe the scene.⁴¹

Such scenes cannot help but evoke parallels with the theatrical efforts of Nero himself, especially so, since the facial features and the fleshy body of the transvestite Achilles in this painting resemble so closely the appearance of the emperor himself.⁴² The abundant representations of satyrs and maenads in flight, centaurs, panthers and marine creatures in vague pursuit, and Muses afloat which appear in the garlanded tendrils of Neronian grotesques all connote the glory of Bacchus and his craft of dramatic poetry, but they confirm as well the illustrious talents of the artist-emperor in his contrived domain.⁴³

⁴¹Schefold, La peinture pompeienne, pp. 187-189 and plates 38-40.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 197-8, plate 37. The central figure of Apollo likewise resembles Nero somewhat in the famous wall painting from the House of Apollo at Pompeii. Nero appeared as Apollo Citharoedus on coinage of the mid sixties A.D.

⁴³For the grotesques of the Golden House, see Dacos, La découverte de la Domus Aurea, plates I-XXXII. Interestingly, the execution of the grotesques found in the House of the Dioscuri at Pompeii is generally superior to extant examples

The Neronian aesthetic is difficult to typify because it was neither wholly Greek nor wholly Roman in inspiration. Nero did not totally reject the principles of romanitas in order to copy slavishly the artistic values of the Greeks as Tacitus claims. Nero was really a cultural relativist, a near traditionalist, who, in effect, attempted to restore the Republican creative attitudes, the natural progress of which the unnatural institution of the Empire had interrupted. By giving proper recognition to Nero's ecumenism, one can better comprehend his cultural motives. As Gilbert Charles-Picard observes:

We thus avoid two errors that often arise when 'Neronian romanticism' is discussed: it is either seen as but a servile reflection of Hellenic art; or, on the contrary, taken to be a reaction that was specifically Roman, owing nothing to Greek tradition and influence (a mistake into which Attilio Levi has fallen). Both attitudes are due to a too simple view of Hellenistic art, which contains both a romantic and a classical current, and of the new movement that began to spread in the middle of the first century A.D.; this owed its inspiration to Latin-speaking westerners who had absorbed Greek culture and who were completely outside the national trends.⁴⁴

The Neronian aesthetic did not enforce in any sense an ideal distancing of art from life, but rather encouraged the mitigation of the everyday with the ideal. The historians of the Julio-Claudian period well acquaint us with the vibrant

from the Golden House. Either the Golden House contained paintings of better quality in its parts which are now lost, or residents of Italy outside Rome utilized more talented artists than the emperor.

⁴⁴Charles-Picard, Augustus and Nero, pp. 118-19. M.A. Levi, Nerone e suoi Tempi (Milan: Cisalpino, 1949).

interest which the Roman people displayed in each and every deed their emperors performed. The emperors were, in the words of Seneca "nailed to a pinnacle" and unable to escape the relentless attention of the commons.⁴⁵ Neronian literature reflects this growing openness, the gossip-filled, often malicious curiosity and inquisitiveness which every emperor had to tolerate.⁴⁶

Works of literature became concomitantly colloquial, self-explanatory, didactically verbose. Seneca's tragedies are nothing like the classical models which they imitate because their author felt it part of his art to expound, to explicate the wages of sin and guilt in words rather than allowing the tragic figures to endure their own retribution for acts evilly done. Atreus in the Thyestes is a case in point. The character is a walking example of the old political truism that "absolute power corrupts absolutely." Rather than living this conceit through to a demonstration of tragic truth, as Creon does, for instance, in Sophocles' Antigone, Seneca's

⁴⁵Seneca, Clem. 1.8.3-4:
fastigio tuo adfixus es. Nostros motus pauci sentiunt,
prodire nobis ac recedere et mutare habitum sine sensu
publico licet; tibi non magis quam soli latere contingit.
Multa circa te lux est, omnium in istam conversi oculi
sunt. Cf. Tertullian dig. 35.6.

⁴⁶Chester G. Starr, Civilization and the Caesars: The Intellectual Revolution in the Roman Empire (New York: W.W. Norton, 1965), pp. 117-121 for a fuller discussion on this point. See also: Z. Yavetz, Plebs and Princeps (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 62-7; 103-29.

bloodthirsty villain elucidates this maxim by uttering countless pointed apothegms, in order to explain his violent intentions.⁴⁷ The gloom and horror with which Seneca surrounds his tragic hero is all but unbearable. The atmosphere of the Atreus truly connotes the misery and suffering which abuseful autocracy can bring upon those it strikes. Clearly, fear of the imperial potential for harm invades the tragedy and locks it into its own era. Nero received from this play the unambiguous message that evil could indeed triumph and revel in its successes and that kingship was inherently evil:⁴⁸

Atreus:

Ut nemo doceat fraudis et sceleris vias,
regnum docebit. ne mali fiant times?
nascuntur. (Thyestes, 312-314)

Seneca's generic experimentations with tragedy nullified, in effect, the very humanistic spirit which the genre was intended to exalt. By making his material relevant to the Neronian world, he has also, to paraphrase E. Leach, denied the validity of universal tragedy for contemporary

⁴⁷ Seneca, Thyestes 203: aut perdet aut peribit; 211-212: Laus vera et humili saepe contingit viri/non nisi potenti falsa; 214-15: Ubicumque tantum honesta dominanti licent,/ precario regnatur. 220: Fas est in illo quidquid in fratre est nefas.

⁴⁸ See W. Calder, "Seneca: Tragedian of Imperial Rome," CJ 72 (1976): pp. 1-11, esp. 10-11, and J. David Bishop, "Seneca's Oedipus: Opposition Literature," CJ 73 (1978): 289-301.

Rome.⁴⁹ Calpurnius' Eclogues, according to Leach, suffer from the same basic flaw. The rustics featured in Calpurnius' poems are too urbane, too city-wise to maintain the unpretentious simplicity which transformed the pastoral into "a microcosm of universal nature."

Once impoverished by urban sophistication, pastoral simplicity has nothing to offer the great world. The dream of a rural golden age fades away.⁵⁰

The loss of pastoral simplicity is clearly evidenced in the behaviour of Corydon who expresses a strong preference for Nero's new amphitheatre at Rome, over the amenities of flock and field:

vidimus in caelum trabibus spectacula textis
surgere, Tarpeium prope despectantia culmen
(Ecl. 7.23-24)

Corydon further laments that his lowly peasant garb and rustic status prevented him from greeting Nero directly:

O utinam nobis non rustica vestis inesset:
vidissem propius mea numina! sed mihi sordes
pullaque paupertas et adunco fibula morsu
obfuerunt. utcumque tamen conspeximus ipsum
longius. (7.79-83)

Although Calpurnius included "more precise and homely details" of rural life than even Vergil had,⁵¹ the

⁴⁹Leach, "Neronian Pastoral and the World of Power," p. 204.

⁵⁰Ibid., p. 205.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 206.

less pleasant aspects of Neronian social mores also invade the tranquil scene. Eclogue 3 features an uncomfortable analogy between a straying woman and a vagrant heifer: they are both to be beaten into obedience. Jealousy provoked Lycidas' violence which is graphically described by Calpurnius:

haec ego cum vidi, fateor, sic intus arsi,
 ut nihil ulterius tulerim. nam protinus ambas
 diduxi tunicas et pectora nuda cecidi.
 (Ecl. 3.28-29)⁵²

The choleric machismo of Lycidas meets another obstacle in Eclogue 6, where he takes on the more refined Astilus in a singing contest. More is at stake in this wager than mere talent in pastoral composition. Astilus and Lycidas represent, in a sense, city v. country, the polished and refined poetry of the Neronian aula v. the rough and natural pastoral of the past. True to his delicate bearing, Astilus offers a trained deer for a prize, while Lycidas proposes a swift and noble steed.⁵³ Neither prize is typical of the wagers normally set in pastoral competitions, and neither prize is suited in the least to its theoretical recipient.

⁵²Parallels for the lover's attack may be found in Ovid, Amores 1.7 and Theocritus 4.4.46-49, but not in Vergil.

⁵³Leach, "Neronian Pastoral and the World of Power," p. 221. Leach refers to the tame deer as representing "the artificial acculturation of nature."

The contest is never actually staged, since the contestants continuously quarrel between themselves. When Astilus, who finds the outdoor locale unbearable, refuses to compete with noises from the near-by brook, Lycidas proposes a move to the caves and describes the moss-covered grottoes in terms that obviously are meant to attack Astilus' sexuality as well as to imply that his voice needs the acoustical boost of an echo:

Astilus:

sed, ne vicini nobis sonus obstrepat amnis
gramina linguamus ripamque volubilis undae
namque sub exeso raucum mihi pumice lymphae
respondent et obest arguti glarea rivi.

Lycidas:

si placet, antra magis vicinaque saxa petamus,
saxa, quibus viridis stillant; vellere muscus
dependet scopulisque cavum sinuantibus arcum
imminet exesa veluti testudine concha.
(Ecl. 6.62-69)

Further low and personal aspersions are cast on each side, before the Eclogue finally ends when Mnasyllus withdraws in disgust from his position as judge. The earthy realism of the poem's denouement recalls in tone the scene in the Satyricon where Eumolpus is first set upon by the drunken lodgers of the insulae and is then rescued by Bargates, the gout-ridden landlord, who alone of all present knows the true worth of a poet. He addresses Eumolpus in phrases most solicitous:

'O poetarum' inquit 'disertissime, tu eras?
Et non discedunt ocius nequissimi servi
manusque continent a rixa?'

(Sat. 96.6)

But then Bargates asks the inevitable favour in return:

Contubernalis mea mihi fastum facit.
Ita si me amas, maledic illam versibus,
ut habeat pudorem.

(96.6)

He wishes Eumolpus to use his poetic skills in order to curse his mistress in rhyme. Astilus and Eumolpus, the poetae urbani, are equally misunderstood and equally misused.

Like the art of the age, Neronian literature aimed primarily at gratifying and saluting the taste of the artist-emperor. Literary works could take any generic form which their authors chose, but the content was always subject to the influence of imperial domination. Ultimately, Atreus, Corydon, Lycidas and Eumolpus were all to be depicted as inhabitants of the Capitol, expressive of political, social, and artistic viewpoints which touched the emperor directly. Excess of emotion, nostalgie de la boue, naturalism naive to the point of embarrassment, and theatrical exaggeration were all integral elements of the Neronian canon. Nero moulded literature to his own tastes and to the needs of his personal renaissance, an enlightenment which was not necessarily shared by any level of Roman society. In his initial period of patronage he undoubtedly aided a few poets, but his chief aim was always self-indulgence.

ii. The Generic Nature of the Satyricon.

When Petronius began the composition of his long work, his goals were necessarily two-fold. He had to satisfy his own creative instincts and urge to write, while studiously avoiding the possibility of offending the artistic princeps. The Satyricon is thus a work fostered of its own time and moulded to the specific tastes of Nero's court. It is for this reason that it concentrates upon a theme of $\pi\alpha\iota\delta\epsilon\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma \xi\rho\omega\varsigma$ and displays theatrical overtones throughout. The Satyricon is a curious blend of high and low genres, difficult to analyze, impossible to define generically. Petronius utilizes his vast erudition and knowledge of earlier literature within a loose framework of romantic incidents structured from mime, romance, and folktale, with the result that the reader is often unable to discern where the humour or parody is meant to lie.

The inserted tale of The Widow of Ephesus provides a parody of Vergil, when the widow's maid urges her on to love's consummation in words which recall Dido's sister Anna:

'Quid proderit' inquit 'hoc tibi, si soluta
inedia fueris, si te vivam sepelieris, si antequam
fata poscant, indemnatum spiritum effuderis?

Id cinerem aut manes credis sentire sepultos?⁵⁴
(Sat. 111.12)

⁵⁴Cf. Vergil, Aen. 4.34: Id cinerem aut manes credis
curare sepultos.

Both the ancilla and Anna advise their charges to opt for life's pleasures. Petronius has quoted Vergil almost word for word with the exception of the infinitive, which he has altered from curare to sentire. A few lines below, the maid quotes Vergil verbatim:

Placitone etiam pugnabis amori?
Nec venit in mentem, quorum consederis arvis?
(Sat. 112.2 and Aen. 4.38-9)

Amusingly, the widow is not residing in any potentially hostile land, but rather, she is sitting in the tomb of her husband, whose shade might well become hostile at the sight of what is to follow.

Walsh⁵⁵ states that the inclusion of such literary reminiscences by Petronius makes the pleasure accruing to the educated reader (or listener) both "cruder and more intellectual."⁵⁵ Zeitlin sees such abuses of the great works of the past as constituting a disavowal of the meaningfulness of Homer, Vergil and the higher genres:

The Satyricon is a radically anti-classical work, which, by its subversion and rejection of classical aesthetic theory with its attendant expectations, sets out to project a radically anti-classical world view.⁵⁶

Zeitlin attributes to the Satyricon more seriousness and to Petronius a higher sense of moral indignation than he

⁵⁵Walsh, Roman Novel, p. 32.

⁵⁶Zeitlin, "Petronius as Paradox," p. 634.

probably deserves. The tradition of parodying the higher genres of literature reaches all the way back to Homer and the mock-heroic Margites. Whether one considers the Satyricon to be predominantly Menippean satire or novelistic in form, literary imitation by means of parody, pastiche, and direct quotation are seen in both forms.⁵⁷ The comic and mime theatre commonly parodied serious works also.⁵⁸

The overall tone of the Satyricon does not betray the work of a conscientious moralist or earnest theorist upon the social impact of the decline of letters, but rather the attitude of a brilliant and vastly-educated γελωτοποιός, who made use of his native cleverness in order to entertain the emperor and thereby provide an outlet for his own artistic yearnings. Petronius used the medium of low-brow

⁵⁷E. Courtney, "Parody and Literary Allusion in Menippean Satire, Philologus 106 (1962): 88-91 discusses in detail the evidence for literary parody of both epic and dramatic works in Varro's Menippea and Seneca's Apocolocyntosis. Given the scantiness of Varro's fragments, the Apocolocyntosis is a much more reliable source for such usages. See also Raymond Astbury, "Petronius, p. Oxy. 3010, and Menippean Satire," CP 72 (1977): 30-31. Walsh, Roman Novel, p. 32, sees the Romance as being "basically the same genre as epic," and therefore absorptive of epic treatment. He cites Longus' Daphnis and Chloe as exemplary for its literary borrowings. Chariton also used Homeric quotations.

⁵⁸Aristophanes often parodied Euripides and Aeschylus, most notably in the Frogs and Thesmophoriazusae. The surviving titles from the works of Laberius, the writer of mimes during the late Republic indicate imitation of the fabula palliata (Aulularia), the fabula togata (Aguae Caldae, Compitalia, Fullo, Saturnalia, Staminariae), and New Comedy (Gemelli). See W. Beare, The Roman Stage, 3rd ed. rep. (London: Methuen, 1968), pp. 155-157.

farce because it was the only one safely available to him within which to demonstrate his broad literary learning. The Satyricon was intended to be an example of literary παίγνια, nothing more than a sophisticated plaything, an after-dinner amusement for Nero and his aula. As Ben Edwin Perry stated:

Petronius wrote farce because he did not dare write anything else; and he wrote a long farce instead of a short one, in other words, a burlesque novel instead of a Mime or a Milesian Tale, because he needed a large framework, or container, into which he could pour with some hope of impunity all the wealth of literary, philosophical and artistic expression that was welling up within his fertile genius and demanding an outlet.⁵⁹

It is undeniable that over the course of the long work, Petronius appears to tire of his toy upon occasion, to lapse into slightly plaintive fits of nostalgia for a saner world, for a less artificial environment in which to create. When examples of this more serious mood shine momentarily through in the Satyricon, the mood does not persist for many lines and normally ends with teasing abruptness. The nostalgia often takes the frequently used device of literary patterning upon Homer or Vergil, but with greater moral urgency. An example of such a passage is supplied by Encolpius' solitary flight to the seashore,

⁵⁹ Ben Edwin Perry, The Ancient Romances, Sather Classical Lectures vol. 37 (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1967), p. 205.

where he weeps with Achillean despair over the loss of his own heroic honour and personal Patroclus.⁶⁰

The passage is preceded by eight possibly incomplete lines of elegy which deny that friendship and human relationships are anything more than momentary stage-posturings:

Nomen amicitiae sic, quatenus expedit, haeret;
calculus in tabula mobile ducit opus.
Cum fortuna manet, vultum servatis, amici;
cum cecidit, turpi vertitis ora fuga.

*

Grex agit in scaena mimum: pater ille vocatur,
filius hic, nomen divitis ille tenet,
mox ubi ridendas inclusit pagina partes,
vera redit facies, dum stimulata perit... (Sat. 81.9)

Here Petronius relates not the fullness and amusement of his stage-lured world, but rather the emptiness and changeability of its circumstances. Encolpius illustrates the significance of the poem by strapping on his sword and vowing revenge on Ascyltos for the stealing of his prize. He becomes a momentary Achilles, intent upon nothing but violence:

nihil aliud quam caedem et sanguinem
cogito frequentiusque manum ad capulum,
quem devoveram. (Sat. 82.2)

Then, suddenly, when Encolpius bumps into a real soldier, his false courage fails him instantly. Upon reflection,

⁶⁰ Sat. 81.1-6. The Croton episode likewise contains expressions of isolation and alienation on the part of Encolpius, and, yet, it may be read on another level as nothing but a ribald story. See chapter one, pp. 25-27.

Encolpius expresses his gratitude for having been saved from his own false impression of himself:

Despoliatus ergo, immo praecisa ultione,
retro ad deversorium tendo paulatimque
temeritate laxata coepi grassatoris
audaciae gratias agere. (Sat. 82.4)

Petronius' work consistently betrays the attitude of cynical realism which is revealed in the passage just analyzed. If he is ever critical in his use of passages from Vergil or Homer, it is usually of the lack of verisimilitude, the magnifications of human heroism which epic naturally emphasized. The witty incident in which Giton hides under the bed, clinging to the mattress ticking, has its heroic parallel in Odysseus' escape from the cave of the Cyclops, which was made by clinging to the belly of a ram. Giton gives himself away when he is provoked to sneeze by the bugs residing in the bedding. The situation leaves the reader to ponder if Odysseus might not have had the same problem with the fleas on his ram.⁶¹ If Homer is guyed slightly, here, the tone is genuinely amusing.

Vergil is likewise called to slight account in Petronius' telling of the Werewolf Tale of the banqueter Niceros. While traveling with a soldier one morning before dawn, Niceros was shocked to discover that his valiant

⁶¹ Sat. 97.4ff. and Od. 9.426ff.

protector suddenly changed into a werewolf. In Petronius' telling of the story, the graveyard where the metamorphosis occurs, becomes the descriptive equivalent of Vergil's entrance to the underworld, and the great courage displayed by Aeneas on that ominous threshold is contrasted unfavourably, by means of verbal reminiscences, with the more predictably human behaviour of Niceros. Both joust with shades, although Aeneas' are real and Niceros' only imaginary. Aeneas makes a valiant stand against his unsubstantial foes:

Corripit hic subita trepidus formidine ferrum
 Aeneas strictamque aciem venientibus offert,
 et ni docta comes tenuis sine corpore vitas
 admoneat volitare cava sub imagine formae,
 inruat et frustra ferro diverberet umbras.
 (Aen. 6.290-4)

Niceros has no sibyl to restrain him:

qui mori timore nisi ego? Gladium tamen
 strinxi et † matavita tau †⁶² umbras cecidi
 donec ad villam amicae meae pervenirem.
 (Sat. 62.9)

Petronius is certainly not intending to discredit epic by taking harmless and amusing liberties such as this, but he does use the epistolary tradition of the Heroides of Ovid in a slightly more biting manner to indicate the

⁶²The text cannot be restored here. Sage and Gilleland, in their edition, take the syllables to indicate a magic incantation, like our "Abracadabra."

true nature of women. Circe's epistle to Polyaenos (Encolpius) dispenses with the romantic niceties normally to be found in amatory exchanges and deals in the most forthright words possible with Circe's disgust at Encolpius' inability to perform sexually.⁶³ Ovid's romanticism becomes an excuse for Petronius to create one of the wittiest pieces to be found in his entire work.⁶⁴

Petronius' Satyricon is difficult to judge critically because it is derivative of so many genres of ancient literature and totally faithful to none. It has been discarded by critics as an example of Roman satire, despite its Menippean appearance, because it lacks a fixed moral point of view.⁶⁵ The occasional statements on the evils of luxuria and perils of promiscuity which the work may contain, are invalidated by the disreputable nature of

⁶³For the popularity of amatory epistles in the Augustan Age, see Prop. 4.3, and Wilkinson, Ovid Recalled, p. 86.

⁶⁴Sat. 129. The letter ends with the perfect squib: Vale si potes.

⁶⁵That all Roman satire must instruct, is of course, a critical responsibility foisted upon the genre by modern scholars of ancient literature who based their judgment on the works of Horace and Juvenal. The Epicurean theories concerning literature stressed, in fact, the non-didactic nature of poetry and established pleasure as its only criterion. See Sullivan, Satyricon of Petronius, pp. 108-111; Walsh, Roman Novel, pp. 20-22; and L.P. Wilkinson, "Philodemus and Poetry," G&R 2 (1955): 144-151.

the speaker, who is in most cases either Eumolpus or Trimalchio.⁶⁶ In writing the Satyricon, Petronius was granted Narrenfreiheit, the license of a court-jester,⁶⁷ but he dared only make fun of cultural ideas and social mores when his attitudes corresponded fairly closely with those of his intended audience. He thus remains deliberately impersonal and the personae of his characters are not reliable indicators in every instance of the writer's views. Encolpius, the ego-narrator, comes the closest to conveying the reactions of Petronius himself, but even Encolpius is more than once held up by the Arbiter as worthy of ridicule, especially in connection with his naive reactions to the "elegances" at Trimalchio's cena.⁶⁸

It is impossible to conclude anything with certainty concerning the generic nature of the Satyricon. It is clear

⁶⁶ Eumolpus: amor ingenii, Sat. 83.10; ultimus Hammon, 119.14;

Trimalchio: 'Luxuriae rictu Martis...Sat. 55.9.

⁶⁷ For the significance of this term, see Calder, "Seneca, Tragedian of Imperial Rome," p. 10.

⁶⁸ Sat. 60.1, 64.1, but R. Veyne, "Le 'je' dans le Satiricon," REL 42 (1964): 303 states that Encolpius and Petronius share "le détachement dédaigneux" from the things which are happening around them.

from the discussion of the passages cited above that Petronius' own conservative literary heritage does not always serve him well or unambiguously when included in the literary texture of his contemporary work. As Eugen Cizek states, Petronius seems to have one foot in each of two worlds, and is constantly trying to reconcile the old with the new: "des structures ou des virtualités classiques et des expériences nouvelles."⁶⁹

Neronian culture constituted a truly Hellenistic blend of elements Greek with elements Roman.⁷⁰ Likewise, the Satyricon is perhaps best described as a hybrid product of these two separate impulses. After years of endless debate concerning the nature of the Satyricon, three aspects of the work have emerged as most important. It has been defined most frequently as either a work of Menippean satire, a comic novel, or a series of interlocked mimic episodes. None of these proposed explanations is entirely satisfactory in and of itself.

John P. Sullivan is the most influential champion of a Menippean format for the work. He cites its prosimetric form and the presence of the stock satiric banquet piece which has its literary antecedents in Plato, Lucilius, and Horace. Discussions of philosophy, art, literature,

⁶⁹E. Cizek, L'Époque de Néron, p. 398.

⁷⁰See above, p. 79.

and rhetoric accord well with the traditional content of Roman satire also. He observes that parody of literary works which occurs so frequently in the Satyricon, is also implied in Varro's fragments and well-constituted as a part of the genre by Seneca's Apocolocyntosis.⁷¹ E. Courtney and Jean-Pierre Cèbe have concurred in the opinion that there is sufficient evidence provided by the fragments of Varro's Menippea to conclude that parody was a prominent feature in his work, but Raymond Astbury disagrees that parody was "intrinsic to what Varro was doing in the Menippeans."⁷²

Astbury also restates the traditional objection that Petronius' Satyricon is not Menippean satire because it lacks a moral and satirical purpose.⁷³ Varro's works were intended to be explicitly moral and to castigate the ills of society as the 94 titles and 600 fragments which

⁷¹ Sullivan, Satyricon of Petronius, pp. 91-92.

⁷² Courtney, "Parody and Literary Allusion," pp. 89-91, and Jean-Pierre Cèbe, La caricature et la parodie dans le monde romain (Paris: Éditions E. de Boccard, 1966), pp. 285-288. Astbury, "Petronius, P. Oxy. 3010, and Menippean Satire," p. 30.

⁷³ Astbury, p. 29. It is impossible to go back behind Varro, and to analyze Menippus' own style and content except by presumed analogy with Lucian. As Donald Dudley states of Menippus: "like the Cheshire cat, he has faded away to a grin." Donald R. Dudley, A History of Cynicism (London: Methuen, 1937), p. 69.

are extant reveal. But it is impossible to garner very much about his method of literary treatment from what remains. Epic parody or imitation is implied in such titles as Sesculixes and Περίπλους. Marcipor seems to deal with a storm and shipwreck.⁷⁴ Fragment 144 appears to be set in a school like the opening scene of Petronius, but Astbury claims that this fragment actually refers to a meal.⁷⁵ While one can see Varronic elements in the Satyricon, it is impossible to view Petronius' work as exclusively Roman satire. The supposed parallels between Petronius and Horace are really not that strong and are likewise insufficient to allow the Satyricon to be classed as a canonical example of Roman satire.⁷⁶

Gareth Schmeling noted that the mood and cultural values expressed in the Satyricon are ill-suited to Roman satire. He further remarked that Petronius' concept of reality "does not conform to the reality generally accepted

⁷⁴Varro, frg. 272. The fragments are collected in Franz Buecheler, rev. W. Heraeus, Varronis Menippearum Reliquiae, appended to Franz Buecheler, ed. Petronii Saturae, 6th ed. (Berlin: Weidmann, 1922, 8th ed. 1963).

⁷⁵Fragment 144: et ceteri scholastici saturis auribus scholica dape atque ebriis sophisticе aperantologia consurgimus ieiunis oculis. Walsh, Roman Novel, p. 21 believes that the fragment refers to a school, but see Astbury, p. 27, where he discards most of Walsh's parallels between Petronius and Varro.

⁷⁶Both Horace and Petronius describe cenae, although Petronius' is by far the more elaborate; both authors use elements of the mime, and both mention Priapus; however,

as normal."⁷⁷ In addition to representing restrained understatement, Schmeling's observations compel the critic to search outside the confines of Roman satire in order to arrive at a more accurate assessment of the nature of the work. Schmeling is correct in saying that Roman social values as normally portrayed in the genre of satura do not constitute the standard of comparison in the Satyricon. But Petronius is not concerned with depicting Roman social mores, but rather Neronian social mores. Roman satire is merely one element in the artificial, acculturated hybrid which results. The work is made intentionally to resemble Menippean satire in form, but Petronius takes, as Sullivan has remarked, full advantage of the "flexibility" and opportunities for diversity of narrative provided by this form.⁷⁸ It is therefore not profitable to search for other forms of prosimetric literature outside Roman satire with which to link the Satyricon. Such undertakings merely confuse the issue and do not provide much help in defining the

Petronius attaches much more emphasis to these motifs. See Niall Rudd, The Satires of Horace (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1966), pp. 62-68, and J. Révay, "Horaz und Petron," CP 17 (1922): 202-212.

⁷⁷Gareth L. Schmeling, "The Satyricon, Forms in Search of a Genre," CB 47 (1971): 52.

⁷⁸Sullivan, Satyricon of Petronius, p. 90.

work.⁷⁹

It is best to accept the Roman-Menippean aspects of the work at face value and then in light of Nero's grecophilism, to look to the tradition of the Greek romance for a further delineation of the literary texture of the Satyricon. R. Heinze pointed out the many motifs and themes which the Satyricon has in common with the Greek romance.⁸⁰ These similarities include: the Liebespaar as represented by Encolpius and Giton, intentions of suicide, wanderings of the hero, storm and shipwreck, rival lovers, and the motif of numen laesum as advancing the movement of the plot.⁸¹ Other points of contact may be seen in the narrative style of the work as well: impassioned monologues, letters and replies, lengthy deliberations concerning approaching peripeties, and moral-

⁷⁹Ibid., pp. 49-50. Dagmar Bartoníková, "Prosimetrum: the Mixed Style in Ancient Literature," Eirene 14 (1976): 88. The prosimetric format can be found in authors as diverse as Plato and Chariton, but most examples are direct quotes from other writers, not original compositions. Peter Parsons, "A Greek Satyricon?" BICS 18 (1971): 53-68, revealed a new papyrus which does contain the alternation of prose and sotadean verse, but the fifty lines date from the second century A.D. They may presuppose a Greek model for Petronius, but the evidence is still inconclusive.

⁸⁰R. Heinze, "Petron und der griechische Roman," Hermes 34 (1899): 495-514.

⁸¹Fake suicides: Sat. 94, 108.11; wanderings: Sat. 81.3-4; storm and shipwreck: Sat. 114; rival lovers: Sat. 79.80; numen laesum (Priapus): Sat. 16-26.6, 104, 140.12-13.

izing sententiae.⁸²

Heinze viewed the Satyricon as a deliberate parody of the sentimental genre of Greek romance. He regarded the unfaithful homosexual Liebespaar to be a direct degradation of the eternally constant heterosexual lovers integral to the romance.⁸³ Sullivan has correctly observed that Romans of Petronius' day would not necessarily regard homosexuality as deliberate parody of heterosexuality, since "Petronius, like most of his contemporaries, no doubt regarded all men as potentially, if not actually, bisexual."⁸⁴ It is more likely that Petronius' concentration upon homosexual lovers is in complete conformity with the preferences of Nero's aula. The very form and ideal substance of the romance are under attack in Petronius. He is exposing the unreality of the romantic genre when viewed against the social circumstances of his own day. He attacks

⁸²Monologues: Sat. 81-82, 115.11-20; letters and replies: Sat. 130; deliberations: Sat. 13-14, 101-104, 117; ecphrases: Sat. 1-2, 83, 89ff. For an analysis of these motifs and narrative techniques as they are used in the Greek romance, see Gerald N. Sandy, "A Comparative Study of Apuleius' Metamorphoses and other Prose Fiction of Antiquity," Ph.D dissertation, (Ohio State University, 1968), esp. pp. 91-133.

⁸³Heinze, "Petron und der griechische Roman," pp. 495-6.

⁸⁴Sullivan, Satyricon of Petronius, p. 96.

the speciousness, the simplicity of action and feeling which pervades the romance form, because it offends his cynical penchant for realism in art and literature. On this subject, Gerald Sandy states:

Both Byron and Sterne, like Petronius, are the enemies of whatever is stylized, and thus they parody their own works so as to avoid the pitfall of pedantic dogmatisms and crank conventions.⁸⁵

Petronius' use of the genre of Greek fiction amounted to the same kind of "literary opportunism" which Sullivan sees in his adaptations of the Menippean form. The Greek romances and comic novellae of Greek fiction were prosified and degraded forms of the epic, inclusive of all the literary conventions and motifs that they derived from the Odyssey. By adapting the modes of Greek prose, Petronius could display his vast knowledge of true epic and pattern in any literary direction which suited him.⁸⁶ Significantly, with regard to Nero, the romances were Greek in origin and therefore possessed appeal prima facie. They also reflected the high levels of pathos and maudlin human drama which were attractive to the

⁸⁵ Sandy, "Comparative Study of Apuleius," p. 104, and idem, "Satire in the Satyricon," AJP 90 (1969): 292-303.

⁸⁶ Walsh, Roman Novel, p. 7.

emperor. Petronius could spin out his tale indefinitely, and by sheer variety of episodes, hope to keep Nero's interest and favour. The Satyricon, like the Room of the Landscapes in the Golden House, jumps from scene to scene. A Priapic orgy gives way to a satiric banquet, the banquet to a mime of pederastic jealousy, the mime to a fabulistic shipwreck, the shipwreck to an elegaic exploration of a strange new land.⁸⁷

The adventurous and restless texture of Petronius' Satyricon is well within the spirit of Nero's own aesthetic, which encouraged the pursuit of themes both illusionary and escapist. Nero's comprehensive Hellenistic tastes did not categorically discriminate between Greek and Roman in art or in literature. The Fourth Style of painting which he inspired, is thus a blending of conservative Roman landscape paintings, old-masters' copies and the innovative fantasies of the Neronian grotesques. All of these elements are juxtaposed with no thought to harmony, in a complex *mélange*, within the rooms of the Golden House. If the resulting effect seems inconsistent

⁸⁷ I agree with Philip Corbett that the Satyricon has been epitomized by someone who deliberately chose episodes which would typify the generic variety of the work. I also agree that the lacunae in the extant portions are never large. See Corbett, Petronius, p. 43.

or schizophrenic to the modern beholder, one must remember that Nero was never known for his balanced intellect, but rather for his theatricality. The continual references to the mime which pervade the Satyricon reflect the pre-occupations of the emperor himself. The work is Greek and Roman, comprised of literary evocations both low and high. It parallels, therefore, the uneven, internally contradictory artistic urges of the artifex.

The Neronian aesthetic, with its emphasis upon variety, may be viewed as the culmination of the intellectual Hellenism which began with Clodius, Catullus, Sulla, Julius Caesar and other advocates of the aesthetic libertinism which typified the Late Republic. The Carmina Priapaea convey the spirit of their moral ambivalence concerning religion and life in general.⁸⁸ The illusionary and unreal aspects of the Second Style wall-paintings relate to the Roman desire for escape from the political realities of the last years of the Republic. The realistic and megalographic nature of these same works connotes their Roman fixedness upon real and concrete representations of phenomena. The Fourth Style of Nero is a direct extension

⁸⁸ Rankin, "Petronius, Priapus and Priapeum LXVIII," p. 62, states that the Priapaea were the outward expression of Roman brutality and frustration, and were intended to neutralize by means of laughter the negative and destructive elements and residual strands of the unease which seemed to prevail in the last

and elaboration of Second Style painting, connotative of the limitations of the Roman tolerance for fantasy or abstract metaphor in art. As Peter von Blanckenhagen states:

For them [the Romans] art did not require an inherently consistent pattern. It had to be nothing but an immediate and rich illustration of actuality, and they did not bother with more problematic relations between life and art.⁸⁹

The Satyricon is just such an illustration of the Neronian actuality, in which histrionic and staged greeklings are made to function within the hard-nosed realities of Roman society. Like Nero himself, the scholasticus, Encolpius, attempts to live an ideal and pleasure-oriented life free of constraint, and like the emperor also, his desire to do so is continually thwarted by the non-ideal nature of his environment. This fantasy of cultural escape was not new with Nero by any means. The Hellenistic villa architecture of

years of the Republic, and which were far from being extinguished in the new dispensation of the principate.

See also Arnold J. Toynbee, Hannibal's Legacy, 2 vols. (London: Oxford University Press, 1965) 2:487.

⁸⁹Peter von Blanckenhagen, "Narration in Hellenistic and Roman Art," AJA 61 (1957):83.

Campania serves to document the retreat into hedonism which Roman aristocrats had contrived for themselves. The Romans of the late Republic affected the lifestyles of Hellenistic princes and attempted to revive the "lost paradises" of Alexandria or Antioch in typically Roman material forms. The Dionysiac gardens in the Roman villas give literal life to Hellenistic sacral-idyllic wall-paintings.⁹⁰ The Romans decorated the walls of their villas with designs adapted from Hellenistic stage scenery and thus literally strove to "live out" the conceits of a Greek paradise. The house became, in effect, a Musaion, replete with sacred groves, Dionysiac masks, oscillae, all of the learned symbols of Hellenistic refinement.⁹¹

Priapus, the garden-god offspring of Venus and Bacchus, became symbolic of the new Roman libertinism. Garden and theatre mingled under his image to form the proper atmosphere for the unbridled and unencumbering sensuality which his godhead also promised.⁹² The Carmina

⁹⁰ Grimal, Les jardins romains, pp. 334; 432-435.

⁹¹ Karl Schefold, "The Origins of Roman Landscape Painting," Art Bulletin 20 (1938): 94. For the relationship between scaenographic paintings in houses and actual theatres, see A.M.G. Little, "Scaenographia," Art Bulletin 18 (1936): 407-418.

⁹² Hans Herter, De Priapo. Religionsgeschichtliche Versuche und Vorarbeiten, bd. 23 (Giessen: Alfred Topelmann, 1932), pp. 2-6.

Priapaea reveal the aggressive sexuality which Priapus encouraged. Priapus threatens men, women, and boys alike.⁹³ Women are given many of the unpleasant characteristics which they display in Petronius, since the garden-god contends that they come only to wear him out.⁹⁴ Even Penelope is described as delaying her decision until she can find the most potent suitor.⁹⁵

Priapus appears prominently on Arretine pottery of the period from 50 to 20 B.C., and he was cultivated by the neoterics and Catullus.⁹⁶ Horace wrote of a statue of Priapus belonging to Maecenas which was prominently placed in the remodelled gardens on the Esquiline.⁹⁷ Representations of Priapus occur throughout the decorations of Campania and indicate the flourishing pleasure culture which was to be found there. The Satyricon, with its theme of the "wrath of Priapus" participates in the spirit of the high-living milieu which the garden-god

⁹³ Carm. Priap. 4,5,10,12,14,16. The solution to the pun in Carm. Priap. 67 is "pedicare."

⁹⁴ Carm. Priap. 8,24,26.

⁹⁵ Carm. Priap. 68. See also Rankin, "Petronius, Priapus and Priapeum LXVIII," pp. 61-63.

⁹⁶ Georg Luck, Latin Love Elegy (London: Methuen, 1957) p. 86, and Catullus 16.

⁹⁷ Horace Sat. 1.8. See Rudd, The Satires of Horace, pp. 67-74.

symbolized.

The very title Satyricon is a clue to the nature of Petronius' work. The word derives from the adjective satyricus which means satyr-like and was eventually used in Latin to apply to the activities of the young Romans who became habitués of the theatre arts and of the palaestra.⁹⁸ The palaestra, which served as a gathering place for those interested in dramatic arts in the Greco-Roman world, had for its legendary founder and patron the god Hermes, with the result that, in Roman society, men of culture are often called Mercuriales and are associated in the Roman tradition with the Roman Woodland deity, Faunus.⁹⁹ Interestingly, in the Satyricon, it is the Roman god Mercury, the protector of satyrici, who cures the impotence which Priapus has visited upon Encolpius.¹⁰⁰

⁹⁸ Satyricus, -a, -um is derived from the Greek σατυρικός and is not to be confused with the Roman word for medley, satura. The title is either a Greek genitive plural, on analogy with Manilius' Astronomicon (libri), or neuter singular with the word opus implied. The analogy of the Μηλοποιία of Aristides, a work of similar spirit, makes the genitive plural the likelier possibility.

⁹⁹ Cf. Horace Od. 2.17.28: Faunus, Mercurialium custos virorum. For the palaestra as center of the theatre arts, see Charles Daremberg and E. Saglio. Dictionnaire des Antiquités grecques et romaines (Paris: Hachette, 1877-1919).

¹⁰⁰ Sat. 140.12, Corbett, Petronius, p. 36, views the intercession of Mercury, who delivers Encolpius from wrathful Priapus, as: "a triumph for Rome over the noisome cult of a foreign superstition."

Two instances of the usage of the adjective satyricus attest to its meaning in Petronius. In the Life of Galba, Chapter 16, Plutarch describes how Galba wished to economize by ordering that all but one-tenth of the gifts which had been made during Nero's reign to the people of the theatre and the palaestra should be returned. The money could not be returned, states Plutarch, because these men were ἐφήμεροι and σατυρικοί - irresponsible and loose in their way of life. The words are applied specifically to lovers of the theatrical world: οἱ περὶ σκῆνην καὶ παλαίστραν. In the other instance of the use of the word satyricus, Athenaeus mentions that Sulla wrote satyr-comedies in Latin:

αὶ ὑπ' αὐτοῦ γραφεῖσαι σατυρικαὶ κωμῳδίαί
τῇ πατριῷ φωνῇ.¹⁰¹

Plutarch completes the picture of Sulla's interest in the theatre by relating that Sulla retired into the company of mime-artists and comics:

συνῆν μίμοις γυνάξει καὶ κιθαριστρίαις
καὶ θυμελικοῖς. (Sulla 36)

The title of Petronius' work indicates the connection between the Satyricon and the interests of the artistic set of Neronian Rome. One would expect the work to reflect, as it does, an interest in the Fescennine verses, Atellan farces, and the mime which evolved from those comic impulses as cultivated by the Fauni and

¹⁰¹Athenaeus Deip. 261c.

Σατύροι.¹⁰² The Neronian aula with its penchant for nostalgie de la boue, was particularly susceptible to the allurements of the mime, not so much for its morally redemptive sententiae as for its lewdness. Pantomimes accompanied by tragic songs replaced tragedy at Nero's court, since here also, suggestive gesticulation was as important as the words.¹⁰³

H. Stubbe and M. Rosenbluth long ago concluded that Petronius' primary motivation in writing the Satyricon was to present a series of mimic scenes.¹⁰⁴ More recently, P.G. Walsh and Gerald Sandy have surveyed the abundance of theatrical metaphors in the Satyricon. Sandy has analyzed the Cena and has found it to be structured from

¹⁰²Corbett, Petronius, p. 139. Even Augustus financed and viewed Fabulae Salticae of a very low nature. Ovid confronts the emperor with the fact of his imperial sponsorship and viewing of such performances:

haec tu spectasti spectandaque saepe dedisti
(maiestas adeo comis ubique tua est)
luminibusque tuis, totus quibus utitur orbis,
scaenica vidisti lentus adulteria.
scribere si fas est imitantes turpia mimos,
materiae minor est debita poena meae.
an genus hoc scripti faciunt sua pulpitar tutum,
quodque licet, mimis scaena licere dedit?
et mea sunt populo saltata poemata saepe,
saepe oculos etiam detinuere tuos. (Trist. 2.511-20)

¹⁰³Beare, Roman Stage, p. 234.

¹⁰⁴H. Stubbe, Die Verseinlagen in Petron, Philologus Supplement-band 25.2 (Leipzig: Dieterich, 1933). M. Rosenbluth, Beiträge zur Quellenkunde von Petrons Satiren (Diss. Kiel 1900) (Berlin: Eisenstädt, 1909).

a number of skits.¹⁰⁵ Froma Zeitlin remarked upon the abrupt transitions made from scene to scene in the Satyricon that "episodes are not resolved; they disintegrate."¹⁰⁶ Mime scenes often end with a blare of horns or some precipitous departure.

Aspects of the mime are abundantly apparent in the Satyricon. The characters wear the pallium and tunicam so common to Roman comedy and the low stage.¹⁰⁷ The colours of the garments worn in the Satyricon are the reds, greens, and yellows normally associated with the stage.¹⁰⁸ The gestures of covering the head with the pallium, and or girding up the garment in order to fight are also motifs of the physical mime.¹⁰⁹ Quartilla

¹⁰⁵ Walsh, Roman Novel, pp. 7-15. G. Sandy, "Scaenica Petroniana," TAPA 104 (1974): 329-346.

¹⁰⁶ Froma Zeitlin, "Petronius as Paradox," p. 655.

¹⁰⁷ pallium: Sat. 12, diligentius considerare pallium coepit; Sat. 14, vel minoris pallium addicere placuit; Sat. 28, sed palliis ex lana mollissima factis.

tunica: Sat. 126, collegit altius tunicam; Sat. 136, tunicam meam lacerat.

¹⁰⁸ colours: Sat. 27, tunica vestita russea; Sat. 67, ut infra cerasina apparet tunica; Sat. 60, candidas succincti tunicas.

¹⁰⁹ gestures: Sat. 32, pallio enim coccineo excluserat caput; Sat. 20, operuerat Ascyrtos pallio caput; Sat. 80, intorto circa brachium pallio composui ad proeliandum gradum.

and Oenothra function as archimimae, stage directing the humour and remaining central to it.¹¹⁰

The Satyricon appears to contain stage directions at some points. Quartilla, for instance, gives out with a laugh reminiscent of mime (mimico risu, Sat. 19.1). The servants at Trimalchio's board are described as meant to be a chorus of pantomime artists (pantomimi chorus, Sat. 31.7). The shipwreck is to be regarded as a mimicum naufragium. Encolpius and Giton stage a suicide scene (mimica mors, Sat. 94), and Eumolpus proposes that they play out a farce at Croton (et ne quid scaena, Sat. 117.4). These examples of stage directions leave the impression that the Satyricon may well have been acted out by members of the court circle. Nero himself may have played Trimalchio, a possibility which opens up all kinds of ironical overtones for the Cena. This suggestion does not seem so fanciful when viewed in light of the fact that Tigellinus' banquets were choreographed debauches and that Tiberius had human tableaux arranged on the grounds of his villas at Capri which were far more shameful than anything which occurs in the Satyricon.¹¹¹

¹¹⁰Quartilla: Sat. 19.1, mimico risu; Oenothra: Sat. 135, incincta quadrato pallio.

¹¹¹Suet. Tib. 43-44.

In keeping with Nero's personal aesthetic, the Satyricon is Roman, Greek, and acutely contemporary in nature. Petronius' use of protagonists more familiar to the world of the idealized romance was an intentional ploy meant to meet with Nero's favour. Encolpius is the archetypal vagrant litterateur, who must struggle to survive in a thankless world. As Reardon states, the heroes of the romance were "the late Greek version of unaccommodated man."¹¹² The characters of the romance sail "ever farther away from home, peace, and security."¹¹³ The artistic pretensions and endless travails of Encolpius were met with undoubted sympathy from the restless and oft-thwarted artifex.

Nero and Encolpius share Greek values and sensibilities which are not always operative within the Roman cultural scene. They are both forced, each in his own way, to endure the barbaric insult of Roman life. P.G. Walsh devised a system for analyzing the Satyricon which confirms the suggestion that Encolpius is more or less trapped within the Roman mores. He views the romantic "eternal triangle" of Encolpius, Giton and Ascyltus/Eumolpus as centered within a number of adventures

¹¹²Reardon, "The Greek Novel," Phoenix 23 (1969): 243.

¹¹³Ibid.

which all belong to the world of Roman satire.¹¹⁴ Walsh divides the Satyricon into a number of separate episodes, each dealing with a stock subject of Roman satire. The graeculi must constantly confront the Romani in their travels.

Agamemnon is portrayed as a hypocritical rhetor; Quartilla as a mulier libidinosa; Trimalchio, a boorish host; Eumolpus, a vesanus poeta; Lichas and Tryphaena, as superstitiosi, and Croton as a setting for the captatores.¹¹⁵ While this explanation is insufficient to explain all of the elements in the Satyricon, it certainly provides a logical estimation of how Petronius proceeded in writing the work. This description of the Satyricon also satisfies, as Walsh states, the apparent pun in the title, which implies both satyrica and satura.¹¹⁶

In conclusion, the Satyricon is a work of distinctly Neronian flavour, written to be enjoyed and possibly performed, by the Neronian coterie. The values of Greco-Roman aesthetics expressed in the work reflect the variegated tastes of the emperor himself, who always struggled to be untraditional yet somehow faithful, nonetheless, to his Greco-Roman cultural heritage.

¹¹⁴Walsh, "Was Petronius a Moralist," p. 189.

¹¹⁵Ibid.

¹¹⁶Ibid.

CHAPTER THREE
A CAMPANIAN COMMENTARY TO PETRONIUS'

CENA TRIMALCHIONIS

Introduction

Never has there appeared a full Campanian commentary to the Cena Trimalchionis written in the English language, although it has been long assumed by most Petronian scholars that Southern Italy provides the location for the opening adventure of what survives of the Satyricon. Ludwig Friedlaender pioneered the construction of a social commentary on the Cena with his edition of 1906.¹ The commentary which accompanied his text and translation of the Cena sets the work in the social framework of the Neronian Age, and contains both a wealth of philological clarifications and the kind of general insights into Roman and Campanian society which typify his later four-volume work, Darstellung aus der Sittengeschichte Roms.²

¹Ludwig Friedlaender, ed., Petronii Cena Trimalchionis (Leipzig: S. Hirzel, 1906).

²Ludwig Friedlaender, Darstellung aus der Sittengeschichte Roms, 4 vols. (Leipzig: 1922), 10th ed., ed. G. Wissowa (Aalen: Scientia Verlag, 1964).

Perhaps only one man in the world was capable of taking such a social commentary one step further: Amedeo Maiuri. In 1945, he did just that by publishing his Campanian commentary³ which adds the further dimension of actual archeological evidence to the work of Friedlaender. No one individual other than Maiuri was sufficiently knowledgeable of the finds of Pompeii and Herculaneum - both in situ, and the many virtually uncatalogued pieces in the Naples Museum, of which he was curator until his death. Maiuri was able to concentrate on Italian customs and artifacts best understood in the eternally Roman environment of the Campi Phlegraei. His work was rather revolutionary at its time and could not escape inevitable comparison with that of Friedlaender. Maiuri's commentary was nonetheless well-received by the French and Italian scholars who reviewed it.⁴

This present, abbreviated commentary is a first

³Amedeo Maiuri, ed., La Cena di Trimalchione (Napoli: Raffaello Pironti 1945).

⁴There do not seem to have been any reviews of this book written in the English language; at least, there are none listed in L'Année philologique through 1951; however, of four reviews sampled, two in French and two in Italian, all four critics were positively impressed with the book as a whole. They cited for particular commendation the textual aspects of the edition, its apparatus criticus, its use of inscriptional materials from Campania, and its use of parallels drawn from actual archaeological discoveries at Pompeii and Herculaneum. The four reviews and reviewers were: A. Rostagni, RFC (1946): 184-86; G. Pugliese Carratelli, PP (1946): 94-98; Alfred Ernout, RPh (1947): 111; J. Marouzeau, REL (1949): 93.

effort at adapting Mauri's method and updating the information concerning the Campanian elements in the Cena, by utilizing the findings of Gilbert Bagnani, John D'Arms, Wilhelmina Jashemski, John P. Sullivan, William Arrowsmith, Martin S. Smith, and K.F.C. Rose, and other scholars who have contributed their own investigations into different aspects of the Campanian world as painted by Petronius.

And Petronius paints from a brilliant palette indeed. Whether his work be considered as satire with serious moral intent or as mere story-telling,⁵ he incorporates into his writing a mode of realism, and the fine attention to detail that one would naturally expect from an elegantiae arbiter.

Three questions must first be tackled by anyone undertaking to comment on the Campanian elements in the Cena Trimalchionis. These are the questions of the authorship and date of the Satyricon as a whole and the location of the Cena portion of that work. The Campanian enthusiast would naturally wish to establish that the author of the

⁵ Gilbert Highet, "Petronius the Moralizer," TAPA 72 (1941): 176-194 and William Arrowsmith, "Luxury and Death in the Satyricon," Arion 5 (1966): 304-331, both espouse the theory that Petronius is writing the Satyricon from the point of view of an enraged Epicurean and earnest moralist. Gilbert Bagnani, "And Passing Rich," Phoenix supplement, vol. 1 (1952): 218-223 and J.P. Sullivan, "Petronius: Artist or Moralizer," Arion 6 (1967): 71-88 hold the view that he makes no real moral condemnations or judgments of any kind, but merely tells his "good yarn", resplendent with details and realistic touches which can be interpreted in different ways by different levels of society.

Satyricon is the Petronius mentioned in Tacitus⁶ as the Arbiter of Neronian times, that he is a member of the family of Petronii who maintained estates at Cumae, and that he chose the Campanian area and specifically the city of Puteoli as the site of this section of his whole work.

Proving such depends upon first establishing that the work is of Neronian date. If it could be proved by means of evidence from outside the text of the Satyricon that the work was of Neronian date, then the authorship could be secured in favour of that member of the Gens Petronia who received the cognomen-nickname "Arbiter" from Nero sometime after A.D. 58. Maiuri established a working terminus ante quem for the writing of the Satyricon by observing that malui civis Romanus esse quam tributarius would be completely meaningless after the Constitutio Antonia of A.D. 212.⁷ Making use of Maiuri's terminus ante quem, Gilbert Bagnani attempted to pinpoint the date even further by taking Echion's comments concerning a master who consigned his slave to the ring without the necessity of magisterial consent, and concluding that such an arbitrary action must have preceded the passage of the

⁶Tacitus Ann. 16.17-19.

⁷Maiuri, "Petroniana," pp 3 (1948): 127. Maiuri was writing here to dispel the dogmatic conviction of E.V. Marmorale, La Questione petroniana (Bari: Laterza, 1948), that the Satyricon should be dated to post-Commodan times.

Lex Petronia de Servis which prohibited many abuses of slaves by their masters.⁸ By working with material other than the Satyricon,⁹ Bagnani assigned to the Lex Petronia de Servis a Neronian date and approximated its year of enactment as A.D. 61. He then left open the possibility that this post-Claudian lex rogata may even have been proposed by the Arbiter himself,¹⁰ or by some member of his immediate family.

Most Petronian scholars other than Marmorale are willing to place the time of the composition of the Satyricon within the time frame of A.D. 58-65, and, although there is no way of proving it conclusively, they also accept that the Arbiter is the author of the work.¹¹ Petronius probably intended his writings for the amusement of the court

⁸ See Sat. 45.12 below.

⁹ Gilbert Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance: A Study of the Life and Works of C. Petronius Arbiter, Phoenix supplement, vol. 2 (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1954) pp. 16-24.

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 24.

¹¹ Recent scholars who accept the Neronian date and, reservedly, the Arbiter as author include: Kenneth F.C. Rose, "Time and Place in the Satyricon," TAPA 93 (1962): 402-409; John P. Sullivan, The Satyricon of Petronius (London: 1968); W.B. Sedgwick, ed., Cena Trimalchionis of Petronius 2nd ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press 1950); W. Arrowsmith, The Satyricon of Petronius, Translated and with an Introduction (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press 1959); G. Highet, "Petronius the Moralist". Martin S. Smith, ed., Petronii Arbitri Cena Trimalchionis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975) accepts a Neronian date but demurs on accepting the coincidence of identity between the author of the Satyricon and Petronius Arbiter, p. xiii.

circle,¹² and the many sly criticisms aimed at philosophers within the Satyricon more than likely reflect the decline in Seneca's influence over Nero.¹³

The Arbiter's birth and life fit readily into a Campanian context, if he was as is now generally accepted T. Petronius Niger, Cos. ca. A.D. 62,¹⁴ born in or around A.D. 20, perhaps on a paternal estate near Cumae,¹⁵ where he subsequently died.¹⁶ He would thus have been able to absorb and observe the details of Campanian life both rural and urban.

Further, the Herculaneum Tablets attest to a family of Petronii prominent in the causa liberalis of Iusta.¹⁷ These people would appear from their cognomen to be freedmen of the Gens Petroniana. The head of the family is a

¹²Bagnani, "And Passing Rich..." p. 218 and Arbiter of Elegance, p. 67, suggests that the Satyricon was written specifically for recitation at the Neronia held in A.D. 60. If a festival must be chosen, a more plausible guess would be the Neronia of A.D. 65, given the allusions to events and writings later than A.D. 60 which the later episodes of the extant portions of the Satyricon contain.

¹³See commentary to Sat.71.12 below, where Trimalchio has emblazoned proudly on his tombstone the information that he "never heard a philosopher," and Sat.47.7 where Petronius parodies a passage from Seneca's de Tranquillitate animi. See also chapter 1, pp.11-27 above.

¹⁴Ronald Syme, Tacitus 2 vols. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1958), 1:387.

¹⁵John D'Arms, Romans on the Bay of Naples (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), pp. 219-220.

¹⁶Tacitus Ann. 16.18-19.

¹⁷G. Pugliese Carratelli, "Tabulae Herculenses II," PP 3 (1948): 165.

certain C. Petronius Stephanus who could well have been a freedman of the Arbiter or his father.

Petronius could thus have been exposed directly to the gaucherie of the rising freedmen, and his doubts about the effectiveness of the current educational methods might well have arisen from his personal experience at the hands of his own Campanian Agamemnon.

Petronius is more than familiar with the moeurs de province, having been born into that world himself. It is not, therefore, unlikely that he would choose the teeming port and pleasure city of Puteoli as the location for his Cena. Other Campanian sites such as Cumae and Neapolis have been fiercely argued as candidates for Petronius' Graeca urbs (81.3), but there seems to be general agreement now that Puteoli is the best and most likely choice.¹⁸

¹⁸ Naples was the First Campanian city to be suggested as the location of the Cena, by N. Ignarra, De Palaestra neapolitana (Naples: D. Campi, 1770), p. 184. C. Beloch, Topographie, Geschichte und Leben der Umgegend Neapels in Altertum (Breslau: E. Morgenstern, 1890) also supported Naples. The case for Cumae was championed by Theodore Mommsen, "Trimalchios Heimath und Grabschrift," Hermes 13 (1878): 106-121. But the strongest case has been made for Puteoli, which was proposed by C. Iannelli, In Perottinum codicem...dissertationes tertia qua Petronii Arbitri aetas constituitur (Naples: n.p., 1811). Ludwig Friedlaender, Petronii Cena Trimalchionis, pp. 73-6, C. Dubois, Pozzuoles antiques, fasc. 98 (Paris: Bibliothèques des Ecoles Françaises d'Athènes et de Rome, 1907), pp. 379-384 and A. Maiuri, "Petroniana," PP 3 (1948): 101-128 have argued in favour of this site for the dinner. Two Italian critics have contended that the dinner is to be situated in no particular city, but that the Campanian port town described is to be taken as a "specie di Cosmopoli" - a "dream city"

Descriptive information in the Satyricon weighs heavily in favour of Puteoli. The site is by the sea (Sat. 81.1), in Campania (Sat. 90.2), and has a harbour ample enough to accommodate Lichas' large vessel (Sat. 101.8). It is certainly not as small a place as Cumae, for Encolpius twice loses his way (Sat. 6.3 and Sat. 79.2). It would be fairly easy to get lost in a city built up on several levels the way Puteoli was. There was the old nucleus of the city on the Castello Hill, where the temple of Divus Augustus stood, the fashionable residential section of the city and sites of the two amphitheatres along the hillside toward Solfatara, and the harbour level below.¹⁹

The extant portions of the Satyricon pick up more or less in media res, at a school of rhetoric where Encolpius is in the midst of a discussion with Agamemnon. This conversation is being held in porticu (Sat. 3.1). It is

composite of the Campanian world. See Marmorale, Questione petroniana and Ettore Paratore in his commentary, Il Satyricon di Petronio (Florence: Felice le Monnier, 1933), p. 184. This view hardly seems likely since Petronius names the locations of the other parts of the work. Most scholars assume that the name of this Campanian site appeared in the text originally, but was lost due to the corrupt nature of the text. For the history of the question, see K.F.C. Rose, "Time and Place in the Satyricon," TAPA 93 (1962): 402-409.

¹⁹ Amedeo Maiuri, The Phlegraean Fields, trans. V. Priestley (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1947), p. 31. The Odemira and Prague flasks depict the topographical lay-out of ancient Puteoli. See A.G. McKay, Naples and Coastal Campania, Ancient Campania: Volume II (Hamilton, Ontario: Cromlech Press, 1972), pp. 176-189.

known that there were several porticoes which ran along the ripa. Cicero relates that one of these was dedicated to Neptune,²⁰ and should one assume that the porticus which Lichas refers to (Sat. 106) is in Puteoli, then the name of another one of these porticoes would be the Porticus Herculis.

When Encolpius loses his way for the first time (Sat. 6.3), he comes upon an old woman selling vegetables and inquires whether she knows where he lives. Such vendors of fresh fruits and vegetables may be seen today at the modern harbour of Pozzuoli, and adjacent to their stands is what remains of the magnificent macellum of Flavian date. Encolpius' complaint that quocumque ieram, eodem revertabar, conforms nicely with Maiuri's description of the lower town of Puteoli:

The labyrinth of narrow streets in the commercial quarter of the town was filled with the most varied polyglot crowd imaginable in a Graeco-Oriental market.²¹

Ascylltus, who also lost his way, turns up having been led to the same brothel as Encolpius. He describes how they came per obscurissimos egressus (Sat. 8:2) on their way there. From portico to marketplace to brothel, Encolpius and Ascylltus seem to be roaming about the port area and commercial district of Puteoli.

²⁰The Phlegraean Fields, p. 30.

²¹Ibid., p. 19

Another incident of these opening chapters which reflects the Puteolan atmosphere is the arrival of Quartilla at the deversorium where Encolpius and Giton are staying. She chastizes them for having violated the secreta she was holding in honour of Priapus. Quartilla states that no uninitiates have ever seen the rites without being punished and that gods are as numerous as men in her part of the world: utique nostra regis tam praesentibus plena est numinibus ut facilius possis deum quam hominem invenire (Sat. 17.6). This comment is certainly suggestive of the great variety of Egyptian, Asian, Greek and Roman deities who were worshipped in the city of Puteoli, where every sort of cult imaginable was fostered among the mixed population of the port city.²²

Trimalchio's house is probably located in the upper town in the Augustan quarter of the city, far from the noise and rabble of the harbour where he first got his start. His house could be located among the older Republican villas, dating back to the time when Cluvius and Cicero came to Puteoli for fun and profit.²³ When a Trimalchio struck it rich, he could have remodelled one of these

²²For an enlightening discussion of religious life at Puteoli see C. Dubois, "Cultes et Dieux à Pouzzuoles," Mélanges D'Archéologie et D'Histoire, 22 (1902): 23-68.

²³A.G. McKay, Ancient Campania: Vol. II, pp. 145-6.

older homes to fit his own pronouncedly Augustan tastes.²⁴ Baths and solaria line this upper quarter and the close proximity of the Augustan amphitheatre would appeal all the more strongly to someone who loved gladiatorial combats as much as Trimalchio and his friends.

Puteoli was, in short, the natural environment for a freedman of Trimalchio's type. The bustling port kept him within easy access to his holdings in Egypt and other places abroad, and the large numbers of freedmen and peregrini included in its population created an atmosphere in which he could feel at home and work and play among others of his kind. And according to Petronius' description of him, Trimalchio strives very hard to be a model citizen of that variegated world.

²⁴See commentary, Sat. 29.3-4, below.

Commentary¹

26.7 venerat iam tertius dies, [id est expectatio liberae cenae]: the graeculi begin their third day of adventures in the Campanian city of Puteoli. Wearied from the activities of the two previous days, and concerned with how to avoid the praesentem procellam of their fortunes, Encolpius and Ascyltos seem genuinely cheered at the prospect of a libera cena, when it is extended to them by the slave of Agamemnon. Buecheler, however, took the phrase id est expectatio liberae cenae to be an explanatory interpolation added to the text by an epitomizing amanuensis. If the reading is part of the original text, several different interpretations of libera are possible: Encolpius might consider the meal to be libera because they may eat it in peace, free from the clutches of Quartilla and the physical demands requisite at her festive board; libera, as Maiuri suggests (Cena di

¹The basic text used in this commentary is that of Konrad Müller, ed., Petronii Arbitri Satyricon cum apparatu critico (München: Ernst Heimeran, 1961).

Suggested interpolations and variant readings are taken from J.P. Sullivan, "Interpolations in Petronius," Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society 22 (1976): 90-122, and from M.S. Smith, Petronii Arbitri Cena Trimalchionis (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975).

Trimalchione, p. 150), because both Encolpius and Ascyrtos intend to go their separate ways after this banquet with no further strife; libera, perhaps, in its obvious sense, that they have successfully "cadged a dinner" (John P. Sullivan's translation from The Satyricon of Petronius (London: Penguin Books Ltd., 1969), p.33) from Agamemnon as they had hoped to do at Sat. 10.2; or, libera, as Sedgwick comments (Cena Trimalchionis of Petronius, p. 87), in the sense of the libera cena of the bestuarius, his last meal, which was taken in public the evening before he fought the beasts (Tert. Apol. 42).

This fourth interpretation is well-suited to the Puteolan atmosphere where the Augustan amphitheatre was in continual use. Suetonius (Aug. 44.1) describes how Augustus, prompted by the overcrowded conditions in the amphitheatre at Puteoli, passed special seating regulations in order to assure seats for senators on the front row at all gladiatorial games and circus events.

In this same small and by then well-used amphitheatre, Nero entertained the King of Armenia in A.D. 66. Dio Cassius records that Nero

entertained him in many ways, especially by giving a gladiatorial exhibition at Puteoli. It was under the direction of Patrobius, one of his freedmen, who managed to make it a most brilliant and costly affair, as may be seen from the fact that on one of the days

not a person but Ethiopians - men, women and children - appeared in the theatre. By way of showing Patrobius some fitting honour Tiridates shot at wild beasts from his elevated seat, and - if one can believe it - transfixed and killed two bulls with a single arrow.

Dio's Roman History, trans. Earnest Cary, The Loeb Classical Library (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1924; reprint ed. 1955, 1961), 62.3.

The wealthy city of Puteoli kept pace with progress in the area of public entertainment being made at Rome itself, when in Flavian times it erected a larger amphitheatre using municipal funds. A copy of its commemorative inscription can still be seen today above the niche of Neptune at the east entrance to the amphitheatre:

COLONIA FLAVIA AUGUSTA PUTEOLANA PECUNIA SUA. Its greater size and convenient accommodation for storing animals and moving them into the ring made it a fitting location for the spectacles of the venationes, but the smaller Augustan amphitheatre continued to be used for gladiatorial shows. See Maiuri, The Phlegraean Fields, pp. 32-46, and also Echion's speech at Sat. 45. below.

26.9 Trimalchio, lautissimus homo: for sheer power of character delineation Petronius' Trimalchio is unequalled as a dramatic phenomenon of Latin literature, and, as a source of social insight into the likes and dislikes of the common man and freedman of the early Empire, he is without parallel. The name "Trimalchio" seems to derive from the Greek τρίς and the Semitic Melek: τρίς meaning

"thrice" and Melek meaning king or ruler. Bagnani ("Trimalchio," Phoenix 8 (1954): 79) observes that in the Roman world, Melek probably bore the weaker significance of "great man" or "mogul." Bagnani makes the provocative suggestion that the word "Trimalchio" may mean something similar to "Trismegistos." He further concludes that the Hermetic Corpus of a third century A.D. date at the earliest, might draw on originals derived from the Gnostic movement which flourished in Neronian times. In support of his argument he notes that Trimalchio does style himself a polymath, knowledgeable of science, astrology, spiritualism, and medicine. Trimalchio's choice of Mercury along with Minerva as his patron gods is strongly suggestive of the combination of intelligence and guile assigned to Hermes Trismegistos. But the images of Fortune and the Three Fates which Trimalchio's lararium also contains (Sat. 29.3), fit in well with accustomed practice in lararia found at Pompeii and Herculaneum. Isis-Tyche and Venus Pompeiana are almost interchangeable symbols of bounty and good luck in the commercial vein. See K. Schefold, La peinture pompéienne: Essai sur l'évolution de sa signification, trans. and ed. J.M. Croissille, Latomus 108 (Brussels: 1972), p. 64; and also G.K. Boyce, "Corpus of the Lararia of Pompeii," MAAR 14 (1937): 73.

The name "Trimalchio" is proof of Semitic origin,

for whereas a Greek cognomen might be adopted by an Oriental or Levantine resident of Puteoli, few freedmen or peregrini, indeed, if any at all, would adopt or receive a Semitic name unnecessarily. The cognomen "Malchio" is quite common as a slave and freedman's name in the Campanian area and at Rome, from the first century B.C. until the end of the first century A.D., when its occurrence in inscriptional evidence becomes somewhat rarer. Some examples of its bearers include: a M. Mundicius Malchio, who was a prominent inhabitant of a village near Pompeii (ILS 6376); a Malchio who, unlike Trimalchio, chose to be a decurio at Rome (CIL 6.4710). Other references include a T. Statilius Malchio (CIL 6.6574), a Malchio, who was a freedman of A. Hirtius, Cos. 43 B.C. (CIL 6.4963), and a Malchio who was Caesaris trierarchus ex triere Triptolemo (CIL 9.41).

Lautissimus should perhaps best be translated as "terribly elegant," or, better still, by the somewhat dated English colloquialism "He's just too-too!" So Trimalchio might well appear to the simple slaves and lesser "refined" freedmen of the polyglot port city.

26.9 horologium in triclinio et bucinatorem habet subornatum: it is significant to Petronius' sharp portrayal of Trimalchio that the first fact concerning his nature of which we are apprised is his fixation with time and the steady approach of death. Trimalchio meets

such fears head-on with a surfeit of material possessions, and engages a finely outfitted trumpeter as nuntius horarum, not to announce the time of day for the living, but rather to inform Trimalchio of how much time he has left to live. Trimalchio may be attempting to imitate the elegance and sumptuousness of Campanian-Lucullan Epicureanism as he understands it. See William Arrow-smith, "Luxury and Death," p. 307. Needless to say, a clock in a triclinium is a bit eccentric. No examples of this survive at Pompeii or Herculaneum. Maiuri, Cena di Trimalchione, p. 151, cites the discovery of two sundials in the garden of the House of Ariadne at Pompeii, but observes that sundials would not be able to function in the closed environment of the triclinium. He thus suggests that Trimalchio must have had a water-clock (clepsydra) of the sort attributed to Ctesibios (Vitr., de Arch. 9.8.2) in the third century B.C. Nero's Golden House was notorious for its new scientific gadgets of this sort and was said to contain the largest hydraulic organ that had ever been built. See Michael Grant, Nero (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1970), p. 175 and Suetonius Nero 41 and 44. Smith, (Cena Trimalchionis, p. 53) also assumes that a water-clock is intended here.

26.10 in balneum sequi: with Giton acting as servant, Encolpius and Ascyrtos enter the baths which Trimalchio has evidently hired for his private use. It does not

appear to be a large public bath, but rather a smaller, private one put to public use, such as the bath of Julia Felix in her house near the palaestra at Pompeii. The best example of a hired bath of moderate size in Campania is provided by the following inscription:

M. Crassi Frugi
aqua marina et bal[neum]
aqua dulci, Ianuarius l[ibertus]
(CIL 10.1063)

This well-known inscription was discovered in March, 1749, at Pompeii, a few yards outside the Porta Ercolano in the so-called "Villa di Cicerone." Since the baths were equipped with both fresh and sea water as the inscription states, they must have been situated along the coastline near Pompeii. It is not known whether the baths were the property of M. Crassus Frugi, Cos. A.D. 64 or of his father of the same name, but Pliny (HN 31.4) offers evidence that the family owned a similar establishment at Baiae. See D'Arms, Romans on the Bay of Naples, pp. 214-215.

Numerous baths of this type were located along the Campanian littoral from Baiae to Pompeii. In Puteoli, the better baths would have been placed on the level of the upper town, perhaps in the Augustan section, near the solarium for heliotherapeutic cures. See Maiuri, The Phlegraean Fields, p. 31.

27.1 immo iocari magis et circulis [ludentem] accedere:

Encolpius advances into the sphaeristerium, a small court adjacent to the apodyterium, which could be used for ball-playing and less strenuous forms of exercise not requiring a palaestra. Pliny the Younger writes: apodyterio superpositum est sphaeristerium, quod plura genera exercitationis plurosque circulos capit (Ep. 5.6). The general layout of these baths recalls the thermae constructed during the Augustan period in Insula VI at Herculaneum, where the sphaeristerium precedes the entrance to the palaestra, with the apodyterium between the two on the right.

27.2 pila prasina exercebatur: in the sphaeristerium stands Trimalchio, in a reddish shirt and slippers, playing ball with some long-haired young boys. Suetonius reports that Augustus played pila even after the Civil Wars, when he had more than reached maturity (Aug. 83). Horace mentions Maecenas' playing pila (Sat. 1.5.49; cf. also Pliny the Younger, Ep. 3.1.8). Trimalchio's outrageous attire recalls another Imperial habit, that of Nero, who was accustomed to giving audiences in an unbelted dressing gown, slippers, and a scarf (Suet. Nero 51).

27.3 spadones: the possession of eunuchs was seen as a claim to regal magnificence. See Suet. Claud. 28:

libertorum praecipue suspexit Posiden spadonem, quem etiam Britannico triumpho inter militares viros hasta pura donavit.

Maecenas is said to have been accompanied by two eunuchs (Sen. Ep. 114.6), and his general dress and demeanor as described by Horace, Seneca, and others might well suggest that he is the target here; however, Smith, Cena Trimalchionis, p. 55, is cautious on this point.

27.3 matellam tenebat argenteam: the remains of Campanian baths certainly evidence no lack of latrines, but Trimalchio, to say the least, is overly-fastidious about his health. Ordinarily, the chamber pot was made of humble earthen ware (creta) and was easily broken (Mart. 12.32 and 14.119), but the use of metal ones in bedrooms was becoming common in the early Empire. It is still rather doubtful that many of these bedroom conveniences were silver. A Pompeiian epigram clearly indicates the scarcity of such facilities in bedrooms at all. Disappointed with the accommodations available to them, some visitors to Pompeii left the following message for their inn-keeper:

Minximus in lecto, fateor: peccavimus hospes.
Si dices 'quare?' 'nulla matella fuit'.
(CIL 4.4957)

Both in language and intention, this graffito is very much in keeping with the spirit of the Satyricon.

28.4 involutus coccina gausapa: wrapped in this luxurious, exotic oriental felt, Trimalchio's perfumed body is deposited in a litter and whisked from the baths to the accompaniment of the pipes. This cloth was made from the wool of the finest sheep and was hardly obtainable from the felters and dyers of the Campanian area. It was used primarily in the manufacture of fine coverlets for beds and tables and for the mantles and broad-striped togas of the Senatorial class at Rome.

The word gausapa is first attested in Horace (Sat. 2.8.10), who probably derived the word from Lucilius. It next occurs in the Elder Pliny (HN 8.73. 4): Gausapae patris mei memoria coepere... nam tunica laticlavi in modum gausapae texi, nunc primum incipit. The ugly cinaedus (Sat. 21) is myrtea subornatus gausapa, and at 38.15, mention is made of apri gausapati.

Although the Campanians had competed as successful woolen producers since the Samnite domination of the area, only during the early Empire did woolens production evolve to such a point that there was a final break made from home industry (Columella 12, Praef. 9-10) to actual fullers', felters' and dyers' shops operated on a large scale for mass consumption. See T. Frank, An Economic Survey of Ancient Rome, 5 vols., 2nd ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1927), 1:201. In Claudian times, the fullers began producing a variety of homespun items

suitable for export to Gaul and the lesser provinces outside Italy. CIL 10.813 indicates that there were enough fullers at Pompeii to warrant the formation of a guild - far more fullers than would be necessary to handle the laundry of Pompeii.

Owners of latifundia and estates such as Trimalchio's, could sell the wool from their sheep (probably through freed-middlemen) at emporia like Eumachia's woolen market, for local production, and thereby afford to purchase the fine Alexandrian cloth which was arriving at Puteoli, for their personal use. The account books for Caecilius Jucundus, found in his house at Pompeii, reveal that he rented several fulleries from the municipality over which he set his own freedmen managers (CIL 4.3340). Jucundus, like Trimalchio, was a freedman himself, who rose through his business acumen to become a leading banker at Pompeii. His fashionable, but conservative home on the Via di Stabia with its Third Style decorations, contains the famous lararium bearing the reliefs of the collapse of the buildings of the Forum area and the area of the Vesuvian Gate during the earthquake of A.D. 62. For more on Caecilius Jucundus see J. Andreau, Les affaires de Monsieur Jucundus (Rome: École Française de Rome, 1974).

In Reg. IX, Insula VII at Pompeii may be seen

the officina coactilaria of M. Vecilius Verecundus, where woolen cloth and articles of felt were made and sold. Frescoes on the pilasters at the entrance to the workshop picture the interior of the factory with four felters at a table, three weavers at work, and the proprietor displaying finished wares. Against a backdrop of a salesroom, showcases and a drying-rack, the saleswoman, possibly Verecundus' wife, waits on a customer.

28.4 phaleratis cursoribus quattuor et chiramaxio: the custom of having four courtiers with medals proceed in front of a litter goes back to a decree of Nero that he would be escorted by una armillata phalerataque Mazacum turba atque cursorum (Suet. Nero 30.3).

Chiramaxio is a word derived from the Greek for a "baby carriage" of sorts: *χειράμαξα*, *χειραμάξιον*. Trimalchio's retinue formed a gauche procession, with his adolescent favorite in a pram, flanked by guards in front and the music of the pipers behind.

28.4 eius deliciae vehebantur: see passer, deliciae meae puellae (Catullus 2.1). Maiuri aptly observes that:

il vocabulo assume nel linguaggio della
società romana del 'ultima età repubblicana,
tutte le sfumature dell' equivoca mondanità:
dall' affettuosa carezzosità, all' aperta o
velata oscenità. (Cena di Trimalchione, p. 153)

It was surely in the late Republic and early Empire that Trimalchio first experienced the delights of romance for himself: ad delicias (domini) annos quattuordecim fui (Sat. 75.11). This is certainly yet another example of Petronius' careful attention to detail and realistic portrayal.

28.9 super limen autem cavea pendebat aurea, in qua pica varia intrantes salutabat: Cf. pica salutatrix (Mar. 7.86). Trimalchio is slightly behind the times again, as he illustrates by having a magpie for a pet. Magpies, it seems, were all the rage at Rome in Augustan times (Pliny HN 10.78), but Bagnani ("The House of Trimalchio," AJP 75 (1954): 22) states that in Nero's time they were "still a novelty in the provinces." In Pompeii or Herculaneum, there is no known example of a bird cage in an entrance hall, but the Campanians did not lack birds on the walls. Many paintings of unknown original location contain garden scenes with birds. Exquisite examples have emerged from the predominantly Second Style paintings of the villa at Oplontis. See A. de Franciscis, "La villa romana di Oplontis," PP 28 (1973), 455-458.

29.1 in pariete erat pictus superque quadrata littera scriptus 'cave canem': two such depictions of dogs have been found at Pompeii, but both are mosaic floor decorations in the fauces of houses: the House of the Tragic

Poet and the House of Paquius Proculus. Chains for a live dog were discovered in the House of Vestorius Priscus and skeletons of dogs have turned up in many locations about Pompeii, notably in the House of Menander. Bagnani queries: "Is the painting of his watchdog on the wall another of Trimalchio's eccentricities?" ("House of Trimalchio," p. 23). Perhaps, but the tradition of such watchdogs as a household decoration goes back at least to Homer Od. 7.91 ff., where gold and silver dogs fashioned by Hephaestus guard the palace of Alcinous.

29.3 erat autem venalicium cum titulis pictum:

no house found in Campania closely parallels the decorations or the lay-out of Trimalchio's house in every detail. His house is a satirical exaggeration of all of the "personal touches" which the nouveaux riches incorporated into their well-earned homes. The subjects on walls of Campanian houses are typically mythical and generally related to some heroic cycle. Here the bold saga depicts the aristeia of Trimalchio himself. This type of decoration can be found, however, on the walls of a Republican house on the Esquiline. Here the personal life of an individual is depicted in the form of a sepulchre actually painted on the wall. At Pompeii, the tomb of Vestorius Priscus outside the Vesuvian Gate shows him carrying out the affairs of an

aedile. It is of course very much in line with Trimalchio's morbid interest in death that he should place a funerary decoration on his wall.

In an effort to determine what style of painting was employed in this depiction of Trimalchio's life, Bagnani, "House of Trimalchio," p. 24, notes Burman's emendation of venaliciium titulis pictum to venaliciium <cum> titulis pictum. Most commentators, including Smith, accept this addition, and then translate "a slave market and the slaves with the price tags around their necks." Without this emendation, pictum would have to be construed most naturally with venaliciium - "a slave market was painted with names above it". Maiuri preferred this reading.

There is a slight but important difference here, for, as Bagnani argues, reading cum enables the tags to be around the necks of the slaves. Following this interpretation, the figures of the slaves would have to be at least one-half life-size in order for the names on the tags to be large enough to read. Arguing along these lines, Bagnani concludes that the "walls of the portico are decorated with 'megalographies' in the style of the famous ones in the Villa dei Misteri" ("House of Trimalchio", p. 25).

29.3 Trimalchio capillatus caduceum tenebat Minerva-
que ducente Romam intrabat: Mercury and Minerva are the

protecting deities of Trimalchio: Mercury of his commercial fortune and Minerva of his shrewdness. If any credence is given to Bagnani's theory of Gnostic implications in the name Trimalchio, Mercury would also symbolize the lightning-quick learning of the polymath (cf. Sat. 26.9 above). Trimalchio is pictured as capillatus and carrying the caduceus as a talisman, a good luck symbol and guarantee of Mercury's continuing patronage. In the paintings on the wall of the officina coactilaria of Verecundus, there is a figure of Mercury about to descend the steps of a temple. In one hand he carries the caduceus, in the other, his purse full of money. No better illustration could be found of Trimalchio's statement: dum Mercurius vigilat, aedificavi hanc domum (Sat. 77.4).

29.6 Fortuna <cum> cornu abundanti [copiosa]: an augural emblem at Pompeii, recurring constantly in pictures, statuettes and amulets. Such a figure also appears on a public fountain on the Via dell' Abbondanza at Pompeii. The street and fountain take their names from the emblem of Fortuna cornu abundanti which appears on the fountain.

29.8 praeterea grande armarium in angulo vidi: as Encolpius comes to the corner of the portico where the mural ends, he sees a large, wooden cupboard used as a

lararium, containing Trimalchio's first beard in a little golden pyxis, the silver Lares, and a small marble statue of Venus. The armarium of Trimalchio is quite similar to one actually found at Herculaneum. The discovery of this wooden sacellum, in a small Republican house, hence referred to as the House of the Wooden Sacellum, brought to light one of the most singular objects of ancient furniture. The upper section of the wooden structure serves as a domestic lararium and takes the form of a small temple in antis, with two finely carved and fluted Corinthian columns. Inside its double doors stand the statues of the household gods. In the lower portion which was used as a domestic cupboard, several pieces of jewelry were found which belonged to the lady whose bedroom this cupboard once enhanced. See A. Maiuri, Herculaneum, trans. V. Priestley (Rome: Istituto Poligrafico dello Stato, 1959), pp. 49-50.

29.8 Venerisque signum marmoreum: Bagnani, "House of Trimalchio," p. 27, puzzles over why the statue of Venus would be marble, while everything else in the case is either gold or silver. Maiuri contends that marble statues of Venus normally accompany the images of the Lares in Campania (Cena di Trimalchione, p. 156). The statues are generally of marble, and a fine piece of

marble is every bit as luxurious as a piece of gold or silver. In keeping with the love of gilt displayed in Nero's time and later is a gold marble figurine of Venus discovered in the Temple of Isis at Pompeii. For more on the fad, see A. Boëthius, The Golden House of Nero (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960), pp. 105-106. A statuette of Aphrodite with Priapus, deriving from the Villa of Julia Felix is pictured in John Ward-Perkins and Amanda Claridge, eds., Pompeii A.D. 79, 2 vols., (Boston: Boston University, 1978), 1:65. It is of very fine, possibly Parian marble and still reveals traces of gilt. The statue is taken as evidence that the house was used as a brothel in its later days.

29.8 pyxis aurea: keeping one's first beard was not a particularly common practice in the ancient world, but in Trimalchio's actions lie another imperial allusion. Nero is reported to have placed his first beard in a pearl-studded golden box and to have dedicated it to Capitoline Jupiter (Suet. Nero 12). Trimalchio cannot spare his, of course, for he has his own monumentum to build.

29.9 'Iliada et Odyssian' inquit 'ac Laenatis gladiatorium munus': scenes from epic are very common at Pompeii and Herculaneum, with themes from the Iliad

outstripping those from the Odyssey in popularity. Their occurrence on the walls of a Pompeian home reflected conservative good taste and reliance on stock motifs adopted into Roman painting from Greek originals. Excavations at Pompeii in 1824-25 brought to light a large variety of figure compositions in the House of the Tragic Poet. Maiuri estimated that the paintings from this house represented "Pompeian painting at its splendid best" (Roman Painting, trans. Stuart Gilbert (Geneva: Skira, 1953), p. 71). The walls of the atrium, peristyle and triclinium were used to form a private pinacotheca and contained at least five pictures which portray scenes from epic, including the famous Sacrifice of Iphigenia which is now in the Naples Museum. For more on Roman picture-galleries, see Donald Strong, Roman Art, prepared for press by Jocelyn M. C. Toynbee (London: Penguin Books, 1976), pp. 32-37.

There existed at Pompeii other large-scale figure paintings of Homeric themes, for example, the composition in the portico of the temple of Apollo, lost today, and several narrative friezes illustrating in serial order the leading scenes from the Iliad.

Equally worthy of note is the House of the Crypto-Portico with its fifty scenes from the Iliad, twenty of which have survived.

Local painters of Campania later broke from the

highly stylized, derivative Homeric scenes and created their own masterpieces. One such painting is the scene of the Trojan horse now in the Naples Museum. In commenting on this painting, Maiuri says:

here landscape and narrative are fully integrated. And we can gauge the skill of the local painter who, with technical procedures brought to the fore in our day by the Impressionists, imparted such tragic grandeur to this night-piece and organized his high-lights to such superb effect. Quite likely he was drawing on his actual experience of the illuminations and night-fêtes that took place periodically at Pompeii, and these he sublimated onto the place of ancient myth - which perhaps is why this strange picture gives the impression of a real life scene, poetically interpreted by a gifted artist.

(Roman Painting, p. 76)

This may well be the very style of painting Petronius has Encolpius and Eumolpus speak against. Encolpius clearly prefers the graceful and classic lines of Apelles, a Greek painter of the third century B.C., who was regarded as one of the best artists of antiquity (Pliny HN 35.79-97). His most famous work was Aphrodite rising from the sea (The Anadyomene). Of his painting called "The Goddess on One Knee," Encolpius reflects that the "lines of the painting were so subtle and clear that you could see them as expressing the subjects" (Sat. 83). Eumolpus contends that a decline in painting is no surprise and neither is a decline in any of the arts in a time when "a lump of gold seems

more beautiful to everybody, gods and men, than anything those crazy little Greeks, Apelles and Phidias, ever made" (Sat. 88.9).

Trimalchio certainly qualifies as a lover of gold and probably never paid half the attention to the Homeric scenes on his walls that he did to his gladiatorial depictions. Nowhere do single gladiatorial events such as those sponsored by Laenas appear on the walls of an extant house in Pompeii or Herculaneum, unless one considers the anomalous example of the painted Riot in the Amphitheatre. It is hard to conceive that such would be a common practice at Puteoli either, despite the great popularity of the games there, for Pompeii had its highpoints of spectacle also, especially the riot of A.D. 59. Quick sketches and graffiti of games and events are to be found in large numbers; many of them are stick figures turned with a child-like hand. But, it is doubtful that even Trimalchio's taste had degenerated quite that far! Such munera gladiatoria do in fact occur, not in houses, but on funerary monuments, especially the monuments of magistrates and others who had been editores munerum, and wished this spectacular and expensive event in their lives to be recorded for posterity (Bagnani, "House of Trimalchio," p. 28).

To depict one's own games in a private home at a Neronian date would be in bad taste and quite contrary

to the elegant landscapes and theatrical wall-treatments which Nero encouraged. The earliest known example of gladiatorial scenes formally used to decorate a private house are those on the mosaics of the Villa at Zliten in Tripolitania which are dated ca. A.D. 70, for which see S. Aurigemma, I Mosaici di Zliten (Rome: Africa Italiana, 1926), p. 279. Bagnani concludes that avid admirers of the arena were probably scorned by the cultivated members of the Neronian circle and that upon reading of Trimalchio's portico decorations, they would be struck similarly to the way we would be by hearing that "someone had framed photographs of the Sistine Madonna and Joe Louis side by side in his drawing room" ("House of Trimalchio," p. 29). Here, again, it would seem that Trimalchio has placed upon his walls scenes better reserved for funerary use, a good example of which is provided by the Tomb of Umbricius Scaurus outside the Herculaneum Gate at Pompeii.

30.1 procurator rationes accipiebat: at the entrance to the triclinium sits Trimalchio's procurator going over the accounts. He would most likely be a freedman of Trimalchio, and thus stands in the same relationship to him that Imperial freedmen would stand to the emperor. To each Imperial freedman would be assigned

a specific task, such as the freedman whom Nero made procurator of the furnishings of the Golden House: a suppellectile domus auriae (sic) (ILS 774). See A.M. Duff, Freedmen in the Early Roman Empire (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1958), pp. 144, 170, and 227.

30.1-2 in postibus triclinii fasces erant cum securibus fixi: the fasces represent magisterial power and serve as a constant reminder to himself, his retainers and his guests of Trimalchio's provincial post as a sevir. For his insignia cf. the mosaic emblem at the entrance to the House of the Anchor. Other dedications from faithful slaves and freedmen at Pompeii and Herculaneum usually take the form of herms, the most famous of these being the herm dedicated by the freedman Felix to his former master L. Caecilius Jucundus, the aforementioned banker. An inscription from the House of Epidius Rufus reads Genio M(arci) N(ostri) et Laribus duo Diadumeni liberti (CIL 10.861).

[triclinii] is likely a supplemental gloss first pointed out by Müller. For a recent evaluation of interpolations in the Satyricon, see J.P. Sullivan, "Interpolations in Petronius," Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society 22 (1976): 90-122, esp. pp. 106-122.

30.2 seviro Augustali: this organization was

separate and distinct from the Augustales, in that the seviri were a pro-magisterial college having as their function the organization of the games and the celebration of the sacra in honour of the emperor. The seviri were elected annually from the Council of the Decurions and were taken from the ranks of the liberti and incolae, who were excluded from holding the high offices of the colonia or municipium, see Duff, Freedmen, pp. 133-40.

Trimalchio's guests and associates, Habinnas and Hermeros, are seviri. That Puteoli had a flourishing institute of Augustales is amply attested by many inscriptions. See especially CIL 10.1567 and 1838.

30.9 dispensatoremque in oecario aureos numerantem:

"The king was in his counting-house counting out his money." Trimalchio's dispensator has lost his dinner clothes of Tyrian purple through the carelessness of a lesser slave. Homespun was good enough for Augustus, but obviously ill-suited to the tastes of Trimalchio's finance officer. Nero never wore the same clothes twice, either (Suet. Nero 30.2). A dispensator was, however, a fairly valued slave, at least in Imperial circles, where Nero's dispensator of the Armenian War was manumitted for a sum of 13,000,000 sesterces (Duff, Freedmen, p. 18). This amount would represent more than one-third of Trimalchio's total fortune of thirty million.

Smith, Cena Trimalchionis, p. 64, points out that the details of the dispensator's luxurious existence were not without basis in practice: a slave could in fact own a slave as part of his peculium. See Mart. 2.18.7, esse sat est servum, iam volo vicarius esse; and Dig. 15.1.17 si servus meus ordinarius vicarios habeat.

31.3 tandem ergo discubuimus: the seating arrangement at the banquet is troubled and no satisfactory order has yet been devised. The normal triclinium would feature three couches around a central solid table, furnishing places for the usual number of nine banqueters. But we know that Trimalchio has far more than nine guests and that each one has his own table to allow for more elbow room (Sat. 34.6). Trimalchio chooses the top place on the highest couch for his own seat, either, as Sullivan suggests, because he wishes to be closer to the bathroom (Satyricon of Petronius, p. 187), or, possibly, so that no one's head will be higher than his own, while he presides over the cena in the manner of an oriental potentate holding his sumptuous court. Habinnas, the monument builder and administrator of Trimalchio's various wills, testaments and funeral arrangements, later takes the honoured seat of praetor on the middle couch. Sedgwick, Cena Trimalchionis of Petronius, p. 92, proposes a reasonable

seating chart.

The triclinium itself is large, as Maiuri notes (Cena di Trimalchione, p. 160). Petronius probably meant it to resemble other large triclinia of the Neronian period, e.g. House of the Vettii, House of Menander, House of Meleager. Several wall paintings now in the Naples Museum reflect the teeming atmosphere of the banquet. Maiuri concludes that the triclinium must be one of the type which Vitruvius designated as Greek in style: Decos quadratos tam ampla magnitudine uti faciliter in lis quattuor tricliniis stratis, ministrationum ludorumve operis locus possit esse spatiosus (6.10.3). The triclinium could possibly be an oecus Corinthius, of the type found in the House of the Labyrinth and in the House of Meleager, with columns around three sides. Imitation rectangular skylights, originally of wood, may be seen in the centre of the ceilings of some of the larger rooms at Pompeii. Should these actually have been skylights, Bagnani contends ("House of Trimalchio," p. 32) that some could easily have been mounted on wooden rails and slid open to allow gifts and food to be let down on the guests (cf. Sat. 60.1-4).

31.3 pueris Alexandrinis aquam in manus nivatam:
chilling boiled water in glass containers was a

Neronian invention according to Pliny (HN 31.3: Neronis principis inventum est, decoquere aquam, vitroque demissam in nives refrigerare). To the Romans, the Alexandrians represented luxury and corruption: cf. Caes. B.C. 3.110.2: in consuetudinem Alexandrinae vitae ac licentiae venerant; and Quint. Inst. 1.2.7: verba ne Alexandrinis quidem permittenda deliciis.

31.4 ac paronychia cum ingenti subtilitate: the Greco-oriental elegance of pedicures for dinner-guests was introduced to Nero's court by Otho, before his departure for Lusitania in A.D. 58, where he lived in virtual exile until Nero's death. The refinement and ostentation of the former courtier is here attributed to the parvenue Trimalchio. See R.H. Crum, "Petronius and the Emperors I: Allusions in the Satyricon," CW 45 (1952): 161-67.

31.7 pantomimi chorum, non patris familiae triclinium crederes: the whole banquet takes on more the aspect of a musical comedy than a respectable dinner party. Singing and musical accompaniment enhance every course, as surely they must have at the court of Nero, if Suetonius is to be believed. An aura of theatricality pervades the "Dionysiac" gardens of the House of the Golden Cupids at Pompeii, which was the

property of Poppaeus Abitus, who may have belonged to the same wealthy family as Nero's wife Poppaea. The elegant peristyle garden of the house is decorated with masks and carved marble oscilla suspended between the columns of the portico; theatrical motifs dominate the hermae and marble reliefs placed about the garden area. There is a romantic but credible tradition that Nero may have sung and given recitations standing in the slightly raised area at the west end of the garden. Trimalchio and Fortunata both make their dramatic contributions: he declaims and she is ready on several occasions to dance the cordax.

Seneca (Ep. 84.9) complains about the effect of music upon the attitudes of the young: In commissionibus nostris plus cantorum est quam in theatrum spectatorium. For athletic entertainments at banquets, see Sat. 53.11 below.

31.9 ceterum in promulsidari asellus erat Corinthius: for the origin of Corinthian bronze, see Sat. 50 below. A promulsidare is a tray on which the promulsis, the first-course, or antipasto, was served at a Roman banquet.

31.10 Tegebant asellum duae lances, in quarum marginibus nomen Trimalchionis inscriptum erat et argenti pondus: the two silver dishes appear to be attached to the donkey in the manner of saddle-bags.

Each dish bears a statement of its weight in silver and Trimalchio's name. The inclusion of such information was a precaution against thieves and also aided in the control of weights and measures. It is a safe bet that the weights recorded on Trimalchio's dishes are hyperbolized. Owners' names and notations of weight commonly appear on silver pieces recovered from Pompeii and Herculaneum. CIL 10.8071.1-22 records inscriptions taken from a hoard of silver unearthed in 1844.

The names of toreuticenses (embossers) or negotiatores (agents) are inscribed on the silver found at Boscoreale and in the House of Menander. See A. Maiuri, "Il ritratto del Menandro nella Casa delle argenterie a Pompeii," Bolletino d'Arte 25 (1931): 241-51. For an excellent and well-illustrated sampling of the Menandrian treasures, see Michael Grant, Eros in Pompeii (New York: William Morrow, 1975), esp. pp. 63-66.

Most of the silver plate with which a Campanian set his table was of local production from Campanian shops or factories. Since the raw materials were costly, an extensive system of customized production prevailed. Wealthy men would often set their freedmen up in artisans' shops, as Caecilius Jucundus did with his fullers (cf. Sat. 28.4 above). Within the shops,

division of labour techniques were generally employed, reducing the frequency of signed pieces and increasing the occurrence of Roman and Alexandrian motifs juxtaposed and embossed on the same piece. Included in the production of one piece might be: caelatores (engravers), CIL 6.922, 9453, 4750; inaurator (gold decorator), CIL 6.3928; tritor argentarius (polisher), CIL 6.9950; and a toreuticensis, CIL 3.8839. Capua, the Campanian city connected to Puteoli by the Via Campana, was well-known for its factory-style production of copper and bronze in wholesale lots (CIL 6.9663). See Frank, Economic Survey of Rome, 1:213.

32.3 anulum grandem subauratum...ut mihi videbatur, totum aureum, sed plane ferreis veluti stellis ferruminatum: only Romans of equestrian rank were allowed to wear rings of pure gold. There were so many violations of this law among the fast-rising nouveaux riches of the early Empire that the ius aurei anuli was severely enforced in Neronian times. The iron studs would prevent Trimalchio's ring from being entirely of gold. Other explanations of the studs are possible: they could relate to his former life as a slave, or, as Maiuri (Cena di Trimalchione, p. 163) suggests, they could further represent Trimalchio's superstitious nature, since rings studded with iron were common amulets in the ancient world. At Sat. 74, Trimalchio

strengthens this interpretation by moving the ring from hand to hand in a gesture of superstitious precaution against evil.

This ring, along with the ivory and golden amulets which Trimalchio wears would have been fashioned by a gemmarius. Such cutters of intaglios and cameos became very popular in the early Empire when every distinguished Roman had to have a signet ring. As might be expected, the Greek gemmarii were considered to be the best: Pliny (NH 37.4.9) and Suetonius (Aug. 50) both relate that Dioscurides was summoned from the East to make the Imperial seal. Marcellus dedicated a collection of such gems in the Temple of Apollo on the Palatine.

33.2 cum tabula terebinthina et crystallinis tesseriis: Trimalchio is playing the Egyptian game of latrunculi, the technique of which lies somewhere between checkers and chess. The use of gold and silver coins for draughts is, of course, Trimalchio's own personal touch. With regard to the popularity of the game in the Campanian area, an election notice of a certain Montanus, incised in a public building at Pompeii, relates: Montanus cliens cum latruncularis. Trimalchio's inlaid tabula lusoria of terebinth wood mimics the precious inlaid table which Pompey displayed

in his third triumph (Pliny HN 37.6.2). Some of the best terebinth tables, like Trimalchio himself, were Eastern in origin. Pliny (HN 16.76.7) describes a Syrian variety.

34.7 'Falernum Opimianum annorum centum': this wine would have to be at least 170 years old to fall within a Neronian dramatic date, since Opimius was consul in 121 B.C. Trimalchio knows Opimian was one of the finest wines ever, as did Cicero, who mentions in the Brutus (83), written around 46 B.C., that both Opimian and Anisian (160 B.C.) are scarcely potable. On the other hand, Pliny (HN 14.6.55) in his discussion of wines of exceptional age and value, says Opimian was still extant in A.D. 70, but far too bitter to be drunk neat or with water. In his day, it was used as a seasoning to improve other wines. It could be then, that Trimalchio has actual Opimian and that neither he nor his guests, freedmen and educated practitioners of the arts alike, know of its current use nor do they know enough about wines to realize that it does not taste quite right. See Barry Baldwin, "Opimian Wine," AJP 88 (1967): 173-5.

The statement that it is "one hundred years old" remains an anomaly. The label does not read properly according to inscriptions recovered on the countless amphorae at Pompeii. See August Mau, Pompeii:

Its Life And Art, trans. F.W. Kelsey (New York: Macmillan, 1899), p. 505. According to common practice in the wine trade, the "one hundred years old" would refer to its age when it was transferred from the vat into another container, usually an amphora. Therefore, this wine was removed from the vat in 21 B.C. and must at some later date have found its way from a Republican period amphora to a glass bottle (amphora vitrea) of the Imperial period. See McKay, Ancient Campania: Vol. II, p. 176 ff., for the importance of Puteoli in Italian glass manufacture. It is easier to believe that either Trimalchio was duped in the purchase of this wine, or that he is deliberately lying to his guests who still do not seem to know any better. Another evidence of his comparative ignorance of wines and their proper use is seen in his serving of mulsum, a sweet breakfast wine, with the first course (Sat. 34.2).

34.8-9 larvam argenteam attulit servus: the use of the images of skeletons on eating utensils and as decorations at banquets is well-documented at Pompeii. These so-called larvae conviviales are found also in the mosaic floors of triclinia. A small silver one executed in the manner described by Petronius may be seen in the Naples Museum, where a mosaic guild sign featuring a

skull with a mason's tools displayed around it is also exhibited. Two modioli of silver from Boscoreale are decorated with skeletons of philosophers and poets, strongly reflective of this symbol's Epicurean significance. One cup from Boscoreale reads:

ζῶν μετάλαβε τὸ γὰρ αὔριον ἄδηλον ἔστι (Smith, Cena Trimalchionis, p. 74). Herodotus (2.78) and Plutarch (Mor. 357) describe an Egyptian custom of bringing out a skeleton or something similar at a banquet as a reminder of the fragility of life. The skeletons reinforce the memento mori theme so relentlessly present in the Cena. See Arrowsmith, "Luxury and Death," p. 308.

35.2 rotundum enim repositorium duodecim habebat signa in orbe disposita: Trimalchio's sign is Cancer, the Crab, a fact which goes a long way toward explaining his basically domestic orientation, love of material possessions and stay-at-home attitude (cf. Sat. 30 where we are told that he eats out only two days a year and Sat. 70 where we learn that he would not venture forth to Rome to forge a political career for himself). Cancerians are also known for the near-hypochondriacal care and concern they feel over the state of their health. However, on the whole, Trimalchio's understanding of astrology is very rudimentary

and superficial, when considered in the light of his Eastern origins and the large number of Syrians and Tyrians living in the Puteolan area. Petronius must have experienced the mathematici at first-hand in Southern Italy and Bithynia.

Augustus' great reliance on the stars may have led Tiberius to the study of astrology at Rhodes. Manilius' cramped and scientific Astronomica, written during Tiberius' reign, would be far beyond the comprehension of Trimalchio and his set. See Franz Cumont, Astrology and Religion Among the Greeks and Romans (New York: Putnam's, 1912, reprint ed. New York: Dover Publications, 1960), pp. 60 and 79. Smith points out that Encolpius reveals his own ignorance of etiquette when he is struck by the novitas of an astrological dish. Athenaeus (2.60) quotes from Alexis to the effect that such platters were displayed as early as the third century B.C. Smith concludes that "the lack of originality is perhaps meant to emphasize the pretentiousness of Trimalchio's dish even more than Encolpius' naiveté" (Cena Trimalchionis, pp. 74-75).

35.6 circumferebat Aegyptius puer clibano argenteo panem: a clibanus is a small portable oven used for cooking and holding warm bread. They usually appear in terracotta, bronze or iron. For a collation of

types of domestic utensils from Campania see Andrea Carandini, ed., L'Instrumentum domesticum di Ercolano e Pompei (Roma: "L'Erma" di Bretschneider, 1977), esp. "Suppellettile fittile dei nuovi scavi," pp. 105-121.

The clibanarii, such as this Egyptian boy, produced bread of very fine quality, but not in near the quantity of the pistrinae. Clibanarii are known to have asked for the candidacy of Trebius Valentis for the aedileship of Pompeii (CIL 4.677).

36.3 repositorii Marsyas quattuor, ex quorum utriculus garum piperatum currebat super pisces:

Sullivan glosses [repositorii] as a plausible supplemental interpolation. Similar holders for garum were found in the House of Ephebus in the form of four little statuettes of placentarii, grotesque and obscene representations of street bread sellers. Maiuri (Cena di Trimalchione, p. 167) notes the similarity between such sauce-holders and garden fountain motifs, citing the nymphaeum of the House of Lucius Tiburtinus as an illustration. For Umbricius Scaurus, the garum-king, see Sat. 77, below.

38.1 omnia domi nascuntur: anyone with estates as extensive as Trimalchio's could certainly produce all of the products necessary for his personal consumption. In fact, Campanian estate owners had from earliest times

adopted a rigorous capitalistic policy in dealing with their agricultural produce. This policy, known as "vertical integration" in modern terminology, allowed them to concentrate in their own hands the many branches of agricultural production, assuring them control of this production from the field to the consumer's door (R. Étienne, La Vie Quotidienne à Pompei (Paris: Hachette, 1966), p. 147). Like Trimalchio, they would grow the grapes, make the wine, bottle it, load it on ships and take it to its final destination for trade. Some of the wine could also be made available through retail outlets, shops or thermopolia owned by the estates holders and operated by their freedmen. More often than not, such shops adjoined the entrepreneurs' houses, as evidenced at Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Trimalchio is concerned with trying to improve the quality of his "home-grown products" by attempting to produce a higher quality of wool and to improve his own strain of bees by mixing some Attic ones in with them. Pompeii and the other cities of Campania worked for the home market generally, and for trade in the lesser provinces and areas of Egypt, but were never able to compete with Rome and Alexandria. See M. Rostovtzeff, Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire, 2 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1926) 1:74. By Neronian times, provincial wines were

eclipsing the Campanian market, and the cities of Vesuvius found themselves beginning to lose out economically, when Ostia overtook Puteoli as the port city for Rome.

Pliny (HN 16.40) relates that Capuan perfumes lost favour on account of adulteration, and it is well known that woolen products from Campania were always considered coarse and second-rate. See Sat. 28.4 above. Perhaps Trimalchio is not merely satisfying his personal tastes and extravagances by introducing exotic strains into his local product, he could be feeling the financial pinch a bit himself, as were the Petronii of Cumae, no doubt.

38.8 Incuboni pilleum rapuisset, [et] thesaurum invenit: incubi were regarded as entrusted with the locations of the secret treasures of the earth. This may be an allusion to Nero's search for the treasure of Dido (Tac. Ann. 16.1).

38.10 Pompeius Diogenes...ipse enim domum emit: the freedman's rise and his move from shop-room to house is verifiable as a frequent phenomenon of Julio-Claudian life. CIL 6.2979 records a freedman of the Gens Pompeia (like this Diogenes) who is giving a small dinner party to celebrate his move from the cramped quarters over his shop into a house.

39 laudamus urbanitatem mathematici: Trimalchio the polymath delivers the first of several "learned" discourses, this first one dealing with astrology. His descriptions of the attributes of each sign are fairly comical and even quite imaginative. They seem to reflect the wit of Petronius more strongly than they indicate the learning of Trimalchio: e.g. "Under the Heavenly Twins on the one hand - pairs-in-hand, yokes of oxen, people with big bollocks, and people who have it both ways" (Sullivan's translation). Of his own sign Trimalchio most acutely observes: "I was born under the Crab, so I have a lot of legs to stand on and a lot of property on land and sea, because the Crab takes both in his stride." Of Nero's sign, Sagittarius, Petronius makes what could be taken as a cryptic comment on the emperor's impulsive nature and its consequences: "Under Sagittarius are born squint-eyed people who look at the vegetables and take the bacon." M. de Vreese, Petron 39 und die Astrologie (Amsterdam: H. J. Paris, 1927), takes Trimalchio's cleverness all too seriously. Petronius may have become so intent upon showing his own astrological knowledge in this piece that he made Trimalchio appear to be a veritable mathematicus. The joke may lie in the fact that Trimalchio literally fractures Western mythology and literature, but speaks with true command concerning Eastern superstitions.

42.1 'ego' inquit 'non cotidie labor': Trimalchio has left the room to go to the toilet. Relieved of his oppressive presence, a general conversation begins among the 'guests'. Seleucus speaks first and takes up the current issue of bathing and how often it should be done. Seleucus objects to the practice of daily bathing on the grounds that "the water bites into you" on cold days. Seneca likewise resisted the practice but on more aesthetic grounds, since he considered large, palatial baths and daily bathing indicative of the moral decline and growing "softness" of the upper classes: decoquere corpus atque exanimire sudoribus inutile simul delicatumque credimus (Ep. 108). Petronius may be jibing at Seneca here by giving a freedman's version of what is actually being discussed at court.

The name "Seleucus" appears in two Greek-oriented inscriptions from Puteoli: CIL 10.2275, 2267.

44. Ganymedes: ...'Nemo curat, quid annona mordet': Ganymedes, a freedman of Asian extraction, portrays the discontent and unrest over the grain situation in Italy during the reign of Nero. Quite early in the history of the Empire, after Actium in 31 B.C., Augustus was well aware that Rome would have to depend increasingly upon Africa and Egypt for its grain supply. For this reason, Augustus installed grain officers to administer

the supply at Puteoli and created a special fleet to carry cargoes between Alexandria and Puteoli (McKay, Ancient Campania: Vol. II, p. 161). Large horrea must have existed in Puteoli at this time; however, no remains of them can be found today.

Despite attempts to regulate distribution of the grain supply, both Tiberius and Claudius realized that their power depended upon the contentment of the citizens at Rome, and that Rome had to be fed first. As a result, prices rose considerably in the provinces and a shortage developed which contributed to the financial crisis of A.D. 33 under Tiberius. Claudius' efforts to rejuvenate the grain economy were largely unsuccessful in Campania (cf. 75 below), with the result that, during the reign of Nero, open hostility broke out between the grain aediles and the people of Puteoli. Tacitus relates: auditae Puteolanorum legationes, quas diversas ordo plebs ad senatum miserant, illi vim multitudinis, hi magistratum et primi cuiusque avaritiam increpantes, eaque seditio ad saxa et minas ignium progressa (Ann. 13.48).

45.4 habiture sumus munus eccellente in triduo die festa; familia non lanistica, sed plurimi liberti: Sullivan glosses die festa as a plausible explanatory interpolation. Echon the rag merchant is not as

fiercely caught up in the controversies of the day. His philosophy is aptly appropriate for a rag picker: quod non hodie est, cras erit (Sat. 45.2). He extends to his grousing comrades the solace of panem et circenses - a three-day munus gladiatorium and a campaign party at Mammaea's house. CIL 5.5143 records such a three-day festival at Pompeii, and Pompeii was noted for its presentation of liberti in the ring.

45.7 mulierem essedariam: men and women often entered the ring together in Neronian times. An essedum is a type of British chariot used by British gladiators of both sexes. Tacitus (Ann. 14.31) tells of the battle exploits of Boudicca, who mounted her essedum in order to avenge her honour and that of her people against the Romans. Fierce female competitors from Britain were a particular attraction in the ring of the Empire. Notice Echion's fascination with spectacle and slaughter - the bloodier the better, he seems to feel.

45.8 videbis populi vixam inter zelotypos et amasiunculos: Maiuri (Cena di Trimalchione, p. 170) relates such examples of "strife among the people" to the famous riot involving the Pompeians and the Nuceria in A.D. 59. Cf. Tacitus Ann. 14.17.

45.10 quia nobis epulum daturus est Mammea: Mammaea is throwing a dinner at a low cost of two denarii a

head in order to increase his chances of defeating Norbanus for public office. M. Gordon, "The Ordo of Pompeii," JRS 17 (1927): 165-83, offers ample evidence that the municipal magistracies were flourishing in Campania during the reign of Nero. However, the concern over municipal affairs displayed by Trimalchio and his guests argues strongly against those who would attempt to date the Satyricon later than Neronian times. For, as Bagnani points out, at a later dramatic date, the average local aristocrat would have been working even harder than this to ensure that he was not elected to public office, (Arbiter of Elegance, p. 180).

45.12 omnes postea secti sunt: from Echion's description, Norbanus presented some rather broken-down and sickly slaves as gladiators at his games. The Lex Petronia de Servis, probably passed in A.D. 61, which Bagnani believes was proposed by the Arbiter himself, or by a member of his immediate family, was intended to limit the powers of owners over their slaves and specifically to prohibit their assigning sickly and useless slaves to a sure death in the ring. This law reflects the post-Claudian attitude of humanitarianism towards slaves as demonstrated in the Epistulae Morales of Seneca. See G. Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, pp. 58-118. Trimalchio decks out his slaves in Tyrian vest-

ments (Sat. 30) and allows them to share both food and conversation at his dinner party (Sat. 71), where he states: et servi homines sunt at aequae unum lactem biberunt.

46.8 litterae thesaurum est, et artificium numquam moritur: Echion now addresses Agamemnon and illustrates the attitude of the uneducated man towards the so-called "intellectual." Yet, the ex-slave wishes an education for his son, so that he can be aut tonstrinum aut praeconem aut certe causidicam (Sat. 46.7). His statements verify Agamemnon's contention to Encolpius (Sat. 4.1) that rhetors must give children what their parents wish them to learn, and that all they want them taught is how to be a success in life. Thus far, Echion has allowed his son the type of education Quintilian recommended: a graeco sermone puerum incipere malo (Inst. 1.1.12), but now he wants him to abandon poetry for the practice of law. A Pompeian inscription best captures the spirit of Echion's attitude: hominem reddit rhetor. Qui emit servom (doctum), os non habet (CIL 4.1899).

47.7 multos scio sic periisse, dum nolunt sibi verum dicere: Trimalchio has returned and is lecturing his guests on the necessity of being watchful about the state of one's health. Petronius has phrased this

statement to be a verbal recollection of Seneca's quis enim sibi rerum dicere ausus est? (Tranq. 1.16).

Maiuri comments:

un' espressione usata da Seneca a significare l'introspezione morale di noi stessi, sarebbe, non senza malizia, rivolta di Petronio a indicare un caso d'introspezione corporale.

(Cena di Trimalchione,
p. 181).

Claudius shared Trimalchio's fear of "holding it in." cf. Suet. Claud. 32.

47.9 petauristios: spring-board or trapeze artists.

Greek symposia often included acrobats, swimmers, wrestlers and other such athletic entertainments. See W.J. Slater, "High Flying at Paestum," AJA 80 (1976): 423-5.

48.3 nunc coniungere agellis Siciliam volo, ut cum Africam libuerit ire, per meos fines navigem: Trimalchio has just stated that the wine at this dinner comes from his new suburbanum which unites his estates at Tarra-cina and Terentum. Such a property would necessarily cover at least 200 miles in territory. This is, of course, outrageous, but large estates and large numbers of slaves were common features in the early Empire. Pliny (HN 18.7.35) states that in Nero's time, six men

owned one-half of the Roman province of Africa. Such vast holdings are, then, not that large an exaggeration. See H. Schnur, "The Economic Background of The Satyricon: In Favor of the Traditional Date," Latomus 18 (1959): 793.

48.8 nam Sibyllam quidem Cumis ego ipse oculis meis vidi in ampulla pendere: Trimalchio has begun his second demonstration of his wide-ranging knowledge. First he discusses how the Cyclops tore out Ulysses' thumb with a pair of pincers, and then he mentions how he saw the Sibyl. It is well in keeping with Trimalchio's concentration on superstition and death that the Sibyl would wish only to die. The great works of Augustus, rebuilt in Antonine times, on the acropolis and at the cave of the Sibyl (see Maiuri, The Phlegraean Fields, pp. 117-139), the sixth book of the Aeneid, and the transformation of Cumae into a fashionable resort of the early Empire had certainly thrown light on this small Campanian town; however, nowhere else can there be found another story of this sort relating to the Sibyl of Cumae. Arrowsmith feels that the condition of the Sibyl in this passage reflects the state of romanitas by the middle of Nero's reign. He states that it is "romanitas turned inside-out and upside-down in a slavish Saturnalia - which we witness

at Trimalchio's dinner," ("Luxury and Death" p. 310). Helen Bacon, "The Sibyl in the Bottle," Virginia Quarterly Review 34 (1958): 262-278, has a similarly metaphorical impression of the passage.

Other scholars have advanced the theory that Trimalchio is referring to the Aeolic Cumae in Asia Minor. Their case is strengthened by the fact that only the Traguriensis (H) gives the story of the Sibyl at all. Should this reading be accepted as sound, the word "Cumae" could still be taken as an incorrect gloss. Bagnani attempts to associate this tale with the Greek world of Aeolic Cumae, where there is likewise no mention of such a story relating to the Sibyl. He continues to stress Trimalchio's Asian origins and relates the story to one of a Sibyl hanging in a cage in the Carian harbour of Bargylia ("Trimalchio," p. 83). Cf. Lucius Ampelius (8.16): et Herculis aedes antiqua; ibi e columna pendet cavea ferrea rotunda, in qua conclusa Sibylla dicitur. He then suggests that Trimalchio may have heard of, or seen this as a boy whose birthplace might well have been this same Bargylia, since it fits all the requisites of a harbour town (for slave-trading) with a large Semitic population. This is all rather shaky and is based on ground far less sound than simply assuming that the Sibyl intended here is the Sibyl of

Cumae. The element of philosophical skepticism involved in this tale as reported is quite intriguing. It is as if someone in a school of rhetoric or philosophy had raised the question: "Can Sibyls die - and if not, what happens to them?" Or, perhaps, some now lost tale of children approaching the Sibyl was popular in Trimalchio's day. There is, of course, no way of resolving this without the discovery of new references to the Sibyl and the aspects of her cult site. One should not, at any rate, take Trimalchio too seriously here, since this passage occurs in the midst of several examples of his fractured mythological learning.

50.2 'Solus sum qui vera Corinthea habeam': the craze for Corinthian bronze in the first century A.D. is well-documented. Suetonius (Aug. 70) relates how some people considered Augustus to be too fond of expensive furniture, the gaming-tables, and Corinthian bronze. Pliny (HN 34.3.5-8) discusses the origins and colours of Corinthian ware and concludes that much of what passes for fine Corinthian work is not. Trimalchio, of course, garbles his history of Corinthian ware beyond belief with the added entry of Hannibal into the story.

He does not, however, claim to have genuine Corinthian ware of "Hannibalic vintage," but most uniquely to possess the works of a craftsman whose very

name is Corinthus - "you can't get more 'Corinthian' than that," he concludes. Every wealthy Roman had his favourite silversmith and the styles "in vogue" were subject to frequent change:

Fashions in silver plate undergo marvellous variations owing to the vagaries of human taste, no kind of workmanship remaining long in favour. At one time, Furnian plate is in demand, at another Clodian, at another Gratian - for we make even the factories feel at home at our tables - at another time the demand is for embossed plate and rough surfaces, where the metal has been cut out along the painted lines of the designs, while now we even fit removable shelves on our sideboards to carry the viands, and other pieces we decorate with filigree, so that the file may have wasted as much silver as possible.

Pliny, Natural History,
10 vols., trans. H. Rackham,
The Loeb Classical Library
(Cambridge, Mass.:
Harvard University Press,
1961), 33.139.

It is interesting to note here that Petronius broke a valuable trulla murrina valued at 300,000 sesterces, rather than have it fall into Nero's hands at his death (Pliny HN 37.20).

51. Fuit tamen faber qui fecit phialam vitream,
quae non frangebantur: Pliny (HN 36.195), gives his version of this story which does not include the

murder of the inventor. Trimalchio seems to be playing on the popular estimate of the cruelty of Tiberius. See also Dio Cass. 57.21.7.

52.3 nam Hermerotis pugnas et Petraitis in poculis habeo: for decorations on silver cups, see Sat. 34.8 above; for the significance of gladiators on cups see Sat. 29.9 above. The name "Tetraites" appears in inscriptional evidence as a name commonly associated with the gladiatorial arena at Pompeii. Petraitis may be the Oscan form of Tetraites. For details of Petraitis' career, see H.T. Rowell, "Gladiator Petraitis and the Date of the Satyricon," TAPA 89 (1958): 14-24.

52.9 Syrum histrionem exhibebat concinente tota familia: madeia, perimadeia: Trimalchio adopts the mien of a drunken actor of the mime. The whole scene recalls Nero's histrionic leanings. Madeia is a hyperdoric form of "Medea" which occurs in the Southern Italian dialect. Perimadeia is another form of the famous sorceress' name. There is evidence to show that in many dramatic performances of the mime, the hero's fortunes and romantic desires would be assured to him through the agency of a witch-like figure bearing some form of the name "Medea". Madeia could also be a substantive

formed from the verb, madere, and this could refer to Trimalchio's drunken state. The reading is troubled. The words madeia perimadeia might well be an example of the acting out of magical incantations in mime, equivalent to "hocus-pocus" in current low-stage parlance. The names of the two witches are associated with each other in Theocritus 2.14-16:

καὶ ἐς τέλος ἄμμιν ὀπάδει
 φάρμακα ταῦτ' ἔρδοισα χερεῖονα μήτε τι Κίρκας
 μήτε τι Μηδείας μήτε ξανθᾶς περιμήδας.

Perimadeia is mentioned in Propertius 2.4.7: non hic herba valet, non hic nocturna Cytaeis/ non Perimadaeae gramina cocta manus.

53.1 actuarius, qui tamquam urbis acta recitavit: Trimalchio's display of low taste and rude, drunken behaviour is interrupted by the entry of the actuarius who reads his acta for the 26th of July. Rose takes this reading of the acta for the 26th of July as evidence that the Cena takes place in the summer and most likely in early August (K.F.C. Rose, "Time and Place in the Satyricon," TAPA 92 (1962): 408).

53.3 Mithridates servus in crucem actus est, quia Gai nostri genio male dixerat: this statement is probably meant to satirize the law of maiestas, passed in Tiberian times, whereby all who spoke ill of the

emperor were subject to capital punishment. If taken seriously, the inclusion in the acta of this statement that a slave was crucified at his masters' discretion establishes a terminus post quem non for the dramatic date of the Satyricon, since Hadrian deprived slave owners of the right of summary execution without court trial (Script. Hist. Aug. (Hadr. 18.7)).

53.5 in hortis Pompeianis: this line is taken by Maiuri to indicate that Trimalchio owns an estate in Pompeii. He cites a cubiculum garden painting as containing all of the fruits grown in a hortus Pompeianus (Maiuri, Roman Painting, p. 127). If so, this information could be regarded as a terminus ante quem for the dramatic date of the work, since the land around Vesuvius would have remained unworkable for at least a century following the eruption of A.D. 79. However, Ludwig Friedlaender, Petronii Cena Trimalchionis, p. 160, states that hortis Pompeianis refers to the estates of Trimalchio's patron C. Pompeius. His interpretation rests on analogy to such usages as horti Sallustiani for "the gardens of Sallust." But it seems unusual that Trimalchio would wait a full year to be informed that he had purchased lands belonging to his old master and benefactor. Most of Pompeius' estates would have fallen to him anyway, one would assume, if

Trimalchio was made his co-heir with the emperor (Sat. 76.1).

Trimalchio cannot be referring to Gnaeus Pompeius Magnus or to his son Sextus Pompeius, although he would certainly like to leave the general impression that he is. Pompey the Great had certainly made his presence felt in the Baian region. Like many other patricians of the late Republic, he was famous for his wealth and ostentation. Cicero (Att. 4.10.2) relates that he owned a residence at Cumae (Cumanum) and Seneca (Ep. 51.11) confirms that he owned a villa in regione Baiana.

John D'Arms, Romans on the Bay of Naples, pp. 192-93, states that it is uncertain what happened to Pompey's Cumanum after Pharsalus. Julius Caesar's magister equitum Marc Antony received much of Pompey's property and apparently sold some of it to Dolabella. The Cumanum passed back to Sextus Pompey by the treaty of Misenum in 39, but of its condition or interim use nothing is known.

horti Pompeiani might best be taken to mean "gardens at Pompeii" as Maiuri asserts. Wilhelmina F. Jashemski's studies of Pompeian gardens have revealed that many houses within the city walls contained orchards and gardens with market potential. The House of Julia Felix provides an example of this as does the Villa of

the Mysteries which, amidst the depressed economic conditions of Pompeii's last years, was converted into an agricultural factory with wine, flowers and food-stuffs. Relevant works by Jashemski include: "The Discovery of a Market Garden Orchard at Pompeii," AJA 78 (1974): 391-404; "From Vesuvius' Dust: Pompeii Emerges a City of Gardens, Vineyards," Landscape Architecture May (1976): 224-230; "A Large Vineyard Discovered in Ancient Pompeii," Science 180 (1973): 826.

53.13 'nam et comoedos' inquit 'emeram, sed malui illos Atell(ani)am facere, et choraulen meum iussi latine cantare': an ardent admirer of the Atellan farce in the Neronian age would be considered somewhat out of style. Current tastes ran more to sophisticated pantomime and operatic arias. The Atellan farce had degenerated into coarse mime by this time; but Trimalchio's regional loyalty to the old Oscan art-form should not pass unnoticed. His preferences for farce and mime and his command that his choruses cantare latine furnish other aspects of his personal Romanization and absorption into the Roman world. Comoedi were entertainers who specialized in reciting passages from New Comedy (see Pliny Ep. 1.15.2 and 5.19.3). Trimalchio displays his ignorance of culture by having them perform in Latin.

55 donec Trimalchio 'rogo' inquit 'magister, quid putas inter Ciceronem et Pub lium interesse':

Trimalchio the polymath, in his guise of literary critic, deigns to compare Cicero to Publilius Syrus, the leading composer of mimes in the time of Julius Caesar. Cicero, Trimalchio admits, was the better orator (desertiozem) but attests that Publilius was the better man (honestiozem). His choice is probably dictated by his own ability to relate more easily to Publilius' moralizing verses than to Cicero's rhetorical prose. Petronius' lines in imitation of Publilius are so good that they are better destined for the Imperial court (where no doubt this was recited) than for the banquet of a freedman. What Petronius lacks in verisimilitude, he makes up for in virtuosity. Publilius Syrus' name became a catch-all for collectors of apothegms to use, and it is impossible to know which of the seven hundred or so lines surviving under his name are genuine. See Smith, Cena Trimalchionis, p. 148.

56.7 cum pittacia in scypho circumferri coeperunt, puerque...apophoreta recitavit: the game was a great favourite with Augustus (Suet. Aug. 75).

57.4 malui civis Romanus esse quam tributarius:

Ascyrtos laughs rather heartily and rudely at the vulgarity of his host, and a freedman rails angrily at him.

Hermeros uses the stock arguments about how no one eats better than he and how he has made it the hard way. In his speech, he reveals that he too was born free but gave up his freedom in order to escape the tribute which peregrini were forced to pay. This procedure represents one of the expedients available to foreigners who wished to be Roman citizens. They would place themselves in service and hope for early manumission and the rights of citizenship which came with it. But, Hermeros by his own admission was not very quickly manumitted, as he was a slave for over 40 years. For more on this practice as it relates to Neronian times, see H.C. Schnur, "Economic Background of the Satyricon," p. 794.

57.9 et puer capillatus in hanc coloniam veni; adhuc basilica non erat facta: calculating that Hermeros is about the same age as Trimalchio, and that they are both around 70 years old, he would have been a puer capillatus in the days of Augustus. To the Augustan period is attributed the construction of a new basilica at Puteoli, which was called for this reason "Basilica Augusti Anniana" (CIL 10. 1782-3).

59.2 Cum Homeristae graecis versibus colloquerentur, ut insolenter solent: the presence of Homeric reciters at dinner parties is a pre-requisite established by

Athenaeus (Deip. 15.3). However, these "rhapsodes" strongly resemble performers of the mime, and according to Encolpius, their rendering of the Greek leaves a lot to be desired, not that Trimalchio would recognize the difference.

59.6 lance du <ce> naria: a libertus of Claudius was made to construct a lanx of 500 lbs. with a service of eight lesser platters weighing 250 lbs. each (Pliny, HN 33.145).

60 lacunaria sonare coeperunt totumque triclinium intremuit... diductis lacunaribus subito circulus ingens... dimittitur: for evidence of movable ceiling panels cf. 31.3 above. Such sumptuous banquet arrangements probably existed in late Republican times, but the earliest documentation is Suetonius' report of Nero's banquet scene: cenationes laqueatae tabulis eburneis versatilibus, ut flores, fistulatis, ut unguenta desuper spargerentur (Nero 31). Seneca also reports on a Neronian banquet: versatilia cenationum laquearia... ut subinde alia facies atque alia succedat et totiens tecta quotiens fercula mutantur (Ep. 90.15).

60.4 Priapus... gremioque satis amplo omnis generis poma et uvas sustinebat more vulgato: Priapus is represented in an endless array of garden sculptures and

wall decorations at Pompeii. Most of the Priapic sculptures had been removed from their original positions and were not available for public scrutiny, but numerous figures of Priapus still survive on walls. Most significant is the Priapus panel in the anteroom which precedes the Dionysiac room in the Villa of the Mysteries. Within the last five years some of the contents of the "Raccolta Pornografica" of the Naples Museum have begun to be exhibited for public inspection once again. Michael Grant was permitted to photograph and publish key objects from this collection in 1975 (see Sat. 31.9 above). Grant's evidence reveals that the Hellenistic deity Priapus co-existed quite comfortably amidst the ithyphallic superstitions that greeted his arrival in Italy. The ithyphallic lamps, tintinnabula, and eating vessels which appear in Grant's book give a context to some of Petronius' more sexually explicit passages and reveal discussions of the author's possible perversion and "scopophilic" traits as totally anachronistic.

Priapus and Dionysus were undoubtedly connected in their fertility aspects, but Priapus was also linked less esoterically with sexual potency and prowess. H.D. Rankin, "Petronius, Priapus, and Priapeum LXVIII," in Petronius the Artist: Essays on the Satyricon, ed. H.D.

Rankin (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1971), pp. 52-67, stresses ~~these~~ aspects of Priapus in his discussion of the "wrath of Priapus" which dogs the impotent Encolpius with the same relentless perversity that the "wrath of Poseidon" dogged Odysseus.

60.8-9 aiebat autem unum Cerdonem, alterum Felicionem, tertium Lucrionem vocari: a slave brings in the Lares of the household, called "Cobbler," "Luck" and "Lucre". One is reminded immediately of the House of Siricus at Pompeii, where the symbol of the owner's main interest in life is contained in the mosaic pavement outside his house, which reads: salve lucru(m). Both Trimalchio and Siricus clearly represent the predominantly commercial and materialistic tenor of life among the nouveaux riches of Campania.

Maiuri, Cena di Trimalchione, p. 196, notes that the gods of Trimalchio's triumvirate all have the third declension forms of their names, derived from the second declension forms as was the common practice with many servile names from inscriptional material at Pompeii. E.g. Amandus - Amandionis, Popilius - Popilionis, Quartus - Quartionis. The first of the three, Cerdo, a Graeco-Oriental slave name, appears in several inscriptions: e.g. Cerdo sodalibus Brundisio (CIL 4.6867) and Cerdo hic bibit (CIL 4.6868).

Felicio is an augural name; the golden pendant which Scintilla (Sat. 67.9) wears about her neck as a good luck token is called by this word. Names and particularly slave names reflecting Sulla's nomen of Felix are common enough in Pozzuoli and Pompeii. Lucrum is self-explanatory, as the sentiment of Siricus confirms. The word also appears frequently in Martial and Persius and their usage of it reflects the Puteolan spirit of the word, for it was there that it was playfully (or accurately) asserted the Lacus Lucrinus got its name from the great fortunes made there in the cultivation of oysters.

60.9 veram imaginem ipsius Trimalchionis: Trimalchio's own image, evidently a bust wrought in silver, is placed with the Lares for adoration. The bust must represent the worship of the genius of the pater familias. More common than silver busts are the bronze herms which may be seen set up by faithful retainers in honour of the important men of Pompeii and Herculaneum. Cf. Sat.

30.1-2, where Trimalchio has his ship's beak and fascēs dedicated to him by Cinna, but he nonetheless seems intent on adding this other little touch himself, just to assure proper recognition of his magnificence. The kissing of his image may be a parody of imperial rituals, for example, Caligula's identification of himself with

Jupiter (Suet. Calig. 22).

62 persuadeo hospitem nostrum ut mecum ad quintum miliarium veniat: Niceros' ghost tale begins with his description of the scary walk he and his soldier-friend must make along a street lined with tombs between the towns of Puteoli and Capua. Despite Rose's objection that it is the dominus who is going to Capua and not Niceros ("Time and Place," p. 405), it seems fairly possible that Niceros could be taking this same road at least as far as the quintum miliarium, where his lady love evidently lived. Little remains of the post-markings on the Via Campana, but the tombs still line the road, especially in the area of the Piano del Quarto. See McKay, Ancient Campania Vol. II, p. 175, and Maiuri, The Phlegraean Fields, pp. 47-55.

Ghost stories and werewolf tales were common enough in the ancient world; and seem to have been particularly diffuse and numerous in the Campanian area:

et otiosa credidit Neapolis,
et omne vicinum oppidum.
(Horace, Epod. 5.43-4)

64.5 Quando parem habui nisi unum Appellem:

Plocamus was evidently a fine singer and reciter in his younger days. Apelles, whom Caligula had killed, was reportedly the finest singer of his day. See Suet. Calig. 33 and Dio Cass. 59.5. Smith, Cena Trimalchionis, p. 179, cautions against using the occurrence of the name

of this contemporary personage as evidence for dating the Satyricon to Neronian times. But the appearance of this popular name adds to the weight of evidence which points to a mid-first century date.

63.5 oppositaque ad os manu: Maiuri, Cena di Trimalchione, p. 200, relates this obscene whistle to the so-called "pernacchio Napoletano" or, loosely translated, the "Neapolitan Raspberry," which still can be heard (endured) today.

64.9 'nemo' inquit 'in domo mea me plus amat':

Trimalchio has passed through several stages of inebriation and now arrives at the sentimental stage, just before passing on to the angry and violent one. His statement that Scylax loves him more than anyone in the house is probably quite true. One of the sadder sides of Trimalchio's character is his willingness to give every sort of material gratuity he can think of in order to be spoken well of in this world or the next. Towards this end, he plies his wife with jewels, his slaves with drink and his animals with food. See Arrowsmith, "Luxury and Death," p. 310.

65.5 Habinnas sevir est, idemque lapidarius, [qui videtur monumenta optime facere]: Encolpius mistakes the arrival of Habinnas for that of a magistrate, entering as he does clad in white, followed by a crowd of

lictors. He makes his appearance late and in a state of drunkenness on the model of Alcibiades in Plato's Symposium. His function in the Cena is quite the same as Alcibiades' in Plato, for it is in the sunshine of his comradely admiration that Trimalchio reveals his innermost feelings about his life and death. Habinnas is both his trusted executor and the architect of his monumental tomb. For more on this, see Averil Cameron, "Petronius and Plato," CQ 19 (1969): 367-70.

66.1 'tamen' inquit Trimalchio 'quid habuistis in cena?': Habinnas has come straight from a ninth-day dinner given by a domina in honour of her prized slave who died. Trimalchio immediately questions him about what sort of foods were served. Habinnas then recites an incredible repast almost the equal of the one Trimalchio is holding. Arrowsmith, struck by the close parallel between physical satiety and death in the Cena, makes the statement that "if Trimalchio turns a feast into a funeral, Habinnas turns a funeral into a feast" ("Luxury and Death," p. 312).

67.9 Scintilla, quae de cervice sua capsellam detraxit aureolam, quam Felicionem appellebat: cf. 60.9 above.

68.1 scobemque croco et minio tinctam sparserunt et, quod numquam ante videram, ex lapide speculari pulverem tritum: the sprinkling of sawdust tinted with saffron

and vermillion spread from the circuses and amphitheatres into the Imperial homes and from there to the triclinia and portici of lavish private homes. Encolpius' surprise at powdered mica floating down seems rather incongruous, since it was commonly used for its glittering effect in the circus (Pliny HN 33.90 and 36.162; Suet Calig. 18.3). While the material was familiar enough, perhaps this particular "ceremonial" use of it in a private triclinium was not.

68.6 <im> miscebat Atellanicos versus, ut tunc primum me etiam Vergilius offenderit: Encolpius is horrified by the Alexandrian slave's mixed rendition of Vergil and Atellan verses. Vergil finds himself in a similarly unsuitable and vulgar environment at Pompeii, CIL 4. 2310, where Aen. 9.404, tu, dea, tu praesens nostro succurre labori, is incised at the entrance to the caupona of Phoebus. This is surely not the sort of "labor" which Nisus had in mind when he asked for aid.

68. nam quod strabonus est, non curo; sicut Venus spectat: Venus often seems cross-eyed in paintings, possibly because the artists try to accentuate her eyes to make her more alluring and seductive. A Pompeian inscription asks suggestively: quid faciam vobis, ocelli lusci? (CIL 5.1780).

70.8 inaudito enim more pueri capillati attulerunt

unquentum...pedesque recumbentium unxerunt: a practice introduced to Nero's court by Otho (Pliny HN 13.22). Its inclusion here at the freedman's Cena may indicate that Petronius thought it vulgar. Cf. Sat. 31.4 above.

71.1 'et servi homines sunt et aequae unum lactem biberunt': cf. 45.12 above. In this line lies a verbal reminiscence of Seneca, Ep. 47, and perhaps a parody of the Stoic views on slavery may be detected in the vast gulf between Trimalchio's actions and his words. He says that he is going to free all of his slaves in his will (in testamento). If he feels so strongly on the issue of slavery, why does he not free them now? If there is no difference between a free man and a slave other than their comparative degrees of luck (malus fatus oppresserit), why does he free the slave who falls on him so that it will not be reported that he was injured by a mere slave (ne quis posset dicere tantum virum esse a servo vulneratum (54.5)? Seneca frequently discoursed upon the equality of slaves in his Epistulae Morales, but like Trimalchio, apparently never acted upon his words.

71.3-4 'et haec ideo omnia publico, ut familia mea iam nunc sic me amet tamquam mortuum': cf. Sat. 66 above.

71.5 aedificas monumentum meum, quemadmodum te iussi?: Trimalchio questions Habinnas as to how his tomb is

coming along. He now wants to add a picture of his dog at his foot, wreaths, scent bottles and all of the contests of Petraitēs (for Petraitēs see 29.9 and 52.3 above). Lucanian and Etruscan tombs (ca. 340 B.C.) were known for their scenes of violent combat, as tombs now visible in the museums at Paestum and Tarquinia clearly indicate.

The tomb is to be 100 feet wide facing the road and 200 feet deep back into the field. Trimalchio wants to die as elegantly as he lived. The fruits and vines on the tomb relate to his estates and his initial financial successes in the wine business. He also wishes to include among the decorations some ships sailing at full canvas. Ships on funerary monuments are fairly common in and around port cities. Successful maritimers would naturally have chosen such decorations. On the tomb of Navoleia Tyche at Pompeii, built to house her remains and those of her husband, C. Munatius Faustus, appears the representation of a ship with its sails raised and the crew members all at their stations, preparing to enter into a port. This tomb represents, like Trimalchio's, an allegorical depiction of life's journey, interpreted in terms of Faustus' participation in the commercial shipping industry.

71.7 'hoc monumentum heredem non sequatur.':

This statement is expressed epigraphically by H.M.H.N. S., and assures that the heirs of the deceased cannot alter the tomb's appearance or claim any part of its substance for themselves.

71.9 et me in tribunali sedentem praetextatum cum anulis aureis quinque et nummos in publico de sacculo effundentem: he also requests a scene from the public banquet which he gave, showing all the people having a good time. He can wear his golden rings without fear of breaking the law once he is dead, although he is still not entitled to wear them while living. Another Asiatic freedman, M. Valerius Anteros, had a banquet scene placed upon his tomb (Maiuri, Cena di Trimalchione, p. 212). Such scenes were common on Greek and Etruscan tombs. Cf. especially the Tomb of the Diver at Paestum.

71.11 ad dexteram meam ponas statuam Fortunatae: the usual pose on Roman funerary monuments, husband, wife and children beneath them. However, Trimalchio has no children to include upon his monument. Arrowsmith points out that to a Roman moralist, barrenness of children is "the typical trait of an unnatural society organized on the principle of luxuria" ("Luxury and Death", p. 321). Trimalchio is noteworthy for the emptiness of his excesses. Despite the large banquets and innumerable kindnesses to his guests and servants, he

seems to have reaped little of the admiration, respect, and love he so strongly craves.

71.12 Maecenatianus: H. Haley, "Quaestiones Petronianae," HSCP 2 (1891): 13; Friedlaender, Petronii Cena Trimalchionis, p. 342, and most recently Bagnani, "Trimalchio," p. 86, all agree that Trimalchio has merely adopted the agnomen "Maecenatianus" to make his name appear more impressive and to link himself with the group of Imperial freedmen who constitute his direct social "betters". To argue as Grimal attempts to ("Sur Quelques Noms Propres de la Cena Trimalchionis," RPH 16 (1942): 162), that Trimalchio belonged at one time to Maecenas who sold him to C. Pompeius is more than a bit strained against the text which implies only one owner for Trimalchio from his first days in slavery when he was a puer capillatus. Maecenas died in 8 B.C., so that in order for Trimalchio to have been puer capillatus in his lifetime, the dramatic date of the Cena might have to be shifted backwards to Claudian times - a switch which would not reasonably align itself with the many allusions to Neronian times found in the work.

71.12 huic seviratus absenti decretus est: this statement implies that the nominee was decreed a member of the Sevirate by the council of the decurions, in his own absence, and without the pressure of his money or

influence. Such an honour signals public recognition of a man's deeds, but it really represented nothing more than a formal decree; Trimalchio would have had to have applied himself in some manner to obtain the office.

Acts of public munificence could often launch a freedman on a public career, as the father of M. Popidius Celsinus clearly recognized when he ascribed the rebuilding of the Temple of Isis in A.D. 63 to his small son.

71.12 sestertium reliquit trecenties: Bagnani notes:

In the eyes of the needy adventurers and parasites he is a very rich man, but he is very small beer for that small and immensely wealthy society of Rome for which Petronius is writing. ("And Passing Rich...", p. 220)

Trimalchio is, of course, somewhat richer than his friends and hangers-on. One of the freedmen, C. Pompeius Diogenes, has 300,000 sesterces (Sat. 38.7), which is twice the equestrian census, and another, Iulius Proculus, had a senatorial fortune of a million sesterces. Cf. Sat. 77.4 below.

Trimalchio's thirty million is not even exceptional by provincial standards. Titus, who is giving the games which Echion hopes to attend, is probably a member of the upper class and a city magistrate, and he

too claims a fortune of thirty million (Sat. 45.6). In Rome, where the great fortunes of the day ran from 200 to 400 million (Frank, Economic Survey, 5:22-29), this amount would hardly qualify one as well-to-do. In the light of the Campanian familiarity with fortunes the size of that of Lucullus and the Cornelian family, this amount looks small indeed. Poppaea Sabina's freed-man father was probably far richer than this by virtue of his houses and agricultural horti in the Pompeian area alone.

71.12 nec philosophum audivit: a very desirable claim to make in the days of Seneca's waning influence on Nero. Suetonius states that Nero's mother turned him from philosophical pursuits: monens imperaturo contrariam esse (Nero 52).

72.3 coniciamus nos in balneum: a bath proposed at this point in the banquet would imply that following the bath, the feasting would begin all over. Suetonius relates how Nero used to feast from mid-day to the middle of the night: refotus saepius calidis piscinis ac tempore aestivo nivatis. This method of sobering up and starting afresh was not without its dangers. Cf. Juvenal 1.5.142 ff.

72.7 ducente per porticum Gitone...Ascyltos etiam in piscinam ceciderit: portico, areas and the gardens they

surround exhibit no lack of fountain nymphaea and piscinae among the houses remaining at Pompeii and Herculaneum. The House of Castor and Pollux and the House of the Citharist both contain piscinae. The Villa of the Pisos at Herculaneum and the House of Pansa at Pompeii both contain piscinae large enough to swim in. "Narcissus" villa at Stabiae also contains a large piscina, as does the late-Republican House of Julia Felix. The largest piscina yet to be found is the one at Oplontis which is almost Olympic in proportions (A. de Franciscis "La Villa romana di Oplontis" PP 28 (1973): 453-66).

73.1 'alia intrant, alia exeunt.': the grander houses at Pompeii and Herculaneum all have secondary entrances off the side of the peristyle and garden. The guests would be herded out a back entrance to prevent their stealing anything.

73.2 balneum intravimus, angustum scilicet et cisternae frigidariae simile, in qua Trimalchio rectus stabat: Trimalchio's bath was once used as a bakery and from its description as angustum, may retain the conical and narrow aspects of a baker's oven. Maiuri (Cena di Trimalchione, p. 214) describes it as dismal and reflective of the lack of attention which Trimalchio pays to the decor of the private sections of his house. Sullivan

argues (Satyricon of Petronius (trans.), p. 192) that the bath, contrary to its description as angustum, "sounds very spacious." It is best to take angustum at face value, for "spaciousness" is at best a comparative consideration, especially in an environment like the Campanian one where newer and finer baths were being added all the time in the early Empire. Against this health-spa atmosphere, the private baths of Campanian houses do definitely appear small. Bagnani has hypothesized that Trimalchio's house is one of Augustan vintage, complete with decorations resembling the Second Style, cf. Sat. 29.3-4 above. Trimalchio's bath also fits the Augustan type, and indeed, Encolpius' words, balneum angustum, render much the same descriptive impression as Seneca's famous comment on Scipio Africanus' bath at Liternum: balneolum angustum, tenebriosum (Ep. 86.4-7).

It has been suggested that angustum might be better read as augustum, thereby implying that Trimalchio's bath might be of Augustan date and therefore related in form to the domed baths at Baiae and other such architectural experiments. However, the apparatus supports no such variant reading, and Sullivan glosses the whole passage <angustum scilicet et cisternae frigidariae simile> as an explanatory interpolation.

Smith glosses only <angustum scilicet et>.

73.3 coepit Menecratis cantica lacerare: one must notice Petronius' keenly-drawn picture of old, drunken Trimalchio singing and sweating away in his steamy little bath. The picture irresistibly recalls the opening line from a Canto of Ezra Pound: "The ant's a Centaur in his dragon world." Menecrates the singer and lyre-player was a favourite of Nero's (Suet. Nero 30).

73.6 Lucernas aeneolosque piscatores notavimus et mensas totas argenteas: the new triclinium prepared so exquisitely by Fortunata features lamps with bronze decorations and tables of solid silver. Bronze decorative pieces and service dishes were extremely popular in Campania, as evidenced by the many bronze finds at Herculaneum and Pompeii. For a full discussion of such items see Spinazzola, Le arti decorative a Pompei e nel Museo Naz. di Napoli (1928) pp. 283-287 and Andrea Carandini, ed., L'Instrumentum Domesticum, pp. 163-168. The most elegant and coveted variety of 'table at the end of the Republic was one of citrus wood with intarsia work (Pliny HN 13.91). In the days of the early Empire, trim of silver and ivory was added to the legs of such tables. Once again, with his solid silver tables, Trimalchio's design for luxurious

living has caused him to trespass the boundaries of good taste.

74.1 gallus gallinaceus cantavit: Trimalchio hears a cock crow and immediately declares that this forebodes either that there would be a fire or that someone would die in the neighbourhood. To assuage his superstitious fears Trimalchio first causes wine to be poured under the tables and the lamps to be sprinkled with it also. Cf. Pliny HN 28:26: incendia inter epulas nominata aquis sub mensam perfusis abominamur. Secondly, Trimalchio switches his signet ring (described at Sat. 32.3) from his left hand to his right. Cf. Pliny HN 28:57: plerique anulum e sinistra in longissimum dextrae digitum transferre. The second gesture seems intended to assure that he will not be the member of the community who turns up dead. He ensures the effectiveness of his counter-spell by serving up to his guests the villainous cock that crowed.

74.5 Fortunata mola buxea piper trivit: Fortunata's pepper box is made of a hardwood called boxwood. There was a thriving industry for the production of household furnishing such as this around Pompeii. On one of his tablets, Caecilius Jucundus records the sale (auctio buxiaria) of a large quantity of boxwood.

74.13 Trimalchio 'quid enim?' inquit 'ambubaia non meminit [se] de machina illam sustuli?': ambubaia is a Syrian word with quite exotic connotations which first appears in Latin literature with Horace: ambubaiarum collegia (Sat. 1.2.1). The application of this term to Fortunata is probably not meant simply to insult her, but actually to call to mind the details of her former life. Fortunata could easily be of Syrian origin and could have begun her life in Campania and could have supported herself by means of her dancing and low morality just as other foreign women did. The entrance annex to the House of the Ephebus contains an erotic scene depicting the ambubaiae. Bagnani accepts this as evidence of Fortunata's Syrian origin and profession, and suggests that Trimalchio may have married her, in accordance with an arrangement, in order to relieve some important Puteolan gentleman of his embarrassing relationship with her ("Trimalchio," p. 88). Trimalchio implies that such might be the case (Sat. 77), and Fortunata had 10,000 gold pieces to give Trimalchio to help him regain his footing when his first commercial venture failed.

76.4 uno die Neptunus trecenties sestertium devoravit: Trimalchio recounts his rise to riches from co-heir with the emperor to his master's possessions to the temporary

set-back of his losses in his first maritime adventure. It strikes one as curious that he could have lost 30 million sesterces on his first venture, since this is the exact amount of his present fortune. It could be, as Bagnani concludes ("And Passing Rich...", p. 237) that in the jargon of all would-be high financiers, he lost 30 million by not making that amount. His original investment could not have been more than at the most one million sesterces, since he states that his master left him a patrimonium laticlavium (Sat. 76.3), and the senatorial census was set at one million sesterces in the Augustan age and remained at that rate into Neronian times.

76.6 oneravi rursus vinum, lardum, fabam, sepladium,
manicipia: all of these products are readily acceptable as items of trade at Puteoli. For, in fact, every product available on the Mediterranean came into port there - some for local consumption, but most for conveyance to Rome. Sepladium refers to the perfumes and unguents which were the special products of Capua. At Capua, there was a special forum of the perfume dealers (unguentarii), similar in its scale of activities to Eumachia's woollens market at Pompeii. Much inscriptional evidence exists for the perfume trade at Puteoli (CIL 4.609 and 2935), Capua (CIL 4.3968, 3974-5), and

Pompeii (CIL 4.609 and 2184). See Jashemski's works on Pompeian flower gardens and the manufacture of perfumes, cited above at Sat. 53.5.

76.8 quicquid tangebam, crescebat tamquam favus:
Trimalchio's rise to riches parallels exactly the career available to any provincial parvenu in the early Empire. One must assume that his activities as a libertus began in the reign of Tiberius after the financial crisis of A.D. 33, when the business affairs of the Empire took a considerable upswing (Schnur, "Economic Background of the Satyricon," p. 791). Further proof in support of a late-Tiberian beginning for his career is his statement that wine was scarce and dear when he made his start (Sat. 76.2). Campania is known to have endured a decline in viticulture during Tiberian times which created a shortage in domestic wine. Trimalchio's rise could certainly have occurred no later than the early Claudian era, since wine from Spain and Gaul began to flood the Italian market about that time, making the export of Italian wine unprofitable. See Rostovtzeff, A Social and Economic History, 2:515 n. 20.

His rise follows a long-established pattern. As a libertus, he must risk all that he can scrape together in order to become really wealthy. He has

the aid of his administrative experience in the household of his master and the added incentive of knowing that without considerable financial emoluments, he will never achieve any social, let alone political, standing in the community. He goes for broke, takes to the sea, succeeds, and then begins purchasing land and estates. Commerce gives way to agriculture and banking. His ventures become increasingly more conservative until he relinquishes all active participation in the commercial world and becomes a financial agent for other liberti. His business affairs are now run by a dispensator and an actuarius and he has hence achieved the same position his master had before him. Cf. Rostovtzeff, Social and Economic History, p. 74.

77.4 Scaurus cum huc venit, nusquam mavoluit hospitari, et habet ad mare paternum hospitium: most critics agree that this is most likely a reference to the garum magnate and duovir, Umbricius Scaurus, whose father might have been a freedman of the Scauri of Rome. Petronius' mention of a real personality here is curious.

It could be reflective of his own visits to the homes of freedmen of the Petronii of Cumae. Cf.

G. Pugliese Carratelli, "Tabulae Herculaneenses I," PP (1946): 165-184. Iulius Proculus who is mentioned at Sat. 38.16, may be a contemporary personality as well,

since there was a C. Iulius Proculus M.f. who was quaestor under the joint rule of Titus and Vespasian and possibly another of the same name who was consul under Trajan. See Grimal, "Sur Quelques Noms Propres de la Cena Trimalchionis," p. 164.

78. itaque vigiles [qui custodiebant vicinam regionem]...effregerunt ianuam subito et cum aqua securibusque tumultuari suo iure coeperunt: one mourner at Trimalchio's wake rehearsal blows his horn so loud that the fire brigade arrives. Should Puteoli be accepted as the site of the dinner, these vigiles would represent part of the cohortes stationed there by Claudius (Suet. Claud. 25.2): Puteolis et Ostiae singulas cohortes ad arcendos incendiorum casus collocavit.

With subtle irony, Petronius skillfully makes Trimalchio's worst fears come true, as the fire brigade arrives to put out the non-existent fire generated by the mock-funeral. The gallus gallinaceus has its revenge, and Encolpius, Giton and Ascyltos get their long-awaited opportunity to slip away.

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APPENDIX IPETRONIUS: THE BIOGRAPHY

17. Paucos quippe intra dies eodem agmine Annaeus Mela, Cerialis Anicius, Rufrius Crispinus, ac <T> Petronius cecidere...

18. De [C.] Petronio pauca supra repetenda sunt. nam illi dies per somnum, nox officiis et oblectamentis vitae transigebatur; utque alios industria, ita hunc ignavia ad famam protulerat, habebaturque non ganeo et profligator, ut plerique sua haurientium, sed erudito luxu. ac dicta factaque eius quanto solutiora et quandam sui negligentiam praeferentia, tanto gratius in speciem simplicitatis accipiebantur. proconsul tamen Bithyniae et mox consul vigentem se ac parem negotiis ostendit. dein revolutus ad vitia seu vitiorum imitatione inter paucos familiarium Neroni adsumptus est, elegantiae arbiter, dum nihil amoenum et molle adfluentia putat, nisi quod ei Petronius adprobavisset. unde invidia Tigellini quasi adversus aemulum et scientia voluptatum potioem. ergo crudelitatem principis, cui ceterae libidines cedebant, adgreditur, amicitiam Scaevini Petronio obiectans, corrupto ad indicium servo ademptaque defensione et maiore parte familiae in vincla rapta.

19. Forte illis diebus Campaniam petiverat Caesar, et

Cumas usque progressus Petronius illic attinebatur; nec tulit ultra timoris aut spei moras. neque tamen praeceps vitam expulit, sed incisas venas, ut libitum, obligatas aperire rursum et adloqui amicos, non per seria aut quibus gloriam constantiae peteret. audiebatque referentis nihil de immortalitate animae et sapientium placitis, sed levia carmina et facilis versus. servorum alios largitione, quosdam verberibus adfecit. iniit epulas somno indulsit, ut quamquam coacta mors fortuitae similis esset. ne codicillis quidem, quod plerique pereuntium, Neronem aut Tigellinum aut quem alium potentium adulatus est, sed flagitia principis sub nominibus exoletorum feminarumque et novitatem cuiusque stupri perscripsit atque obsignata misit Neroni. fregitque anulum ne mox usui esset ad facienda pericula.

20. Ambigenti Neroni quonam modo noctium suarum ingenia notescerent, offertur Silia, matrimonio senatoris haud ignota et ipsi ad omnem libidinem adscita ac Petronio perquam familiaris. agitur in exilium tamquam non siluisset quae viderat pertuleratque, proprio odio.

(Tac. Ann. 16.17-20)

T. Petronius consularis moriturus invidia Neronis, ut mensam eius exheredaret, trullam myrrhinam HSCCC emptam fregit...

(Plin. HN 37.20)

19. Καὶ ταυτὶ μὲν ἐλάττονά ἐστιν. ἐκεῖνα δ' ἤδη χαλεπὰ καὶ λυμαινόμενα τοὺς ἀνοήτους, ὅταν εἰς τάναντία πάθῃ καὶ

νοσήματα κατηγορεῖσιν... ἣ τοὺς ἀσώτους αὖ πάλιν καὶ πολυτελεῖς
εἰς μικρολογίαν καὶ ῥυπαρίαν ὄνειδίζουσιν, ὥσπερ Νέρωνα
Τίτος Πετρώνιος...

(Plut. Mor. 60 d-e)

Petronius: The Biography

The question of the identity of the author of the Satyricon and his possible identification with the Petronius who is mentioned as Nero's elegantiae arbiter by Tacitus (Ann. 16.17-20), is a vexatious one. Thus far, scholars have found no one, immutable fact by which to affirm in an irrefutable manner that the Petronius mentioned in Tacitus is the author of the work; although, in the opinion of most researchers, the weight of the circumstantial evidence is telling. The amount of time and ink spent on this question is both lamentable and necessary.

Classical literary criticism has traditionally called for the application of textual-linguistic, historical, and generic methods to any given work. The textual approach to the Satyricon reveals two layers of conversational patois, the sermo urbanus spoken by Encolpius, Eumolpus, Ascyltos, and Giton and the sermo vulgaris chiefly exemplified by Trimalchio and his friends. This observation, while enlightening, contributes nothing to a firm dating of the work, since, with the exception of plebeian inscriptions, few examples of these types of Latin exist outside the text

of the Satyricon. Investigations of Pompeian wall inscriptions have produced verbal parallels, but these cannot be used as a firm device for dating, since the plebeian speech patterns evolved very slowly and hence do not betray dramatic changes from era to era.¹

The application of the historical method of criticism is wholly reliant upon the critic's ability first to establish, as Taine suggested, the race, milieu, and moment of the work.² In this instance, the race is clearly Roman, but the milieu and moment shift hopelessly in their interpretive value as scholars argue for dates ranging from the reign of Caligula to post-Commodan times.

Generic criticism is likewise impossible, without a fixed impression of what genres are possible and what constitutes deliberate archaism and what does not in the given time frame. The more modern approaches of structural and formal criticism can and have been applied to

¹Frank Frost Abbott, "The Use of Language as a Means of Characterization in Petronius," CP 2 (1907): 49-50, W. Süss, De eo quem dicunt inesse Trimalchionis cenae sermone vulgari. Acta et Commentationes Universitatis Tartuensis 9 (Dorpat: C. Mattiesen, 1926), and A. von Guericke, De linguae vulgariis reliquiis apud Petronium et in inscriptionibus parietariis pompeianis servatis (Leipzig: Kessler, 1875). More readily available is Amedeo Maiuri, ed., La Cena di Trimalchione di Petronio Arbitro: Saggio Testo e Commento (Naples: Raffaele Pironti, 1945) pp. 227-35. Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, pp. 80-2, acknowledges this problem with relation to verbal parallels between the Apocolocyntosis and the Satyricon.

²H.A. Taine, History of English Literature, 2 vols., trans. H. Van Laus (New York: Holt and Williams, 1871), 1:10.

the Satyricon, chiefly by William Arrowsmith, Helen Bacon and Froma Zeitlin, but even these critics rely upon the assumption of a Neronian backdrop against which to posit their theories that form and intention connote a moral purpose for the over-all work.³

Those who view the Satyricon not as a moral treatise, but rather as the work of a court litterateur intent upon entertaining Nero and satisfying his artistic whims would particularly like to see the authorship controversy laid to rest, so that the relationship between literature and Nero's court could be further clarified and defined as it has been for the Augustan Age. These matters are the current concern of John P. Sullivan, and, in a smaller way, of the author of this dissertation.⁴

In the review of the state of the question which follows, a particular aspect of the Petronian portrait will be emphasized. By retracing directions originally taken by Gilbert Bagnani,⁵ it is my intention to examine

³Arrowsmith, "Luxury and Death," pp. 304-31; H. Bacon, "The Sibyl in the Bottle," Virginia Quarterly Review 34 (1958): 262-276; F. Zeitlin, "Petronius as Paradox, Anarchy and Artistic Integrity," TAPA 102 (1971): 631-84.

⁴J.P. Sullivan, "Petronius: an Aesthetic Evaluation," Erotica Antiqua, Acta of the International Conference on the Ancient Novel, ed. B.P. Reardon (Bangor, Wales, 1976), pp. 3-4, and see also John P. Sullivan, review of Petronii Arbitri Cena Trimalchionis by Martin S. Smith, ed. (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975) in TLS, 26 March 1976, p. 350.

⁵Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, pp. 47-56.

more closely the character of the Petronian gens itself, to cut away what is fanciful in Bagnani's reconstruction, and yet to establish what can be confirmed about the active participation of the Petronii in Julio-Claudian politics and life. Regardless of whether the author of the Satyricon was T. Petronius Niger Cos. suff. ca. A.D. 62, it is a certainty that his nomen links the author of the Satyricon to that wealthy and politically industrious clan.

The authorship problem may best be tackled in three stages: the dating of the Satyricon to the Neronian Age by means of internal evidence; the Tacitean biography and other testimonia; the evidence for the identification of Tacitus' courtier as the author of the Satyricon.

i. The Dating of the Satyricon to the Neronian Age

There is abundant evidence within the text of the Satyricon itself for assigning to the work a dramatic date of the Neronian Age, yet there is always the undeniable possibility that the author may have written at a later date and merely chose to give his work a Neronian flavour. This is not highly likely, but must nonetheless be mentioned as a possibility. The economic background of the work harmonizes with the conditions of Julio-Claudian times, particularly the great number of wealthy freedmen, the hints of reduced agricultural and small industrial conditions in

Southern Italy (Sat. 38.1, 53), and Trimalchio's own rise to wealth through a shipping venture which parallels Claudian legislation for the encouragement of shipping entrepreneurs.⁶ The reference to Caesar at Sat. 51.2, clearly places the action in the Imperial period, but does not specify any particular emperor. The bustling, polyglot atmosphere reflects conditions of the Campanian port city of Puteoli in the first century A.D. more closely than its decline in the second century A.D.

There is, as stated above, nothing indicated by Petronius' use of language which contradicts a dating to the first century A.D., but neither language nor economic background can be used to fix a more precise date. The many allusions to Julio-Claudian occurrences are likewise not very useful for precision dating. The story of the unbreakable glass (Sat. 51.2), for instance, is associated with Tiberius.⁷ The practice of having one's feet perfumed and toenails pared at dinner (70.8) was introduced to Nero's court by Otho prior to his exile in A.D. 58, but the Greeks and Jews had experienced this elegance for many years before

⁶Suet. Claud. 19; Sat. 76.1; Albino Garzetti, From Tiberius to the Antonines: A History of the Roman Empire, A.D. 14-192, trans. J.R. Foster (London: Methuen, 1960), p. 139; and Harry Schnur, "The Economic Background of the Satyricon," Latomus 18 (1959): 796.

⁷The story is elaborated at Isidorus Etym. 16.6, which is readily accessible in Smith's Oxford edition of the Cena, p. xxvii.

Nero's time.⁸ The reference to Otho was a dangerous and tricky allusion for Petronius to make. Otho had been sent into virtual exile as Governor of Lusitania in A.D. 58, and remained there until Nero's death in A.D. 68. In A.D. 62 Nero married Otho's wife, Poppaea Sabina. Squibs such as this may have seemed humorous to Nero on first impression, but the glow of such boutades might have faded in the aftermath of the Pisonian Conspiracy.⁹

That there are many such correspondences between Nero's personal habits and those of persons (mostly Trimalchio) mentioned in the Satyricon has been well established by R.H. Crum, whose compilation summarizes parallels discovered over the centuries by different scholars.¹⁰ Some of them were adopted in turn by K.F.C. Rose.¹¹ Crum's list of allusions is drawn mostly from affectations and events mentioned in Suetonius which are likewise mirrored in the Satyricon. There are, for instance, remarkable similarities between the personal habits of Trimalchio

⁸Rose, Date and Authorship, p. 24; Pliny HN 13.22. Smith mentions that Cephisodorus, the writer of Old Comedy, attributed this practice to the luxury-loving Athenians (Cena Trimalchionis, p. 193).

⁹Nero may have taken this as a slight dig at himself as Rose, Date and Authorship, p. 24 and Smith, Cena Trimalchionis p. 193-4 agree.

¹⁰R.H. Crum, "Petronius and the Emperors, I: Allusions in the Satyricon," CW 45 (1952): 161-67.

¹¹Rose, Date and Authorship, pp. 21-37.

and those of Nero: the favourite colours of both are scarlet and purple; both sport the aurea armilla; both love music and art; both collect precious cups as dinnerware; both sing tragic songs and love dramatics; both were hit by a falling acrobat; both boast panelled and movable ceilings.¹²

Crum hypothesized that Petronius "must have been very close to Nero to taunt him so."¹³ The testimonium of Plutarch contributes the information that Titus Petronius was adept at teasing and cajoling Nero by charging him with faults that were actually the opposite of his own: *ὅταν εἰς τάναντία πάθῃ καὶ νοσήματα κατηγοροῦσιν* (Mor 60E). Nero may well have laughed as he saw his own virtues and mannerly habits being aped and misinterpreted by the parvenu Trimalchio. The portrait of Trimalchio also includes sufficient gibes at Claudius, Augustus, and his minister Maecenas to allow Nero to feel that, as an object of parody, he was in the best of

¹²Colours: cf. Suet. Nero 30 and Sat. 28.4, 32.2, 38.5; aurea armilla: cf. Suet. Nero 6 and Sat. 32.4, 67.7; music and art: cf. Suet. Nero 41, 54 and Sat. 32.7 (water-organ); cups: cf. Suet. Nero 27.2 and Sat. 29.9 and 59.9 (both also favour Homeric decorative themes as the cups reveal); tragic songs: cf. Suet. Nero 21, 26-28 and Sat. 48, 52 and 59; acrobats: cf. Suet. Nero 12 and Sat. 54.1; ceilings: cf. Suet. Nero 31 and Sat. 60.1.

¹³Crum, "Allusions in the Satyricon," p. 166.

company.¹⁴

Some of the proper names mentioned in the Satyricon have been used as evidence for dating, but Petronius mentions no one of true historical importance in the work, and many of the names, especially those of singers and gladiators, were common to servile members of those professions throughout the early Empire. Of this type are such names as Apelles (64.4) who was a noted singer in Gaius' reign (Suet. Gaius 33.1); Menecrates (73.3) who was most likely a famous singer under Nero (Suet. Nero 30.5, Dio Cass. 63.1.1); and Petraitēs (52.3, 71.6) who has been established by H.T. Rowell as having been a popular Campanian gladiator in Nero's time.¹⁵ Taken individually, these names may be weak evidence for dating, but the coincidence of the three in one work is too great to overlook. On the other hand, no particular member of the large clan of Scauri can be singled out from the reference to a Scaurus (77.5) and there is no reason to assume that the kingpin of the Campanian garum trade is intended here. The possible allusion to the court pharmacologist, Locusta, is rendered unlikely by the corrupt nature of the text

¹⁴ Claudius' digestive habits: Sat. 47.5; Augustus' apophoreta, 56.4, and pila, 27.3; Maecenas' general appearance and lifestyle, 27-28 and *passim*.

¹⁵ Petraitēs (or Tetrāites): H.T. Rowell, "The Gladiator Petraitēs and the Date of the Satyricon," TAPA 89 (1958): 13-14.

at that point and is based largely on Gaselee's emendation (Sat. 35.4).

In this century, only a handful of scholars have questioned a Neronian dating for the Satyricon. Chief among these was Enzo Marmorale. Marmorale based his objections to a first century dating of the work upon linguistic grounds and upon allusions to the late Antonine era which he found within the Satyricon.¹⁶ He claimed that the Satyricon was written in a uniform dialect of sermo urbanus throughout, and that the dialect was sullied by too many "late usages" to be contemporary with the Younger Seneca. Although he contended that the work is written in the style of cultivated Roman speech throughout, he did allow that Petronius had placed some vulgarisms in the mouths of Trimalchio's guests. Marmorale then attempted to discern between these few instances of sermo plebeius and the sermo urbanus of later Latin which occupies the greater portion of the work. His unpreparedness for this kind of linguistic undertaking and his many errors in judgment are laid bare by Rose with ruthless efficiency.¹⁷

¹⁶Enzo V. Marmorale, La Questione petroniana (Bari: Laterza, 1948), p. 136-7.

¹⁷Rose, Date and Authorship, pp. 12-15.

Marmorale used the evidence of Terentianus Maurus' reference to the fact that the songs of Petronius were commonly sung in his day in order to conclude that Petronius must have been contemporary with Terentius Maurus at ca. A.D. 200. Marmorale reasoned that otherwise the songs would not still have been making the rounds. It is likely, however, that the verses were memorized by schoolboys for metrical purposes and might have circulated in this manner for centuries.¹⁸

The allusions to Antonine mores which Marmorale unearthed were based upon the lives of Commodus and Heliogabulus as they are portrayed in the colourful Historia Augusta.¹⁹ He insisted that the degrees of sexual license and immorality portrayed by Petronius simply did not exist prior to A.D. 200.²⁰ The unsoundness of such statements needs no elaboration, nor does the unreliability of the Historia Augusta as an accurate reflection of events and mores of the second and third centuries A.D. It is amazing to realize that Marmorale's

¹⁸Marmorale, La Questione, pp. 288-91, and Terentianus Maurus, de Metris, in Keil, Gramm. Lat. VI, pp. 399, 409.

¹⁹Enzo V. Marmorale, Cena Trimalchionis (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1947), pp. x-xi.

²⁰Idem, La Questione, p. 312.

redating of the Satyricon has received such large circulation, especially when one considers the absurdity of his conclusion that the work was written by a certain P. Petronius Polianus, a senator of the early third century A.D. This revelation is intended to link the author's own name to Enclopius' adoption of the pseudonym Polyaenus in the Croton episode.²¹

Marmorale's strongest and therefore most often attacked evidence for a later dating of the Satyricon concerned the issue of the wearing of the equestrian gold ring. Marmorale argued that when the drunken Hermeros attacks Ascyltos (Sat. 57.4, 58.10), he sees that he is wearing a gold ring and therefore truly believes that Ascyltos is a Roman knight.²² In the first century A.D. the wearing of gold rings was an indication of equestrian status and those below that rank were prohibited from wearing them. In post-Commodan times, however, the ius anuli aurei was extended by Imperial concession as a symbol of ingenuitas. This, Marmorale argued was an indication of the late-Antonine date of the work. However, R. Browning,

²¹Ibid., p. 326. There is a great temptation to take parts of Marmorale's book as deliberate parody of the various methods used by scholars to solve the Petronian problems, but Rose (Date and Authorship, p. 19) sees his investigations as seriously intended.

²²Marmorale, La Questione, pp. 317-23.

in his review of Marmorale's book, pointed out that if Commodus allowed freedmen the right to wear the gold ring under the ius ingenuitatis, and the work were of that date or later, there would be no reason for Hermeros to comment upon the ring at all.²³

Hermeros himself belies the assumption that he ever really mistook Ascyltos for a knight or indeed, the ring for a genuine gold one, as he rails on at Ascyltos a little farther in his speech:

ergo aut tace aut meliorem noli molestare,
qui te natum non putat; nisi si me iudicas
anulos buxeos curare, quos amicae tuae in-
violasti. (Sat. 58.10)

The ring is not made of gold at all, it is fashioned from box-wood. Marmorale does not remark upon anulos buxeos in his commentary, but Maiuri suggests that the wood of the ring may approximate the light colour of gold.²⁴ It is also possible that the basically wooden ring might be covered with a layer of gilt, in keeping with the fashion of the early Empire. It would then give the appearance of a gold ring without actually being one. Trimalchio is eager to flaunt the prohibition against

²³R. Browning, review of La Questione petroniana by Enzo Marmorale in CR 63 (1949): 12-13.

²⁴Maiuri, Cena di Trimalchione, p. 192.

wearing the anulus aureus. He wears an enormous gilt ring (subauratum) on the little finger of his left hand and a smaller one on his ring-finger next to it. Encolpius is sufficiently impressed with Trimalchio's jewelry to comment:

(ut) mihi videbatur, totum aureum, sed
plane ferreis veluti stellis ferrum-
inatum. (Sat. 32.3)

The inclusion of the iron stars allows Trimalchio to bend the law a bit and to enjoy a privilege which was denied to his class. But, after his death, no such caution will be necessary, and his tombstone will contain a seated statue of himself dressed as a member of the Augustales in ceremonial array:

et me in tribunali sedentem praetextatum
cum anulis aureis quinque et nummos in
publico de saeculo effundentem.
(Sat. 71.9)

Trimalchio's fixation with gold rings and eagerness to display them obviously points to a time when for him to do so was in some way topical. It is a matter of historical fact that Nero trimmed back many privileges extended to freedmen under Claudius and passed legislation prohibiting their sons from being members of the senate and from holding any of the greater magistracies.²⁵

²⁵Henderson, Life and Principate, p. 86. Veiled in Hermeros' description of himself, et ego regis filius, may be a reference to Claudius' freedman Pallas, who was supposedly regibus Arcadiae ortus (Tac. Ann. 12.53.2) and received many public honours. See also Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, pp. 3-4.

The only other influential detractor of a Neronian date for the Satyricon was Ugo Paoli, who was combing the text of the Satyricon for allusions to an age later than the Neronian ten years before Marmorale. Marmorale had, in fact, joined with Maiuri in refuting Paoli in 1937; however, in La Questione petroniana, in 1948, Marmorale espoused Paoli's evidence.²⁶ Paoli had suggested that the practice of manumissio per mensam was implied by Trimalchio's stated intention of freeing all of his slaves at his death (Sat. 71-72).²⁷ Manumissio per mensam was originally a Greek practice which was not documented in Rome until after the third century A.D. But it is the general consensus of researchers that manumissio per mensam is not necessarily indicated here, but rather manumissio a testamento, which was one method of ensuring a large and enthusiastic turnout at one's funeral. Augustus had passed two laws to prohibit these incidents of wholesale swelling of the freedmen's ranks, the lex Fufia Caninia of 2 B.C. and the lex Aelia Sentia of A.D. 4.²⁸ Trimalchio's promise may be merely a beau geste, since he admits that he is telling them now so that they will show their affection before he

²⁶Marmorale, La Questione, pp. 276-77.

²⁷Ugo Paoli, "de manumissione per mensam" Studi e Documenta Historiae et Iuris 2 (1936): 369-372.

²⁸Smith, Cena Trimalchionis, p. 101.

dies:

et haec ideo omnia publico, ut familia
mea iam nunc sic me amet tanquam mortuum.
(Sat. 71.4)

When the arguments for manumissio per mensam were shown deficient, Paoli refined his estimated dating to the time of Martial, on the basis of apparent misinterpretation and imitation of that author which he found in Petronius.²⁹ But efforts to wrench the Satyricon from its strongly Neronian environment have all failed. The abundant minutiae of Julio-Claudian life which appear on almost every page of the text make such debunking a fruitless exercise. Even as cautious a commentator as Martin Smith allows for a general Neronian dating of the work while demurring on the authorship question.³⁰

Attempts to narrow the dating of the work to a set period of years within the fourteen years of Nero's principate require a consideration of the identity of its author and his apparent purpose in writing the work. If the Tacitean Petronius was the author of the work, then it was composed prior to his death in A.D. 66. If Petronius was familiar with all ten books of Lucan's

²⁹Ugo Paoli, "L'eta del Satyricon," SIFC 14 (1937): 43 and Idem, "Note petroniane," SIFC 15 (1938) 43-53. See also U. Knoche, Roman Satire, trans. Edwin S. Ramage (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1975), p. 110.

³⁰Smith, Cena Trimalchionis, pp. xiii and 214.

Bellum Civile, then certain portions of the Satyricon, chapters 119 ff., could not have been written prior to A.D. 65. If Petronius drew upon Seneca's Epistulae Morales in order to criticize and poke fun at Nero's former tutor, he could not have begun composing the Satyricon before A.D. 60-62.³¹ Bagnani suggested that the Satyricon was intended for the Neronia of A.D. 60 and that Petronius' consulship might also be dated to that year. However, his arguments were based upon the fanciful assumption that Seneca had brought Petronius to court as an older playmate for Nero some time in the late fifties A.D.³² The slender facts which we have do not support this thesis but rather tend to align Petronius with the later, anti-Stoic elements who accompanied Tigellinus' rise to power.

ii. The Tacitean Biography and other Testimonia

Tacitus' biographical sketch of Petronius appears in the course of his narrative of the purge which followed the discovery of the Pisonian Conspiracy. Petronius'

³¹ See Chapter 1, above, where these points are argued. If there are verbal correspondences between Seneca's Epistulae Morales and parts of the Cena, he could not have begun the composition of the Cena prior to Seneca's retirement in A.D. 62 shortly after which, Seneca began writing his Epistles. Of the missing portions of the work which preceded the surviving incidents, it is impossible to speak.

³² Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, pp. 23 and 66. He would date the Lex Petronia de Servis to this year as well

death is mentioned in connection with those of wealthy men of equestrian rank including Lucan's father Annaeus Mela and Crispinus whom Tacitus informs us were both laticlavii:

paucos quippe intra dies eodem agmine
Annaeus Mela, Cerialis Anicius, Rufrius
Crispinus, (T.) Petronius cecidere.
Mela et Crispinus equites Romani dignitate
senatoria. (Tac. Ann. 16.17.1)

The nature of the accusation against Mela and his bequest to Tigellinus clearly indicate that Tigellinus was legacy-hunting among men who were politically inert, but rich, when he listed these names for elimination. Tacitus narrates the deaths of Mela, Crispinus, and Cerialis without elaboration and then proceeds, in chapters 18-20, to provide a lengthy digression on Petronius. The use of the passive periphrastic pauca supra repetenda sunt indicates that Tacitus felt some necessity of pausing for elaboration. He seems fascinated by the inverted nature of Petronius' lifestyle:

Nam illi dies per somnum, nox officiis et
oblectamentis vitae transigebatur
(Tac. Ann. 16.18.1 ff)

Tacitus states that although industria brought fame to

and make the Arbiter its sponsor, but the date of the Lex Petronia is very uncertain: it may even be a piece of Claudian legislation. See R. Browning, review of Arbiter of Elegance, by Gilbert Bagnani in CR 5-6 (1956): 45-47. Philip B. Corbett, Petronius, Twayne's World Author Series no. 97 (New York: Twayne, 1970), p. 26, under Bagnani's influence, limits Petronius' period of "arbitrage" to A.D. 61-62 and rushes him out of court as Tigellinus enters.

others, Petronius prospered by means of his ignavia. The old Republican contrast of industria/ignavia took on a new meaning in Imperial times and any motive of overt action was best disguised in some way. Syme refers to the appearance of quies which every Roman nobilis, especially those distinguished few who still possessed vintage family names had to practice:

If he wished to survive, the bearer of a great name had to veil himself in caution or frivolity and practise with ostentation the sober virtue of quies or political quietism - an inheritance from a lower and commercial order of society, the Roman knights.³³

The Petronii, who were equestrians of Osco-Umbrian descent, made their first appearance in Rome after the Hannibalic Wars. The first Petronius of whom we know was Gaius Petronius who was a legatus in 156 B.C., attached to L. Apuleius on his mission to mediate between the kings of Pergamum and Bithynia.³⁴ The early and lasting connections of the Petronii with the East are further indicated by the

³³For industria/ignavia and their relationship to otium in the Roman Republic, see Cic. Off. 1.11, Rep. 1.17.27, the exemplum of Scipio Africanus, and C. Wirszubski, "Cicero's cum dignitate otium: a Reconsideration," in The Crisis of the Roman Republic, ed. R. Seager (Cambridge: W. Heffer, 1969), Chap. 9, pp. 1-13; Ronald Syme, The Roman Revolution rep., (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1962), p. 504.

³⁴Polyb. 32.16.5, 28.5; Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 51; W. V. Harris, Rome in Etruria and Umbria (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), p. 327; RE s.v. "Petronius," 19.1: 1193-2013.

mention of a L. Petronius in an inscription at Delos.³⁵ The Petronii seem to have kept clear of politics and to have gone about the business of making money until the late Republic, when there is a mention of a Petronius as one of the military tribunes of Crassus in the Parthian expedition.³⁶ It is noteworthy that whenever foreign service called, the Petronii served in Eastern locales, no doubt with an eye to protecting and furthering financial interests there.

Factional participation was difficult to avoid in the years of struggle between Pompey and Caesar. M. Petronius was a centurion in Caesar's eighth legion and died while encouraging his soldiers at Gergovia in 52 B.C. But another Petronius was apparently knowledgeable of the conspiracy to kill Caesar and later supported Brutus and Cassius. Antony's omission of his name from the amnesty list of 41 B.C. is taken as an indication that his role in the assassination was apparently more than passive.³⁷

Nothing is heard of any other Petronius until a

³⁵ Ibid., entry no. 87.

³⁶ Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 51; Plut. Crassus 30-1; T.R.S. Broughton, The Magistrates of the Roman Republic, 2 vols., (New York: American Philological Association, 1951), vol. 2, supplement 5 (1960), p. 230.

³⁷ Caes. B.Gall. 50. 4-6; Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 52, n. 36; Appian B.Civ. 5.15.

Publius or Caius was Prefect of Egypt ca. 25-21 B.C.³⁸
 This was, of course, the wealthiest and one of the most powerful positions that any man could hold under Augustus. As Syme states: "The Viceroy of Egypt could look down from high eminence upon a mere proconsul of Crete or Cyprus."³⁹ The appointment must have been the result of years of faithful service in the area of finance. The Petronii must have increased their wealth considerably by buying up the estates of the proscribed during the years of the Second Triumvirate. Bagnani suggests that they may have even acquired their Campanian holdings in this manner, where Nero's Arbiter would eventually go to die.⁴⁰

There is no doubt that the Petronii learned the value of quies at firsthand. They did not constitute an old family burdened with concern for dignitas, gravitas, and the other outmoded concepts of the older nobiles. They were, by virtue of their wealth and attitude, prime candidates for leadership among the new nobiles of the

³⁸Bagnani, p. 52, n. 36, says "Gaius," but Syme (Roman Revolution, p. 338), says "Publius". The reading "Publius" is based upon an apparent mistake in Pliny HN 6.181. Dio Cass. 54.5.4, gives "Gaius" and H.H. Scullard, likewise states "Gaius", From the Gracchi to Nero (London: Methuen, 1965), p. 260. See n. 54 below.

³⁹Syme, Roman Revolution, p. 356.

⁴⁰Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 52. This is unproveable, of course, but highly likely.

early Empire. Augustus showed great favour to the equestrian class and subsequent emperors could not reverse the trend, since the Equites were the chief land-owners, army officers, and Imperial officials of Julio-Claudian Rome. The only real threat to the pre-eminence of the equestrian order came not from the old senatorial element which was in serious decline, but rather from the rapidly rising freedmen who had made great strides under Claudius and were employed at all levels of provincial and municipal administration.⁴¹

The evidence does not reveal exactly when the Petronii took the step up from equestrian to senatorial status, but Bagnani concludes that they must have, since Bithynia was a praetorian province and therefore would have required either a former praetor or someone who had been adlectus inter praetorios.⁴² The family's affiliation by marriage with the gens Turpiliana in Augustan times also signals a change in status. The first consular Petronius of whom we know was Publius Petronius, Cos. A.D. 19. Publius served as proconsul of Asia and then as legate of Syria in A.D. 39. He displayed good judgment and political skill by heeding Jewish opposition and refusing to

⁴¹M. Rostovtzeff, The Social and Economic History of the Roman Empire, 2 vols., 2nd ed., rev. P.M. Fraser (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1957), 1:103.

⁴²Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 48.

erect a statue of Caligula in the temple of Jerusalem. Caligula's order to commit suicide arrived after the news of the emperor's death.

That the Petronii were a prominent family during the years of Nero's reign is indicated by the fact that three of them served as consul between A.D. 55 and 70: A. Petronius Lurco Cos. A.D. 55; P. Petronius Turpilianus Cos. A.D. 61; T. Petronius Niger Cos. A.D. 60-70.⁴³ Of Lurco, nothing is known, but Turpilianus was a faithful administrator and soldier under Nero. He served as governor of Britain after Suetonius Paulinus, was curator aquarum in Rome in A.D. 63, and helped to repress the Pisonian Conspiracy. In A.D. 68, Nero entrusted him with the command against the rebels, but he survived Nero only to be killed by Galba.

It is unusual that Tacitus first mentions (T.) Petronius within a grouping of equestrian names, but, again, the common denominator for these men was most probably that they all possessed great wealth. Furthermore, Anicius Cerialis was one of four consuls in the year of the conspiracy, A.D. 65, and Mela and Crispinus both had senatorial fortunes, but did not choose to leave the world

⁴³A. De Grassi, I fasti consolari dell' Impero Romano (Rome: Edizioni di storia e letteratura, 1952), cites T. Petronius Niger as suffect consul for A.D. 62.

of active commercial involvement.⁴⁴

iii. Evidence for the Identification of the Tacitean Courtier with the Author of the Satyricon

Tacitus' Petronius was thus born into the world of money and privilege within which he moved with such remarkable ease and grace that he was not regarded as a mere spendthrift and debauchee (ganeo et profligator) but rather as one eruditus luxu - the polished artist of extravagance. He was so casual about his own affairs that his words and actions were received as examples of his charming naiveté or candour:

Ac dicta factaque eius quanto solutiora
et quandam sui neglegentiam praeferentia,
tanto gratius in speciem simplicitatis
accipiebantur. (Tac. Ann. 16.18)

The word simplicitas is found in the Satyricon as well, and in a similar context:

Quid me constricta spectatis fronte Catones
damnatisque novae simplicitatis opus?
(Sat. 132.15)

This poem in the Satyricon is generally regarded as a "programmatic" statement to the tone of the work in its entirety, which indicates a new frankness, a new naturalism to be found in the work, free of pretense and social restraints. Lewis and Short define simplicitas as

⁴⁴ Ibid.

"plainness, frankness, openness, innocence, honesty, candor, simplicity, directness, ingenuousness, naturalness." H. Stubbe first suggested that this poem stood in a programmatic relationship to the rest of the Satyricon. He regarded simplicitas as:

Der unschuldige, unverbildete, nicht
heuchelnde Realismus des Werkes (opus
auch = Gattung, Quintil. Inst. X,I, 67 und
69) dem Inhalt sowohl wie der Sprache nach.⁴⁵

H. Bogner accepted Stubbe's comments about the innocent and non-hypocritical tone of the realism of the Satyricon and went on to suggest that the coincidence of the words simplicitas in the text of Tacitus and in Petronius' work constituted evidence that Tacitus had read the word in its original context.⁴⁶

H. Bickel answered Bogner with the objection that simplicitas was a word in popular vogue in the Silver Age. He pointed out that Tacitus employed the word on three other occasions, for a total of four references in which he used it to describe the personal traits of an individual

⁴⁵H. Stubbe, "Die Verseinlagen im Petron," Philologus, Supplement-band 25, Heft 2 (Leipzig, 1933): 150-3.

⁴⁶H. Bogner, "Petronius bei Tacitus," Hermes 76 (1941): 223-4.

not a type of literature.⁴⁷ Bickel's objections would seem to be stronger, were it not for the fact that Syme too has posited a connection between this line of Tacitus and the Satyricon.

In his discussion of Seneca's Apocolocyntosis and how it would have been "alien to the dignity of history" for Tacitus to have mentioned it among Seneca's accomplishments, Syme asserts that the same proviso would cover the case of the Satyricon, which is likewise not mentioned in the Petronian biography. He refers to Bogner's article for support and adds that the words dicta factaque (Ann. 16.18) might be taken as a veiled tribute to Petronius' literary work.⁴⁸

More recently, H.D. Rankin has re-examined the question and has concluded with Bogner that Tacitus may indeed have been familiar with the poem in the Satyricon, since nova simplicitas and in speciem simplicitatis "seem to convey the same meaning of a 'simplicity' that is not 'simple' at all."⁴⁹ Rankin's theory is based upon the coincidence of nova and novitas, a word which Tacitus uses

⁴⁷E. Bickel, "Petrons simplicitas bei Tacitus," RhM 99 (1941): 269-71. He lists: Tac. Hist. 3.86.7, 4.86.9; Ann. 6.5.13 and Petronius Sat. 16.5.13.

⁴⁸Syme, Tacitus, 1:336.

⁴⁹Rankin, "The Identity of Petronius," in Petronius the Artist, p. 107.

to describe the odd and unusual sexual acts which Petronius detailed for Nero:

sub nominibus exoletorum feminarumque et
novitate cuiusque stupri perscripsit.
(Ann. 16.18.7)

Rankin feels that Tacitus objected to the notion that simplicitas should ever be "outrageous" or avant-garde. Therefore, his paraphrase of nova simplicitas took the form of in speciem simplicitatis with an implied objection to the idea that Petronius' work was in any way "simple" or "uncomplicated". Rankin's ideas are based upon very fine critical scrutiny of the two passages and represent the kind of intricate reasoning that one is tempted to accept, but should not.⁵⁰ Rankin's interpretation requires greater subtlety in choice of words than Tacitus is regarded to have possessed.

Bickel's objection that the two passages imply two separate definitions of simplicitas, is, upon further consideration, undeniable. Petronius addresses the Catones in a literary context, charging them with having little sympathy for the candid tone and sexual honesty of his work, whereas Tacitus is surely referring to Petronius' political harmlessness and personal conduct. One is therefore not safe to conclude that Tacitus was familiar with the poem in the Satyricon. Without pressing issues that finely, how-

⁵⁰ Ibid., p. 108.

ever, the phrase dicta factaque could certainly be extended to take in the Satyricon, in which case, Tacitus' source for the necrology, if not Tacitus himself, may well have judged that Petronius' species simplicitatis had allowed him to write and say the things which he did and still survive. If Tacitus' Petronius was indeed the author of the Satyricon, this must be the implication of the passage.

When serving in public office as proconsul in Bithynia and later as consul, Petronius revealed himself to be competent in political affairs. Petronius was most likely sent to Bithynia during the more heated years of Nero's Armenian War, since Bithynia was a crucial supply base for troops and goods beyond the Euphrates. The years A.D. 58-61 mark those in which Petronius' services might have been needed most when Corbulo, the commander in the East, was attempting to bring Tiridates and the Parthians to a negotiated settlement. Artaxata, the Armenian capital, was destroyed by Corbulo in the last months of A.D. 58, and news of these events arrived at Rome in time to contribute to the spirit of the Saturnalia. Large numbers of troops were retained in the East on the ready throughout the peace negotiations of A.D. 60-61.⁵¹

Family interests in the Levant may have played an

⁵¹J. Bishop, Nero: the Man and the Legend (New York: A.S. Barnes & Co., 1964), pp. 135-37.

important consideration in Petronius' choice of provinces also. In the time of Nero, the Eastern provinces experienced a great revival of economic growth. Prusa, in Bithynia, was the birthplace of Dio Chrysostom, and his writings reflect the changes which transformed Bithynia to a productive agricultural regimen similar to that seen in Southern Italy: the land was turned from corn to viticulture; vast amounts of money were lent for building (ἐργαστήρια); new shops and houses were seen in the cities. Rostovtzeff concluded that there was no difference in the bourgeois activities practised at Rome or in Asia Minor in the first century A.D.⁵²

A trip to the Levant also provided Petronius with an opportunity to hear Milesian, Cappadocian, and Pergamene tales as told in their native environment and to experience first-hand the whims and quirks of the ever-active commercial class in the East. If Petronius, Nero's Arbiter, did indeed write the Satyricon, the guests at Trimalchio's banquet are living models of the Syrian, Jewish and Eastern merchants and traders whom he encountered in Bithynia. The portraits of Seleucus and Hermeros are particularly vivid, and their contempt for Romans and Roman institutions is

⁵²Dio Chrys. Or. 36; and Rostovtzeff, Social and Economic History, 1:93.

particularly well drawn.⁵³

Nothing can be said with absolute certainty about Petronius' consulship, but of the three Petronii who are known to have held the consulship between A.D. 55 and 70, only one, T. Petronius Niger, is a candidate for identification with Nero's Arbiter. In their mentions of Petronius, both Pliny and Plutarch give his praenomen as Titus. Plutarch, in fact, spells out his name fully: Τίτος Περώνιος. Pliny, a contemporary of Petronius, seems to have returned to Rome in A.D. 58 and to have remained in residence there, although in retirement from political life, until A.D. 70. Both Pliny and Petronius had interests and connections in Southern Italy, and it is impossible to believe that Pliny would have mistaken the Arbiter's praenomen.⁵⁴ Plutarch's source for his anecdote concerning Petronius and Nero betrays an intimate knowledge of court practices of the kind which makes the courtier Cluvius Rufus a very likely choice and Pliny mentions Cluvius as a source on two occasions.⁵⁵ Cluvius, like Pliny, would

⁵³ Seleucus hates baths (Sat. 42ff.); Hermeros sees no good in the Roman educational system (Sat. 57ff.). Money is their only standard.

⁵⁴ Schmeling, "Studies in Petronius," p. 10. Bagnani points out that Pliny was mistaken about the praenomen of another Petronius, but that Petronius was not a contemporary of his and the manuscript may be faulty, Pliny HN 6.81: P (C) Petronius. See n. 38 above.

⁵⁵ Quaest. Rom. 107, Otho 3.2; and see Rose, Date and Authorship, p. 49.

hardly mistake the Arbiter's first name.

Tacitus alone gives the praenomen as (C.) but his evidence stands at the furthest chronological remove from Petronius' time. Syme assumed that Pliny was the most likely source for the Petronian necrology, since the stance of its writer was anti-Neronian and therefore potentially pro-Petronian, at least after Petronius' death at Nero's hands.⁵⁶ But Rankin, following a suggestion originally made by F. Marx, has put forward a strong case for the notion that the necrology represents an example of the Exitus-literatur, written by Stoic-Cynic critics of Nero's reign.⁵⁷ The most likely candidate for authorship is Fannius, whom the Younger Pliny mentioned as having left at his death an unfinished work on the people who were either killed or exiled by Nero.⁵⁸ Fannius was connected in some way to Fannia, the daughter of Thrasea Paetus, and one would therefore expect the work of Fannius to take on a moral tone and censorious attitude toward Nero.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ Syme, Tacitus, 1:292.

⁵⁷ F. Marx, "Tacitus und die Literatur der exitus illustrium virorum," Philologus, (n. f.) Bd. 46 (1937): 83-103.

⁵⁸ Rankin, "Identity of Petronius," p. 94, and Pliny Ep. 5.5.1.

⁵⁹ Rankin, "Identity of Petronius," p. 94, and P. von Rohden and H. Dessau, Prosopographia Imperii Romani (Berlin: Georg Reimer, 1898), 3: 25-31, nos. 196-242.

Such a linking of the passage in Tacitus to Cynic-Stoic Exitus writings would explain the obvious "whitewashing" which Nero's high-living Arbiter has received. His bohemian habits and preference for night-life have been interpreted as nothing more than examples of his self-styled expression of the Cynic virtues of ἀναίδεια, αὐτάρκεια and παρρησία. The biography suggests that his vices were merely feigned, vitiorum imitatione (Ann. 16.18), in order to win him acceptance at Nero's court. What the account does not provide, is any explanation of why Petronius wished to gain entry into the denizens of such creatures as Tigellinus, Sporus, Pythagoras, and Halotus in the first place. Why would he risk provoking the invidia Tigellini unless he estimated his own influence with Nero and his own political acumen as at least equal to that of the vicious horsetrainer? G. Schmeling has estimated the situation quite precisely: "Petronius told Nero which knife to use and Tigellinus on whom."⁶⁰ It would take an extremely wealthy and accomplished man to dare to co-exist beside Tigellinus inter paucos familiarium Neroni.

The consular T. Petronius Niger is the likeliest candidate for identification with the Arbiter, but the problem of the praenomen must be dispensed with first. As stated above, only Tacitus reads (C.) and his source is

⁶⁰Schmeling, "Studies in Petronius," p. 6.

uncertain. Most editors have emended the passage to read (T.), based upon the corroboration of Pliny and Plutarch for that praenomen and upon the fact that the letter (C.) may be a scribal error from the word "ac" which occurs in the Medicean manuscript. Furthermore, Rose has pointed out that in several of the Tacitean manuscripts, including the Beneventan, it is difficult to distinguish t's from c's.⁶¹

Bagnani was the most influential supporter of the reading (C.), but his reasons do not stand up to scrutiny, since they were based upon the frequency of the use of the name Gaius vis à vis that of Titus in the Petronian gens, and upon his own imaginative creation of a C. Petronius Arbiter Cos. A.D. 60. In compiling his excellent and useful stemma of the gens Petroniana from Augustan times, it appears that Bagnani indulged himself and went one step too far, and in doing so, only complicated the Petronian authorship problem. This fictitious C. Petronius is not needed. His function of writer of the Satyricon and consular arbiter of Nero can be assigned with considerably less effort to T. Petronius Niger whose existence is confirmed by written evidence.

Like Marmorale, Bagnani has received an amount of scholarly attention disproportionate to his deserts.

⁶¹Rose, Date and Authorship, p. 45.

Unlike Marmorale, however, Bagnani was totally aware that his conclusions were little more than fancy and wishful manipulation of the evidence. Bagnani therefore wrote the following caveat for his readers:

A certain indulgence should be granted to all who devote themselves to the study of novels and other products of the imagination. The imagination of their authors may - perhaps should - infect them to a greater or a lesser degree. I therefore make no further apology for attempting a biography on Petronius. That, in so doing, I will call on my imagination to fill the enormous gaps in our information, that I will turn the slightest of hints into a valuable clue, and thus again into an established fact, is both obvious and inevitable.⁶²

Not to be ascribed to the realm of fantasy at all is the existence of T. Petronius Niger, Cos. A.D. 60-70. Wax tablets recovered from Herculaneum in 1946 confirm that T. Petronius Niger served as consul some time in the early sixties A.D. The tablets concern the causa liberalis of Iusta. Mentioned on the tablets is a certain C. Petronius Stephanus who was most likely a freedman with ties to the Campanian estates of the Petronii. One tablet even bears the name "Malchio", but Malchio was a common Semitic slave name in the first century A.D.⁶³

⁶²Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 47.

⁶³P. Carratelli, "Tabulae Ceratae Herculenses," pp. 1 (1946): for C. Petronius Stephanus, see p. 173; for "Malchio," see p. 179; also C. Petronius Telesphorus, pp. 168, 169, and throughout. See Gilbert Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 50 on the names contained in the Herculaneum Tablets. He concludes that, as their names indicate, those mentioned on the tablets "are obviously freedmen or descendants of freedmen."

The tablet bearing the name of T. Petronius Niger was published by P. Carratelli in 1948 and reads as follows:

Chir (ographum) L. Comini Primi
ex nomine facto
Actum Neapoli pr(idie) Idus Iulias
Q. Manlio Tarquitio Saturnino
T. Petronio Nigro Cos. 64

Q. Manlius Torquatus Saturninus who served as Niger's colleague in the consulship was governor of Africa in A.D. 71-72. The normal interval between the consulship and the governorship of Africa was ten years, but this may have been shortened by the civil war.⁶⁵ Therefore, Niger's consulship is best placed in the early sixties A.D. A. Degrassi has placed him as consul in A.D. 62 based upon the evidence for Saturninus' governorship, but A.D. 63 is certainly a strong possibility, since the list is not so crowded for that year. P. Corbett argues for A.D. 61 on the grounds that he replaced his brother Turpilianus, when he was summoned to take command of the Roman armies in Britain.⁶⁶ But this scheme allows Niger a consulship of only a few weeks, as suffect, until the regular consul, Publius Calvisius Ruso, took office on March 1, A.D. 61. If Niger is the Petronius mentioned in Tacitus, a few weeks would hardly provide him with ample opportunity to show his skills.

⁶⁴P. Carratelli, "Tabulae Ceratae Herculenses," PP 3 (1948): 165ff.

⁶⁵Rose, Date and Authorship, p. 50.

⁶⁶Corbett, Petronius, p. 142.

Tacitus clearly states that it was after his consulship that Petronius lapsed into his former vices: dein revolutus ad vitia. Only after his consulship was he received as Nero's elegantiae arbiter. Therefore, one might assume that as consul he came to realize the comparative impotence of a life spent on the senatorial side and set his sights upon penetrating the aula Neronis. Bagnani's suggestion that Petronius served as consul for the presentation of the Neronia in A.D. 60 is tantalizing in this respect. Such a thesis would place him at court prior to the retreat of Seneca in A.D. 62. It would give him time to insinuate himself into the affections of the young emperor as Seneca's influence waned. Petronius' obvious distaste for the oratorical and poetic styles of the Annaei coincided with Nero's growing jealousy of Lucan. Petronius may indeed, as Bagnani suggests, have aided Nero in the decoration of the Domus Transitoria, but there is no good reason to dissociate him from the building of the Golden House as well.⁶⁷

Petronius became Nero's tutor in elegance, in the same sense that Seneca had been his tutor in politics. At first, the emperor followed Petronius' advice implicitly: dum nihil amoenum et molle adfluentia putat, nisi quod ei Petronius adprobavisset. Petronius in all probability

⁶⁷Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 69.

kept a low and good natured profile throughout his years at court. He was the artful jester, the mannered aristocrat and poet, who displayed a guileful image of simplicitas where political matters were concerned. He may truly have remained unsullied by and uninvolved in the seamier aspects of Nero's life as orchestrated by Tigellinus. He projected that image of a consummate philhellenist and aesthete to which Nero always aspired, but which his compulsive excesses never allowed him to attain.

The Satyricon was written as a court amusement to divert the cruelty and violence of Nero. Petronius' heroes are Greeklings caught in a Roman environment. The foibles of the lower classes are made exaggerated copies of the foibles of the court itself. The work as a whole may have been much longer than the parts which survive. Lost portions of the work might well cover the earlier period of Petronius' tenure at court, but the extant portions were written between 63 and Petronius' death in A.D. 66, as parallels to the Epistulae Morales and Bellum Civile suggest. Petronius' clean, Atticizing style and veneration for the golden writers of the Augustan Age posed no threat to Nero's own compositional tastes and gave the court an aura of tasteful erudition.⁶⁸

⁶⁸See Chapters 1 and 2 above.

Petronius may have been in charge of the tendance of the public image of Nero while Tigellinus cared for the more private aspects of his well-being. When Nero's growing disgrace as a public singer and charioteer had to be contended with in some manner and put across to the people of the empire in some acceptable form, someone proposed the idea of chastely posing the emperor as Apollo the lyre-player. The theme had only been used once before, by Augustus as a token of thanks to Apollo for his decisive sea victory over Antony at Actium. Nero's evocation of the motif served to remind the people that divus Augustus had also favoured Greek learning and art. Nero frequently evoked the memory of Augustus on his coinage of the years A.D. 62-66. It is tempting to see in the finely wrought themes of this tasteful coinage the hand of the arbiter.⁶⁹

Petronius could not have helped but stir the invidia Tigellini, but the fact that he survived as long as he did testifies to a strength and slyness of character which is also evidenced in the Satyricon. Petronius laughed at everyone to be sure, but he most of all laughed at himself. There is a hard-nosed cynicism and a sense of nihilism about the Satyricon which is also revealed in Tacitus' bi-

⁶⁹M. Grant, Roman History from Coins (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), pp. 32-3, and plates 8 and 9. Other Augustan themes included "Victory," which was proliferated in very large issue, and the "Temple of Vesta," as it was rebuilt after the fire of A.D. 64.

ography. Tigellinus accused him on the grounds of his friendship with Flavius Scaevinus, a dissolute and slothful man of senatorial rank who was probably at one time a court intimate. Scaevinus must have had a considerable grudge to settle with Nero, since he claimed the right of striking the first blow with a ceremonial knife which he removed from the temple to Fortune in Etruria. His freedman Milichus revealed the plot to Nero when Scaevinus gave him the knife to sharpen.⁷⁰ Tacitus' narrations of the unravelling of the Pisonian plot well relate the paranoia, suspicion, hysteria and anxiety which marked the last period of Petronius' life. Amid the murders and despair of A.D. 65 and 66, Petronius wrote and jested and entertained as if living well truly was the best revenge.

When the accusation came, Petronius felt close enough to Nero to try to overtake him in Campania, but once Petronius reached his own estate at Cumae, he was detained in custody. On the matter of his death he did not hesitate, nor did he allow the falsity of undue lamentation:

Audiebatque referentes, nihil de immortalitate
animae et sapientium placitis, sed levia
carmina et facilis versus. (Ann. 16.19.25)

⁷⁰Tac. Ann. 15.54-56.

He treated his slaves as they deserved, gifts for some, the lash for others. He tried to make his death appear as natural as possible, as if it were a matter of chance: coacta mors fortuitae similis.

Petronius apparently had no interest in trying to keep his estate intact for his family by addressing flattering codicils to Nero or Tigellinus. He broke a costly trulla myhrrina which he knew that Nero coveted,⁷¹ and after sealing one last document, he also broke his signet ring. The last document revealed:

flagitia principis sub nominibus exoletorum
feminarumque et novitatem cuiusque stupri
perscripsit atque obsignata misit Neroni
(19.30-34)

The catamites on Tigellinus' pleasure raft were arranged according to their ages and specialities.⁷² Here Petronius gives the names as well, in order to leave no doubt that Nero's private shame was a matter of public knowledge.⁷³ The cool and calculated manner in which

⁷¹Pliny, HN 37.20; see testimonia, p.210 above.

⁷²Tac. Ann. 15.37.

⁷³Schmeling took sub nominibus to mean "under false or assumed names." Other commentators have assumed this reading as well, and have attempted to find historical figures mentioned under secret names in the Satyricon. Such efforts have not led to the discovery of any but the vaguest parallels to situations that are similar to historical events. See Schmeling, "Studies in Petronius," pp. 13-16 and R. Verdiere, "La Tryphaena du Satiricon est-elle Iunia Silana?," Latomus 15 (1956): 551-8.

Petronius faces death reveals another facet of the artist's personality. By mimicking no lofty philosophical maxims and refusing to indulge in sentimentality on any level, he demonstrated that he was ultimately more Roman than Greek, far more practical and calculating than his jester's role had ever revealed. The order to commit suicide, one would suspect, was not a great surprise. Petronius' interest in Nero's sex life and exclusion therefrom is a lasting curiosity which certainly finds interesting parallels in the over-riding sexual angst of Encolpius in the Satyricon. Is a hint of sanguine jealousy or personal pique implied in the sending of the codicil? Perhaps the codicil was simple proof that Nero's debaucheries were a matter of public knowledge and could easily become a matter for public protest. The fact that Silia, Petronius' informant, was merely exiled, not tortured or killed, demonstrates Nero's comparative lack of concern in the matter.

Is the author of the Satyricon to be identified with the Petronius mentioned in Tacitus? Is the consular T. Petronius Niger to be identified with Tacitus' Petronius? One can answer both questions in the affirmative without being considered unduly radical. Both Tacitus' Petronius and T. Petronius Niger had connections in Campania and both served a consulship during the reign of Nero. Of the three Petronii known to have held that honour under Nero, A. Petronius Lurco has the wrong praenomen and held the consul-

ship a bit too early (A.D. 58). P. Petronius Turpilianus has the wrong praenomen and also outlived Nero. The only possible objection to T. Petronius Niger comes from those who consider, as Bagnani did, that "Arbiter" was the official cognomen of Nero's courtier.⁷⁴ But Rose has demonstrated that only slaves, soldiers and freedmen would sport such a cognomen.⁷⁵ "Arbiter" may have been an unofficial nickname, or it may have never been applied to Petronius prior to Tacitus' coining of the phrase elegantiae arbiter. It was probably an unofficial appellation which Petronius received at court. Until evidence is discovered for the consulship of another Titus Petronius ca. A.D. 54-70, the identification between Tacitus' Petronius and T. Petronius Niger will be secure.

As to the association of T. Petronius Niger with the author of the Satyricon, this question must be given a largely subjective answer. There are affinities to be noted between the author of the literary work and the consular arbiter: both Petronii have associations with Southern Italy; both are interested in sexual themes; both display a strong spirit of spoudaiogeloion; both spurn high

⁷⁴Bagnani, Arbiter of Elegance, p. 23 argues ex silentio: that if Petronius had possessed a cognomen, "Tacitus would certainly have given it."

⁷⁵Rose, Date and Authorship, p. 44 cites two slaves and one common soldier; an arbiter figures prominently in Plautus' Aulularia.

philosophy; both feign simplicitas in the realm of matters political; both criticize "elegances" such as art, sculpture, and vases. If they are two distinct personages, then one Petronius lived out these attitudes and practised them at Nero's court while the other remained at home and recorded in a voluminous work the affectations of the aula which the first reported to him.

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