

preventing the reader from taking *nil* as the subject, since that would leave us with the nonsensical meaning quoted in my title.

In following the critical principle ‘start from the sense’, translations are often useful. Here the required meaning is expressed most clearly and succinctly by Segal’s version:<sup>7</sup>

‘As to stepmothers I am silent: they are a thing no gentler than beasts.’

This is an excellent rendering of just what Seneca must have written—if, that is, he wrote 558b at all:

taceo nouercas: mitius nil *sunt* feris.

The singulars and plurals are now in the right places, just where they are in Segal’s version, while the rules of Latin concord prevent the reader from taking *nil* as the subject (with Zwierlein), leaving an adverbial accusative as the only thing it can be (so Leo and Boyle). The shift from feminine plural to neuter singular is still very bold, but clearly signposted, as in Zwierlein’s parallel passage. Corruption would have been inevitable, as with Juvenal’s *quota portio faecis Achaiei?*, ‘what proportion of the dregs (of Roman society) are Greeks?’ (3.61), where nearly all manuscripts mistake the nominative plural for a genitive singular and ‘correct’ the gender to *Achaeae*.<sup>8</sup> After *mitius nil*, plural *sunt* would have been equally vulnerable. The fact that ‘there is nothing gentler than wild beasts’ is nonsense in any language has not deterred modern translators from glossing it with vernacular nonsense.<sup>9</sup> Why should a medieval scribe have been more fastidious when it came to copying such nonsense, or even (in at least one case) ‘correcting’ *mitius nil sunt feris* so as to produce it?

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<sup>7</sup> C. Segal, *Language and Desire in Seneca’s ‘Phaedra’* (Princeton, 1986), p. 90. The interpretation, which is roughly the same as Boyle’s and not entirely different from Leo’s, is no doubt much older, though I have not attempted to trace it further back. Segal’s translation is identical to F. J. Miller’s Loeb<sup>2</sup> (London and Cambridge, 1929), if we ignore—and it is not easy—the latter’s irritatingly archaic style, which must have been hopelessly out of date the day it was published: ‘I say naught of stepmothers; they are no whit more merciful than beasts’.

<sup>8</sup> Those few scribes who preserved *Achaiei* may be suspected of not knowing the gender of *faex*.

<sup>9</sup> L. Herrmann (Budé<sup>4</sup>, Paris, 1968): ‘quant aux marâtres, je les passe sous silence. Les fauves ne sont rien moins que doux.’ T. Thomann (Artemis<sup>2</sup>, Zurich and Munich, 1978): ‘Ich rede nicht von Stiefmüttern: nicht Milderer gibt es als wilde Tiere.’ F.-R. Chaumartin (Budé, Paris, 1996): ‘Je passe sous silence les marâtres: il n’y a pas plus de douceur ici que parmi les fauves.’ No doubt the facing-text format encourages literalism.

#### DIVIDING THE DINNER: BOOK DIVISIONS IN PETRONIUS’ *CENA TRIMALCHIONIS*\*

The information transmitted on the numeration of the books of Petronius’ *Satyricon* is notoriously contradictory. Parts of the extant fragmentary text are variously assigned to Books 14–16: the *testimonia* are clearly set out in Müller’s recent fourth edition (whose numeration I use here), and briefly discussed by Sullivan<sup>1</sup>: of Müller’s

\* My thanks to Stephen Heyworth and to the anonymous referee for *CQ* for some useful comment and criticism.

<sup>1</sup> K. Müller, *Petronius: Satyricon Reliquiae* (Leipzig, 1995), pp. xxx–xxxviii; J. P. Sullivan, *The Satyricon of Petronius* (London, 1968), pp. 34–5.

*testimonia*, no. 10 places *Sat.* 89.1 in Book 15, no. 13 puts *Sat.* 20.5 in Book 14, no. 21 identifies the *Cena Trimalchionis* (*Sat.* 26.7–78.8) as Book 15, and no. 22 suggests that excerpts from *Sat.* 6–141 and the complete *Cena* all come from Books 15 and 16. My main purpose here, however, is not to reopen the general question of the numeration or the overall number of the books of the *Satyricon*.

Nevertheless, one element in that argument should be stressed here as an important preliminary. The reported number of books for Petronius' work (at least 16, and probably at least 20 in a complete version) is relatively high compared with the book totals of other extant novelistic texts (Apuleius has 11, Heliodorus 10, Achilles Tatius and Chariton 8, Xenophon 5 [though possibly 10 originally<sup>2</sup>], and Longus 4). This, along with the relative brevity of the books in novelistic texts (see below; other prose writers could of course tolerate much longer books), might suggest that the books of the *Satyricon* were relatively short, and that consequently its overall length was not as substantial as J. P. Sullivan once argued.<sup>3</sup> His reconstruction, assuming a book length of ~20,000 words and 20 books, yielded a Gargantuan work of ~400,000 words, nearly eight times as long as Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (~51,000 words). His estimate of book length was surely much too long, being based on the improbable assumption that *Sat.* 1–11, the *Cena*, and *Sat.* 79–99 together constituted a single book (some 90 Teubner pages). But if we use a shorter book length of 5000 words, roughly equivalent to the average novelistic book of 25 Teubner pages (see below), and again assume 20 books, the *Satyricon* comes out at ~100,000 words, about twice as long as Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*—a much more probable conjecture. On this line of argument, the *Satyricon* is more likely than not to have had relatively short books.

This is clearly relevant to my main concern here, the issue of whether the *Cena Trimalchionis* constitutes a single book: I wish to argue that it does not, and to divide it into three books. This is not a new idea: Müller himself inclines to think that the *Cena* contains two books, and van Thiel has suggested two or three.<sup>4</sup> The contribution of the present article is specifically to argue that the volume of the extant *Cena* is too great for a single book of ancient prose fiction, and that the beginnings and ends of three books are suggested by specific intratextual signals.

Müller originally argued in 1961 that the 56 Teubner pages of the *Cena Trimalchionis* (*Sat.* 26.7–78.8) constituted a single book of the original *Sat.*, probably Book 15, and that *Sat.* 1–26.6 were excerpts from Book 14, with *Sat.* 79–141 being excerpted from Book 16 and possibly later books as well.<sup>5</sup> But this would make the *Cena* a very long book compared with the longest books of other texts of ancient prose fiction such as Apuleius (Book 9, 34 Teubner pages) and Heliodorus (Book 10, 39 Teubner pages).<sup>6</sup> And, more importantly, the length of 56 pages for the *Cena* does

<sup>2</sup> Despite the arguments of T. Hägg, *C&M* 27 (1966), 118–61 and J. N. O'Sullivan, *Xenophon of Ephesus* (Berlin, 1995), I would still incline to the older theory that our text of Xenophon is an epitome of a ten-book original (cf. K. Bürger, *Hermes* 27 [1892], 36–67, H. Gärtner in *RE A* 9.2072–80), following the evidence of the *Suda* and noting the extraordinary brevity of the transmitted Book 4 (6.5 pages).

<sup>3</sup> Sullivan, op. cit. (n. 1), pp. 35–6.

<sup>4</sup> Müller, op. cit. (n. 1), p. xxii; H. van Thiel, *Petron: Überlieferung und Rekonstruktion* [*Mnemosyne* Suppl. 20] (Leiden, 1971), pp. 21–24.

<sup>5</sup> K. Müller, *Petronii Arbitri Satyricon* (Munich, 1961), pp. xxix–xxxi.

<sup>6</sup> I leave out of account here the *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyrii*, which in the three versions identified in the Teubner edition of G. Schmeling, *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyrii* (Leipzig, 1988), has a single book of 43 pages (version A), 38 pages (version B), or 53 pages (version C); and these are long Teubner pages like those of Reeve's Longus (see n. 8 below). Though it might seem convenient for my argument to ignore this work, its peculiar and complex textual history makes it

not count the probable *lacunae* at 26.10, 29.8–30.1, 41.9, 60.4, 64.1, and 73.5; though none of these seems very likely to have been more than a page or two long (since in each case in context there seems not much of a narrative gap), if we were to postulate a length of 60–70 Teubner pages for the complete *Cena*, we would probably not be too far off the mark.

This would divide into either two or three books of normal novelistic length. In the controversy on the genre of the *Satyrica*,<sup>7</sup> I would maintain that the work sees itself generically as (parodic and low-life) ancient prose fiction with the addition of verse insertions rather than as a Menippean satire, though our only extant example of a Menippean satire, Seneca's single-book *Apocolocyntosis*, would equally support my argument: at ~4000 words it comes out at something like 20 average Teubner pages, closely comparable with novelistic books: Apuleius' books vary between 22 and 34 Teubner pages, and books in Greek novels usually cover between 15 and 40 average Teubner pages of 250 words or the equivalent, with a number of books shorter than 20 average Teubner pages (~5000 words). I here list the extreme size range for books in Greek novels with relevant page totals, cited from different editions with different page lengths<sup>8</sup> but also expressed in average Teubner pages, all approximate calculations:

*Achilles Tatius*: between 20 Loeb pages (Book 7, 16 average Teubner pages; cf. also Book 6, 18 average Teubner pages) and 38 Loeb pages (Book 2, 31 average Teubner pages).

*Chariton*: between 17 Loeb pages (Book 7, 17 average Teubner pages; cf. also Book 4 at 19 average Teubner pages) and 28 Loeb pages (Book 3, 28 average Teubner pages).

*Heliodorus*: between 20 Teubner pages (Books 3 and 6) and 39 Teubner pages (Book 10)

*Longus*: all four books between 16 and 17 Reeve pages (24–5 average Teubner pages).

*Xenophon*: all five books under 20 Teubner pages, especially Book 4 (6.5 Teubner pages), but the last is likely to be effected by epitomizing or lacunose transmission (see n. 2 above).

Thus even the extant 56 Teubner pages of the *Cena* could conceivably contain three whole novelistic books.

The natural plot-divisions for a reader of the *Cena* would seem to be as follows (the traditional chapter and section numbers are of course non-authorial and relatively arbitrary):

(i) 26.7–31.11 Arrival and preliminaries

thoroughly anomalous, and renders it impossible to say whether its extant form of a single Latin book is in any sense authorially determined.

<sup>7</sup> Here I agree with G. B. Conte, *The Hidden Author: An Interpretation of Petronius' Satyricon* (Berkeley, 1996), pp. 140–70, who also gives a good history of the issue.

<sup>8</sup> I cite Achilles Tatius from the Loeb edition of S. Gaselee (Cambridge, MA, 1917), Chariton from the Loeb edition of G. P. Goold (Cambridge, MA, 1995), Heliodorus from the Teubner edition by I. Bekker (Leipzig, 1855), Longus from the Teubner edition by M. D. Reeve, second edition (Leipzig, 1986), and Xenophon from the Teubner edition by A. D. Papanikolaou (Leipzig, 1978). Note that the Loeb pages for Achilles Tatius are about 20% shorter than the average Teubner page of 250 Greek words, while those of the Loeb Chariton are roughly equivalent to it and the pages of Reeve's Longus are about 50% longer.

- (ii) 32.1–41.9 Trimalchio's first appearance and exit *ad lasanum*
- (iii) 41.10–46.8 The tales of the freedmen
- (iv) 47.1–65.2 Trimalchio's second appearance
- (v) 65.3–78.8 Entry of Habinnas—conclusion and departure.

In length, (i) covers some 5 Teubner pages, (ii) 8, (iii) 6, (iv) 18, and (v) 16. A two-book division would put (i)–(iii) in the first and (iv)–(v) in the second, a three-book division (i)–(iii) in the first, (iv) in the second, and (v) in the third. As already suggested, I would opt for three books, which I shall label A, B, and C (perhaps 15, 16, and 17 in the original?), with Book A of 19 extant pages beginning at 26.7 and ending with the tales of the freedmen at 46.8, Book B of 18 extant pages beginning with Trimalchio's second appearance at 47.1, and Book C of 16 extant pages beginning with the entry of Habinnas at 65.3 and ending with the end of the episode at 78.8. I assume that all three books are lacunously transmitted and may well have each been up to 10% longer originally, though even at their extant lengths they are not too short for novelistic books (see above). This has the advantage of making both the internal divisions in the *Cena* at analogous points in the plot, each marking the entry or re-entry of a character crucial to the plot—the re-entry of Trimalchio at 47.1, an obvious mark of a new narrative phase, and the late entry of Habinnas at 65.3, which like its Platonic model, the late entry of Alcibiades at *Symposium* 212c, heralds closure, in Plato of the whole work, in Petronius of this episode of the novel.<sup>9</sup>

As well as marking important points in the plot, the openings and closures of Books A, B, and C can be seen as marked out by intratextual signals, which recall the beginnings and endings of books in epic texts. Such epic patterns are natural enough, given that one of the agreed strands of parody in the *Satyricon* as a whole is parody of epic. Indeed, the *Cena Trimalchionis* itself, as an extensive entertainment offered to the protagonist, has a clear epic ancestor in the entertainment of Odysseus in Phaeacia.<sup>10</sup> There are also beginnings and endings of books in other later novelistic texts which clearly recall the same points of epic books, for example in Apuleius and Chariton.<sup>11</sup>

The beginning of Book A, though it comes after an evident lacuna in the *Satyricon*, does seem to represent an opening (26.7): *venerat iam tertius dies, id est expectatio liberae cenae*. The indication of a new day matches in a general way those epic books which begin with a new dawn (*Iliad* 8, 11, 19, *Odyssey* 2, 3, 5, 8, 17, *Aeneid* 11, Ovid, *Met.* 8), though *expectatio liberae cenae* suitably draws the epic allusion down to the level of the low-life novel. Likewise, the abrupt end of Book A precisely at the end of the inserted tales of the freedmen (46.8) also echoes an epic structure: in both the *Odyssey* and the *Aeneid* the inserted narrative of the hero similarly concludes at the end of a book (*Odyssey* 12, *Aeneid* 3), and *Odyssey* 12 matches Book A even more

<sup>9</sup> Cf. Sullivan, op. cit. (n. 1) p. 125, Averil Cameron, *CQ* n.s. 19 (1969), 367–70.

<sup>10</sup> On the *Satyricon* and the *Odyssey* see e.g. Sullivan, op. cit. (n. 1), pp. 95–6, P. G. Walsh, *The Roman Novel* (Cambridge, 1970), pp. 37–8, 43. Neither makes the suggestion about Phaeacia. The anonymous referee for *CQ* adds the further convincing parallel that Trimalchio is playing ball when first seen by Encolpius (*Sat.* 27.1), just as Nausicaa is playing ball when first seen by Odysseus (*Od.* 6.110)—‘not the commonest activity in classical literature’.

<sup>11</sup> In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* books often begin with an epic-type dawn (2, 3, 7), or end with an epic-type sunset or day-end (1, 2, 10); for epic models see the examples I discuss in the main text. Such epic patterns are particularly exploited within the tale of Cupid and Psyche—see S. J. Harrison, ‘Epic structures in *Cupid and Psyche*’, in M. Zimmerman et al. (edd.), *Aspects of Apuleius' Golden Ass*, Volume II: *Cupid and Psyche* (Groningen, 1998). In Chariton the first book ends with night.

closely by ending the inserted narrative without an immediate summary passage in the same book, postponing the summary until the beginning of the next book (*Odyssey* 13), just as in Petronius the summarizing phrase opens the hypothetical Book B.

And Book B indeed begins with a phrase rounding off the tales of the freedmen (47.1): *eiusmodi fabulae vibrabant*. Though the verb is in the imperfect rather than the perfect, this can be seen as an echo of summarizing epic speech formulas, suitably modified for a novelistic context: the prosaic *eiusmodi* picks up the usual epic function of *sic* or *haec* in such contexts following speeches (*Aeneid* 1.464 *sic ait*, 1.631 *sic memorat*, 5.547 *sic fatur*, 1.297 *haec ait*, 11.718 *haec fatur*, 11.822 *haec ita fatur*), but brings the phrase down to a suitably low stylistic level, while the unusual *vibrabant* seems to suggest the epic metaphor of words as weapons (cf. *Aeneid* 9.769 *vibranti gladio*; Ovid, *Met.* 12.79 *vibrantia tela*; Cicero, *Brutus* 326 *erat oratio . . . vibrans* with A. E. Douglas' note, *OLD* s.v. *vibro* 5(a)). In particular, the summarizing speech formula is also a common epic book opening; apart from the already mentioned *Odyssey* 13.1 'So he spoke, and they were all silent' (where, as in Petronius, the phrase summarizes inserted narrative rather than a simple speech), we might compare *Iliad* 7.1 'So speaking, glorious Hector rushed out of the gates' and *Aeneid* 6.1 *Sic fatur lacrimans*. My proposed ending of Book B, 65.1–2, has no possible epic colouring, and looks like just another dish in the endless dinner:

hanc humanitatem insecutae sunt mattea, quarum etiam recordatio me, si qua est dicenti fides, offendit. singulae enim gallinae altiles pro turdis circumlatae sunt et ova anserina pilleata, quae ut comessemus, ambitiosissime a nobis Trimalchio petiit dicens exossatas esse gallinas.

However, it seems an appropriate point of closure. Trimalchio here produces savouries (*mattea*) which might suggest that his extraordinary meal is at last over; the last things to be eaten in the whole meal are again *mattea* (74.6), so an ancient reader might plausibly have expected these *mattea* at 65.2 to be the last course. This is only a temporary notion, since we are later presented with not one but two elaborate desserts (68.1, 69.6), but a false closure to the meal provides a highly appropriate book ending for this culinary epic.<sup>12</sup>

The hypothetical Book C begins at 65.3 *inter haec triclinii valvas lictor percussit*, announcing the entrance of Habinnas, an appropriate point in the plot for a new book (see above). Once again an echo of an epic formula may be detected: lexically, *inter haec* is a basic prosaic expression, but it may be seen as a version of two kinds of epic book openings. The first is a common Homeric book opening, which introduces a new and important stage of the action through the transitional 'while all this was going on, X happened': cf. *Iliad* 9.1–2 'So the Trojans kept watch, but a wondrous panic gripped the Achaeans', where 'So' (Greek *ὥς*) has the same summarizing function as *haec* in Petronius (very similar openings are found in *Iliad* 12, 16, 18, 20, 22, and 23, and in *Odyssey* 6 and 7). Such Homeric openings are imitated by Vergil (*Aeneid* 9.1: *Atque ea diversa penitus dum parte geruntur*) and Ovid (*Met.* 5.1–2: *Dumque ea Cephenum medio Danaeius heros! agmine commemorat*; 11.1: *Carmine dum tali silvas ducit . . .*), both like Petronius employing a demonstrative pronoun or adjective as a summarizing element. The second is the similar Vergilian use of *interea* as a loose temporal connective at the beginning of a book, with its obvious relation to *inter haec* (*inter ea*): cf. *Aeneid* 5.1:

<sup>12</sup> Stephen Heyworth persuasively compares the ending of Apuleius *Met.* 1, where Lucius' miserable 'non-dinner' ends with the book itself. For false closures in classical literature cf. D. P. Fowler, *MD* 22 (1989), 97–101; on closure in general see not only Fowler's original article but also now D. H. Roberts, F. M. Dunn, and D. P. Fowler (edd.), *Classical Closure* (Princeton, 1997).

*Interea medium Aeneas iam classe tenebatl certus iter*; 10.1: *Panditur interea domus omnipotentis Olympi*; 11.1: *Oceanum interea surgens Aurora reliquit*; and the Ovidian imitation of this formula at *Met.* 15.1: *Quaeritur interea*. . . . The close of Book C would appear to be lost in the lacuna marked in editions since Bücheler's after 78.8: *nos occasionem opportunissimam nacti Agamemnoni verba dedimus raptimque tam plane quam ex incendio fugimus*. However, the swift excuses and departure of the guests at the chaotic end of the dinner is very likely to have been the last event in the *Cena* proper, and again the physical departure of narrator or protagonist is a common form of poetic closure found in epic:<sup>13</sup> here we might compare the end of *Aeneid* 2, where Aeneas leaves Troy in flames with his father on his back (804), a departure from a real *incendium*, or the end of *Aeneid* 6, where Aeneas leaves the underworld, to which Trimalchio's house has been interestingly compared,<sup>14</sup> to return to his fleet (899–901). Once again, there is an amusing generic difference: the contrast between the flight of three spongers from a comic near-riot and the dignified departure of a hero brings this mode of epic closure down to an appropriately lower level.

In sum, I hope to have shown that the extant *Cena Trimalchionis* is not a single ancient book but a continuous conflation with some lacunae of three ancient books, both on the general ground of the length of books in similar ancient texts, and on the particular ground of intratextual signals for the beginning and endings of books, signals which imitate and appropriately modify for a lower genre known epic modes of book opening and book closure.

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<sup>13</sup> Cf. also P. G. Fowler in Roberts (n. 12), pp. 114–5, 128–9.

<sup>14</sup> Cf. J. Bodel, 'Trimalchio's underworld', in J. Tatum (ed.), *The Search for the Ancient Novel* (Baltimore, 1994), pp. 237–59.

#### TACITUS, *ANNALS* 4.70: AN UNAPPRECIATED PUN\*

Chapter 68 begins the account of the last year covered by Tacitus in *Annals* 4: A.D. 28, when Junius Silanus and Silius Nerva were *consules ordinarii*. The new year, Tacitus informs us, was marked by a disgraceful event, the arrest (postponed since A.D. 24, cf. 19.1) of Titius Sabinus, loyal friend to Germanicus and his family. After the naming of the consuls at 68.1 and the brief preliminary account of Sabinus' arrest, 68.2–69.3 revert to the period *before* the beginning of A.D. 28 and describe Sabinus' entrapment by a group of ambitious praetors wishing to gratify Sejanus and so secure the consulship, an office *ad quem non nisi per Seianum aditus*, 'to which the only access was through Sejanus' (68.2).

Chapter 70 resumes the narrative of A.D. 28 and describes the events which occurred at the beginning of the year in greater detail. On 1 January a letter from Tiberius was read out containing (a distortion, because couched in a letter, of) the conventional prayers associated with the new year, the *uota pro salute rei publicae*: traditionally, the new consuls 'entering office on 1 January offered a sacrifice to Iuppiter on the Capitol in fulfilment of the vow of the past year and renewed the vow for the current year'.<sup>1</sup> These formalities completed, however, the emperor's letter abruptly changed tack, attacking Sabinus for treachery and demanding retribution in no uncertain terms. The

\* I am grateful to *CQ*'s editors and referee for their comments on this note.

<sup>1</sup> S. Weinstock, *Divus Julius* (Oxford, 1971), p. 217.