

SCAENICA PETRONIANA

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Petronian studies that touch upon the subject agree almost unanimously that Roman popular theatre, especially mime, and its tastes, techniques, and concerns have left many recognizable traces throughout the *Satyricon*. Enthusiasm ranges from Preston's statement that "the influence of the mime on Petronius can, in truth, hardly be exaggerated" to Sullivan's more restrained view that "it is perhaps an exaggeration to say that the key to the whole *Satyricon* is in the words: *omnia mimico risu exsonuerunt*." In view of the large amount of admirable work on the subject, I confine myself in this paper to sweeping up around the edges, concentrating on a few selected portions of the *Satyricon* where there is still scope for original proposals. Discontinuity is bound to result, but on the whole it is preferable to repeating what has already been adequately stated.* I note below earlier studies of value, to which I shall make subsequent references by the authors' surnames only.¹

* For their advice on specific details I wish to record my gratitude to Miss Janet Fairweather and Dr. T. P. Wiseman, and to Professor P. G. Walsh for encouragement and helpful suggestions.

¹ A. Collignon, *Étude sur Pétrone* (Paris 1892) 275–81; M. Rosenblüth, *Beiträge zur Quellenkunde von Petrons Satiren* (Berlin 1909) 36–55 (invaluable); É. Thomas, *Pétrone* (Paris 1912³) 143–52 and as indexed s.v. "Mimus, mimicus;" K. Preston, "Some Sources of Comic Effect in Petronius," *CP* 10 (1915) 260–69 (much more valuable than Sullivan 223, n. 1, is prepared to allow); J. P. Sullivan, *The "Satyricon" of Petronius* (London 1968) 219–25; P. G. Walsh, *The Roman Novel* (Cambridge 1970) 24–27 (among the best). F. Möring, *De Petronio Mimorum Imitatore* (diss. Münster 1915), and E. Paratore, *Il Satyricon di Petronio* (Florence 1933) I, 99–104, are the only critics known to me to play down the influence of mime on Petronius. Both aim their remarks specifically at Rosenblüth, whose examples of mime-inspired elements they trace to the genus comedy, especially Aristophanes, rather than to the species mime (but cf. A. Maiuri's defense of Rosenblüth in his commentary on the *cena* [Naples 1945] 52, n. 1). R. Cahen, *Le Satiricon et ses origines* (= *Annales de l'Université de Lyon* 38) (Lyon and Paris 1925)

I TRIMALCHIO ARTIFEX

I take as my starting point Encolpius' bemused reaction to the antics of Trimalchio's servants:

Pantomimi chorum, non patris familiae triclinium crederes. (31.7)²

It should be noted first that his exasperation is probably caused by the persistence of his host's divertissements rather than by a breach of propriety in providing them; elaborately contrived amusements seem to have been the rule at the dinner-parties of those who could afford them (e.g., Plin. *Ep.* 9.17.1, Quint. *Inst.* 1.2.8, Spart. *Vit. Had.* 1.26; cf. Plut. *Mor.* 712E). Trimalchio, as we shall see, is a superb showman, staging his dinner-party with the kind of extravagant artistry that aroused Juvenal's indignation: *Veniet qui fercula docte / componit* (7.184-85). The perfected staging results from repeated performance, as Encolpius recognizes when he turns to veteran guests for hints: *deinde ut audiui veterem convivam* (33.8), and: *at ille, qui saepius eiusmodi ludos spectaverat* (36.8). It is equally clear that Niceros and Plocamus have played the parts of *scurrae* at Trimalchio's dinner-parties in the past (61.2, 64.2).³ Trimalchio has equipped his *triclinium* for spectacular staging with a ceiling that opens to allow the lowering of *apophoreta*

70-75, accepts the principle of mimic influence but is sceptical about a number of details. On Roman popular theatre in general L. Friedländer, *Darstellungen aus der Sittengeschichte Roms* (Leipzig 1922¹⁰) II, 112-47, remains the most useful, with much valuable inscriptional material. On mime in general, H. Reich, *Der Mimus* (Berlin 1903) (wildly speculative at times but invaluable); E. Wüst, s.v. "Mimos," *RE* 15.2 (1932) 1727-64; A. Nicoll, *Masks, Mimes and Miracles* (London 1931). On Roman mime, F. Giancotti, *Mimo e gnome* (Messina and Florence 1967); M. Bonaria, *Romani Mimi* (Rome 1965) (an up-to-date critical edition with valuable introduction and full *testimonia*). C. Gill, "The Sexual Episodes in the *Satyricon*," *CP* 68 (1973) 172-85, especially 179-83, though dealing primarily with a topic unrelated to the formal relationship between mime and the *Satyricon*, deserves to be recommended here because he relates the staged qualities of the novel to the development of individual episodes in a more general fashion than I have attempted.

² The commentaries do not cite a passage in Cicero that may be intended as a frame of reference for Encolpius' response: *Valerius cotidie cantabat; erat enim scaenicus: quid faceret aliud? At Numerius Furius . . . cum est commodum, cantat; est enim pater familias . . . ; puer didicit quod discendum fuit* (*De Orat.* 3.23.86-87). For the purposes of the story Encolpius, a *scholasticus* (10.6; cf. 10.5), is familiar with Cicero's oratorical studies and theories (1-4).

³ Cf. my remarks in *TAPA* 101 (1970) 468.

(60.1-4), and, if Maiuri is right (p. 56), he has decorated its entrance to make it resemble a *pulpitum* (30).

The host's stage-managing is strongly felt in the structure of the *cena*, which is, in effect, a nine-scene "skit," with each "routine," except the last three (65.1, 68.1, 69.6), commencing with a startling, eye-catching entrance, often spiced with a variety of wide-ranging dialogue, the whole production, this time, however, without the stage-manager's prompting, concluded by the noisy, precipitate departure of Encolpius, Giton, and Ascyltos to the accompaniment of trumpets in the manner of the raucous *mêlée* that served as the ending of a mimic performance.⁴ Habinnas' limelight-stealing arrival is responsible for the restrained presentation of the seventh course (65.1), and his continued "upstaging" of the host contributes to the equally subdued eighth and ninth servings (68.1, 69.6).

The cast have taken their places (31.3) and the hors-d'oeuvres are served to the accompaniment of the music that exasperates Encolpius (31.3-8), when the star of the show makes his grand entrance with all the brummagem of the stage, *Ipse Trimalchio ad symphoniam allatus est* (32.1). I have tried in the preceding sentence to retain Petronius' "cum-inversum" construction (32.1; cf. 34.1 and *passim*), which seems designed to make the reader's eye follow the sequence of unexpected *lautitiae* that embellish the banquet, as though he were watching a three-ring circus: *novitas tamen omnium convertit oculos* (35.1). We may pause to note that there is a pronounced impression that someone or something is being conveyed to centerstage (*allata est*, 31.8; *allatus est*, 32.1). The musical fanfare adds to the impression (31.4-6, 32.1).⁵

⁴ Preston 264, who quotes the evidence of Cic. *Cael.* 65. The courses: (1) 31.8, (2) 33.3, (3) 35.1, (4) 40.3, (5) 47.8, (6) 59.6, (7) 65.1, (8) 68.1, (9) 69.6. I use the word "courses" loosely; some of them in my enumeration are really progressive stages within a given course, e.g., 31.8 and 33.3. Walsh, Chapter 5, provides an especially lucid analysis of the *cena*.

⁵ See Giancotti 39-40 and the *testimonia* collected in W. S. Teuffel, *Geschichte der römischen Literatur* (Leipzig and Berlin 1916⁶) I, 13, on the place of music in popular drama. In the *Sat.*: 33.4, 34.1, 35.6, 36.1, 36.6, 47.8, 78.5; also 41.6, 68.4, 70.7, 64.3, 73.3. At 28.5 music accompanies Trimalchio from the baths as though he were making a stage-exit. Cf. the musical finale of the "Chariton-Mime," *P. Oxy.* 413.

Contrived, theatrical-type productions are reserved for the next course:

Repositorium allatum est... Accessere continuo duo servi et symphonia strepente scrutari paleam coeperunt, erutaque subinde pavonina ova divisere convivis. Convertit ad hanc scenam Trimalchio vultum. (33.3-5)

"Scena" is not a carelessly chosen work; the disguised hors-d'oeuvre is part of an often repeated, well-drilled performance, as the adverbs *continuo* and *subinde* and the conditioned optimism of the *vetus conviva* testify (33.8).

There is, as it were, an intermission (*lusu intermisso*, 34.1) before even the clearing of the tables is performed with the bravura of the stage, *Subito signum symphonia datur et gustatoria pariter a choro cantante rapiuntur* (*ibid.*). The arrival of two "stage-hands" costumed as Ethiopians and the sprinkling of the floor with *crocus* as though at an amphitheatre underscore the theatrical contrivances (34.4).⁶ Wine is now served (*allatae sunt amphorae*, 34.6), which prompts banal moralizing on Trimalchio's part (34.7). This in turn seems to be a cue for one of the slaves to provide a suitable "prop" as a complementary *memento mori* (34.8), which inspires Trimalchio to further, equally banal reflection, this time in verse. His flat rendering of the "carpe-diem" theme appears to be a cue also, for, after an expectant delay for applause (*laudationem ferculum est insecutum*, 35.1), the third course arrives and turns the spectators' eyes from the preceding "act" (*ibid.*).

One of Trimalchio's execrable puns signals the end of the zodiac spectacle (35.7), and the performers who have been awaiting the cue in the wings respond with rehearsed alacrity, making their startling appearance to the sound of music, *Haec ut [Trimalchio] dixit, ad symphoniam quattuor tripudiantes procurrerunt* (36.1).⁷ Their stunt is

⁶ W. B. Sedgwick, in his annotated edition of the *cena* (Oxford 1950²) *ad loc.*, remarks that the long-haired Ethiopians must be in costume for the parts. See L. R. Taylor, in *Studies in Honour of Gilbert Norwood* (Toronto 1952) 151 and n. 27, for references to *crocus* in the theatre.

⁷ On puns in Roman popular theatre see lines 197-98 in Bonaria; Cic. *De Orat.* 2.64.259; Suet. *Aug.* 68; W. Beare, *CR* 51 (1937) 213-15. They were not, of course, confined to popular theatre, as Cicero's comparable *ius tam nequam esse verrinum* shows (*Verres* 1.121).

applauded at the prompting of a claque (36.4), Trimalchio is pleased with the act (*methodio laetus*, 36.5), and the meat-carver now entertains, carving in such a way "that you would have thought he was a charioteer in the circus, fighting to an organ accompaniment."⁸

With a temporary lull in the production of *automata* (37-38), the movement of the convivial divertissements lacks direction, as Trimalchio recognizes (39.3). His remedy is a call for learned table-talk (39.4), a regular feature of literary symposia, which he initiates by exploiting the zodiac dish of chapter 34 for an extended series of what Sullivan calls conceptual puns (39.5-15). The cheers that greet the "routine" signal its conclusion to the waiting stage-hands, who prepare the stage for the next "act" (40), an elaborate hunting "skit," including hunting dogs (40.1-2; *CIL* 10.1074 [Pompeii] is an excellent commentary on the passage). Something of the magnitude of the production is evident in the diners' ignorance of where to look next (40.2.) Like the earlier spectacles, the "routine" serves to "feed" Trimalchio with a *bon mot* (41.7-8).

He is now borne off stage on a wave of applause (41.8-9), and the sublunaries are left to make small-talk (41.9-46.8) until the star-director returns (47.1) to stage another spectacular production to the usual musical accompaniment (47.8). Encolpius' expectation, which assigns the "routine" to the domain of the amphitheatre (47.9), is cheated twice; the expected acrobats and performing pigs do not in fact appear (47.10), and the pig that Trimalchio selected for preparation is returned in an unbelievably short time (49.1-2) and turns out to be a disguised receptacle for sausages (49.10), thereby defusing Encolpius' blustering threats (49.7). This *automatum* has completely outwitted the guests from beginning (47.10) to end (49.10). Its success depends on extensive dissimulatory play-acting (47.10-12, 49.3-6 and 8-9), which, as it involves more than one person, must have been well rehearsed, and on discursive, time-filling "patter" (48.1-8). Trimalchio's claque responds enthusiastically to this, the most elaborate of the *automata* (50.1), and the cook is honored with a crown, as though he,

⁸ Sedgwick's translation brings out the implication that Carpus' movements are orchestrated and modeled in the pattern of popular entertainment. The word *methodium* belongs to the theatre: "une petite pièce qui se jouait après la grande" (Collignon 276, n. 1). On the claque of the theatre see Friedländer 144 and n. 11.

perhaps like Eumolpus (83.8), has been victorious in an agonistic festival (50.1).

During the interlude before the sixth course, a variety of acts holds the stage, including song and dance from the mimic stage (52.8–9), tumblers (53.11) and an acrobatic act, the theatrical association of which is well brought out in Ernout's translation: "J'étais fort mal à l'aise, dans la crainte que ses prières ne fissent partie d'une comédie machinée pour amener un coup de théâtre."⁹ The ambiance is further underscored by a listing of Trimalchio's theatrical preferences (53.12–13).

Well-rehearsed entrances are particularly evident at 56.7–10, where one can easily imagine assistants off-stage awaiting cues to usher appropriate *apophoreta* into the dining room. After some slapstick (57–58), a troupe of Homeristae appears at command (59.2–3). They are normally a part of a vaudeville-type company, associated with jugglers, acrobats and farcical performers. The consequences of their command performance raise interesting questions regarding exactly what Petronius envisaged. The garbled version of the Trojan war that Trimalchio recites as a kind of pendant to their recitation is probably a mythological travesty of the type featured in Atellan farce (59.3–5).¹⁰ This seems to me the most likely interpretation, unless we suppose that Trimalchio is to be imagined as ignorant of Greek, which, given his provenance (75.10) and the character of his solecisms, is very unlikely.¹¹ He does not seem to be reporting to his guests what the Homeristae are reciting, presumably verbatim, from Homer (*ita nunc Homeros dicit*, 59.4) in *Graecis versibus* (59.3).¹² I

⁹ A. Ernout, Budé edition (Paris 1962⁵).

¹⁰ See W. Heraeus, *RhM* 79 (1930) 395–402, for *testimonia*, especially CGL 3.172, line 46 (ed. Götz), which puts Homeristae in the company of a wide range of performers. Pomponius' Atellan farce entitled *Armorum Iudicium* (Ribbeck II², p. 228) is of obvious significance in view of the subject of the "skit": "*Secutus est Ajax strictoque gladio, tanquam insaniret, concidit* (59.7).

¹¹ He claims moreover to have read Homer (48.7) and he quotes a short statement in Greek (48.8) (which may very well be confused). On the Greek stratum underlying Trimalchio's solecisms see A. H. Salonijs, *Die Griechen und das Griechische in Petrons Cena Trimalchionis* (= *Commentationes Litterarum Humanarum* 2.1) (Helsingfors 1927) 21 and *passim*.

¹² A misinterpretation on Trimalchio's part of some kind of purely visual *tableau vivant*, analogous to his confused description of vase-representations at 52.1–3, is unlikely in view of the phrases *Graecis versibus* and *dicit*. There is comparable uncertainty about

suggest that he is to be imagined reading from the scenario of an Atellan mythological travesty: *Ille canora voce Latine legebat librum* (*ibid.*; and see n. 10), drawn perhaps from his Latin library (48.4), and that the passage should be included among the meager *testimonia* that we have on the dramatic form. Trimalchio's earlier statement of his preference for Atellan farce to a performance, presumably in Greek, by his troupe of comic actors (53.13), like his choice of Latin here (59.3), supports the proposal. In any case, the serving of a calf, which all the hullabaloo is designed to embellish, is undeniably spectacular:

Clamorem Homeristae sustulerunt, interque familiam discurrentem vitulus in lance ducenaria elixus allatus est, et quidem galeatus. (59.6)

The guests' amazement at this "act" is stressed (59.7, 60.1 and 2), and the association of the diversions with public amusements is underscored by the reference to *ludi* (60.5) and the use of *crocus* (60.6; cf. 68.1 and n. 6).

Scurrae and a dog "act" (61–64) hold the stage until Habinnas' unexpected arrival, which, as A. Cameron has recently explained, is modeled on Plato's *Symposium* and gives to the later stages of the *cena* a new mood and pace.¹³ His limelight-stealing appearance, combined

the nature of the representation of the story of Ariadne and Dionysus in Xen. *Symp.*: Wüst 1737 thinks that it is a mime because of the reference to "words" (9.6); I. C. Cunningham, in his commentary on Herodas (Oxford 1971) 6, n. 1, favors pantomime.

¹³ CQ 19 (1969) 367–70. Cf. my own remarks on Trimalchio's risible attempts to put his *convivium poetarum ac philosophorum* on the same footing as the symposia of Plato and Xen. in *TAPA* 101 (1970) 471–73. On "dog acts" see Plut. *De Soll. Anim.* 973E, and cf. *Sat.* 40; also *Sat.* 95.8, which Reich 588, n. 1, describes as taking place "in einer mimischen Prügelscene." Laberius wrote mimes entitled *Scylax* and *Catularius*. I wonder whether the phrase *mimice ac moleste / ridentem catuli ore* in Cat. 42 is not an allusion to a recent production of the *Catularius*, which, if my speculation in n. 32 is correct, would by association further discredit the *moecha* (cf. Cic. *Cael.* 64–65). *Mimice*, which is unparalleled as a pejorative expression, is perhaps intended to "signpost" the allusion, which, with elision in *catuli ore*, would not be overly abstruse. There is only one other example of *catulus* being used pejoratively: Verg. *Geor.* 3.438, where the sense is unusual enough to warrant an explanation from Servius that it has the same derogatory meaning as *canis*, which, in fact, we find in line 17. Clodius Pulcher (Macr. *S.* 2.6.6) and Cicero (Sen. *Contr.* 7.3.9) could be links between Catullus' circle and the mimographer, and it is intriguing that both men experienced warm and, especially, cold relations with Caesar because of their *aspera libertas* (Suet. *Jul.* 39.2, Aul. Gell. 17.14.1 and 8.15, Macr. *S.* 2.7.2).

with the progressive drunkenness of the guests (64.2), the hostess (67.11) and perhaps the host, as his maudlin behavior suggests, causes a noticeable decline in elaborately contrived *automata*. Habinnas' slave takes up some of the slack, giving samples of his virtuoso abilities as a "Vergilianist" and as a performer of Atellan farces (68.4-5), with his master reporting additional details of his talent as a *mimus* (68.6-7; cf. 69.4-5). It is of some interest that the slave's mingling of different verse forms is reminiscent of Livy's famous description of the introduction of drama, i.e., Atellan farce, to Rome (7.2.11). Habinnas himself clearly shares with Trimalchio an avid interest in popular entertainment (69.4), apparently, like his host, maintaining a private *grex*, possibly on a reduced scale. Trimalchio, in any case, whether through excessive drinking or because Habinnas has "stolen the show," has lost interest in skilfully orchestrated *coups de théâtre* (68.2); the remaining courses are conspicuously devoid of fanfare (65.1, 68.1-2, 69.6-9), and the convivial *divertissements* decline rapidly in quality, culminating in the already noted raucous exit of Encolpius, Giton and Ascyltos, which, though probably inspired by the popular stage (see n. 4 and related text), falls nonetheless outside Trimalchio's direction.

The haphazard last stages of the dinner-party stand sharply apart from the tightly drilled progression of its first two-thirds, where everybody performs exactly on cue without a hitch. I quote a few examples:

Haec ut dixit, ad symphoniam quattuor tripudiantes procurrerunt (36.1); quo facto, videmus infra altilia et sumina leporemque in medio (36.2); "Carpe," inquit. Processit statim scissor.¹⁴ (36.6)

Every showpiece has been carefully orchestrated to a degree of perfection made possible only by rehearsal or repeated performance, as Encolpius recognizes with uncharacteristic astuteness when, as we have seen, he clutches at clues from veteran guests (33.8, 36.8). Trimalchio's taste and erudition, like those of Philocleon in the *Wasps*, are invariably open to question, but there is no doubt that he exercises directorial powers consistent with his characterization as a successful, self-made businessman.

¹⁴ Other examples: 33.4, 34.1, 34.6, 34.8, 35.1, 59.6 and, possibly, 60.4.

I have tried in the preceding pages to give substance to Thomas' statement that "pendant tout le festin comme dans les préparatifs, les occupations de tous, les entrées, les sorties, tous les mouvements sont réglés comme ceux d'acteurs au théâtre" (150).¹⁵ This view of the *cena*, which, I believe, adds a dimension to Walsh's clear analysis of it, provides a heightened appreciation of the orchestrated timing, sequence and alternation of its divertissements.

Before proceeding to other matters, I should like to record a few theatrical *Realien* that do not depend on the subtleties of "dramatic" structure. Trimalchio's wife performs an indecent dance featured in mime and other forms of low comedy (52.8).¹⁶ Trimalchio immediately contributes to the mimic spirit of the occasion, *Atque ipse erectis super frontem manibus Syrum histrionem exhibebat concinente tota familia: madeia permadeia* (52.9). If, as I think likely, the verses attributed a little later to Publius Syrus are in fact his, then the host has at his command a sizeable block of the mimographer's writing (55.5-6).¹⁷ Finally, the concept of Trimalchio's *automata* that depend for their effect on a disguised "entrance" may be inspired by a practice of the popular stage; a scholiast at Juv. 8.186 remarks on *siparium*: *Velum, sub quo latent paradoxi, cum in scaenam prodeunt. Aut ostium mimi* (cf. Donat. *De Com.* [ed. Wessner p. 30]); cf. *Sat.* 33.8, 40.5, 49.10, 59.7, 70.4-5.

II MIMIC CONVIVIA

The contribution of popular theatre, especially mime, to Petronius' arrangement of the *cena* may go deeper than the staging and stage-inspired elements suggested in the previous section. He may have drawn the basic concept of a burlesque *convivium* from mime. This is not to ignore the prominent role of *cenae* in Roman satire and the rich tradition of literary symposia,¹⁸ but what is clearly lacking in the

¹⁵ See, too, G. H. Gellie, *AUMLA* 10 (1959) 98.

¹⁶ Hesychius, s.v. *κορδακισμοί*: τὰ τῶν μίμων γελοῖα, καὶ παίγνια. See further Friedländer 134, who cites 53.11 and inscriptional evidence.

¹⁷ See Giancotti 238-74 for a full range of possibilities regarding the accuracy of Trimalchio's ascription. O. Skutsch, s.v. "Publius Syrus," *RE* 23 (1959) 1923-24, doubts that the poem is an authentic quotation. I provide more details in a note forthcoming in *RhM*.

¹⁸ Bibliography in *TAPA* 101 (1970) 471, n. 15.

comic-satirical branch of table-talk where Trimalchio's dinner-party would have its antecedents is the extended dramatization and exuberance of character and incident that distinguish his.

There are a few traces of evidence that make staged, mimic *convivia* a distinct possibility. The *testimonium* of St. Jerome is particularly tantalizing (Hier. *Ep.* 52.8.3 = Migne *P. L.* 22. 535); it deals with what is alleged by him to be a speech of Cicero in defense of Q. Gallius in which the orator discredits the powers of judgment of a theatrical audience:

His autem ludis . . . unus quidam poeta dominatur, homo perlitteratus, cuius sunt convivia poetarum ac philosophorum, cum facit Euripiden et Menandrum inter se et alio loco Socraten atque Epicurum disserentes, quorum aetates non annis, sed saeculis scimus fuisse disiunctas. Atque his quantos plausus et clamores movet! Multos enim condiscipulos habet in theatro, qui simul litteras non didicerunt.¹⁹

The setting of the *convivia* is undoubtedly theatrical (*ludis, plausus, theatro*). What is particularly significant for our purposes is the indication that the popular theatre and possibly mime itself (*poeta* = mimographer as in, e.g., Plin. *HN* 8.209) treated literary matters in a fashion reminiscent of Trimalchio's displays of misinformation, which commence with his call for *philologia* (39.4).²⁰ The sarcastic references to Cynics, Pythagoreans and Democritus in scraps of Laberius' mimes may indicate that other kinds of weighty intellectual matters were treated for laughs on the mimic stage, possibly in the manner of Trimalchio's discourse on occupations and the lot of animals, which threatens to put philosophers out of work (56.1-7).²¹

¹⁹ Bonaria p. 87 includes the putative title under "Fragmenta Dubia." For full discussion see E. Hauler, *WS* 27 (1905) 95-105, and Giancotti 119-28. It should be added that the text differs considerably from one critical edition to another. I have quoted from that of I. Hilberg (Leipzig 1910).

²⁰ See my remarks in *TAPA* 101 (1970) 472-73.

²¹ For Laberius' references to philosophers see lines 29-30, 50 and 90-97 in Bonaria. The gibe at Pythagoreanism (line 29) is reminiscent of the boast to be recorded on Trimalchio's gravestone (71.12; cf. 46.6). At *Sat.* 56.4-6 we are almost certainly dealing with burlesqued Pythagoreanism, as C. Stöcker, *Humor bei Petron* (diss. Erlangen and Nürnberg 1969) 97-99, has noticed. A tradition of mimic spoofs of Pythagoreanism seems to be indicated by Min. Fel. 34.7 and Lact. *Inst.* 7.12.31. Giancotti 127 speculates that *fabula mimica* (Cic. *Att.* 1.16.13, Sen. *Apocol.* 9.3) may be a mimic spoof of Pythagoreanism. Lines 195-96, 215-17 and 240 in Bonaria may constitute the same kind of mythological misfire as, e.g., *Sat.* 48.7 and 59.3-5, though it should be added that there is no

The younger Seneca provides clear evidence that extravagant dinner-parties were the subject of mimes:

I nunc et mimos multa mentiri ad exprobandam
luxuriam puta. Plura me hercules praetereunt quam
fingunt. (*De Brev. Vit.* 12.8)

Moreover, the verses attributed by Trimalchio to the mimographer Publilius may be lifted from a mime in which they were applied to excessive luxury (55.5–6; see n. 17 and related text), the comic point of the attribution being that Trimalchio does not grasp that they censure his own *lautitiae*.²²

III QUARTILLA-MIME

The episode involving Priapus' libidinous priestess Quartilla and the orgiastic exorcism is unusually rich in mimic associations, most notably in the clause: *Omnia mimico risu exsonuerunt* (19.1).²³ The phrase *mimico risu* seems to have twofold application: it probably applies to a studied type of laughter, perhaps stridently aggressive, possibly like that of the *moecha* in Cat. 42; and it appears to apply to the character of the entire episode, which, with its repeated instances of rapid transformation of mood (*ex lacrimis in risum mota*, 18.4; cf. 18.7 and *quae tam repentina esset mutatio animorum*, 19.1), abounds in histrionic

indication of a convivial setting in the mimic fragments. The same possibility must be considered for the mimic buffoonery mentioned by Varro, *apud* Aug. *De Civ. Dei* 4.22. On mythological travesty in mime in general see Wüst 1752.7–22. The risible *scholasticus* in a collection of mimic jokes of late classical antiquity going under the name *Philogelos*, sometimes attributed to Philistion, may depend on a tradition of rhetorical theory being ridiculed on the mimic stage (cf. *Sat.* 48.4–8; see Reich 458–75 for further details). Walsh 26 suggests with good reason that Trimalchio as comic astrologer may be modeled on literary mimes that take their titles from the names of the signs of the zodiac. See Hauler, *op. cit.* (n. 19), for further possibilities of academic subjects being spoofed in mimes. One final point of marginal relevance: the incongruous juxtaposition of *jocosus* and *pilicrepus* with *scolasticus* in *CIL* 6.9797 may point to a tradition of a “type-cast” clownish scholar.

²² For further details see my note forthcoming in *RhM*. Skutsch, *op. cit.* (n. 17) 1923, interprets *cena* at Plin. *HN* 8.209 as a reference *not* to Publilius' “Privatleben” but to a staged mime, probably entitled *Sumen*. Hauler, *op. cit.* (n. 19), notes that several of Laberius' titles indicate festive banquets: *Saturnalia*, *Compitalia*, *Parilicii* [*Ludi*], *Nuptiae*.

²³ Preston 261 includes *risus* and related words among the stage-inspired comic effects in Petr. Cf. Quint. *Inst.* 6.3.8, [*risus*] . . . *res levis et quae ab scurris, mimis . . . moveatur*.

demonstrativeness. Theatrical associations may extend to the phrase *iam deficiente fabularum contextu* (20.5). Because the immediate context is lacunose, it is impossible to determine whether the expression means "because the conversation was flagging," as at 37.1, or whether *fabulae* here mean "play-acting," as at 95.1. In any case, the mock marriage of Pannychis and Giton has the earmarks of an obscene mimic "routine," with applause (25.3), the kind of peeping familiar from the comic stage (26.4-5) and references to *lusus* (26.4) and *spectaculum* (26.5).²⁴

I want in particular to emphasize the *cinaedi* who participate in the action of this part of the *Satyricon* (21.2, 23-24). The musical accompaniment (*cymbalistria*, 23.1), the Sotadean meter of the song of a *cinaedus* (23.3) and the fact that one of the *cinaedi* is wearing make-up (23.5) all underscore the character's well-known theatrical and mimic role.²⁵

There is an extremely interesting piece of neglected evidence on a vase-representation belonging to the group of so-called Homeric vases. M. Rostovtzeff has interpreted it as "a well known scene of a famous mime."²⁶ It portrays a flour-mill and millers at work in it; five intruders, designated as *κίναιδοι*, burst in on the peaceful scene and "in the usual manner perform all sorts of mischief," which, in plain language, comprises theft and an attempt sexually to stimulate a donkey. The attempts of the *cinaedus* sexually to arouse Ascyrtos and Encolpius are strikingly similar (21.2 and 23.4-24.4).²⁷ It looks very much as though Petronius had a vivid image of mimic performances in his mind's eye as he was composing the Quartilla-episode.

²⁴ If titles are a reliable guide in this case, marriage was the subject of mimes: Laberius' *Nuptiae* and the titles recorded by Bonaria pp. 117-18, to which should be added Epicharmus' *Ἡβας Γάμος* (CGF, ed. G. Kaibel, p. 98), and Quint. *Dec.* (ed. C. Ritter, p. 139. 21-22), . . . *semoto illo nuptiarum mimo*. . . Gill 179 draws attention to a structure made up of actors-performers-audience at *Sat.* 25-26, with Quartilla stage-managing and even providing a chorus (26.1), to produce a *spectaculum* of which she is a most ardent spectator.

²⁵ On the character's mimic and pantomimic provenance see Reich 478 and 533; W. Kroll, s.v. "Kinaidos," *RE* 11.1 (1922) 460. 39-43; Wüst 1743.31-45 and 1751.26-34; O. Crusius, *Untersuchungen zu den Mimiamben des Herondas* (Leipzig 1892) 50-52.

²⁶ *AJA* 41 (1937) 87-90.

²⁷ The *cinaedi* in both scenes wear a kind of loin cloth (*Sat.* 21.1), and the theft in the vase-representation has its parallel in the two Syrian *expilatores* who are unmasked (22.3-5), though neither of these similarities is to be pressed, of course.

IV CONCLUSIONS

The conclusions that follow go beyond the material to which I have limited myself, drawing on the valuable work of my predecessors and extrapolating from what I have been able to observe. At the outset certain negative observations must be expressed. First, I think that it is mistaken to suppose that Trimalchio's preoccupation with mime, which extends to the arrangements of his dinner-party and not just to a few ill-timed quotations from mimes, is one of the many elements that contribute to his characterization as a buffoon: the mimic underpinning extends throughout the work as we have it, often forming the basis of an evocative metaphor that perfectly expresses the character and tone and possibly the provenance of an entire episode, e.g., the Quartilla-scene or the events at Croton; we should also recognize that mime did not merit universal scorn, enjoying indeed the admiration of men of letters of the stature of the two Senecas, and that accordingly a liking for mime would not automatically discredit a person except in the eyes of Cicero and the Church Fathers, whose motives and sensibilities were totally different from those of Petronius. Second, I do not believe that Petronius' work of comic prose fiction can be reduced to a string of low-comedy "skits" intended for performance. The past tense used by the first-person narrator would be enough to rule out the possibility of performance at least, should anyone be tempted seriously to entertain it. Finally, I do not think that it would be justified to regard the mimic underpinning as part of an elaborate *tour de force* along the lines of Gent's seventeenth-century dramatization of Heliodorus, for instance, or a hybrid in which the "drama" is confined to the printed page (80.9, lines 5-8).

It is nonetheless a certainty that a theatrical and above all a mimic spirit pervades the work and that stage-conceptions have provided a sustained source of inspiration. My belief is that the underlying theatrical quality echoes a dominant interest in the court of Nero *artifex*. It is true, of course, that the spirit of the popular stage could be invoked to characterize the age of almost any *princeps*, but of no other can it be said that the methods chosen for the first attempt to murder his mother were taken directly from the stage! The age of Nero was a time of renewed literary activity, much of it probably inspired by the

emperor's own interest and example, and dramatic forms, like those of Seneca, Lucan's *Medea* and *salticae fabulae*, pantomime and mime, were conspicuously in the forefront of endeavors. His own histrionic efforts seem to have been limited to pantomime, but mime clearly thrived during his reign. I think that it is legitimate to extrapolate from this evidence that it would have been natural for a writer intimately associated with, and culturally attuned to, Nero to infuse what is in many ways a fictional chronicle of the court with the theatrical spirit so pronounced in the court itself that it persisted to the last few minutes of the *princeps* on earth (Suet. *Nero* 54.1).²⁸

An important consequence of recognizing that mime in particular is the single most pervasive and identifiable source of inspiration for Petronius and that it displays a feature corresponding to almost every distinctive characteristic of the *Satyricon* is that it helps to circumvent the red-herring of Menippean satire, which too often causes the critic to attribute to the work a greater degree of seriousness than is warranted.²⁹ The *cena Trimalchionis*, for instance, simply cannot be accounted for in the traditions of Menippean satire. Mime, however, as we have seen, may have provided the germ of the concept of a burlesque *convivium* replete with brummagem and bungled erudition. Or consider the latest attempt comprehensively to isolate the constituent elements of the *Satyricon*, which maintains that the "exclusus-amator" theme is the controlling idea: there is fragmentary evidence for a mimic *παρακλαυσίθυρον*.³⁰ Mime and the *Satyricon*, moreover, share a fondness for certain stock characters;³¹ sex is treated with *nova*

²⁸ O. Murray, *Gnomon* 43 (1971) 833-34, effectively summarizes the character and importance of the literary and artistic renaissance under Nero. For specific details see J. P. Sullivan, *TAPA* 99 (1968) 453-67. The younger Seneca's many references to Publius are adequate testimony for the vitality of mime at the period. See Wüst 1750.42-55 for references to Nero's antics on the stage and to mimic activity during his reign. For examples of the extension of stage-material to the private domain of Nero's activities see Tac. *Ann.* 13.21.5 and 14. 7.7, Suet. *Nero* 34.3 and 39.3, Dio Cass. 61.13.3 and, especially, 12.2 (ed. Boissevain).

²⁹ Views are surveyed by G. Schmeling, *CB* 47 (1971) 49-53.

³⁰ G. Schmeling, "The *Exclusus Amator* Motif in Petronius," in *Festschrift* for V. D'Agostino (Turin 1971) 333-57; for the mimic *παρακλαυσίθυρον* see Wüst 1752.65-67.

³¹ See Rosenblüth 54-55 and Prescott 267-68 for further details. This is a convenient place to acknowledge forthrightly that many of the elements that I have localized in mime and the *Satyricon* enjoy a wider popularity. For instance, Walsh 40-41 advances

simplicitas in both genres;³² they both include literary parody and the related practice of depreciation of elevated poetry;³³ they share two particularly distinctive stylistic features: the mingling of prose and verse³⁴ and an unparalleled range of tone, subject and speech;³⁵ finally, there are the singular facts that Priapus, whose anger seems to be the only, albeit meager, thread of plot running through the narrative, was the subject of mimes (Aug. *De Civ. Dei* 6.7) and that his involvement in the *Satyricon* occurs in distinctly farcical episodes.

strong evidence for linking Agamemnon with Varronian satire; Sullivan 119–25 is equally convincing in tracing Circe and the other libidinous viragoes to Roman satire. The fact remains, however, that their mirror-images are attested on the mimic stage and that mime is the only frequently avowed analogue. For the risible rhetorician see above, n. 21; for the Circe-type see Herodas' fifth mime, *P. Oxy.* 413, verso, columns 1–3 and the remarks of Gill 180. In the same vein, it might be added that the shipwreck at *Sat.* 114.1–7, which under the influence of R. Heinze's article in *Hermes* 34 (1899) 494–519 has generally been regarded as an element in Petronius' supposed parody of the Greek love-romances, may have a mimic source of inspiration: Seneca's reference to a *mimicum naufragium* is well known (*De Ira* 2.2.5; cf. *Sat.* 117.7 and Mart. *Spec.* 26); even more apposite is the neglected evidence of a papyrus-fragment: *P. Berol.* 13927 (= G. Manteuffel, *De Opusculis Graecis Aegypti e Papyris, Ostracis Lapidibusque Collectis* [Warsaw 1930] no. 17), which is a list of mime-titles and "props," includes among the stage-properties a representation of a river, ship's tackle, and barber's equipment, all of which are suggestive of mimic themes comparable in scope and theme to the adventures aboard Lichas' ship.

³² See Rosenblüth 52–53. It is relevant to speculate whether the gross language (lines 34–35 in Bonaria) and the title of Laberius' *Catularius* indicate dog-style love-making, i.e., sodomy.

³³ See Rosenblüth 44–45. On literary parody in Herodas see Crusius, *op. cit.* (n. 25) 15, 54, 124, 126, 127. Also in Greek mime, cf. the scurrilous application of Euripidean tragedy in the "Chariton Mime" (*P. Oxy.* 413). Equally germane is literature as the subject of literature (cf. *Sat.* 1–4 and 118) in Herodas 8 (Cunningham, *op. cit.* [n. 12] 16 and 194). On depreciation of the pompous style see Valerius, line 192 in Bonaria, *Quid hic cum tragicis versis et syrma facis?* On the practice in the *Sat.* see TAPA 101 (1970) 466–67.

³⁴ S. Sudhaus, *Hermes* 41 (1906) 247–77, indulges in a lot of special pleading in the face of overwhelming evidence that Greek farce and mime included both prose and verse. *P. Oxy.* 413, recto, lines 88–91 and 96–106, clinches the matter. Rosenblüth 38–39 surveys the older literature on the subject; see now Nicoll 127. On Roman mime see Giancotti 37–40 and Bonaria pp. 3–4 and 7.

³⁵ I let Walsh 25–26 eloquently describe the wide range of tone and subject in mime: "Mime too could range from scenes of stupefying obscenity and disgusting sadism to the most decorous discussions containing mannered apothegms about the human condition." On the formidable breadth of speech in mime see Rosenblüth 39 and Nicoll 126–27; in the *Sat.* see P. George, *Arion* 5 (1966) 336–58.

APPENDIX

Eumolpus *Scaenicus*

Walsh's characterization of Eumolpus as "the manic poetaster with a chip on his shoulder about the exigent status of the literary genius" is the best that I have seen, and he is absolutely right to regard him as a familiar butt of the Roman satirists.¹ One side of his character that has not been noted, however, is that he is not pictured as the ordinary kind of dilettante featured in Horace, Juvenal, and Martial, a Nasidienus ready to spout verses at the drop of a hat; Eumolpus has been *professionally* associated with the stage, and it is this professional association that I shall explore here. It involves a broadening of the terms of *scaena* hitherto applied by me and a certain amount of speculation and different aims, which are the reasons for the separate treatment given to the subject. First, however, I should like firmly to establish Eumolpus' preoccupation with the stage, although this will entail more rehashing than I should prefer.

The plot is rife with stage-conceits after he is introduced into it. He is involved in Encolpius' *mimica mors: fabula inter amantes luditur* (95.1). Corax, Eumolpus' *mercennarius*, whose razor Encolpius uses in his farcical attempted suicide (94.8-15), is lifted from the pages of the *Frogs*, being modeled on Xanthias. The theatrical provenance is specified in a feigned attempt at suicide later in the story (108.11).²

Eumolpus is prominent later in the formulation of a ruse to escape from the ship of Lichas, who heaps scorn on the play-acting involved in it, dismissing it as *mimicae artes* (103 and 106.1). Play-acting was, of course, *de rigueur* in mime (Reich 456, Collignon 278), and Eumolpus' preoccupation with it is evident earlier in the narrative when his rich imagination envisages the peril to be faced by himself and his colleagues as comparable to that of Odysseus when he encountered the Cyclops, *Fingite . . . nos antrum Cyclopis intrasse* (101.7; cf. 101.5). The *Odyssey* seems to have provided material for many a piece of low comedy: Aristoxenus, *apud* Ath. 1.19F (= frag. 135, ed. F. Wehrli), includes *Κύκλωψ τερετίζων* and *Ὀδυσσεὺς σολοικίζων* as themes

¹ Walsh 98-100 and 104 incisively traces instances of Eumolpus' stage-posturing. As Rosenblüth 54, n. 4, notes, Eumolpus' *morbus* (90.3) is not unknown to the mimic stage (CGF, p. 201, ed. G. Kaibel). Gill 181 remarks on *Sat.* 140.5-11 that the mechanism contrived by Eumolpus for sexual intercourse with Philomela's daughter is presented as a *spectaculum*, with Philomela's son and Encolpius in attendance as spectators, in a manner, I might add, comparable to the artifacts designed by Trimalchio for viewing.

² As was recognized as long ago as 1743 by de Salas in P. Burmann's 2nd ed., II, p. 229, Corax' flatulence and his reluctance to carry his master's baggage are modeled on the prologue to the *Frogs*. On a harmless knife as a stage-"prop" cf. Achilles Tatius 3.21 and Sudhaus, *op. cit.* (n. 34) 266-67.

in the repertoire of γελωτοποιοί.³ Giton, who is no less theatrically motivated, proposes a scheme that is a pastiche of Hom. *Il.* 5.385–94 and *Od.* 4.435–53 and 10.19–55 (102.8–9). Eventually, there is a reconciliation between the warring parties made possible by Eumolpus' defense (107), which is suggestive of the trial-scenes so common in Roman mime of the imperial period. The escapade ends in shipwreck, which recalls Seneca's reference to a *mimicum naufragium* (*De Ira* 2.2.5; cf. *Sat.* 117.7 and *Mart. Spec.* 26).⁴ With the emphasis on *finge* and *puta*, the plotters of *mimicae artes* appear to insist that their proposals be visualized in terms of play-acting and the stage (e.g., 101.7, 101.11, 102.11, 102.15).⁵ Before turning to Eumolpus' professional involvement with the stage, it is worth mentioning his prominence in the events at Croton, of which Collignon (279) has said that we have "le scénario d'un véritable mime," and noting with Reich (318, n. 4) that the ruse formulated by Eumolpus at 117.2–10 in such richly theatrical and mimic metaphors is specified in *Auct. ad Her.* 4.50 as a trick of the mimic stage.

At 90.5 Eumolpus shrugs off the pelting of stones that he has just received with the resigned observation that he is used to it:

Immo quoties theatrum, ut recitarem aliquid, intravi, hac me adventicia
excipere frequentia solet.

A little later in the narrative he compares the hostile reception that his poetry had in the baths to the response customarily given to it in the theatre, *De balneo, tamquam de theatro eiectus sum* (92.6). The implications of these two statements have generally been played down or ignored. Coupled with the reference to Eumolpus' *coronae* (83.8), they point incontrovertibly to recitation of original compositions at agonistic festivals.

Assuming that the "dramatic" date and the date of composition of the *Satyricon* belong to the Neronian period, we are left with only a very limited number of major agonistic festivals in Italy to postulate as the basis of Petronius' fictional and doubtless exaggerated portrayal of a successful contestant: they are the Sebasta (or Augustalia) at Naples and the Neronia at Rome.⁶

³ Note the phrase *lusimus quaerentes voluptatem robustam* (127.10) in an episode rich in Homeric play-acting. Euripides' *Cyclops* is germane. Cf. lines 195–96 in Bonaria, *Tu Hectorem imitare: ab Illo / numquam recedis*. Laberius' *Necymantia* may have reference to Homer.

⁴ On the trial-scene in Roman mime of imperial times see R. W. Reynolds, *CQ* 40 (1946) 84. Rosenblüth 48–49 traces many more elements in the episode to mime. On the shipwreck cf. the papyrological evidence cited in n. 31.

⁵ Cf. 78.4, Juv. 8.195 and Luxorius (*PLM* 4.398, no. 464, ed. E. Baehrens).

⁶ See R. M. Geer, *TAPA* 66 (1935) 208–21, and I. R. Arnold, *AJA* 64 (1960) 245–51, for details of agonistic festivals in Italy. Virtually nothing is known about the smaller festivals except that one C. Concordius Syriacus, a *poeta Latinus*, was *coronatus* at the local agonistic festival of his native Beneventum (*CIL* 9.1663; also 1571 and 1572).

It must be agreed that in a whimsically fictional work combining both wide-ranging bookishness (Walsh 32–52) and concentrated topicality⁷ we are not likely to pin down a caricatured participant to a specific, historically attested occasion. On the other hand, it is unlikely that Petronius has allowed exaggeration to obscure completely the patterns of recognizable topicality evident elsewhere in the novel.

Given the Neopolitan setting of the Sebasta, its fame and the likelihood that Encolpius and Eumolpus are in the area of Trimalchio's *cena*, which is almost certainly Puteoli—given all this, most, I think, will grant that the Sebasta was at least in the background of the author's thoughts as he was creating Eumolpus.⁸

The possibility of allusion to the Neronia of 60 is particularly intriguing. We know that the *corona* for Latin oratory and poetry was awarded to Nero by agreement without his even participating in the competition (Suet. *Nero* 12.7 and Tac. *Ann.* 14.21). This historical fact may lie behind Eumolpus' conditional claim to poetic merit:

Ego . . . poeta sum et, ut spero, non humillimi spiritus, si modo
coronis aliquid credendum est, quas etiam ad imperitos deferre
gratia solet. (83.8)

Imperitos and *gratia* could be guaranteed to refresh memories of a recent blatant example of "pull" (*gratia*) securing a *corona* for one who did not participate, one who, in other words, was *imperitus*.⁹

⁷ See K. F. C. Rose, *Arion* 5 (1966) 292–98, and *idem*, *The Date and Author of the Satyricon* (Leiden 1971).

⁸ J. D'Arms, *Romans in the Bay of Naples* (Cambridge, Mass. 1971) 142–52, provides a wealth of material relating to Neopolitan cultural life.

⁹ Like Eumolpus, *Nero recitavit . . . carmina . . . in theatro* (Suet. *Nero* 10.2). If Dio Cassius (63.21.1) is to be believed, the prestige of the *coronae* was certainly cheapened at a later date when Nero returned from his Greek tour with 1,800 of them. G. Bagnani, *Arbiter of Elegance* (Toronto 1954) 66, proposes, without much foundation, that the *Satyricon* was Petronius' contribution to the Neronia of 60.