NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

MANUM DE TABULA: PETRONIUS *SATYRICON* 76.9

At *Satyricon* 76.9, Trimalchio has been explaining how he made his fortune in the shipping industry, with the aid of an inheritance from his former owner and a loan from Fortunata. He then interjects: "postquam coepi plus habere quam tota patria mea habet, manum de tabula: sustuli me de negotiatione et coepi per libertos faenerare." Two parallels are generally adduced for the phrase *manum de tabula.* Cicero in a letter uses the expression without a governing verb: "sed heus tu, manum de tabula. magister adest citius quam putaremus" (*Fam.* 7.25.1). In the context of painting the elder Pliny supplies the verb *tollere* to the expression: "dixit enim omnia sibi cum illo paria esse aut illi meliora, sed uno se praestare, quod manum de tabula sciret tollere" (*HN* 35.80). The expression in Pliny is considered a metaphorical extension of the phrase in Cicero, which in turn is generally interpreted as a command by the teacher to the students to stop writing. The teacher wishes to check their work or, more likely, to look for graffiti.[1] Trimalchio clearly means by *manum de tabula* "I stopped what I was doing," but exact interpretation of the phrase has been difficult.

Marmorale suggested that Trimalchio, like Pliny, applies the phrase metaphorically, referring not to a student's or to a painter's *tabula* but to an accountant's tablet.[2] This interpretation has found little support, but did open the way to further thinking on the metaphoric meanings of *tabula.* Catalano, in a study comparing Petronius' usage to the modern dialect of Naples, has argued a fourth interpretation of the Petronian passage. He rightly rejects Marmorale's interpretation, and suggests that the *tabula* alluded to by Trimalchio is the *tabula lusoria* of the gambler. Trimalchio's fortune has been made in the high-risk shipping industry, which he calls *negotiari* (76.3). After one loss of *trecenties sestertium,* he "upped the ante" in an even riskier venture, with financial backing from Fortunata, and made a quick profit of *centies sestertium* (76.4–8). He then diversified his portfolio with landed investments, and, when his financial position was secure, ceased from shipping ventures entirely (*sustuli me de*

I would like to thank Victor Udwin, the Editor, and the anonymous referees for helpful comments on previous drafts, and Reginald Hyatte, who suggested the phrase "I cashed in my chips"; none of these should be held to agree with the ideas presented here. I would also like to thank the Interlibrary Loan and Special Collections staffs of McFarlin Library, The University of Tulsa.

1. For the standard interpretation, see M. S. Smith, *Petronii Arbitri Cena Trimalchionis* (Oxford, 1975), 208; J. M. Hunt, "Petronius 76.9," *Latomus* 28 (1969): 696, who wishes to delete *me de negotiatione.* For graffiti: August Otto, *Die Sprichwörter und sprichwörtlichen Redensarten der Römer* (Leipzig, 1890), 210, s.v. *manus* 5; Virgilio Catalano, "Petronio e il dialetto napoletano," *GIF* 21 (1969): 91. Ludwig Friedlaender, *Petronii Cena Trimalchionis*[2] (Leipzig 1906; second reprint ed., Amsterdam, 1960), 352, cites the parallels without commentary.

2. E. V. Marmorale, *Petronii Arbitri, Cena Trimalchionis*[2] (Firenze, 1961), 172, who also believed that the students in Cicero's passage were gambling on a *tabula lusoria.*

negotiatione) and resorted to lower-risk loan brokering (*faenerare,* 76.8–9). Trimalchio, therefore, describing the high risk of his financial dealings, puns on the Ciceronian expression with the gambling terms *tabula* and *manus.*[3] Trimalchio's adaptation of the phrase is more daring than Pliny's, since now both *tabula* and *manus* have metaphorical significance, a shift made possible by their association in technical terminology. The phrase must have some metaphorical extension unless *tabula* is used as a term of accounting, and this is not probable. It is open to question whether this use of the phrase originates with Trimalchio or has already entered common use. Trimalchio constantly employs puns and witticisms and is capable of such a transformation. But these are employed by Trimalchio in situations that seem staged and rehearsed; the context here, in which Trimalchio seems genuinely upset, would suggest that the expression as used by Trimalchio is already in common use.

Catalano is apparently unaware of contemporary parallels to *manus* as gambling terminology, and consequently for linguistic support looks to the use of *mano* in modern Italian dialect. But there is a parallel that is exact and roughly contemporary with the dramatic date, at least, of the *Satyricon.* Augustus, in a letter preserved by Suetonius, describes his gambling practices (*Aug.* 71.3 = Aug. *Ep.* VII.5–9 Malcovati): "ego perdidi viginti milia nummum meo nomine, sed cum effuse in luso liberalis fuissem, ut soleo plerumque. nam si quas manus remisi cuique exigissem aut retinuissem quod cuique donavi, vicissem vel quinquaginta milia." It has been understood by commentators since Casaubon that *manus* here means the gambling "stakes," which each participant in the dicing wagers against a good or bad throw of the dice; Aulus Gellius refers to the "pool" itself as *aes manuarium* (*NA* 18.13.4).[4]

Scholars, looking for parallels and unaware of the Petronian passage as interpreted by Catalano, have searched even further afield than he does. Shuckburgh, quoting Shakespeare (*Henry IV, Part I,* 4.1.47–48), looks to "the French and English *main* as a term in dice."[5] Pisani, thinking the Suetonian passage "l'unica testimonianza di *manus* col valore di 'posta al giuoco' " and acknowledging *mano* and *main,* finds an equivalent in Indian, and suggests that the Latin and Indian words are calques from an earlier use.[6] But the expressions of Trimalchio and Augustus parallel and clarify each other. Augustus allowed his companions not to lose their *manus;* Trimalchio leaves the game, or pulls his stakes from the table (*manum de tabula*). As Catalano documents, this use of gambling terminology is consistent with the tone and language of the passage in which it occurs and with Trimalchio's character as revealed elsewhere in the *Cena.* Trimalchio is fond of playing board games; one is

3. Catalano, "Petronio e il dialetto," 92–93. As Catalano notes (p. 93, n. 16), the Petronian interpretation *tabula = tabula lusoria* was suggested but not developed by Amedeo Maiuri, *La cena di Trimalchione di Petronio Arbitro* (Naples, 1945), 220.

4. Isaac Casaubon in J. H. Boeclerus, *Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus* (Strasbourg, 1688), 257–58. See e.g., the notes of J. A. Ernesti, *Caius Suetonius Tranquillus*[2] (Leipzig, 1775), 145; E. S. Shuckburgh, *C. Suetoni Tranquilli Divus Augustus* (Cambridge, 1896; reprint ed., Salem, 1984), 136; J. M. Carter, *Suetonius: Divus Augustus* (Bristol, 1982), 193; Joseph Gavorse, *The Lives of the Twelve Caesars* (New York, 1931), 97; J. C. Rolfe, *Suetonius,* rev. imp., vol. 1 (Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1951), 235; Robert Graves, *Gaius Suetonius Tranquillus: The Twelve Caesars,* rev. imp. (London, 1979), 85. Henrica Malcovati, *Imperatoris Caesaris Augusti Operum Fragmenta*[5] (Turin, 1969), 10, attributes the interpretation to Rutgers (1618), who would not predate Casaubon (1595) and whose Ovidian parallel (*Ars Am.* 1.451–52) Malcovati finds inadequate, comparing *Pont.* 1.4.46.

5. Shuckburgh, *Divus Augustus,* 136.

6. Vittore Pisani, "Due comparazione indo-latine," *RSO* 52 (1957): 765–67, quotation from 765.

in progress on a *tabula terebinthina* when he enters the *triclinium* (*Sat.* 33.1–3).[7] Trimalchio apparently gambles with his own slaves (*Sat.* 70.13).

Although the parallel between Petronius *Satyricon* 76.9 and Suetonius *Divus Augustus* 71.3 has gone unnoticed to the best of my knowledge, some translators of Petronius have seen Trimalchio's meaning: Haseltine translates *manum de tabula* as "I threw up the game"; Arrowsmith translates the phrase as "I picked up my winnings and pulled out." Perhaps the best translation would be "I cashed in my chips."[8]

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7. Catalano, "Petronio e il dialetto," 92.

8. M. Haseltine, *Petronius* (1913; rev. ed., Cambridge, Mass., and London, 1930), 153. William Arrowsmith, *The "Satyricon" of Petronius* (Ann Arbor, 1959), 77. Cf. A. E. Ernout, *Pétrone, le "satyricon"*[4] (Paris, 1958), 78. Lewis-Short, *A Latin Dictionary*, s.v. 1. *manus* II.E, *TLL* 8.3 (1971): 358.70–72 s.v. *manus* I.B.4.B and *OLD* s.v. *manus* 26 (1976 fascicle) cite only *Aug.* 71.3 for "stakes."

MACROBIUS, CORNUTUS, AND THE CUTTING OF DIDO'S LOCK

Macrobius' *Saturnalia* offers many valuable observations on Virgil. The one that has perhaps exerted the strongest influence on later scholarship is his discussion of the cutting of Dido's lock, which appears in Book 5 of his dialogue (5.19.1–5). Here Macrobius rejects the view of Lucius Annaeus Cornutus, who claimed that Virgil invented the notion that Dido was unable to die because Proserpina had not yet cut a lock of her hair. Macrobius (through the mouth of the philosopher, Eustathius) counters that Cornutus is mistaken, and he argues that the cutting of Dido's lock is in fact an imitation of Euripides' *Alcestis*, where, in accordance with common belief, the heroine goes to her death only after Thanatos cuts a lock of her hair (*Eur. Alc.* 73–76).

Modern scholars have generally regarded Macrobius' argument as proving that Virgil's portrayal of Proserpina is conventional. But before accepting Macrobius' remarks at face value it is necessary to recognize that Macrobius is here not really speaking as an "objective" scholar who is interested only in correcting a factual error that he has found in Cornutus. He is instead engaging in what is in essence an ideological dispute over the proper interpretation of Virgil's poetry and over the role that Virgil's poetry plays in his society. In this paper I will attempt to analyze the ways in which Macrobius' ideology shapes his discussion of the cutting of Dido's lock. By looking at a few representative examples, I hope to show that the readings that Macrobius' characters present in the course of their dialogue are typically constructed with the aim of confirming Macrobius' own view of how Virgil as the ideal poet must have composed.

At the heart of Macrobius' disagreement with Cornutus is a differing evaluation of poetic invention. Cornutus, in line with critical opinion reaching back to Aristotle, holds that poets have the right to invent and to present fictions in their works. Macrobius' conception of Virgil, however, allows no place for such license. He consistently regards invention as abhorrent, and is unwilling to admit its presence in Virgil's text.