SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE NARRATIVE TECHNIQUE OF PETRONIUS

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ONE OF THE MOST PROBLEMATIC QUESTIONS in the *Satyricon* is the character of the hero and narrator of the story, Encolpius himself. Critics rightly point out the fluctuations and seeming inconsistencies in Petronius' portrayal of him, as the following pen sketches from two recent studies show: "alternatively romantic and cynical, brave and timorous, malevolent and cringing, jealous and rational, sophisticated and naive" (J. P. Sullivan[1]); "simple soul and man of the world, sadist and soft-hearted sentimentalist, parasitic flatterer and ingenuous guest" (P. G. Walsh[2]). Explanations of these seeming inconsistencies, however, differ widely. Some find the self-contradictory character convincing in itself, in an Aristotelian sense consistently inconsistent. H. D. Rankin sees him in a rather modern light as a decayed intelligence, registering and aware of the experiences that flow over him but unable to confront and master them, a victim of random emotions and anxieties.[3] For Walsh the inconsistencies are primarily a matter of Encolpius' position as narrator: "He is the chameleon of the I-narrator who sees the complexities within himself but only the consistent traits in others."[4] Others explain the discrepancies in terms of the economy of the *Satyricon* as a whole. Sullivan insists that "Encolpius' character is disorganized and fragmentary, not because he is at odds with himself and suffering from a spiritual instability that the author is interested in exploring, but because he is the structural and narrative link for the different themes that Petronius has chosen, as well as the victim of certain comic and satiric situations. The character of Encolpius . . . is composed *of those traits, even if contradictory, which are appropriate responses to the demands of the particular episode*" (*loc. cit.* [n. 1]; Sullivan's italics). On a somewhat different tack, P. George accounts for the discrepancy between the quality and sophistication of the narrative and the naivety, stupidity, and poor taste of the narrator in terms of the author's wish to retain the vividness and the comic and satiric possibilities of first person narrative without

[1] *The Satyricon of Petronius* (Bloomington and London 1968) 119.

[2] *The Roman Novel* (Cambridge 1970) 81.

[3] "Some Comments on Petronius' Portrayal of Character," *Petronius the Artist: Essays on the* Satyricon *and its Author* (The Hague 1971) 11–31, 19.

[4] *Loc cit.* (n. 2). Walsh adds that the contradictions are also "explicable in part by the comic pose of the anti-hero as simpleton" (*ibid.*); cf. P. Veyne, "Le 'je' dans le Satiricon," *REL* 42 (1964) 301–324, who sees a consistent pose of *fausse naïveté* in Encolpius' conduct at the *cena*.

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stunting himself with the limitations of a style appropriate to the narrator.[5]

It will be noted that both of the last two explanations (George and Sullivan) imply a certain failure on Petronius' part, despite the brilliance of individual episodes (or, perhaps, because of it), to sustain an over-all plausibility and consistency in the writing of narrative fiction; or at least they suggest a willingness to sacrifice plausibility and consistency of narration for other effects. This, to some extent, is typical of the mainstream of Petronian criticism which tends to treat the *Satyricon* primarily in terms of parody, satire, and a medley of literary entertainment (the heaviest arguments being concerned with the genres that go to make the mixture and with Petronius' attitude towards them), and only secondarily as an extended novel.[6] In the study that follows I propose to take an opposite approach and to suggest a means of reconciling the discrepancies in Encolpius' character that at the same time sees in the *Satyricon* a well-wrought, sophisticated, and self-consistent work of narrative fiction.

The key to the solution is, I believe, a realization that in dealing with Encolpius one is concerned not with a single person but with two: Encolpius the narrator and Encolpius the subject of the narration. Not only are they two distinct persons separated by what is presumably a considerable span of time (the narrator is looking back on his own *past* adventures) but they are also two very *different* characters. The narrator, as we shall see, is sophisticated and competent, while his former self is chaotic and naïve. Strictly speaking, one should say only that *that version* of his former self *which the narrator chooses to present* is chaotic and naïve. For we should be aware that the Encolpius who is the protagonist in the adventures related is as much the creation of the Encolpius who tells the story as are the other characters who make their appearance in the novel. And as we shall also see, there is excellent reason to suppose that the very last thing that interests Encolpius the narrator is an accurate, factual reconstruction of his own past life and character. In the *Satyricon* we have in fact two levels of creation: the author creates the narrator and the narrator creates the narrative together with the various characters (himself included), using as a basis—but as no more than that—his own past experiences. In a sense, of course, the author creates the totality of the work, but to be aware of this alone is to rest on a generality which ignores the particular approach here taken by Petronius.

[5]"Style and Character in the *Satyricon*," *Arion* 5 (1966) 336–358, esp. 349 ff.

[6]This observation is perhaps somewhat unfair to George who, in the earlier part of his article (above, n. 5), demonstrates brilliantly the care which Petronius takes to make the rhetoric of different persons (in particular Giton) match and define their characters in the context of the narrative.

The genius of the *Satyricon*, considered as a work of narrative fiction, lies in the subtlety with which Petronius has delineated a highly sophisticated and complex narrator who defines himself brilliantly and consistently in the telling of his story.

That there is a real difference between the narrator and his former self and that an awareness of this difference might help in appreciating the structure and economy of the *Satyricon* is a consideration that has so far played virtually no part in the criticism of the work.[7] This unfortunate state of affairs is due to a number of factors. First, the mutilation of the text has deprived us of the beginning and end of the novel, points at which we might reasonably expect that the author would have shown us the narrator introducing and concluding his narration. At the most elementary level, then, we are never made aware of the narrator as an individual existing in his own right outside the context of the narrative, as we are, for example, by Clitophon's meeting with the author in Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon* or by Apuleius' introduction of himself to his audience in the *Metamorphoses*. Secondly, Petronius' narrator does not draw attention to himself by frequent use of a first person clearly referring to his present rather than his former self (a rare example occurs in 65.1 where the narrator comments on the *matteae* served at the banquet: *quarum etiam recordatio me, si qua est dicenti fides, offendit*). Thirdly, as we shall see, the narrator takes considerable pains to avoid the sort of aloof, superior, and judicious tone that would reveal beyond question his separate identity as a distinct person distanced from the action and looking back at past events from the vantage point of hindsight and experience. Finally, though, the main reason why the distinction between the narrator and his former self is generally ignored may well be a matter of the marginal status of prose fiction as a genre in ancient literature. Classical antiquity simply does not possess a large corpus of sophisticated prose fiction, and as a result the necessary critical approaches, such as "point of view" analysis, evolved in the study of other literatures are not by and large known to classicists or applied to such novels as fall within their sphere. Fortunately, with T. Hägg's recently published *Narrative Technique in Ancient Greek Romances* an excellent start has been made at remedying this deficiency.[8]

The starting point for an assessment of Encolpius as narrator must surely be Encolpius' own attitude towards the telling of his tale, since it

[7]The possibility of a distinction is intimated by Veyne (*op. cit.* [n. 4]) but is not further explored: "L'auto-ironie du *Satiricon* se justifait-elle par la conversion finale d'un Encolpe parvenu, après tous ses voyages, au port de la sagesse?" (307).

[8]Stockholm 1971. See in particular (*i*) Hägg's chapter on "Points of View" (112–137) and especially the section on Achilles Tatius (124 ff.) whose novel, like Petronius', takes the form of a first person narration, and (*ii*) his bibliography with its coverage of writers, especially American, on the novel in general.

is that which determines the whole character of the narration and thus of the novel itself. Why does he tell his story, what purpose is the narrative intended to serve? Lacking any explicit statement of aims, one must work backwards from the evidence of the structure and tone of the narrative itself. The answer is not difficult to find. It is abundantly clear that Encolpius' main—one is even tempted to say exclusive—aim in recounting his adventures is to *entertain*. One receives throughout the novel the consistent impression of a narrator *shaping* the adventures and encounters of his past life into episodes which will delight and amuse. The clearest proof of this is the narrator's use of realism. Where realism serves the end of effective story-telling realism is maintained. Thus, in the *cena*, where the main thrust of the narration is to build up a picture of a freedman magnate and his circle, realism dominates both the narrative and the reported speeches, since realism will clearly produce the effect desired. Yet even here unrealistic elements intrude when they contribute to the building of the narrator's portrait of Trimalchio and his world, for example the fantastic exaggerations of the bulletin read out by the *actuarius* (53.2): on a single day on a single estate 30 boys and 40 girls born, 500,000 *modii* of grain processed, 500 oxen broken in! When, however, different effects are aimed at in the story-telling, realism is sometimes jettisoned entirely. Take, for example, the introduction to the adventures with the legacy hunters at Croton. Here the narrator intends to entertain us with satire of sorts, and to set the scene he has the adventurers meet a certain *vilicus* who obligingly gives them a thumb-nail sketch of the predators and their prey (116.6–9):

In hac . . . urbe non litterarum studia celebrantur, non eloquentia locum habet, non frugalitas sanctique mores laudibus ad fructum perveniunt, sed quoscumque homines videritis, scitote in duas partes esse divisos. nam aut captantur aut captant. in hac urbe nemo liberos tollit, quia quisquis suos heredes habet, non ad cenas, non ad spectacula admittitur, sed omnibus prohibetur commodis, inter ignominiosos latitat. qui vero nec uxorem umquam duxerunt nec proximas necessitudines habent, ad summos honores perveniunt, soli fortissimi atque etiam innocentes habentur. adibitis . . . oppidum tamquam in pestilentia campos, in quibus nihil aliud est nisi cadavera quae lacerantur aut corvi qui lacerant.

[Müller's text]

In that town literature and the arts go utterly unhonored; eloquence there has no prestige; and those who lead the good and simple life find no admirers. Any man you meet in that town you may be certain belongs to one of two classes: the makers of wills and those who pursue the makers of wills. You will find no fathers there, for those with natural heirs of their own are regarded as pariahs. A father is someone who is never invited to dinner, never entertained, who, in short, is compelled to spend his life, outcast and excluded, among the poor and obscure. Those, however, who remain bachelors in perpetuity and have no close relatives are held in the highest honor and esteem: they and they alone are men of honor and courage, brave as lions, paragons without spot or flaw. In short, sirs, you are going to a place which is like a countryside ravaged by the plague, a place in which you will see only two things: the bodies of those who are eaten, and the carrion crows who eat them. [Arrowsmith's translation]

Now the point here is not that such a tirade is unrealistic in content: people frequently castigate cities in an exaggerated way as moral cesspools where only rogues thrive. Rather, the point is that such a speech with its neat summary of the state of affairs, its brisk style and clever antitheses is utterly implausible in the mouth of a farm bailiff encountered by chance by a party that has lost its way on a country road. Since the narrator, as we know from the *cena*, is more than capable of reporting realistically the talk of the uneducated, we must assume that he has other motives for presenting the conversation with the *vilicus* as he does. Here, as in other situations, the principle at work appears to be the effective presentation of the episode as an entertaining tale shaped to a certain pattern. The pattern here is a satiric farce in which legacy hunters prey on the rich, the rich on legacy hunters, and Eumolpus and company on all comers. The speech of the *vilicus* provides with considerable neatness, but also with total lack of plausibility if verisimilitude is taken into account, an alluring introduction to the episode.

The narrator gives us, then, not a precise and factual account of his past life and adventures but a version of them shaped imaginatively for the entertainment of an audience. In effect, he offers implicitly what Apuleius offers explicitly (*varias fabulas conseram auresque tuas benivolas lepido susurro permulceam*, 1.1), and he offers it perhaps more wholeheartedly, since in Apuleius' case a good part of the author-narrator's purpose—though unstated—is the glorification of Isis and the redeemed life. In the *Satyricon* there is no such ulterior motive at work. Petronius portrays a narrator spinning tales to amuse an audience, tales which we may suppose to be *based* on the narrator's experiences, but not an accurate *reconstruction* of them. Realism can at any point be sacrificed for effect, and we can never know just how close we come to the "facts" of the narrator's past life, though we can be quite sure that most of the time there is a high proportion of fantasy, imagination, and artistic editing to the mixture. Continuity and consistency in the *Satyricon* lie not in the *content* of the narration but in the *persona* of the narrator as an artist shaping a highly selective and fanciful autobiography.

It is the *persona* of the narrator that above all justifies the frequent appearance of verse in his story-telling. The verse is an organic part of the narrative because the narrator himself is firmly characterized throughout as a self-conscious practitioner of the art of words, as one who moulds the experiences of life into literary forms, and as a fascinated student of the poetic imagination—and its delusions. Moreover, the subjects of his narrative are often themselves the devotees—and victims—of rhetoric, of poetry, and of literary culture in general. They include not only such obvious figures as Eumolpus and Agamemnon, but also the hero's sexual associates (Giton and Ascyltus), and above all his own past self. The

difference between the narrator's approach to literary culture and that of the subjects of his narration is a topic I hope to explore more fully on a later occasion. At present the point I wish to emphasize is simply that it is the ubiquitous literary concerns of the narrator and his subjects that permit the frequent resort to verse without any loss of the novel's unity. This, indeed, is one of Petronius' subtlest achievements: the transformation of his chosen genre, the mixed prose and verse medium of Menippean satire, into coherent narrative fiction. The means that won him this triumph is the creation of his cultured and imaginative narrator. To realize the nature of Petronius' achievement one has only to compare the near contemporary *Apocolocyntosis* in which the movement from prose to verse is inexplicable in terms of any logic of narrative or character, and which therefore remains more or less at the level of a satiric medley.

The verse in the *Satyricon* may be divided into two categories: that which the narrator attributes to characters other than himself and that which he either attributes to his own past self or else presents in his own person as narrator. The first category is obviously the more straightforward, in that in each instance the verse must be presented as the spoken words of the character to whom it is attributed. More often than not the verse in this category is realistic enough, in the sense that it fits the character and the occasion. The best example of this sort is perhaps Eumolpus' "little elegy on hair" (*capillorum elegidarion*) and the hendecasyllables that follow (109.9–10). What could be more natural than that in the merry-making following the reconciliation on Lichas' ship the irrepressible old aesthete should deliver himself of a humorous medley of prose and verse, taking as an obvious starting point the ludicrously shorn and painted appearance of Giton and Encolpius?

. . . cum Eumolpus et ipse vino solutus dicta voluit in calvos stigmososque iaculari, donec consumpta frigidissima urbanitate rediit ad carmina sua coepitque capillorum elegidarion dicere. [109.8]

. . . when Eumolpus, being well in his cups, got the idea of throwing out some quips about bald heads and brandmarks, until exhausting his weak witticisms he went back to his poetry and began reciting a little elegy on hair. [Sullivan's translation]

Just as realistic (if we grant the convention of the narrator's total recall of lengthy poetry) is Eumolpus' *Sack of Troy* (89) with its genesis in the conversation between the two newly met *littérateurs* and the picture that confronts them in the gallery; even his *Civil War* (119 ff.), despite its huge length, is reasonable enough, given his addiction to verse-making and recitation and the established tastes and interests of the narrator which lead him to report it. Other examples of verse that fits both character and situation without any violation of realism are the lines of Agamemnon on training for the arts (5) and the execrable pieces of

Trimalchio on mortality (34.10 and 55.3). Of verse that is unrealistic in this sense the best example is probably Tryphaena's appeal to the combatants on board Lichas' ship (108.14). In "real" life such murderous conflicts springing from the passions of desperate men (*rabies libidine perditorum collecta*, 108.8) are seldom settled by the measured rhetoric of Vergilian hexameters. But realism is, of course, the last thing that interests the narrator in his description of the fight. Rather, his aim is to turn the fracas into an entertaining farce. Hence Giton's histrionics with the dummy razor (108.10–11), and hence too the narrator's ironic elevation of the brawl into "no commonplace war" (*non tralaticium bellum*, 108.12) which can only be settled by due ritual (*data . . . acceptaque ex more patrio fide*, 108.13) and the formulas of solemn treaty (109.2–3). Into this presentation Tryphaena's verse with its pretentious allusions to the sea flights of Paris and Medea fits admirably. The heroic and tragic overtones render the actual mêlée by contrast only the more ludicrous.

A further example of verse which is unrealistic and implausible in its given context is the poem of Oenothea on her powers as a witch (134.12). The poem merits some close attention since it leads us directly to certain highly significant features of the narrator's over-all design. The content of the poem is commonplace enough. Oenothea simply attributes to herself the standard accomplishments of witchcraft that one meets throughout ancient literature:[9] control of crop growth, the raising and stilling of tempests, power over animals, and—the supreme accomplishment—the ability to change the motions of the heavenly bodies. If one accepts lines 11–16 (see Müller *ad loc.*), Oenothea then cites the great mythical practitioners of her art: Medea, Circe, Proteus. In both language and content the poem is utterly trite. What gives it point is nothing in the poem itself but rather the contrast between, on the one side, the claims that it makes and the images that it conjures up, and on the other, the reality of Oenothea's person and abilities. For as the narrative proceeds, it becomes abundantly clear that Oenothea is a drunken, incompetent, libidinous, and venal hag whose "magic" cannot fool even the credulous Encolpius. This counter-picture the narrator paints in vivid detail: the dilapidated state of her cottage with its loose pegs (135.4) and rotten stool collapsing under her weight and scattering the fire needed for the ritual (136.1–2), the snack of decaying pig's head (135.4 and 136.1) and the spitting out of the bean shells *veluti muscarum imagines* (135.6), the quick change of attitude over the slaughtered goose once payment is offered (137.7–8), the pretense of divination by the nuts which even Encolpius realizes sink or swim in the wine depending on whether or not their kernels are properly formed (137.10), and finally the drunken and

[9]Cf. Ap. Rhod. 3.531–533, Virg. *Ecl.* 8.69–71, 95–99, *Aen.* 4.487–491, Tib. 1.2.43–52, Ovid *Am.* 2.1.23–28.

lecherous pursuit as Encolpius makes his escape (138.3). So glaring, then, is the contrast between the pretensions of the verse and the sordidness of the actual situation that one is lead to suppose that it is an intended element in the narrator's design. The verse is included not for its own sake (and certainly not for its artistic merits), but deliberately to set up this contrast between illusion and reality—though here, of course, one must bear in mind the fact that the "real" world is as much the narrator's creation as is the never-never land of poetic delusion (the farcical element built into the world of the everyday should keep us aware that this side of things is also shaped artistically, not merely recorded). What, though, is the purpose of this contrast? To suppose that it is intended to make a point about Oenothea herself, that her performances do not measure up to her pretensions, is to run into an immediate difficulty. For the narrator draws the contrast in so extreme a manner that it becomes scarcely credible that so squalid and uncultured a person could possibly entertain and express in correct—though hackneyed—form the literate and imaginative sentiments attributed to her in the verse. In other words, if we suppose that the contrast is purely a matter of opposite traits in Oenothea *alone*, we must also admit that the narrator's over-all portrait of her fails to achieve either unity or plausibility. There is, however, another possibility. Might we not suppose that the verse represents not the narrator's reconstruction of Oenothea's own pretensions to magical powers, but rather the reconstruction of what he himself in the past, with the fervid literary imagination that he carried into all his adventures, would *expect* a witch to claim on first encounter? The verse, on this supposition, would not really be Oenothea's at all, but rather the imaginings of Encolpius himself *projected* on to Oenothea in his later re-shaping of his adventures for narration. The interpretation is admittedly a complicated one. It depends for its plausibility on the realization that this would merely be a variation on a game which the narrator is constantly playing in his story-telling: the drawing of contrasts between the delusions engendered on his own past thinking by literary stereotypes and the often squalid truth about the people whom he met and the adventures which befell him. Most often this contrast is effected by means of the verse which the narrator either presents in his own person or attributes specifically to his own past self. It is to the verse of this type that we must now turn.

The verse of Encolpius falls naturally into two groups. The first, which is much the smaller, consists of those poems which are presented as the words and thoughts of the protagonist *in situ*. Encolpius' supplication of Priapus (133.3) is one such poem; it is set out unambiguously as his spoken words on the particular occasion: *positoque in limine genu* sic deprecatus sum *numen aversum* (133.2). Another is the poem in which he attributes his misfortunes to the wrath of Priapus and assimilates his

sufferings to the pattern of the divine persecution of the great heroes (139.2). The present tenses (*persequitur*, *sequitur*) guarantee it as his own words, or at least his thoughts (the absence of its prose framework from the text prevents us from knowing which), *in situ*. The same is true of the flamboyant challenge to Jupiter to sample Circe's charms (126.18). Again, the text is mutilated in its surroundings, but we could well construe it as a conceit spoken aloud to compliment and impress Circe herself (such an interpretation would fit well with the sentence that appears next in the text: *delectata illa risit . . .*, 127.1). Finally, I would also classify as Encolpius' words *in situ* the verse deprecating the censoriousness of would-be *Catones* (132.15), which I shall argue is actually a continuation of his soliloquy in defense of the rhetorical onslaught which he has just delivered against his recalcitrant member.

I am well aware that such a reading of the verse at 132.15 runs counter to the generally accepted interpretation. Most critics have understood the piece not as the words of Encolpius at all, but as a direct appeal by Petronius himself justifying, in his own person, the approach and subject matter of the *Satyricon*. Such, for example, was Collignon's opinion: "Il semble même qu'à un moment donné, Pétrone s'applique ouvertement à mettre son récit sous le patronage d'Épicure. Au chapitre 132 se lit une pièce de quatre distiques, où l'on croit entendre *l'auteur lui-même s'adressant à ses lecteurs et non plus cette fois par la bouche d'un de ses personnages*" (my italics).[10] The same view is adopted, as an unargued assumption, by both Arrowsmith ("a rare aside, that defends [Petronius'] work from the attacks of prudery")[11] and Sullivan ("an aside of the author to his audience, explaining part of his intentions and principles in a defense of the subjects of the *Satyricon* and his literary treatment of them").[12]

The view is a difficult one to refute. For it depends not on any evidence in the text that can be challenged as a matter of fact, but on an unexamined and fixed determination to discover at all costs the presence—and opinions, whether aesthetic or moral—of the author himself in his work. It is this preconception of the nature of the *Satyricon* as necessarily a vehicle for the tastes and opinions of its author (if only we could agree what they are!) that leads critics to seize on the verse at 132.15 as Petronius' direct address to us in his own proper person. But, in fact, we are not dealing with an author such as Fielding, part of whose technique—and a highly successful part—consists in regularly and explicitly entering his own work to explain, to justify and to point the moral. The verse to the *Catones* would be the *only* such intrusion to be found in the very sub-

[10] *Étude sur Petrone* (Paris 1892) 53.

[11] In the introduction to his translation (Ann Arbor 1959), xvi.

[12] *Op. cit.* (n. 1) 98.

stantial portions of the *Satyricon* that have survived. We would have to assume, then, that for the sake of a meagre few lines of personal apologetics the author has chosen to sabotage his whole carefully contrived effect of a story communicated throughout not by himself but by a narrator with his own distinct and subtly drawn *persona* recreating his own adventures.

But, in fact, the generally accepted view of the poem, with its disastrous implications for Petronius' narrative technique, is quite unnecessary. The poem may be read—and read more naturally—as a continuation, without any break, of the rhetorical soliloquy that immediately precedes it. Shortly beforehand Encolpius had delivered his tirade. He had then, however, experienced feelings of shame at having "bandied words with that part of the body which men of the stricter sort (*severioris notae homines*) usually do not admit even to their thoughts" (132.12). But his mood now veers again, and he reflects that his imprecations are only natural. His words are given in direct speech (132.13–14):

Quid autem ego . . . mali feci, si dolorem meum naturali convicio exoneravi? aut quid est quod in corpore humano ventri male dicere solemus aut gulae capitique etiam, cum saepius dolet? quid? non et Ulixes cum corde litigat suo, et quidam tragici oculos suos tamquam audientes castigant? podagrici pedibus suis male dicunt, chiragrici manibus, lippi oculis, et qui offenderunt saepe digitos, quicquid doloris habent in pedes deferunt.

What's so unnatural or wrong about working off one's feelings with a little plain-spoken abuse? Don't we curse our guts, our teeth, our heads, when they give us trouble? Didn't Ulysses himself have a parley with his heart? Why, the way those heroes in the tragic plays strut around cursing their eyes, you'd think their eyes had ears. Gouty people damn their toes; arthritics curse their joints; the crud-eyed blast their eyes and even toe-stubbers take out their feelings on their feet. [Arrowsmith's translation]

It is at this point that the poem is introduced. The first four lines are as follows:

Quid me constricta spectatis fronte Catones
damnatisque novae simplicitatis opus?
sermonis puri non tristis gratia ridet
quodque facit populus, candida lingua refert.

Why do you censors stare at me with frowning brow and condemn a work of novel simplicity? The lively charm of pure language laughs through it, and what the people do my candid tongue reports.[13]

The continuity of this first part of the verse with the preceding prose passage is seamless. The *Catones*, surely, are the *severioris notae homines* whom we met above. Encolpius is now addressing them directly as if they were present (he is, in fact, soliloquizing) and debating with him on

[13]My translation here is intentionally as literal as possible. In general, the versions of the published translations are coloured by their common conviction that the poem is Petronius' *apologia* for the *Satyricon* (see esp. Arrowsmith's version).

standards of propriety in speech. The development of the rhetoric is typical of Encolpius, as the narrator (who is, of course, his later self) reveals him to us. In his soliloquy Encolpius moves from the reality of his own impotence to a debate with imaginary adversaries on the propriety of making a declamation out of it. In precisely the same way the earlier oration over the drowned Lichas (115.8–19) had drifted away from the here and now of the individual corpse on the sea shore to the generalities of a classroom exercize complete with imagined objectors to the line of argument:

At enim fluctibus obruto non contingit sepultura. tamquam intersit, peritурum corpus quae ratio consumat, ignis an fluctus an mora. quicquid feceris, omnia haec eodem ventura sunt. ferae tamen corpus lacerabunt. tamquam melius ignis accipiat; immo hanc poenam gravissimam credimus, ubi servis irascimur. [115.17–18]

But I hear someone object: those who drown at sea die unburied. Lord, lord, as though it mattered how this deathbound flesh should die! Fire or water or the wear and tear of time, what does it matter? Death or death: the end is always the same. But objectors again: wild beasts may mutilate the body. And so? Is the fire that someday cremates your corpse more friendly? Gentle fire, the cruelest death to which an angry master can sentence his slave? [Arrowsmith's translation]

Surely, then, the *novae simplicitatis opus* of the poem's second line need be understood as no more than the tirade against the offending member. To accept this interpretation, it is not necessary to believe that the tirade *really is* "a work of novel simplicity" or that it has in fact all the qualities ascribed to it (purity and candour of language, liveliness and charm). We need only admit that Encolpius himself might well make such a claim. Given his talent for grandiose fantasies (cf. the sacrifice and festival promised to Priapus in 133.3), the supposition is perfectly plausible. If the term *opus* seems out of all proportion to the few sentences actually recorded, it can be accounted for by Encolpius' exaggerated sense of literary self-importance. Even when first introduced, the tirade is called an *oratio* (the choice of term reflecting, I take it, Encolpius' own estimation at the time): *erectus igitur in cubitum* hac fere oratione *contumacem vexavi* (132.9).

On this reading, the expression *quod facit populus* need be taken to refer to no more than what Encolpius has just been saying that people as a matter of fact habitually do, which is to curse those parts of their bodies which give them trouble. The fourth line of the poem, then, is merely a recapitulation in verse of what has already been argued in detail in prose. Encolpius claims that his tirade has the merit of "candour" (*candida lingua*) because it reflects the idiom of ordinary people (*quod facit populus*). As he had said earlier (132.13), he has only relieved his feelings with "natural invective" (*naturali convicio*).

But, in fact, the expression *quod facit populus* is usually construed in a

very different sense. Its meaning is generally understood not from what precedes it, but from what follows. For the poem continues (lines 5–8):

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.

All men born know of mating and the joys of love; all men are free to let their limbs glow in a warm bed. Epicurus himself, the true father of truth, bade wise men be lovers, and said that herein lay the goal of life. [Heseltine's Loeb translation]

Reading back from line 5 to 4, it is natural enough to suppose that "what the people do" is to be understood in the present context as love-making. The inference seems guaranteed by the conjunction *nam*:

quodque facit populus candida lingua refert.
nam *quis concubitus, Veneris quis gaudia nescit?*

Now if this equation of *quod facit populus* with *concubitus* and the *gaudia Veneris* is accepted, it follows that the subject matter of the *novae simplicitatis opus* is also *concubitus* and the *gaudia Veneris*. In that case the *novae simplicitatis opus* must be construed as something other than Encolpius' tirade, the subject of which was rather different and much more specific, namely his own impotent member. Since there is no other internal candidate for the *novae simplicitatis opus*, it is tempting to equate it with the *Satyricon* itself and to suppose that the author is here thrusting himself forward to justify his own subject matter.

And yet, as I have argued, this interpretation involves the supposition that here and here only in the entire preserved text does the author choose to violate his otherwise carefully maintained pretense that the *Satyricon* is the continuous autobiography of a narrator with a distinct and definite *persona* of his own. It also involves the supposition of a considerable lacuna immediately prior to the verse to allow first for the change of speakers from Encolpius *in situ* to the author in his own person, and secondly for the shift of subject matter from the propriety of speaking about certain parts of the body to the propriety of treating of sexual matters in general. It is the first of these changes that is the really awkward one. Surely, it is quite inconceivable that at one moment Encolpius the protagonist—not even Encolpius the narrator—should be speaking, and at the next, and without any transition, Petronius in his own voice.[14] And yet it is well-nigh impossible to imagine what form a

[14]Strangely enough, just such an unsignalled and abrupt switch from Encolpius to the author is implied by both Sullivan and Arrowsmith. Both critics believe that the poem is Petronius' own apology, but in their translations neither of them marks a lacuna in front of the verse. Collignon (*loc. cit.* [n. 10]) was more aware of the difficulties involved in reading the poem as authorial comment: "Ces quatre distiques ne se lient pas étroitement

transitional sentence or passage, alerting us to the fact that the verse will be the author's own apology, could conceivably take. An easy transition to and from authorial comment is precisely what Petronius has denied himself by the very skill and consistency with which he presents the *Satyricon* exclusively as a story told by his narrator Encolpius.

I suggest, then, that we return to an interpretation of the poem as a continuation of Encolpius' soliloquy, understanding the *novae simplicitatis opus* as his recent tirade and *quod facit populus* as the everyday practice, which he has just been discussing, of cursing mis-functioning parts of the body. With this reading we must, of course, postulate a lacuna between lines 4 and 5, since there will now be a *non sequitur* between Encolpius' claim that his speech only reflects the common habit of damning one's faulty members and the rhetorical question "who is ignorant of love-making?" We may suppose that in the missing section Encolpius developed his argument to the point of demanding from his imaginary opponents the right to speak of sexual matters at large, on the grounds of their universality and their prime importance in human life. This intervening prose passage dropped out, and the two verse passages were conflated, with the conjunction *nam* suggesting a sort of spurious continuity. Such a conflation of two pieces of verse can be exactly paralleled in 80.9, where two separate pairs of couplets have likewise coalesced into a single verse passage, though in that instance the lack of real continuity between the two is more readily apparent.

A significant feature of the verse at 132.15 (if my interpretation is correct) is the way in which the original tirade is built up in Encolpius' imagination into a full-scale literary *opus*. This quality of exaggeration is also present in the other pieces of verse which are presented as the words or thoughts of the protagonist in action. Significantly, the exaggeration often takes the form of a flight of fancy into the world of literature and myth along much the same lines as the poem on Oenothea's powers (134.12), which I suggested above should properly be read as the hero's own fantasy projected into the witch's mouth. Thus, in his prayer to Priapus (133.3) Encolpius commits himself not only to the sacrifice of a goat and a litter of piglets (lines 13–15) but also to an entire festival complete with chorus of suitably inebriated and dancing youths (line 16 f.):

> *Spumabit pateris hornus liquor, et ter ovantem*
> *circa delubrum gressum feret ebria pubes.*

New wine will foam in bowls, and thrice around thy shrine the tipsy youth will tread its joyous dance.

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avec ce qui précède. On peut, avec M. Buecheler, supposer une lacune. Ou bien il y a eu transposition de ce morceau primitivement placé ailleurs à l'endroit qu'il occupe aujourd'hui."

The image is that of a rustic revel of the type that features regularly in idealizing poetry about the simple, pious life of the countryside.[15] But it is utterly inappropriate to Encolpius with his radically different *milieu* and style of life. For, in sober fact, how on earth is this city boy of presumably slender means going to assemble all those dancing yokels to redeem his vow for him? But, clearly, the faithful fulfilment of his promises is not the consideration uppermost in Encolpius' mind.[16] He is indulging in a literary fantasy in which he enters a pastoral world to act as master of ceremonies in a festival modelled on the best poetic stereotypes. Much the same "trip" into the world of literature is also evident in the verse at 139.2, though there the realm entered is that of epic and heroic myth. With magnificent hyperbole the impotent Encolpius classes himself, as the victim of Priapus' wrath, with the archetypal victims of divine jealousy, Hercules, Laomedon, Pelias, Telephus, and Ulysses:

> *me quoque per terras, per cani Nereos aequor*
> *Hellespontiaci sequitur gravis ira Priapi.* [line 7 f.]

Me too over land and grey Nereus' sea the harsh anger of Hellespontine Priapus pursues.

In view of the wide-spread belief that the wrath of Priapus is a major theme in the composition of the *Satyricon* as a whole,[17] it is, I believe, most important to bear in mind that we have only the word of Encolpius the protagonist, not of Encolpius the narrator, as assurance that his sufferings stem from the individual attentions of an outraged god. The hypothesis of divine persecution may well be no more than a fantasy spun by the hero partly to salvage his dignity in the humiliating circumstances

[15]Cf. Virg. *Georg.* 1.338–347, 2.527–531, Hor. *Odes* 3.18.

[16]A fair indication of Encolpius' break with reality as his poetic fancy runs away with him is his claim *non sanguine tristi/perfusus venio, non templis impius hostis/admovi dextram* (lines 6–8). But the crimes of homicide and temple desecration are precisely those that he has recently confessed in his letter to Circe (130.2): *hominem occidi, templum violavi.* In the poem, however, Encolpius is deluding himself into the rôle of the guiltless suppliant. Therefore, *by definition of the rôle assumed,* he *cannot* have committed the crimes which in other circumstances he will openly—even somewhat boastfully—admit.

[17]See, for example, the following observations of Sullivan (*op. cit.* [n. 1] 42) and Walsh (*op. cit.* [n. 2] 76): ". . . the wrath of the god . . . provides one of the mainsprings of the plot." "The pervasive motif . . . is of a hero beset by the anger of Priapus." This view was first put forward by E. Klebs, "Zur Komposition von Petronius Satirae," *Philologus* 47 (1889) 623 ff. Strictly speaking, all that we are entitled to claim is, I believe, (*a*) that Encolpius the protagonist, a character whom we know to be hopelessly prone to fantasy and melodrama, *imagines himself on certain occasions* to be the victim of the anger of Priapus, and (*b*) that these imaginings are understandable in view of (*i*) the nature of his ailment at Croton (i.e., impotence) and (*ii*) his occasional entanglements with people such as Quartilla who are genuinely connected with the cult of Priapus.

of sexual impotence and partly because, in any case, he is by nature a compulsive spinner of such fantasies.

So far we have been discussing only those pieces of verse which are presented directly as the words or thoughts of Encolpius *in situ*. A much larger group consists of pieces which Encolpius offers in his rôle of narrator. These pieces are contemporaneous with the prose narrative; they look back on the past adventures from the same later standpoint in time. Most of them are characterized by past tenses: e.g., *qualis nox* fuit *illa* (79.8), *nobilis aestivas platanus* diffuderat *umbras* (131.8), *ter* corripui *terribilem manu bipennem* (132.8), *non Indum* fulgebat *ebur* (135.8). When present tenses are used, they tend to be the timeless presents of general propositions: e.g., *nomen amicitiae sic, quatenus* expedit, haeret (80.9), *quisquis* habet *nummos, secura* navigat *aura* (137.9).

Now of all these pieces only a single one actually functions as narrative in advancing the telling of the story. That piece is the verse at 132.8, which describes Encolpius' attempt at self-mutilation and its failure: *ter corripui terribilem manu bipennem*. The rest are a medley of background description (e.g., on the beauties of nature as the setting for the meeting with Circe, 131.8), moralizing (e.g., on the limits of friendship, 80.9.1–4), commentary on the action (e.g., the extended simile comparing the sexual failure with Circe to the loss of a hoard of gold that a dreamer experiences on awaking, 128.6), and literary and mythical allusions (e.g., the comparison between the victory over the geese and the routing of the Stymphalian birds by Hercules and of the Harpies by the Argonauts, 136.6). Do we conclude, then, that these pieces represent the studied evaluations and literary reflections of the narrator looking back on his past life and adventures? The answer, unfortunately, cannot be a simple yes. For to suppose such would be to ignore a persistent and significant feature of many of these pieces. In perhaps the majority of instances the verse, *taken in context*, is somehow inappropriate, ludicrous, or downright false. Furthermore, the error or absurdity belongs not to Encolpius the narrator, whose concern is to draw attention to it in an oblique and subtle way, but rather to Encolpius the protagonist in action.

Let us take as an example the verse description of Oenothea's cottage (135.8). The place is characterized as a model of rustic simplicity. The appearance and furnishings are described in terms which are favourable or at least neutral (with the exception, perhaps, of the wine-stained pottery at line 7 and the rather careless application of daub to wattle at line 8 f.). It is the sort of place, indeed, that prompts thoughts of Hecale, the old woman immortalized by Callimachus as an archetype of peasant hospitality. Now the most striking thing about this verse description is that it is clean contrary to the facts as given in the prose narrative. Oenothea's cottage, as we have seen already, is a ramshackle and filthy hovel and its

owner a slovenly hag (no Hecale she!). The contrast between prose and verse can be seen at its clearest in the edible provisions that each makes mention of. The prose speaks of dirty beans (*grana sordidissimis putaminibus vestita*, 135.5) and a decaying pig's head, the veteran of countless snacks (*sincipitis vetustissima particula mille plagis dolata*, 135.4; *coaequale natalium suorum sinciput*, 136.1), while the verse describes only fruit and sweet smelling herbs (*mitia sorba/et thymbrae veteres et passis uva racemis/inter odoratas pendebant texta coronas*, lines 12–14). Now the contrast between the sordid reality of the prose and the idealizing fantasies of the verse is too marked, too vivid, and too entertaining to be a matter of chance discrepancy or of careless composition. We must assume, then, that it is an effect intentionally engineered by Encolpius the narrator. It follows, therefore, that the illusions of the verse are not *his* illusions; *he* does not see Oenothea and her shack in the idealizing light of the verse. Whose illusions are they, then? Surely they must represent the poetic fantasies in which, as we have seen already, the narrator's *former* self, Encolpius the protagonist, used constantly to indulge. Though the language of the verse with its past tenses seems to emanate from the narrator looking back in time, the sentiments are very much those of the hero in the thick of his adventures. Like the flight of fancy in the prayer to Priapus (133.3), the reflections on Oenothea's cottage are clearly the imaginings of the Encolpius who lives half his life in a never-never land of myth and literature and whose imagination is easily triggered into fantastic poetic responses, however inappropriate or even ludicrous. Thus, the mere fact of the *paupertas* of Oenothea's dwelling place (135.7) is enough to prompt the hero's musings on the commonplace theme of the simple life free from the burden of riches (lines 1–3 of the poem), and by a sort of literary osmosis the shack, despite its all too obvious squalour, is transformed into the rustic and fragrant haunt of a Hecale. The beginnings of this drift into fantasy are caught precisely in the prose sentence that introduces the verse: *mirabar equidem paupertatis ingenium singularumque rerum quasdam artes*. Though presented in the format of a narrator's description, the verse that follows is clearly a reconstruction of the hero's intrigued reflections (*mirabar equidem*) at the time.

Let us look at some of the other passages in which the narrator's verse, by reason of some obviously deliberate contrast with a sordid or ludicrous prose reality, seems to be a reconstruction of Encolpius' fantasies at the time. One such piece is the verse comparing the victory over the geese to the routing of the Stymphalian birds or the Harpies (136.6). The verb *reor* (line 2 of the verse) should be the narrator's present: "In just such a way I think the Stymphalian birds . . . fled" (*tales . . . Stymphalidas . . . fugisse* reor). But it reflects, I believe, more the pretensions to mythic grandeur of the hero himself in action. For once again the narrative

makes it abundantly clear that the actual fray is a very different matter from its imagined counterparts, and since the narrator is controlling this contrast between reality and illusion it cannot be he who is the spinner of illusion, except in the sense of *re-creating* his own past fantasies. The passage is a particularly interesting one in that the hero's fantasies are allowed to spill over into the preceding prose (136.4–5), where we find, often in the same sentence, a subtle mixture of heroic posturing and absurd or very ordinary reality. In the protagonist's imagination his foes are viciously formidable (*impetum in me faciunt foedoque ac veluti rabioso stridore circumsistunt trepidantem*) and their leader a sort of Mezentius: *dux et magister saevitiae.* But probably they are only looking for their midday meal (*qui, ut puto, medio die solebant ab anu diaria exigere*), and part of the injuries which they inflict on Encolpius, the tearing of his tunic and the breaking of his sandal straps, are scarcely compatible with heroic dignity. Again, Encolpius defends himself *armata manu,* but his weapon is actually a table leg, and a diminutive table leg (*pedem mensulae*) at that! Finally, the battering to death of the *dux* which had been rash enough to bite Encolpius' leg is spoken of as an act of epic vengeance: *morte me anseris vindicavi.*

Yet another piece of verse in which there is a jarring contrast between the poetry and its prose context is the implied comparison of the love-making with Circe to the ἱερὸς γάμος of Jupiter and Juno (127.9). The hero's musings (*Idaeo quales fudit de vertice flores / terra parens*) are triggered by the varied plant cover on to which Circe lowers him (127.8): *implicitumque me bracchiis . . . deduxit in terram vario gramine indutam.* But the love-making itself is a bathetic anticlimax, trailing off into Circe's shrill and vulgar questioning (128.1): *numquid te osculum meum offendit? numquid spiritus ieiunio marcens? numquid alarum sum negligens?* What could be more extreme than this contrast between the fantasy of the ἱερὸς γάμος, that most fructiferous of all unions, and the actual impotence of Encolpius' performance, or between the imagined floral idyll and Circe's real anxieties about her personal hygiene? Again, the contrast is clearly an effect produced by the narrator, and the comparison with the ἱερὸς γάμος, so false to the realities of the situation, can only be the fantasy of the hero in the moments before disappointment strikes. The same, surely, is true of the ecstatic poem on the mutual joys of that night which in fact ends so crushingly with Giton's choice of Ascyltus as his "brother" (79.8): *qualis nox fuit illa, di deaeque.* The verse implies a union of souls in the high passion that unites the two bodies: *et transfudimus hinc et hinc labellis/errantes animas* (line 3 f.). But as events immediately show, such a union is an illusion: Giton will jilt Encolpius for another man, seemingly at whim. Indeed, in this particular passage the narrator, in what I take to be one of his rare uses of a first person referring to his present rather

than his past self, himself alludes to this very discrepancy between the illusions and the realities of his earlier life. For at the end of the verse the prose resumes with the sentence, *sine causa gratulor mihi* ("but I flatter myself without good cause," 79.9). The narrator is here saying that the picture which he has just painted of a highly romantic and, by implication, exclusive passion is unfounded in reality; for Ascyltus, he continues, made off with the boy. The single present (*gratulor*), followed by an immediate switch to past tenses (*nam cum . . . remisissem . . . manus, Ascyltos . . . subduxit mihi . . . puerum et in lectum transtulit suum*), suggests that this is certainly the narrator's comment at the time of narration and not the protagonist's at the time of the original action.[18]

Naturally, not all of the narrator's verse demonstrates the sort of ludicrous contrast with its prose context that would make it unequivocally a reconstruction of the protagonist's musings *in situ*. Some of the pieces are sound and unexceptionable comments on the situations as they really were. For example, the verse on the power of money (137.9) is an appropriate enough general response to Oenothea's sudden change of attitude over the slaughter of the goose when payment is offered. It would not be inconsistent, then, to imagine that here the verse is the narrator's own commentary, since such a supposition would not contradict what we know of his sophisticated clear-sightedness. But we can, of course, equally well imagine it to be Encolpius' own reflection at the time, a reflection which for once squarely hits the mark and which is then echoed and endorsed by his later self in the process of narration. The same two options are also open for the verse in which the hero's reaction to the fiasco with Circe is compared to the sense of loss experienced on awaking from a dream of hoarded gold (128.6). We could take the verse, which is forceful and to the point, either as exclusively the narrator's own composition at the time of narration or else as his reconstruction of a comparison which he made at the time of the original experience. It is impossible to decide for certain, though since we are told that the hero was in fact musing at the time (*ego contra damnatus et quasi quodam visu in horrorem perductus interrogare animum meum coepi, an vera voluptate fraudatus essem*, 128.5), it is perhaps best to interpret the verse as echoing, in part, the contents of those reflections.[19]

[18]Such, though, is not the usual reading implied by the translations. Cf., for example, Arrowsmith ("Alas, I boasted of my happiness too soon") and Sullivan ("I congratulated myself too soon").

[19]The prose tells us that the theme of Encolpius' self-questioning was *an vera voluptate fraudatus essem*. If the verse is also taken as re-creating Encolpius' reflections at the time, then the prose summary of his line of inquiry must be understood to mean "whether it was real (as opposed to illusory or dream-like) pleasure that I had been deprived of." Encolpius, in other words, is left wondering after Circe's departure whether the whole experience might not have been a dream—or nightmare. I stress this point because the

By and large, however, the dominant impression that emerges from the narrator's verse, as from that which is directly attributed to the protagonist *in situ*, is one of a hero who constantly—perhaps even compulsively—indulges in flights of fancy, mainly into a world of literary stereotypes, in contexts which render his fantasies both ludicrous and perversely inappropriate to the prose realities of his life, character, *milieu*, and adventures. The contrast between the hero's fantasies and the real situations in which he lives and moves is established by the narrator through the subtle and humorous juxtaposing of verse and prose. The narrator allows his audience to draw its conclusions about the hero—and about himself—from the contrasts alone. Nowhere does he intrude into his narrative to say in so many words that his protagonist, his own former self, lived much of his life surrounded by an aura of self-induced illusion and literary fantasy. Yet that is the conclusion that inescapably emerges. It is a conclusion, moreover, that helps us answer the problem with which this study started: the apparent character conflict between Encolpius as the cool and rational sophisticate and Encolpius as the deluded simpleton. The cool and rational sophisticate is the Encolpius who delicately and amusingly shapes his narrative in such a manner as to point up, without specific comment, the fantasies of his subject; the deluded simpleton is the earlier Encolpius who himself dreamt up and experienced the fantasies.

In dealing with the contrast between narrator and protagonist as seen in certain of the verse passages and their prose contexts, one has not, of course, covered (even by implication) the whole topic of the relationship between the two. Much remains to be examined in the prose alone. Much, moreover, remains to be said about the way in which the narrator presents characters other than his own past self. But these topics must wait for separate treatment. For the present I hope that I have established enough to suggest first that a distinction can and should be drawn between Encolpius as narrator and Encolpius as protagonist, and secondly that what Petronius offers us in the *Satyricon* is a portrait of Encolpius the narrator shaping an amusing and sophisticated version of his past life and adventures which includes, as a theme of major interest, a detailed treatment of his own chaotic and fantasy-ridden former self.

To conclude, I should emphasize the fact that both the hero's fantasies and the contrasted "realities" of his life and adventures as presented in the narrative are constructions of the narrator which may in fact corre-

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translators for the most part imply that the pleasure was accepted as real enough and that the only question that engages Encolpius' thoughts is whether or not he had lost it: ". . . wondering if I were now cut off forever from my only hope of joy" (Arrowsmith), ". . . whether I had been robbed of the chance of true pleasure" (Sullivan). This, I believe, misses the point. The emphatic word in the indirect question is *vera*, which should be understood predicatively.

spond only loosely to the hero's "actual" fantasies and "actual" experiences. As I suggested earlier, the narrator's primary concern seems to be to shape his life and adventures into well-organized and entertaining episodes, even on occasions at the expense of realism and verisimilitude. Thus, not only the verse fantasies but also the prose "realities" may well contain certain deliberate inventions of the narrator designed simply to make the contrast more dramatic. For his aim is not to present an accurate case study of his earlier fantasies but to shape them for our entertainment. What his own feelings towards them actually are, it is difficult to tell (perhaps, in any case, it is the wrong question to ask of such a narrator). But a possible hint is offered by a strange phenomenon which we have already noted: the presentation of most of the protagonist's fantasies in the form of the narrator's own verse compositions looking back from a later standpoint in time. It is as if the narrator were fondly reliving the follies and fantasies of the past by giving expression to them as his own compositions of the present. It is a subtle device. For by identifying with his own past self in this way, the narrator avoids the sort of aloof and heartless ridicule of his subject which would render both himself and his narrative far less attractive than they are. Indeed, I believe that this identification of the narrator with his protagonist contributes in large measure to that atmosphere of good humour and moral sanity which the *Satyricon* somewhat paradoxically maintains. In place of unfeeling condemnation, callous contempt, and unpitying laughter, we are invited to feel sympathy with the young Encolpius as absurdly but gamely he confronts his unedifying experiences with the grand fantasies of myth and literature. To a great extent we feel this sympathy because the older Encolpius who is telling the story retains it himself.

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