Queer World-Making in Petronius' *Satyricon*
This dissertation is a reading of certain aspects of Petronius’ *Satyricon* in light of contemporary queer theory, where “queer” is understood broadly as “non-normative”. This non-normativity encompasses gender and sexuality as well as other vectors of positionality, in particular class. A popular reading of the *Satyricon* contends that its characters are figures of derision, and that their “lowly” escapades should be viewed over the narrator’s head, from the implied perspective of a “hidden author”. The dissertation challenges this interpretation by reading from the perspective of the characters themselves rather than that of a superior figure of elite normativity, arguing that they are in the process of creating new queer worlds. Key queer theoretical texts informing the dissertation’s approach include Edelman’s *No Future*, Butler’s *Gender Trouble*, and Halberstam’s *The Queer Art of Failure*.

The first two chapters explore the queer parody and reformulation by Petronian characters of two key aristocratic Roman institutions, fraternity and marriage. The first chapter examines how the central characters, Encolpius, Ascytos, and Giton, appropriate sublime Roman fraternity in order to forge new forms of kinship in the absence of natal family, while the second focusses on the Pannychis episode, the marriage of Trimalchio and Fortunata, and the Wife of Ephesus, substantiating the myriad ways in which these episodes challenge normative conceptions of marriage and elite (reproductive) futurity.

The second pair of chapters reads the Croton episode as a microcosm of the text as a whole, focusing on its paradoxical combination of biological non-reproductivity and creative
fertility, as instantiated by the struggle of the younger generation to adapt to a world where biological reproduction no longer carries world-building force and normative social relations have been blighted.

The fourth chapter presents a close reading of the Circe episode in light of theoretical literature positioning masochism as a mode of eroticism that privileges non-phallic means of generating pleasure. It suggests that Encolpius’ “failed” relationship with Circe exhibits a queer, masochistic aesthetic, to the side of the phallocentric impotence plot: as elsewhere, failure is productive, not paralyzing.
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**Introduction**

We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality. We have never been queer, yet queerness exists for us an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future. The future is queerness's domain. Queerness is a structuring and educated mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present. The here and now is a prison house. We must strive, in the face of here and now's totalizing rendering of reality, to think and feel a then and there. Some will say that all we have are the pleasures of this moment, but we must never settle for this minimal transport; we must dream and enact new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds. Queerness is a longing that propels us onward, beyond romances of the negative and toiling in the present. Queerness is that thing that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing.¹

I quote from the iconic opening passage of Jose Esteban Muñoz' 2009 book *Cruising Utopia*, one of the most influential works of queer theory of the past few years (and a work whose pathos has increased since the untimely passing of its author). It is an apt an introduction to recent conceptualizations of this thing called “queerness” as any: queerness is not precisely definable, but bears a distinctive temporality, an orientation towards an as yet unrealized potentiality – in short, the making of the world anew, the great prison break. Queerness is capacious: it is not shackled to same-sex sexual activity, or even sexuality in general. It is, rather, a refusal of what is, in favour of an almost ecstatic groping towards what could be, what already exists and yet does not quite exist at the same time, what has been but what has not been clearly articulated. Against claims of presentism or faddishness often directed at queer theory, Muñoz' form of queerness incorporates the past and the future under the idiom of the unrealized but almost dreamt. The aesthetic is Muñoz' playground: from literature to visual and performance art, he peeks around corners, pushes the envelope, allows the out-of-control past to come

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¹ Muñoz (2009), 1.
careering right through the present into the future, disappearing from the centre of our field of vision but still flickering in the peripheral.

But what, then, of Petronius' *Satyrica*, a blast from the ancient Roman past, a riot of sex, food, poetry, and story-telling, peopled by witches, whores, thieves, parasites, slaves, the over-schooled and the self-taught alike? It is a strange, vibrant work of beauty and degradation, soaring from above to crash into the gutter, surrounded by the irresistible aura of fragmentation, the very catnip of the classicist. And there is so much we do not know: who wrote it, when it was written, how the plot begun and ended, how long it was, what kind of work it was at all, how it fits into what we know of Latin literature. Scholars of classical antiquity have occupied themselves with answering questions such as these, producing a range of carefully-wrought answers, none of which, given the irredeemable loss of most of the text, can ever be confirmed.

What we have of the *Satyrica* takes up 175 widely-spaced pages in the standard modern Latin text (the Teubner, edited by Müller, now in its fourth edition), a text peppered with lacunae and uncertain readings, patched together from several different manuscript traditions and cobbled into a more or less coherent narrative exploring the assorted adventures of a gang of rogues, narrated in the first person by the young Encolpius, a wildly unreliable narrator if ever there were one. Already, there is a queer whiff to all this: no beginning or ending, only middle, all present; no 100% confirmed author figure, only the mythos of the Neronian aristocrat Titus (?) Petronius and the narrative of a character whose background, past, and future we do not know but can only deduce.\(^2\) Like all ancient texts that have persisted into the twenty-first century, the *Satyrica* is a palimpsest, written over by generations of textual editors, and invested with the

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\(^{2}\) On Petronius the Neronian courtier and the evidence for him being the author of the *Satyrica*, Rose (1971) makes a clear case. Not everyone is convinced. I generally consider the *Satyrica* a Neronian text (while remaining somewhat agnostic on the identity of the author), but few of my analyses strictly require a Neronian date (much as Neronian non-normativity fits rather well with the text we have and my reading of it).
energy of centuries of reading, re-reading, and rewriting. Yet classicists have by and large
acted as salvage workers, seeking to reconstruct what has been lost, and to make sense of it in
terms of what we know of ancient literary genres. Is it a novel? A satire, Menippean or not? A
kind of mime? A parody of the *Odyssey*; of the Greek novel? A massive “Milesian tale”? A
synthetic cyborg text, grafted with an epic limb here, a novelistic limb there, armed with a
weaponized version of laughter? The question of genre, date, and authorship has been dubbed
the ultimate *Quaestio Petroniana*, as if knowing the answer would unravel the mysteries of the
text and render it neatly comprehensible. For my purposes, the text's fragmentation, a matter of
chance rather than design, nonetheless renders any queer modern reading of it that much queerer.
The ancient past collides with a postmodern aesthetic that privileges the partial and the
fragmented, that which lacks a tidy conclusion.

What I seek to do in this dissertation is something a little different, or, indeed,
considerably different. I primarily grapple with the narrative as we have it, or as we have rebuilt
it, and the kind of worlds that the characters themselves are creating, or tell us that they are
creating. It is my contention that these worlds are deeply queer, in the sense that they are non-
normative or indeed anti-normative, and that, read from close up, from the perspective of the
characters rather than that of a detached, superior author/reader figure, they are strikingly
inventive and challenging, not merely derivative, off-centre copies of an unshakable original.
The word “queer” comes under close examination in the first chapter, but for now I offer a brief

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3 On the irretrievability of the original and the inevitability of a reading filtered through a work's reception-
history, Martindale (1993) makes a strong case.
4 Panayotakis (1995) reads the entire text in terms of mime.
5 This is the ultimate answer of Jensson (2004), who tackles the question of the *Satyricon*’s genre, and the labyrinth
of scholarship surrounding it, with particular verve, coming up with a boldly unexpected solution that is not
likely to find much favour among Petronianists: the *Satyricon* is an adaptation of a lost Greek work.
6 The aggressive use of laughter as a form of social policing/enforcement of the normative is an implicit theme of
Conte (1996), whose take on the *Satyricon* I shall examine more extensively in chapter 1.
precis of the way in which I, and contemporary queer theorists, use it: originally a term of
invective used against sexual deviants (specifically homosexual deviants), those same deviants
reclaimed it by means of what Foucault calls “reverse discourse”, and began to wield it almost
as a weapon, against those who had tried to use it to insult them (yes, we are “queer”, and what
then? Can that not be something to be proud of?). The compulsion of heteronormativity has long
been a central focus of gay/lesbian scholarship, but just as one “should” be straight, and should
be straight in certain ways, if one is going to be gay, there is an accepted way of going about it.
As same-sex relationships have become increasingly accepted in the modern West, this
acceptance has come with conditions: the best gays, those most readily assimilable into the
mainstream, are the monogamous, happily-married, law-abiding, white picket fence dwelling,
gender-conforming. This is what scholars mean when they speak of homonormativity,
heteronormativity's correlate and lawfully-wedded bedfellow. Queer politics, originally radical
in bent, challenges both hetero- and homonormativity – indeed, normativity in general. It is
about deviance and marginality: the reclamation of deviance as a position from which to speak,
and the margins as a habitable zone. Where assimilating gays want a place at the big table, the
queers might prefer to throw the entire table over, citron-wood or not, same-sex sexual contact
or otherwise.

As I shall flesh out, this perspective draws heavily from contemporary queer theory, in
particular texts by Muñoz, Lee Edelman, Judith/Jack Halberstam, Judith Butler, and a sprinkling

7 For this term, see Foucault (1978), 101.
8 On this theme, Warner (1999) is deft and trenchant.
9 “Homonormativity”, in the sense in which queer theorists frequently use the term, has significant roots in
Duggan (2003). It is important to clarify that “homonormativity” is not usually used in the sense of homosexual
rather than heterosexual relationships being considered the norm (although this usage of the term is not
unknown, this is not the way I am using it).
10 I refer obliquely to the obsession in the Roman discourse on decadence with citron-wood tables, purportedly a
symbol of the dire state of the times.
of others, more contingently (Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick, Michael Warner, Lauren Berlant, Kathryn Bond Stockton, and the S/M theorists of chapter four). Recent waves of queer theory are centred on the “antisocial”, and the relationship of queerness to the social: ought queerness, or does queerness, reject or destroy the social, or ought – or does – it look towards the productive building of a new form of the social? An increasing focus on intersectionality has necessitated the reading of gender and sexuality alongside other vectors of human positionality: race, class, ability, age, religion. Queer theory is politically engaged, as a very precondition of its existence; traditional philology, with its focus on retrieving the pristine original text and the objective judgment of the scholar as authority, is equally political, but far less forthcoming about its sitedness. Ironic, perhaps, that the Satyricon is so very much concerned with the scholar’s body and its fleshly vulnerability.

Nonetheless, Classics has not been disengaged from queer theory, and not all philology is the traditional kind: famously, Foucault’s return to the ancient world (meaning, by and large, a certain conceptualization of “the Greeks”) made Classicists, and their texts, relevant anew, from the scholars who took issue with Foucault’s reading of ancient texts, to those who enthusiastically embraced his genealogy of the emergence of “(homo)sexuality” in the 19th century, using Volume One of his History of Sexuality as their jumping-off point. But this strong, and still enduring, focus on Foucault and “Foucauldianism” has tended to efface to a certain extent other streams of queer theory, and other concerns of queer theorists.12 Foucault is foundational for queer theory, but he does not represent it as a whole. Further, same-sex sexual

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11 David Halperin is amongst the most enthusiastic of “the Foucauldians” (a term that is not uncontroversial). See Halperin (1990); (2002). Classicists have heavily critiqued Foucault, especially productively from a feminist perspective: Amy Richlin is the leader of the charge here (see the trenchant Richlin [1991]). Davidson (2007) offers a more recent, and heavily contested, account of Foucault’s shortcomings.

12 The landscape is perhaps shifting a little. Blondell and Ormand (2015) is a recent collection of essays on ancient sexuality that fashions itself as “post-Foucaudian”, and includes a coda by Halperin that expressly embraces “queer temporality” as compatible with “social-constructionist historicism”.
activity is at the centre of the Foucauldian debates (which, despite having been declared passe, nonetheless make their influence continually felt): the family, hetero-sex, child-bearing, marriage, have emerged less closely interrogated than one might imagine. We may now have several volumes of essays on ancient sexuality, from Greek pots to Roman graffiti and every kind of literary genre, but collected volumes on the ancient family tend to pass by without mention those who demur from normative familial models altogether. A great diversity of families, for sure: but what about those who have no family, whose friends are their family, who are uninterested in marriage, unconcerned with reproduction, who are forced to reinvent kinship and social reproduction? The married, or to-be-married, upper class Greek man with his boyfriend, and the married upper class Roman man with his slaves, male or female, have become the central figures in the history of ancient sexuality. These figures are not necessarily queer; they are doing what they are supposed to. And what one is supposed to do as an ancient man is a topic that has received much examination.

I intend the dissertation, then, to be an intervention in both queer studies and Classics. In the strong belief that Classicists still have much to learn from queer theorists and vice versa (though the kinds of lessons to be learnt are very different, and making the two discourses speak to each other is not always easy), I seek to bring the two fields together, reading sometimes more like a philologist, at other times more like a queer theorist, attempting ultimately, perhaps, to become that most elusively hybrid and contradictory of creatures, the queer philologist. The Satyricon is filled with both queers and philologists; perhaps one ought to try borrowing a bit of something from both.

This dissertation may be about queerness, but that does not mean it is always about homosexuality (or whatever circumlocution we must use in order to avoid implying that the
ancient world has a conception of sexual identity like ours, which is not an argument I in any way wish to make). This is a queer reading of Petronius, not merely a gay one. Same-sex sexual activity and intimacy, specifically between men, is central, particularly in my first chapter, but a great deal of what I discuss falls under the rubric of what the modern world calls heterosexuality. As I mentioned above, and as I detail at length in my first chapter, I adopt queerness as a flexible hermeneutic, an ethos of non- or anti-normativity, centred around questions of sexuality and gender but engaged also with other aspects of social position, the most salient being, in the case of Petronius, class. Figuring out what one ought to do is the first, and by no means unimportant, step; detailing the multitude of ways in which people do not do what they ought to do, or do what they ought to do in such a way as to confound the rules they are following, is the nucleus of queer reading. Now, the expressions “non-normative” and “anti-normative” are not synonymous: the latter implies taking up a strong stance against the normative, with a consciousness that that is what one is doing, while the former seems to point rather to a kind of indifference towards normativity, an existence outside its strictures. There is a problem; things are not working. Throw everything out – or make something else. Petronian characters engage in both these modes of behaviour, I shall argue.

I do not attempt to offer a linear “queer reading” of the entire text, as though queerness

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13 Insofar as I do use the terms homosexual and heterosexual, I intend them to refer not to an identity-based conception of sexuality, but as a description of the sameness or difference of the sexes of the participants in a sexual act.

14 Intimacy between women, apparently not being particularly important or visible to Encolpius, is not central in the Satyrica. The second chapter will briefly advert to the intimacy between Fortunata and Scintilla. The sociality of Quartilla’s circle is also intriguing, in the sense that it is comprised of cinaedi and women; lamentably we lack much of the text. Another source of female homosociality is the relationships between women and their ancillae: chapter two looks to the wife of Ephesus and her maid; chapter four Circe and Chrysis. I attempt as far as possible to combat a certain androcentrism in Encolpius’ narrative by honing in on female characters, even though their relationships with each other are sometimes difficult to read, and we see women speaking with each other about men the vast majority of occasions we see them speaking with each other at all. It is vital that one not pass by this dissymmetry between male and female homosociality without note.
were something to be “applied” seriatim; rather, I hone in on particular moments and particular
thematic complexes, while retaining a sense of the queerness of the whole. If *patria potestas*,
that Roman ethico-legal principle which it would not be amiss to translate as patriarchal
authority, holds the bonds of Roman sociality together, society after the loss of *patria potestas'*
sanctity will invariably be “post-apocalyptic” in some sense. The world as we know it has ended;
all the moralists' prophecies of doom have come true. Civil war, Roman authors insist again and
again, is caused by decadence – decadence is a precondition of the *Satyricon* world. A trope of
Roman (and indeed Greek) literature is the fallenness of the present, and the superiority of the
past: men were better back then, stronger, manlier, more whole; something broke, and they
turned against each other, or started having sex with each other. The “Petronius question” is,
then: What if the world did not end when men fell? My third chapter offers a reading of this
aetiology of the world's fallenness as it is worked out in the *Satyricon* itself, through Eumolpus'
civil war poem and the restarting of the narrative at Croton. Thus the text speaks to its own
situation by exploring the beginnings of the world in which it is set, but the newness and
reinvention of the world after a sociocultural disaster is a central theme of the entire dissertation.
What if a reader were to place to the back of their mind what they think they know about the
way the world *should* work, and re-examine the way it actually *is* working?

The dissertation is composed roughly of two pairs of chapters, though they are not
faithful with each other, and themes recur promiscuously throughout. The first two chapters
examine, respectively, fraternity and marriage, two institutions that are particularly significant to
Roman social life, and which the *Satyricon* renders almost threateningly queer and unfamiliar.
The first, fraternity, is the paradigm of sublime homosociality; the latter, marriage, the basis of
socially-sanctioned heterosexuality. Together they determine the contours of social reproduction,
and the appropriate kinds of relationality an elite Roman man ought to have with his aristocratic peers, male and female. Relationships with men of the same age and status are intense and affectively invested, much like a man's relationship with his brother, but according to the dictates of normativity, when these relationships become sexual, society begins to fall apart. Relationships with fellow aristocratic women, on the other hand, allow for the reproduction of a legitimate blood line, the dream of what Lee Edelman calls “reproductive futurism”, the replication of the future in the mold of the present. You procreate with your wife, you discourse with your brother; social inferiors are the ones you fuck, with all the vulgarism that word can imply (at least, this is normativity's narrative). The characters in the Satyricon get everything wrong, but the fact that they are doing things wrong is my starting point, not my punchline: I steadfastly refuse to 'get the joke', obligatorily chuckle, and then put the book down. How are fraternity and marriage reformed? How are their standard forms revealed to be inadequate? This is what queer parody does, as Judith Butler formulates it and as I shall examine in my first chapter: queer Petronian copies reveal the fractures in the plastered-over facade of Roman social normativity.

Chapter one begins with an overview of the theoretical basis for my style of reading, beginning with an interpretation popular amongst Classicists, that the Satyricon derides its protagonists from the point of view of an elite male author and audience. I lay out the ways in which a queer reading differs: it reads from the point of view of the protagonists themselves, taking seriously their attempts at creating a new world for themselves. The world of the Satyricon is largely non-elite, and remarkably unconcerned with such normative life-milestones as marriage, child-bearing, the cursus honorum, etc. My intention is to read this world as habitable and interpretable, not ridiculous and derisory. The chapter begins with a theoretical discussion
centred on Conte, Halberstam, Butler, and Bakhtin, clarifying the significance and scope of the crucial term “queer” for the dissertation's argument. The chapter then moves to an initial application of the reading strategies laid out: the interrelationality within the trio of Encolpius, Ascyltos, and Giton, which is expressed in the idiom of brotherhood. The homoerotic and the homosocial here collide in ways that normative ideologies may refuse to avow, and characters struggle to reformulate and redefine the word “brother” and what it means to be a brother to another man, where fraternity is expanded to include sexual contact. There is no one answer yet; rather, competing definitions cause conflict and all is in process.

The second chapter walks the bride past the altar and straight onto one of the battlegrounds of contemporary queer theory: marriage. It examines two central instances of marriage, the faux-marriage ceremony conducted by Quartilla for Pannychis and Giton, and the marriage of Trimalchio and Fortunata, with a coda on the Wife of Ephesus episode. The Pannychis episode provides a conduit between the queer kinship forged by the reinvention of fraternity, and the nominally more conventional situation of Trimalchio and Fortunata: just as Encolpius, Giton, and Ascyltos are not “actually” brothers, so Pannychis and Giton do not “actually” get married. Nonetheless the ceremony is a powerful piece of queer parody that reveals “marriage itself” to be as precarious, fragile, and contingent as it claims to be steadfast. The troubled, non-reproductive marriage of Trimalchio and Fortunata – still the most “normative” marriage in the text – is bisected by another form of relationality, namely the transfer of property and authority between masters and favoured slaves/freedmen. Marriage, as the exchange of a woman between men, is always undergirt by homosocial bonds, but here such bonds are explicitly sexualized and threaten to replace reproductive marriage entirely, a dynamic that both looks back to the first chapter's discussion of fraternity, and forward to the
third chapter's examination of legacy hunting as a form of social relationality. Petronian characters almost invariably have traumatic pasts: Trimalchio and Fortunata's marriage highlights the relationship between a traumatic past, a sterile present, and a potentially, nonetheless, fertile future. Living in the present is a way of living in/with death, and carving out futures that are not strictly hetero-reproductive. Similarly, the Wife of Ephesus episode foregrounds the rewriting of a future after the death of the Husband qua archetype; the Vergilian undertones of the episode bring it into confrontation with the Augustan reproductive-futurist ideal, according to which a character like Dido is expendable. In the Wife of Ephesus episode, Dido is given the chance to live. Queered temporalities run amok throughout this chapter.

The second pair of chapters takes one particular section of the narrative, the events in the broken city of Croton, as its staging area. Croton is a new start for the narrative, but the city's situation is also reflective of that of the novel as a whole, which brings to life a world where biological reproduction has halted or been rendered perverse, and other ways of relating socially must be forged, here legacy hunting. The third chapter traces several thematic threads through the Croton episode, which have significance for the text more broadly: Philomela's manipulation of reproductive futurity, which leads into a wider discussion, by way of queer theory's investment in youth and childhood, of the ways in which Petronian youth interact with their world in the light – or shadow – of a blighted and perverse older generation; the way in which legacy hunting perversely reformulates, or queerly parodies, another paradigmatic aristocratic institution, patronage; and the thematization throughout the Croton episode, particularly by means of Eumolpus' civil war poem, of the end of one world seguing into the beginning, or creation, of another. My contention throughout is that Croton is a microcosm of the text as a whole, not a uniquely broken ecosystem of its own, and that the text as a whole has something
to say about Rome: Roman sociality, Roman civil discord, the uneasy relationship between the two, and the traumatic process of refashioning “family” in a society built on the back of blighted sociality. This chapter is perhaps the one least concerned with physical sexuality, and most invested in broadening the ambit of queerness beyond sex.

The final chapter is less a conclusion than another potential way of reading queerly. Where the rest of the dissertation moves increasingly away from genital sexuality and the preoccupation with penetration, the last chapter finally brings things back to the phallus – but, of course, the location of the phallus is ever uncertain. The chapter experiments with reading the *Satyricon* alongside theoretical literature on sadomasochism (Deleuze's *Coldness and Cruelty*, MacKendrick's *Counterpleasures*, and Hart's *Between the Body and the Flesh*), with a focus on the “masochism” part of the s/m (non)-binary. In particular, it dwells on the Circe episode, which follows the introduction of the Crotonian legacy-hunting plot. Against (or even alongside) the currents in the text that present Encolpius' inability to achieve an erection with Circe as a failure and a derogation from his (already hopelessly compromised) masculinity, I read for a non-penetrative masochistic eroticism in which sociolegal submission to a woman is combined with the partial effacement of phallic, goal-directed sexuality, in favour of cyclical, suspended forepleasure. The *Satyricon* is certainly concerned, sometimes obsessively, with the penis, but that does not mean it is a “phallic” text. In the Circe episode, the two terms penis and phallus are wrenched apart with particular emphasis; Encolpius is apparently unsure whether to feel abjected or excited, or both at once. Encolpius' slave disguise renders these masochistic undertones richer and queerer, as well as hooking Encolpius' affair with Circe into the legacy-hunting motifs already active at the *Cena*. Thus the four chapters, and the various modes of relationality examined within (marriage, fraternity, legacy-hunting, non-phallic eroticism, and
more), connect and interrelate in a multitude of ways.

These, then, are the vulture-torn, plague-ridden plains set out for the reader; let us set out upon them, in the hope that the still-warm corpses of these dead Romans might yet have something to offer us.
Chapter One: Queer Sociality and Petronian Fraternity

One of the concessions one makes to others is not to present homosexuality as anything but a kind of immediate pleasure, of two young men meeting in the street, seducing each other with a look, grabbing each other’s asses and getting each other off in a quarter of an hour. There you have a kind of neat image of homosexuality without any possibility of generating unease, and for two reasons: it responds to a reassuring canon of beauty, and it cancels everything that can be troubling in affection, tenderness, friendship, fidelity, camaraderie, and companionship, things that our rather sanitized society can’t allow a place for without fearing the formation of new alliances and the tying together of unforeseen lines of force. I think that’s what makes homosexuality “disturbing”: the homosexual mode of life, much more than the sexual act itself. To imagine a sexual act that doesn’t conform to law or nature is not what disturbs people. But that individuals are beginning to love one another—there’s the problem. The institution is caught in a contradiction; affective intensities traverse it which at one and the same time keep it going and shake it up. … Institutional codes can’t validate these relations with multiple intensities, variable colors, imperceptible movements and changing forms. These relations short-circuit it and introduce love where there’s supposed to be only law, rule, or habit.¹

“It’s a tough life for outlaws” (quam male est extra legem viventibus, Sat. 125.4²), laments Encolpius, the petty-criminal narrator of the Satyricon, as he frets about whether he and his buddies will be found out as they engage in a scheme to fleece the legacy hunters of Croton. But Encolpius and his crew are outlaws in more senses than one. Having forgotten, or simply disregarded, marital-reproductive household arrangements, they engage in novel forms of relationality that their cultural lexicon can barely cover as they quest after sex, food, money—or simply subsistence. Much Petronian scholarship, promoting a reading that looks down on the characters, views these forms of relationality as parodic and “purely comic”, ludicrously failed attempts by low, satirized characters to appropriate sublime Roman social institutions like

² The text of the Satyricon used is that of Müller (2009). All translations are my own. They are intended to be as close to literal as possible while still remaining idiomatic and incorporating something of the varied tone of the original.
fraternal *pietas*. In this first, and in many ways introductory, chapter, taking as my primary example the reformulation of brotherhood by Encolpius, Asclytos, and Giton, I begin to read these forms of sociality as queer: that is to say, potentially challenging to normativity rather than simply inadequate to meet its demands. Petronian brotherhood, read in this light, appears richly shaded and contested, not merely one-dimensional and ridiculous. What exactly it means to be a “brother” in this postlapsarian world is always an active question in the scenes involving the trio.

I begin with a survey of the possible contours of a queer reading of sociality in the *Satyricon*, which will be refined and developed over the course of the entire dissertation, and proceed to a close examination of some aspects of Petronian fraternity, in particular the relationship between normative brotherhood and its reinvented queer doublet, and the competing reconceptualizations of fraternity within the text.

This chapter introduces themes that will be at issue throughout the dissertation: primarily the definition of queerness as a dynamic of non-normativity that, although greatly concerned with gender and sexuality, is not restricted to these vectors. The chapter also outlines the ways in which my reading of the text differs from many traditional interpretations. As mentioned in the introduction, a great deal of Petronian scholarship old and new has focused on reconstructing the text, and/or determining what kind of the thing the text was. Recent scholarship has shifted a little towards narratological analysis; narratology has become one of the dominant paradigms of scholarship on the ancient novel both Greek and Roman. As far as sexuality goes, the *Satyricon* has not entirely lacked for interpretation, but there are fewer treatments of gender and sexuality in the text than one might expect, given the riot of non-

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3 One pioneering narratological treatment of ancient prose fiction was Winkler’s Apuleian tour-de-force splitting *auctor*, the author and retrospective narrator, from *actor*, the “I” who acts in the text (Winkler [1985]).
normative gender presentation and sexual behaviour that colours Encolpius' narrative.⁴ As I shall examine in more detail, however, it seems to be the case that it is easier to explain away the text's queerness – as satire, as a series of comedic mimic performances,⁵ as something to mock and laugh at – rather than ride with it to any significant extent. If the Satyrica is the exception, the norm is safe, and normativity has occupied a significant position in scholarship on ancient sexuality. Even so, there has been some recognition that the Satyrica seems to be pushing at the boundaries of normativity, and cannot be read entirely in terms of the norm without doing the text some degree of epistemic violence (although the issue is not often presented in quite these terms).⁶ This is where queer theory can offer something different. This chapter begins with the “homosexual” aspect of the text, which has often seemed to scholars to be the queerest thing about it, hence the promulgation of the Heinzean – or pseudo-Heinzean – theory that the relationship between Encolpius and Giton deliberately “parodies” the relationship between the hero and heroine of the Greek novels by “homosexualizing” it.⁷ But even with a starting point like this, things start to fall apart rather quickly: the Encolpius-Giton pairing continually morphs into a threesome rather than staying within the boundaries of the steadfast “homonormative” paederastic couple form. This threesome will be my entry point into the text’s queerness, and my reading spirals out from there to encompass opposite-sex pairings to a significant extent.

⁴ Sullivan (1968) offers a Freudian discussion of sexuality in the Satyrica, which, largely because of its attempts to deduce the author’s own sexual preferences, has not aged well; nonetheless, themes like scopophilia, voyeurism, and sadomasochism anticipate some of the central themes of psychoanalytically-inflected queer theory. Richlin (2009) offers a useful, pithy summary of some aspects of Petronian sexuality.

⁵ Panayotakis (1995) presents a sequential “mimic” reading of the entire text, detecting the influence of the popular stage almost everywhere.

⁶ Richlin (2009) discusses several respects in which the text is non-normative (indeed, her chapter is subtitled “Outlaws in Literatureland”).

⁷ Heinze (1899) famously argued that the Satyrica was a point-by-point parody of the “ideal Greek romance”. It is fairly often said that Heinze regarded the Satyrica as a “homosexual” parody of the “heterosexual” Greek novel. Jensson (2004), 95-6, points out that Heinze did not in fact extensively focus on the “homosexuality” of the relationship between Encolpius and Giton as a point of parody.
The *Satyricon*, as no reader can fail to notice for long, brings into realization an entire world of marginality. A plethora of marginal figures is brought together from across the literary spectrum: witches, prostitutes, slaves and freedmen, petty-criminals, lecherous pedagogues, legacy hunters, elites with a penchant for rough trade, the down-and-out and the social climbers alike, alongside those members of the social elite who have invested erotic energy in the lower classes. What is most disconcertingly missing from the whole is an obvious anchor point for a “respectable” elite readership. A completely unmarked subject, in elite Roman terms, is a freeborn male Roman citizen, who adopts a very particular gendered positionality: he is an impenetrable penetrator of social inferiors, and conventionally masculine in his self-styling. Class as much as gender defines him: masculine ascesis is a mark of social status. Nobody in the *Satyricon* even remotely approaches this phantasm of ideal masculinity, whether because of class, gender presentation, or, most often, a combination of both. And the narrator, penetrated, beaten, effeminate, and impotent, ever ready to play the actor, the slave, the whore, perhaps conforms to the normative phantasm the least of all the characters.

Even the seediest of verse satire has at least a unifying narrative voice, aggressively manly and abject by turns, but nonetheless properly scandalized in the name of propriety, staging an elaborate scene of itself scandalized, inviting an implied “us” to feel disgust at the excessive enjoyment of the other. If satire is horrified that Saturnalian inversion has extended into a year-round orgy of perversion, in the *Satyricon*, we ourselves are stuck inside the “orgy

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9 For the satirist’s voice as both aggressive and abject, see Rosen and Keene (2013). Further on the gendering of the satirist’s voice, see Henderson (1989).
10 On the complex staging of the scandalized gaze in satire, see Gunderson (2005).
11 Gunderson (2005), 226, remarks on satire’s presentation of the perversion of the present era as a year-round Saturnalia.
of perversion”, subject to the hopelessly compromised perspective of Encolpius: forgetful, confused, always terrified, always the last one to get the joke. The clean, detached phallic authority of masculinity aghast is replaced by a man who is all flesh. He is, like it or not, our only means of access to the world of the text. The fragmentation of the text, our uncertainty about its authorship and literary form, and the wildly unreliable narrator combine to generate a dizzying hall-of-mirrors effect, and the desire to at least attempt to fix down an Archimedean point of interpretation – even if it consists precisely of the impossibility of interpretation – has often proven irresistible.

Many readers have recourse to the figure of the author: he is speaking to us over the head of the stupid and sentimentalizing narrator, and “we” are goaded to laughter, a conspiracy of giggles between author and reader, both secure in their superiority to the marginal characters in the book. The satirist is still there, we are assured; he’s standing behind the narrator all along, pulling his strings and winking. We are safe if there is some way we can know all this is perverted, that none of this is to be taken seriously. A great number of other questions, provoked by the sense that there is something unsettling about the text, can then be sidestepped, because the text’s generic positioning as “humorous” would supposedly render them otiose. As Conte (1996: 22) formulates one version of this viewpoint:

Behind the protagonist’s narrative we meet the “hidden author,” who is also listening, along with the reader, to Encolpius’ narrative – and, along with the reader, is smiling at it. Behind the naive narrator who in speaking of “I” exposes himself and his desires, an agreement is being reached between the author and the reader of the text. Both are bound in a close complicity ... The reader cannot

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13 Slater (1990) argues that the *Satyrica* deliberately thwarts attempts at interpretation.
14 Rimell (2002), 1-16, has an excellent discussion of the way in which the notion of “pure comedy” is used in Petronian scholarship to efface the “serious, the political, and the problematic” (4).
help adopting the *bona mens*, that common sense which is so often invoked in
the *Satyricon* as the significant missing element. ... The ideal reader, by forming
exactly this image of the author, that is by agreeing to it, takes shape in the text
as a set of values in opposition to those of Encolpius and closer to normality ...
Encolpius is kept far from every kind of normal behaviour and every value that a
sensible author could reasonably expect to be shared by his readers.

Conte sets out here a tightly-structured between-men contract: the reader-function and the
author-function, both of them disembodied constructs implied from the text, bond over the
inferior, excessively bodily objects of the text, exposed to their mastering gaze by Encolpius’
narrative. Novelistic polyglossia is reduced to a “dialogue” between author and reader that is
in fact utterly monologic, the mere confirmation of values already held. “We” laugh because
Encolpius is deluded, because he thinks his life is epic or tragic but it is in fact just debased.
Readings like this build up the good men absent in the text and make them essential for a
“correct” reading. Sensible authors and sensible readers are sensible precisely because they are
as far from Encolpius as possible. This “ideal reader” appears to be reducible simply to a “set of
values”. We are not told what the content of this “set of values” might be, whether they are
supposed to be Roman or modern, or even what “normality” is – presumably everything,
absolutely everything (“every value”) that Encolpius is not. But, as ever, there is no need to
substantiate what “normality” is, because it is universal, transparent, commonsensical, the very
embodiment of truth. It speaks for itself, and yet at the same time seems to have no content of its
own. It is what it is not. Here is a classic case of the formation of the norm by exclusion. There
is an apparent need to look down on Encolpius, violently to disidentify from him.

But the fact remains that, unless you put them in there by building up a supposedly
implied viewpoint emanating from but somehow beyond the text itself, there are no good men in

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15 See Rimell’s remarks (2002: 12) on the “bodilessness” of Conte’s author and readers, opposed to the “vulgar”
corporeality of the text.
the *Satyrica*, and the reader is stuck in Encolpius’ world, filtered through his perspective. That does not mean that one ought to ignore the issues, and indeed the pleasures, surrounding the wildly unreliable narrator. But to disidentify from him to the extent of constructing a normative subject-position and inserting it into one’s reading under the guise of the “author” seems a rather too tidy way of making the text fit an already preconceived conception of the world, rather than allowing the text to trouble that conception. Can one really resist so strongly the lure of a first-person narrative, the desire to identify with Encolpius to whatever extent? Or is the reader already “stained” the moment s/he opens the book and finds herself inside Encolpius’ head?\(^\text{16}\)

Conte’s reading would evacuate the text of whatever is odd or unsettling about it, its queerness, and read it merely against some kind of “normality”, universal and undefined, not needing definition precisely because of its purported obviousness and universality. My project, in contrast, is to attempt to read the queer surface of the text, rather than immediately reading past it by deferring to some other authority, whether a particular generic structure or a hidden author.

What is it exactly, though, that is so “queer” about the *Satyrica*? Queerness is no easy thing to pin down, largely because it is constituted by its very resistance to being pinned down. It is often imaged as a positionality rather than a positivity, a “resistance to the regimes of the normal,” in Warner’s pithy formulation.\(^\text{17}\) Rather than having any fixed content of its own, it is relational and relative, setting itself against the normative, whatever that “normative” may be. The queer is by no means limited to the homoerotic, although it has a powerful historical relationship with homoeroticism. In particular, to invoke queerness is not the same as claiming

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\(^{\text{16}}\) Richlin (1992: 191) considers the first-person narrative a “staining joke on the reader, who is torn between identifying with Encolpius and laughing at him.”

\(^{\text{17}}\) Warner (1993), xxvi. The language of “positionality” and “positivity” is derived from Halperin (1995), 62: “Queer is by definition whatever is at odds with the normal, the legitimate, the dominant. There is nothing in particular to which it necessarily refers. It is an identity without an essence. ‘Queer’ then, demarcates not a positivity but a positionality vis-à-vis the normative.”
that the *Satyricon* represents some sort of “homosexual subculture”, uniting men against the world based simply on the fact that they have sex with other males,\(^\text{18}\) or suggesting that it parodies anything simply by virtue of depicting male-male relationships, as has frequently been argued of the *Satyricon*’s relationship with the “idealistic” Greek romance.\(^\text{19}\) One great value of queerness as a hermeneutic is its flexibility, its responsiveness to the changing content of social norms, as Carolyn Dinshaw’s *Getting Medieval* has elegantly demonstrated vis-à-vis another period of premodernity.\(^\text{20}\) Scholars have been saying for decades now that there was no “homosexuality” in Rome (or Greece), that is to say, no categorization of persons on the basis alone of same-sex object choice;\(^\text{21}\) be that as it may, Rome was certainly not before normativity. Much work has emerged on the content of Roman gender norms, in particular the “priapic paradigm”, whereby a man could, with sociocultural and legal impunity and without any sort of pathologization, penetrate any social inferior he liked, regardless of gender, provided that he did not submit to penetration himself or violate a freeborn Roman citizen: a graphic equation of phallus and penis.\(^\text{22}\) But like heteronormativity, priaponormativity is a “regulatory fiction”

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\(^{18}\) This is the argument of Taylor (1997).

\(^{19}\) On the limitations of the argument that the *Satyricon* is a “homosexual parody” of the Greek novel, see especially the discussion of Jensson (2004), 89-96. Jensson adduces, in particular, Hippothous’ story in the *Ephesiaca* (3.1-2) as an example of the compatibility of homoerotic stories with the “ideal” novel. Hippothous is a fascinating comparandum to the *Satyricon*’s characters on many levels: he is an outlaw and exile who engages in long-lasting, devoted homoerotic relationships like that of Encolpius and Giton, and even forms a kind of queer kinship when, at the end of the novel, he apparently adopts his male beloved as a son (*Eph*. 5.15.4, although a lacuna here makes matters somewhat uncertain; see Jones [2012], 197-8). For a discussion of Hippothous in relation to the paederastic norm, see Jones (2012), 186-203.

\(^{20}\) Dinshaw (1999). Dinshaw views queerness as a way of building an affective relation between past and present, a “touch across time”. For another useful definition of queerness from a premodernist, see Burrus (2004), 168 n 66: “I use the term queer to designate erotic practices that actively resist and/or put into question the very categories of the “normal,” the “conventional,” or the “natural,” particularly in contexts in which resistance exposes, critiques, and subverts the violence of both *domus* and *dominus*. The “queer” overlaps at some points (but by no means at all points) with the “homoerotic,” e.g., where homoerotic practices resist the conventions of either marriage or pederasty.”

\(^{21}\) The canonical texts for the radical alterist viewpoint are Halperin (1990) for Greece and Williams (2010; originally published in 1999) for Rome.

\(^{22}\) See especially Williams (2010) for a detailed account of the “priapic” norm.
rather than some sort of hardwired code laying down the boundaries of the thinkable.\textsuperscript{23} And, even more significantly for my purposes, what we might playfully label “priaponormativity”, despite its centrality in much of the scholarship on ancient sexuality, does not exhaust the content of Roman norms surrounding sexuality and sociality. Genital relations, the core and central focus of the “priapic paradigm”, always occur within the context of some sort of social relation, and I wish to direct my attention to the latter as much as, if not even more than, the former.

There are any number of ways into the \textit{Satyrlica}’s queerness, but one I wish to pursue here is the text’s representation of sociality, and in particular the sociality of the Encolpius-Ascytlos-Giton trio, imaged under the paradigm of fraternity. At the purely genital-sexual level, there is already a measure of destabilization of the norms of activity and passivity: at various points in the text, it is not always possible to tell who penetrates whom, whether there is penetration going on at all, or whether some sexual encounters are thought of in terms whereby penetration, whether or not it occurs and in what way, is simply not a relevant factor.\textsuperscript{24} The sexual relationship between Ascytlos and Encolpius is also in itself potentially rather queer because of the fact the two are roughly the same age, both \textit{adulescentes}, though their social status is ever shadowy.\textsuperscript{25} Such concerns are relevant to my investigation of queer sociality. But to speak of the destabilization of norms in this way is to restrict the investigation to a very limited field, the bodily penetration of one person by another. The \textit{Satyrlica}’s queerness, such as

\textsuperscript{23} On heteronormativity as a “regulatory fiction”, see Butler (1990), \textit{passim}.
\textsuperscript{24} Compare especially Encolpius’ representation of his lovemaking with Giton in his poem at \textit{Sat.} 79.8: he evokes soft beds, close embraces, and the mutual “transferral of souls” (\textit{transfundimus hinc et hinc labellis | errantes animas}), rather than penetration and domination (see the remarks of Williams [1992], 342: “it seems crassly out of place to ask who was penetrating whom. The texts simply do not invite their readers to make such an inquiry.”.) Another example of the destabilization of “activity” and “passivity” comes in the scene where Encolpius and Ascytlos are very “actively” sexually assaulted by a \textit{cinaedus}, the archetypal “passive” figure, at Quartilla’s (\textit{Sat.} 21).
\textsuperscript{25} On the difficulty of determining the social status of the protagonists, see Richlin (2009); Courtney (2001), 39-42 (who concludes that they are educated freedmen).
it is, runs much deeper than this.

Members of the social elite at Rome were under great social and legal pressure to marry and produce children. Even if certain types of homoeroticism were perfectly consistent with normative masculinity, the reproductive imperative was extremely strong amongst the Roman elite and seems in a certain sense to precede the license given to the Roman man to priapically engage with social inferiors. Whereas the modern conception of “reproductive futurism”, in queer theorist Lee Edelman’s influential formulation, tends to focus on the phantasmic figure of the innocent Child in need of protection (even if that protection comes at the expense of “actual” citizens) and the investment in that figure of the possibility of the continuation of the social order itself, Romans were more obsessed with mos maiorum, the continued reproduction in the future of that which is always in the past: in some sense, it is the Ancestors who become the phantasmic figures, they who must be reproduced (though the figure of the Child in whom the future of the social order is invested was hardly without political significance at Rome: look to Vergil’s fourth Eclogue, or little Ascanius). Roman education sought to mold upper-class Roman boys into patres familias, copies of their own fathers; if one is to be the head of a household, one must have a wife and children over which to exercise one’s authority in the first place. Roman marriage was supposed to be an institution in which a woman is given to a man for the bearing of legitimate children (liberorum quaerundorum causa); if a marriage did not produce children, it was apt to be swiftly terminated. Marriage and reproduction were conceived of as a matter of civic responsibility for the elite, the kind of civic responsibility with which even elegiac lovers, those paradigms of urban bachelorhood, must grapple as members of the

27 See especially Bloomer (1997).
28 See Treggiari (1991), 8, for citations.
elite. Marriage and children, furthermore, and the relationships between spouses and between parents and children, are essential parts of the framework of many literary genres, from the Odyssean reunion-reintegration paradigm through New Comedy’s marital teleologies and the romance’s apotheosis of the idealized married couple, to the broken households that litter tragedy, oratory, and the declamatory corpus.

The non-elite characters of the Satyricon, for the most part, do not appear to feel the pull the marital-reproductive imperative. Encolpius, Ascytis, and Giton never mention wives, parents or other blood relatives, or even the desire, intent, or expectation to marry or reproduce. They appear to be deracinated from the kin relationships most vital to Roman thought about “the (normative) household”, but this deracination does not seem even to register with them, let alone cause them concern. The shattered, sterile, childless society of Croton (Sat. 116) is an all-too cozy home for them in the latter part of the extant text, as I shall examine in detail in chapters 3 and 4. The marital teleologies and civic reintegration so central to other literary genres seem to be simply absent. The lives of the central characters are defined by precarity and marginality. They skulk around the edges of the urban landscape, through winding backstreets, bordellos, seedy inns, ever lost and ever forgetful, willing to engage in crime, parasitism, and prostitution in order to obtain their next meal. In the modern context, Judith Halberstam, in her discussion of queer temporalities and “subcultural lives”, looks to those who “opt to live outside of reproductive and familial time”, such people as “ravers, club kids, HIV-positive barebackers, rent boys, sex workers, homeless people, drug dealers, and the

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29 For a recent discussion of the elegist’s battle with civic responsibility, formulated in terms of Kristevan notions of temporality, see Gardner (2012). Additionally, this civic responsibility was bolstered by the continuing force of the Augustan marriage legislation; see Treggiari (1991), 60-80.

30 Encolpius does claim in his tirade against Ascytis and Giton (Sat. 90) that the latter was “persuaded by his mother that he not be a man” (ne vir esset, a matre persuasus est), but it is impossible to know whether he is referring to an actual (lost) incident or merely tossing out invective. The heavily rhetoricized nature of the tirade perhaps suggests the latter.
unemployed”, suggesting that they may be viewed as queer because of their precarious lives, lived by night and in spaces abandoned by others. Precarity, deracination, marginality, “criminal intimacy”; these are tropes beloved of modern queer theory, and much in evidence in the *Satyricon*. Encolpius & co are queer subjects in a sense that far transcends questions of whose penis goes where. Their social status means that their lives do not “matter” in the way elite lives do; there is no pressure on them to reproduce. Their position in a kind of “criminal underworld”, their mobility and rootlessness, opens them up to different social structures barely contemplated by the elite stance on sexuality, a set of protocols set out by elite men for elite men. Social/financial status – class, in modern terms – as much as sexuality is perhaps what ultimately generates much of the text’s queerness. Here a kind of intersectional analysis is invaluable. It is not just that the characters have sex in queer ways (although this they certainly do), but that they relate to their social world in a way that cannot be encompassed by normative views on kinship and the life course.

In another, and related, sense, it is Encolpius’ very stupidity, incomprehension, and forgetfulness, the putative object of the superior educated reader’s condescending smile, that open the way for a queer reading. Already in the work of Bakhtin the fool becomes a potent symbol of novelistic dialogism:\(^\text{34}\)

Stupidity (incomprehension) in the novel is always polemical: it interacts dialogically with an intelligence (a lofty pseudo intelligence) with which it

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31 Ravers, club kids, and barebackers of course do not have direct ancient equivalents, but the *Satyricon* is thoroughly concerned with mercenary sex, drugs, and unemployed drifters, not to mention marginal subjects like witches and debauched priestesses. Virtually the entire cast of the *Satyricon* lives on the edge just as these modern subjects do.
32 Halberstam (2005), 10.
33 Compare Berlant and Warner (1998: 558): “Queer and other insurgents have long striven, often dangerously or scandalously, to cultivate what good folks used to call criminal intimacies... Making a queer world has required the development of kinds of intimacy that bear no necessary relation to domestic space, to kinship, to the couple form, to property, or to the nation.”
34 Bakhtin (1981), 403.
polemicizes and whose mask it tears away. Stupidity... is a dialogic category, one that follows from the specific dialogism of novelistic discourse. For this reason stupidity (incomprehension) in the novel is always implicated in language, in the word: at its heart lies a polemical failure to understand someone else’s discourse, someone else’s pathos-charged lie that has appropriated the world and aspires to conceptualize it, a polemical failure to understand generally accepted, canonized, inveterately false languages with their lofty labels for things and events: poetic language, scholarly and pedantic language, religious, political, judicial language and so forth.

Stupidity has a certain subversive force, whether or not the “stupid” person recognizes it as such, as a failure to understand and enact the terms of normative ideologies. Bakhtin speaks here of deliberate incomprehension, but the argument can be extended to stupidity as a simple lack of awareness.35 Judith (Jack) Halberstam has written magisterially about “queer failure”, addressing the way in which stupidity and forgetfulness can open up the path towards new epistemologies, unconstrained by the oppressive force of a normativity that constantly weighs on one’s mind.36 Failure, in Halberstam’s work, becomes not a terminus, but a beginning, a sort of fugue state that points the way to novel forms of sociality. Where success individuates, failure builds collectives. Encolpius constantly loses his way, professes to have forgotten where is he supposed to be going or even what happened in his past, and this forgetfulness figures in microcosm a broader dynamic of the text: he has forgotten how to be a vir bonus, or he simply does not understand how to perform normative masculinity in the first place, trying it on from time to time as one mask amongst many, but failing to assume it as habitus, all the while missing the point that it is supposed to be (although continually fails to be) what is there when one takes off the mask, not the mask in itself. And normative kinship seems to have been

35 Though readings such as Conte’s take Encolpius’ stupidity as straightforward and transparent, Rimell (2002), 8, brings up the possibility that Encolpius might sometimes, or always, act the fool deliberately: “[C]an we claim that Encolpius is simply stupid (and therefore ‘inferior’) and not ever or always self-consciously posing as a clown, empowered by ironic self-mockery and by his audience’s necessary inability to tell when they are being manipulated or fooled?”

36 Halberstam (2011).
forgotten even more thoroughly, forgotten almost to the point of erasure. From the normative perspective Encolpius and co are failures who simply don’t get the rules of the game, but if this were the end of the story we wouldn’t have the text at all, because Encolpius never even begins to succeed in normative terms. The fact is that we do have the text, no matter how battered, and we see, in elaborate detail, how a new “game” is being formed, what the world might look like when normativity is one pose among many, when proper manliness and normative kinship arrangements are forgotten or only intermittently and fleetingly of concern. If normative relations with one’s body or one’s social environment are lost through amnesia or incomprehension, new ones must be found.

Significantly, whatever kind of sociality we have in the Satyricon is not quite yet fully realized. The “new brotherhood”, taking shape over the ruins of normative kinship in the Satyricon, is nascent and disputed, not yet concretized into an institution and a set of constitutive shared beliefs forming that institution. It fails dismally, because dismal failure is the measure of the Satyricon’s world. But nonetheless, even if just for a moment, it points elsewhere, at forms of relationship exceeding the normative. The Satyricon is no queer utopia, but its sometimes nightmarish disintegration of the social world both demystifies and desublimates certain aspects of the normative, and hints at certain possibilities of resignification. Its queerness, like that of Muñoz, is always on the horizon, glimmering into existence. This dissertation is about that glimmer.

Brotherhood is hard to miss in the Satyricon. The appellation frater follows the Encolpius/Ascyltos/Giton trio from their first appearance at the beginning of the extant text, and the language of siblinghood persists all the way to Croton. The modern reader is deprived of a
great deal of information that would aid in the interpretation of the relationship amongst the trio: we cannot know for sure (though there has certainly been ample speculation) in what circumstances Encolpius met Ascytlos or Giton, how long he has been travelling with them when the extant text begins, what relationship Encolpius and Giton had with Lichas and Tryphaena to occasion the events on the ship, what happened that one time in the viridarium with Ascytlos, and so forth.\textsuperscript{37} So the reader has the curious impression of getting a glimpse into a set of relationships already well-established and -developed, and having to extrapolate from the way the characters act what exactly the nature of these relationships might be. As far as the extant text goes, the pre- and post-\textit{Cena} scenes between Encolpius, Ascytlos, and Giton (\textit{Sat.} 9-11 and 79-80) form a parallel pair of lovers’ quarrels as Giton is exchanged from bed to bed and each of the older men is “caught out” by the other, but there are no perfect symmetries. The scenes are densely packed with intersecting levels of significance, and the roles of the three men continually shift. Are they friends, brothers, mess-mates, spouses, who is the wife, who is the husband, who is paired up with whom, who wants whom? The answer seems to change over and over, and none of the old terms quite seem to fit. As a result, fraternity is expanded to cover a range of forms of relationality.

Scholarship on the sociality of the trio tends to focus on the “instability” of these relationships, set in contrast to the purported stability of normative kinship relationships (both brotherhood and legal marriage). The humour in the scenes supposedly arises from the fact that the \textit{fratres} think of themselves as lofty literary figures, whereas they are in fact thoroughly “disreputable”, a band of “promiscuous homosexual rogues”\textsuperscript{38} who “abuse” and

\begin{footnotesize}
\begin{itemize}
\item[Jensson (2004)] offers one of the most extensive and detailed reconstructions of the \textit{Satyricon}.
\item[Morgan (2009), 44.]
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“misappropriate” the “norms of brotherly love”. According to this point of view, their use of brotherhood is a simple metaphor, and a bad one at that. The high is inappropriately applied to the low: “we” laugh. But this reading, once again, views the trio from the point of view of the normative: it is to gaze down from above, to perceive and acknowledge a lack of fit with normativity but to immediately dismiss that lack of fit with laughter rather than seeking to examine it more deeply. Often, as happens not infrequently in Petronian scholarship, there are hints in such readings of the influence of modern sexual normativity and the implicit valuation of certain kinds of relationships above others. In particular, the idea that the Satyrica “parodies” the Greek novel by replacing the “faithful heterosexual couple” with a “promiscuous homosexual couple” at times serves to project modern sexual normativity onto ancient texts, considerably flattening out both the Greek novel and the Satyrica in the process. As Halberstam puts it, glossing the work of Kath Weston on queer kinship, “normative temporalities... privilege longevity over temporariness, permanence over contingency, and so on. These normative conceptions of time and relation make permanent (even if estranged) connections take precedence over random (even if intense) associations.” The trope of “instability” is far from ideologically innocent. I seek here to substitute such a top-down gaze for a bottom-up one, and to track the way the fratres themselves view their relationships, how they appropriate the bond of brotherhood and resignify it.

But what is it precisely that the trio is appropriating in the first place? What “original” do

39 Abuse and misappropriation: Bannon (1997), 86.
40 It is telling to note how much of the sexual activity represented in the Satyrica falls outside of Gayle Rubin’s “charmed circle” of sexual normativity: the Satyrica includes sex which is homosexual, unmarried, promiscuous, non-procreative, commercial, in groups, casual, cross-generational, in public (or at least al fresco), utilizing manufactured objects, sadomasochistic – almost every single aspect Rubin ascribes to “bad, abnormal, unnatural, damned” sexuality (Rubin [1984]). A queer reading ought surely to challenge modern along with ancient sexual normativity.
41 Halberstam (2011), 72.
they draw on? The answer is not as straightforward as it may appear, because Roman
brotherhood, despite posing as utterly natural, the very paradigm of sociality itself, is not a
straightforward thing. In general, brotherhood was a highly-valued and prestigious kind of
relation for Romans, who traced the very founding of their city back to an originary conflict
between two brothers, Romulus and Remus. In the first place, the fraternal relationship gained
more prestige because of its relative rarity: mortality rates meant that full brothers were rather
uncommon. Many Roman sources emphasize a purported similarity between brothers; Gellius
records Nigidius Figulus’ etymology for frater from fere alter (NA 13.10.4). A brother was
“nearly” another self – but not quite, and that “not quite” could open the way to particularly
virulent conflict. Perpetual discord between brothers, from Romulus and Remus on,
accompanies the idealization of brotherhood as a supreme example of familial pietas.
Aggression against one’s brother is sometimes imaged as a form of aggression against oneself,
and this suicidal impulse reaches its peak in civil war, where fratricide often comes to figure the
self-destructive madness of a people fighting itself, a sword turned against the guts of the body
that is the state, in the imagery of the proem of Lucan's civil war epic (populumque potentem | in
sua uictrici conuersum uiscera dextra, BC 1.2-3). The shattering of the bond between brothers
figures the shattering of the entire social contract, a social contract that was, paradoxically,
founded upon fratricide in the first place. The “overstuffed” Roman tradition of civil war
literature, in whose long shadow the Satyrlica lurks, reveals all too clearly that the sublime

43 Compare [Quint.] Decl. Min. 321.9, cited by Bannon (1997), 73, in which the strength of the brother-bond and
the self-destructive quality of fratricide is marshaled in defense of a man who is charged with the murder of his
brother, in an attempt to make such a murder seem thoroughly implausible: Huic necessitudini qui dare
venenum potest non oculos effodiet suos, non manus in viscera sua armabit? (“A man who could give poison to
someone so essential to his own survival, will he not strike out his own eyes, or turn his hand against his own
heart?”). His very limbs would sooner fight against themselves (membra hercule inter se citius pugnaverint, 8).
44 Bannon (1997), 137.
45 See Eumolpus’ comments on the oversaturation of the civil war tradition, Sat. 118: Ecce belli civilis ingens opus
brother-bond failed repeatedly (more on civil war to come, in chapter 3). All Romans, Horace claims, share in Romulus’ curse: Remus’ blood stains posterity (Epod. 7.18-21, acerba fata Romanos agunt | scelusque fraternal necis, | ut inmerentis fluxit in terram Remi | sacer nepotibus cruor, “a harsh destiny, the crime of fraternal slaughter, dogs the Romans, ever since the blood of innocent Remus flowed onto the ground, a curse for posterity”). It is fratricide that makes Rome possible in the first place; one brother must win at the expense of the other. Failure is a significant component even of normative brotherhood.

Although riven by potential conflict from the mythical origins of Rome on, the language of brotherhood nonetheless retained its seductive symbolic force to the extent that it was used metaphorically of all manner of male-male relationships, from polite acquaintance to close friendship.\(^{46}\) It is, therefore, not unusual per se for a Roman man to refer to another unrelated to him as “brother”; Encolpius and co draw on a familiar extension of kinship terminology. However, they go too far. They seek not to supplement kin relations with homosocial bonds imaged through a brother-metaphor, as a Roman gentleman would very well be expected to do, but to replace the normative household itself, which is everywhere absent in the Satyrica, with a set of male-male relationships that are explicitly sexual, lacking in the disavowal and sublimation of physical sexuality upon which homosociality is grounded.\(^{47}\) The fact that “brother” was already a standard metaphor for relationships between unrelated men means that the trio’s resignification of the term takes on not only kinship but also a broader field of male-male relations.

\(^{46}\) See the overview of Dickey (2002), 123-6.
\(^{47}\) Sedgwick (1985) offers a classic account of the formation of male homosociality by means of the exclusion of homosexuality. Gunderson (2003), 153-90 discusses a similar dynamic in Roman discourse. The “homosexuality” that makes Romans anxious is not simply sameness of gender, but sameness of gender, age, and status.
The work of Judith Butler offers a particularly rich conceptual apparatus for the potential queerness of parody, its ability to point to the constitutive fractures in the norm.\(^{48}\) Whereas the “view from the normative” sees the Ascyltos/Giton/Encolpius trio’s parody of fraternity as ultimately a joke on them for the delectation of the superior author/reader, Butler’s work points rather towards the ways in which parody can undermine, rather than shore up, normativity. To Butler, since normative ideals cannot ultimately be fully inhabited but only approximated, every such attempt at approximating the norm takes on a “citational” quality: there is no stable core of gender, only a series of imitative, repetitive actions that, because of their repetitive nature itself, over time coalesce so as to create the illusion of an authentic original. Gender parody, of which Butler’s (in)famous example is drag, calls normativity’s bluff by revealing that there is no “authentic original” after all, but only a “set of imitative practices”.\(^{49}\) Indeed, the Roman conceptualization of mos maiorum, the projection of an impossible ideal onto a phantasmic image of the Ancestors, is built precisely around the idea of imitation, and an imitation that must invariably fail: “no Roman of any age”, as Erich Segal comments in his analysis of Plautine comedy, “could fulfill the dictates of mos maiorum any more than Sisyphus could push his rock to the summit.”\(^{50}\) Roman brotherhood has always already failed, because the present age is always already corrupt. Remus is always murdered. Encolpius and co “parody” the way in which the social elite apply the term “brother” to their homosocial relationships,\(^{51}\) but that application by the elite is already an imitation of blood-brotherhood, and the pietas of blood-

\(^{48}\) Butler’s theories of parody and resignification are complexly developed throughout her oeuvre. In this paragraph I rely primarily on Butler (1990), but the discussion in Butler (1993), passim, of the notion of the “constitutive outside”, among a host of other issues, has also influenced my thinking considerably.

\(^{49}\) Butler (1990), 188.

\(^{50}\) Segal (1987), 12.

\(^{51}\) Bannon (1997), 87-88. Bannon hints that there might be something queer going on here: “Like the pretense of military identity, the use of frater for lover is euphemistic, concealing the socially unacceptable erotic component of their relationships and at the same time mocking socially acceptable behavior by suggesting deviant applications of these norms.” However, she unfortunately does not develop the idea of “deviant applications” of the norm.
brotherhood is already an imitation itself, an approximation of an impossible norm that moralistic discourse, the overdeveloped Roman superego,\textsuperscript{52} renders uninhabitable and unrealizable. All this points strongly to *mos maiorum* and the phantasm of brotherly *esprit de corps* being a con, but Encolpius and co are not particularly concerned. They utilize “brotherhood” not as a way to anxiously analogize their relationships to an idealized blood-relation, but as a means of experimenting with new forms of community the norm would seek to abject, even as these new forms of community come with their own constitutive exclusions. As Halberstam has it, failure to approximate the norm enables them rather than shuts them down. As ever, there are both centrifugal and centripetal forces at play: though it is possible to read their appropriation of brotherhood as a Butlerian-type parody that exposes the phantasmic quality of norms that attempt to naturalize themselves through iteration, pointing to some kind of fatal incoherence in normative sociality, the *fratres* themselves do not explicitly set themselves in opposition to a norm. They do not dwell on what they are not doing, because they are too busy enacting something new. Again, there is something profoundly enabling about this kind of “amnesia”. Nonetheless, Butler’s focus on a breakdown of the distinction between “(authentic) originals” and “copies” has had much impact on my analysis, as will shortly become clearer.

In the first place, without a doubt, the interrelationships amongst the members of the trio do not fit easily into normative Roman conceptions of sociality. The three men lodge together and adventure together, seeking their fortune, or even just their survival, as a collective. None of them have wives or children; none of them mention parents, siblings, or any other blood relatives. Both men, alternately, have sex with Giton, and both feel they have some kind of

\textsuperscript{52} For the overdeveloped Roman superego, see Segal (1987), 13.
claim on him; he is sometimes represented as if he were a slave, but at other times he appears to have a great deal of agency of his own.\textsuperscript{53} The two older men have had some kind of sexual encounter in the past, but we cannot now know the details of their sexual relationship or whether it was limited to a single encounter. During the course of the narrative, the trio are on the road and on the run: this is not a settled household arrangement, but something more contingent and ad hoc. Precisely what, it is difficult to pin down. The three seem to have gathered together primarily for financial security, or at least Encolpius suggests as much when he tells Ascytlos they ought to part company and “drive out poverty” by separate enterprises (\textit{paupertatem nostram privatis quaestibus temptemus expellere}, \textit{Sat.} 9.4). But the fact that all three members of the trio have engaged in sexual activity with one another endlessly complicates the formation of the ménage à trois as a matter of simple financial expediency. Complex emotional bonds link the \textit{fratres}, uniting them and setting them at odds in turn. Within the petty-criminal existence and outside of normative kinship, some very queer bonds are forged: queer both in the sense that they exceed bounds of the normative Roman household, and that they incorporate kinds of intimacy between men that would normally generate anxiety.

\textit{Frater}, the primary Latin kin term for “brother”, is very often used of these bonds, and it takes on a peculiar familiarity in the frequency of its use, becoming a kind of queerly uncanny doublet of itself. The term \textit{frater} is used only three times in relation to actual “blood” brothers, and twice these brothers are positioned in the “over there” of myth: the brother of the freedman Chrysanthus, to whom he denied inheritance because of conflict between them (\textit{Sat.} 43.4); the “brothers” Diomedes and Ganymede, Trimalchio’s butchered – or reinvented?\textsuperscript{54} – version of Agamemnon and Menelaus (\textit{Sat.} 59.1); and the twin sons of Laocoon in Eumolpus’ \textit{Troiae}

\underline{\textsuperscript{53} On this ambivalence, see Richlin (2009), 86-7.}
\underline{\textsuperscript{54} On the possibility that Trimalchio is rewriting rather than simply butchering myth, see Rimell (2002), 46-7.}
halosis (who form a courageous mirror image in death, and of whom the ubiquitous Roman buzzword pietas is used, which appears, startlingly but perhaps unsurprisingly, only here in the entire extant Satyrica; Sat. 89.46). By contrast, frater is used in the extant text time and time again in reference to the interrelationships of Encolpius, Giton, and Ascyltos. Of course, we cannot know about the brothers that are lost to us forever with the fragmentation of the text, but nonetheless the frequency with which brotherhood language is used of the three rogues compared to its use in reference to actual brothers is immediately striking. The “queer” kind of brotherhood overshadows “actual” brotherhood; the purported “copy” begins to seem threatening to the putative authenticity of the “original”, which by its very absence appears unreal. What can “brotherhood” possibly mean when nobody has a “real” brother? And what meaning do kin relationships have, anyway, in a milieu without kin and without reproductive futurity? Where is the referent to be situated? The metaphoricity of queer brotherhood seems in danger of breaking down. But is this a simple negativity, a breaking down of the “original” and an exposure of its inadequacy for naming queer forms of relationality, or a creation of something new, something ever on the horizon? One of the issues here, as we shall see, is that “brotherhood”, even this queer brotherhood, seems to mean different things to Encolpius and Ascyltos. The boundaries of this “new” kind of brotherhood are far from uncontested. They grope towards something else, something elsewhere, but their different ideas of what this new thing is set them in conflict.

Modern scholarship has certainly not been blind to the non-standard nature of the intimacies within the trio. Several scholars, in particular Williams, have focused on the idea of “brotherhood” as a way for the characters of the Satyrica to “sidestep” issues of penetration, and

to structure their relationships in a way that is more fluid than the priapic paradigm of clearly-demarcated penetrator and penentratee allows. But the consequences here are very far-reaching indeed. To the normative imaginary, penetration of one man by another was, regardless of circumstances, inherently an act of violation, depriving the penetrated man of his status and masculinity. But if men are in a relationship of “brotherhood”, it is not obvious who is superior, and it is not necessary that one member of the brother-pair gain his status at the expense of the other. In fact, it might even be the case that brotherhood has so much symbolic force because it represents the ideal homosocial relationship, intensely close and intimate but not “stained” by sexual contact, which, between two adult males of equal age and status, was viewed at times with positively phobic revulsion, not always directed exclusively towards the penetrated partner: in the Miles Marianus case, monumentalized into a world-making or -shattering event in Pseudo-Quintilian’s third Major Declamation, the tribune, having attempted to sexually assault a soldier under his command, is portrayed as a perverted monster for having invested a base, unsublimated sexual desire in the tokens of normative military masculinity, even though he desires to penetrate rather than be penetrated. (And here in particular, the Petronian trio’s appropriation of the language of military comradeship begins to sound a rather scandalous note indeed.)

56 Williams discusses this hypothesis most extensively in his dissertation: Williams (1992), 341-9. It also appears in his book on Roman friendship: Williams (2012), 171 (“the label frater offered a way of representing intimate relations between males in such a way as both to represent a relationship as meaningful and affectionate, valuable to participants and respected by others, and to sidestep questions of gendered and penetrative hierarchy”). Bannon (1997), 80, also argues that frater could be used to “mask any inequality in lovers’ sexual relationships”. While Bannon sees the term as a euphemism to cover up socially-unacceptable behaviour in a “society where intimacy between men could raise eyebrows” (80), Williams insists that “[a]nxieties around physical intimacy and desire between males, and accompanying impulses to deny or erase, do not form a part of the cultural landscape visible to us in the Latin textual tradition”, and thus sees his position as the exact opposite to Bannon’s (Williams [2012], 171). Williams and Bannon use a similar idea – the equalizing nature of brotherhood – to argue different positions.

57 See the discussion of Gunderson (2003), 153-190.
58 For military language, see the reference to communes sarcinulas at 10.4 (suggestive of the shared mess of
If male subjectivity itself is founded on the repudiation of sexual contact with a man of the same age and status, then brotherhood, “naturally” desexualized by the incest taboo, is positively the Platonic form of an idealized male-male relationship. But here, the use of “brotherhood” of a relationship between male lovers is risky business. Rather than elevating the relationship between the lovers into a realm of male intimacy sublimely beyond the limitations of priaponormativity, there is the danger of performing the opposite operation: dragging down and desublimating the “original” brotherhood, suggesting that even the ideal of homosociality is shot through with suppressed sexuality. This is perhaps especially the case in the Satyrica, where it is clear that there has been explicitly sexual contact between all three members of the trio. Does the use of the language of “brotherhood” in the case of lovers therefore “clean up” a sexual relationship or dirty up a kinship relationship and – perhaps even more pointedly – its metaphorical extension? Is there a naughty suggestion somewhere in the Satyrica that those men who call their very dear friends their “brothers” might just have been mystifying something very dirty all along? This is not the “answer” to the use of brotherhood language, but it is one of the questions potentially raised, and it is expedient to bear in mind when turning to the details of the text.

The hypothesis of brotherhood as an equalizing term must take into account the fact that brother language is not used equally amongst the members of the trio. Although the appellation frater is used at times of all three members of the Encolpius/Ascytlos/Giton trio, it is not applied in symmetrical ways. Tracking the usage of frater reveals that, although Encolpius frequently

soldiers, as Bannon [1997], 86 notes); manubias at 79.12 (Schmeling [2011], 334 translates “spoils of war”); Ascytlos’ reference to Giton as a praeda at 80.1; Encolpius’ claim at 80.8 that Ascytlos has abandoned his carissimum commilitonem, etc.

59 Compare the way in which the Satyrica appropriates earlier literature, in particular epic, and dirties it up; the paradigmatic example, perhaps, is Encolpius’ representation of his penis as Dido at Sat. 132.11, as well as the mutation of the Odyssean scar recognition scene into a penis recognition scene (Sat. 105.9-10). Cf. Rimell (2002), 119 for a discussion of the Satyrica’s sexualization of the Odyssey.
refers to Giton as his *frater*,\(^{60}\) he is much slower to refer to Ascytos as such: in fact, he never does so in the extant text, a fact not often adverted to in the secondary literature. On several occasions, Ascytos refers to Encolpius as *frater\(^{61}\) (and Giton also calls Ascytos Encolpius’ brother\(^{62}\)), but Encolpius does not reciprocate. If Ascytos interpellates Encolpius as ‘brother’, he implicitly refuses the call and addresses Ascytos in terms of friendship instead. *Frater*, for Encolpius, does indeed at times seem almost equivalent to “boyfriend”, and he seems to regard Giton as his only boyfriend. *Frater* is his default way of referring to, and addressing, Giton. Sometimes it seems relatively neutral, a straightforwardly descriptive way of referring to Giton. On several occasions, however, calling Giton *frater* appears to be for Encolpius a way of claiming him as his own as against rival attempts on the boy: he tells Quartilla, when she asks whose Giton is, that he is his *frater* (*Sat.* 24.6). He does not say merely that he belongs to him, but that he is his brother; as often, the term takes on a kind of pointedness. Encolpius is enraged when he catches Ascytos in bed with “a brother not his own”, *fratre non suo* (*Sat.* 79.9). Giton, he implies, is his brother and his alone, not Ascytos’. They can’t share him.

Perhaps the most telling scene for Encolpius’ “exclusive” view of brotherhood comes long after Ascytos has dropped out of the story. Circe, having found out about Encolpius’ relationship with Giton, offers herself to him as a *soror*, wondering whether he can’t just adopt a sister as well as a brother. Here is the resultant exchange (*Sat.* 127.1-5; 8):

> (si non fastidis), inquit, “feminam ornatam et hoc primum anno virum expertam, concilio tibi, o iuvenis, sororem. habes tu quidem [et] fratem, neque enim me piguit inquirere, sed quid prohibet et sororem adoptare? eodem gradu venio. tu tantum dignare et meum osculum, cum libuerit, agnoscere.” “immo”, inquam, “ego per fórmam tuam te rogo, ne fastidias hominem peregrinum inter cultores admittere. invennes religiosum, si te adorari permiseris. ac ne me iudices ad hoc


\(^{61}\) *Sat.* 9.10, 11.1, 11.4, 13.3.

\(^{62}\) *Sat.* 9.4, 80.3 (implicit in *Thebanum par*).
“templum [Amoris] gratis accedere, dono tibi fratrem meum.” “quid? tu”, inquit illa, “donas mihi eum sine quo non potes vivere, ex cuius osculo pendes, quem sic tu amas, quemadmodum ego te volo?” ... “sume ergo amplexum, si placet. neque est quod curiosum aliquem extimescas: longe ab hoc loco frater est.”

She said: “If you won't disdain a distinguished woman who has only experienced a man for the first time this year, I offer you a sister, young man. You have a brother too – I wasn't ashamed to inquire – but what's to stop you from adopting a sister too? I come on the same terms. All you have to do is deign to accept my kiss, when you like.” I said, “On the contrary: I entreat you by your beauty, do not disdain to accept a foreigner amongst your worshippers. You will find me devoted, if you allow yourself to be worshipped. And lest you think I am approaching the temple empty-handed, I give you my brother (/I give up my brother for you).”

“What's that?” she said, “are you really going to give up for me (/give to me) the boy you can't live without, the boy on whose kisses you hang, the boy whom you love in the way that I want you to love me?” ... “So embrace me, if you wish. There's no need for you to worry about any voyeur: your brother is far from here.”

Circe reaches towards a notion of “siblinghood” as the basis for non-monogamy, a way to justify having several lovers at once by invoking a “natural” fact about kinship: it is possible to have more than one sibling simultaneously, and to have them on the same terms. One has an equivalent relationship with each of one’s siblings: Circe wants Encolpius to love her just as he loves Giton, and he needn’t give Giton up in order to do so. Circe’s proposal is, in many ways, the natural conclusion to the logic of siblinghood. If you’re going to treat your lover as a kind of metaphorical sibling, why not go the whole hog and incorporate into your sex-life the non-exclusivity of natural siblings? One might wonder at the content of the enquiries Circe has supposedly made into Encolpius’ sex-life: has she heard about his obsession with “brotherhood” and the fact he is wont to refer to Giton as his frater, or is this somehow a shared idiom in the world of the Satyricon, even beyond the Aseylos-Encolpius-Giton trio? Or does Encolpius merely characterize Circe in such a way as to reflect his own obsession with brotherhood?

At any rate, however, Encolpius does not assent to this “commonsensical” invocation of
the non-exclusivity of sibling terminology, but instead says he will give up Giton for Circe, as though he thinks himself capable of having only one “sibling” at once. Encolpius has transformed the meaning of “siblinghood”: to him, it is a way of describing an exclusive relationship, limited to one person. He may – and does – have other lovers, but Giton is his only “brother”. But even here, there is another fillip of non-exclusivity, whether or not Encolpius intends it. Addressing Circe in religious tones, he assures her that he will give Giton to her as a kind of offering: *dono tibi fratrem meum*. While he seems to mean that he will give *up* Giton in *favour of* Circe (*donare* meaning “to give up for the sake of”, *OLD* 3), the phrase could easily be taken to mean that he will give Giton *to* Circe (*donare* meaning “to present, grant, give to”, *OLD* 2), that is, Circe will “have” the both of them. And who in the *Satyrica*, given his apparently universal desirability (though that universal desirability is a function of the way Encolpius sees the world), would refuse a gift of Giton to enjoy for themselves? Tryphaena and Quartilla have already enjoyed Giton as a tasty morsel; why should not Circe also, especially given her penchant for men of a low social status? And if Circe wants Encolpius to love her like he loves Giton, shouldn’t she, by analogy, be able to love Giton the way Encolpius does, if Giton is “given” to her? Circe’s proposal that one can have more than one sibling “stains” Encolpius’ remark. And she is not deaf to the salacious possibilities: she assures Encolpius that he need not fear anyone meddlesome, because his brother is far off (*neque est quod curiosum aliquem extimescas: longe ab hoc loco frater est*). The generalizing *aliquis* immediately morphs into the specific *frater*: initially feigning that she could mean just anyone, she proceeds to conjure up the image of Giton’s presence only to banish it, but the possibility of Giton as voyeur lingers – and voyeurism in the *Satyrica* repeatedly leads to (attempted) sexual activity.63 The

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63 See especially the Quartilla episode, where Quartilla is turned on by watching Giton and Pannychis, and kisses
non-exclusivity of sibling terminology, when used in a sexual sense, invokes the never quite realized potential for group sex between multiple “brothers” and/or “sisters”.  

Another crucial point here is the way in which Encolpius thinks brotherhood is established. After the Cena and more squabbling over Giton, Ascytlos finally proposes that they hand over the matter of Giton’s brotherhood to the boy himself (Sat. 80.5-7):

We put away our swords after these pleas, and Ascytlos said first: “I'll put an end to this argument. Let the boy follow whichever of us he wants, so that he might at least have the freedom to choose a brother.” For my part, I was convinced that an intimacy so long-standing had turned into a pledge of blood, so I had no fear; I even latched onto the terms of the agreement with precipitous haste, and entrusted the suit to the arbiter. He did not so much as pause, so as to show he was hesitating, but immediately, as soon as the words had left my mouth, he got up and chose Ascytlos as his brother.

Giton’s freedom has been limited, Ascytlos implies, but now a choice is open to him. Certainly Giton oscillates continually between being represented by Ascytlos and Encolpius as exchanged or stolen property or a kind of disputed inheritance, and having agency of his own. Ascytlos here envisions “brotherhood” as a matter of choice, closer in that respect to the legal kinship of marriage than the natural kinship of blood-relation. But it is unclear whether Ascytlos imagines that Giton is choosing which of the two men will become his brother, or whether he is choosing between two men who are already his brothers. Does Giton’s choice form brotherhood in the

Encolpius (Sat. 26.4-5), and the children of Philomela episode, where Encolpius tries it on with the brother who is watching his sister have sex with Eumolpus (Sat. 140.11).

64 Again, the children of Philomela episode is relevant, in that the brother watches his sister having sex with Eumolpus, with the help of Corax (although the two siblings do not directly engage each other sexually).
first place, or is there something prior to choice? Where Circe spoke in terms of adoption, 
*adoptare*, invoking a legal mechanism for the creation of kinship but playfully reworking it (one strictly “adopts” a child, not a sibling), Ascytlos seems to have something more informal in mind.

Although Ascytlos’ view of the formation of brotherhood remains somewhat elusive (such is the case elsewhere also, as we shall see), Encolpius proceeds to reveal exactly how he thinks brotherhood is initiated. He is confident that Giton will choose him as his brother, because their long association has transmuted itself into a blood relation (*vetustissimam consuetudinem putabam in sanguinis pignus transisse*). This is rather a stunning thing for Encolpius to say:65 he thinks that a long-established relationship of familiarity, *consuetudo*, can bring about an actual blood-bond. The phrase *sanguinis pignus* is rare; it is found elsewhere only in two pieces of (Neronian) literature:66 Seneca’s *Oedipus*, where it is used of the children of Oedipus and Jocasta, an “ill-omened pledge of [Oedipus’] blood” (*inauspicatum sanguinis pignus mei*, 1022), and Lucan’s *Bellum Civile*, where it is used of the “pledges of united blood” Julia took to the underworld (*pignora iuncti | sanguinis*, 1.111). *Pignus*, in its primary meaning, is something given as surety for a bond; a guarantee of faith (*OLD* 1). As such, it is used of children, who act as surety for a marriage. Such is apparently the meaning of *sanguinis pignus* in Seneca and Lucan, but Encolpius means something entirely different, and thus uses the phrase in a unique way. He seems to be using *sanguis* in the sense of “blood relationship” or “consanguinity” (*OLD* 8b, where *Sat.* 80 is cited). His long-lasting relationship with Giton has, therefore, “passed over into a pledge of consanguinity”.

Encolpius, wittingly or not – and he makes the statement, buried in a relative clause, so

65 And indeed, the phrase *sanguinis pignus transire* appears only here: Habermehl (2006), 21.
casually that one can overlook the implications – here poses a strong challenge to “natural” brotherhood by suggesting that association can actually create blood kinship. Indeed, some Roman sources emphasize the shared experiences of brothers as a basis for fraternal pietas, albeit secondarily to the “natural fact” of shared birth: commonality of both nature and nurture establishes emotional intimacy and loyalty between brothers. But Encolpius here stretches the metaphoricity of their queer brotherhood to its very limits, to the point where it is collapsed with blood-brotherhood. Once the relationship has been established by consuetudo, “metaphorical” brotherhood merges completely with “actual” blood-brotherhood. This does not even seem to be a consciously willed process; it is the consuetudo itself that has grammatical agency to “pass over”, transisse. It seems that, to Encolpius’ mind, once intimacy and familiarity reach a certain point, the relationship automatically becomes one of blood. It then becomes Giton’s relationship with Encolpius as his “blood brother” that is the basis for a loyalty which should impel Giton to follow Encolpius as his lover. Brother and lover are one in the same; tenor and vehicle have merged. Encolpius shows no compunction whatsoever about the overtly incestuous overtones; no incest-taboo seems even to exist to him. By his casual claim about Giton’s relationship to him, he lays bare the framework of something totally alien to normative kinship even as it claims a complete identity with it. But almost immediately after having gestured towards a rupture of this kind, Encolpius reverts to the idea of brotherhood as choice: Giton, he says, immediately “chose Ascyltos as his brother” (fratrem Ascylton elegit). Just as he is forced to yield Giton to Ascyltos, he is also compelled to concede to the definition Ascyltos has just

67 See, again, [Quint.] Decl. Min. 321.7, which uses the word consuetudo: Fratrem occisuro non succurrit communis uterus, non eadem causa vitae, non una primordia, non illa [consuetudo] quae alienos etiam ac nulla necessitudine inter se coniunctos componere et adstringere affectibus potest consuetudo actae pariter infantiae, pueritiae studia, lusus tristiae ioci? (“Didn’t their shared birth come to the aid of the man who is about to kill his brother, and the same source of life and the shared origins, the familiarity which is able to join in a close emotional bond even strangers who share no interdependence, doesn’t the familiarity of shared childhood, boyhood education, joy, sadness, and games?”) Trans. Bannon (1997), 73.
offered of brotherhood, a simple matter of choice.

But Ascytlos’ views on brotherhood, insofar as they can even be determined through the murky glass of Encolpius’ narrative, are perhaps rather more complex than he suggests during the brother-choice scene. One of the most notorious loci for “brotherhood” in the Satyrica is Ascytlos’ invocation of his “brotherhood” with Encolpius during their first quarrel over Giton. After Encolpius accuses Ascytlos of having submitted to penetration and oral sex, Ascytlos responds with something rather more elusive and much less easy to fit into the rigid scheme of priaponomativity (Sat. 9.6-10):

quibus ego auditis intentavi in oculos Ascytli manus et, “quid dicis”, inquam, “muliebris patientiae scortum, cuius ne spiritus <quidem> purus est?”
inhorrescere se finxit Ascytlos, mox sublatis fortius manibus longe maiore nisu clamavit: “non taces”, inquit, “gladiator obscene, quem †de ruina† harena dimisit? non taces, nocturne percussor, qui ne tum quidem, cum fortiter faceres, cum pura muliere pugnasti, cuius eadim ratione in viridario frater fui qua nunc in deversorio puer est?”

On hearing this, I brandished my fist in Ascytlos’ face and said, “What have you got to say for yourself, you whore who takes it like a woman, whose very breath is far from clean?” Ascytlos pretended to be offended, but then he raised his fists more aggressively, and shouted out much more loudly, “Won’t you shut up, you filthy gladiator, whom the arena dismissed on account of collapse! [?] Won’t you shut up, you assassin by night! Even when you were fighting heroically, you didn’t have a go at a decent woman. I was your brother in the garden the same way the boy is now in the inn.”

Much scholarly discussion of this scene has focused on how Ascytlos’ statement might relate to priaponomativity: is he accusing Encolpius of being penetrated by Giton, or is he invoking his own penetration by Encolpius?68 Normative discourse insists that it must be one or the other.

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68 Williams (2012), 216-7, argues that Ascytlos is claiming that Encolpius is penetrated by Giton, just as he himself penetrated Encolpius, whereas Richlin (2009), 85, suggests that Ascytlos is invoking his penetration by Encolpius (while also keeping open the possibility that Ascytlos is accusing Encolpius of being penetrated by Giton). Gladiator obscene, nocturne percussor, fortiter facere and pugnare, though, all of which imply manly
Indeed, the juxtaposition of Ascyltos’ outburst with Encolpius’ accusations, which clearly are based on penetration, might well cause a reader to be thinking in terms of the priapo-norms. But there are broader affective dynamics at issue as well. It is abundantly clear, regardless of what exact sexual conduct is at issue, that frater takes on a pointed sexual meaning here: there was a time when Ascyltos was to Encolpius as Giton is to Encolpius now, and the Encolpius/Giton relationship is saturated with overt sexuality. But Ascyltos’ comment here opens up the idea that there might be more than one way of being a brother. Eadem ratione qualifies frater. Ascyltos “was” Encolpius’ brother in a certain way in the past, but Ascyltos still considers him a “brother” in the narrative present, frequently addressing him as such. Their sexual relationship was in the past, but their brotherhood endures into the present – at least for Ascyltos. Encolpius, however, does not reciprocate in referring to Ascyltos as a brother. It is difficult to know precisely how to interpret the rapid change in subject (to the events involving Agamemnon) that the quarrel takes after Ascyltos’ invocation of his sexual past with Encolpius, and whether the rapidity of this change indicates discomfort on Encolpius’ part, or simple indifference. Ascyltos is only pretending to be scandalized, and the whole thing ends up in laughter; the “insults” apparently bruise neither of them. At any rate, there seems to be no paralyzing anxiety about the fact that a sexual relationship once existed between these “brothers”. They transition, apparently fluidly, from lovers to travelling-buddies, remaining “brothers”, at least in Ascyltos’ eyes, the entire time. Brotherhood in the Satyrica has the potential to be extremely flexible, apparently able to incorporate almost every kind of male intimacy, including explicit peer

aggressivity (ironic in the light of Encolpius’ impotence, which is indeed part of the point), are odd phrases for Ascyltos to use if he is trying to blacken Encolpius with the accusation of being penetrated by Giton (though gladiator obscene might suggest the effeminate retiarius; Cerutti-Richardson [1989]). This is a complex scene. Schmeling (1994-5), 212, refers to mutiliebris patientiae scortum as an “encoded bit of banter between bisexual lovers.”
sexuality. But this is not always the way Encolpius, who wants to draw dividing lines and possess Giton exclusively, sees things.

Giton seems to pick up on some of the ambivalence of brotherhood when, accusing Ascytlos of attempted rape, he disparagingly refers to Ascytlos as *tuus iste frater seu comes* (“that brother or companion of yours”, *Sat.* 9.4). Giton affects not to know the valence of the relationship between Ascytlos and Encolpius: is it brotherhood or comradeship? Just how intimate is it? The use of *iste* marks Giton’s remark as sarcastic, but what exactly is he getting at? His remark, coming so close to Ascytlos’ invocation of his brotherhood-inflected sexual encounter with Encolpius in the past, can be interpreted as playing on the sexual meaning of brotherhood by formulating a disjuncture between a *frater* and a *comes* rather than the smooth homosocial continuum that Ascytlos seems to see.\(^7^0\) During the post-*Cena* quarrel, Giton begs Encolpius and Ascytlos not to allow a humble inn to witness a “Theban duel”, that is, civil strife between Polynices and Eteocles (*ne Thebanum par humilis taberna spectaret*, *Sat.* 80.3): one wonders here whether the well-read Giton is picking up on Thebes’ notoriously incestuous nature and again hinting at the sexualization of the Encolpius-Ascytlos relationship. It is up to the reader to piece together from knowing references and insinuations on the part of Giton and Ascytlos what exactly “brotherhood” means to them. It is certainly not transparent. When Ascytlos claims, some time after the first quarrel but still on the same night, that he will go off tomorrow and find a “dwelling and another brother” (*habitationem mihi prospiciam et aliquem*

\(^7^0\) Breitenstein (2009), 124, suggests that Giton plays on the sexual relationship between the two and “appelliert nicht nur an einen Freund, sondern an den einstigen Geliebten seines Schänders, korrigiert sich aber sogleich mit dem distanzierenden *comes*.” The “correction” of oneself in regard to sexualized sibling relationships perhaps calls to mind Cicero’s notorious treatment of Clodius’ relationship with his sister, in which he pretends to slip up by calling Clodius Clodia’s *vir* instead of her *frater*, making a malicious innuendo in the process (*Cic. Cael.* 32). Compare also Sedgwick’s discussion (1985: 2-3) of the difference between male and female homosociality in modern society: male interrelations as strongly dichotomized between the homosexual and the homosocial, and female interrelations as a continuum, or at least less starkly dichotomized.
fratrem, Sat. 10.6), the ambivalence of brotherhood is again set in relief: when he says he will
find another brother, does he mean another Encolpius or another Giton? Are they both brothers
to him? Interpreters and translators of the Satyrica use phrases as divergent as “little friend”,
“roommate”, and “boyfriend” to render frater here;71 it has become a complex and multivalent
term by this point in the text. If Encolpius were to say ‘I’ll go in search of another brother’, we
could be much more secure that he meant ‘another Giton’. Asyltos is more opaque. Despite
Encolpius’ retrospective presentation of him as nothing but an obstacle between himself and his
sole brother Giton, Asyltos’ valuation of his relationship with Encolpius seems rather different.

Indeed, the confrontation between Asyltos and Encolpius over Giton can be viewed as
generated partially by competing interpretations of what “brotherhood” means. Both of them
claim they are entitled to a share of Giton, but use ‘fraternity’ in different ways in order to lay
their claims. Encolpius feels that he is entitled to Giton because his association with him has
forged a blood-bond, the likes of which Asyltos does not have with the boy. To Asyltos,
however, it is the fraternal relationship that he feels he has with Encolpius, rather than with
Giton, that is the basis for his claim: he and Encolpius are brothers, and brothers share.

Encolpius’ brotherhood is exclusive and focused on his relationship with Giton; Asyltos’
inclusive and focused on his relationship with Encolpius. Where Asyltos feels Encolpius is
threatening the bond of brotherhood, Encolpius sees Asyltos’ betrayal in terms of friendship.72

Asyltos’ view of brotherhood, then, is closer to Circe’s than to Encolpius’.

71 “Little friend”: Ruden (2000); “boyfriend”: Walsh (1997); “roommate”: Courtney (2001), 64.
72 Compare Encolpius words at 79.11, fidem scelere violasti et communem amicitiam; 97.9, per memoriam
amicitiae, and, in particular, the poem about fair-weather friends at 80.9. Matters are complicated by the fact
that Encolpius also sometimes speaks of Giton in terms of amicitia: reliquit veteris amicitiae nomen, 81.5;
reviviscem amicitiam, 91.9. To add to the ambivalence, Giton refers to himself as having broken the
amicitiae sacramentum between Encolpius and Asyltos immediately after he apparently implored them not to
become a “Theban pair” - that is, brothers (80.3-4). Brotherhood and friendship cannot be easily separated.
Nonetheless, the point remains that Encolpius himself does not refer to Asyltos as his brother, even as he
represents others doing so in his narrative.
The pre-*Cena* scene in which Ascytlos punishes Encolpius for failing to share Giton nicely illustrates this dynamic (*Sat. 11*):

postquam lustravi oculis totam urbem, in cellulum redii osculisque tandem bona fide exactis alligo artissimis complexibus puerum fruorque votis usque ad invidiam felicibus. nec adhuc quidem omnia erant facta, cum Ascytlos furtim se foribus admovit discussisque fortissime claustris invenit me cum fratre ludentem. risu itaque plausuque cellulum implevit, opertum me amiculo evoluit et “quid agebas”, inquit, “frater sanctissime? quid? †verti† contubernium facis?” nec se solum intra verba continuit, sed lorum de pera solvit et me coepit non perfunctorie verberare, adiectis etiam petulantibus dictis: “sic dividere cum fratre nolito.”

After I had explored the whole town with my eyes, I returned to my little room, and, exchanging kisses finally in good faith, I held the boy in the tightest of embraces, and fulfilled my wishes to an enviable degree. But things were not yet entirely finished, when Ascytlos stole up to the doors, and shaking off the bolts with great violence, he found me playing with my brother. He filled the room with laughter and applause. He rolled me out of bed, still covered in my cloak, and he said: “What were you doing, most reverend brother of mine? What's this? Were you making a tent under the covers?” He did not content himself with words alone, but took out a leather strap from his satchel and begun to beat me with no small measure of vigour, adding on arrogant words: “This'll teach you to share with your brother!”

When Ascytlos catches Encolpius in bed with Giton, whom Encolpius pointedly refers to as his own *frater* (*cum fratre ludentem*), he addresses Encolpius sarcastically as *frater sanctissime*, and proceeds to roll him out of bed and beat him heartily with a leather strap, railing at him for not sharing with his *frater* (*sic dividere cum fratre nolito*). The close juxtaposition of Encolpius’ use of *frater* for Giton and Ascytlos’ use of *frater* for Encolpius brings to the fore the question of the Encolpius-Ascytlos relationship and its sexualization. And as with Circe, there is perhaps lurking in the background here the spectre of multiple sexual relations or group sex. Whereas in the scene with Circe, the possibility of the presence of Giton as voyeur and equal-participant “brother” to both Encolpius and Circe is invoked only to be banished, Ascytlos actually is a
voyeur, having snuck up to the door (*furtim se foribus admovit*) at a moment where the text threatens to conflate the “brotherhood” between Ascytlos and Encolpius with that between Giton and Encolpius, the latter of which is sexualized. Ascytlos wants Encolpius, as a brother, to share with his brother, but what precisely would this sharing consist of? *Dividere* can have the valence of sexual penetration; is there here even the faint, smutty suggestion of “dividing” in the sense of penetrating and being penetrated at once, whoever is imagined to be in whichever position? Indeed, on one reading at least, Ascytlos’ beating of Encolpius is a displacement of Encolpius’ penetration of Giton, which could not take place because of Ascytlos’ arrival. The ideal of the impartial sharing of property between siblings is aggressively desublimated by the submerged possibility of an all-male threesome, made possible by the equalizing nature of brother terminology. A reading like this does not seem so outlandish in a text like the *Satyricon*, where group sex scenes occur more than once (cf. the Quartilla and children of Philomela episodes). Seneca, indeed, thought something along these lines was going on with the arch-pervert Hostius Quadra, made notorious in the *Natural Questions*, although Hostius’ orgies involved both men and women.

In light of this scene with the trio, it is perhaps possible to re-read Ascytlos’ earlier invocation of the past sexual relationship between himself and Encolpius in a different light. Encolpius takes issue because Ascytlos tried to have sex with Giton, which results in Encolpius’

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74 What exactly is going on sexually between Encolpius and Giton, other than tight embraces, is not made explicit, but Encolpius does say that they had not yet done everything (*nec adhuc quidem omnia erant facta*), by which phrase he may mean that penetration had not occurred (or that orgasm had not been reached?)
75 Seneca has Hostius say: *simul... et urum et feminam patior. Nihilominus illa quoque superuacua mihi parte alicuius contumella marem exerceo; omnia membra stupris occupata sunt.* (“At the same time I submit to a man and a woman. Nonetheless, with that part of my body not occupied I play the man in violating someone else; all my parts are occupied by debauchery”, *NQ* 1.16). For an all-male threesome in which two men are sexually active and two are sexually passive (that is, the man in the middle is penetrating and being penetrated simultaneously, τέρπων ἐξόπιθεν, πρόσθε δὲ τερπόμενος, “getting pleasure behind and giving it in front”, as the poet puts it, a rather unusual representation of penetration as enjoyable) see Strato, *AP* 12.210.
accusations of sexual passivity. Ascytlos responds by invoking Encolpius’ impotence, and the fact that he was Encolpius’ brother in the past the way Giton is now. Given that brotherhood, for Ascytlos, is a matter of “sharing”, he might be interpreted as saying something like, “fair’s fair, brothers share, you had me, now I get to have Giton”. That is, if brotherhood implies sharing and non-hierarchical sexual relationships, he might be invoking a certain interchangeability of sexual relationships amongst the trio rather than necessarily making a statement about sexual penetration. How one reads his remark depends, among other things, on what one thinks “brotherhood” means.

But what the modern world might call “polyamory” cannot eventuate in the *Satyrica* given Encolpius’ view of siblinghood, in which the jealous possessiveness of the lover overrides the idea of siblinghood as an equal relation of “share and share alike” between multiple siblings. Encolpius wants to reformulate brotherhood as an exclusive love-relationship, almost a kind of conjugality (which nonetheless sometimes allows for the possibility of fleeting sexual encounters outside its bounds, just as, indeed, normative Roman marriage did in the case of the husband), whereas Ascytlos and Circe, in a sense, retain more of the original notion of blood-brotherhood by allowing multiple siblings, rather than only two, to share an equal relationship – but in the latter case, it is the admission of sex into the sibling relationship, the tearing down of the “incest taboo”, that renders the resultant relationship radically non-normative. The idea of true ménages à trois in which everyone has sex with everyone lurks at the boundaries here, but never reaches full realization. And indeed, whether consisting of Giton-Encolpius-Circe or Ascytlos-Encolpius-Giton, these “households” would be very queer indeed: if polygamy, one man having multiple wives, is thoroughly imaginable in the ancient world, configurations like one woman having two male lovers, who themselves are sexually involved, where the woman is
married to neither, or three men sharing a kind of household, each of them sexually involved with the other two, have no place whatsoever in the normative imaginary.  

It is not that such configurations are directly visible even in the queer world of the *Satyricon*, but they emerge briefly as almost-thinkable possibilities, annulled by the narrator’s view of brotherhood which, although still queer, is differently queer. Different aspects of normativity are differently resignified, depending on who you ask. Queerness is not a singular thing, a unified resistance to a monolithic normativity, but a field of multiple potentialities, realizable in different ways. It is not so much the case that Encolpius’ view of brotherhood, which views it as exclusive, constituted by association alone, and in practice somewhat analogous to a “standard” jealous lover’s relation to his beloved, is “less” queer than the idea of sexualized siblinghood as the basis for non-exclusive sexual combinations; rather, each of these reformulations of brotherhood takes on different aspects of the “original” to produce something that is both novel and familiar, a re-citation with a twist. But something must always be abjected even in the production of new forms of sociality: the abject outside of Encolpius’ brotherhood is the caring-and-sharing ménage à trois, which returns repeatedly to haunt him.

I hope to have pointed to some of the intriguing possibilities that result when one examines Petronian brotherhood closely, character by character, rather than merely dismissing it

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76 There are a few hints at one woman-two man combinations: the most notable example is the epitaph of Aulus Allius for his beloved Potestas, who had two *amantes* (*CIL* 6.37965). Williams (2012: 147) suggests that the use of *amantes* might imply a sexual relationship between the two male lovers as well as between Potestas and the two men. Marriage is not mentioned. Rather different is the tale of the baker in Apuleius, who has sex with his wife’s pretty young lover, which act he represents as a kind of “division” (*cum uxore mea partiaro tractabo... communi dividendo formula dimicabo, ut sine ulla controversia vel dissensione tribus nobis in uno conveniat lectulo*), “I will treat you as the joint property of my wife and me... I will institute a suit to share common assets, contending that without controversy or dissension, we three should enter into contract in the matter of one bed”, 9.27; trans Hanson [1989]). The husband here sarcastically pretends to treat the boy as shared marital property, but he has sex with the boy alone, having locked his wife in another room, and promptly divorces his wife afterwards.

77 Compare Foucault’s comments on the necessary plurality of resistances (1978: 95-6); just as power is manifold, so is resistance, which is never exterior to power in Foucault’s view.
as an inferior copy of an authentic normative original. What I have called a bottom-up, queer reading aims to seriously engage with non-normativity and its potentialities, as well as its ability to point to the limitations of normativity and exploit pre-existing fissures and contradictions in normative ideologies, rather than assuming in advance the integrity and authoritative status of those ideologies. Further, by looking beyond the genitality of the priapic paradigm and subversions thereof, my reading has attempted to integrate a broader consideration of sociality, kinship, and class into the study of Roman sexuality, in line with the inclusiveness of queerness as an anti-essentializing flexible relation rather than any fixed action or behaviour. Micro-debates about who penetrates whom certainly have their interest, but they risk overlooking the forest for the trees. An engagement with the marginality and non-normative sociality of the Petronian rogues, in accordance with queer theory’s interest in precarious, outlaw lives, aids in broadening the focus and producing a fuller picture of the Satyricon’s representation of sexuality in the context of a fictional universe that is very queer indeed.
Chapter Two: Petronian marriage and the living death of futurity

Marriage sanctifies some couples at the expense of others. It is selective legitimacy. This is a necessary implication of the institution… To the couple that gets married, marriage just looks ennobling… Stand outside it for a second and you see the implication: if you don’t have it, you and your relations are less worthy. Without this corollary effect, marriage would not be able to endow anybody’s life with significance. The ennobling and the demeaning go together. Marriage does one only by virtue of the other.¹

“Marriage is such a normal part of human life that it is taken for granted,” begins Susan Treggiari’s oft-cited study of Roman marriage.² Beginning from the assumption that marriage is “a normal part of human life” results in an occlusion of its status as a cultural artifact that serves to legitimate some relationships and not others (as Warner details in the epigraph to this chapter), to privilege some forms of intimacy and render others “outside”. The new-millennial preoccupation with the granting of same-sex marriage rights has pushed debates about the nature and purpose of marriage to the forefront of the public consciousness, particularly in the United States (and, to a lesser extent, other countries in the Anglosphere). It may now be difficult to claim that marriage is “taken for granted”. Only some have the luxury of taking the ability to marry for granted – note the passive voice in Treggiari’s sentence, which conceals the identity of the invisible agent who is doing the taking for granted. As to the “normal part”: marriage has faced close scrutiny as a normativizing apparatus of the state. Several strands of queer theory have forcefully resisted the normativizing thrust of calls for same-sex marriage, and pointed to the way in which same-sex marriage can potentially act in tandem with heteronormativity, quashing the threat of queerer social configurations that might directly

¹ Warner (1999), 82.
² Treggiari (1991), 1.
threaten some of heteronormativity’s prized institutions (family, the couple, monogamy, state recognition). The mainstream discourse surrounding same-sex marriage has changed remarkably little since Michael Warner's provocative 1999 *The Trouble with Normal*, in which he argues that the foregrounding of “the marriage issue” denies recognition to “a welter of intimacies outside the framework of professions and institutions and ordinary social obligations” in order to offer legal recognition, and its concomitant benefits, to the monogamous couple form only.3

Marriage – what it is, what it does, who should have it, who should want it – is very much on the public radar in a way it was not when Treggiari's book was written. In short, one no longer takes for granted that marriage is a normal or natural part of human life. The kinds of stories we might want to tell about the ancient world may shift in consequence.

In the ancient world, the stated purpose of marriage was, by and large, the production of legitimate children:4 Augustan marriage legislation aimed to secure – and particularly to ensure the reproduction of – aristocratic lineage, and to protect it from the admixture of the undesirable, or the taint of illicit sexual relations, whereas modern discourse tends to link marriage much more strongly to the legitimate intimacy of the monogamous couple. The Augustan impetus towards the reproduction of the upper classes resulted, however, in the granting of tangible rewards for participating in the state's project – and penalties for failing to do so. Those who demurred were unable to partake in certain legal rights: the unmarried (*caelibes*) could not inherit from those outside the sixth degree of relationship, and the married but childless (*orbi*) could only inherit half from non-kin (*extranei*) and one-tenth from each other.5 In this respect, the Augustan marriage laws penalized failure to adhere to repronormativity much more harshly.

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4 Treggiari (1991), 8. The formula *liberorum quaerundorum causa* is frequently bandied about by Roman authors as the purpose of marriage.
5 Phang (2001), 116.
than the modern world does, at least legally speaking. It may have been the case that Roman men, especially, could have pursued certain kinds of intimate relationships outside of marriage, or even that they found their primary intimacy in non-marital relationships, in particular friendship with other men, but those who avoided marriage altogether faced substantive legal sanctions.

The queer intimacies of the *Satyricon*, given that characters of dubious social origin would not have the same investments as the upper classes, might seem entirely outside the repronormative state-marital complex, but it turns out that the characters in the text engulf marriage, even the rituals of aristocratic marriage, in their quest to reinvent the world, or simply to subsist in a fallen world. This chapter will explore two primary examples of the resignification of marriage: the perverse ceremony Quartilla conducts for Pannychis and Giton, which is perversely compliant to the rules (and therefore “fails to fail”); and the non-reproductive, rather queer marriage of Trimalchio and Fortunata. The final section of the chapter turns briefly to the Wife of Ephesus as a complement to the Cena in its formulation of marriage and futurity. Although marriage is where these case studies begin, their ambit gradually expands to incorporate other aspects of “the household” (insofar as that term any longer means anything in this text), in particular forms of social reproduction other than biological parenthood, and the relationship between non-reproductivity and futurity. The uneasy partner throughout is death, and the uncertainty it generates, in particular in a world where legacy-hunters run rampant. But by staging their own deaths, or existing in a state of living death, characters find their own ways of relating to the future, experimenting with alternative life courses. This is not to say, it must be emphasized, that these alternatives automatically constitute some kind of vision of a queer utopia. But, as always in the *Satyricon*, a dialectic operates between life and death, the sterile present and the fertile future, the centrifugal and the centripetal.
For Lévi-Strauss, kinship is intimately linked to marriage, in tandem with which it founds the social order: as Gayle Rubin puts it, Lévi-Straussian kinship is a “way of generating a social and political structure from manipulations of marriage and descent.” The Augustan marriage legislation, and the legal discourse surrounding marriage in general, amply demonstrates that upper-class Romans similarly conceived of marriage as one of the elementary structures of society, a way of making a certain world in a certain way, and arranging social relations in a proper order. Those individuals, particularly of the upper classes, who failed to choose appropriate spouses, or to take a spouse at all, were denied state legitimation. But, again, the denial of this legitimation does not matter in the same way to those belonging to a non-aristocratic social milieu, as do Petronius' characters. Quartilla and Trimalchio do not “do marriage” properly, and in doing so they reveal the instability of marriage, its dependence on legal rules and social expectations. Where Quartilla is perversely compliant, threatening the rules by following them, Trimalchio and Fortunata's marriage points to the (sexualized) homosocial relations that undergird the institution of marriage in a patriarchical society, and foregrounds the queer threat of sterility to the replicatory function of marriage. As the Wife of Ephesus tale reveals, this is what the world is like after the death of the Husband. Marriage, in the Satyrica, has almost lost its power to create kinship, since kinship is under constant scrutiny as legacy-hunters hover, men reinvent fraternity, wealth and property are transferred along

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6 As Lévi-Strauss puts it ([1969], xxiii), “Elementary structures of kinship are those systems in which the nomenclature permits the immediate determination of the circle of kin and that of affines, that is, those systems which prescribe marriage with a certain type of relative, or, alternatively, those which, while defining all members of the society as relatives, divide them into two categories, viz., possible spouses and prohibited spouses. the term 'complex structures' is reserved for systems which limit themselves to defining the circle of relatives and leave the determination of the spouse to other mechanisms, economic or psychological.” That is to say, both “elementary” and “complex” structures of kinship, which together apparently form the entire field of kinship, are founded upon marriage and the determination of appropriate spouses.

7 Rubin and Butler (1994), 86. Rubin is here distinguishing Lévi-Straussian kinship from an alternate tradition, represented by David Schneider, which encompasses “simply the social relations of support, intimacy, and enduring connection” (86). Such “post-structuralist” conceptions of kinship have been taken up by queer theorists with vigour; see, to give only one example, Eng (2010), who examines manifestations of what he calls “poststructuralist kinship” in the diasporic context.
unexpected lines, and fantasies of futurism are shattered. What is radical, and profoundly queer, is the capacity of the characters to imagine, and actively inhabit, a world where marriage is not an elementary building block of society. Even now, as – within limited parameters – alternative forms of intimacy can openly flourish, we cannot delude ourselves that we inhabit such a world.

This chapter forms a pair with the previous one. Much of what is to be discussed here resembles the Satyricon's representation of brotherhood, in the sense, firstly, that the institutions of marriage and fraternity complement each other, the former as the most socially-privileged form of heterosexual relationship, and the latter as the most revered kind of homosociality, as the previous chapter examined. Idealized homosociality, further, depends both on the rejection of homosexuality (where “homosexuality”, for the Romans, implies a relationship between two adult citizen men), and the embrace of heterosexuality. In Sedgwick's triangular model, the men are linked by a single woman, and it is the desire for that woman that intensifies and renders charged the relationship between the two men (without the “pretext” of the woman, that is to say, such intense relations between two men would be suspect to homophobic culture). To Romans, both fraternity and marriage are subsumed under the concept of pietas. Properly structured social relations, for Roman men, implicate certain forms of sanctioned relationship with one's frater (understood in the broad sense as one's fellow citizen, as discussed in the previous chapter) and one's uxor. Crucially, your brother is not your wife. Breaking the rule, confusing the categories, results in monstrosities like Juvenal's Socratic cinaedi, creatures despised by the satirist, who nonetheless seem to live quite happily.

But the Satyricon is replete with confused categories: Trimalchio, in a fit of pique directed

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8 Sedgwick (1985).
9 Juv. Sat. 2 features such Socratici cinaedi who affect an excessive, hirsute masculinity while shamelessly marrying each other. On the relative happiness of such perverse Juvenalian monsters compared to that of the anxious satirical ego (Egito, as John Henderson labels it, recognizing the investment of knowledge in the male; Henderson [1989]), see Gunderson (2005), 236.
at Fortunata, threatens to replace her with his *cicaro* (a term meaning in context, roughly, “boy-toy”) and write her out of the *familia* altogether, an appropriate move, ironically, for a former slave who won his freedom because of his sexual relationship with both the master of the household and his wife. The *cicaro* is a second Trimalchio: why should he not be at the centre of Trimalchio’s household, a *familia* without a wife? As in Encolpius' fantasy of fraternity, sexual relationships between males supplant the marital relationship between husband and wife as the bonds forming the central pillar of the household. It is as though the husband of Catullus 61, rather than giving up his *concubinus* to move on to his wife, took up with him permanently instead.10 But Trimalchio’s *cicaro* also acts as a substitute child in a childless marriage, just as the possibility is open of viewing Giton as the “child” or marital property of Encolpius and Asylios. Here, the multivalence of the word *puer*, which means both child and slave (with the connotations of subordinate sexual partner), becomes particularly charged. It is particularly the low social status of the characters that causes this kind of breakdown of categories: while *patria potestas* should guarantee the hierarchical structure of the household under the rule of the *paterfamilias*,11 it is all but absent in the *Satyrica*, and in its absence, without strict boundaries of subordination, brother becomes wife becomes lover becomes child, and so forth. The interchangeability of roles suggests that the rigidly-structured household is always a moment away from failure – and we have already seen, as we will continue to see, the queer potentialities surrounding such failure. Marriage and fraternity, women and men, superordinate and subordinate: these categories, and the correlations between them, will not hold, become unstuck from physical sex and gender.

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10 See Cat. 61.122-34 for the groom’s *concubinus*, whom he is exhorted to give up.
11 Though, of course, *patria potestas* was thwarted frequently in practice, given the fatherlessness of many Romans; see Saller (1994). In this sense, the *Satyrica* is sensitive to the fragility of the impossible patriarchal ideal.
The second sense in which the *Satyrica*'s treatment of marriage resembles its treatment of fraternity is the parodic, desublimating way in which both are reinvented. I continue to use “parodic” in the Butlerian sense: as in the case of Petronian fraternity, several scholars refer to the *Satyrica*'s treatment of marriage as “parodic”, but they nonetheless retain a sense of the primacy of the original, which the reformulation thereof in the *Satyrica* can only attempt, and fail, to approximate.12 But as with fraternity, I argue that Petronian marriage has the potential to reveal fractures in the original, that ever (apparently) beleaguered thing that the modern world calls “the institution of marriage”. It is worthwhile recalling some of the rhetoric opposing same-sex marriage: “Gay marriage is a parody that will destroy the real thing”, reads the headline of one conservative opinion piece.13 At least two contradictory ideas are tied up in the headline: firstly, that same-sex marriage is a pathetically inadequate, “unreal”, copy of a natural and superior original, and secondly, that said copy nonetheless has the power to “destroy” the original. Same-sex marriage (queerly?) fails, bringing down “real” marriage in the process: how close we are, ironically, to Halberstam (and to formulations such as Edelman's, according to which queers should positively [or negatively?] *embrace* hostile characterizations of their threat to the social order14).

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12 See, for example, Gill (1973), 179, who describes the Pannychis episode (along with the Philomela episode) as such: “While some of the characters enact a parody of a normal sexual act- and themselves relish the comic and aesthetic aspects of what they are doing- others serve as the appreciative audience of those parodies.” The “normal sexual act” (!) is obviously precedent, and unaffected, here. Similarly, Sandy (1974), 340, refers to the episode as a “mock marriage” with the character of an “obscene mime”. Panayotakis (1995), 49, takes up the mime dimension with gusto, referring to the 'marriage' (complete with scare-quotes) and again using the phrase “mock-marriage” (though strictly of the Chalinus-Olympio scene in the Casina), as well as approvingly citing the above quote from Gill (at 50, n100). Using a fragmentary genre as a trump card is problematic in its own right, but it simply defers the question: if the *Satyrica* draws on mime, then how does mimic parody itself work? The answer is, again, difficult to determine, given the fragmentariness of the mimic genre. And again, we would be looking *past* the text we have rather than *at* it. It is all too easy to dismiss troubling aspects of a text by attributing them to a (conveniently lost) genre where “such things” are *de rigueur.*

13 [http://conservativewoman.co.uk/the-state-has-eviscerated-marriage-society-must-rebuild-it/](http://conservativewoman.co.uk/the-state-has-eviscerated-marriage-society-must-rebuild-it/). The argument is far from unique.

14 Maybe the connection is not so ironic, given that Edelman's argument essentially involves embracing and embodying the scare-mongering and fire-and-brimstone apocalyptic character of anti-gay rhetoric; cf. Dean
Performativity and parody in the Pannychis episode

The *Satyricon*’s parody of marriage, like its parody of fraternity, hints that the “original” is itself a copy of an impossible, non-existent ideal, as is especially evident in the Quartilla/Pannychis episode: marriage, Quartilla's retinue implies, is nothing but ceremonial trappings, employed in order to legitimate a union that is at base purely libidinal. The performance, the spectacle, the ceremony of marriage is always a re-performance, and there is no ur-marriage. Roman marriage, legally speaking, was a straightforward procedure. There was no centralized register of marriages, no need to inform the state that a marriage had taken place. The old, aristocratic forms of marriage, *confarreatio* and *coemptio*, involved elaborate, strange rituals, and all the trappings: the flame-coloured veil, the hair parted by a spear into six locks, the symbolic sharing of bread, the recital of ceremonial verses, the mandated presence of witnesses.15 But these ceremonial elements were not an essential part of marriage, which, legally, was comprised of three elements: capacity (*conubium*), consent, and intention.16 Boys under 14 and girls under 12 did not have *conubium*,17 so there is no doubt that the marriage between Pannychis and Giton could not be legally valid, regardless of the consent or intention of either party. But what happens here is more interesting: the ceremony comes metonymically to represent marriage itself, and Quartilla rewrites the rules of the world in light of her own inability even to remember virginity. The legal question is thrown out the window; the object of

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15 For a detailed treatment of Roman marriage ceremony, see Hersch (2010).
17 Phang (2001), 9.
parody is, in some respects, not marriage itself tout court, but the aristocratic marriage with its panoply of ceremonies and rituals, which sharpens the edge of the parody.

The marriage takes place in a brief compass, in a passage that is, as usual, dense and yet deceptively smooth in its flow (Sat. 25-26):

Cum haec diceret, ad aurem eius Psyche ridens accessit et cum dixisset nescio quid: "Ita, ita, inquit Quartilla, bene admonuisti. Cur non, quia bellissima occasio est, devirginatur Pannychis nostra?" Continuoque producta est puella satis bella et quae non plus quam septem annos habere videbatur, ea ipsa quae primum cum Quartilla in cellam venerat nostram. Plaudentibus ergo universis et postulantibus nuptias, obstupui ego et nec Gitona, verecundissimum puerrum, suffecte huic petulantiae adfirmavi, nec puellam eius aetatis esse, ut muliebris patientiae legem posset accipere." Ita, inquit Quartilla, minor est ista quam ego fui, cum primum virum passa sum? Iunonem meam iratam habeam, si unquam me meminerim virginem fuisse. Nam et infans cum paribus inquinata sum, et subinde procedentibus annis maioribus me pueris adplicui, donec ad hanc aetatem perveni. Hinc etiam puto proverbium natum illud, ut dicatur posse taurum tollere, qui vitulum sustulerit." Igitor ne maiorem inuriam in secreto frater acciperet, consurrexi ad officium nuptiale.

26. Iam Psyche puellae caput involverat flammao, iam embasicoetas praeferebat facem, iam ebriae mulieres longum agmen plaudentes fercant, thalamumque incesta exornaverat veste. Tum Quartilla quoque iocantium libidine accensa et ipsa surrexit, correptumque Gitona in cubiculum traxit.

Sine dubio non repugnaverat puer, ac ne puella quidem tristis expaverat nuptiarum nomen. Itaque cum inclusi iacerent, consedimus ante limen thalami, et in primis Quartilla per rimam improbe diductam adplicuerat oculum curiosum, lusumque puerilem libidoosus speculabatur diligentia. Me quoque ad idem spectaculum lenta manu traxit, et quia considerantium <co>haeserant vultus, quicquid a spectaculo vacabat, commovebat obiter labra et me tamquam furtivis subinde osculis verberabat. <. . .>

When she was saying this, Psyche approached, grinning, and whispered something in her ear. Quartilla said, "Oh yes, it's good you've reminded me. Why shouldn't our Pannychis be deflowered, since there's such an excellent opportunity at hand?" Immediately a rather pretty girl was brought out, who did not seem to be more than seven years old; she was the one who had first come into our room with Quartilla. When everyone applauded and called for marriage, I was astonished, and protested that Giton, who was a very modest lad, was not up to such wantonness, nor was the girl of such an age that she would be capable of taking on the duty of female submission. "Come now," said Quartilla, "is she any younger than I was when I first submitted to a man? Juno's curse be on me, if I can even remember having been a virgin. Why, even as an infant I fooled around with my peers, and as I got older I insinuated myself upon older boys, until I came to this age. I think that's where the proverb originated: it's said that whoever has carried the calf can carry the bull." Fearing that my brother might suffer a greater injury in private, I rose to attend the marriage ceremony.
Psyche had already wrapped the girl's head in the veil; the “night-cap”\textsuperscript{18} was carrying the torch; the drunk women, applauding, had formed a long column, and adorned the bed chamber in sacrilegious coverings. Then Quartilla, herself inflamed by the lust of those jesting, snatched up Giton and dragged him into the bedroom.

Certainly the boy didn't resist, nor did the girl grimly fear the name of marriage. So when they lay down, shut up inside, we sat in front of the chamber's threshold, and Quartilla especially put a voyeur's eye up to a crack that had been shamelessly opened, and watched the childish play with lustful attentiveness. She hauled me up to watch the same spectacle with an insistent hand, and since our faces were pressed together as we watched, whenever there was a break in the spectacle she would move her lips to mine in passing and lash me with purportedly furtive kisses.

There are two main aspects of the Pannychis episode that render it broadly “comic”, and parodic: in the first place, the metaphor of the sexual act as “marriage” is literalized,\textsuperscript{19} and secondly, this “marriage” is identified entirely with its symbolic, ceremonial aspects. Firstly, the metaphor. Adams comments that 'the term 'marriage' dignifies a purely sexual liaison', citing \textit{Aen.} 4.172 (\textit{coniugium vocat, hoc praetexit nomine culpam}).\textsuperscript{20} It is a species of euphemism, and Encolpius is very much inclined towards euphemism when describing sexual activity of any sort. At Quartilla's, the euphemism becomes a literal marriage, as though Encolpius' euphemistic view of sex is externalized, and other characters adhere to his linguistic shaping of the world. The marriage ceremony is in some sense a game with language wrought large. But the “euphemistic” marriage in fact succeeds Quartilla's markedly non-euphemistic suggestion that Pannychis be “devirginized” (\textit{devirginatur}). The scene calls the bluff of the euphemism by reducing it to its barest sexual bones, desublimating the lofty language of epic “marriage”. What is at issue here is a one-off sexual encounter between an underage girl and a teenage boy, and nobody makes any attempt to disguise that fact. Rather than being a “screen” for illicit sexual activity as in the \textit{Aeneid}, marriage is transformed into the very basis of illicit sexual activity.

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{18} That is, the \textit{cinaedus} who earlier served as Ascylos’ “night cap”.
\item \textsuperscript{19} On the literalization of metaphor as a comic device, see Stewart (1978), cited by Goldhill (1990), 189 in connection with Aristophanes.
\item \textsuperscript{20} Adams (1982), 160.
\end{itemize}
Pannychis is produced, and straightaway everyone approves of the suggestion of
devirginization, and starts clamouring for “marriage” (*plaudentibus ergo universis et
postulantibus nuptias*). The guests speak in unison. An immediate, apparently intuitive slippage
between loss of virginity and marriage takes place, so swiftly it is not closely scrutinized by the
narrator. There are two things going on here: in the first place, the literalization of the metaphor
(devirginization leads everyone to think of literal marriage), and secondly, the use of marriage
as a means of legitimating female sexual activity, and as the privileged site for the loss of
“virginity”, itself a cultural construct, to take place. These two dynamics are, at first glance,
inimical to each other, but in fact they work in tandem: if all that is needed to legitimate sexual
activity is a marriage, Quartilla's ceremony, mercenary as it is, ticks all the boxes. Quartilla
takes the injunction to marry at its word: marriage is nothing more than a set of rituals, empty
symbols, that are nonetheless performative in their own right. If it is just the symbols that *create*
the marriage itself, what need is there actually to live as a married couple? Quartilla has read her
J.L. Austin (and perhaps her Butler too), and extrapolates from the performative vows of
modern marriage to the rituals of ancient marriage, whose performative force she reinscribes:
“When I say before the registrar and altar, &c, ‘I do’, I am not reporting on a marriage, I am
indulging in it.” And indeed, that the marriage ceremony itself has this performative valence is
suggested by the gender-differentiated Latin vocabulary for marriage, which is apparently drawn
from aspects of the ceremony: to marry as a man is *ducere*, that is, to “lead” a wife, and to
marry as a woman *nubere*, literally “to veil [oneself]”. The gendered vocabulary is, of course,
ripe for exploitation in accounts of male-male marriage. Quartilla is, again, a literal reader of

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21 Austin (1955), 6. Quartilla has, however, ignored Austin's stipulation that the correct circumstances must obtain
in order for the words to enact the desired result. Like Trimalchio, she elevates bad reading to an art form.
22 See, for example, Williams' appendix on “marriage between males” (2010, 279-286). Williams is heavily
invested in the notion that male-male marriage must entail turning one of the parties into a “woman” along
the dictionary: she conflates the veiling and leading with the marriage *tout court* (even though Giton is himself dragged to the chamber by his *pronuba* Quartilla rather than “leading” anyone!). This is no naive literalism but another linguistic game. It is worthy of note, too, that Pannychis is not “elevated” into the category of *uxor*, or subsequently referred to as such; it is her status as *virgo* that is being removed, not a new status as *uxor* that is being imposed in its stead. Marriage is rewritten as a ceremony that takes something away (ie, one’s status as a *virgo*), something that nobody in the *Satyrlica* can ever remember having in the first place. The “ascension” to wifehood, on the other hand, is suspended, or completely absent.

The marriage has taken place; the sex must be authorized. If the laws require marriage before female sexual activity will be legitimate, marriage there shall be. Quartilla takes the law at its word. Who can complain, when the girl wore the *flammeus* and everything, when the torch was carried, the procession was led? What more's a priestess-*materfamilias* to do for her charge? Both the euphemism and the act of marriage itself as a means of legitimating sex are desublimated as false, lofty names used to paper over lust. And the facilitator of the union, Quartilla, watches through a crack in the door, “also inflamed by the lust of the jokers”, *quoque iocantium libidine accensa*. This phrase is rather oblique, and could be read in several ways: Quartilla feels the same lust as the others participating in the “joking”, or she is turned on precisely *because* the others are, her arousal is activated by her perception of theirs (*quoque*, which is not accepted by all editors, perhaps points towards the former interpretation). In the latter reading, her desire is quite literally the desire of the other: it is mimetic of theirs. But what is this “joking”? Is the entire scene a “mere” *iocus*, as many Petronianists would have it,23 or is there an allusion here to Fescennine jesting at the wedding chamber (a ritualistic practice at a

23 Recall, again, the “pure entertainment” interpretation of the *Satyrlica*, critiqued by Rimell (2002), 3-5.
“proper” wedding whereby guests made obscene remarks)? Is the “joke” at the broader level of the entire escapade, or the narrower level of a (faithful) parody of what is already a “joke” in the “original”, albeit a particular and ritualized form of joking? The obscenity of the Fescennine jest suits Quartilla's entourage all too well: does the Fescennine “joke” even stop being a joke in their mouths?

Traditionally, epithalamia were sung outside the bridal chamber during the consummation of the marriage. Quartilla's voyeurism hints at a libidinal basis for such customs, a lustful investment in the sexual initiation of the young bride and groom on the part of those accompanying the wedding party. Consider, too, for the debauched motivations of senes severiores, the brothel episode, with its sexually-predatory yet respectable-looking paterfamilias (Sat. 8.2-4), and the “helpful” old woman who turns out simply to be invested in the young Encolpius' sexuality (Sat. 7), as well as the predations of Eumolpus upon the all-too-willing Pergamene boy (Sat. 85-87) and daughter of Philomela (Sat. 140). Quartilla's sexuality as a whole, as revealed throughout the episode, is centred largely around orchestration and facilitation: she sexually assaults Encolpius and Ascytlos by proxy, through the cinaedus (or cinaedi?24), and “marries” Pannychis to Giton rather than having sex with Giton herself. The episode is of course notoriously fragmentary, but, insofar as Quartilla plays the role of director, and even of guardian of Pannychis, whose marriage she “arranges”, it brings to light a seedy vein of sexual motivation in the figure of the “master of ceremonies”. A certain cynical reading

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24 Given the state of the text, it is uncertain exactly what is going on throughout the Quartilla episode. A cinaedus appears at 21, and proceeds to sexually assault and sloppily kiss Ascytlos and Encolpius, while at 23 a cinaedus “enters” (intrat) and again sexually assaults and kisses Encolpius, who begs Quartilla to let Ascytlos have a go as well. This cinaedus, redubbed embasicoetas, then carries the torch in the wedding procession. One cinaedus or two? In some ways, the nightmarish repetition and hyperbolic grotesquerie of the scene, as seen through Encolpius' eyes, renders the question insignificant. But the meaning of the frequent repetitions in the Quartilla episode nonetheless demands close scrutiny: is this an aesthetic, or an artifact of the broken text? Or are we to content ourselves with the queer, fragmentary, confoundingly “inadequate” (castrated?) object before us? This last option may not be philologically sound, but it does engage with the affective economy of the fragment. Queer sexuality, fragmentary textuality, and repetitive temporality here collide in fascinating ways.
of the episode, one that would nonetheless be entirely consonant with the rest of the text, suggests that the one who arranges marriages, who is indeed in traditional terms often the *paterfamilias* himself, does so out of self-interested lust. Even though Giton and Pannychis both consent to the match and appear to participate quite happily in sexual dalliance, the adults around them, libidinous creatures as Priapic priestesses and *cinaedi* are, are motivated purely by libido, rather than what usually might be given as reasons for marriage (the desire to transmit property in certain ways, for instance, or to cement political alliances).

In Quartilla's case particularly, she attempts to mould Pannychis' sexuality after her own. She reminisces about her youthful sexual experiences in response to Encolpius' objections, and the picture she draws is equivocal in the sense that she oscillates between active and passive sexuality. Firstly, she says, when she was even younger than Pannychis, she “suffered a man” (*virum passa sum*). The wording here is standard for a “woman's part” in heterosexual intercourse, which, in the normative imaginary, consists of being subject to another, enduring the use of one's body, and Quartilla's wording here corresponds closely to Encolpius' complaint that Pannychis is not old enough to “accept the rule of womanly submission”, *muliebris patientiae legem posset accipere*. But Quartilla plays with age categories in what follows: initially she speaks of having been sexually subject herself, at Pannychis' age, to a (presumably) adult male, a *vir*, while Pannychis is to be “given” to Giton, who is not yet a *vir*, or at least is not imagined as such by anyone in the novel (and his immaturity is highlighted by Quartilla's groping of his “still immature little prick”, *vasculo tam rudi*, 24.7). When she was an *infans*, Quartilla says, she “fooled around with [her] peers” (*cum paribus inquinata sum*, literally “I was stained with my peers”): the dynamics have shifted. She does not say that she was “defiled by

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25 Compare, to give only one example, Lysidamus in Plautus' *Casina*, who attempts to marry Casina to his slave Olympio in order to sexually enjoy her himself.
her peers”, but they were dirtied along with her, or such is the implication of cum.

Devirginization has shifted: here the “stain” of sex seems to affect the boys as well26 (is it even possible, also, that Encolpius' concern for Giton's chastity is slipping into his narration of Quartilla's speech?). And she speaks now of coevals rather than viri, and herself as an infans, taking the idea of youth to an extreme, an infans being, etymologically speaking, a child who is too young to speak (though it is used more loosely in practice). She says that she cannot remember ever having been a virgin, and she proves the literal truth of this claim by retrojecting sexual activity as far back as babyhood, in a rewriting of her past – in order to master it? There may well be a connection between her desire to control the ceremony and the sexual assault, and her need to impose meaning upon her own sexual past in light of the present.

Finally, she says, she “attached herself to boys” (me pueris adplicui) as she grew older, until she either “came of age” or “came to this age” (depending on whether or not hanc is read in the text). She proceeds to allude to the famous story of Milo and the bull, suggesting that her sexual partners grew progressively larger (the wrestler Milo of Croton, in order to increase his strength, was said to have carried a calf every day until it grew into a bull; the progressive overload principle). By using the legend, she presents a perverse reading of rugged athletic masculinity in terms of sexual subjection at the same time as imparting an athletic dimension to her own sexual activity, feminizing the famously butch Milo and/or masculinizing herself as she establishes a new, dirty aetiology for the proverbium.27 However, her account of her sexual progress begins with subjection to viri, proceeds through apparently mutual sex-play with coevals, and ends by placing her in a much more active role, that of thrusting herself upon boys, pueri, not men, which indeed accurately describes what she is about to do to Encolpius as they

27 For the rewriting of proverbs after one's own life, cf. Onos 45, and the corresponding scene in Apuleius 9.42 (unde etiam de prospectu et umbra asini natum est frequens proverbium).
watch through the crack in the door; indeed, the same verb, *adplicuere*, is used of her voyeurism (*adplicuerat oculum curiosum*; and cf. her kissing of Giton, *vocatumque ad se in osculum applicuit*, 24.7 – she kisses both “brothers” in the same way!). The ages of her sexual partners appear to diminish in reverse chronological order, starting with men and moving to boys, as Quartilla's own sexual aggressiveness increases. The sexual career that she sets out for Pannychis to emulate is, therefore, no simple matter of enduring sexual activity in marriage.

Here, again, Encolpius' view of what is going on is narrower than the more expansive attempts of other characters to rewrite conventional institutions: for him, Pannychis' part in the marriage involves simply conventional *muliebris patientia*, which he describes as a law (*lex*), rather than Quartilla's progression from subordination to equal-opportunity filthiness to getting boys up against doors.

But Encolpius' is no simple statement either: *muliebris patientia scortum* is the phrase Encolpius throws in Ascyltos' face after Giton accuses Ascyltos of molestation (*Sat. 9.6-7*). *Muliebris patientia* is for Encolpius, then, not inherently linked to the female-bodied, but can incorporate men as well (albeit perverse ones in the terms of the invective discourse he appropriates). He accuses Giton of similar “womanly” behaviour at 81.5, and proceeds in this passage to speak of Giton in terms more appropriate to the bride than the groom, as I shall shortly examine. But further discussion of his use of the word *lex* is called for. Schmeling interprets Encolpius' remark literally, commenting that “we understand why E speaks here about a *lex*, when we consider the observation in *Digest* 36.2.30: *quia non potest videri nupta, quae virum pati non potest.*”

That is to say, in order to be legally married, according to the *Digest*, a girl must be of such an age that she is physically capable of undertaking penetrative intercourse with a man (whether this is the case with Pannychis is, in fact, unclear; see below). Encolpius

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28 Schmeling (2011), 76.
attempts here to fix female sexuality in a certain mould, and to render this characterization authoritative by retrojecting it as a “law”. A juridical law, or a law of nature? It is not quite so simple, it would seem, as Encolpius simply quoting his law-books. The proximity of Encolpius' statement here to Quartilla's review of her sexual career, which quickly progresses beyond patientia, renders the qualification of patientia as essentially “feminine” even more fragile than ever, especially since it is the men who, in this episode, are forced to “endure” sexually, having been overpowered by the women. If marriage is about womanly submission, it too has fallen apart at the seams, since Petronian women are not apt to submit in any straightforward or conventional way. The Pannychis episode reveals how a girl grows up in the world of the Satyrica: muliebris patientia in marriage is not her destiny, not the end of her story or her development, but merely the beginning, a phase she will overcome in time. Compare the Freudian scheme, whereby the girl must overcome a sexually active, “phallic”, homoerotic (insofar as it is characterized by attachment to the mother) phase on the path towards sexual subjection to a man, and, even more close to home, ancient ideas about the untamed wildness and masculinized bodily morphology of the unmarried, unpenetrated girl. Quartilla, taking the part of amateur psychoanalyst, has entirely rewritten the developmental schema of female sexuality.

Encolpius' concern for Pannychis, however, is overridden by his concern for Giton, which renders his gendering of patientia even more questionable. Firstly, he asserts that Giton, that verecundissimum puerum, is not up to such immodesty (petulantia). The girl is an afterthought, and it is the boy who is too chastely innocent to undergo the “marriage” ceremony. After Quartilla narrates her sexual career, Encolpius decides to go along with the ceremony, “lest [his]
brother receive a greater injury in private” (*ne maiorem iniuriam in secreto frater acciperet*).

*Iniuria* would seem more intuitively to be used, in the context of heterosexual intercourse, of the bride's defloration; here, Encolpius claims, it is Giton who will be receiving an *iniuria*. Yet again, he uses sexual euphemism, and in particular a euphemism that he is to use much later in the novel in a similarly voyeuristic context: when the daughter of Philomela, the unscrupulous Crotonian matron who whores out her children to the highest bidder in an attempt to milk their legacies, is having sex with Eumolpus, Encolpius propositions her brother who is watching from the door, and attempts to determine whether he will “endure injury” (*dum frater sororis suae automata per clostellum miratur, accessi temptaturus an pateretur iniuriam*, 140.11). The boy does not demur: “the boy, being exceptionally well-educated, did not recoil from my advances”, *nec se reiciebat a blanditiis doctissimus puer*.31 In the case of Philomela's son, *iniuria* refers to the part of the penetrated boy in homosexual intercourse (that, presumably anal, penetration is what Encolpius intends is indicated by his being thwarted by the *numen*, Priapus; he implies that he would have needed an erection in order to do whatever it is he wanted to do). Encolpius apparently continues to regard Giton as his penetrated *puer*32 even when he is having sex with a girl.

He continues to assimilate Giton to the bride rather than the husband in his subsequent narrative: after the girl is veiled and the procession is made to the wedding chamber, it is Quartilla who “seizes Giton and drags him into the bedroom”, *correptumque Gitona in*

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31 Adams (1982), 198, notes of the passage that, because of the use of *blanditiis* of the proposed sexual activity, it demonstrates “the weakening of the euphemism into a means of expressing an act containing no real hostility”. He attributes this weakening also to the notion that women enjoy sexual violence. There is something quite complex going on here, especially in the context of a text where rape is so frequent. Or might Encolpius be making a distinction between *blanditia* (his advances on the boy short of penetration) and *iniuria* (penetration, which he cannot achieve)?

32 It is worthwhile noting again that “penetrated *puer*” cannot encompass Giton's entire role in the text. Regarding him simply as Encolpius' “passive” *eromenos* is a drastic oversimplification of the text's sexual dynamics. Encolpius merely likes to view him as such when convenient.
cubiculum traxit. The boy “certainly didn't resist, nor did the girl unhappily shrink from the name of marriage”, sine dubio non repugnaverat puer, ac ne puella quidem tristis expaverat nuptiarum nomen. Quartilla plays the role of pronuba, the bridal attendant who would lead the (sometimes reluctant) bride to the chamber – not the groom! Encolpius projects bridal trepidation onto Giton, and expresses in negative terms the expected scenario that did not occur.\textsuperscript{33} It is the mere name of marriage that he is surprised is not fearful to the girl (his surprise being expressed through the expressions sine dubio and ac ne quidem): again, his language conflates marriage with sex, and the “name of marriage” is nothing more than sex. The nomen nuptiarum alone is supposed to connote the proverbial trauma of first intercourse to the fearful bride.\textsuperscript{34} But what does the “name of marriage” even mean in a world where marriage is one big joke? Why should the girl be afraid, when Quartilla has presented “virginity” as a virtually meaningless state she can no longer even recall? It is the men, near-dead with fear, who are trembling in this episode, not the women. Encolpius, yet again, fails to inhabit the world of his text, clinging to the remnants of convention.

It might be noted, though, that it is not even clear what Pannychis and Giton do in the wedding chamber. Encolpius describes the spectaculum he and Quartilla see through the crack in the door only as lusus puerilis. Ludere, for Encolpius, can denote non-penetrative sex play:\textsuperscript{35} earlier in the novel he had described Ascytlos bursting in on him “playing with his brother” (cum fratre ludentem, 11.2), before he had finished the job (nec adhuc quidem omnia erant

\textsuperscript{33} This moment might be viewed, then, as a smaller-scale parallel to the lengthy “anti-marriage” of Cato and Marcia in Luc. BC 2.326-391.

\textsuperscript{34} The trope is common, but a particularly piquant example is a Greek epigram describing one Petale, who, fleeing the marriage chamber in terror, was devoured by guard dogs (AP 9.256).

\textsuperscript{35} Adams (1982), 162, notes that the verb is used in the sense of “unspecified physical play which falls short of intercourse” at Ter. Eun. 373. Notably, it is also used at Cat. 61.204 (cited by Adams). Here I include some further context: ludite ut lubet et brevi | liberos date. non decent | tam vetus sine liberis | nomen esse. Catullus' epithalamium here uses ludere of fruitful heterosexual intercourse that results in legitimate children – quite the opposite of what is going on in the Satyrical!
facta). Given the euphemistic way Encolpius describes sex throughout the novel, the presence or absence of the penetrative element is not clear here, but ludere is also used of Encolpius and Circe’s rolling around in the grass and kissing, where Encolpius is unable to achieve an erection (in hoc gramine pariter compositi mille osculis lusimus, quaerentes voluptatem robustam, 127.10; Encolpius and Circe’s foreplay is fully treated in chapter 4). Here ludere, non-penetrative eroticism, is opposed to voluptas robusta, penetrative sex, which Encolpius cannot carry out. The result of this configuration of sex-play elsewhere in the text is that it is unclear in the Pannychis/Giton scene whether the bride is actually “deflowered” or not, or whether the “childish play” falls short of penetration.

The adults, Encolpius and Quartilla, expect that Pannychis will be subject to her first experience of heterosexual penetration, but the children may or may not collude in this anticipated trajectory. Perhaps the adults are imposing a narrative upon them, but that narrative, defloration after marriage, reflects the way their culture conceptualizes legitimate female sexuality. It might be the case that even Quartilla’s expansive view of sexuality does not fully describe the world in which she is written. Children can be very queer creatures, polymorphously perverse, before the law (albeit in a limited respect), growing sideways, in Stockton’s formulation of the “queer child”, rather than onwards and upwards.36 The potentialities of the textual world continually reach beyond what (some of) the characters can even imagine.

The episode places a spotlight on the way in which sexuality develops in a world like this; female sexuality, primarily, but male sexuality too, insofar as Giton has yet to complete the process of maturation. We are given the opportunity to turn the temporal clock back, to observe how subjects of certain kinds emerge out of exploited and controlled youngsters. But what is the

36 Stockton (2009).
model for the development of these youngsters? Where is the telos? Quartilla sets herself up as such for Pannychis, outlining the progression of her own sexuality through a phase of passivity, patientia, to aggressiveness and activity, a reversal of the usual scheme. However, Pannychis' patientia in this episode is not clearly established, since all we are told is that the children “played” - in a mutual way? A non-penetrative way? It is never made clear. And who is Giton to model his mature masculinity after, when there are no viri boni? His “brothers”, who in this episode are molested by women and cinaedi, and who are far too sexually invested in each other? How is Giton to become a proper Priapic agent when his boyfriend can't even get it up to show him how? Encolpius seems to think that Giton is the one who is to receive the proverbial bridal iniuria, that Giton is the one whose chastity must be protected, as if Giton's chastity were not already irrevocably compromised. The idea of “innocence” is stained from the start. Everyone has motives of their own, and Encolpius is not always apt to decipher them, which contributes to the kaleidoscopic aesthetic of the text.

But there is something broader at stake here for Encolpius. At the moment when he fears for Giton's safety, he refers to him as frater. I have examined in the previous chapter the powerful resonance of this term in the Satyricon, and the bold way in which fraternity is reinvented as an alternative paradigm of relationality outside the repronormative/marital context. But here, “marriage”, albeit in a limited, sexualized, symbolic way, is actually on the agenda for Giton, and Encolpius views this marriage as threatening to his fraternity with Giton. Here we encounter, as we will further in the Cena, a privileging of male-male intimacy, whether imagined under the rubric of fraternity or paederasty, over and above the male-female marriage bond. The Pannychis episode, in fact, renders abundantly clear, even explicit, the rejection of marriage and the normative male role of paterfamilias by Encolpius. He does not want it for Giton, let alone for himself. Giton, on the other hand, seems quite happy to go along with the
ceremonial and sexual aspects of the male-female marital union: although his entry into the bridal chamber is described – by Encolpius – as Quartilla snatching and dragging him, he elsewhere shows no resistance to the sexual ministrations of Quartilla's entourage. Again, the exclusivity of Encolpius' conception of fraternity is foregrounded: his relationship of brotherhood with Giton, in his eyes, precludes Giton's involvement in a “marital” relationship, just as he felt he had to “give up” Giton himself before becoming involved with Circe. It is highly significant, too, that Philomela's son is propositioned by Encolpius firmly in his role as “brother” – in that case, actual blood-brother of the girl having sex with Eumolpus, but by that point in the novel frater has taken on too much weight to read simply as “biological male sibling”.

The interplay between Encolpius and Quartilla in this episode brings to the fore a question. A Lévi-Straussian reading of marriage conceives of it as the exchange of a tokenized woman between two men – the new husband and the father of the bride – while the incest taboo ensures exogamy and alliance, joining two groups by way of the “gift” of the woman.37 But how can such an exchange work in the case of Giton and Pannychis? Pannychis' father is, of course, nowhere to be seen; Quartilla stands in his place. Or if Giton is the bride, as Encolpius seems to think, Encolpius stands, in a sense, in the place of his father. But Giton, as Encolpius sees it, does not have the authority to enter into a contract: he protests the marriage on his behalf. One of the problems here is that, added to the fact that both Giton and Pannychis take on the role of feminized tokens of exchange, the homosociality which is supposed to drive the marriage process is broken. Pannychis has no male kin, only the aggressive, masculinized Quartilla. And

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37 Rubin (1975) is a starting point; the essay extends far and hits hard, and a considerable amount of its power arises from Rubin's critical extension of the conclusions Lévi-Strauss and Freud reached. The world does not have to be this way; none of this is inevitable. That political project, of course, is ongoing, but even in the Satyrica there was scope for imagining otherwise.
Giton, when he acts as a marriage-token, often circulates between Encolpius and Ascylos, two men who, as we have seen in the previous chapter, fail utterly at enacting sublime male homosociality. Again, the lack of *patria potestas* causes everything to fall apart, since there is no fatherly authority, no Phallus, to hand down from generation to generation – only the fleshly, physical enactment of masculine failure which manifests itself again and again in this episode, Giton's “immature little tool” (*vasculo tam rudi*), Encolpius' flaccid prick, Quartilla's whalebone staff as an externalization of her phallic sexuality, and her perversely-(non)phallic agents, the *cinaedi*. We see penises everywhere, except where one is really needed: to deflower the girl and make the marriage. Quartilla's marriage ceremony, correct in its particulars, strips away the illusion of what marriage is and what it does, revealing the ceremonial aspects as a mere mask upon a more sordid and mercenary reality, something this text does insistently.

In the context of “world making”, then, the Giton/Pannychis episode is significant on several levels. In addition to its scrutiny of the development of children, it reveals what marriage is like when the structures that give it coherence and meaning in the Roman context, in particular the exchange of women between authoritative men and the necessity of joining families for the purposes of property transfer, have been eroded. Marriage is reduced to a series of vestigial acts, costumes, and rituals, all of which function simply to frame a girl's premature defloration in a way that would once – before the loss of patriarchal authority – have been necessary to render her loss of “virginity” acceptable in the eyes of her male kin. But even that “defloration” does not proceed straightforwardly: this is not a text where the simple reassurance of penetration – the inexorability of the phallus, that one decisive moment that “makes a girl a woman” – is ever permitted to carry the day. The reader, at any rate, after the pomp of the ceremony and even after being taken directly to the door of the wedding chamber, is denied the spectacle of the “defloration”, the promised performance of the phallus, and is left in doubt as to
whether any penetrative activity took place at all – even in a Priapic ritual context! How is
virginity to be “lost” when the characters cannot even remember it? It is always already lost. Of
course, Pannychis is too young to bear a child, so the function of marriage as a medium for
procreation is thwarted. Marriage is “for” nothing but sex, sex which is seemingly more
important to those who facilitate the wedding than those who participate in it. Pannychis' age
renders this episode discomforting for modern readers, and probably ancient ones too. But the
episode as a whole has acute stories to tell about marriage, what it is for, and what constitutes it.
Here, youth prevents reproduction; elsewhere, reproduction is thwarted in other ways, by
infertility (?) in Trimalchio and Fortunata's case, and death, in the case of the Wife of Ephesus.

**Trimalchio's Tomb**

The Pannychis/Giton marriage, significant as it is, is only a transitory event, and does not
form a household, nor is it intended to (and that is the point of its parody). The only fully-
fleshed out account of a married couple and a domestic household in the extant text arises in the
*Cena*. The brothers do form a household of sorts, and other marriages appear on the sidelines
(the Wife of Ephesus story, on which later, focuses on the wife's conduct after the death of her
husband, not the condition of their household during the marriage, while the seduction of
Lichas' wife [?] Hedyle may have featured in a missing part of the text38), but Trimalchio and
Fortunata, and their retinue of slaves, loom large as the narrative penetrates into the inner spaces
of their mansion, detailing both the public image Trimalchio wishes to present of himself and
his household, and, as the *Cena* yields to chaos, the gradual breakdown of that public image to

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38 Encolpius attempts to explain Lichas' angry reaction to the Wife of Ephesus story by invoking Hedyle and the
dire consequences of her “lustful elopement” (113.3): *Non dubie redierat in animum Hedyle expilatumque
libidinosa migratione navigium.*
reveal the tensions beneath. In this sense, Trimalchio and Fortunata are perhaps the least "perverse" couple in the text in conventional terms, but perversity is very much a relative term in this world. Even the most normative marriage in the text falls drastically short of fulfilling marriage's idealized social role, and, yet again, fails in a queerly productive way, tearing away the curtain of illusion from high ideals.

One significant fact about Trimalchio and Fortunata is that, although they are married, they are childless. This is, therefore, a rather queer marriage, if the very purpose of marriage is social reproduction by means of childbearing. Trimalchio's *familia* is made up of slaves rather than blood kin: rather than being the "remainder" that putters around in the background behind, and makes possible the leisure of, the nuclear family, the slaves are all there are. The class of freedmen as a whole lives in a state of perpetual liminality: they are marked by the stigma of past servility, the shame of having been subject to another, and their future is constrained by their inability to transcend their social class, given the rigorous legal and social solidification of class boundaries.³⁹ Slaves are deprived of kin as part and parcel of their servile status:⁴⁰ Trimalchio's natal origins are obscure, beyond the fact that he was brought from Asia (or as he puts it, he "came" from Asia, returning the agency to himself: *ex Asia veni*, 75.10), while Fortunata's past is described only in Trimalchio's angry and dismissive tirade: *ambubaia non meminit? [se] de machina illam sustuli, hominem inter homines feci* ("doesn't the dancing girl remember? I removed her from the sales platform, I made her a human among human beings", 74.13) Before the sales platform, nothing. Lest she fancy herself too big for her britches, she

³⁹ Further on the "stain" of servility and the naturalization of the slave/free distinction in legal texts, see Mouritsen (2011), 10-35.
⁴⁰ Patterson (1982), 5, in a cross-cultural comparative study of slavery, emphasizes the role of “natal alienation” as a constituent element of slavery. With enslavement comes social death and the loss of heritage.
will never be anything more than an *ambubaia*, a foreigner,\(^{41}\) a whore. Doesn't she remember? Trimalchio throws the “question” in her face in the form of a barbed accusation. She must never forget that she owes it all to him, and that her past is nothing – as if she could forget, given the formation of the subjectivity of the freed slave around the weight of the servile past.\(^{42}\) Trimalchio's account of his rise to prosperity begins with the favour granted him by his *dominus*, for whom he played the role of *deliciae*. The master's providence is what makes a slave *homo inter homines*, “a human among humans beings”, as Trimalchio remarks of his “taking up” of Fortunata (74.13); literalizing slavery's social death, he rewrites personhood as beginning only at the road towards manumission (and indeed, a slave's status hovers uneasily between person and property\(^{43}\)). The freedman's past is erased, but for Fortunata and Trimalchio, there is also “no future” in the sense that the possession of a future demands the replication of the self in the form of blood descendents. The childlessness of the couple hangs over the entire *Cena* as the reader quickly realizes, particularly after Encolpius' ekphrasis of the frescoes depicting Trimalchio's career at the beginning of the episode (29.3-7), that children are nowhere to be found, but this childlessness comes to the fore explicitly only during the quarrel, where

\[ \text{et ego, homo dipundiarius, sestertium centies accipere potui. scis tu me non mentiri. Agatho unguentarius here proxime seduxit me et: 'suadeo, inquit, non patiaris genus tuum interire.' at ego dum bonatus ago et nolo videri levis, ipse mihi asciam in crus impegi.} \]

Two-bit idiot that I am, I could have gotten into ten million. You know I’m not

\(^{41}\) The word, derived from Syrian, is used specifically of Syrian women; as Smith (1975), 204, rather coyly puts it, the word “implies more than just music-making”. Suetonius (Nero 27) speaks of Nero's waiting staff, composed of whores and *ambubaiae: scortorum et ambubaiarum ministeria*. Trimalchio's use of the term as invective need not imply anything about Fortunata's ethnicity specifically, but the ethnic component adds to its heft: Fortunata is alienated from her natal origin, a nobody in a strange land (as is Trimalchio, of course, and how did he achieve his high rank if not by a kind of whoring?).

\(^{42}\) On the way that this dynamic of servile stigma played out in Roman social relations, cf., again, Mouritsen (2011), and Bradley (1994).

lying. Agatho the perfume-seller drew me aside just the other day, and said, “I entreat you, you ought not to let your line perish.” I was acting like a good guy, and I didn’t want to seem fickle; so I’ve stuck the axe in my own leg.

Fortunata's infertility becomes another barb: Trimalchio foolishly turned down a lavish dowry and the prospect of continuing his line for a sterile, whorish chorus-girl. The phrase non patiaris genus tuum interire appropriates the language of aristocratic lineage, which Trimalchio, besmirched by his past, can never have. It is no concern for him to let his genus die out, because as a former slave his genus does not exist. If the upper classes image futurity as self-replication, where the self is formed on the model of the Ancestors and therefore endlessly duplicates the past, a past that can be traced back through Great Men, Trimalchio has no past to replicate, no glorious ancestors to reanimate. Markedly missing in his home are the wax imagines of forefathers. He is a novus homo in the truest sense, if he only becomes a homo at all when he is freed.

The lengthy march towards Trimalchio's simulated death and the end of the episode, proceeding through the entry of Habinnas and Scintilla, the reading of Trimalchio's will, the description of the funeral monument, the quarrel, Trimalchio's story of his rise to prosperity, and final “funeral” and the escape of Encolpius' gang, dramatizes the end of the household, and the nature of the ties that found it and hold it together. At the beginning of the Cena, Trimalchio is in control; as it approaches its conclusion, the belly of his household is gradually slit open. The will, the monument, the quarrel, the story of Trimalchio's ascent, and the funeral, read in tandem, trigger an intricate series of connections between wifely “rights”, a husband’s sexual prerogatives, non-reproductivity, death, inheritance, money, a slave’s sexual service to his masters – in short, the inner workings of Trimalchio's household, and the way the trauma of the servile past relates to the erasure of a “future”, at least in the terms by which futurity is typically
imagined by free, upper-class Romans. A freedman's relationship to his slave household differs markedly from that of a free man: although many free Romans acknowledged the fineness of the line separating a slave from a free man and saw a slave as another manifestation of the self, a freedman has himself directly been in the position of those whom he enslaves in turn. Trimalchio is at times beholden to aristocratic Roman conceptualizations of status and success; at other times, he strains against the constraints of ideology to create something else. He is caught between the boast that he never listened to a philosopher (nec umquam philosophum audivit, 71.12), and the words of the philosophers ringing in his ears. All this rewards reading in the context of the novel as a whole, against other forms of queer sociality, both the fraternity of the scholastici and the cynicism of the Crotonian legacy-hunters.

In his will, Trimalchio proposes to set free all his slaves, and to make Fortunata his sole heir (71.1-3). What other kin, in any case, does he have? The moment he became a slave, his natal origins were replaced by the fragility of a master's providence. And on his funeral monument, the only people he wants represented, other than anonymous crowds, are his cicaro and Fortunata (as well as an equally anonymous boy crying over a broken urn, 71.11). He expresses no wish to have his slaves depicted on the monument. His familia, elsewhere constituted sometimes exclusively of his slaves, is reduced to its barest bones: his boy and his

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44 Scholars similarly take up the idea of futurity as linked to reproduction: Andreau (2009, 119) glosses Bodel (1994) as presenting the freedmen “without a future” because they do not have “children capable of achieving a better social situation” (cf. an earlier formulation in Bodel's dissertation, 1984, 210-211: “the freedmen have no pasts, and as Petronius portrays them, no future; consequently their interests in life centre on themselves”); as Hales (2009, 170) formulates it, “Having no offspring or ancestors, whether real or imagine-d [sic] (and no future: he has no children, no familia except his slaves), this domus has no genius, only the living owner.” A “future” here seems to equate to childbearing and transcendence of the status of a libertus, as though there were something unliveable or unsustainable about the life of a freedman. It is not difficult to hear Edelman's clarion call here. In terms of Roman social history and the problematic position of the freedman stained by servility, see also Mouritsen (2011).


46 Edmondson (2011, 339 n4) lists places in the Cena where familia refers exclusively to Trimalchio's slaves: 31, 36, 37, 50, 52, 54, 59, 64, 67, 69, 70, 71, 72, 74.
wife. The cicaro, depicted next to the wife in Trimalchio's fantasy of his tomb, acts both as the substitute child of a childless couple and a sexual partner, a troubling and perversely ambivalent position (and not too dissimilar, in some ways, to that of Giton vis-a-vis Encolpius and Ascytlos). It is difficult, given the textual context, not to read Trimalchio's cicaro in a sexualized light. Elsewhere in the Cena, pueri delicati are explicitly eroticized: compare Habinnas' circumcised, snoring (ergo bedfellow) cicaro (68.8); the attractive boy Trimalchio kisses and Encolpius (implicitly) admires (puer non inscusos, 74.8); and indeed Trimalchio himself, revealing his anxiety about the shame that might redound upon his relationship with his master by denying such things are shameful (nec turpe est quod dominus iubet, 75.11). And Trimalchio's (literal) horseplay with his precious Croesus is suggestive: the boy “rides his horse” (non moratus ille usus est equo, 64.12), a phrase which is not only a common sexual euphemism elsewhere in ancient literature, but which is memorably employed during Quartilla's orgy, when the slavering cinaedus “switches horses”, transferring his attentions from Encolpius to Ascytlos (equum cinaedus mutavit, 24.4). Equally, Croesus' grotesque appearance – bleary eyes, bad teeth, “wizened” (vetulus), uglier than his master (28.4) – echoes the hideous, aged cinaedi, flaky, oily, and porous. Encolpius has an eye for the leakages of the comic body. Petronian parents, or quasi-parents, are invariably sexually exploitative (more on which in the following chapter).

The relationship between boyfriends and wives, indeed, soon comes dramatically to the fore, and the significance of the cicaro is fleshed out. A “not unattractive” (non inscusos, 74.8) boy enters among the fresh wave of servers, and Trimalchio “seizes him and begins to kiss him for rather a long time” (invasit eum Trimalchio et osculari diutius coepit). Fortunata abuses him for his inability to hold in his lust; his response is to remind her of her indebtedness to him,

to assail her for her sterility, and finally to instruct Habinnas not to depict her on his tomb, and to deny her the right to kiss him at his funeral. His angry response (a flash of lightning, *fulmen*, Encolpius calls it, 75.1) is effectively a heat-of-the-moment attempt to erase Fortunata's position in his household and as kin, a virtual disinheritaence. He made Fortunata into a person by rescuing her from the sales platform; to deny her recognition after his death in a kind of *damnatio memoriae* is, in a sense, to efface the personhood he granted her.\footnote{Courtney (2001), 119, notes the similarity to a *damnatio memoriae* in Trimalchio's denial of the statue.} She has been nothing before, and she will be nothing again. But Trimalchio's own past is perilously close to the surface here: he kissed the boy, he goes on to claim, because of his moral character, as manifested by his intelligence and economic nous, rather than his physical beauty (*puerum bastiavi frugalissimum, non propter formam, sed quia frugi est*, 75.4). It was such *frugalitas* which enabled Trimalchio himself to transcend servile status and make his millions (*ad hanc me fortunam frugalitas mea perduxit*, 75.10). He became his master's *deliciae* and serviced the mistress as well, leading to him being written into the master's will. Exploiting sex to receive inheritances is, of course, one of the things a legacy-hunter does. Had Trimalchio's former master no children of his own to write into his will? It appears not; the only legatees mentioned are Trimalchio and the emperor (*coheredem me Caesari fecit*, 76.2). Trimalchio's former master takes on the cast of the rich, childless old man vulnerable to the predations of legacy-hunters (even as Trimalchio plays the child/adolescent vulnerable to the predations of adult sexuality, who simultaneously manipulates that sexuality for material ends, like the Pergamene boy). As Trimalchio sees it, his behaviour was not exploitative but merely obedient: *non turpe est, quod dominus iubet* (“there's no shame in what the master orders”, 75.11). He attempts to head off perceptions of himself as either the exploited or the exploiter, but the game he plays here is an exceptionally delicate and sensitive one.
Trimalchio's drunken chain of associations flags up the connection between himself (his former, servile self) and the comely boy, a connection he is perhaps not consciously aware of. What does the boy want from his master? Is he using his sexuality, and his master's attraction to him, as Trimalchio himself had done? This boy is not Trimalchio's *cicaro*, but his position is similar. Are *cicarones* and *deliciae*, like wives, even interchangeable, more valued for their structural position than their individual characteristics? The homosocial relationship between master and favourite boy-slave is revealed to be vital to the establishment, functioning, and eventual demise of Trimalchio's household. Without children, inheritances flow from master to favoured slave. It was his master's death that set Trimalchio free, and he (professes that he) intends to replicate this turn of events by manumitting all of his slaves in his will (*Sat.* 71). He claims Fortunata as sole heir, but is only too quick to write her out of existence when she objects to his same-sex affairs. After all, it was not Trimalchio's master's wife that received the master's inheritance, but Trimalchio. Trimalchio plays lip service to the expectation that a man should leave his property to his kin (not blood kin, here, but legal kin), but he is subject to throw out his wife's claims to kinship at the drop of a *pilleus*. Marriage is entirely unstable. It is not quite the case here that marriage equates to the exchange of the token Woman between men – Fortunata, like Pannychis, has no family to “exchange” her – but relationships between men take precedence over the bond between wife and husband nonetheless. As Skinner puts it, “male homoerotic bonding thus repeats itself from one generation to the next as a skewed form of social reproduction”. But, as elsewhere in the text, this is the wrong kind of homosociality: for a man's career to be built on the basis of his sexual services to other men would render him the butt of jokes (and, of course, that accusation is levelled again and again in political rhetoric and popular discourse).

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But the replacement of the marital bond by relationships between men is a dynamic dear to Encolpius' heart, as we have seen in the Giton/Pannychis episode. In his reporting of the scene, Encolpius comes to the fore as narrator, further revealing what is at stake here: *itaque Fortunata, ut ex aequo ius firmum approbaret, male dicere Trimalchionem coepit et purgamentum dedecusque praedicare, qui non contineret libidinem suam* (“then Fortunata, in order to establish her rights in accordance with equity, began to abuse Trimalchio and to call him a piece of trash and a disgrace of a man, who could not hold his lust in check”, 74.9).

Encolpius' interpretation of the situation is that Fortunata was trying to “establish her rights in accordance with equity” (*ut ex aequo ius firmum approbaret*). Significantly, Encolpius' use of legalistic language recalls the way he thinks about his relationship with Giton: naturally, **Encolpius zelotypus** identifies with **Fortunata zelotypa**. Are we seeing a sympathetic identification of Encolpius with Fortunata and an implicit analogy between her marriage with Trimalchio and his marriage with... Giton? Or Ascyltos? Trimalchio's active molestation of a younger man recalls Ascyltos more than Giton, after all. If Encolpius is rather being sarcastic here, his sarcasm is nonetheless undermined by the similarities between Fortunata's feelings and his own, just as his snobbishness vis-a-vis Trimalchio and his freedmen friends is undermined by his own dubious social position (a bluff which Hermeros calls, mocking Ascyltos' pretensions towards the status of an *eques*, 57.4). And it is also significant that immediately after the *Cena* (79), he is to catch Giton in bed with Ascyltos, thus reigniting his 'husbandly' – and brotherly – *zelotypia*. The implicit connection between the marriage of Trimalchio and Fortunata and the marriage-fraternity of Encolpius, Ascyltos, and Giton flickers in the foreground, albeit only for a moment. In this new world, even heterosexual marriage is queer, and various forms of queer sociality interact and integrate with each other, as we will continue

50 This is how Smith (1975, 203) translates the phrase.
to see.

The issues at play here go beyond the single case of Trimalchio and Fortunata. Among the *liberti* at the *Cena*, similar dynamics repeatedly arise. As scholars have examined, Trimalchio's life course/career in particular resembles that of Chrysanthus, the freedman whose life and funeral Seleucus and Phileros detail. Chrysanthus' story again reveals a crisis of inheritance: not only did he milk legacies while he was alive (*hereditatem accepit, ex qua plus involavit quam illi relictum est*, 43.5), but, most offensively, he spurned his upright brother in a fit of pique (just as Trimalchio threatens to do to Fortunata), and left his estate to “some son of the soil” (*nescio cui terrae filio*, 43.5), some man with whom he shared no kinship. To nobody's surprise, given the text under discussion, we hear also that the old man was so randy he didn't even leave the family dog unmolested – a real chickenhawk (*pullarius*51, 43.8), a jack (or john?) of every trade (*omnis Minervae homo*, 43.8). Was this “nobody” to whom he left his wealth one of his boy lovers? It is not implausible, given the recurrence of the *captatio* motif in the *Satyricon*, and the constant collocation of sexual exploitation and wealth. At any rate, there is apparently no question of Chrysanthus leaving his legacy to his purported harpy of a wife, nor any indication that he had children. Once again, what Encolpius recollects of another’s recollection and presents to the reader as an irrelevant third-party tale is in fact entangled with his own personal narrative: a brother's betrayal again fits his own situation rather neatly. There is always a partiality here, an Encolpiocentrism. Here, again, three forms of queer sociality collide: fraternity and the invariably broken obligations of fraternal *pietas* (although here literal brotherhood illuminates queer brotherhood); sexualized legacy-hunting; and the childless freedman with his boy lovers. Where Seleucus is openly misogynistic, Phileros fails to mention Chrysanthus' wife at all. This harpy-like wife: was she another Fortunata, Scintilla – Encolpius?

51 Cf. Williams (2010), 25: *pullus* was apparently a term of endearment used for a beloved boy.
Habinnas' *deliciae*, the circumcised snorer, is, of course, not introduced until considerably later into the evening (68.8). Where Chrysanthus is an *omnis Minervae homo*, a connoisseur of every form of libidinousness, the *deliciae*, Massa, is an *omnis musae mancipium* (68.8): versatile, pragmatic, capable of imitation – what could be more useful in a world like this? But Scintilla calls his bluff immediately: the slave is a pimp, *agaga* (69.1). Trimalchio laughs, perceiving Scintilla's reaction as *zelotypia*; let the man live it up while he can, and women, like his ex-mistress, are equally partial to a good pounding, anyway (*tu autem, Scintilla, noli zelotype esse. crede mihi, et vos novimus. sic me salvum habeatis, ut ego sic solemi ipsumam meam debatuerre*, 69.2-3). The *deliciae*, as it naturally turns out, turns his professional versatility to sexual ends. Here is so much of the *Satyrina in miniature*: the commercialization of sexuality, the invariable sexualization of almost any relationship, the continual exposure of the seedy reality behind the veil of virtue. Trimalchio claims that he kissed the boy because of his parsimony; Habinnas that he admires his boy for his practical skills. Their wives will have none of this: they know the kind of world they live in, displaying an awareness that is almost metatextual. In some ways, this homosocial/erotic reproductive dynamic merely testifies to the perennial ability of patriarchy to reinvent and propagate itself, attempting at every turn to transcend the “swamp” of the feminine and Woman's reproductive capacity. But the wives will not be quiet, and they share a homosociality, or eroticism, of their own, taking solace in each other's arms (“meanwhile the women, worse for the wear, giggled amongst themselves and gave each other tipsy kisses, while one of them went on about her capability as a housewife, the other the boyfriends and inattentiveness of her husband”, *interim mulieres sauciae inter se riserunt ebriaque iunxerunt oscula, dum altera diligentiam matris familiae iactat, altera delicias et indiligentiam viri*, 67.11). They, unlike the dense Encolpius, are not deceived for a moment. Such canniness and cynicism is one of the best ways to “succeed” in the textual world of the
Satyricon: there is no reading too dirty, no chance of underestimating the ubiquitous motivation of sex. These wives are perceptive readers of their own text. Nonetheless, they too, like Trimalchio, remain crotcheted to some form of normativity that is unattainable to them as “disreputable” lower-class women: they “boast” (iactat, Encolpius’ perception) about their diligentia, matronly propriety and capability.

Again, though, a larger question is at stake: boy-love, in the case of both Chrysanthus and Habinnas, is connected to death. Phileros “[doesn't] blame [Chrysanthus], since that's the only thing he can take with him” (nec improbo, hoc solum enim secum tulit, 43.8). Trimalchio, similarly, “praises” Habinnas, “since nobody honours the grave with that” (mehercules laudo illum; hoc enim nemo parentat, 69.2). Both claims amount to much the same thing: you cannot receive when dead the pleasures you did not enjoy while alive. But Trimalchio's word choice is telling: parentare is the vox propria for offering rites at the Parentalia in particular (a festival in honour of one's ancestors). With all these alienated wives, legacy-hunting boy-toys, and the absence of blood kin, who indeed will tend these men's graves? The relationship of queer freedman sociality to the obligations of kin remains unclear. Scholars have noted that Trimalchio appears to owe no duties to his former owner's family, since the owner seems to have had no family (is Trimalchio's domina dead?). The “skewed” form of generational succession represented by the replacement of dominus by his slave deliciae has an uncertain relationship to configurations of futurity implicating the remembrance of kin in ritual. As we turn to the death of reproductive futurity, however, a broader consideration of the Petonian meaning of death is called for.

52 Cf. Schmeling (2011), 173: “Epitaphs claim that the dead can take into the afterlife only that which they enjoyed on earth.”
53 OLD s.v. parento, 1.
54 See Bodel (1984), 80-84, who discusses Veyne's claim that the freedmen can all be viewed as independent, arguing that such a claim is only fully supportable in the case of Trimalchio.
Trimalchio's villa, as scholars have amply demonstrated, has both a labyrinthine and chthonic character.\(^{55}\) Trimalchio's simulated death serves as both a closural device for the episode, and a culmination of the images of death, the underworld, and mortality that build up during the *Cena*. There is a certain tendency throughout the text to trope non-reproductivity as death, particularly evident during the *Cena* and at Croton. While Croton is a sterile, post-apocalyptic wasteland,\(^{56}\) its desiccated corpse pecked at by crows, Trimalchio's villa is lavish but lethal. Non-reproductive social relations take place in deathly settings. But death, in the *Satyricon*, does not necessarily reside under the sign of despair: simulated death, in particular, is an opportunity for gain, as the text's final, cannibalistic, passage reveals. And Trimalchio, by staging his own death, takes ownership of it. It is rather as though Eumolpus and Trimalchio had taken Edelman's directive for queers to embrace the death drive seriously. Here, it is worthwhile quoting one of Edelman's particularly bold metaphors for what queerness does to the hope of a future: the fantasy of futurity as a costume turned inside out. This metaphor of “turning inside out” is paralleled, too, in Bakhtin's account of the carnivalesque: “Because carnivalistic life is life drawn out of its usual rut, it is to some extent "life turned inside out," "the reverse side of the world" ("monde a l'envers")”.\(^{57}\) The particular piquancy of Edelman's formulation of the metaphor, however, lies in his rather poetic addition: turning a (flashy, sparkly, showy) garment inside out reveals the seams that are ordinarily hidden, the way it is put together, and the ease with which it can fall, or be torn, apart.\(^{58}\)

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55 See especially Bodel (1994).
56 Cf. Rimell (2002), 129, who describes Croton as a “hellish, apocalyptic landscape whose inhabitants have become uncivilised, man-eating beasts.”
57 Bakhtin (1973), 122. There are numerous occasions on which one can sense something almost proto-queer in Bakhtin's work, although Bakhtinian dialogism is less aggressively oppositional than Edelman's account of queerness and futurity.
Sinthomosexuality, on the other hand – denying the appeal of fantasy, refusing the promise of futurity that mends each tear, however mean, in reality's dress with threads of meaning (attached as they are to the eye-catching lure we might see as the sequins of sequence, which dazzle our vision by producing the constant illusion of consequence) – offers us fantasy turned inside out, the seams of its costume exposing reality's seamlessness as mere seeming, the fraying knots that hold each sequin in place now usurping that place.

What we have here is a remarkable fit for the Cena, and for that matter the Satyrica, as a whole. The whole point of Trimalchio's cavalcade of tricks, puns, and illusions is that nothing is at it seems. As we dwell amongst the “lesser classes”, good-life fantasies are continually called out. No, say Scintilla and Fortunata, you are not kissing that boy because you admire his industriousness, you are kissing him because you lust after him. No, says Hermeros to the scholastici, you are not better than us, you are merely putting on a costume (“you're a Roman knight? Oh, yeah, and I'm the son of a king,” *eques Romanus es: et ego regis filius*, 57.4). The sequence of the upper-class life – birth to a noble family, progress through the *cursus honorum*, marriage and childbearing, wielding of *patria potestas*, a will that keeps wealth in the family, death, due observance of funerary rites by one's kin – is utterly torn out of joint by the freedmen, who, because of their former servitude, have no yesterday, and a tomorrow that offers only repetition of the *dominus-deliciae* transfer of wealth and authority, rather than the (purportedly) reassuring anchor of blood kin. In any case, Trimalchio's master, who, as far as Trimalchio tells

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59 For Edelman, queerness takes on the character of the Lacanian *sinthome*: a kind of mindless enjoyment, *jouissance*, originating from the subject's drives, particularly the death drive. He thus coins the neologism “sinthomosexuality”, in a chapter discussing Scrooge and Silas Marner (very “situated” characters in terms of gender, class, race, genre...). The Lacanian vocabulary is not essential to the point I am making, however: there does not seem to be a great difference here between “sinthomosexuality” and “queerness” in Edelman's argot. There is something evocative for the Satyrica, though, about Edelman's characterization of sinthomosexuality as “insisting on access to *jouissance* in place of access to sense, on identification with one's *sinthome* instead of belief in its meaning.” (Edelman 2004, 37)

60 Here I am influenced by Lauren Berlant's treatment of “cruel optimism”, and the affective bonds individuals form to what she dubs “good-life fantasies” (Berlant [2011]). People remain bound to such fantasies, even if they are injurious to their wellbeing, because the continuity of the fantasy comes to anchor the continuity of life itself.

61 Hermeros' statement has been taken to imply that Ascytlos is aping the style of an eques in some way, perhaps with gold rings: Schmeling (2011), 233. Deceit, role-playing, and the adoption of costumes (costumes that are, more often than not, subtly, or overtly, wrong: compare Encolpius' unsoldierly shoes, *Sat.* 82) are of course common motifs in the text.
us, was not a freedman himself, was equally subject to the fate of the non-reproductive
freedmen: transfer of his patrimony outside the family. Trimalchio served as a disruptive wrench
in the machine of the good-life fantasy. “Meaning” and the “illusion of consequence”, at the
same time, are thwarted again and again: the reader stumbles along from behind Encolpius'
murky, drunken gaze, unable to trust either Encolpius' eyes or her own as director Trimalchio
stages trick after trick even as his grasp on the show begins to loosen as it hurtles towards its
funereal close.

In a more general sense, Trimalchio's approach to life, peppered with shards of low- and
“misappropriated” high-culture, in some respects utterly refuses the normative ideal, under
whose terms freedmen, at any rate, barely count as respectable. Aristocrats, like the figure of the
sneering upper-class reader enshrined in much Petronian scholarship, or wannabe aristocrats,
like Encolpius' gang, may scoff, but Trimalchio dances to the beat of a different drum. Myth is a
flexible system – why can't Medea be replaced by Cassandra, or Daedalus imprison Niobe in the
Trojan Horse? Of course, he is doing the flexibility of myth all wrong, but there's something
very queer about his overliteral interpretation of the fluidity of mythical narratives and his
inability – or unwillingness – to grasp the way the rules are supposed to work; recall Bakhtin's
“wilful stupidity”, the stubborn stumbling-block of obtuseness. Bufoonishness shades into
campy wit: Trimalchio claims that “Cassandra's” dead boys are painted so skilfully they look
alive (pueri mortui iacent sic uti vivere putes, 52.1). The distance between a perverse
misreading and a creative re-reading is sometimes not all that great: sometimes, even, the two
are almost one and the same. The overliteral character of Trimalchio's reading of the “rules” in

62 Rimell (2002), 45-8, as part of her ongoing, acute argument about the inadequacy of reading the Satyricon as
“pure entertainment”, suggests that there might well be more to Trimalchio's blunders than a straightforward
demonstration of his ignorance for the amusement of a sneering audience: Trimalchio's perversions of myth “are
so obviously out of synch with their Homeric originals that it is hardly original or clever to make an issue of
their absurdity.” (46)
this respect recalls Quartilla's approach to marriage: You can follow the rules, even to the letter, but you will still get it all wrong, to the extent that you are believed utterly incapable of ever being able to get it right, that you are written off before you even had a chance to begin. Is the problem with you, or with the rules?

**Life after the Husband**

It would be impossible to do justice to the nexus of marriage and death without some discussion of the Wife of Ephesus story. Like the *Cena* the episode has received a great – disproportionate – deal of attention in the secondary literature. Perhaps, traditionally at least, this close focus can be attributed to the prominence in both the *Cena* and the Wife of Ephesus of heterosexual marriage, which is notably absent elsewhere in the *Satyricon*. A full-scale treatment of the episode, especially given the density of the secondary literature and the episode's long reception history, falls outside my purview. However, some remarks on it are nonetheless called for.

Firstly, there is a limited sense in which the episode constitutes an anti-*Cena*. As McGlathery notes, the ejection of the husband from the tomb in favour of the lover causes it to become a “household with living beings” – a burial chamber is transformed into a wedding chamber. What happens in the *Cena* is that a living household turns into a tomb, as both the pervasive funerary imagery and the non-reproductivity of the freedmen demonstrate. The physical space of the house, near-impossible to escape, becomes a metaphor for the life of the freedman, trapped in an eternal present, denied past and future. The Wife's stagey devotion to her dead husband constitutes ritually correct mourning practice, something which is repeatedly

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foreclosed in the *Cena*: compare both Chrysanthus' wife's failure to appropriately mourn him after his death (42.6-7), and Trimalchio's threat to deny Fortunata the right of carrying out funerary rites (74.17). Like Trimalchio with myth and like Quartilla with marriage, the Wife follows the rules of uxorial *pietas* overliterally, which results in what borders on a reductio ad absurdum: mourning so excessive it becomes a spectacle (*spectaculum*, 111.1), and the woman a kind of prodigy (*monstrum*, 111.7). But as in the case of the *Cena*, the (first) marriage of the wife of Ephesus does not appear to have yielded any children, or at least none that are of significance to the story. Bakhtinian arguments equating the Wife's relationship with the soldier with fertility, the renewal of life, the womb, etc, are in danger of insufficiently accommodating the non-reproductivity of Petronian sex (whether non-reproductive because it is between men, or because, for whatever reason, no children are born). Recall, too, the episode's much-discussed Vergilian underpinnings: as much as Dido yearns for a *parvulus Aeneas*, it is never to be (*Aen.* 4.328-9). Edelman's words on queerness again ring apt: in homophobic discourse, the association of queers (and here, he seems to mean gay men in particular) with a “culture of

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65 McGlathery (1998) seeks to out-Bakhtin Bakhtin, applying Bakhtinian concepts to the Wife of Ephesus story that Bakhtin himself did not in his analysis of the tale. McGlathery associates the end of the story with the “fertile, renewing power characteristic of the novel”. The physical bodies of Petronian characters, however, are more often than not sterile rather than fertile: Encolpius, the inhabitants of Croton, Trimalchio & Fortunata – and the Wife? (there is no mention, at any rate, of either her relationship with her husband or the soldier resulting in children) Cf. Miller (1998), a discussion of Bakhtinian carnivalesque sterility/fertility in relation to Roman satire: according to Bakhtin, Miller argues (257), “satire, though often rich in grotesque imagery, is essentially bereft of the idea of its regenerative force”. For Bakhtin, the *Satyricon* is Menippean and thus associated with carnival and rebirth, but might we read Bakhtin against himself here, and argue that the *Satyricon* is closer, in this limited sense at least, to his description of satire? Caveat: this is not to claim, or to revive the claim, that the *Satyricon* “is” a satire; its generic ontology is obviously more complex than a single word can fully encapsulate. And I am arguing for a different kind of fertility: world-making, as opposed to baby-making.
66 Edelman persistently speaks of “queerness” in highly abstract terms, yet when it comes to the crunch, he seems to associate it with (cisgendered?) gay men in particular; in the passage in question, he is discussing homophobic responses to the AIDS crisis. The colours of the queer rainbow are thus muted. For varying responses to this problematic aspect of Edelman's polemic, cf. Halberstam (2011), who argues for an expanded archive of queer materials (might the *Satyricon*, with its diverse cast, fit here, one wonders?), and Muñoz (2009), who focuses particularly on the erasure of race in Edelman's treatment. Despite the problematic aspects of Edelman's book, he evidently succeeded in setting an agenda.
death” is linked to what he describes as:  

... the all-pervasive fantasy within which our meaning is always a function not only of what we do with our genitals but also of what we don't do: a function, that is, of the envy-, contempt-, and anxiety-inducing fixation on our freedom from the necessity of translating the corrupt, unregenerate vulgate of fucking into the infinitely tonier, indeed sacramental, Latin of procreation.  

The episode's treatment of Vergil enacts a dynamic with which we are intimately familiar by this point: the lofty is desublimated, the euphemizing mask of epic language removed. No procreation, no parade of Roman ancestors to be anticipated or reviewed, no bright fantasy of Augustan futurity, but all vulgarity, food, drink, and sex which results in no offspring (i.e., “fucking”) – wasn't that what went on in the cave with Aeneas and Dido, anyway, when she tried to dignify her culpa with the title coniugium? “Don't you want to live anew?” asks the ancilla (vis tu reviviscere? 111.12), quoting Anna's words to Dido: “Do you really believe that ashes or buried shades can feel this?” (id cinerem aut manes credis sentire sepultos? 111.12) The ancilla is castigated for being a bad (or “unsophisticated”) reader of Vergil at this juncture, because she apparently fails to advert to the tragic consequences that resulted from Anna's persuasion. It is the author, or even the narrator Eumolpus – bad poet but skilful storyteller, as the scholarly narrative goes – that is playing the sophisticated game; the “lowly” character is ignorant. But there is another sense in which the ancilla is turning the Aeneid on its head. The maid, placing the wife in the place of Dido, adjures her, Dido, to “live again” (reviviscere).  

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68 One might even detect a resonance here with Bakhtin's conceptualization of epic (procreation) and novel (fucking). The Bakhtinian idiom has yielded rich fruit; might the queer idiom too?  
69 McGlathery (1998), 328: “the maid is an unsophisticated reader of Virgil”. Another lowly character for the snooty reader to look down on? Rimell (2002), 133, challenges this perception of the ancilla's ineptitude on different grounds: someone who could quote Aeneid 4 verbatim would surely be aware of the ending, thus, possibly, “the lines of Virgil have taken on a sensual power here that far exceeds the rationale of their impact within the narrative of Dido’s love affair with Aeneas” (133), since they are read through Ovidian erotodidaxis, and Anna becomes an Ovidian go-between. There is some satisfaction to be derived from making the lowly character the clever Alexandrian, instead of the author in collusion with the reader.
Whereas the original Dido died on a pyre, the husband of this new Dido is hung on a cross, and her soldier-Aeneas has no Roman destiny to pull him away.

We can replay the *Aeneid*, says the *ancilla*, but this time it will end happily – precisely because there is no future, or at least no fantasy of the future, a fantasy that ends up forestalling procreation for Dido anyway, since it is the Augustan-Roman future that matters, not her own. The story ends, the camera cuts away and back to the ship; the last image is not Dido falling on her sword as her lover sails away, but the husband hanging on the cross, as the wife languors in her lover's embrace. Cut to Giton and Tryphaena, and Encolpius' *zelotypia*, again (113). Can we imagine Trimalchio or Encolpius in their “husbandly” roles hanging on that same cross? Is Fortunata's redemption the opportunity to become the Wife of Ephesus? Trimalchio had blazed away in his attempts to be remembered in the way he wanted, but the Wife episode reveals that a husband's legacy is a tenuous business. Life is renewed, then, but the future-less, inert settings in which it is lived – the confines of the freedman's villa or of the tomb, or the Crotonian wasteland – demand a new way of approaching it. In Edelman's terms, fucking, not procreation. The image of the husband on the cross would make an apt cover for the entire novel. *Patria potestas* is already dead when the curtain opens; the audience's gaze is lavished on its corpse, substituted for the criminal body which is usually the object of such a gaze. The parents of the executed criminal, in fact, seize the opportunity, while the Soldier is distracted, to carry out funereal rites for their son (112.5): are these the best parents in the text?

As in the case of the *Cena*, good-life fantasies are again turned inside out, “exposing reality's seamlessness as mere seeming”. In the Wife episode this dynamic is even more overt: the wife and the soldier seal themselves up in the tomb, “so that any friend or stranger who came to tomb would imagine that a most virtuous lady had breathed her last over her husband's

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70 Edelman (2004), 35.
body” (ut quisquis ex notis ignotisque ad monumentum venisset, putaret expirasse super corpus viri pudicissimam uxorem, 111.3). The Wife's futurity, in conventional terms, is ruptured by the death of her husband, and dying over his body is the most “virtuous” thing she can do: her timeline ends with his, and she thus becomes the perfect univira, her virtue solidified by death and frozen for all time. The good-life fantasy thus engenders stasis, manufacturing seamlessness by death. To become an exemplum, a woman must die (compare, to give only the most obvious examples, Lucretia and Verginia). There is a sense in which killing a woman reassuringly forestalls her ability to exercise agency in a non-authorized way in future. It is the Roman moralistic tradition, and its manifestation in Vergilian national epic, that demands the woman must die.71 The Wife has gamed the system magnificently: while appearing to abide by the tradition, she has forged a new timeline for herself, taking seriously the ancilla's exhortation to “live anew”. The Wife and the ancilla together reshape the tradition, rather than merely repeat it as the fantasy of futurism would demand. This may be a “bad” reading of the Aeneid – or simply a Didonian one.72 What is essential here is that the “renewal of life” does not necessarily entail procreation: “life”, that is to say, is not co-extensive with reproductive futurism. There is something quite radical buried under the misogynist framing of the tale. It is significant, too, that Eumolpus, according to Encolpius, claims to be speaking not of “old tragedies or names famous through the ages, but an event that occurred within his own memory” (nec se tragoedias veteres curare aut nomina saeculis nota, sed rem sua memoria factam, 110.8). Throw away the old tragedies and begin anew.

The Wife episode takes on a Satyrica-in-miniature quality, its anonymized, archetypal

71 Cf. Joshel (1992), a trenchant, cuttingly perceptive, piece on Livy's Lucretia and Verginia: the Woman, women, must die in order to deaden the male body to desire. Women die so that men might live. Dido fits here all too well.

72 The Juvenalian satirist, of course, complains about women who make excuses for Dido: Juv. 6.435. As he frames it, it is not so much that they are wrong as that they should shut up lest they expose their husbands' ignorance.
actors playing out the reinvention of the world after the death of the husband. In a sense, every husband is dead now. Similarly, the Pergamene Boy episode, with its anonymous boy protagonist, illustrates a character who has read the *Satyricon* thoroughly and knows how the sexual dynamics of this world play out: it may be that being exploited is inevitable, but exploited and exploiter can shift in a moment. The Wife episode, like the marriage of Trimalchio and Fortunata, speaks to Encolpius' obsessions: here, there are three, yet again, but the husband is already dead from the start. But the Wife's response is simply that she loves them both: *nec istud... dii sinant, ut eodem tempore duorum mihi carissimorum hominum duo funera spectem* (“gods forbid that I should see at the same time the deaths of two men so dear to me”, 112.7). Just as Ascylos, Circe, Quartilla and others can imagine constellations of intimate relations more expansive than Encolpius is willing to accept for himself, the Wife sees no distinction between husband and lover. Why can she not be allowed to love the latter as intensely as she mourned for the former, and hold both dear to her heart? Here, unlike in Carthage, she has at least a chance of succeeding at failing to do what men like Eumolpus and Lichas would prefer her to. Eumolpus' derisive framing of the story cannot efface this chance at a new way of life, which the “lowly *ancilla*”, that “inferior” reader of the tradition, seems to acknowledge equally.

Whereas elsewhere in the *Satyricon* it is cultural institutions which are brought down and desublimated by means of parody, the Wife episode represents a reasonably clear-cut case of a particular literary text being “parodied”. The putative literary artistry of this parody has rendered it easy to praise in the scholarship: it is not difficult to read the episode from the “hidden author”/reader's perspective. This parody is not treated as laughably inferior to the “original” (like Quartilla's marriage, Encolpius' brotherhood, Trimalchio's myths, and so on), but enshrined
in the lofty annals of “some of the most elegant Latin prose to survive to this day”. The Wife of Ephesus is a scholarly industry – the queer brothers or the canny priestesses and freedmen, on the other hand, idiots and/or perverts who we are supposed to laugh at. What if were to take the artistry of the characters' reinvention of the world as seriously as the literary artistry of a parody of Vergil? The first step here, perhaps, might be to foreground the “textual” quality of cultural institutions like marriage, fraternity, reproductive futurism. To return to my remarks at the beginning of this chapter, it is surely difficult now to take marriage for granted as a transparent universal; rather, it is a normativizing form of legitimating intimate relationships and creating kinship that takes on radically different meanings in different cultural and social contexts.

Kinship, marriage, reproduction, intimacy, and relationality are taking on new forms in the new millennium: now, perhaps, they seem more contingent than ever, as new reproductive technologies and non-normative kinds of relationality increasingly seep into the popular consciousness. To Quartilla, the aristocratic marriage ceremony is a text to be re-cited, as much as Vergil's text haunts the 

73 Such is the judgment of the now-standard commentary, Schmeling (2011), 427.
74 Cf. Bowlby (2007), who reads Greek tragedy and Freud in relation to new reproductive technologies such as IVF and transnational adoption.
these marriages result in children, challenging immediately a central tenet of Roman aristocratic ideology, the investment in future generations of the hope of immortality, the immortality both of one's own name and of the structures that invest that name with prestige and authority. Yet other ways of configuring futurity emerge from the ruins: the establishment of alternative libidinal careers; the transfer of property along homoerotic master-slave lines; the possibility of a new life for Dido, killed by the machine of empire. It is not that these other forms of futurity engender utopia: the old forms of oppression remain, and characters approach them with a wearied familiarity, at the same time attempting to rewrite their pasts in order to obviate suffering and exploitation, though they perhaps still cannot envision the absence of an exploiter. The process of world-making is sluggish, halting, proceeding in fits and starts; quite different, in some ways, to the relentless engine of Edelman's death-driven queerness. But nonetheless, the starting point remains the eradication of reproductive futurity, or at least its diminution in importance. This diminution is a weight with which all the characters must live, even as they seem only intermittently aware of it (though flashes of awareness crop up in surprising places, like Trimalchio's offhand mention of Agatho). Fraternity was one response; in this chapter, we have seen others. In what comes next things escalate even further: the protagonists wander to Croton, where sterility is, with a heavy irony, the very precondition of civilized life.
Chapter Three: Croton: How to Raise Your Children Queer

One can remember desperately feeling that there was simply nowhere to grow. What would become of the child one feared oneself to be? For adults... who from a young age felt they were attracted to others in wrong ways, the notion of a gay child – however conceptually problematic – may be a throwback to a frightening, heightened sense of growing toward a question mark. Or growing up in haze. Or hanging in suspense – even wishing time would stop, or just twist sideways, so that one wouldn't have to advance to new or further scenes of trouble. Truly one could feel that one more readily had a future with a word – *homo*, *faggot*, *gay*, or *queer* – words so frequently used by kids – than with the objects or subjects of one’s dreams.¹

The stage for the final scenes in our extant text of the *Satyrica* is Croton, an extraordinary city where extraordinary things happen. The South Italian city is a place rich in associations: Pythagoreans and Olympic athletes had their roots there, though it was largely deserted by the 1st century CE. Petronius rewrites it into a potent setting that is simultaneously dead, in normative terms, and flourishing, in queer terms. The events at Croton begin when our heroes happen to wander there after the shipwreck, and decide to take up temporary residence after hearing of the lucre that can be won from the hordes of legacy-hunters who lavish gifts on the rich and childless, hoping to be written into their wills. They exploit these potential exploiters by engineering a scheme whereby Eumolpus will transform himself into a ripe target for the legacy-hunters. Encolpius and Giton pretend to be his slaves, but this legacy-hunting plot, although remaining in the background, is largely derailed by Encolpius' troubles with impotence, which take us through to the end of our extant text. The text breaks off as Eumolpus instructs the apparently willing legacy-hunters they must eat his corpse: a peculiarly apt place for the text to end.

¹ Stockton (2009), 3.
The Croton episode takes up almost a third of our text (49 out of 175 pages in Müller's Teubner; compare the 55 pages of the Cena), but has received markedly less scholarly attention than the rest of it. Perhaps unsurprising: the episode is puzzling, fragmented, highly sexual, and – a death knell – includes Eumolpus' much-despised Bellum Civile, a 295-line section of rather stiff and conventional hexametric epic poetry recited on the road to Croton, which has only relatively recently been examined in the context of the text's prose narrative rather than as an abstracted “school exercise”, a wretched chunk of bad epic. But it is a stunning episode: rich with verse in a range of styles, and remarkably telling when it comes to sexuality, gender, desire of various kinds, and the representation of the masculine body, and I shall therefore have cause to dwell there for the next two chapters. There is something almost emblematic about Croton for a queer reading of the Satyricon: the initial description of the city reads like something torn straight out of Edelman's No Future, and things only become queerer from then on.

It is worth noting early on that the Croton episode ups the sexual ante: Encolpius' frustrated desire for Giton, manifested in the post-Cena scenes at the inn and on ship, gives way to a wider variety of sexual escapades. Encolpius, in addition to continuing (or attempting to continue) his sexual relationship with Giton, has an affair with Circe, an aristocratic matron, in which he toys with a masochistic, non-penetrative mode of male eroticism as his penis fails him: the next chapter will substantiate this claim at length. Eumolpus too has his fair share of sex, with the daughter of Philomela, another Crotonian matron, in a voyeuristic scene of group sex reminiscent of the Quartilla episode. Additionally, Encolpius is lusted after and anally penetrated, with a dildo and for purportedly “medicinal” purposes, by an elderly woman who claims to be a witch. In terms of Gayle Rubin's “charmed circle” of normative sexual activity, we might note that the sexual activity on display here constitutes “perversion” in multiple ways:

2 The pioneering treatment here is that of Zeitlin (1971).
there is cross-generational, non-monogamous, non-marital, casual, public/group sex that utilizes manufactured objects (dildoes), sex that is distinctly not spontaneous, but arranged/contracted in advance, not technically in exchange for money but with mercenary goals. In addition, the sex takes place under deceitful guises: Eumolpus and Encolpius are pretending to be, respectively, a rich old man and his slave. But most of the sexual contact, except for Encolpius' attempt to seduce Philomela's son, is heterosexual, and therefore has perhaps been less legible as “queer” (although it ought to prick up a queer reader's ears whenever the language of “perversity” clusters around sex acts in the secondary literature). But as I have already demonstrated (and will continue to emphasize), “heterosexuality” (opposite-sex sexual contact) and queerness are not mutually exclusive in the Satyricon (or necessarily anywhere, for that matter). In particular, Encolpius' encounters in this part of the novel are very queer indeed, from his non-penetrative, heavily contracted and hierarchical encounters with Circe, the subject of the next chapter, to his anal penetration by an old witch, a category of person marked in Latin literature as sexually repulsive.

However, my approach in this chapter, as elsewhere, is more, or as much, interested in the context of these sex acts, as opposed to their mechanics. As elsewhere, far more is at stake

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3 Corax's manipulation of Eumolpus during sex with Philomela's daughter is also treated peculiarly as a kind of machine: the brother watches the *automata* (140.11) of his sister, which Schmeling (2011, 543) interprets as “mechanical loving”.

4 See Rubin (1984). Rubin's list of “bad, abnormal, unnatural, damned sexuality” goes as follows: homosexual, unmarried, promiscuous, commercial, alone or in groups, casual, cross-generational, in public, pornography, with manufactured objects, sadomasochistic.

5 Particularly rich in this respect is Gill's 1973 treatment of the “sexual scenes in the Satyricon”; to quote a few representative phrases: “striking and bizarre love triangle involving male homosexuals” (177); “parody of a normal sexual act” (179); “casual perversity” (181); “elaborately perverse construction”, “reversals of ordinary mating roles”, “grotesque machine for sexual intercourse” (182); “Petronius' *candida lingua* does not report the whole range of human sexual experience; his selection is slanted towards acts which have a surprising effect, the perverse, bizarre, or amusing in erotic combination” (184). It is not specified from whose perspective these sex acts are perverted, or in what sense the term is used. Sullivan (1968), although offering a surprisingly nuanced and non-judgmental account of Petronian sexuality, nonetheless deploys the vocabulary of perversion, although perhaps with a Freudian technicality: “the scenes witnessed [Philomela and Pannychis] seem to be of a perverse nature” (240); “such perversion [scopomixia, exhibitionism]” (243).

6 On sexual invective directed against old women, see briefly Richlin (1992), 109-115.
than issues such as what orifice Eumolpus penetrates. These queer sexual acts take place in a queer frame: not only legacy hunting, which is a queer perversion of the way that kinship ties are supposed to ensure the transfer of property, but also the repeated failure of masculinity, in terms of impotence (a sexual failure), servile embodiment (a sexualized social failure), and the failure to reproduce. At Croton, the death of reproductive futurity, which we are already familiar with from Trimalchiro's household and elsewhere, is particularly strongly thematized, culminating in the order to literally cannibalize the body of the (simulated) father, Eumolpus. The cannibalism is animated by the fantasy that flesh has transmuted into gold, making concrete the Satyricon's economy of the flesh as an object of exchange (an economy that runs through the Cena and the Philomela episode in particular): “just shut your eyes,” advises the legacy hunter Gorgias in the dying paragraph of our text, “and pretend that you're gobbling up a million bucks rather than human flesh”, operi modo oculos et finge te non humana viscera sed centies sestertium comesse (141.7).

The threat of legacy-hunting, captatio, lies in its encroachment upon kin ties: no matter the “actual” prevalence of legacy-hunting in Roman society (not very high, it seems), its prominence in literature points to a deeply-held anxiety surrounding the usurpation of the rightful place of family members by grasping extranei. Just as the “outrageous” scenarios of declamation constitute a kind of laboratory for the working-through of anxieties about familial structure, the spectre of captatio provides insight into the feared death of the normative family as an entity holding society together by means of kin ties. Satire's formulation of the mundus

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I allude to the debate over the correct reading at Sat. 140.6: Aphrodisiaca is Bücheler's reading for the transmitted pigiciaca; others read pygesiaca (from the scribe's gloss πυγησιακά), a “ceremony of the buttocks” (see Panayotakis [1995], 182-9). For the debate over anal penetration, see Gill (1973), 181 n 29; Schmeling (2009), 541. Assumptions about the gendering of anal intercourse abound (sometimes backed up by ancient evidence, sometimes not).

On captatio from a social-historical perspective, Champlin (1991) 87-102 is useful.

See Gunderson (2003).
inversus is so piquant because it takes such anxieties and runs with them, portraying a kind of dreamland of the triumph of everything that the vir bonus professes to despise, a straw-man construction of “society these days” for him to sneer at, abhor and abject even as he fears its realization and its roots in his own psyche. The Satyrica, although not satire in this sense, nonetheless does something similar with captatio, taking hold of it and running with it. But here we see how a society can work after captatio has won and reprofuturity has lost.

This chapter, then, approaches Croton through a wide-angle lens, looking beyond perverse sex acts to their broader implications. It begins with an introduction to Croton's non-reproductive society and its (paradoxical) reproduction by Philomela and her children, arguing that, as with fraternity and marriage, another institution key to aristocratic Roman sociality, patronage, here receives its queer reformulation/perversion. Here, too, it considers the wider significance of children in the Satyrica, and the ability of the younger generation to adapt queerly in the face of ubiquitous exploitation. The chapter then moves to the Bellum Civile poem and its context, examining how the novel manages to incorporate the end of the world and its beginning anew by means of a “swallowing up” and retooling of epic negativity. Some key queer-theoretical tropes come into play: the resignification and queer parody of elite institutions with which we are familiar from previous chapters, but also the importance of children/youth as a focal point for futurity and a site of queerness, and finally the process of embracing and working with, rather than against, the negative. As elsewhere, I juxtapose the “mindless pulsations” of an Edelmanian death drive, embodied graphically in the carrion bird metaphor literalized as cannibalism, with the flickerings of queer world making: the tension between the two is uneasy, but it is a fertile unease.

This “working with” the negative merits some expansion. Recent queer theory has flirted heavily with the negative and the antisocial, taking up a position against the purported myopia
of early 21\textsuperscript{st} century mainstream queer politics. We have already examined Halberstam's tarrying with failure and Edelman's radical plunge into the antisocial: where Edelman views queerness as the end of signification, a force inherently opposed to the social and to “politics”, Halberstam attempts to inhabit the world after failure (as well as to expand on what she sees as Edelman's restricted “queer archive”\textsuperscript{10}). Against the rallying cry of gay pride, queer theorists have dwelt on “gay shame”, reclaiming and channelling negative affect, and finding a place for embarrassing/disreputable queer figures and moments from the past.\textsuperscript{11} Here I take these kinds of arguments in a different direction. Eumolpus' civil war poem allows an entree into the politicized landscape of ancient epic poetry, and the differing responses of Roman epic poets to Vergilian-Augustan teleology. The kinship of Eumolpus' poem with Lucan's epic is a longstanding theme in Petronian scholarship, but similarities between the poems have traditionally been read at the micro-level. Zeitlin and Connors, however, expand these readings by investigating the poem's relationship to epic teleology, with which civil war epic has a notoriously fractured relationship.\textsuperscript{12} Quint divides epic into two streams, the Vergilian epic of imperial domination, and the Lucanian epic of “a defeated whose resistance contains the germ of a broader republican or antimonarchical politics”.\textsuperscript{13} Quint associates the former with linear teleology, and the latter with “random or circular wandering”, contingency, powerlessness, and the romance.\textsuperscript{14} It is striking how well the looping temporalities of the \textit{Satyrica} cohere with the so-called “Lucanian” stream; striking, too, how thoroughly queer this epic of the defeated

\textsuperscript{10} See Halberstam (2011), 109-10. Interestingly, the “queer archive” seems to begin around the 19\textsuperscript{th} century; what would it look like with, say, Petronius and gender-bending Catullus added to the mix?

\textsuperscript{11} There is a collection with the title edited by Halperin and Traub (2010), which circles around many of the central issues and controversies. From a historical perspective, Love (2007) offers a powerful reading of negative affect in “pre-Stonewall” queer texts; again, none of these texts extend back earlier than the 19\textsuperscript{th} century.

\textsuperscript{12} Zeitlin (1971); Connors (1998).

\textsuperscript{13} Quint (1993), 8.

\textsuperscript{14} Quint (1993), 9.
sounds in light of the radical resistance and antisovereign bent of twenty-first century queer politics. The “negativity” I focus on this chapter, then, is the nihilism and despair of civil war epic, and the way in which Eumolpus and the Crotonians, in particular, forge strategies of survival in a world that is characterized as post-civil war, where Lucanian defeat is a precondition of life, not to mention the defeat of a more “domestic” reproductive futurism (though it is impossible to separate the domestic from the political). Eumolpus' bleak, tired poem sparks off innovation rather than sputtering to a halt.

Civil war tends to herald an end of some sort, whether that end is positive – a new, established world order justifying the carnage – or negative – the destruction of the world and the breakdown of the bonds between citizens. But Eumolpus' civil war poem, and civil war motifs throughout the Satyricon, lead to new beginnings. At Croton, the “beginning” in question – the legacy-hunter escapade – constitutes a large chunk of the novel, and an extended piece of deceit and impersonation on the part of the protagonists. Encolpius, on the other hand, becomes significantly more poetic himself, even as his phallic power breaks down to its lowest ebb (the following chapter will further examine some of Encolpius’ poetic production at Croton). This is a place of creative fertility: the death of reproductive futurity (not to mention the failure of the fleshly penis to penetrate) again opens up new possibilities, and new configurations of intimate relationships. Although, as elsewhere, these new possibilities result in friction and unhappiness, such friction is, as civil war poetry repeatedly demonstrates, one of the costs of reinventing the world.

So, let us begin with one of the most significant passages in the novel as regards the end of reproductive futurity: the speech of the vilicus, who introduces Croton to the trio of Eumolpus, Encolpius, and Giton, after they have escaped the shipwreck and the clutches of Lichas, and
ascended to a peak from which they glimpse a nearby town (Sat. 116):

hoc peracto libenter officio destinatum carpinus iter, ac momento temporis in montem sudantes conscendimus, ex quo haud procul impositum arce sublimi oppidum cernimus. nec quid esset sciebamus errantes, donec a vilico quodam Crotona esse cognovimus, urbem antiquissimam et aliquando Italiae primam. cum deinde diligentius exploraremus qui homines inhabitarent nobile solum, quodve genus negotiationis praecipue probarent post attritas bellis frequentibus opes: "o mi, inquit, hospites, si negotiatores estis, mutate propositum aluqude vitae praesidium quaeerite. si autem urbanioris notae homines sustinetis semper mentiri, recta ad lucrum curritis. in hac enim urbe non litterarum studia celebrantur, non eloquentia locum habent, non frugalitas sanctique mores laudibus ad fructum perveniunt, sed quoscunque homines in hac urbe videritis, scitote in duas partes esse divisos. nam aut captantur aut captant. in hac urbe nemo libero tollit, quia quiscquis suos heredes habet, non ad cenas, non ad spectacula admissitetur, sed omnibus prohibetur commodis, inter ignominiosos latitat. qui vero nec uxores unquam duxerunt nec proximas necessitudines habent, ad summos honores perveniunt, id est soli militares, soli fortissimi atque etiam innocentes habentur. adibitis, inquit, oppidum tanquam in pestilentia campos, in quibus nihil aliud est nisi cadavera quae lacerantur, aut corvi qui lacerant."

When we had gladly completed this duty [the burial of Lichas], we set off on our intended path, and soon, drenched with sweat, we climbed a mountain, from which we could see, not far off, a town with a lofty citadel. Wanderers that we were, we didn't know what town it was until we learnt from a farm bailiff that it was Croton, a city of great antiquity and once the first in Italy. When we scrupulously enquired as to what kind of people inhabited this noble land, and what kind of business they particularly pursued after their wealth had been worn away by frequent wars, the bailiff said: “Visitors, if you are traders, change your plan and seek another means of securing a livelihood. But if you are men of a more urbane bent and you are capable of constantly lying, you are heading straight towards profit. In this city, literary studies are not celebrated, rhetoric has no place, nor do good sense and upright morals result in praise, but whichever people you see in this city are divided into two factions: prey or predators. In this city nobody raises children, because anyone who has rightful heirs is not admitted to dinners or spectacles, but is barred from all amenities, and skulks amongst the disreputable. But whoever is unmarried and does not have close relatives ascends to the highest privileges: these alone are considered to be soldiers, these alone brave, and even upright. You are entering a city that resembles plague-ridden plains, in which there is nothing but corpses to be pecked at, and the crows who peck at them.

Croton is already in ruins, if not literally, then certainly figuratively. In reality, the city was a “ghost town” by the first century CE. 15 In the Satyrira, it survives, but everything has gone

15 Walsh (1970), 104.
wrong. Its wealth has been “worn away by frequent wars” (*post attritas bellis frequentibus opes*), so says Encolpius. Here is the first hint of the civil war pattern seeping into the Crotonian narrative. But one significant aspect of the introduction to Croton is the resonance with Aeneas' approach to Carthage (*Aen. 1.419*):16 Aeneas too climbs a hill before he enters Carthage, from which he looks down upon the city. Carthage is the place where Aeneas delays by having an affair with Dido, and by delaying fails, albeit temporarily, in his fulfilment of the Roman imperial mission. He could have stayed in Carthage, and the entire story might have been different – but he did not, because history, already fulfilled, demanded otherwise. Where the “marriage” between Dido and Aeneas might have resulted in the establishment of a dynasty, or, quite otherwise, the kind of sexual dalliance enjoyed by the Wife and the Soldier, the result in reality, in History, was Dido's death and the curse of Hannibal. As with the Wife of Ephesus episode, the *Satyricon* endeavours to take the *Aeneid* for another spin, under different conditions, and see what happens when the reproductive-futurist/imperialistic trajectory driving Aeneas, and the purportedly-*concors machina* of the *Aeneid*’s plot, is absent. Encolpius and his companions have no such trajectory behind them; rather, this anti-family land, this second sexy yet sterile Carthage, is a place they embrace the chance to explore.

Unlike the nascent Carthage, which is animated by the hopeful energy of rebuilding, Croton is ancient and broken. But the episode to come is filled with productive energy, albeit of a “perverse” kind: the narrative becomes increasingly poetic as the mad, Bacchic energy of the inspired poet Eumolpus transforms Encolpius into a slave, a role he plays out to its end, maintaining servile posture through his affair with Circe (the significance of which will be further examined in the next chapter). Eumolpus reveals his poet's creed before he recites the *Bellum Civile* in a telling sentence: *per ambages deorumque ministeria et fabulosum*

16 Schmeling (2011), 444.
‡sententious tormentum‡ praecipitandus est liber spiritus, ut potius furentis animi vaticinatio appareat quam religiosae orationis sub testibus fides (“the free spirit [of the poet] must hasten through twists and turns, councils of the gods, mysterious utterances, so that the result might resemble the prophecy of an inspired mind more than a scrupulous account attested by witnesses”,17 118.20). With some irony, Eumolpus' machinations in the prose narrative surpass his often rather pedestrian efforts at versification in originality and “madness”. I would suggest the entire Croton narrative takes on the quality of the liber spiritus in its often free-associative gliding between verse and prose, its costumes and postures pursued to the bitter end, its melding of genres. There is something of a tension between the thick, rich literary texture of the Crotonian narrative and the abject failures narrated (at least as far as Encolpius' masculinity is concerned). Something much more interesting seems to be going on here than simply an attempt by Encolpius to “ludicrously” aggrandize himself to the level of an Aeneas: again, as in the Wife of Ephesus tale, the overshadowed possibilities of roads never taken in Vergilian epic animate the reinvention of the world. Civil war and Aeneas' arrival at Carthage form the background to the Croton episode: both of these paradigms concern the establishment of the world as “we” know it, imperial Rome.

But the content of the passage itself is particularly acute for a queer reading of the episode. The flow of the vilicus' tirade is intriguing: if you are businessmen, go elsewhere, but if you are of a more sophisticated breed and know how to lie, you will rake in riches. Literary arts and rhetoric have no place in Croton; adopting the proper moral stance leads to no profit; the populace is in a constant state of conflict, divided into two factions. Before even getting to the Crotonian perversion of reproductive futurity, the vilicus has painted a fascinating picture.

17 The text and sense of this sentence is not entirely clear; I have referred closely to Schmeling (2009), 452-3 in translating it.
Traders, *negotiatores*, are to go elsewhere; the more refined set is to come here. *Urbanitas* is usually a positive quality, associated with the effortless habitus of the aristocratic *vir bonus*, within which literature and rhetoric hold an important place.\(^\text{18}\) It is worth recalling that Trimalchio gained his riches as a *negotiator*, and credited his success, however falsely, to *frugalitas* (75.10). The *vilicus*, for all his elegant prose,\(^\text{19}\) seems to reveal something of a class bias, in favour of honest traders, against the sophisticated wiles of gentlemen. Yet the manifestations of high culture, literature and rhetoric, are apparently absent. It is as though two sets of class-linked values have become confused, and the link between *urbanitas* and literary and rhetorical culture is severed; almost as if, after the *Cena*, high culture has taken up residence with Trimalchio and his fellow *negotiatores*. Further, what the *vilicus* is saying is not borne out by the action to come: literature flourishes in Croton, at least in terms of the texture of Encolpius' narrative, and rhetoric, *eloquentia*, is surely an indispensable component of carrying out the farce successfully. A retrospective re-reading of the *vilicus'* prologue reveals that the picture he presents of Croton is not necessarily accurate, but as partial and biased as any speech in this text. The dark, manipulative, often sexually exploitative genius of authorship, invested in such Petronian orchestrators as Trimalchio, Quartilla, Eumolpus, and Philomela, thrives in Croton. Lies, double speech, careful hedging of one's bets, the perversion of discourses of marriage and education – these are far from exclusive to Croton.

But, to the heart of the matter: nobody raises children in Croton, because those who have children are denied admittance to *cenae* and *spectaculae* (i.e., events normally staged for clients by their patrons), barred from all amenities (*commoda*), and reduced to a life of skulking in the shadows (a kind of skulking not unfamiliar, surely, to the text's “low-life” protagonists). But the

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\(^{19}\) For a stylistic analysis of the *vilicus'* prose, see Schmeling (1996), 475-9.
following sentence reveals that it is not just the raising of children that is at issue as the *vilicus'* rhetoric increases its pitch: it is those who have neither wives nor close relatives who reach the heights of honour in Croton. Simply being childless is not enough; in order to truly succeed, those who are pursued by *captatores* must be deracinated from all kin ties, legal and biological. The predations of the legacy hunters have succeeded in hamstringing kinship entirely, tearing away its function of making community. It is as though they have established a quasi-government, severing the power of the *paterfamilias* and standing, illegitimately and disgracefully, in his place. In the process, it becomes clear by negation what kinship is supposed to do: increase one's standing in society, enhance one's leisure time, lead one to be respected and esteemed. Again, the world has been reversed; the garment has been turned inside out; the seams of kinship have been revealed, along with its vulnerability. Inversion reveals the assumptions upon which the original is built, suggesting that it is usually those who demur from reproductive futurity who are reduced in social standing.

The result of the removal of these functions of kinship is a plague-infested wasteland: legacy hunters are birds of prey, and their targets, although still alive, are already dead. A life without normative kinship, although not unimaginable, is unlivable. And, it would seem, ungrievable: this is a plague-ridden land to be avoided, as if polluted. A diseased corpse is an object of intense abjection, untouchable by all except filthy carrion birds. The Crotonians are cloaked in a cloud of miasma. Here, the connection between non-reproductivity and a “sterile” lifestyle is made overt: without the kind of fertility embodied by children, all other kinds of life must die. Elsewhere in the *Satyricon*, the death of reproductive futurity occurs silently in the background. Normative kinship is not something Encolpius seems overly to care about, given his investment in queer fraternity. Trimalchio’s mention of Agatho’s offer (74.15) places the

20 The terminology of the “liveable/grievable life” echoes Butler; she uses the phraseology across her corpus.
failure of the characters to biologically reproduce briefly on the radar, but the *vilicus'* speech brings the issue to the forefront of the narrative, which casts a retrospective colour on the whole of the text. Where are the protagonists' wives and children? Why do they seem not to care at all about their absence?

But as the Philomela episode, at least, goes on to reveal, the *vilicus* is again being disingenuous: it cannot be the case that literally nobody raises children in Croton, because Philomela has children, and she is a leading citizen in this twisted city. Philomela, like Quartilla and Trimalchio, ends up doing things so wrong she gets it right, or so right she gets it wrong: *matrona inter primas honesta, Philomela nomine, quae multas saepe hereditates officio aetatis extorserat, tum anus et floris extincti, filium filiamque ingerebat orbis senibus, et, per hanc successionem artem suam perseverabat extendere* (“a respectable matron amongst the first ladies of the city, Philomela by name, who had extorted a great number of inheritances by using her youth as a favour, now an old woman with the flower of her youth long gone, was in the habit of thrusting her son and daughter upon childless old men, and through this succession, kept on extending her craft”, 140.1). Philomela is one of the first ladies of Croton, according to Encolpius; she has followed the code of the *captator*. It is true that she is now old, with “the flower [of her youth] long gone” (*floris extincti*): the metaphor from plant life, so cliched it may seem dead, here takes on new life in the context of a sterile city where nothing grows. But she has also found a way to twist childbearing to her advantage: her children continue her trade, gaining lucre in exchange for the “flower of their youth”. Philomela's profession, indeed her *ars*, will extend into perpetuity: isn't this, the perpetuation of an abstract memory by living bodies, what reproductive futurity is supposed to do? Philomela, like Quartilla, is a queerly respectable citizen: an *officium*, a duty, is something a respectable person carries out, something one offers to those to whom one has a social obligation, and the use of the word here bears a haunting echo
of the normative system of aristocratic social reciprocity.

The characterization of Philomela's legacy-hunting as an *ars* draws the reader back to the *vilicus*’ description of the city, where he denies rhetoric and literature have a place. It seems rather to be the case that legacy-hunting is Croton's creative art par excellence, handed down through the generations. The class-based practice of rhetoric and high literature is apparently replaced, in a land without *negotiatores*, by a craft somehow more banausic. Trimalchio's *Cena* has revealed that sexual exploitation by one's elders is, in fact, one quite prominent method of social reproduction in the world of the *Satyrlica*: there, property and wealth were transferred along the lines of master-favoured slave, rather than husband-wife or -child. Philomela has made this kind of sexual exploitation into a family business, despite having in fact had children herself. The only way the *vilicus* can conceptualize such monstrous perversions is to declare reproductive futurity dead and mouldering, but maybe it is all too alive. Philomela does not leave her own property, which is limited, to her children, but rather her ability to fleece the property of others. And the victims of captation appear to be an endless resource. This self-perpetuating legacy is potentially limitless, and in that sense, ironically *superior* to a one-off inheritance. *Ars*, further, is used of Eumolpus' Crotonian scheme (*nemo ausus est artem damnare nihil auferentem*, 117.5), as well as Encolpius' measured gait, which leads Chrysis to believe he is a prostitute (*incessus arte compositus*, 126.2), suggesting that there is something deceitful, or over-refined – decadent – about Petronian *ars*. Elsewhere, though, Eumolpus uses the term in connection with the liberal arts, which are now as good as dead, so he claims (*pulcherrimae artes*, 88.1; *artes ingenuae*, 88.2). The new world demands a new *ars*. Notably, too, the *Bellum Civile* poem constitutes Eumolpus' final significant poetic outburst: his role shifts from poet to producer, while Encolpius takes on the mantle of poet, interspersing his narrative with increasingly frequent verse. As elsewhere, other characters adapt as Encolpius,
and the *vilicus*, cannot. Eumolpus is possibly the most versatile player of the *Satyrlica*’s game, although this does not prevent him from being beaten up or having rocks thrown at him. The male body nowhere survives unscathed.

The temptation, based on the *vilicus*’ speech, is to read Croton as a self-contained dystopia, “il mondo alla rovescia”. But compare, again, Edelman’s image of the garment turned inside out, revealing the seams: Croton is not “another place”, conveniently located far from wherever “we” may wish to reside, but the hitherto-hidden flipside of precisely the place we already inhabit. The *vilicus* wants Croton to be a wasteland of death, wants to believe that reproductive futurity and kinship have failed and that in their failure there can be no livable life. As Edelman puts it: “If . . . there is no baby and, in consequence, no future, then the blame must fall on the fatal lure of sterile, narcissistic enjoyments understood as inherently destructive of meaning and therefore responsible for undoing social organization, collective reality, and inevitably, life itself”. The *vilicus* uses a kind of rhetoric that is not unfamiliar in the modern context, but it is no less rhetorical for that fact; just because ancient and modern logics converge does not render either any less contingent. “The fatal lure of sterile, narcissistic enjoyments” strongly recalls the ubiquitous Roman discourse of decadence, which we shall see in Eumolpus’ *Bellum Civile*; it is a phrase worth bearing in mind.

But in fact Croton is not so self contained: the episode, rather, elevates to a new level of intensity dynamics perceptible elsewhere in the text. The character Eumolpus plays, the so-called *dives fugitivus*, is an old, rich, sick man, bereaved of his only son, who lost wealth in a shipwreck, and who is explicitly invented so as to be as tempting as possible to legacy hunters. This character resembles Trimalchio to such an extent that Eumolpus seems to have attended the

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21 This is the title of Fedeli (1987), which argues that Croton is a systematic reversal of the *Graeca urbs*.
23 On this character type in mime, see Panayotakis (1995), 157-60.
Cena: like others, he seems to know his own text. Trimalchio too is old (senem calvum, 27.1), rich, sick (digestion problems, 47; doctor's prescriptions, 56), and lost wealth in a shipwreck (76.4, an alleged thirty million). Eumolpus must keep up appearances to the extent that he has to have Corax manipulate his allegedly gouty and disabled body during sex with Philomela's daughter. Such “keeping up appearances” is a kind of humorous reflex of the delicate game Trimalchio must play, attempting to reinvent himself after the stigma of a servile past. And Philomela's children find themselves in a situation that is similar in many ways to that of the slave delicati and cicarones in the Cena (including Trimalchio himself), not to mention Eumolpus' Pergamene boy: submitting to the sexual ministrations of elders in order to gain influence, and thereby wealth/property, from them. Philomela herself resembles Quartilla in the sense that she is an orchestrator who pimps out her charges, although she apparently does so for profit rather than voyeuristic pleasure. Encolpius at Croton might even be read as having the same kind of relationship with Eumolpus as Philomela's children with their mother: dressed as a slave of Eumolpus he attempts to have sex with the rich Circe, although profit does not seem to factor explicitly into his motivations (the following chapter further works on the meaning of Encolpius' servile [non-]sex with Circe). Over and over, sex is the currency of social relations: not legitimate sexual activity within marriage, which creates normative kinship, but semi-licit sex with those from whom one has something to gain. Officium morphs into Philomela’s officium aetatis: a perversion of the original, but simultaneously far too close to bringing into the light of day what the original had been sublimating all along. If Croton is dystopic, so is the entire text. But the apocalypse, as a rich tradition of speculative fiction illustrates, does not necessarily mean the end of the world. Postapocalyptic society is invariably reborn; social relations are remade. And those who survive the apocalypse, like the Petronian crows, must scavenge the landscape for something with which to rebuild.
The children are our future

The Philomela episode merits attention from another angle: it demonstrates the socialization of children into the world of the *Satyricon*. In this respect, it forms a pair with the Pannychis episode, where Quartilla, as parental – or paternal? – figure, attempted to shape the sexuality of the young Pannychis under the guise of a queerly-parodied marriage ceremony. Children are important: as Cobb puts it, in a review of queer theoretical literature on childhood, they are “required to represent our future, by which we mean that they have futures we can’t yet account for, but futures for which we nonetheless hold out hope. But children are also tokens of the past—they remind us, perhaps, of when in our own histories we were young, of how we all made a tour through childhood, and of how that tour was laced with nostalgic goodness or traumatic horror, or some combination of both”. Petronian youths, too, are required to mediate between an invariably traumatic past (compare the way in which Quartilla relates Pannychis' sexuality to her own past), and adults' hopes for their future (compare, for example, Echion's hopes for his *cicaro*). How do children live in a world where everything seems stacked against them, where the figurative ideal of the Child as constitutive of the social order has lost its normative force? Since we have now examined a series of interactions between children and their elders – Quartilla, Eumolpus, Trimalchio – the Philomela episode, appearing right at the end of our extant text, allows the opportunity to take stock and consider Petronian youth more broadly.

In the Philomela episode, unlike elsewhere, Philomela is the children's actual mother, not a parental substitute. This makes the episode unique in the text: actual parents are few and far

24 Cobb (2005), 119.
between, and so the irony (and, perhaps, wit) is even greater that one of the few appearances of a parent and her children takes place in the city where “nobody has children”. Notably, there is no mention of a father; the father of Philomela's children seems to be of no significance to the story, almost as if Philomela brought forth the children who will perpetuate her craft by a wilful parthenogenesis. In the absence of a father, Eumolpus takes on the place of paedagogue, his education “the only legacy that could be left for the children” (sola posset hereditas iuvenibus dari, 140). In the dying moments of the text as we have it, Eumolpus directs the legacy hunters to cut up his body and eat it in public in order to receive their share of the inheritance. As eagerly as they “cursed Eumolpus' spirit” (that is, presumably, hoped for him to die in order to inherit his wealth), so they should devour his body (quibus animis devoverint spiritum meum, eisdem etiam corpus consumant, 140.4). Here the younger generation is compelled literally to devour the older generation. The exploited, that is to say (including, presumably, Philomela's children), must eat their exploiter, much as the Pergamene boy, initially taking on the position of the unresponsive, lusted-after eromenos, turned the tables on Eumolpus by demanding more sex than he could offer. And like the Pergamene boy and his demands for gifts and sex, the legacy hunters come dangerously close to calling Eumolpus’ bluff and acceding to his demands with a vigorous enthusiasm that he failed to anticipate (the text ends with the legacy hunter Gorgias defending cannibalism, apparently quite prepared to devour the not-yet-dead Eumolpus). Rimell has demonstrated the strong link in the Satyrica between gustatory and sexual consumption; devouring the father is a kind of substitute for raping him, just as the Philomela of myth avenges rape with forced cannibalism and infanticide.\(^{25}\) To eat the father himself is, in typical Petronian

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\(^{25}\) Equivalences of this kind are a general theme of Rimell (2002). The link between the rape and the forced cannibalism is deftly expressed by Oliensis (2009), 78: “The story is saturated with what Charles Segal has termed “the terrible mimetic violence of the revenge plot,” with Tereus’ rape of Philomela answered, both punished and duplicated, by Procne’s murder of Itys. Indeed, the stringent demands of poetic justice are such as
fashion, to go a step further, a step more literal and graphic. If the father insists on sexual violation, the response, a much more thoroughgoing violation of bodies and boundaries, might take him by surprise.

It is worth noting here that Eumolpus is, of course, nobody's father. Paterfamilias is, rather, a role he has taken on (recall the poem at 80.9, where the contingency of the role of “father” is expressed in the idiom of the mimic). He has chosen to assign himself a son whose death caused him such grief he was forced to abandon his homeland. Captatio as the death of reproductive futurity is here figured in literal terms (and was prefigured by the death of Lichas, whom Encolpius initially interprets as a paterfamilias). Eumolpus could merely have claimed to be childless, particularly in light of the vilicus' claim that “nobody of any note raises children”; instead, he stages the death of his son as the precondition for his integration into Crotonian society. The deliberate taking on of social roles enables the staging of scenes that speak incisively to Roman social tensions and pressure points, rather than constituting simply isolated acts of light entertainment. The eating of Eumolpus qua paterfamilias is a powerfully symbolic moment. Usually succession requires death, but death still allows for externalization: a funeral, a body to display, a death mask, a wax portrait in your home. Incorporating the father viscerally is another matter: it is, as Oliensis puts it discussing Tereus' eating of Itys, “the most incestuously private of kinship relations”.26 The concept of mos maiorum presupposes the reproduction of virtues in the younger generation, but with the cannibalism of Eumolpus, the body of the father is literally incorporated into the bodies of his successors. Yet again, we see here a parodically grotesque literalization of what is only “supposed” to be a metaphor. This literalization remains at the level of unreality, insofar as Eumolpus is not who he claims to be, and it is not clear

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26 Oliensis (2009), 88.
whether the cannibalism actually takes place or not. But what comes to the surface here, as in
the episode of Pannychis' marriage by Quartilla, is everything that the sublime discourse of
moral virtue and *mos maiorum* must efface in order to define itself: greed, lust, exploitation, the
sordid stain of the bodily, the obscene; a kind of irruption of the Real, in Lacanian terms.

If Eumolpus' character is a second Trimalchio, then his staged (or real?) death, combined
with a reading of his will, draws the reader back to the series of events at Trimalchio's house.
Trimalchio's staged death is certainly melodramatic, even campy, but it pales in comparison to
Eumolpus' cannibal edict. The level of theatricality, as it were, intensifies: metaphors of carrion-
birds become real. Trimalchio, at least, had Fortunata and his slave familia to inherit his
property; the bereaved father played by Eumolpus, on the other hand, although making a brief
mention of the inheritance of his “freedmen” (*libertos meos*, i.e., Giton and Encolpius, 141.2),
turns almost entirely to the *captatores*. He is said to have lost his son, but the son's mother
appears nowhere: there is no Fortunata here. The erasure of a potential wife parallels the erasure
of the father of Philomela's children: Philomela and Eumolpus combine to form a kind of
“couple”, the pandering mother and the incestuous father, emblematic of Petronian character-
types. 27 Bearing in mind fragmentation as a caveat, as always, it is nonetheless striking that the
text does not even mention Philomela's husband or Eumolpus' wife (that is, the wife of the
character Eumolpus plays), not even to explain away their absence. The mother-father pairing
seems now to have lost all significance for Encolpius' narration: there is only a lusty, childless,
wifeless poet, Eumolpus, pretending to be a father pretending to be a teacher, and a husbandless
woman, Philomela, who prostitutes her own children, and who is named after a famously
childless, and child-killing, mythical victim. The mythical Philomela herself is something of a

27 The emblematic Petronian paterfamilias is the one who attempts to molest Ascytlos at the brothel (8.2-4), who
forms a pair with the old woman who leads Encolpius to the same place (7; he politely refers to her as *mater*).
queer figure: she has no children of her own (Tereus fails at impregnating her), and has a strangely ambiguous relationship with her sister, which has sometimes even been perceived as incestuous.28 Whereas Trimalchio's slave familia and cicarones at least offered the possibility of some kind of social reproduction, albeit skewed, the cannibalism of Eumolpus flirts with death in an even more final way. Instead of wanting to be remembered in an external way, Eumolpus wants his body to be devoured, incorporated into the bodies of non-kin. He entered Croton already “dead”, as a corpse to be pecked at by the captator-vultures; now he embraces the finality of death with a suicidal eagerness.

Nonetheless, there is still a theatricality and campiness to the cannibalism episode: Eumolpus, having heard the vilicus’ account of Croton and having immediately seized upon it, looks back to it for what is presumably the end of his time in Croton, treating the captatores as literal carrion birds, or at least testing to what extent they will abide by the carrion bird description in reality. This kind of pressing of the boundary between metaphor and reality, tenor and vehicle, the figurative and the literal, is rife in the Cena, where words translate into action in such a way as to play with the relation between signifier and signified: consider the play on carpere and the butcher named Carpus (36.7-8), the symbolic food dishes (the zodiac, 39) and riddles (56.8-10), the “freedman” boar (41.1-5), the slave named Dionysus and the pun on liber/Liber pater (41.6-8), and so on. With a poet's sense for language, Eumolpus plays upon the vilicus' richly colourful description of the city, and points to its rhetorical quality. But all this literalization of metaphor might end up turning the tables on him, as indeed he himself becomes the dish upon the table.

The intersection of education, sex, and generational succession thematized in the

28 Brown (2005), 85-104. Brown reads through the lens of receptions of the myth, which is an effective technique for drawing out the implications of an original.
Philomela episode is suggestive for the entire text. At the very beginning of the extant text, Agamemnon laments the fact that the teacher of rhetoric (eloquentiae magister) must appeal to his charges, those “little fishies” (pisciculi), with the correct bait, lest he be left on the rock “without hope of a catch” (sine spe praedae):

Sicut ficti adulatores cum cenas divitum captant, nihil prius meditantur quam id quod putant gratissimum auditoribus fore — nec enim aliter impetrabunt quod petunt, nisi quasdam insidias auribus fecerint — sic eloquentiae magister, nisi tanquam piscator eam imposuerit hamis escam, quam scierit appetiuros esse pisciculos, sine spe praedae morabitur in scopulo. (Sat. 3.3-4)

Just like, when fake flatterers are trying to cadge dinners off rich men, they think of nothing except what they think their listeners will most want to hear – because they won't get what they want unless they set some kind of trap for the ears – so the teacher of rhetoric, unless, like a fisherman, he loads the hook with the kind of bait he knows the little fishies will go for, is bound to wile away his time on the rock, without hope of a catch.

He blames the parents of young men, who foist politics and rhetoric upon them before they are ready (cruda adhuc studia in forum pellunt et eloquentiam, qua nihil esse maius confitentur, pueris induunt adhuc nascentibus, 4.2). It is no coincidence that Agamemnon's language drips with sexual suggestiveness, overlaid with the widespread metaphor of sex as a hunt (here, a fishing expedition). In the Satyrica, those belonging to the younger generation are indeed repeatedly beset by the sexual demands of their elders: the Pergamene boy cajoled into sex by Eumolpus' gifts; Pannychis inducted into the rites of marriage by Quartilla; Philomela's children whored out; the deliciae at the Cena groomed by their masters; Giton propositioned by all and sundry; and even Encolpius and Ascytolos, the former tempting to Lichas, Eumolpus, and perhaps even Agamemnon,29 and the latter to older men at the brothel and the baths. Everyone

29 Kennedy (1978), 176 plausibly suggests that Agamemnon may be attempting to seduce Encolpius: “In this satire of satyrs it is not unlikely that Agamemnon finds Encolpius physically attractive and hopes for a sexual encounter with a simpatico young man of discriminating taste. This interpretation would help explain why
wants something; everyone is a *fictus adulator*. But another aspect of this whole complex of social relations is the reaction of the younger generation to the demands of the older: how do they react, adapt, survive in the face of exploitation? We have seen some examples: Pannychis and Giton do not abide by the conception of marriage as fearful first penetration in any straightforward way; the pubescent Pergamene boy, initially forced into the role of reluctant courted *eromenos*, turns out to possess a youthful sexual energy outstripping Eumolpus' senile exhaustion; Trimalchio manipulates his sexual relationship with his master (and mistress) to become his successor, and to breed a generation of mini Trimalchios in the form of *deliciae*, in lieu of children of his own. Encolpius, Ascytos, and Giton, unanchored from their natal families and apparently lacking the will to physically reproduce the next generation, experiment with a sibling relationship, one lacking the “natural” hierarchy of parent-child or husband-wife. Encolpius fantasizes that Giton's mother “persuaded him not to be a man” (*qui ne vir esset, a matre persuasus est*, 81.5), while Giton uses this quality of softness and desirability as a tool to manipulate those who lust after him in order to survive in a treacherous world, a form of adaptation that Encolpius himself seems unable to see. The new world struggles against the old as new discourses begin to emerge, formed around and against inescapable vulnerability and precarity. Adults are blinded by lust, and the younger children and adolescents that become the object of this lust wield it against them – even to the extent of eating their elders alive.

Children in general, as queer theorists have recently begun to argue, are queer creatures, even threateningly so.30 Against what Edelman has formulated as the dead ideal of the Child, Stockton, in her bold and dazzling book *The Queer Child*, investigates the multiple queernesses of children as they are represented in twentieth-century film and literature. Stockton formulates

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30 Alongside Stockton (2009), the collection of Bruhm and Hurley (2004) is pioneering.
the tortuous process of children's deferred “growth” towards adulthood as “growing sideways”,
where “growing up” signifies rather a linear movement towards the milestones of
heteronormativity and reproductive futurity: a spouse, reproduction, work. “Sideways growth”,
in Stockton's terms, names “something that locates energy, pleasure, vitality, and (e)motion in
the back-and-forth of connections and extensions that are not reproductive”.31 In this sense there
is something “childish” about those who refuse such milestones in general: the queer individual
is a perpetual child or adolescent, and thus also a “failure” in normative terms. Stockton
undertakes the further brilliant move of queering “innocence”, the most salient characteristic of
the normative child. Innocence is always already lost from the perspective of the adults
assigning it to children, rendering these “innocent” children alien and thus queer, simultaneously
dangerous and dangerously corruptible. Eumolpus is never quite close enough to the realization
that the young legacy-hunting children might outright murder him.

It is striking to turn to scholarship on Petronius with Stockton's arguments in mind: both
the characters in the text, and the author himself, have been labelled as childish or adolescent.
Arrowsmith argues that the protagonists are “[l]ike children, precisely, and what this means is
nothing less than an improbable kind of innocence, a comic innocence in which immoral actions
are incongruously set against a fundamental and rather charming naivete. Encolpius' deepest
trait is innocence; he is either beyond or below good and evil. His love for Giton is, true,
pederasty, but it is also love – and what is more, it is unrequited love, as Petronius takes pains to
show us”.32 The children in the text, on the other hand, are in Arrowsmith's terms perverse, “less
innocent and more corrupt than their corruptors”,33 mirrors of Nabokov's Lolita (and it is

31 Stockton (2009), 13.
32 Arrowsmith (1966), 326.
33 Arrowsmith (1966), 322.
significant here that Stockton queers Lolita herself, too. Conte labels the “mythomania” of the Satyricon's characters “innocent”, and thus safely disengaged from any serious parody of the purportedly untouchable literary Classics. According to Gill (although he disavows this interpretation as being “more than he can say”), the author's supposed “voyeuristic” detachment from his work “may be susceptible of psychological interpretation... as being the attitude of a man who has not moved from the satirical mimicry of the emotional adolescent to the mature self-responsibility of the independent artist”.

These philologists are not directly concerned with the sexuality of the characters or the trajectories and temporalities of their lives, but are rather attempting to pin down the author's attitude to his characters. A childish, “charming naivete”, perhaps like that of Halberstam's Jesse and Chester (from her reading of Dude, Where's My Car?), renders Petronian characters, like the “innocent child” of twentieth century mythopoesis, safely detached from the adult reader. When this childishness is read through the lens offered by Stockton, it begins to look a lot like queerness; particularly telling, too, is Arrowsmith's move from Encolpius' “innocence” to his pederasty that is nonetheless (!) “love”. There is a sense in which the entire text is played out in a space that is somehow adolescent or childish, falling short of the landmarks of adulthood represented by marriage, reproduction, and employment, rather growing sideways and queerly riding metaphors. Yet Stockton's children are dangerous, too: their motivations ungraspable, their polymorphous perversity turning them towards sex and murder. The motivations of Giton and Philomela's children are similarly muddied by Encolpius' narrative: he is infatuated with, and simultaneously blind to, the former, and simply uninterested in the inner lives of the latter. The invocation of innocence might also be read as an attempt to defuse the threatening aspects

34 Stockton (2009), 119-154.
35 Conte (1996), 43.
36 Gill (1973), 183.
of the text's queerness, what Rimell calls its “dangerously infectious” quality.37 They know not what they do, whether they are children, morons, or both; the correct attitude is condescension. But in the strange space of childhood, as in the boundless expanse of stupidity, unauthorized queer desires flourish.

As it happens, the collision of education and sex continually threatens to pervert the “literary sublime”, rather than allow it to emerge unscathed as the text's absent centre.38 Philomela's son is doctissimus, “thoroughly educated” (140.11), and this quality of erudition is revealed precisely by his willingness to submit to Encolpius' (unsuccessful) sexual ministrations. Doctus has silently become a synonym for pathicus, perhaps in light of Eumolpus' sex-ed. If Philomela's (ironically) repro-futurist ars of sexualized legacy-hunting replaces rhetoric and literature at Croton, her “well-schooled” children become quasi-scholastici (and thus very much like Encolpius and Ascytlos). Encolpius remarks to Ascytlos early on in the text: communes sarcinulas partiamur ac paupertatem nostram privatis quaestibus temptemus expellere. et tu litteras scis et ego (“let's divide our shared belongings and try to drive away our poverty with our own efforts. The both of us are familiar with literature”, 9.4-5). After Croton, all “education” of this kind comes to resemble, or even just signify, outright prostitution.39 Scholastici, like parasites, those fake flatterers, have words to offer, but these words segue all too easily into bodies. The phallic, sublime authority of masculine speech and paideia breaks down into the

37 Rimell (2002), 5.
38 This is Conte's argument precisely: “This means, in effect, that he [Encolpius] projects the pettiness of events onto the great models of the sublime literary tradition, thus promoting himself and his own debauched life – yet without in any way damaging the nobility of the great models, which remain unharmed and quite out of reach.” Conte (1996), 37.
39 Schmeling (2009), 33 suggests that “the attentive reader suspects that quaestibus is a euphemism for our threesome's way of making a living by prostitution”. This reader is perhaps bolstered by Encolpius' delicately expressed concern about gossip immediately after: “So that I don't stand in the way of your occupation, I'll try something else; otherwise, a thousand things will set us at odds every day and the whole city will defame us with rumours” (ne quaestibus tuis obsetem, aliquid aliquid promittam; alioqui mille causae quotidie nos collident et per totam urbem rumoribus different, Sat. 10.5).
bodily, the obscene. To be learned is to be willing to be fucked, like the quivering spectators of Persius' effeminate Alexandrian poet. As Rimell has convincingly suggested, the *Satyrica* has a way of stringing together different discourses, and hooking the reader into dangerous chains of signification: education and Literature are inseparable from lust and gluttony. Sex and eating are never just metaphors; they continually become real in startling and uncomfortable ways. The sublimated eroticism of the literary establishment is never allowed to remain so, and sexual consumption segues into literal consumption, as the cannibalism episode reveals. From the Cena to Croton, the *Graeca urbs* to the open sea traversed by Lichas' ship, *paideia* and literature are twisted, stained, troubled, queered.

This line of investigation is worth pressing further, and in a broader sense. The foregrounding of captation, as I have detailed, retrospectively casts a light on social relations elsewhere in the text, particularly in the Cena: inheritance-hunting of various sorts, we now see, has been everywhere, and that inheritance-hunting opens out onto parasitism, practised in the *Satyricon* particularly by *scholastici*. The general complex of social relations here appears as a perverted version of patronage, its pathological obverse which is nonetheless necessary to render it coherent as an aristocratic institution. Alongside fraternity and marriage, yet another social institution is here queerly reflected. Patronage holds aristocratic social relations together, as well as enabling the practice of literature. Rome's social hierarchy necessitates a delicate

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40 Persius 1.19-21: “and then, their proper manner and clear voices gone, you can see huge Tituses trembling, when the poetry enters their loins and their inmost parts are tickled by the vibrating verse”, *tunc neque more probo uideas nec uoce serena | ingentis trepidare Titos, cum carmina lumbum | intrant et tremulo scalpuntur ubi intima uersu.*

41 Rimell (2002), 8: “the Satyricon enacts, through concatenations of images and metaphors, the difficulties and double binds implicit in reading (this text)”. A version of this idea, expressed differently and used for very different ends, can be found in Arrowsmith (1966), 307: “Thus there is almost a cyclical rhythm here of associations between thematic ideas ... The tropes pursue each other in an endless chain.”

42 On the sublimated eroticism of Roman literary production in general, see Gunderson (1997).

43 Agamemnon at the Cena is the most overt example.
series of relationships amongst aristocratic men. Insofar as “hierarchy is hot”, that is, continually prone to be translated into sexual terms, there is something of a tension here: men must rely on patrons in order to pass through the *cursus honorum* and fulfil the good-life promise of elite masculinity, but simultaneously the sexiness of hierarchy always threatens to pervert these relationships. Compare Juvenal's Naevolus (*Sat.* 9), whose *officia* consist of sexually satisfying his anally-voracious patron and impregnating his wife: here, satire's *reductio ad absurdum* strips away the veil of patronage, conflating patron and prostitute and muddying the distinction between the two (and, yet again, recall too Philomela’s *officium aetatis*, where the qualification *aetatis* threatens everything *officium* claims to represent). It is worthwhile at this juncture to draw attention to the (in)famous “joke” related by Seneca in the *Controversiae* (4.pr.10):

> memini illum, cum libertinum reum defenderet, cui obiciebatur, quod patroni concubinus fuisse, dixisse: 'impudicitia in ingenuo crimen est, in servo necessitas, in libero officium.' res in iocos abit: 'non facis mihi officium' et 'multum ille huic in officiis versatur'. ex eo impudici et obsceni aliquamdiu officiosi vocitati sunt.

I remember that he [Haterius] said, when he was defending a freedman who had been accused of sleeping with his patron: “Unchastity is a crime for a free man, a necessity for a slave, a duty for a freedman.” The matter became a joke: “you are not doing your duty by me” and “he is very dutiful towards him”. Because of that, for some time the unchaste and perverted were called “dutiful”.

There is a frisson to these perverted *officia*, as the constant return to the joke demonstrates. The hapless declaimer has inadvertently punctured a rich seam, whereby Roman men, their agency disguised by anonymity and the passive voice (it is the *impudici* and *obsceni* who are

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44 This is the felicitous phrase of Halperin (2002), 118, used in the context of a discussion attempting to draw a bright line between friendship and “sexual love”, on the grounds that sameness of status desexualizes – “sexual penetration is not the sort of thing you would do to someone you really love” (121). The *Satyrica* muddies these sorts of distinctions rather thoroughly.

45 On the psychic life of this joke, see Gunderson (2003), 234-6.
acted-upon, *vocitati sunt*), find endless amusement in converting *officia* into sexual penetration. The *Satyrica*, too, draws on this forbidden yet irresistible equivalence. The *officia* offered by the *Satyricon*'s “clients” (parasites, legacy-hunters, upwardly-mobile slaves) are often sexual in nature, and they aim to gain in return not a dinner or two, but to consume their patrons completely, a metaphor the end of the extant text is on the verge of literalizing. Patronage is rewritten as predation, and predation in the *Satyricon* is invariably sexual. Here, we can see several different discourses coming together and intensifying at their intersection. Cynthia Damon has examined the ways in which, in Roman literature, parasites are presented as the pathological counterpart to patrons: where the patron-client relationship acted as “a kind of moral archetype that was used both to legitimize such [hierarchical] relationships and to endow them with affective appeal”, the discourse of parasitism highlights the cracks in this facade, “the frustration, envy and outrage that could arise from frictions due to the functioning of patronage”. Both patrons and clients are morally stained; the object of critique, according to Damon, is the deleterious nature of relationships of dependency between social classes. Elsewhere, Ellen Oliensis presses the relationship between the figure of the lover and that of the patron, and the continual collision of the discourses of *amicitia* and *amor* in Augustan poetry. And Haterius' (in)felicitous remark brings to the surface a submerged equivalence between social and sexual hierarchies: he as good as says that being socially dependent is like being sexually penetrated. The crux of Roman social relations, the cherished hierarchical structure that is supposed to hold the state together, receives in the *Satyricon* a brutal desublimation. And it is difficult to argue that the threat of the text is defused because the characters are not like “us”, when elsewhere elite Roman men flirt heavily with the debauched underside of social

46 Damon (1997), 1.  
47 Damon (1997), 9.  
Both children and adults, then, must find ways of adapting to the world they find themselves inhabiting. The discourses of captation, parasitism, patronage, and prostitution are irresistibly attracted to one another, and the arbitrary nature of the distinctions between various forms of social dependence becomes increasingly clear. Where one of these things is found, one might expect to find the others too. Offering up one's body in return for food, money, manumission, wealth, inheritance, is not clearly distinguished from offering up one's words, flattery, services. The Satyrca's children must learn how to do so from a young age, even if they find ways of resisting the vulnerability that goes along with sexual exploitation. Doubtless, there is still stigma attached to using one's body in this way, and shame, or attempts to impose shame, encroach upon the narrative with relative frequency. But something about the economy of social relations has changed: the body no longer possesses the sacrosanct inviolability that hegemonic masculinity wishes it to have. As elsewhere, this social economy is fleshed out in such detail, on such a large scale, that it is dangerous to argue that it is simply there for contrast, to form the debased inverse to the proper way of doing things, to allow the reader an easy laugh. The struggle for survival as a social entity and the anxiety generated, among even the senatorial classes, by the presence of the emperor as “first citizen”, must have rendered the Satyrca's picture of stained sociality and the necessity to adapt rather pointed.

The beginning of the end

49 Encolpius views the brothel as a deformis locus (7.5), and covers his head, a gesture of shame, as he dashes through it; Chrysis, Circe's maid, views prostitute-Polyaenus as niggardly and effeminate (126). Elsewhere, Encolpius puts on a butch front and accuses Ascylos and Giton of being womanly whores (81). Quartilla's cinaedi (or cinaedus), who have the aura of prostitutes (and indeed are not infrequently translated as such) are thoroughly abject creatures.
But how did all this come about? How did things break down in the first place? As Eumolpus' civil war poem reveals, origins are at stake here. The events at Croton skew temporality, drawing attention to beginnings and processes. Croton is both typical of the Satyricon's milieu as a whole, and a locus for reinvention, the flooding forth of a great poetic deluge that goes hand-in-hand with the captation ruse. The novel opens its jaws wide, to use Connors' metaphor, in order to swallow up the epic genre, and incorporate – or expectorate – the epic worldview. Epic, according to one conception at least, founds worlds. As Connors puts it, glossing Bakhtin, “the end of an epic is the beginning of the world order”. Epic draws on “national tradition”, stories that are familiar to all; it becomes a kind of aetiology for the world itself, or at least the polity, the closed world of ideology: the obviousnesses of the world as it is. The most salient example here is the Aeneid, whose telos is Augustan Rome: all this must happen, the gods insist, because Rome is fated to be, and to reach its peak under Augustus.

Later Latin epic expends a great deal of poetic energy responding to the Aeneid's world-founding project, and reconfiguring the cosmic order. For Lucan, the world has ended before the principate can even begin: civil war has picked the cosmos apart at the seams, and a deeply cynical view of despotism emerges. Civil war in Statius' Thebes, similarly, dissolves the very boundaries of the cosmos, causing heaven, earth, and hell to bleed together. Ovid's epic attempts to incorporate everything from the creation of the world down to Augustus, including the events of the Aeneid themselves. Although Bakhtin does not allow for epic to be internally dialogized, there are nonetheless centrifugal and centripetal forces at work in these poems: where a city, a

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50 Connors (1998), 103.
52 This is the formulation of Bakhtin.
53 For ideology as “obviousness” or “common sense”, see Althusser (1971).
54 My approach here is somewhat influenced by Janan (2009), 224-251, who perceptively discusses the imbrication of “civil, familial and sexual strife” in post-Vergilian epic filtered through Ovid (on which see also, seminally, Hardie [1993]).
community, a political system attempts to suture itself together in a particular way, other forces act to rip it apart, from the “energy of hell”, in Hardie's words,55 to dissenting individuals like Dido and Turnus. Eumolpus' 295-line chunk of epic, therefore, in one sense raises the stakes for the Satyrca's world-making project. What kind of world is being created here? What is the history of the present that is being told?

The telos of Eumolpus' poem, in the straightforward narrative sense, is Croton: it is on the road to Croton that Eumolpus recites his as-yet-unfinished epic. But there is more at stake here than simply the trajectory of the narrative. The civil war motif is pervasive throughout the text, appearing in episode after episode: Encolpius and Ascylos are repeatedly positioned, in Giton's mind at least, as participants in civil conflict (see my discussion below); there is a civil war-like situation on Lichas' ship, which ends along with a Lucanian epic outburst by Tryphaena (108.14); and finally, at Croton, the populace is divided into duo partes, the opposed factions of legacy hunters and their targets (116.6). Over and over, conflict on a personal level is elevated to the level of the political, much as Rome is blighted by civil war in an endless cycle felt to be a curse.

The telos of the Bellum Civile poem, then, is civil war in Croton. There is something particularly appealing about this reading because of the poem's aesthetic of delay, a particular characteristic of Lucanian and Statian epic:56 it begins with a standard-issue run-through of the decadence of today's youth (luxury, effeminacy, gluttony, political corruption, the stain brought by imperial domination, etc), progressing through speeches by the gods Dis (who repeats the decadence motif) and Fortuna, omens, Caesar's crossing of the Alps complete with a speech, more omens, flight from Rome, and finally a speech by Discordia. It is a civil war poem, but no

55 Hardie (1993), 60.
56 “Delay” is a central theme of two seminal studies of, respectively, Statius and Lucan: McNelis (2009) and Masters (1992).
civil war yet takes place; no blood is spilled. In one sense, it is meta-epic: a poem about civil war poetry. In another, the civil war about to begin in the poem's narrative is the one already underway in Croton. But the war has already been won, and the principate has already been established. The people of Croton fight for something else, and civil wars proliferate in an endless loop. The ascendancy of Augustus was supposed to have solved the problem of civil discord, but how can that be the case if civil war is Rome's eternal curse?

Although in the strict sense Eumolpus' poem concerns the Pompey-Caesar conflict that eventually leads to the principate, in another sense it is only an entree, opening up onto the events in Croton, which constitute the “action” of the civil war, and are yet at the same time a gladiatorial show, a mime, a comedy, et cetera. But, in addition to the pervasiveness of civil war imagery in the plot, Crotonian society is so typical of the Satyricon as a whole, that the epic telos of Eumolpus' poem could be imagined to be “the world of the Satyricon”. The characters, as I have repeatedly emphasized, live in a fallen world, where social relations no longer work as they “ought” to. The poem seems to offer one answer to the question “how did this world come to be”: civil war and decadence, of course, the root of all Rome's problems at all times. As Zeitlin details, Eumolpus' poem is characterized by a relentless negativity, even more so than Lucan's: there is no promise of the Neronian golden age to alleviate the hellish darkness and despair. But it is worth bearing in mind, again, the retooling of negativity and failure characteristic of queer theory. Maybe all the traditional ways have died, and citron-wood tables and prancing, effeminate youths rule the day – don't the Cena, and the dubiously-masculine men of the Satyricon prove that proposition beyond doubt? But where do we go from there? The moralistic Roman discourse of decadence obsessively looks backward, condemning the purportedly fallen world of the present in terms of its failure to repeat the past.

57 Zeitlin (1971), 80-1.
Epic discourse has burned itself out, quavering under the burden of its own weight (the unschooled poet will “labour under the weight”, says Eumolpus, *sub onere labetur*, 118.6), always reaching for an end, a justification. The history of Rome is blighted by the compulsion to repeat – civil war, the degradation of morality, inadequacy vis-a-vis one's ancestors – and epic poetry, with its full aesthetic apparatus, attempts to delay that which history has revealed to be inevitable. Eumolpus' poem is unfinished because it opens up onto a new world. A finished epic would mean the closure of the ideological circle. In fact, the way that Eumolpus works, repeatedly, is to find creative fertility in situations of despair: he first comes to Encolpius when the latter is lamenting his loss of Giton, and rapidly rattles off the story of the Pergamene boy and the *Troiae Halosis* poem, while on the ship he manipulates the dire circumstances of Encolpius and Giton in order to enact fantasies about them as his slaves (a ruse he repeats at Croton), and even scribbles away as the ship sinks. When he hears from the *vilicus* that Croton is nothing more than a plague-ridden field of corpses, he comes up with a deceitful plan to fleece the legacy hunters, then recites his piece of poetic “inspiration”. Eumolpus retools the negative as enthusiastically as any queer theorist. The world is not yet burned out: there are new possibilities to be had. The death of reproductive futurity is not, as the *vilicus* has it, the end of all life: the plague-ridden fields become fertile sowing-grounds.

The poem itself indicates this fertility. It has been regularly regarded as “tiresome” in various ways: even Connors, one of its most committed and careful readers, condemns the *BC* as offering “dim, overly studied transformations of tradition”. Yet beyond the poem's “rotten recycling” (as Rimell might put it), it offers a faint glimmer of potentiality on the horizon. On the one hand, there is a tension between Eumolpus' Callimachean principles (118.4; one must

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59 Rimell (2002), 159 uses this phrase of the *Satyricon*'s “recycling” of the Philomela myth.
flee the common crowd), and the sluggish, un-Callimachean poem he produces under the head of “deluge” (the poet's mind must be doused in a “great flood of literature”, *ingenti flumine litterarum*, 118.3). On the other, the poem he produces thematizes novelty. As soon as the *vilicus* declares Croton dead and pestilent, Eumolpus “turns his attention to the novelty of the matter” (*convertit ad novitatem rei mentem*, 117.1), and sets up the ruse to ensnare the legacy hunters. The context of generating something new out of something tired and dead colours the poem he proceeds to recite.

Eumolpus' excitement about the “novelty” of the situation at Croton seeps into his poem, and seems to impact his diction. The *BC* begins with the weary decadence of a Rome driven to satiety by the pleasures of empire, in search of something new to pique the palate: “there was no happiness in familiar joys, or in pleasures dulled by the common man's use” (*non vulgo nota placebant gaudia, non usu plebeio trita voluptas*, 119.7-8). The phrasing of the poem here echoes Eumolpus' prose statement of poetic principles, where he declares that one must, in neoteric fashion, “choose words divorced from popular use” (*sumendae voces a plebe semotae*, 118.4). The quest for novelty continues: men are effeminate, whorish, and castrated, taking delight in a mincing gait, flowing locks, and “numberless clothes of new names” (*tot nova nomina vestis*, 119.26). Exotic seafood is necessary to “renew hunger by extravagance” (*renovent per damna famem*, 119.26); “extraordinary silks” (*nova vellera*, 119.11) are sought from the Seres. Here, wrought large, are Edelman's “sterile, narcissistic enjoyments understood as inherently destructive of meaning and therefore responsible for undoing social organization, collective reality, and inevitably, life itself”.60 That social organization and the very fabric of the universe are thought to have been sundered is made clear in Dis' speech: the earth has been broken, hell has seeped into the earthly realm, and the stability of the universe has been shaken.

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by mortal rebellion (permutata rerum statione rebellant, 120.89). In return, Dis demands the erasure of life. Elsewhere, too, “novelty” continues to appear: Fortuna, who is herself characterized by Dis as “a lover of new things” (nova semper amas, 120.81), commands him to receive “new souls” (animas... novas, 121.117); “unknown stars” appear in the heavens (stellis... novis, 122.139); the sky throws down a “fresh” bloody rain (sanguineoque recens descendit Iuppiter imbre, 122.140); Aetna is “swallowed up by unfamiliar fires” (Aetna voratur ignibus insolitis, 122.135-6); “unfamiliar voices” are heard from the groves (insolitae voces, 122.180); the sun burns “brighter than it is wont” (ipse nitor Phoebi vulgato laetior orbe crevit, 122.181-2); Caesar embarks upon “unaccustomed feats of audacity” (insolitos ausus, 123.184); “newborn rivers” run down from the mountains (mox flumina montibus altis undabant modo nata, 123.189-90). Again and again, one hears about newness in the context of a story that is anything but new: beneath the poem's surface, there bristles a kind of energy struggling to emerge. The protagonists of the Satyrica's prose narrative themselves fit the poem's description of decadence perfectly: Trimalchio's Cena is built up around the striving for novelty, and the primping style of Encolpius and Giton (who are, as it happens, possibly wearing the flowing wigs from the ship at this very moment) receives its echo in the description of the ruination of masculinity.

Of course, there is nothing new about civil war, or wars so horrendous, so all-encompassing, that they are more than civil, in Lucan's words (bella... plus quam civilia, BC 1.1). From Romulus and Remus on, Rome bristles with civil strife, and civil strife, in large part, is what leads to political and social change. But those who seek “novelty”, or social change, are repeatedly denigrated as rebels and conspirators who tear apart the fabric of society. In the words of Sallust, speaking of the Catilinarian conspirators: nam semper in civitate, quibus opes nullae sunt, bonis invident, malos exoltunt, vetera odere, nova exoptant, odio suarum rerum
mutari omnia student, turba atque seditionibus sine cura aluntur, quoniam egestas facile habetur sine damno (“as always in society, those who are without resources envy the good, extol the bad, hate old things, desire new things, and, in their hatred for their own situation, are eager that everything should be changed; amid turmoil and rebellion, they support themselves without difficulty, since poverty is easily endured without loss”, BC 37.3). Here, poverty is linked to the desire to foment civil strife, but also a host of other vices, expressed in starkly antithetical terms not unlike the vilicus' black-and-white description of Croton. That poverty creates desperation and violence is a sentiment echoed in Eumolpus' BC: inops audacia tuta est, notes the narrator epigramatically at the end of his condemnation of Rome's decadence (119.57). Now the Catilinarian conspirators, significantly, are a queer bunch: one of their innumerable vices, according to Cicero, is their tendency to exchange active and passive roles in perverse sex with one another, and Sallust, too, reports a salacious rumour that they “handled their chastity less than decently”.61 As a distinct counterpublic,62 they embody a fantasy held by upper class Romans of the financially destitute as perverted in every part of their being. The desire for change, expressed as a longing for “new” things, thus spirals out beyond conspicuous consumption to encompass forms of political resistance. There is something threateningly queer about “newness”, even queer in the specifically sexual sense: deviant sexuality and failed masculinity are vital components of the discourse of decadence.

As it happens, the world of the BC, unlike the world of Croton, does not preclude reproductive futurity. Rome's decadence is not directly reflected in a failure to reproduce, as one

61 Cic. Cat. 2.8: iam vero quae tanta umquam in ullo iuventutis inlecebra fuit quanta in illo? qui alios ipse amabat turpissime, aliorum amori flagiotosissime serviebat, aliis fructum libidinum, aliis mortem parentum non modo impellendo verum etiam adiuvando pollicebatur; Sall. BC 14: scio fuisse nonnullos, qui ita existumarent: iuventutem, quae domum Catilinae frequentabat, parum honeste pudicitiam habuisse; sed ex aliiis rebus magis quam quod cuiquam id compertum foret, haec fama valebat.
62 Cf. Berlant and Warner (1998), 599, who include, in their discussion of queer counterpublics, “coconspirators” among their list of those who engage in “nonstandard intimacies”.
might expect it to be. When Caesar crosses the Alps and the Romans flee their city, Eumolpus presents a little tableau of “family life” (123.226-32):

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\begin{align*}
\text{gaudet Roma fuga, debellatique Quirites} \\
\text{rumoris sonitu maerentia tecta relinquent.} \\
\text{ille manu pavida natos tenet, ille penates} \\
\text{occultat gremio deploratumque relinquit} \\
\text{limen, et absentem votis interficit hostem.} \\
\text{sunt qui coniugibus maerentia pectora iungant,} \\
\text{grandaevosque patres...} \\
\text{onerisque ignara iuventus} \\
\text{id pro quo metuit, tantum trahit. omnia secum} \\
\text{hic vehit imprudens praedamque in proelia ducit...}
\end{align*}
\]

Rome takes pleasure in flight, and the warred-down citizens abandon their sorrowful homes upon hearing a rumour. One man holds his children with trembling hand, another hides the household gods in his clothing and weeps upon the threshold as he abandons it, killing the absent enemy with prayers; some hold their spouses to their sorrowful chests, and their aged fathers ... The youth, unused to burdens, drag along only what they fear to lose. The fool takes everything with him and brings booty into battle...

There is still concern in the city for normative kinship arrangements: sons, spouses, fathers, household gods. Here is one of the few places in the text where “aged fathers” appear in a context of respect: they are vulnerable figures rather than lecherous predators. But the youth of the city are incapable of protecting them, given that they – effeminate and castrated as they are – are “unused to burdens” (much as Encolpius complains he and his crew are unaccustomed to physical labour). The image of the inept youth gives way to the picture of the imprudens, attempting to drag along all his possessions; the term praeda lends something of the sense of “ill-gotten gains” to these possessions. The flow of this passage seems to demonstrate a shift in ethical values: a concern for sons, fathers, and penates recalls the ethical structure of the Aeneid, albeit disregarding Aeneas' initial, selfish reaction to the fall of Troy (not to mention the loss of the coniunx, Creusa). But the beginning of the poem has demonstrated amply that these kinds of values are dead, and the focus quickly shifts from a concern for one's kin to a concern for one's
physical goods. Sacked Troy from *Aeneid* 2 is revisited: again, the *Satyricon* returns to the *Aeneid* as an originary site, but does not allow events to play out as Vergil claimed they had to.

Redrawing everything from the ground up results in a queerer world than the Vergilian present of Augustan ideology.

The mention of fathers and sons in the context of youthful incapability might also draw the reader back to a particular aspect of the poem's denigration of decadence: the “Persian-style” castration of “barely pubescent” boys, in order to prolong their period of youthful sexual attractiveness: *Persarum ritu male pubescentibus annis surripuere viros, exsectaque viscera ferro in venerem fregere, atque ut fuga nobilis aevi circumscripta mora properantes differat annos* (119.20-4). The castrated literally cannot, of course, father children. There is a certain sense in this passage, then, that reproductive futurity is beginning to suffer; Croton completes this process. The expanse of adolescence is again a place the text feels impelled to linger, in the foundational poem just as in the prose that follows it (temporally): the castrating knife pulls back the “hastening years” and forces them to remain stationary. Men have been broken – in a sense they must be broken, brokenness is a precondition of pleasure (*venus*). But this originary trauma, this castration, is something that opens up new libidinal careers: whores, a halting gait, flowing hair, exotic clothing, all the things that are so strangely productive in the *Satyricon* (the next chapter, too, will examine some modes of pleasure that becoming a whorish, effeminate slave might enable). Again, the question in the background is: What if an interest in such things did not terminate one’s subjectivity? What if the *cinaedus* could write back? The perpetual adolescents of the *Satyricon* might have been subject to violation, but they emerge as new, queerer creatures, for whom a lack of interest in tired old narratives enables an energetic exploration of new ones.

The Crotonians, then, behave similarly to Eumolpus' Romans in terms of the discourse of
grasping decadence, but they escalate matters by disregarding kin ties entirely. Their ethical values have fully transitioned; the apocalypse has already hit. In the *vilicus'* speech and in Eumolpus' poem shortly following, the reader is presented with two images of two cities, Rome and Croton: the former is in the process of falling, while the latter has already fallen (at least according to the *vilicus*). And a major point of distinction is the place of kin ties in the two cities: at Rome, normative kinship still makes sense; at Croton, it has been blighted. Might Rome look like Croton, when the kind of civil strife narrated in the poem has torn it all to pieces? It is frequent war, Encolpius claims, that has reduced Croton to its present state. Images of cities, refracted through different lenses, build up kaleidoscopically: before the narrative even gets to Croton proper, we hear how the *vilicus* thinks the city works, and we see a version of a city broken by civil war in the *BC*. The Croton in Encolpius' narrative is a different place again, a strange poetic dreamland where social relations are queered, and where children form an important part of the narrative. It is not a case of selecting one of these prisms and assigning it a privileged kind of truth; they are all mediated, all partial and contingent, and in process. Epic wholeness cannot be grasped.

The motif of the death/rebirth of the city is suggestive elsewhere in the text. In this context, it is worth glancing back to some of the scenes with the trio of *fratres* in order to expand the political horizon of the *Satyrica*'s use of myth (a dimension that a purely aestheticizing “mythomania” does not necessarily take seriously, or consider worthy of note). Roman foundational narratives of all kinds receive queer refractions in the *Satyrica*, which point to the lack of fit of old stories with a bold new world. Let us recall two moments: firstly, Giton's confession of Ascylos' attempted rape, where he claims that Ascylos presented himself as a Tarquin to Giton's Lucretia (*cum ego proclamarem, gladium strinxit et 'si Lucretia es, inquit, Tarquinium invenisti*', 9.5); and secondly, the later scene with the trio, where Giton puts himself
between Encolpius and As cyltos, imploring them not to become a Thebanum par, a duo of warring, fratricidal brothers (inter hanc miserorum dementiam infelicissimus puer tangebat utriusque genua cum fletu, petebatque suppliciter ne Thebanum par humilis taberna spectaret, 80.3). Giton argues that he ought to receive punishment, since it was he who “abolished the sacred vow of friendship” (ego mori debeo, qui amicitiae sacramentum delevi, 80.4). Firstly, there are the overt references to Lucretia/Tarquin and Polynices/Eteocles, and secondly, there are strong shades of other Livian tales of early Rome: the conflict between Romulus and Remus, and the intervention of the Sabine women, putting themselves between their husbands and their fathers, blaming themselves for the fracas and thus defusing it (Liv. 1.13).

Roman historiography transforms the rape of Lucretia and the subsequent banishment of Tarquinius into a foundational event: the woman is raped, the woman kills herself, the king is expelled, the republic is founded. Happily ever after. Monarchical rule is replaced by... brotherhood? The rule of law? (liberi iam hinc populi Romani res pace belloque gestas, annuos magistratus, imperiaque legum potentiora quam hominum peragam, Liv 2.1) But as we have seen, As cyltos and Encolpius are also, to Giton, a potential Thebanum par, incestuous Theban brothers clasped together in the mutual embrace of death. The great civil war epics of Lucan and Statius are about the unfounding of the world to the point of cosmic dissolution, elsewhere, Rome must define herself against, beside, teratogenic Thebes and its seamy murk. The breach of the marriage bond in the Lucretia story, Tarquin's disrespectsing of another man's wife, is what sets libertas in motion; breach of fraternity, on the other hand, whether by means of Roman civil strife shearing through the bonds of civic solidarity and the metaphorical brotherhood of the polity, or by machinations for power in perverted Thebes, threatens to destroy that libertas and

63 See Hardie's chapter on the bleeding of the boundaries between heaven and hell (Hardie [1993], 57-87), and cf, e.g., Lucan's simile at 1.72-80 (civil war as ekpyrosis, the Stoic destruction of the world).
64 On Rome and Thebes, Janan (2010) is rich and essential. See also Braund (2006); Hardie (1990).
bring down the *res publica*. The two powerful mythic paradigms of Lucretia-Tarquin-Collatinus and Polynices-Eteocles work against each other in this sense – or is it the absence of a Brutus that brings them in sync? Encolpius plays a cowed, cuckolded, castrated Collatinus, but is completely unable to embody the Liberator, even (especially) after a blustering speech in which he formulates his vengeful persona around the idea of himself as “free” and a “man” (*nam aut vir ego liberque non sum, aut noxio sanguine parentabo iniuriae meae*, 81.6). Here, it is worth recalling again the Livian narrative. As Oliensis comments:65

One of Brutus’ first actions after expelling the Tarquins is to oversee the execution of his own sons, exposed as Tarquin-sympathizers; it is only by ceasing to be the father of flesh-and-blood sons (potentially a new line of tyrants; Brutus is himself a Tarquin by blood) that Brutus confirms his standing as the “father” of liberty. By annihilating the son the tyrant may have planted in her, Lucretia’s suicide likewise enables the birth of the free Republic. Hence *liberi*, not “children” but “free,” broaches Livy’s second book...

In the Livian narrative, there is a strange sterility to *libertas*, which sits uncomfortably alongside the reproductive futurity of the Vergilian tradition. Brutus becomes the *pater patriae* by ceasing to be a *pater* at all. In this respect, flesh-and-blood children are replaced by abstract ideals, freedom and the rule of law. Ironically, though, this conversion is not too distant from the logic of reproductive futurity, which is invested in the idea of the Child rather than necessarily the welfare of individual children. It is this idea, the set of abstract ideals that real children are forced to embody, that is supposed to be perpetuated; if the child him/herself turns out to be too queer, there is a problem. There may also be something of a gendered component: if women birth fleshly children, men birth virtue and freedom, and Lucretia, by placing this virtue above her reproductive capacity, becomes a masculine figure, admirable to patriarchal ideology.

Connections in the *Satyrica* to Rome’s foundational myths encourage a re-reading of the latter,

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65 Oliensis (2009), 83.
in light of the former's preoccupation with the perverse reformulation of kinship, the fragility of masculinity, and the complexities of fraternity. Via the Petronian retooling, shades of incestuous Greek fratricide permeate the careful ideological calibrations of the retelling of Roman myth. Romulus and Remus might resemble Polynices and Eteocles more than you would wish. These become stories about things broken as much as things created.

The tales of Romulus/Remus, the Sabine war, and Lucretia/Tarquin speak to the traumas of city-founding, the failures and misfires that haunt the Roman polity. The two fratricidal pairs, Romulus and Remus and Polynices and Eteocles, point to the zero-sum nature of political rule: in order for Rome to succeed, the possibility of “Reme” must be expunged, and the impossibility of shared monarchy must lead to the death of both Theban brothers. The body of the chaste wife must be soiled, and having been soiled must be killed, so that its display will incite men to seize political self-determination. Women must be seized from elsewhere; exogamy must be forcefully claimed. The doubling of brothers, men, rulers cannot be abided, as the Caesar-Pompey conflict set up – though never actually substantiated – in the BC poem further demonstrates. The foundation of cities and the destruction of cities merge together: civil war founds cities and ends them. The end of one world heralds the beginning of another, and in the newly-fashioned world it is necessary to return to the old paradigms in order to try to make sense of them. One might play at being a sneering, imperious Tarquin, a Theban fratricide, a wife thrust into the midst of political affairs, all in an attempt to feel out the boundaries of the world being created, its social and political contours. But these are not roles that must be pursued exclusively: they can be thrown on and off, and they do not commit one to the brutal zero-sum logic of the original, where one man can win only if another loses. The novel’s queer fecundity, and its investment in youth of the creation of new worlds as much as new bodies,

66 On doubling in Roman epic, see Hardie (1993); the theme recurs throughout.
opens up new endings to old stories – and new beginnings, along with them. Legacy-hunting Aeneas, carting away his wordly goods from his burning city rather than the heavier burden of the past and of patriarchal authority in the body of his father, can stay in Carthage just as long as he likes; perhaps whatever he founds there will end up superior to the settlement in Italy towards which the logic of reproductive futurity drives him.

The entry of the protagonists into Croton, from the vilicus’ programmatic speech to Eumolpus’ plotting, literary musings, and epic performance, takes on a great thematic density, like an extended proem or dramatic prologue; here, I have read it alongside the Philomela episode and the cannibal coda, moments from the very end of the Croton section as we have it. These two episodes figure the culmination of the captatio plot, which runs through the Croton section in tandem with the impotence plot. The latter will receive attention in the next chapter, while the former looks back to the Cena’s concern with reproduction and inheritance. What is a legacy in a world like this? It is certainly cash, and lots of it, but intangibles too: survival strategies important among them. The problematic figuration of education, patronage, prostitution, and reproduction in the world of the Satyricon continually recurs, lending the process of succession and conceptions of futurity a troubling level of uncertainty. In a Rome where the aristocracy lived and died by the fragility of succession, these low-lives are not so outlandish after all. Like zombies in postapocalyptica, something living rises up from the piles of dead bodies and dead metaphors. Eumolpus beats the dead horse that is civil war epic: our surprise might be when it gets up and gallops, dragged in through the gates of the city.
Chapter Four: Croton 2: Encolpius' Queer Masochism

You may cast anathemas on me, curse me or offer yourself in sacrifice like frenzied bacchantes at my altar, but if one of you so much as dares to kiss my crimson lips, he must make a barefoot pilgrimage to Rome in sackcloth and ashes, and pray until the cursed staff grows green again, while all around me roses, violets and myrtle bloom everlastingly. Their fragrance is not for you. Stay in your northern mists and Christian incense and leave our pagan world to rest under the lava and the rubble. Do not dig us up; Pompeii was not built for you, nor were our villas, our baths and our temples. You do not need the gods – they would freeze to death in your climate!¹

As it happens, the captatio ruse takes up less of the extant text of the Croton episode than one might expect, given its prominence in the introduction to the city. Indeed, the bulk of the episode is taken up the subplot of Encolpius' impotence. Encolpius' sexual failure, in a general sense, is a continual plot point in the Satyricon. In the extant text, he nowhere narrates a successful sexual penetration of anyone. He comes close, but his narrative seems to take great pleasure in the interruption of the sexual act by various means. Where Encolpius' desire for Giton was thwarted mainly by the presence of rivals (Ascytlos, Eumolpus, Tryphaena), at Croton, Encolpius' impotence, primarily in the affair with Circe (but also, probably, with Giton, and with Philomela's son), takes central stage, and Giton diminishes in centrality somewhat. Encolpius, elsewhere obsessed with the threat from without, manifested by rivals, turns his focus inwards: it is now his own body that betrays him, and his narrative hones in on his impotent genitalia, and the beaten, violated body housing them. While his defeat by Ascytlos metaphorically castrated him, he is now literally unmanned. If the sword represented his loss of phallic power qua masculine authority, here, yet again, the metaphor is literalized: his penis betrays him. This literal failure even turns back to metaphor again in Polyaenus' letter to Circe:

¹ Sacher-Masoch (1989), 145.
*paratus miles arma non habui* (130.4). What is a soldier without his weaponry? How, indeed, can he be *paratus* without his sword? Of course, Encolpius never really had a “sword” in the first place, and his performance as a soldier failed wretchedly (*Sat. 82*).

This chapter offers another queer lens on the *Satyrica*, and a new approach to the impotence subplot. Whereas elsewhere I have sought to read queerness in the parody and resignification of cultural institutions like marriage, siblinghood, and inheritance, in this chapter I finally talk about sex itself, and the penis, so significant to the penetrative model of ancient sexuality. But even where the penis is, it may yet turn out the phallus is not. The Circe episode, traditionally rather neglected, has recently received some degree of attention in the scholarly literature, focused primarily on the episode's central intertextual resonances: with Homer, on the one hand, and Ovid on the other. McMahon’s 1998 monograph on “impotence, perception, and text in the *Satyrica* of Petronius” is centrally concerned with ancient quasi-scientific folkloric beliefs about impotence, honing in on impotence specifically. The characterization of impotence as failure is more or less taken for granted; analyses proceed from there. My approach here is a little different. In line with the queer potentiality of failure, I attempt to root out what is occluded by the teleological dash towards impotence. Impotence, in the sense of the male failure to achieve an erection, is, after all, only a “failure” if the goal of sex is phallic penetration.

Certainly, normative ideologies both ancient and modern seek to redefine sex as such, and even only as such: that sex is penile penetration, and lack of penile penetration is therefore not sex, is an assumption frequently enough taken for granted in both ancient texts and modern analyses.

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2 See, for a convenient summary treatment, Morgan (2004), 34-8 (who espouses in this context the Contean view that Encolpius is “characterized by his tendency to assimilate his own mundane and sleazy experiences to grandiose literary analogues”). See also Fedeli (1988), on the Circe episode specifically.

3 As one would expect, Ovid's impotence poem, *Am. 3.7*, has been a primary focus here; see especially Hallett (2012), Obermayer (2003). On Ovidian elegiac intertext more broadly, see recently Antoniadis (2013); Hallett and Hindemann (2014). It would seem there is still room to further investigate the significance of the elegiac intertext: to my mind, the erotic dynamics of the Circe episode have much in common with, for example, Janan's interpretation of the non-relationality of Propertian Erotics (Janan [2004]).
thereof. One significant discourse opposing this conception of “sex” in the modern context is that of sadomasochism: as I shall detail, sadomasochistic eroticism is often remarkably unconcerned with genital sexuality, and yet is undoubtedly still eroticism. Given the prominence of dynamics of domination and submission, particularly female dominance and male submission, in the *Satyricon*, sadomasochistic theory would seem an obvious place to turn, but other than Sullivan's oft-derided Freudian reading of Petronian sexuality,⁴ there is not a significant focus on such theory in the secondary literature on the *Satyricon*. Sullivan's 1968 reading, too, was produced long before queer theory; indeed, in those dark days “pre-Stonewall”. But a non-teleological reading of the Circe episode, with the aid of the rich body of s/m theory, has the potential to ferret out the makings of a queer, non-phallic sexuality, even where the penis appears to be the central hero of the story. In fact, the very centrality of the penis may even serve to make things queerer.

A summary of the Circe episode, with the most important aspects for my purposes emphasized, will help introduce this chapter's focus. Soon after Eumolpus' *captatio* plot meets with great success (to Encolpius' anxiety), Encolpius, in disguise as the slave Polyaenus, is approached by Chrysis, who introduces him to her mistress Circe, an aristocratic woman who exclusively lusts after slaves. A succession of significant moments takes place before they attempt to have sex: Encolpius is struck by Circe's beauty and ravishingly describes her; he recites a poem about Jupiter; Circe implores Encolpius to take her on as a sister (see chapter one); he yields to her as if to a goddess in a quasi-ritualistic speech; they lie down on the grass, and Encolpius recites a poem about the eroticism of the *locus amoenus*; they kiss, unable to

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⁴ Sullivan (1968), 232-53. Although Sullivan's biographical approach (that Petronius' own sexual interests are what is reflected by his narrative) is inadequate, it seems to me unnecessary to throw the baby out with the bathwater and reject entirely the usefulness of psychoanalysis for interpreting the *Satyricon*, especially in light of the richness of recent psychoanalytic interpretations of Latin literature (see, for example, Janan [2010]; Oliensis [2009]). Scopophilia and sadomasochism, to give but two examples of Sullivan's topics of discussion, now boast a sophisticated theoretical literature that should not simply be dismissed without consideration.
achieve a “robust pleasure” (*voluptatem robustam*, 127.10). Evidently Encolpius' penis has not been up to the task of penetration, although our text lacks the moment of failure and picks up in the aftermath; Müller conjectures a number of lacunae around this scene. Circe is offended, examining herself in a mirror and recruiting Chrysis to validate her beauty. Encolpius is horrified, and recites a poem about losing the treasure that one has merely dreamt. Subsequently, Encolpius appears to be impotent with Giton, too. Encolpius and Circe exchange letters via Chrysis. They meet again; Circe brings along the witch Proselenos, who magics up an erection in Encolpius. He recites another poem about *loca amoena*. He and Circe flirt and kiss, but he fails again, and Circe, losing patience, has him flogged, spat on, beaten, and thrown out. Then comes the famous scene where Encolpius reproaches his recalcitrant member. The remainder of the Croton episode details his dealings with Proselenos and Oenothea, another witch, in order to regain his potency. He does not meet Circe again in the extant text, though a highly intriguing and lamentably fragmentary triangle emerges when Chrysis apparently falls in love with him herself.

In order to create a point of transition from the focus of the last chapter, I shall begin with Chrysis' initial proposition to the (purportedly) disguised Encolpius (126.1-7):

*quia nosti venerem tuam, superbiam captas vendisque amplexus, non commodas.*

*quo enim spectant flexae pectine comae, quo facies medicamine attrita et oculorum quoque mollis petulantia; quo incessus arte compositus et ne vestigia quidem pedum extra mensuram aberrantia, nisi quod formam prostituas ut vendas? vides me: nec auguria novi nec mathematicorum caelum curare soleo; ex vultibus tamen hominum mores colligo, et cum spatiantem vidi, quid cogites scio. sive ergo nobis vendis quod peto, mercator paratus est, sive, quod humanius est, commodas, effice ut beneficium debeam. nam quod servum te et humilem fateris, accendis desiderium aestuantis. quaedam enim feminae sordibus calent, nec libidinem concitant, nisi aut servos viderint aut statores altius cinctos. arena aliquas accendit, aut perfusus pulvere mulio, aut histrio scaenae ostentatione traductus. ex hac nota domina est mea; usque ab orchestra quattuordecim transilat, et in extrema plebe quaerit quod diligat.
Because you are well aware of your own charm, you become arrogant, and sell your embraces rather than giving them freely. What is the purpose of those curled locks, the countenance smeared with makeup, the sulky wantonness of your eyes; what is the purpose of that refined gait, not a step out of place, except that you are putting your beauty on display in order to sell it? Look at me: I don't know augury, nor do I care for astronomy as a rule; nonetheless, from people's appearances I infer their characters, and when I saw you walking, I knew what you had in mind. So if you'll sell what I'm after, a buyer is ready, or, if you'll give it freely – which is kinder – put me in your debt. As it happens, when you confess that you are a lowly slave, you incite the desire of someone who is on fire for you. You know, there are some women who lust after disreputable sorts, and they don't get turned on unless they're looking at slaves or high-girt servants. The arena gets some of them hot; others are into mule-drivers covered in dust, or actors disgraced by the ostentation of the stage. My mistress is like that; she leaps right back fourteen rows from the orchestra, and looks for something to love amongst the dregs of the people.

Encolpius' encounter with Circe brings forth an important question: what exactly is he doing with Circe? He is disguised as the slave Polyaenus. But the orchestrator of the plot to ensnare the captatores is Eumolpus; in comparison, the role of Giton and Encolpius is relatively minor. All they must do is obey. The slave's role apparently comes easily to both of them, and they play their peripheral parts without a hitch. Is Circe part of the legacy-hunting, or parasite, plot? Is Encolpius here acting as a captator? Certainly she is a respectable (in terms of social status), wealthy freeborn woman, matrona, with the wherewithal to own a number of slaves. Encolpius' sexual relationship with her might be expected to generate lucre. Chrysis, though, immediately interprets Encolpius as a prostitute, just as the old vegetable seller did way back in the Graeca urbs (6.7). A certain arrogance of bearing (superbia), an excessive concern for physical appearance (curling the hair, applying cosmetics), a melting, or simpering, gaze (oculorum mollis petulantia), and a careful, affected gait are, apparently, the giveaway signs. Here, the roles of slave, parasite, and prostitute blend together. Encolpius' appearance evokes not the rugged, salt of the earth manliness of gladiators or mule drivers, but the over-sophistication and sly knowingness of the disgraced actor (histrio scaenae ostentatione traductus). Of course,
Encolpius is literally acting; Chrysis' diagnosis is even more correct than she realizes. A set of equivalencies, familiar from elsewhere, becomes legible: parasitism/captatio and prostitution are close bedfellows, and the taint of servility and histrionic infamia hangs over the whole business. Encolpius does not directly accept money for sex, but what exactly does a slave get out of a relationship with a wealthy, free woman? It is worth bearing in mind, again, that the social climber Trimalchio sexually serviced his mistress, and Juvenal's Naevolus, a debased client figure, exchanged sexual services for material rewards. Encolpius wants to be an elegist labouring under literary tropes, not a second Trimalchio labouring under another’s legal authority, and he tells himself that it is all an act, but Chrysis’ gaze is penetrating, and reveals something he himself does not fully allow himself to acknowledge.

Chrysis sets commercial sex against the free granting of one's sexual favours: here, she sets the tone for the whole Circe encounter. The interaction between Polyaenus and Circe is not free and spontaneous, but contracted: prearranged, and with specific roles assigned to the two parties. This is sex as a “scene”, a performance that consistently blurs the boundaries between the mimetic and the “real”. Encolpius impersonates Polyaenus, and the whole affair is a reflex of the encounter between Odysseus and the Homeric Circe. But how far is Encolpius acting? Where are the boundaries of his performance? He apparently makes no attempt to dissimulate regarding his relationship with Giton, and the way he acts as Polyaenus does not differ greatly from the way he acts as “himself”: he is submissive, even abject, helpless, groveling, whether or not he is playing a part.

At this juncture, some of the theoretical literature on consensual BDSM (an acronym incorporating both Bondage, Discipline, SadoMasochism, and Dominance/Submission), in the modern context, and the “classic” masochism of the 19th century Austrian novelist Leopold von Sacher-Masoch (still, of course, entirely modern compared to Petronius), offers fruitful insights.
Consensual s/m has long been a particularly contentious site of debate, from the feminist “sex wars” of the 70s, wherein a split emerged between those feminists condemning s/m as a violent reproduction of the patriarchal hierarchy and those embracing it in the name of sexual liberation, to the recent pop-cultural obsession with *Fifty Shades of Grey*, a piece of Trivialliteratur that, almost despite itself, penetrated deep into the 21st century zeitgeist and its anxieties about gender, sexuality, and female desire. It is important to make distinctions here: BDSM is not a unitary thing, but a series of widely-divergent practices (only some of which are immediately recognizable as “sexual”) gathered under the heading of sexual hierarchy and the eroticization of pain. The body of literature surrounding such practices is profuse: queer and feminist theorists have built up a sophisticated and wide-ranging theoretical apparatus, in which s/m holds a privileged place as an “alternative” sexuality, one which unanchors eroticism from the genitals, and which has the potential to shatter the sovereign claims of hegemonic, phallocentric masculinity. Equally, sociologists, literary critics, lawyers, and clinicians all engage with s/m within their various fields, resulting in a great range of perspectives spanning all sorts of discursive contexts. BDSM can almost be described as an interdiscursive “mode of thought” as much as any particular act; as such, it has taken on a kind of (productive) nebulousness not unlike that of “queerness”.

For my purposes, I engage with a selected set of texts which are most germane to Petronius' particular formulation of pain and pleasure. In particular, amongst the range of perverse sexual practices, I am especially interested in masochism, and the way in which

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5 On BDSM and the “Sex Wars”, see, for a recent treatment, Khan (2014), 54-116.
6 On masochism as an “ego shattering” sexuality, the classic account is Bersani (1987), although his definition of masochism sometimes shades into merely “being penetrated”. See also Silverman (1992) and Brintnall (2011), both on male vulnerability, and Halperin (1995), on Foucault, S/M, and fisting (although the appropriation of the latter as a primarily gay-male practice is peculiar).
7 For an interdiscursive account of BDSM, see Khan (2014), a book by a legal scholar which examines legal, clinical, and pop-cultural approaches to BDSM (and how non-legal discourse invariably infiltrates the law, as much as the latter might claim “objectivity”).
Encolpius' encounter with Circe generates a queerly masochistic dynamic – masochism being, in and of itself, not necessarily queer. Masochism is here entangled in particular with two discourses central to the ancient novel: law and the theatre. Theatricality, in relation to Petronius, is an overworked motif; nonetheless, read through the lens of s/m, it would seem there are yet new things to say about it, regarding in particular what Lynda Hart calls “the edge of the stage”, the permeable boundary between the theatrical and the real. In the legal realm, it is the contract that draws much of my attention. The Circe episode offers shades of the masochistic contract between dominant and submissive parties, an instrument of great interest to theorists of masochism, in particular Deleuze, and prominent in Sacher-Masoch (not to mention *Fifty Shades of Grey*). But, alongside Deleuze, I read here a broader parody or desublimation of the law of the father, which works in tandem with a “perverse” sexuality that is peculiarly non-phallic. It is not the erotic enjoyment of pain per se that is at issue here – that is technically “algolagnia”, and not coextensive with masochism tout court. Pain, and punishment especially, have their role in the episode, but my major focus is the combination of submission to a woman and non-phallic sexuality. Roman culture as a whole is heavily hierarchical, legalistic, and contractual: contracted masochism and submission are intuitively resonant in this cultural climate. The dynamics of Roman social relations in many ways mirror the stylized game that is BDSM from the outset.

In order to begin to flesh out how on earth “non-phallic sexuality” is at issue in a text that is apparently so obsessed with the penis, it is necessary to establish what is distinctive about sadomasochistic eroticism. Karmen MacKendrick introduces her discussion of various

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8 See Hart (1998), 91: “We are always already in representation even when we are enacting our seemingly most private fantasies. The extent to which we recognize the presence of the edge of the stage may determine what kind of performance we are enacting, but willing ourselves to forget the stage altogether is not to return to the real ... rather this will to forget is classical mimesis, which, as Derrida points out, is “the most naive form of representation”.”

9 On the distinction, see Deleuze (1989), 16.
sadomasochistic and ascetic “counterpleasures” with the Freudian concept of “forepleasure”. As she puts it:<sup>10</sup>

Forepleasures are precisely those which are essential as preliminaries to “normal” sexual pleasure but which, if lingered over, become “perverse”. In brief, the perverse pleasures are either unduly sustained or overinvested in excitation, or they exaggerate some Partialtriebe, a piece of the ordinary libido, such as the desire to see or be seen by the loved object. Thus they represent the inherence of the perverse within the normal: a slight shift in emphasis, and the latter becomes the former.

Freudian pleasure comes from the release of tension, and is necessarily greater if the tension excited is higher; a forepleasure is pleasure taken in this act of excitation, and is properly anticipatory. The “problem”, and the perversion, comes when this anticipatory tension is experienced as itself pleasurable. “Normal” sexual pleasure is, from a modern, or at least Freudian, point of view, penetrative heterosexual intercourse; from a Roman point of view, there is less investment in the genders of the participants and more in their positioning (ie, phallic penetration by a masculine agent of a feminine subject, a paradigm which is still heteronormative in its way). For Encolpius, this “normal” pleasure is far to seek; unmitigated pleasure in and of itself, indeed, is relatively rare for him, as he tells it. Dissatisfaction, fear, failure, jealousy, and confusion dominate his narrative. But it is significant that the greatest, perhaps almost the only, pleasures for him are forepleasures. In particular, he relishes embraces and kisses, which, in Catullan terms, are the antithesis of aggressive penetration rather than its counterpart.<sup>11</sup> His first-person “sex scenes” are more sensual than obscene. We shall clarify this point with regards to the Circe episode below, but well before Croton, Encolpius' penchant for

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<sup>10</sup> MacKendrick (1999), 7.

<sup>11</sup> At least, this is the version of the story that Cat. 16, in which the poet threatens to rape his friends who have made fun of his unmanly kissing poetry, tells; far from the full Catullan story by any stretch of the imagination. Further on Catullan “aggressive” masculinity in the Mediterranean context, see Wray (2001).
forepleasures is revealed. At the beginning of the novel, he is engaged in “foreplay” with Giton when Ascyltos invades (11.1-2): “After I had explored the whole town with my eyes, I returned to my little room, and, exchanging kisses finally in good faith, I held the boy in the tightest of embraces, and fulfilled my wishes to an enviable degree. But things were not yet entirely finished, when Ascyltos stole up to the doors...” (postquam lustravi oculis totam urbem, in cellulam redii, osculisque tandem bona fide exactis alligo artissimis complexibus puerum, fruorque votis usque ad invidiam felicibus. nec adhuc quidem omnia erant facta, cum Ascyltos furtim se foribus admovit...) I have already discussed this passage in chapter 1, but its significance for this chapter is Encolpius' representation of his “foreplay” as already enviable, and certainly not unsatisfying. Kisses and tight, binding embraces are the focus of the eroticism here, not penetration. This impression receives further confirmation in the poem Encolpius recites after the Cena, when he once again has Giton in his clutches (79.8):

qualis nox fuit illa, di deaeque, 
quam mollis torus. haesimus calentes 
et transfudimus hinc et hinc labellis 
errantes animas. valete, curae 
mortales. ego sic perire coepi.

Gods and goddesses, what a night that was, how soft the bed. We clung together, heated, and we poured our wandering souls back and forth with our lips. Farewell, mortal anxieties. Thus, I began to perish.

As scholars have discussed,12 there is an unusual degree of reciprocity evident in this poem: first-person plurals blur the distinction between the lovers, and an exchange of souls, rather than a one-sided penetrative act, is what generates Encolpius' pleasure. The poem's last phrase (ego

12 See Williams (1992), 341-2, who, despite his general preoccupation with penetration, nonetheless acknowledges that there is something else going on here: “We are far removed indeed from the nearly universal preoccupation with penetrative role discussed in the preceding chapters. In Encolpius' warm recollection of his encounters with Giton and Endymion, it seems crassly out of place to ask who was penetrating whom. The texts simply do not invite their readers to make such an inquiry.”
sic perire coepi) is richly multivalent: on the one hand, it conjoins Eros and Thanatos, perhaps equating the release of tension in orgasm with death; on the other, it foreshadows Ascyltos' theft of Giton, creating a smooth glide between verse and prose. The emphatic ego (grammatically unnecessary in Latin, of course) conjoins the assertion of self to the loss of self: what causes the narrator the greatest pleasure is the prospect of losing himself in another, or erasing the distinction between self and other, and with it the aggressive claiming of the position of “subject” characteristic of hegemonic, sovereign masculinity, a claim that is literalized by phallic penetration as a form of wounding of the other, something that can only take place via the humiliation of the penetrated party. Here we see again the binding embrace, which recurs at an especially significant moment: when Lichas' ship is sinking, the two men cling to each other, expecting to drown. Giton ties his belt around the both of them, and Encolpius says that thus he “endured the final bond” (patior ego vinculum extremum, 114.12). The proximity of the embrace to death is here literal; Encolpius wishes almost to dissolve into his lover, a mechanism of pleasure which is far from hydraulic tension and release and the rhythms of erection and ejaculation. The eternal embrace is a kind of continual tension, a constant back-and-forth motion as described in the poem (hinc et hinc). Phallic penetration is simply not mentioned. Homoerotic pleasure for Encolpius is therefore a veritable buffet of forepleasures without “main events”; his approach to heteroerotic pleasure, as we shall see, is not substantially different.

The concept of forepleasure is an essential tool in the theoretical apparatus I will deploy in my reading of the Circe episode. But the significance of masochistic literature for the Satyricon emerges especially clearly when one reads it alongside Deleuze's 1967 essay on Sacher-Masoch, “Coldness and Cruelty”. The piece is customarily printed as a preface to a text of Masoch's Venus in Furs, but it deals with Masoch's corpus as a whole, with considerable reference to Sade, whom Deleuze strongly distinguishes from Masoch, resisting the reading of “sadomasochism”
as a unity. Masoch and Sade represent what MacKendrick describes as the “classical counterpleasures”, constituting a literary discourse on s/m that precedes, yet also determines the terminology of, the clinical classification of sadism and masochism as psychopathologies.

Three particular aspects of Deleuze's analysis of masochism stand out particularly when his essay is read alongside Petronius. Firstly, for Deleuze, one of the defining characteristics of masochism is suspense: it is the moments of suspense that are, paradoxically, the climactic moments in Masoch's fiction. The female torturer is frozen in fixed postures, identified with statues or paintings, compelled to embody the masochist's ideal. Deleuze emphasizes the mythical and the ritual in Masoch's work: Encolpius' Crotonian dreamland comes immediately to mind. Secondly, Deleuze extensively analyzes the role of the maternal and paternal in sadism and masochism: while sadism exalts the father, masochism expels him from the symbolic realm, removing from him the phallus and the authority of the law and transferring them instead to the mother. The link between phallus and penis is severed; the woman's lack of penis does not prevent her from possessing the power invested in the symbolic phallus. Deleuze claims that it is the resemblance of the father which is “miniaturized, beaten, ridiculed, and humiliated” in the body of the male masochist; it is the father who must be expelled in order for a “new man” to emerge. Thirdly, Deleuze focuses heavily on the contract as the foundation of masochism: the contract is consensual and reciprocal, and elevates the woman from an object of patriarchal exchange to the party with whom the contractual agreement is made. Masochism thus combines the aesthetic, in its obsession with art and suspense, and the juridical, in its emphasis on the contract. The masochistic contract creates a type of law, while the masochist's relation to

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14 Deleuze (1989), 57-68.
15 Deleuze (1989), 60.
law itself is derisory: as Deleuze puts it, “by scrupulously applying the law we are able to demonstrate its absurdity and provoke the very disorder that it is intended to prevent or to conjure”.\textsuperscript{17} Whereas the law demands punishment, the masochist seeks out that punishment, rendering it a precondition for pleasure: while the intention of the law might have been to punish the fulfilment of pleasure, the masochist reverses the formula and places pleasure after punishment, the result rather than the cause. He thus pre-empts the law, beating it at its own game: the result is laughter.\textsuperscript{18} This sort of “insolent obsequiousness” or “rebellious submission” is very Petronian; compare my discussion of Quartilla and Philomela in the previous chapters.

Deleuze's analysis is not unproblematic from a queer or feminist standpoint. As Hart discusses at some length, Deleuze's conceptualization of masochism ultimately involves the transcendence of the mother: “it is through her ministrations that he [the male masochist] is able to transcend his slavishness”.\textsuperscript{19} The female torturer must be formed and educated by the male masochist; he is, in the parlance of contemporary s/m, “topping from the bottom”, demanding that his fantasies be fulfilled, and using the woman as a fantasy construct, an embodiment of his ideal. Sexual difference is solidified, never challenged; taken for granted, in fact. In this sense, Deleuzian masochism is not necessarily queer or radical. Deleuze speaks only of male masochist and female torturer. A “new man” is (re)born; masochism is, in a sense, a temporary state by means of which masculinity can be reconstructed. But Petronian masculinity is very different from Masochistic masculinity: it is women who make demands of Encolpius, and he consistently fails to get one over on them. And his surrender to Giton differs little, in some respects, from his surrender to Circe, Quartilla, or the witches: he is lowly, he begs, he is laughed at. There is perhaps some sense of “rebirth” in Encolpius' quest to regain his sexual

\textsuperscript{17} Deleuze (1989), 88.
\textsuperscript{18} Deleuze (1989), 88-9.
\textsuperscript{19} Hart (1998), 72.
potency; however, masochism is not a stage for him, but a condition of life. Bersani's bold conceptualization of sexuality as a tautology for masochism fits Encolpius entirely too well. Hart notes also of the masochist that “even when 'consummation' occurs, the dynamic is not to arrive at an endpoint but to reproduce the conditions that guarantee the necessity for endless returns”. Masculinity never “wins” in the Satyrica, never emerges hale and hearty, strengthened and renewed from its flirtations with castration and surrender. Rather, it is in the process of being reformed and renegotiated in a world where it no longer has the purchase one would hope.

In the detailed reading of the Circe episode that follows, I mix and mingle these three aspects of Deleuzian masochism (suspense, exaltation of the mother/degradation of the father, and the contract/law) with the concept of forepleasure as perverse/queer. Within the complex Circe episode itself, everything is intertangled, and the layers of suspense, gender, juridicality, aestheticization, and contractuality are overlapping and interdependent. Somewhat artificially, I delay detailed discussion of the specifically contractual aspect of the episode until the end, in order to juxtapose the Circean contract with other instances of contractuality in the lead up to Croton. I use queer forepleasures and Deleuzian masochism as hermeneutic tools in order to produce a reading of the episode that is alert to a submerged, tentatively emerging, though ultimately frustrated mode of non-phallocentric eroticism in what appears to be the most phallocentric portion of the text, and what is thus eminently readable in phallocentric terms. Paradoxically, though, it is sometimes the case that when the penis is most visible that the phallus is the most fragile: sublime masculinity depends upon the effacement of the penis as a

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21 Hart (1998), 79.
vulnerable, fleshly organ; the phallus gains its power from being veiled. Encolpius claims that “men of a more serious character” do not even think about, let alone name, the penis (132.12): “forgetting my modesty I had conversed with that part of the body which men of a more serious character are accustomed not even to think about”, oblitus verecundiae meae cum ea parte corporis verba contulerim, quam ne ad cognitionem quidem admittere severioris notae homines solerent; cf. his words to the penis, “since it's not right and proper even to name you in a serious context”, nam ne nominare quidem te inter res serias fas est (132.9). In a sense, he is right. High epic discourse, like the speech of Ulysses to which he alludes, does indeed not mention the penis, but its eroticism depends rather on sublimation and metaphorical connotation. But one possible reading is that Encolpius has taken this effacement of the penis all too literally in his epic aspirations, building up an eros that is not obsessed with penetration and consummation, but rather delights in connotations and delay. In a sense, this is a wielding of epic against itself.

Epic does not mention the penis. Encolpius generates a productively non-normative inference from this situation: ‘therefore the penis is not central to sex’. He has turned aside from the ‘proper’ conclusion whereby the penis’ centrality to sex is assumed, and so its name need not be spoken. But a close examination of the text is necessary in order to substantiate such a claim.

Encolpius’ narration of his affair with Circe is almost hauntingly poetic. Poetic interludes occur with much greater density than elsewhere in the text: the gap between the “prose track” and the “poetry track” narrows, with Encolpius' prose almost as ecstatic as his poetry. Between and before his sexual failure, the narrative is suspended in the world of ideals: this is a very “masochistic” aesthetic, in Deleuze's terms. Before anything physically erotic happens, the reader is treated to lengthy scene-setting: the ravishing description of Circe, her siren-like speech, the poems describing loca amoena, the dwelling on mythical paradigms and ritual

observations. A lush sensuality prevails; the forward movement of the narrative is frozen as forepleasures are wrought large. Although the text seems to be lacunose, the moments “after”, that is to say Encolpius' sexual failures, are treated with brutal brevity: the reader is jolted out of the dreamland as Encolpius' failing body is beaten and humiliated. This dynamic recalls Mulvey's much-bruited distinction between fetishistic scopophilia and sadistic voyeurism, elaborated upon for ancient texts by Frederick's deft discussion of violence in elegy: fetishistic scopophilia disavows sexual difference, passes by the female genitalia, over-values the female object, takes pleasure in looking alone; sadistic voyeurism exaggerates sexual difference, transforming the female object into a series of penetrable holes, devaluing and punishing her. In Mulvey's words:

This second avenue, fetishistic scopophilia, builds up the physical beauty of the object, transforming it into something satisfying in itself. The first avenue, voyeurism, on the contrary, has associations with sadism: pleasure lies in ascertaining guilt (immediately associated with castration), asserting control and subjecting the guilty person through punishment or forgiveness. This sadistic side fits in well with narrative. Sadism demands a story, depends on making something happen, forcing a change in another person, a battle of will and strength, victory/defeat, all occurring in a linear time with a beginning and an end. Fetishistic scopophilia, on the other hand, can exist outside linear time as the erotic instinct is focussed on the look alone.

Scopophilia, suspended outside linear time, thus closely recalls Hart's description of masochism as “desires interrupted, incomplete moments, repetitions that overlap, interchange, and reverse but never coalesce into a conventional narrative”. The interposition of sadism, on the other hand, wrenches the narrative back into order, demanding “a story”, a beginning and an end, a winner and a loser. But unlike in Mulvey's account, the Petronian object oscillates: Encolpius

23 Mulvey (1975); Fredrick (1997).
24 Mulvey (1975), 14.
enjoys Circe scopophilically, as I shall substantiate, but he himself becomes the object of punishment as his own narrative tears him out of the dreamland of myth and ritual and castrates him by denying him the ability to penetrate. The male body, purported bearer of the scopophiliac gaze, becomes suddenly and drastically visible as an object, a vulnerable chunk of flesh. Might we, particularly in light of Deleuze's discussion of masochism as a mode of thought that disavows sexual difference and apportions phallic authority to the woman, even oppose sadistic voyeurism to masochistic scopophilia?

Let us examine more closely Encolpius' initial description of Circe (126.13-18):

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\text{nec diu morata dominam producit e latebris, laterique meo applicat mulierem omnibus simulacris emendatiorem. nulla vox est quae formam eius possit comprehendere, nam quicquid dixero minus erit. crines ingenio suo flexi per totos se umeros effuderant, frons minima et quae radices capillorum retro flexerat, supercilia usque ad malarum scripturam currentia et rursus confinio luminum paene permixta, oculi clariores stellis extra lunam fulgentibus, nares paululum inflexae et osculum quale Praxiteles habere Dianam credidit. iam mentum, iam cervix, iam manus, iam pedum candor intra auri gracile vinculum positus: Parium marmor extinxerat.}
\]

Without hesitating, she brought out her mistress from where she had been hiding, and pressed upon me a woman more perfect than any representation. There are no words which could adequately express her beauty, so whatever I say will not be enough. Her naturally curly hair flowed down over shoulders, her forehead was narrow and the roots of her hair curved back from it, her eyebrows ran all the way to the contour of her cheeks and nearly met at the boundary of her eyes, her eyes were brighter than stars outshining the moon, her nose was slightly aquiline and her mouth was like the one that Praxiteles believed Diana had. Ah, and her chin, her neck, her hands, the gleam of her feet under a thin band of gold: it outdid Parian marble.

This is fetishistic scopophilia in its classic form, recalling one of the paradigmatic scopophiliac moments in Latin poetry, Ovid's description of Corinna's body in *Amores* 1.5, which skips over the genitalia altogether, and relegates the sexual act to that which “everyone knows” (“who doesn't know the rest”, *cetera quis nescit? Am*. 1.5.25). Encolpius' description of Circe moves
from head to neck to hands and then skips straight to her feet. Her beauty is aestheticized: she is more ideal than the ideal embodied in sculpture. She is so pale that Parian marble cannot compete; her gleam is unearthly, lunar. Here is the aestheticization and the frozenness familiar from Deleuze's description of Masoch: Circe is rendered inert like a statue, and is described in greater detail than almost anyone else in Encolpius' narrative as it stands. She is broken down into parts; this is precisely the mechanism of fetishization. Here we might recall again MacKendrick's characterization of Freudian forepleasures: “the perverse pleasures are either unduly sustained or overinvested in excitation, or they exaggerate some Partialtriebe, a piece of the ordinary libido, such as the desire to see or be seen by the loved object”.26 Encolpius' adventures with Circe meet both parts of this description. There is an intense “overinvestment in excitation” as negotiations are prolonged, and the desire to see is here exaggerated, followed shortly after by the desire to hear her voice, like the siren's call. It is tempting to see Encolpius' prolongation of preliminaries in this part of the narrative as an attempt to delay the inevitable onset of his impotence: he slows down his retrospective narrative, knowing what is to come. Relevant here is the doubling in the Circe episode: he has two attempts at her, he fails both times, and on both occasions strategies like the interposition of poetry, the use of direct speech, and the exchange of letters slow the pace of the narrative. This suspense, the drawing out and slowing down, generates again a masochistic temporality for the text, insofar as masochism is defined by anticipation. Sadism's repetitions, according to Deleuze, are mechanical and allied with the negative; masochism too is invested in repetition, but this repetition is all about suspense.27 Impotence for Encolpius is death; instead, he grasps to life for as long as possible.

But Encolpius is not the only fetishistic scopophiliac here: Circe, too, desires Encolpius

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27 Deleuze (1989), 34.
“partially”. Chrysis has already related her how mistress desires, or at least how she perceives her mistress' desire: some women, like Circe, don't get aroused, she says, unless they see slaves (quaedam... feminae... nec libidinem concitant, nisi aut servos viderint, 126.5). As Chrysis perceives it, these women fetishize such men, longing to “kiss the scars of a flogging” (flagellorum vestigia osculantur, 126.10). The scars are the fetish object, the focus of desire; visible signifiers of a man's servile status, which is what arouses lust. Chrysis mentions other tokens of the slave: short garments, the dust on the muleteer's body, the stage, the back seats in the arena, even the crucifix (nec hoc dii sinant, ut amplexus meos in crucem mittam, “god forbid that I should hurl my embraces upon the crucifix,” 126.9). The slave is divided into a series of parts, not body parts as in Encolpius' description of Circe, but looser cultural signifiers (compare the penchant of sadomasochists for leather, rope, the collar and lead, the marks on the body). And Chrysis' description of Encolpius himself similarly divides him into parts subject to physiognomic interpretation: flowing locks, makeup, melting gaze, mincing gait. Encolpius' narrative objectifies himself qua actor, although in a less aestheticizing way than his objectification of Circe. The familiar dynamic – the man who possesses power objectifies the woman, who does not – is complicated by the interlacing of social status with gender: slaves and women are both conventionally objects, so what happens when they objectify each other?

Circe, Chrysis claims, looks for “something to love amongst the dregs of the people” (in extrema plebe quaerit quod diligat, 126.7), not someone to love or some man to love. She seeks an object, not a person, just as Encolpius freezes her into a statue. Encolpius and Circe desire ardently, but they desire “past” each other, and they even desire “falsely”: Encolpius is not a slave, but is only pretending to be one (albeit in danger of actually becoming one, as I shall discuss later on), while Circe is not a goddess or the embodiment of a Homeric witch, but appropriates ritual and epic discourse to entice Encolpius. Some have even argued that Circe,
like Polyaenus, is a pseudonym.\textsuperscript{28} Circe claims that their names are joined in perpetuity (\textit{semper \ inter \ haec nomina magna fax surgit}, 127.7), but again this claim misses the mark: they are not their names, especially if neither is actually using their real name. The way in which desire invariably overshoots its purported object is here put into action.

The epic “layer” is gradually piled upon the narrative of the Circe affair, introduced in bits and pieces. It is first invoked in Encolpius' poem following his description of Circe, which is about Jupiter's affairs (126.18):

\begin{verbatim}
quid factum est, quod tu proiectis, Iuppiter, armis
inter caelicolas fabula muta iaces?
nunc erat a torva submittere cornua fronte,
nunc pluma canos dissimulare tuos.
haec vera est Danae. tempta modo tangere corpus,
iam tua flammifero membra calore fluent.
\end{verbatim}

What has brought it about that you, Jupiter, your weapons tossed aside, lie still amongst the heaven-dwellers, a silent myth? Now, if ever, were the time to sprout horns on a fierce brow, the time to hide your white hair with plumage. This woman is the true Danae. Just try to touch her body, and your limbs will melt with the seething heat.

As Schmeling notes in his commentary, this is an impotent Jupiter, especially given the prominence of arma as a phallic metaphor in the \textit{Satyricon}.\textsuperscript{29} Jupiter is inert and silent: if seduction is in speech, then, doubly impotent. Circe's sexiness is in her speech as much as her appearance, as Encolpius goes on to detail (127.5): “when she was saying these things, such grace adorned her voice as she spoke, so sweet a sound caressed the air as it was struck, that you would have thought the harmony of the Sirens was singing out through the breeze. The whole sky somehow shone brighter upon me as I marvelled, and it occurred to me to ask the goddess' name” (\textit{haec ipsa cum dicret, tanta gratia concilabat vocem loquentis, tam dulcis sonus}.

\textsuperscript{28} See Courtney (2001), 192-3 (although he argues against this interpretation).
\textsuperscript{29} Schmeling (2011), 482.
pertemptatum mulcebat aera, ut putares inter auras canere Sirenum concordiam. itaque miranti
toto mihi caelo clarium nescio quid relucente libuit deae nomen quaerere). Here, the vital
Odyssean intertext is revealed, as Circe introduces herself. Rather than Circe's appearance, it is
now her voice that is the fetish object; indeed, the voice itself is described in erotic terms, a
sweet sound (dulcis sonus) “caressing” the air (mulcebat). Again, it is a part of Circe that is
eroticized, and it is her words of seduction that have the capacity to change the quality of the
light itself. As Hart notes of the negotiations prior to an s/m scene: “the deliberations prolong
and heighten the erotic exchange itself. In this sense they are not merely preparatory, rather they
are indications that sexual desire is already in play before the “acts” are enacted. In fact the
speech acts emphatically enact the libidinal exchange”.30 The “libidinal exchange” between
Circe and Encolpius is, in fact, almost entirely conducted verbally, given the repeated
interruption of the sexual act itself by Encolpius' impotence. It is verbal, visual, and (briefly)
physical forepleasures that draw Encolpius' attention: it is in these forepleasures that the
libidinal energy of the narrative is invested. An inert, impotent Jupiter gives way to feminized
speech; the old gods are obsolete. What would have happened if Odysseus had given in to the
siren’s song, allowed himself to dwell forever in a space of circularity and delay, with (the
“original”) Circe, with the sirens, with Calypso, forget his mission, just as Aeneas is repeatedly
tempted to? What if “mythomania”, rather than pointing to the mythomaniac’s castration and
inadequacy, allows an identification with new versions of these mythical characters, perverse
doublets that explore roads not taken, lands of feminized plenitude in which the original heroes
could not dwell because a teleology they could not resist – lest they become other than
themselves – forced them elsewhere? Yet again, the novel gives epic a second run, a chance to
play out in a way it never could before.

30 Hart (1998), 152.
The Jupiter/epic theme is deepened by the interposition of a second poem immediately after Circe “embraces Encolpius and draws him down in arms softer than feathers” (*implicitumque me brachiis mollioribus pluma deduxit, 127.8*), an act that already links her with the Jupiter of the previous poem, who failed to “hide his white hair in feathers” upon the sight of Circe (127.8):

Idaeo quales fudit de vertice flores
terra parens, cum se concessō iunxit amori
Iuppiter et toto concepit pectore flammās,
emiciere rosae violaeque et molle cyperon,
albaque de viridi riserunt lilia prato:
talis humus Venerem molles clamavit in herbas,
candidiorque dies secreto favit amori.

The kinds of flowers that mother earth poured forth from the peak of Ida, when Jupiter joined himself in lawful love and took up the flame in his entire breast – roses shone out, violets too, and the tender galingale, and white lilies smiled from the green meadow – it was soil like that that summoned Venus to the soft grass, and a brighter day looked kindly upon hidden love.

The second poem, however, returns the agency of embracing to Jupiter, and replays the famous *Iliadic* seduction scene (*Il. 14.153-353*). Here, the “fire inside” promised by the first poem bursts into life. The “brighter day” recalls Encolpius' perception of the sun shining more brightly upon hearing Circe's voice. Yet, as commentators have noted, the narrative, in which Circe pulls down Encolpius to the ground, rather than vice versa, contrasts both the poem in the *Satyricon* and the scene in the *Iliad*, where Zeus takes the lead. The feathered Circe of the prose has become the Jupiter of the verse. The sequence runs as follows: Jupiter is an inert, mute, impotent myth, lacking the necessary feathered disguise; Circe is the feathered sexual aggressor, and thus morphs into the Jupiter of the second poem, dragging Encolpius to the ground and usurping the role of the Homeric Zeus. All this fits very well with Deleuze's account of Masoch:

the father is invalidated and expelled, while the mother, lacking nothing, takes on his symbolic authority, of which he is divested. Encolpius, on the other hand, is the impotent one here, lacking his *arma* just like Jupiter in the first poem. In this sense he resembles the father – the ultimate Father – and therefore another of Deleuze's propositions, that it is the “father image” in the masochist that is “miniaturized, beaten, ridiculed, and humiliated”, is brought to mind. In these terms, the erotic interaction is “successful”: the impotent Jupiter of the first poem is replaced by Circe-Jupiter in the second, which tells a tale of amor triumphant, although without any mention of phallic penetration. It is a case, rather, of the displaced eroticism of the *locus amoenus*, which has the function of absorbing and expressing many of the sexual connotations that epic decorum does not narrate outright.

But, of course, Circe does not consider any of this a success. After a lacuna in which Encolpius presumably fails to get an erection, Circe demands to know what is wrong with her: is it her breath, her unwashed armpits? Is she ugly or unkempt, somehow blemished? Encolpius, the culprit, is seized by a guilty blush and rendered strengthless, reasoning that he must have been poisoned (128.2): “For my part, suffused with a guilty blush, I lost whatever strength I might still have had, and as though my whole body were weakened, I said, “I beg you, my queen, please do not add to my miseries. I have been poisoned.” *(perfusus ego rubore manifesto etiam si quid habueram virium, perdidi, totoque corpore velut laxato “quaeso,” inquam, “regina, noli suggillare miserias. veneficio contactus sum.”*) Notably, Circe does not lose her veneer of sovereign power after Encolpius has failed to perform sexually. He still addresses her as *regina*, and places no blame on her. There is a marked contrast here to the way impotence is treated in Horace's *Epodes*: two of these poems, 8 and 12, describe in grotesque detail the physical failings

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32 Deleuze (1989), 60.
33 On the eroticism of the epic *locus amoenus*, see Segal (1969), which discusses Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (and further on the eroticism of Ovidian *loca amoenae*, Hinds [2002]).
of hideous old women to whom the poet fails to respond sexually. Disgust is the reason for
impotence; the women are to blame, women for whom no man could be expected to get hard.
These poems treat their female subjects with the heights of sadistic voyeurism: the poet attempts
to assert control, exaggerating sexual difference and honing in on breasts and anus, which fail to
arouse noble penises. Blame is assigned: it is the fault of the women, and the man's impotent
response is only natural. The invective punishes, exposing and humiliating its targets. It seems
that Circe is familiar with this kind of discourse, and throws it in Encolpius' face, pre-empting
his reaction. She expects a sadist, but gets a masochist instead. Encolpius is still stuck in the
wrong genre, satisfied with epic's deferred sexuality.

Encolpius' reaction to Circe's tirade, and the poem he recites, are particularly telling for
his mindset regarding desire (128.5-6):

ego contra damnatus et quasi quodam visu in horrorem perductus interrogare
animum meum coepi, an vera voluptate fraudatus essem.
nocere soporifera veluti cum somnia ludunt
errentes oculos effossaque protulit aurum
in lucem tellus: versat manus improba furtum
thesaurosoque rapit, sudor quoque perluit ora
et mentem timor altus habet, ne forte gravatum
excutiat gremium secreti conscius auri:
mox ubi fugerunt elusam gaudia mentem
veraque forma redit, animus, quod perdidit, optat
atque in praeterita se totus imagine versat.

I, for my part, was condemned, and, terrified as though I had seen some vision, I
begun to ask of myself whether I had been defrauded of true pleasure.
Just like sleep-bearing dreams at night deceive the wandering eyes, and the dug-
up earth brings gold out into the light: the wicked hand paws at the spoils and
snatches the treasure, sweat drenches the face and a profound fear takes hold of
the mind, that someone aware of the hidden gold might perhaps shake out the
weighed-down lap. Soon, when the delights have fled the tricked mind and the
true shape of things has returned, the heart wants what it has lost, and fixates
entirely upon the image of what has gone.

34 On the sexual invective of these poems, see Richlin (1992), 109-16; Henderson (1999), 93-113.
Encolpius is stunned, and must ask himself whether he has been “defrauded of true pleasure”.

But what, indeed, would “true pleasure” constitute? He has been unable to find voluptas robusta with Circe, but such “consummation” is, for the masochistic aesthetic, the least important part of the enterprise. Such is the voluptuous detail with which he has described the moments leading up to his failure, that they become loci for eroticism in and of themselves. There is great pleasure for him in looking and in hearing, in embracing and in kissing, and particularly in versifying: the poetry comes thick and fast, describing a world somehow to the side of, but still deeply intertwined in, the “reality” he lives (which is, in any case, itself a piece of theatre insofar as everyone is acting). Where does pleasure lie? In penetration and consummation? Or the ravishing narrative itself? The expression ubi fugerunt elusam gaudia mentem is rather curious: Encolpius has just described the anxiety and guilt of possessing illicit spoils, which does not appear to have been a “joyful” experience. Yet guilt and punishment here merge with pleasure, and all the wakening ego in the poem wants is to have that treasure back, even with the anxiety it brought. This is a masochistic ego if ever there were one.

The poem here speaks incisively to the idea of desire as lack, and possession as guilt. Here, the broader frame of the narrative becomes relevant: before he met Circe, Encolpius was living in a state of fear, forever expecting the failure of the legacy-hunter plot, and with it punishment (125.4): “what a wretched life it is for outlaws: they're always waiting for their just deserts” (quam male est extra legem viventibus: quicquid meruerunt, semper exspectant). Here is the temporality of the masochist: he is in a constant state of arousal and expectation, awaiting a punishment that he feels he deserves. He cannot enjoy pleasure before he has been punished. The language of crime and punishment suffuses the poem: the hand that gropes for the treasure, described as something stolen, furtum, is wicked (improba), and the subject fears someone privy to the crime (conscius); not even the iron fist of the law so much as a fellow criminal, say a
canny legacy hunter. Again, lucre is linked to sex: sexual pleasure is a piece of hidden treasure, the shadow of a dream, something that eludes one's grasp and on account of which one must feel fear and guilt. The scenario might be described as a Lacanian-style sexual non-relation: *vera voluptas* turns out to be nothing more than an imago, already gone (*praeterita*), misrecognized as the object of one's searching grasp. Encolpius has been dwelling in the realm of the imaginary, where his ideals find their embodiment in Circe, an image, a piece of art, and a name; when genital sexuality interposes, the result is shock and horror. It is as though Circe, in becoming Jupiter, has brought the father's law along with her, the father's demand for phallic potency. The non-phallic forepleasures of looking, listening, promising, and embracing have abstracted desire from the genitals, causing it to flow through the entire body, but this queerly fluid, masochistic dynamic is shattered by the phallic demands of the paternal law.

Not all Petronian women demand phallic performance: Quartilla's libido is quite different, revolving around a kind of sadistic voyeurism that seems even to enjoy non-performance (Encolpius' impotence), phallic inadequacy (Giton's small prick), and subjection in general. But even in Circe's case, it is possible that she enjoys social dominance over her servile lovers as well as the fetishized marks of slavery on their bodies, and the demand for phallic performance is a way of further humiliating the target of her lust. Certainly, as Schmeling suggests, her indignant initial reaction to Encolpius' impotence is rhetorically balanced: she plays a role, much as Ascyltos merely “pretends to be offended” at Encolpius' sexualized invective much earlier in the novel (*inhorsescere se finxit Ascyltos, 9.7*). Like an actor, she practices her facial expressions in the mirror, wondering where her performance has fallen short. Her desire, at least according to Chrysis, is linked to the social inferiority of her lovers,

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36 Slater (1990), 125.
and thus her investment in the role of *domina*. She receives Encolpius as an effeminate, pampered, be-wigged, mincing whore of a man, and eventually she has him whipped, thrown out, and spat upon by the “dregs of her household” (*familiaeque sordidissimam partem*, 132.3). How can she kiss the scars of the whip if there are no scars to kiss? Her treatment of the “slave” Polyaenus might be seen as a way to force him into an even closer resemblance of her sexual ideal, the battered, scarred, dusty muleteer or gladiator. On ship, the shaving of heads and eyebrows and false branding turned Encolpius and Giton into slaves; Circe's imposition of whip marks is in some ways similar, writing social status on the flesh, oversaturating it with signification. The boundaries between the “real” and the performed are continually fragile and permeable: Encolpius is “just” pretending to be a slave, but the beating – the kind of beating that only a slave could legitimately suffer – is real. In a text that so insistently thematizes the permeability of the real and the performed in such a way as to suggest that everything is performed, readings that suggest this is all just a game and not to be taken seriously do not seem adequate.

In accordance with the masochistic investment in prolongation and repetition, the entire performance is repeated all over again. Encolpius and Circe exchange letters: she asserts that she has “played for too long in the shadow of pleasure” (*in umbra voluptatis diutius lusi*, 129.5), and mocks Encolpius as though physically paralyzed and as good as dead. Her mirror and her reputation do not lie (*nec speculum mihi nec fama mentitur*, 129.9). Encolpius' response is, like his poems, exceptionally telling (130.1-6):

*Polyaenos Circae salutem. fateor me, domina, saepe peccasse; nam et homo sum et adhuc iuvenis. numquam tamen ante hunc diem usque ad mortem deliqui. habes confitentem reum: quicquid iussoris, merui. prodigionem feci, hominem occidi, templum violavi: in haec facinora quaeque supplicium. sive occidere placit, ferro meo venio; sive verberibus contenta es, curro nudus ad dominam. illud unum memento, non me sed instrumenta peccasse. paratus miles arma non habui.*
Polyaenos greets Circe. I confess, mistress, that I have often done wrong; for I
am but human, and still young. But never before this day have I committed
mortal sin. You have your defendant, confessing: I have earnt whatever you bid.
I committed treason, I killed a man, I despoiled a temple; seek punishment for
these crimes. If you want to kill me, I come with my sword; if you are content
with beatings, I run naked to my mistress. Just remember one thing: I did not do
wrong, but my tools. Although I was a ready soldier, I had no weapons. I do not
know who caused this turmoil. Perhaps my mind got ahead of the delay of my
body; perhaps, while I desired everything, I used up the pleasure by dallying. I
cannot discover what I did. You bid me to beware of paralysis, as though the
thing which has taken away the means for me to possess you could grow worse.
Here is the summary of my apology: I will please you, if you allow me to right
my wrong.

The response is written in the form of a confession:37 immediately, we find Encolpius writing in
the judicial register. The letter is peppered with legalistic language: fateor, pecasse, deliqui,
confitentem reum, facinora, supplicium, excusationis, culpam, emendare. Encolpius adopts the
abject position of the confessor, which, as Schmeling notes, is unusual in Roman terms: “to
confess is seen by the Romans as a form of dementia or as absolute surrender”.38 Here, again, is
the masochist's guilt, his seeking of punishment, here expressed in graphic terms: he will supply
the sword to kill him; he will run nude to his mistress for beatings. Given the sacrosanctity of
the Roman citizen body, Encolpius here adopts the slave role with force and enthusiasm. Roman
elegists might have played with the servitium amoris trope, but they were not actually literally
disguising themselves as slaves. Encolpius thus lives a literary trope, as so often happens in this

37 Thus, scholarly discussion has focused heavily on what, if anything, Polyaenus' letter can tell us about the
content of the missing parts of the text (the heart longs for what is lost, as Encolpius would put it). Schmeling
(1994-5) argues that it is entirely metaphorical, a view which is reflected also in his commentary; I find much of
value in such an argument, given the intensely metaphorical and theatrical way the Satyrica treats sex.
38 Schmeling (2011), 496.
I will further flesh out the significance of Encolpius' slave-role in discussion to come. But the two letters point to something else: again, the predominance of forepleasure in the erotic dynamic between Circe and Polyaenus. He writes: “perhaps my mind got ahead of the delay of my body; perhaps, while I desired everything, I used up the pleasure by dallying” (*forsitan animus antecessit corporis moram, forsitan dum omnia concupisco, voluptatem tempore consumpsi*). Here, he explicitly acknowledges the centrality of delay, desire's transcendence of the body: that is to say, the masochist's fantasy, his strong investment in anticipation. The word *voluptas* appears repeatedly elsewhere in the Circe episode: during the first dalliance, Encolpius relates how he and Circe kissed and embraced, “seeking a robust pleasure” (*in hoc gramine pariter compositi mille osculis lusimus, quaerentes voluptatem robustam*, 127.10); he asks himself afterwards whether he has been cheated of “true pleasure” (*vera voluptas*, 128.5); Circe complains in her letter of having “played too long in the shadow of pleasure (*in umbra voluptatis diutius lusi*, 129.4); in the aftermath of the whole affair, Proselenos derisively asks what kind of man could “rise from Circe's bed without pleasure” (*qualem putas esse qui de Circes toro sine voluptate surrexit?* 134.9). *Voluptas*, even unqualified, thus seems almost to be (re)defined as “penetrative intercourse”. Encolpius' letter suggests that he effaced penetrative sex by anticipation and tension, his fantasies overleaping the constraints of his body. Circe views this privileging of forepleasure as a ghost of “real” pleasure, that erotic “play” that is so ambiguous elsewhere in the text. Circe and Proselenos apparently cannot imagine pleasure without phallic consummation, denying Encolpius the enjoyment of *voluptas*, which is conceived of as almost a limited resource, surprisingly fragile and ghost-like. The easy assurance of the normative masculine active-penetrative role has been shattered; its contingency is far more visible than the mystifying veiling of the phallus would allow.
Encolpius' own experience, however, is different. During his second “failed” encounter with Circe, he confidently invites her to “just try him”, and ravishes her.... with kisses (131.11): “throwing myself bodily into her embrace, with no witchcraft preventing me, I enjoyed kisses to satiety” (totoque corpore in amplexum eius immissus non praecantatis usque ad satietatem osculis fruor). One gets the impression, in almost all of Encolpius' descriptions of his sexual activity, that he would be fully satisfied with gazes, kisses, and ardent embraces alone. The embrace is for him a kind of bondage that joins two desiring bodies together and effaces sexual difference. That this is the case is nicely demonstrated by a passage that follows in the manuscript tradition, headed “Encolpius speaking about the boy Endymion” (132.1): “the very beauty of the body called me to it and led me to venereal delights. Now lips smacked with numerous kisses, now entwined hands discovered every kind of love, now bodies bound in mutual embrace brought about a veritable mixing of souls” (ipsa corporis pulchritudine me ad se vocante trahebat ad venerem. iam pluribus osculis labra crepitabant, iam implicitae manus omne genus amoris invenerant, iam alligata mutuo ambitu corpora animarum quoque mixturam fecerant). There are several possibilities as to what happened to the text: the passage may be displaced from elsewhere, and may describe an encounter with Giton, hence the caption, or it may be in the right place, describing the encounter with Circe, and the caption mistaken. But it is highly significant that we are unable to tell: Encolpius describes sexual encounters with Giton and with Circe in precisely the same way. Lips, hands, souls do not have a gender. This is a diffuse, non-genital eroticism, wandering across the body's surface: sadomasochistic eroticism is often described precisely as such. Encolpius says here that “entwined hands found every kind of love”: that is to say, there was nothing lacking, despite the absence of any mention of genital sexuality. Just as Circe's kisses sate him, and just as he “fulfils his wishes to an enviable degree”

with Giton without penetration, here his pleasure resides in a non-genital merging of bodies. The penetration mandate seems to come from without, at the behest of others. And yet “successful” penetrative sex is relatively rare in the text. We are left with a situation that is something of a paradox: Encolpius' diffuse, delayed, “masochistic” sexuality is the only kind that results in fruition for him, but it remains marginal, ghostly, and dreamlike, whereas the actual dream, the unattainable fantasy, is normative penetrative sex. The process of fully inhabiting that failure, of avowing “perverse” non-penetrative sexuality, is incomplete: as so often elsewhere, we see a kicking against the borders of normativity resulting in something straining at the seams.

The third aspect of Deleuze's analysis of Masoch mentioned above is the centrality of the contract: the mutual, consensual agreement that creates the relationship of dominance and submission, and that generates a kind of law, according to which the woman usurps the father's power and becomes herself a legal agent rather than an object. When we turn to Petronius, there are several factors to take into account: Circe and Encolpius do not create a formal “contract”, but some of their interaction is conducted in a quasi-contractual vein. In particular, Encolpius' first approach to Circe and his agreement to “give up” Giton establishes a ritual frame for their interaction: Encolpius deals with Circe as though with a goddess, and Roman dealings with divinities are frequently legalistic. Further, Encolpius' letter to Circe establishes a form of consent for her treatment of him, even though “consent” is near-meaningless in the context of master-slave relations, given the slave's lack of autonomy over his body. Here, his histrionic performance of slavery collides with the judicially-toned “confession”, resulting in a merging of the theatrical and the judicial, two primary modes of masochistic – and Roman imperial – practice. But before proceeding to examine Encolpius and Circe's relationship in particular, it is necessary to establish the parameters of the game, and begin to tease out the twisted thread of discursive contexts at play.
The interaction of Circe and Encolpius, as it happens, is already framed by a pre-existing contract: namely, that between Eumolpus on the one hand, and Encolpius and Giton on the other. Eumolpus introduces his legacy hunter plot as a mime, and implores Encolpius and Giton to accept him as *dominus*: both a slave owner, and the person in charge of a troupe of actors. Insofar as actors possess *infamia* and are thus legally something less than full citizens, the two meanings blur into each other. They agree, without hesitation (117.5-6):

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nemo ausus est artem damnare nihil auferentem. itaque ut duraret inter omnes tutum mendacium, in verba Eumolpi sacramentum iuravimus: uri, vinciri, verberari ferroque necari, et quicquid alius Eumolpus iussisset. tanquam legitimi gladiatores domino corpora animasque religiosissime addicimus. post peractum sacramentum serviliter ficti dominum consalutamus.
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Nobody dared to find fault with this harmless plot. Then, so that the lie would remain safe amongst us, we swore an oath of allegiance to Eumolpus' words: to be burned, bound, beaten, killed by the sword, and anything else that Eumolpus ordered. Like real gladiators we most solemnly turned over our bodies and minds to our master. After swearing the oath, we took up a servile pose and saluted our master.

Encolpius and Giton willingly give themselves into slavery; the *sacramentum* becomes a conspiratorial pact. The agreement comes about with remarkable casualness: Encolpius simply notes that nobody could find fault with a plan that would do no damage (*nihil auferentem*). That is to say, they have nothing to lose. Contracted slavery was a legitimate means of social survival and even ascension at Rome: within the *Satyricon*, Hermeros at the Cena contracted himself out as a slave, and now claims to be debt-free and to live proudly, defending himself from what he perceives as the mockery of Ascyltos (57.4-5):

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ipse me dedi in servitutum et malui civis Romanus esse quam tributarius. et nunc spero me sic vivere, ut nemini iocus sim. homo inter homines sum, capite aperto ambulo; assem aerarium nemini debo; constitutum habui nunquam; nemo mihi
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40 On contracted slavery at Rome, see Silver (2011).
in foro dixit: 'redde quod debes'.

I handed myself over into slavery, and I preferred to be a Roman citizen rather than to pay tribute. And now I hope to live in such a way as to be nobody's laughing stock. I am a man among men, I walk with my head bare; I don't owe anyone a penny in debt; I have never had a date in court; nobody has said to me in the forum, “give me what you owe.”

The gladiatorial sacramentum is a pact that is simultaneously dubious and admirable, as Seneca's assessment neatly expresses (Ep. 37.1):

> quod maximum vinculum est ad bonam mentem, promisisti virum bonum, sacramento rogatus es. deridebit te, si quis tibi dixerit mollem esse militiam et facilem. nolo te decipi. eadem honestissimi huius et illius turpissimi auctoramenti verba sunt: 'uri, vinciri ferroque necari'.

You have promised to be a good man, you have enrolled under oath: this is the strongest chain to a sound understanding. You are being mocked if anyone tries to claim this is an effeminate or easy sort of soldiering. I do not want you to be deceived. The words of this most honourable contract are the same as those of that most disgraceful one: “to be burned, to be bound, and slain by the sword.”

His correspondent Lucilius has sworn to become a “good man” (vir bonus), and his oath to do so is supposedly identical to the gladiatorial oath, the difference being that Lucilius must be ready to die willingly, whereas gladiators agree to die even if unwilling, and he must never give up his arms or beg for mercy, both of which are options for gladiators (Ep. 37.2). The gladiatorial oath also resembles the soldier's oath: the gladiator is a debased soldier, always too close for comfort to the ideals of military masculinity. Gladiator and actor are the doubles of soldier and orator: lose focus for but a moment, and the former morphs into the latter, or vice versa.

Encolpius and Giton are therefore actors, pretending to be slaves, in a gladiatorial

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41 On (what relatively little is known of) the soldier's sacramentum, see Phang (2008), 117-20.
42 Further on the ambivalent Roman relationship to gladiators, see especially Barton (1993).
manner. But on ship they have already performed as Eumolpus' slaves, and at Croton this ad hoc arrangement is solemnized, in a fashion that Encolpius describes as “most scrupulous”, *religiosissime*. Immediately afterwards, he feels the need to emphasize that they are “just” pretending: they feign a servile pose, *serviliter ficti*. But for men in their circumstances, an actual slave contract is not at all out of the question, as Hermeros demonstrates. The section of the text from Lichas' ship to Croton, in particular, plays with the boundaries of fiction and reality, the performance and the ontology. The very fact that it is difficult to tell what precisely the social status of the protagonists is in the first place speaks to this ambiguity. Hart's discussion of the performativity of s/m points to this kind of ambiguity between the real and the performed as a hallmark of sadomasochistic eroticism, which attempts to “[test] and [transgress] the line between the real and the phantasmic”. And if slavery is a performance at Croton, the gestus of the free man is as much a performance as well, when Encolpius vows to take revenge on Ascytlos (*Sat.* 81). The use of the gladiatorial oath is a kind of double appropriation: the oath as taken by gladiators is already an offshoot of the “real” military oath, while Encolpius and co reappropriate as a criminal pact what is already debased, causing the proliferation of parodic copies. Encolpius' slave “performance” vis-a-vis Circe, then, is already a complexly layered gesture wherein the sense of the “original” is in danger of being lost altogether, and the characters must rebuild new ways of being and interacting.

When Encolpius comes to Circe, he is already experienced at playing the slave. From the outset, then, he differs from the elegist, who is perhaps the closest immediate model in Latin literature for a man who professes abjection towards a woman. The characters that elegiac poets write in the first person are upper-class men, for whom military service and politics are expected

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43 Slater (1990), 123.
44 For this ambiguity, see Richlin (2009), 86-8.
occupations. The performance of *mollitia* and *servitium amoris* is strongly tropological, and fetishistic scopophilia frequently edges into sadistic voyeurism.\(^{46}\) Another major difference from elegiac poetry is the absence of the husband as rival: Circe seems to be a *matrona*, that is, a married woman (she is labelled as such at 126.10-11; 132.2), but her husband is never mentioned. Giton is the closest thing to the figure of rival, and, as discussed in the first chapter, Circe adopts a peculiarly liberal attitude towards his presence. Further, as mentioned, Encolpius' narrative of his affair with Circe does not oppose itself to epic as erotic elegy conventionally does: rather, he attempts to place himself within epic, in a sense queering it from the inside out as he reverse-engineers a masochistic eroticism out of its conventions. Thus, something quite different is happening in the *Satyricon* than in elegiac poetry, even if the *servitium amoris* trope and Encolpius' asseveration of devotion to Circe have the air of familiarity.

The “contract” between Encolpius and Circe is built up in parts, beginning with the approach of Chrysis, and her act of mistaking Encolpius for a prostitute (not the first time, of course, that someone has made this mistake; cf. again the incident with the vegetable seller, *Sat.* 7). Deleuze argues that the masochistic contract transforms the woman from an object of exchange to a party of the agreement;\(^{47}\) this is certainly the case in Petronius, where Circe negotiates with Chrysis as proxy, but in a sense Encolpius is the object of exchange here, even as he trades himself, without the intermediary of a pimp. When he meets Circe, Giton in turn becomes an object of the contract, to be offered up to the goddess Circe. Here, again, is the exchange in full (127.1-3):

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mox digitis gubernantibus vocem: "si non fastidis, inquit, feminam ornatam et hoc primum anno virum expertam, concilio tibi, o iuvenis, sororem. habes tu quidem et fratrem — neque enim me piguit inquirere — sed quid prohibit et
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sororem adoptare? eodem gradu venio. tu tantum dignare et meum osculum, cum libuerit, agnoscere. — immo, inquam, ego per formam tuam te rogo, ne fastidias hominem peregrinum inter cultores admittere. invenies religiosum, si teadorari permissis. ac ne me iudices ad hoc templum [amoris] gratis accedere, dono tibi fratrem meum.

Then, gesticulating as she spoke, she said: “If you won't disdain a distinguished woman who has only experienced a man for the first time this year, I offer you a sister, young man. You have a brother too – I wasn't ashamed to inquire – but what's to stop you from adopting a sister too? I come on the same terms. All you have to do is deign to accept my kiss, when you like.” I said, “On the contrary: I entreat you by your beauty, do not disdain to accept a foreigner amongst your worshippers. You will find me devoted, if you allow yourself to be worshipped. And lest you think I am approaching the temple empty-handed, I give you my brother.”

Here, the terms of their encounter are set out. Before they have sex, they must figure out how they relate to each other, negotiating in a quasi-contractual manner. Encolpius and Circe are speaking at different levels: she proposes an adoption; he corrects her and offers himself up as a worshipper instead, with Giton as collateral. Whereas a contract presupposes equality, mutuality, and reciprocity between the two parties, Encolpius refuses to look upon Circe as an equal, instead aggrandizing her to the level of a divinity. He turns the masochist's creed up to eleven: to Circe he grants all authority, and the limitless power of divinity. Immediately prior to these negotiations, he had recited (or inserted after the fact) his first poem about Jupiter; specifically, Jupiter's impotence. With the god dethroned, the goddess Circe takes his place. The masochistic contract is essentially an agreement between equal parties that involves one party ceding authority to the other; Encolpius prefers that the parties be unequal from the start, while Circe claims to desire the equality of siblinghood. She says nothing of her desire for Encolpius qua slave, in which capacity she would wield all legal authority over him in any case. Encolpius proceeds to reverse the formula by which Chrysis made her initial proposal: whereas Chrysis mistook him for a prostitute and requested that he grant his services gratis, here he places
himself in Circe's debt instead, insisting that he has not come without due payment, namely Giton. The transaction between the two ascends in sublimity by stages: first, it is prostitution; then, it is adoption; finally, it becomes religious devotion. Circe plays the part of rich, virginal woman, Homeric reflex, and finally cruel mistress; thus, the sublimity is peeled away, revealing the social inequality that was the basis of their interaction all along.

But Encolpius, unlike the pushy Masochistic heroes, remains abject throughout, maintaining his stance as lowly worshipper and slave. In his letter quoted above, he declares his willingness to be punished by sword and fist (130.3): *sive occidere placet, ferro meo venio; sive verberibus contenta es, curro nudus ad dominam*. He does not merely accept his punishment; rather, he will run eagerly towards it. Given the continual use of the sword-as-phallus motif throughout the novel, his assertion here that he will give over his “sword” to Circe in order to slay him again suggests the transfer of the paternal, phallic law to Circe. However, to push the metaphor a little further, his declaration that he, as a soldier, had no weapons (*paratus miles arma non habui*, 130.4), although intended as a declaration of temporary failure, hints at a pre-existing phallic inadequacy: he had no phallic potency to give in the first place. In a text where the father is so strikingly absent, the location of legal authority is in doubt from the beginning. In any case, the legalistic language discussed above places Circe firmly in the position of enforcer. Thus, the letter is a quasi-contractual agreement: I have deserved punishment, and so you may punish me as you wish. Indeed, punishment finally comes: after Encolpius' second “failure”, Circe orders her attendants to flog Encolpius and the dregs of her household to spit on him. His response is telling (132.4): “I covered my eyes with my hands, and poured forth no entreaties, since I knew what I had earned” (*oppono ego manus oculis meis, nullisque effusis precibus, quia sciebam quid meruissem*). His reaction here is the upshot of the “contracts” he has made with Eumolpus and with Circe. He became Eumolpus' slave; he assisted in the legacy-
hunting plot, leading him to expect punishment; he confessed his crimes to Circe, and gave himself up to her whims; finally, he receives what he has been expecting all along, and his reaction is resignation and shame.

But what is particularly interesting here is the way in which Circe has gradually come to replace Eumolpus as master and enforcer. Encolpius is pretending to be Eumolpus' slave, but his allegiance to a domina is to Circe, and it is to her he turns for punishment. The terms of his gladiatorial oath were *uri, vinciri, verberari ferroque necari* (117.5); in his letter to Circe, he specifically opens himself up to beating and slaying by the sword, his language echoing the oath he has taken to Eumolpus. He swore to Eumolpus that he would do “whatever he ordered” (*quicquid aliud Eumolpus iussisset*, 117.5); again, echoing himself, he writes to Circe that “I have earnt whatever you order” (*quicquid iussisset, merui*, 130.1). His slave-act meets its fulfilment as he submits himself to Circe's punishment. And there is nothing pretend about the beatings: they leave marks, which he endeavours to hide from Eumolpus and Giton (132.6). Circe has succeeded in imposing whip-marks upon him, like those which Chrysis claims women of her ilk delight in kissing. Circe and Encolpius co-operate in transforming him into a slave; the “act” is dangerously real. If a mark of a free man is his bodily inviolability and immunity to beating, a beating alone threatens to transform him into a slave. When does the act end? Has Encolpius actually become a slave in reality? As mentioned, for a slave to claim that his master may do whatever s/he wishes to him is otiose, since such is the condition of being a slave. Encolpius here passionately claims slavery. Again, unlike the elegists who perform a somewhat similar rhetorical gesture, he allows himself to be treated as a slave by a woman who thinks he is one, and accepts this treatment as his due.

The masochistic contract takes on a different tone in a society in which slaves are a ubiquitous social reality, and in which free men can literally sign themselves over to slavery.
But, again, Encolpius eagerly accepts his punishment in a way that shatters any illusion of a free man's proud self-sovereignty. Where a servile past is for the former self-contracted slave Hermeros a stigma that must be explained away, a servile present and future is for Encolpius merely another tool, apparently even morally neutral in his estimation. His masochistic desire for punishment and submission, not even slightly sublimated but made perfectly overt in his letter to Circe, drives his self-manipulation of his social status.

Encolpius is, in a sense, learning from his own narrative, and from the experiences he has already had: at the Cena, he witnessed the way in which servility can lead to social ascension, and at Croton, he employs the slave-role for both social and sexual purposes. In the context of the contract specifically, he may have learned something from the resolution of the fracas on Lichas' ship, which deploys the judicial in a fascinating way. An initial quasi-declamatory exchange between Eumolpus as defense lawyer and Lichas as prosecutor ends up in the outbreak of a parodic “civil war”, until finally Tryphaena enacts a truce, and a treaty is signed. A personal dispute expands to involve two “nations”, and then contracts again to hone in on only four parties, Lichas, Tryphaena, Encolpius, and Giton, those mentioned in the treaty signed by Eumolpus in his capacity as general (dux, 109.1). The terms are as follows: Tryphaena must not punish Giton for any wrong done against her in the past, nor may she force upon him any hug, kiss, or erotic embrace that he does not desire, unless she pays a hundred denarii (tu nihil imperabis puero repugnanti, non amplexum, non osculum, non coitum venere constrictum, nisi pro qua re praeentes numeraveris denarios centum, 109.2), while Lichas must not direct insulting words or facial expressions at Encolpius, nor “inquire where he sleeps at night” (quaeres ubi nocte dormiat, 109.3), at the penalty of two hundred denarii for each breach of the terms. The issue under dispute was, as it happens, whatever Encolpius and Giton had done earlier in the text to wrong Lichas and Tryphaena (the relevant section of the text is missing, so
we do not know what exactly they did). But the treaty becomes almost a prostitution contract: it is worded in such a way that it appears Tryphaena can sexually exploit Giton as much as she wishes, provided that she pays (and Giton, at any rate, never makes much of a show of resisting her embraces). The prohibition against Lichas asking where Encolpius sleeps parallels the non-sexual harassment clause directed to Tryphaena. The sums listed in the treaty can be read in two ways: either a penalty for breaking the treaty, or a payment rendered for sexual services. The former is apparently what is “intended”, but the latter is so close to the surface as to be barely suppressed. In this episode we see the sexualization of the contract, its ability to apportion sexual roles to particular parties, and the beginning of the transformation of Encolpius and Giton into slaves, here slave-prostitutes. Encolpius' interaction with Circe takes things further: not only does he portray himself as her slave, but as a worshipper owing her offerings. He is the one who will pay; she is the wronged party he must placate.

I hope, then, to have pointed to the subterranean presence of a non-phallic erotic dynamic in even this most obsessively penile of texts. Encolpius' enjoyment of non-penetrative, not necessarily genitaly-focussed forepleasures, combined with his surrender of agency to a woman, generates a streak of queer masochism that strains against the penetration mandate. That is not to say that it overcomes the penetration mandate, which remains strongly overt; rather, there is something about this episode that hints at a possible alternative emerging on the horizon. Out of failure comes the spark of another way of being – that, in a nutshell, is the basis of a queer approach to Petronius' spectacularly realized fictive world. Elsewhere in the text we have seen characters flirt with the parodic appropriation of aristocratic institutions like sublime brotherhood, marriage, and the repro-futurist molding of children after one's own image. What Encolpius does with Circe has some similarities with these kinds of appropriations, primarily in
the way that he uses epic to situate his masochistic fantasies in the space of respectability. His appropriation of the servile role, though, is quite another matter: he manipulates a debased social position without any immediately obvious sense of shame at doing so or at being perceived as servile. If Croton is the world anew, it would seem that here even slavery can be reinvented, played pseudonymously as something like a game that is precariously close to being not a game at all but a new reality.

How exactly did it all end? We will never know, barring some improbable miracle emerging from the sands of Egypt. We wake up from the dream, groping towards wholeness, left with memories, desires, and these broken pieces of a text that begins but never ends, sparks off initiatives but then discards them, points to something glimmering on the horizon we can squint at but never see clearly. The masochist's looping, lingering, delaying postponement of consummation is as sound a means of reading this kind of text as any; perhaps the sadist's demand for forward movement is even less tenable.
Conclusion

It would perhaps be remiss for a Petronianist to expect any conclusion at all, let alone a tidy one, or one that does not involve ethically defending cannibalism; nonetheless, convention demands that something must be said to place a bow on the oddly-shaped package.

Reading the *Satyricon* queerly and recuperatively, for plenitude rather than for lack, is a prodigious, productive enterprise, one that might have gone any number of other places. There are so many roads not taken, either because of lack or space or time or inability to fit them into the progress-narrative of a dissertation. My investigation into the sociality of the Encolpius-Ascyltos-Giton triangle, to give one example, could have gone in any number of other directions: I might have examined more closely the significance of triangulation in Encolpius' conceptualization of intimate relationships, especially given the central role of the triangle in one of queer theory's foundational texts, Eve Sedgwick's *Between Men*. I might also have pressed more closely the imbrication of fraternity with marriage as a way of describing the interaction amongst these men: ironically, in a queer dissertation, male-female marriage has ended up trumping male-male marriage, at least in terms of words expended. Another avenue might have been the role of Ascyltos as a mirror for Encolpius' masculinity, a doublet who nonetheless performs masculinity more effusively (thus thwarting himself anyway, because masculinity must not be seen to rely on effusive performance) and therefore does not offer an accurate reflection of Encolpius as much as an externalization of his ego-ideal. I could have spent more time on Lichas' ship, teasing out the convoluted configurations of intimate relationships that are revealed there, and their strange (non-)resolution first by formalized contract and then by death. Encolpius' blighted masculinity in general is a topic I might have exhausted several entire dissertations on in its own right: regretfully, I could not say more about
the witches and their manipulation of Encolpius' broken, failing masculine body-in-pain. His relationship with Giton alone, much as it has received attention in the secondary literature, deserves yet more careful examination from a perspective that does not attempt to reduce it to the norms of paederasty transgressed or upheld. The hows and whys of transgression are as important as the fact of transgression alone.

As it happened, I found myself tracing a few persistent motifs, in particular the end of reproductive futurity (and the normative family structure more generally), and the consequences of it being either disregarded or cynically manipulated. Holding the Satyricon in one hand and Edelman's No Future in another leads again and again to startling insights, about both the text itself, and the role of reproductive futurity in Roman society more broadly, not to mention the way that assumptions about reproductive futurity tend to slip under the radar in discussions of “the Roman family”. We have been trained extensively not to claim that there were gay people in the ancient world, whereas cultural assumptions about the role, purpose, or composition of this thing called “family” have gone less closely examined in many contexts; it has perhaps been too easy to say, for example, that Encolpius, Ascyltos, and Giton are “not a family, but a parody of one” and to leave it at that. This single theme undergirds all my chapters: the replacement of repro-futurity by brotherhood (chapter one), property transfer from master to slave (chapter two), legacy-hunting (chapter three), and non-penetrative, non-reproductive, masochistic heteroeroticism (chapter four), to mention only the major forms of relationality I have discussed.

A second, related, persistent motif is parodic reformulation, after Butler: doing something properly normative, but doing it askance, and thus making its contingency, and perhaps absurdity, visible (where a normativizing viewpoint might perceive the absurdity as residing with the putative inadequacy of the queer parody). The major examples here are queer fraternity,
Quartilla's illegitimately legitimate marriage ceremony, and the coiled-up bundle formed by the binding together of legacy-hunting, patronage, prostitution, and education, which strikes at the partially and poorly-sublimated sexualization and venality of Roman hierarchy and the Roman sense of duty. In general, the Satyricon is a text that is quite self-conscious about its metaphors, and insistent in its questioning of their actual metaphoricity. More than that: for a text that has such a pervy, porny reputation and a reception history as a piece of obscenity apt to be banned, the narrator is remarkably prudish, and wont to talk about sex overwhelmingly in metaphorical and euphemistic terms. Here is another persistent theme, a theme that must perhaps remain salient in almost every reading of the Satyricon: the narrator's opacity. If queerness is always on the horizon and lurking at the edges, this is even more the case in a text where the narrator is unable to read the motivations of those around him, and unwilling to acquiesce with their definitions of the world, often more capacious than his own. Quartilla gropes the unwilling Encolpius in her role as “father of the bride” as they watch their respective charges engaging in sex play that fails to make a marriage; Circe invites Encolpius to “adopt” multiple siblings and utilize the discourse of familial relation in order to ward off a jealous monomania, while Ascyltos, laughing, or sneering, all the while, wonders why everyone can’t just share; Trimalchio traps his guests in a labyrinth as he forces them to scrutinize the workings of his queerly-constructed household. Encolpius never quite sees anything clearly, but it may well be the case that he is not queer enough for the world he finds himself in, rather than too queer, as Conte would have it.

But continually, one is caught between loss and reinvention, and struck by the sense that the Satyricon's world is a world in process, just as queerness itself is frequently described as a

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1 On the text's history of censorship as obscene, see Richlin (2009).
thing ever in process, never completely finished, never tied up with a bow and a flourish, to labour my own metaphor (because if it were, one would need a new “queerness” to challenge its closedness, and thus the loop continues). Struggles and attempts, rather than victories and successes, are where the text resides. Failure is ubiquitous, but, with Halberstam, failure need not shut down. Just as we must live with a broken text (because there is literally nothing that one can do about the text's brokenness, short of a completely improbable windfall emerging from the sands of Oxyrhynchus, at which we would then grasp as though in a guilty dream), so we must be willing to try living in a broken world, resisting for a while the impulse to fix it in the image of what we think it ought to look like.

The representation of gender and sexuality in Roman literature is a far richer tapestry than reducing it to binarisms and phallocentrism would suggest, and the Satyricon itself is a particularly bright piece of this tapestry. In a world that is increasingly concerned with, and responsive to, the complexities of gender and sexuality, a return to the Roman past, in addition to the vital project of tracing the roots of bigotry, misogyny, and phobic responses to non-normativity in general, might also read for the ways in which queer responses to normativity struggle, flourish, or simply emerge in their multitudes, whether welcomed or not. “Everyone knows” about the “gay Greeks”, but what of the “queer Romans”? 
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