Modernism and postmodernism in Antiquity, and the (post-)modernist reception of the Classical: from the *Satyrica*-novel by Petronius to the *Satyricon*-opera by Bruno Maderna

Freddy Decreus taught his first course as the new professor of Latin Literature at Ghent University in 1986, when I started studying what was then still called 'Classical Philology'. His approach to ancient literature was totally different from what students of Latin and Greek were used to hearing from their secondary school teachers or from other university classicists at that time. He introduced us to structuralism and narratology, to Jungian analysis and feminist studies, to poststructuralism and beyond. His love for the theatre, for the opera and for the visual arts was clear from these first sessions (on Plautus, *Amphitryon*) and he introduced generations of Ghent students to the importance of the modern reception of the classical tradition in the arts, but equally to the rejection of the very concept of 'the classical' in contemporary cultural theory. Most importantly, he showed us that a 'de-classicized' Antiquity and its reception are perhaps even more fascinating than they already were before we were confronted with the postmodern turn. Freddy Decreus has had a crucial impact on the very survival of Latin and Greek Studies at Ghent University (by 1989 the number of first year students in Classical Philology had dropped to a one digit number) and he introduced radical changes to its very identity. On a more personal level, he supported young scholars to the best of his abilities, and his professional generosity combined with his life-long commitment to the stage were also the direct cause for this text, when he suggested my name to the Vlaamse Opera (Flemish Opera at Ghent and Antwerp) for the introduction on Petronius and Maderna's *Satyricon*.[1] It is with great pleasure and long grown gratitude that I have taken this subject up again, and turned my Dutch notes from 2004 into an English contribution for his well deserved Festschrift. I hope he will accept this article as it was written -in good humour- and smile, especially when he realizes that of the above mentioned methodologies I have used none -really- in writing this text.

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[1] The Flemish Opera staged a double performance of Maderna's *Venetian Journal* and his *Satyricon* in 2004: from June 15th to July 19th in Ghent and Antwerp. The conductor was Luca Pfaff, the director Georges Lavaudant, and the set was designed by Nicky Rieti. The 'lecturne' at which a first, much shorter, version of this paper was presented took place on June 14th.

The Neronian age and the post-classical/post-modernist experience

In a Festschrift-contribution written by Freddy Decreus[2] we can read his interpretation of the political and cultural context in which Petronius (most probably) wrote his *Satyrica* or *Satyricon (libri)*.[3] In an analysis of Light and Darkness in the Tragedies of Seneca, Decreus commented upon the Neronian era as an age of horror and a period of crucial transitions: "pensons à l'évolution de la langue, l'arrivée du christianisme à Rome, l'élaboration de l'éthique stoïcienne romaine, la consolidation de l'éducation antique qui mènera à l'idéal des *artes liberales* du Moyen-Âge, etc…"[4] The intellectual and political crisis brought about by such emperors as Nero and Caligula inspired the most astute minds to reflect about the perversity of absolute power and the problem of absolute evil. During the Second World War, Albert Camus would revert to Caligula (1944) to reflect upon these themes and to stage the modern sense of the absurd.[5] In this era the grand narratives of both ancient religion (mythology and traditional rituals) and philosophy (the moral and political rationalism of Platonism and Seneca's Stoicism) no longer offered any real answers to the problems people were facing. The myths, as Decreus has

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[2] F. DECREUS, *'Lumières et ténèbres' dans les tragédies de Sénèque. Un cas opposé à la tradition chrétienne?* in M. VAN UYTFANGHE/R. DEMEULENAERE (eds.), *Aevum inter utrumque: mélanges offerts à Gabriel Sanders, professeur émérite à l'Université de Gand*, Steenbrugge, 1991, p. 41-52. Gabriël Sanders, a specialist of 'Lux Perpetua' in Early Christian Epigraphy (see his *Licht en duisternis in de christelijke grafschriften: bijdrage tot de studie der Latijnse metrische epigrafie van de vroegchristelijke tijd*, Brussel, 1965), continued in that respect the work of the Ghent historian of religions Franz Cumont (1868-1947), whose œuvre is being re-edited in the Bibliotheca Cumontiana, published by C. BONNET, W. GEERTS, V. PIRENNE-DELFORGE and myself: *Lux Perpetua* appeared as the second volume of the Scripta Maiora in 2010 (Roma, AB & BHIR; Torino, Nino Aragno; Turnhout, Brepols) with a preface by A. MOTTE & B. ROCHETTE.

[3] We will use the culturally accepted title of *Satyricon* although *Satyrica* is probably historically correct, and will accept Petronius Arbiter, the Neronian courtier (TACITUS, *Annales* XVI, 18-19), as its author. For a (long) summary of the long debate about these two issues, see G. JENSSON, *The Recollections of Encolpius. The Satyrica of Petronius as Milesian Fiction*, Groningen, 2004, especially p. 3-26.

[4] F. DECREUS, *'Lumières et ténèbres' dans les tragédies de Sénèque*, p. 41-42.

[5] See F. DECREUS, *De 'Caligula' van Ivo van Hove: een waardige Camus van de jaren negentig* in *Documenta* 14/3, 1996, p. 173-186, and F. DECREUS, *Over Caligula en repertoiretheater. Een gesprek met Ivo van Hove* in *Documenta* 14/3, 1996, p. 187-197. See also F. DECREUS/R. STROOBANDT, *Elixir Gaulois: de herschrijving van Asterix en Vercingetorix of onze vergeten-ideologische blik op het verleden*, Gent, 2008, p. 7 on the thesis of A. WINTERLING, *Caligula. Eine Biographie,* München, 2003 that the madness of emperor Caligula was an invention (p. 175-180: "Die Erfindung des wahnsinnigen Kaisers"), a construction - as is every aspect of our 'knowledge' about Antiquity?

underlined many times, contain a psychological and a philosophical core to which each cultural period seems to revert but they are in constant need of reinterpretation and each period responds to them in their own way, expresses the confrontation with the ancient myths in its own artistic language. Whatever Seneca's goal was in writing his dramatic poetry, it had become pointless to look to art for any form of catharsis. Decreus quoted his predecessor Jozef Veremans (1919-2006) on these same tragedies, although he even went a step further and asked the question whether Seneca's dramas were indeed tragedies and whether the worldviews of stoicism and tragedy are philosophically compatible. But they both agreed that Seneca, in his poetry, reacted to an experience of absolute horror after which nothing could ever be the same again: "Le monde spirituel de Sénèque n'a plus rien de commun avec celui de la tragédie grecque. Intégré dans son temps, branché sur les événements horribles qui caractérisaient son époque, événements auxquels il s'est trouvé mêlé de par sa fonction, Sénèque ne veut ni provoquer la pitié ou la peur, ni souligner la situation tragique de l'homme: il se propose, dans ses tragédies fonctionnant comme *exempla*, de montrer ce que peut avoir d'horrible, voire de parfois répugnant chez telle personne un comportement entièrement négatif, ce qui doit provoquer non pas le *phobos*, mais l'horreur (*horror*)."[6]

Seneca and Petronius lived in what Freddy Decreus has called "a post-age" and in that sense the post-moral experience at the Neronian court and their post-classical art can be compared to our post-modern consciousness and culture. Our post-modern world-view has equally lost faith in the organizing principles of art and science - to limit our discussion to the intellectual realm. We would like to quote the way Decreus summarized the developments in the arts and in the humanities since the 1960s: "Most of the new methodologies which were developed since then, implied the death of one or other form of essentialism, the patriarchal order and the belief in progress. After the death of god, prophesied by Nietzsche in 1882 (*Die fröhliche Wissenschaft*), came the death of the traditional subject, as developed by Michel Foucault in *Les mots et les choses* (1966), later followed by the death of the author (Roland Barthes, *La mort de l'auteur*, 1968), the death of the character (Eleanor Fuchs, *The Death of Character*, 1996) and even the death of (representational) theatre (Hans-Thies Lehmann, *Postdramatisches Theater*, 1999). From this moment onwards many

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[6] J. VEREMANS, *Les tragédies de Sénèque comme exemples stoïques* in *Communication and Cognition* 9/1-2, 1976, p. 137-150; p. 139 quoted in F. DECREUS, *'Lumières et ténèbres'*, p. 49; Decreus also edited the Festschrift for Veremans: F. DECREUS/C. DEROUX (eds.), *Hommages à Jozef Veremans*, Bruxelles, 1986, and wrote, two decades later, the *In memoriam Jozef Renaat Maria Veremans (1919-2006)* in *Euphrosyne, Revista de Filologia Clássica* 35, 2007, p. 499-502.

Western-European intellectuals expressed radical doubts about Western humanism and its literary canon, but equally about the concept of living with one centre, one culture, one science, one religion. A profound scepticism was expressed against all types of 'monologism' (Bakhtin) and attempts to ignore 'heteroglossia' and complexity. In a world which seemed to lack any dominant external reference, every discourse was seen as double coded, ambiguous and variously constructed: as only one of many possible representations of reality (Foucault). Traditional history came to stand side by side with 'Metahistory', 'New Historicism' or 'Post-History' and this transition seemed to imply that traditional humanism was unmasked and replaced by a 'posthumanist' version, which would lead to a 'posthuman' future or even result in a 'transhuman' present."[7]

It is almost impossible to give an all-encompassing definition of postmodernism. As Paula E. Geyh noted in her survey article: "Few terms in the contemporary critical lexicon have been as vociferously debated and as persistently unstable in meaning and use as *postmodernism* and its various avatars, such as *postmodernity*."[8] French theory is notoriously and self-consciously 'difficult' and ambiguous. The main postmodern thinkers (Barthes, Baudrillard, Derrida, Foucault, Lacan, Lyotard,…) disagreed about almost everything and naturally also about the suggestion that they formed any kind of unity, the refusal of which is of course central to postmodernism in general. It is almost impossible to treat this movement in a few pages, let alone in a few lines, but for the purposes of these *Mélanges* it will suffice to list a few recurring themes and keep them in mind when we discuss Maderna and Petronius. We have already mentioned the lack of unity: the postmodernist feeling has a negative and a positive side in that the loss of a single centre is caused or at least compensated by the acceptance of a multi-centred, open system in which the claims made by fields or groups which were previously marginalized are accepted. This entails the deconstruction of canonical systems, of 'the classical' and the loss of cultural hierarchies or the (esthetic and other) criteria used to structure those hierarchies. There is no such thing as good or bad art, high or low culture. The boundaries between genres and between style registers have given way to erosion in postmodern culture. Hybridization between genres and

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[7] F. DECREUS, *Troje of de mythe van de metropool. Centripetale vs. centrifugale aspecten in een zoektocht naar Westerse identiteit* in D. PRAET (ed.), *'Us and them'. Opstellen over filosofie, politiek, religie en cultuur van de Griekse Oudheid tot Islam in Europa, ter ere van Herman De Ley*, Gent, 2008, p. 17-18.
[8] P. E. GEYH, *Postmodernism* in M. C. HOROWITZ (ed.), *New Dictionary of the History of Ideas*, vol. 5, Detroit, 2005, p. 1867-1870. See also F. DECREUS/A. M. MUSSCHOOT (eds.), *Postmodernisme: de fundering is dood, leve de fundering?*, Antwerpen, 1988.

styles is the result and a main feature of postmodern art. The playfulness this entails is not confined to form but also to content: there is no boundary between serious art carrying 'a message' and mindless entertainment. In fact, postmodernism would usually combine a post-ideological and post-religious loss of sense (incredulity toward 'grand narratives') with a sceptical philosophy of language. The link between literature and reality, between words and things, is a matter of convention as can be shown when we study different cultures, or different historical periods, and different social groups or different gender groups within the same period and culture. Discourse is thus definable and can be constructed, is even endlessly re-definable and can be reconstructed by any given group or -why not?- by an individual. But every group or individual has his own hermeneutical frame of reference and indeed, on the side of textual genesis, every text is in fact composed of previous texts. Here too the centre and the belief in the stability of meaning is replaced by an infinite network of references, interactions and points of view. The collage and the play with intertextual references and allusions are also central to postmodern culture. The loss of sense in the ideological and in the epistemological meaning of the word (logos) has drawn an ever greater attention to language and to (artistic) form itself, and thus created a paradoxical irrational (a-logos) postmodern logocentrism. On the other hand, it has provoked discussions about the nature of representation itself and about the difference -if any- between reality and image, between reality and text, between truth and representation, between non-fiction and fiction.

Bruno Maderna's Satyricon

Bruno Maderna (born Bruno Grossato, Venice, 1920 - Darmstadt, 1973) was an important figure in the Italian and European musical avant-garde.[9] Maderna had an unusual life: he was a child prodigy who learnt to play the violin at the age of four, worked in the small popular band with which his

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[9] A very valuable source of information on the life and the work of Maderna, as well as studies of his work, is the database created by IRCAM, *Institut de Recherche et Coordination Acoustique/Musique* at the Centre Pompidou in Paris, consultable for Maderna at http://brahms.ircam.fr/composers/composer/2132/#bio. Here one can find a full bibliography on Maderna; we only mention a few recent studies: R. FEARN, *Bruno Maderna*, Chur, 1990; N. VERZINA, *Bruno Maderna: Étude historique et critique*, Paris, 2003; G. MATHON, *À propos du* Satyricon *de Bruno Moderna* in L. FENEYROU (ed.), *Musique et dramaturgie: Esthétique de la représentation au XXème siècle*, Paris, 2003, p. 571-593; and P. H. VAN DE POEL, *Bruno Maderna sur le* Satyricon: *Pop art en musique* in L. FENEYROU (ed.), *Musique et dramaturgie,* p. 599-601.

father wandered from Bar to Caffè in pre-war Venice, and joined the Partisans in the Second World War. He was adopted by a rich lady from Verona who paid for his first formal musical training, and he later became a student of the famous conductor Antonio Guarnieri and of the composer Gian Franco Malipiero who -by the way- found inspiration in another Latin novel, *The Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* by Apuleius,[10] for his *L'asino d'oro. Rappresentazione da concerto per baritono e orchestra* from 1959. He became a famous conductor, but also an influential composer, teacher and organizer who worked in Italy and in Salzburg (the Mozarteum), Munich, Rotterdam (Conservatorium), the UK (Darlington College, Devon) and the US (Tanglewood Institute and Festival, Massachusetts). Together with Luciano Berio he founded, in Milan in 1955, the first European studio for electronic music (Studio di Fonologia Musicale), and from 1954 onwards he was a teacher at the International Summer School for New Music near Darmstadt (Internationale Ferienkurse für Neue Musik), where all the great names of contemporary classical music convened. It was also at Darmstadt that he died in 1973. Maderna was involved in new developments such as serial music (related to the 12-tone music developed by Schoenberg and elaborated by Boulez, Stockhausen, Berio and Maderna himself) and aleatory music which allowed elements of chance in the composition and/or performance of music. Elements of the latter are clearly present in the open master-structure of his *Satyricon* although the music of the opera itself is postmodern only in its collage-style use of classical and popular music.

Zimmermann's Musique pour les soupers du roi Ubu

Maderna started work on Petronius in 1971. He was probably inspired for the music and the general philosophy of the piece by *Musique pour les soupers du roi Ubu* (1968) by Bernd Alois Zimmermann (1918-1970): a so-called 'ballet noir' based upon the dadaist and surrealist work of Alfred Jarry (*Ubu Roi*, 1896). This work is equally a satire of the greed, the gluttony, the will to power and the lack of taste of the rich: 'Ubu Roi-Rex-Tyrannos' and Trimalchio

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[10] Decreus also introduced me to the world of the ancient novel, through his course on Apuleius in which he provided the students, as always, with numerous interpretations, amongst with the fascinating essay by his mentor Roger Thibau (R. THIBAU, *Les Métamorphoses d'Apulée et la Théorie Platonicienne de l'Eros* in *Studia Philosophica Gandensia* 3, 1965, p. 89-144, who also gave a guest-lecture on Fellini's *Satyricon*. F. DECREUS and F. VAN DAMME edited the Festschrift for Thibau in 1986: *Taal, mythe en religie. Huldeboek Roger Thibau*, Gent, 1986.

(which means 'Thrice King')[11] are even comparable in their anal fixation, cfr. the famous opening word "merdre" in *Ubu Roi* and Trimalchio's predilection for his bowel movements as topic for dinner table conversation. But Zimmermann was, according to Werner Schubert,[12] most influential through his philosophy of musical quotations. The collage technique he developed in the sixties was accompanied by a philosophy of eternal recurrence based upon a spherical concept of time ('Kugelgestalt der Zeit') in which there is no real past, present or future; and hence no old, contemporary or futuristic music. The same goes, we would argue, for the libretto or for literature in general: ancient, modern and avant-garde literature are only constructs based upon a linear philosophy of time, and these concepts lose their meaning when one adopts a different philosophy of time.[13] The collage of ancient and contemporary music, and of ancient and modern texts should bring this post-modern philosophical message home to the audience. This non-linear history (or anti-history if you will) of literature and music also undermines the hierarchic concepts which have dominated every literary historiography but especially 'classical philology' which adopted the Hesiodic metaphors of 'the Golden Age', 'the Silver Age' and, naturally also the completely worthless ages of bronze and iron, although 'decadence' was already thought to set in during the Silver Age, to which Petronius belonged. So many exciting master-pieces of Greek and Latin literature have been neglected and/or misunderstood by this linear degeneration model that one should welcome any philosophy of time -

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[11] The name contains Greek (Tri-), Syriac-Phoenician (Malchos, which was by the way the real name of Porphyry of Tyre who 'adopted the purple' as his Greek name through the link between the Greek word Basileus -King- and its use for the Roman Emperor), and the name contains a Latin ending -io; see J. BREMMER, Μάλχος, *king and Trimalchio* in *Mnemosyne* 34, 1981, p. 395-396.

[12] W. SCHUBERT, *'Trimalchio ad symphoniam allatus': Petrons* Satyrica *und Bruno Madernas Oper* Satyricon in *Antike und Abendland* 47, 2001, p. 187; reprinted in a collection of his essays: *Die Antike in der neueren Musik: Dialog der Epochen, Künste, Sprachen und Gattungen*, Bern-Frankfurt am Main, 2005, p. 201-227.

[13] The postmodern writer Julio Cortázar (1914-1984) was inspired by the ancient philosophy of eternal recurrence developed by Heraclitus of Ephesus as I have tried to show in a series of articles written together with another contributor to this volume: D. PRAET/A. MONBALLIEU, *Reversals of Fire. The philosophy of Heraclitus as thematic subtext of Julio Cortázar's* All Fires the Fire in *Bulletin of Hispanic Studies* 88/8, 2011, 27 p.; and A. MONBALLIEU/D. PRAET/M. JANSE, *Salted with fire. Biblical allusions, Heraclitus and judgment by fire in Julio Cortázar's* All Fires the Fire in *Orbis Litterarum* 66/4, 2011, p. 312-340.

however 'mythical' it might be Nietzsche would have said-[14] if it changes the valorisation of life and of art in a positive way.

Fellini's Satyricon *and Pasolini's* Petrolio

Maderna started work on his *Satyricon*[15] during seminars in the Tanglewood Music Centre in Massachusetts. He collaborated with the American director and producer Ian Strasfogel for the libretto and the students who attended the seminar wrote a group composition with a (to me) unclear link to the final composition by Maderna. As we will see, Maderna explained after the première that he had chosen the *Satyricon* for political reasons. But the work by Petronius played a major part in Italian culture of the late sixties and the early seventies. Very early in his career Federico Fellini (1920-1993) had made plans for a Petronius-adaptation: his first ideas were for the theatre, he even contemplated a musical drama but, as we all know, he created a movie that came out in 1969 under the title *Fellini-Satyricon*. The peculiar title had a double meaning: to distinguish it from another *Satyricon* film (that never actually made it through censorship and to the screen) but also to indicate that the project was more 'Fellini' than 'Petronius'. The director was inspired by the fragmented nature and the open, almost anti-narrative structure of the Petronian *Satyricon* as it has come down to us, and naturally by its post-moral sense of absurdity, but Fellini took both aspects of the original to another level. The film and its relation to Petronius are well researched so we will not dwell on it any further.[16]

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[14] For the use of mythical concepts of time in a philosophy of culture, I would like to refer to K. HEMELSOET/B. BIEBUYCK/D. PRAET, *'Jene durchaus verschleierte apollinische Mysterienordnung.' Zur Funktion und Bedeutung der antike Mysterien in Nietzsches frühen Schriften* in *Nietzsche Studien. Internationales Jahrbuch für die Nietzsche-Forschung* 35, 2006, p. 1-28; and B. BIEBUYCK/D. PRAET/I. VANDEN POEL, *The Eternal Dionysus. The influence of Orphism, Pythagoreanism and the Dionysian Mysteries on Nietzsche's Philosophy of Eternal Recurrence* in *Philologus. Zeitschrift für antike Literatur und ihre Rezeption* 149/1, 2005, p. 52-77.

[15] The *Satyricon* has not been very popular with composers: W. SCHUBERT, *Trimalchio*, p. 176-177, notes 4 and 5 lists only six musical adaptations (apart from Maderna's), most of which were based upon Petronian poems rather than on narrative pieces. There is only one other opera: the rather conventional *Die Witwe von Ephesus* (1954) by Hermann Reuter (1900-1985) with a traditional libretto-adaptation (structured in aria's, ensembles and chorus-pieces) by Ludwig Andresen.

[16] On Fellini and Petronius see J. PAUL, *Fellini-Satyricon. Petronius and film* in J. PRAG/I. REPATH (eds.), *Petronius: a handbook*, Chichester (U.K.)-Malden (MA), 2009, p. 198-217 with further references. The film-music, as always composed by Nino Rota, was uncharacteristically non-melodic and should be seen as an attempt to underline the chaotic atmosphere of the

It is perhaps less known to the general reader that Pier Paolo Pasolini (1922-1975) was working in that same period, not on yet another *Satyricon*-film, but on an open-structured novel called *Petrolio*: a 'philological meta-novel', loosely based upon the Latin romance, but set in contemporary Italy and to which he himself referred as a 'modern-day *Satyricon*'.[17] Pasolini planned to leave the novel unfinished although unfinished did not mean short. He communicated it should grow to 2000 pages, which was possibly the full length of Petronius' *Satyricon*.[18] The violent fate Pasolini met in Ostia left us with a 500 pages manuscript that was even more fragmentary than the author had ever intended.[19] Fellini's work was hardly a slavish rendering of the Petronian novel, but Pasolini's manuscript was even more loosely inspired by Petronius. The pun in the title Petrolio-Petronio refers to the job of the main character who is employed by the national oil and gas company ENI (Ente Nazionale Idrocarburi, successor to AGIP) and refers to the social and political criticism of Pasolini who dreaded the power of the big corporations on Italian politics. The main character symbolizes the divisions in the country: he is both a Catholic and a Communist, a bourgeois who goes 'slumming' and performs fellatio as if it were a religious ritual, he is in fact a right-out schizophrenic and becomes (or thinks he has become) at a given point in the fragments a woman. This Tiresias-motif is not in Petronius but it is appropriate since Pasolini's main character has ample opportunity to verify Tiresias' comparative findings about the intensity of sexual pleasure in male and female: the number and the variety of sexual escapades in the *Petrolio* exceed even those in Petronius.

Satyricon. The use of exotic instruments was an attempt to recreate ancient music, according to W. SCHUBERT, *Trimalchio*, p. 178, note 9.

[17] For the links between Petronius and *Petrolio*, see M. FUSILLO, *From Petronius to Petrolio: Satyricon as a Model-Experimental Novel* in S. PANAYOTAKIS/M. ZIMMERMAN/W. KEULEN (eds.), *The Ancient Novel and Beyond*, Leiden, 2003, p. 413-423; p. 413 for the quote on "modern-day Satyricon"; P. LAGO, *Petronio e 'Petrolio': una rilettura contemporanea del Satyricon* in *Maia* 56, 2004, p. 299-300; and P. LAGO, *Petrolio e l'antico: la presenza e l'influsso delle letterature classiche nel romanzo incompiuto di Pier Paolo Pasolini* in P. SALERNO (ed.), *Progetto Petrolio*, Bologna, 2006, p. 45-69.

[18] We can extrapolate from the fragments we have now which, as we know from several manuscripts, formed parts of books XIV to XVI. In the standard Teubner-edition by K. MÜLLER (fourth edition, Munich, 2003) the fragments are printed on 195 pages and do not add up to three whole books, they are more likely the equivalent of two books. The plot is clearly not at an end, but even if we would accept only sixteen books, that would mean ca. 1600 pages. Most scholars believe the work contained a Homeric number of twenty-four books, which would have made the *Satyricon* well over 2000 modern Teubner pages long.

[19] The voluminous fragments were published posthumously at Torino by Einaudi in 1992 (vi, 591 p.), and see more recently P. P. PASOLINI, *Petrolio*, a cura di S. DE LAUDE, Milano, 2005.

Maderna and Antiquity

Maderna's *Satyricon* has gone almost unnoticed between the works of these two giants of the Italian avant-garde and it has received very little scholarly attention, at least from classicists.[20] It is clear from numerous titles in his œuvre that Maderna had a great interest in ancient literature, both Latin and Greek. In 1948 he wrote *Tre Liriche Greche*: experimental musical pieces set to ancient Greek lyric poetry in Italian translation. In the fifties he wrote music for theatre performances of Euripides: *Ippolito* (1956) and *Medea* (1957). From 1965 we have an orchestral piece *Stele per Diotima*, who is the priestess from Plato's *Symposium* and is also present in the poems of Friedrich Hölderlin (1784-1843). Diotima is furthermore the name of the main female character in his novel *Hyperion*. Maderna composed a work for four orchestral groups called *Quadrivium* (1969), usually translated as 'Crossroads' which is the basic meaning of the word, but in the history of music it obviously refers to the four mathematical sciences in the seven *Artes Liberales* (arithmetic, geometry, astronomy and music) and in that sense it refers to the mathematical basis of music as developed by ancient Pythagoreanism. His *Grande Aulodia* (1970) refers to his view on the ancient *aulos* or *tibia*, as will be made clear from his *Hyperion*. This opera was a true 'work in progress' of which Maderna produced several versions between 1964 and 1970. One of these was a combination of his *Hyperion* with one of the oldest surviving operatic pieces: Domenico Belli*, L'Orfeo dolente* from 1616. *Hyperion* also had a close connection with Belgium since an alternative version called *Hyperion en het Geweld* was staged in the Belgian National Opera House, De Munt, in May 1968, with a libretto by Hugo Claus: *Morituri*.[21] The collaboration was not a complete success: as Fearn

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[20] I know of only a few articles written by classicists: the already quoted W. SCHUBERT, *Trimalchio*; M. FUSILLO, *From Petronius to Petrolio*, p. 422 only mentions that the work by Maderna exists as an open and "multi-lingual" opera; there is a one page treatment in his *Reception: Modernity and Post-modernity*: his contribution to T. WHITMARSH (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel*, Cambridge, 2008, p. 323-333, and an article *Il Satyricon di Bruno Maderna: un' opera poliglotta* in *KLEOS* 2, 1997, p. 231–234. There are a number of analyses by musicologists but they naturally focus on the music or on what Maderna clarified in interviews, but very interesting is e. g. R. FEARN, *Italian opera since 1945*, Amsterdam, 1997, p. 137-146.

[21] Freddy Decreus wrote several articles about Hugo Claus, see R. VAN DER PAARDT/F. DECREUS, *Dodelijke dikke wolken*, Leiden, 1992; F. DECREUS et al., *Hugo Claus, Theaterfestival. Terugblik 1994*, Amsterdam, 1994, p. 81-100; F. DECREUS, *Mythen uit de Oudheid. Heidense lust en wreedheid in de antieke mythologie: Claus tussen matriarchaat en patriarchaat* in J. DECAVELE (ed.), *Hugo Claus 65*, Gent, 1994, p. 79-95; F. DECREUS, *Oedipus en de sfinks in het toneel van Hugo Claus. Enkele recente produkties* in *Documenta. Tijdschrift voor Theater* 13, 1995, p. 3-29; F.

described it, the *Hyperion* was "somewhat uncomfortably amalgated with elements taken from Hugo Claus' drama, as a joint criticism of the war in Vietnam."[22] Contrast is probably how the Maderna-opera was supposed to interact with the high-tech military command-post in the jungle Claus had designed for this performance. A similar contrast between technology and nature can also be found in *Hyperion* performed as an independent opera. The protagonist of Maderna's *Hyperion* neither sings nor speaks. He only plays the flute. It takes him ten minutes or more to unwrap his flutes at the beginning of the opera. During this period the audience is expected to listen to random industrial sounds. The opera-music Maderna wrote was combined with electronic noise produced by a machine. The flute is interpreted as a reference to the ancient Greek *aulos* and thus to a pre-industrial, bucolic past which obviously contrasts with the industrial sounds. Nicola Verzina wrote about this contrast: "L'idée poétique, dialectique, qui traverse *Hyperion* provient du roman épistolaire du poète allemand Friedrich Hölderlin. C'est la tension entre le sujet (la flûte) et la réalité extérieure (l'orchestre ou l'électronique). Autrement dit, quelle fonction est assignée à l'art et quel rôle tient l'artiste dans la société post-industrielle? Chez Maderna, la dimension mélodique est essentielle, en tant qu'elle symbolise l'idée d'une subjectivité en crise. Maderna la désigne sous le nom d'*Aulodia*, de chant monodique pour instrument à anche, lointain souvenir de l'aulos grec, que l'imaginaire madernien fait correspondre à la flûte ou au hautbois modernes, véhicules de cet idéal lyrique. Un chant archétypique s'élève, miroir de l'harmonie entre l'homme et la nature, miroir d'une beauté qui n'existe plus."[23] We should note that, if we follow this interesting interpretation by Verzina, Antiquity was still to a certain extent idealized by the Maderna of the *Hyperion*. Although Antiquity and the classical idea of the subject are literally speechless, although there is a communication-breakdown between the ancient and the post-industrial world, between the Cartesian subject and the postmodern 'death of the subject', Antiquity in itself is still conceptualised as harmonious, be it lost. As we will argue, reading the *Satyricon* and seeing *Fellini-Satyricon* must have changed his idea about a lost harmony: perhaps there never was a classical, harmonious paradise neither in Antiquity or in any other period: hence there can be no 'Paradise Lost'. Let us conclude our discussion of the *Hyperion* by saying that Maderna collaborated for the

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DECREUS, *Hugo Claus en de mythe van de onvoltooide mens: mama, kijk, zonder handen* in *ETCETERA* 12, 1994, p. 39-46.

[22] R. FEARN, *Italian Opera*, p. 89.

[23] N. VERZINA, *Maderna, Parcours de l'œuvre*, consulted at http://brahms.ircam.fr/bruno-maderna#parcours.

libretto with the German musician, composer and writer Hans G. Helms (°1932) who produced a 'text' composed of individual phonemes he had collected from the different languages of the world. Apart from the 'aulodia' and the random phonemes, the opera contained in fact only one 'classical' aria with text taken from Hölderlin's *Hyperion*.

Ancient and modern in Maderna's Satyricon

Maderna finished a first version of his *Satyricon* a few years after Fellini's film. It premièred at the Holland Festival in Scheveningen in March 1973,[24] where Maderna personally conducted the Hilversum Radio Chambre Orchestra (Kamerorkest), eight months before his demise from cancer. Maderna saw this opera as yet another work in progress since he was working on a second version which was (again) scheduled for performance in the Munt in Brussels, but his illness prevented this from happening.

The Italian composer conceptualized his *Satyricon* as a series of 16 independent scenes we have listed below, combined with five tape-recordings leaving explicit instructions that each director and each performance could and should adopt a different sequence, thus creating new versions of the opera at every new staging. Fearn has suggested that the open structure had something to do with the final illness of the composer,[25] but he finished numerous other compositions in the last year of his life and this open structure can be seen as a structural version of aleatory music and it also might have been inspired by the numerous translations and editions of the *Satyricon* which all propose their own sequence of the fragments in their reconstruction of what is left of the Latin novel. Both Fellini and Pasolini transposed the fragmentary and disrupted state of the Petronian material, and the interpretative freedom it gives to the reader, to their own work; and so did Maderna.[26] Most of Maderna's scenes are taken from the famous *Cena Trimalchionis*, the Banquet of the pompous 'nouveau riche'[27] Trimalchio and his wife Fortunata, two former slaves who had worked their way up by -so to speak- working their way down. But Maderna also chose

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[24] See E. VERMEULEN, *Satyricon van Bruno Maderna* in *Ons Erfdeel* 2, 1973, p. 129-130.

[25] R. FEARN, *Italian Opera*, p. 137-138; W. SCHUBERT, *Trimalchio*, p. 179-180 for a link with Petronius.

[26] W. SCHUBERT, *Trimalchio* p. 178: "… die man zugleich als eine musikalische Umsetzung der spezifischen literarischen Technik Petrons verstehen kann." Ibidem and p. 190 for a list of the parallels between the scenes in Maderna and the textual passages in Petronius.

[27] See the analysis of our colleague K. VERBOVEN, *A funny thing happened on my way to the market. Reading Petronius to write economic history* in J. PRAG/I. REPATH (eds.), *Petronius*, p. 125-139.

the famous (cynical) story-within-a-story about the Merry 'Widow of Ephesus' (the almost 10 minutes long parlando-piece § 13 in Maderna: *La matrona di Efeso*), and parts of the Circe-episode to which we will return later. The experimental form of the opera is further differentiated by the use of the tape-recordings which again can intersect randomly with the traditionally performed vocal and orchestral parts. In the orchestral improvisation called 'Food Machine' themes from the other pieces are recycled or -to translate it into the universe of Wim Delvoye- digested. The 16 scenes:

1) Lady Luck;
2) Trimalchio e il monumento;
3) Love's Ecstacy;
4) Scintilla;
5) Fortunata;
6) Carriera di Trimalchio;
7) The money;
8) Fortunata e Eumolpus;
9) Eumolpus fuga;
10) Trimalchio e le flatulenze;
11) Trimalchio e le flatulenze (instrumental);
12) Trimalchio contro Fortunata;
13) La matrona di Efeso;
14) Criside I;
15) Criside II;
16) Food Machine.

The music contains so many quotes from and allusions to all sorts of musical genres and styles that we should call the opera a collage or a cento, a literary technique frequently and irreverently used by Petronius. Raymond Fearn has given a bar by bar analysis of this musical collage technique for one of the scenes from Maderna's *Satyricon*: 'Trimalchio e il monumento', in which Trimalchio discusses his own death and the pompous funeral monument he has planned for himself. A clear textual quote from the Latin Requiem Mass sequence 'Dies Irae' ('Tuba mirum') is not paralleled by a musical reference to any Requiem-mass but Maderna has chosen Tchaikovsky's Piano Concerto in B minor for these lines. The next ten bars contain further quotes: from Puccini's *La Bohème* and Richard Strauss' *Till Eulenspiegel*, followed in the next ten bars by the Walhalla-motif from the Ring, the popular music hall and soldier's song 'It's a long way to Tipperary', and the (in-)famous Circus March 'Entry Of The Gladiators' by Julius Fucik (1872-1916), after which Maderna returned to the higher culture of Gluck's *Orfeo*: "Che farò senza Euridice?"

Fearn concluded: "It is clear from this list of the specific musical allusions in 'Trimalchio e il monumento' that they make up virtually the whole musical material of this number."[28] The same cento-technique and mixture of genres and registers can be found in other scenes where Maderna refers to tango, student songs ('Gaudeamus igitur'), 'Stars and Stripes forever', the triumphal march from Verdi's *Aïda* or the French Can-Can from *Orphée aux enfers*, which is itself already an irreverent rendering of the lofty operatic Orpheus-tradition Maderna used in *Hyperion - Orfeo dolente*. The collage of references to the underworld and the afterlife or the lack there of (cfr. the 'Epicurean' *Gaudeamus igitur*), combined with musical allusions to entertainment ànd to imperialist grandeur evoke the incredulity towards the grand narratives and the fragmented state of mind of these postmodern ancient characters.

Communication is not impossible but it is equally fragmented and finally pointless for the characters. The opera-libretto is written in five languages each chosen for a specific purpose: English is the predominant language but from the numerous translations available, Maderna consciously chose the American translation by W. Arrowsmith, who explicitly opted for American -not Oxford- English, and for *colloquial* American English. For Arrowsmith this choice was motivated by the colloquial and 'vulgar' Latin Petronius used, especially in the *Cena Trimalchionis*: our most valuable source for knowledge of spoken Latin.[29] Maderna preferred the American translation because he wanted to emphasize the imperialistic and capitalistic elements in first century Rome and in the character of Trimalchio.[30] In an interview Maderna underlined the political message in the *Satyricon*: he wanted to hold an ancient mirror to the modern Italians he thought equally decadent, materialist and self-absorbed as their Imperial counterparts: "I chose the *Satyricon* text some time ago. In it, a society is portrayed which, in many ways is neither better nor worse than ours. Whoever belongs seriously to a political party, whether to Right or Left, has a precise idea of the society in which he lives, and I believe it would be difficult to find an image as close to our own reality as that given by Petronius in his description of Roman decadence [...] my aim is to make for the theatre a political act, and it was for this reason that I was drawn to this text."[31]

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[28] R. FEARN, *Italian Opera*, p. 140

[29] Numerous studies since A. STEFENELLI, *Die Volkssprache im Werk des Petron im Hinblick auf die romanischen Sprachen*, Wien, 1962 or H. PETERSMANN, *Petrons urbane Prosa*, Wien, 1976.

[30] W. SCHUBERT, *Trimalchio*, p. 180, with references to the other translations used by Maderna.

[31] W. ARROWSMITH, *The Satyricon*, New York, 1960. See R. FEARN, *Italian Opera*, p. 139 for the interview on Dutch radio after the première, and a fuller account of the interview in R.

Some parts of the libretto are in Italian, others in French or German and the text also contains numerous quotes from the Latin original. Sometimes several languages are used in one and the same section, by one and the same character, as e. g. when Trimalchio becomes ecstatic from counting his money (§ 7 The Money). As Schubert has noted, the languages are used in a stereotypical way: Maderna chose French for seduction scenes in § 8 'Fortunata e Eumolpus' or § 13 'La matrona di Efeso', German e. g. to express Trimalchio's flatulence and Italian for when the passions rise to the highest point § 7: 'milionimilionimilioni!'. The mixture of all these languages can perhaps be seen as "eine Spiegel des heutzutage gängigen Party Small Talks" and I would agree that the mix evokes cosmopolitan (in every sense of the word) society rather than a Babylonian breakdown of communication.[32] As Maderna had inserted quotes from other musical pieces, so his libretto contains quotations from other Latin texts. Petronius had done the same and sometimes Maderna has kept these in the original. A good example is in § 13 'La matrona di Efeso' which is mostly in English, except for the seduction-passages which are in French as we said earlier, and within the French, we read or hear a Latin verse: "A quoi servira-t-il, de te laisser mourir de faim, de t'ensevelir vivante et, avant que les Destins ne t'y invitent, de rendre un souffle innocent? Id cinerem aut manes credis sentire sepultos? Ne veux-tu pas revenir à la vie?..." This quote from the *Aeneid* (IV, 34: Anna to the grieving Dido who is already in love with Aeneas) is present in Petronius (§ 111) where it is used by the maid to persuade the grieving widow of Ephesus to make love to the Roman soldier guarding the corpse of her crucified husband. It is one of many intertextual allusions in Petronius to Vergil and indirectly to Homer,[33] and the expression

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FEARN, *Bruno Maderna*, p. 324-326. See also R. FABBI, *Cena sociale. Satyricon e il 'politico'* (*Musica/Realtà* 67), 2002.

[32] W. SCHUBERT, *Trimalchio*, p. 181-182. He also argues against M. STEGEMANN who, in his article on Maderna in *Pipers Enzyklopädie des Musiktheaters*, München, 1989, Bd. 3, p. 628-630 had linked this mix of languages with a Babylonian confusion of tongues and thus with a break-down of communication, which for Stegemann, is also evoked by the cacophony of musical quotes. The same character uses different languages and there is no hint the character talking or the other characters have any difficulties understanding what is being said. The same goes for the communication with the public: Schubert is perfectly right in saying that, had Maderna wanted to be incomprehensible for the larger part of the audience, he could have stuck to the Latin original or, I might add, used Helmsian phonemes.

[33] See the recent survey articles by J. R. MORGAN, *Petronius and Greek Literature* in J. PRAG/I. REPATH (eds.), *Petronius*, p. 32-47 and C. PANAYOTAKIS, *Petronius and the Roman Literary Tradition* in J. PRAG/I. REPATH (eds.), *Petronius*, p. 48-64, both with ample further references. A general treatment of intertextuality in the ancient novel is J. R. MORGAN/S. HARRISON,

of a popular philosophy akin to Epicureanism. Maderna also used other Latin pieces and he was not bothered by anachronisms as we have seen when he put into Trimalchio's mouth "Here my private *tuba mirum*!" which is a quote from the third part of the 'Dies Irae' sequence ascribed to Thomas of Celano (ca. 1200-ca. 1265), the poet and hagiographer of Saint Francis of Assisi: "Tuba mirum spargens sonum/Per sepulchra regionum/Coget omnes ante thronum."

Sexual politics in the ancient novel and in Maderna

The modern Opera-version is actually more moralistic than the Petronian original. The central plot in Petronius is a love-triangle between two grown men and one adolescent boy. Almost all the characters have so-called *Sprechende Namen*: Greek names that add a paradoxically high-cultured bilingual extra touch to the vulgarity of the novel.[34] The name of the main character, Encolpius, can be translated in three various ways, going from rather romantic to absolutely explicit, whether you take the κόλπος ('kolpos') Encolpius is 'in' to mean bosom, lap or groin. The name of his well-endowed ex-lover and now rival Ascyltus means 'the untroubled one' or 'the indefatigable one' and the 'eromenos' of the trio, Giton, is the little 'neighbour' or 'the boy from next door'. Encolpius is the antipode of 'the untroubled one' since he suffers from chronic impotence, probably caused by the wrath of Priapus, and he has set out on an Odyssey of mostly frustrating bisexual erotic encounters in a more than probable pastiche of the wrath of Poseidon driving forth the Homeric hero. But the Petronian novel -and I here completely ignore the discussions whether we are 'allowed' to call the work a novel- has a sophisticated relationship with the Greek novel of which at least a few predated the Neronian age.

Since the nineteenth century scholars talking about the literary examples the *Satyricon* followed have been divided into two camps. In 1889 Elimar Klebs had argued for a relation with Greek and Latin epic, whereas Richard Heinze ten years later argued for a genealogical link with the Greek so-called 'ideal' novel.[35] It is perhaps needless to say that both German

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Intertextuality in T. WHITMARSH (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion*, p. 218-236; specifically about Petronius (by Harrison) from p. 227-230.

[34] J. PRAG/I. REPATH (eds.), *Petronius*, p. 12 and p. 26 offers translations of all the names: Trimalchio as "Thrice King" has been mentioned, his wife Fortunata is "mss blessed/wealthy"; the poet Eumolpus is "sweet singer", etc.

[35] E. KLEBS, *Zur Composition von Petronius* Satirae in *Philologus* 47, 1889, p. 623–635; R. HEINZE, *Petron und der griechische Roman* in *Hermes* 34, 1899, p. 494–519 (Reprinted in H. GÄRTNER (ed.), *Beiträge zum griechischen Liebesroman*, Hildesheim, 1984, p. 15–40).

philologists were united in their moralistic rejection of the times and behaviour it depicts and can only appreciate Petronius in as far as he too is seen to reject, as a serious satirist, the frivolous life of his anti-heroes, something contemporary Petronius scholars would hesitate to subscribe. Klebs e. g. talked about "seine realistischen Bilder einer unsagbar tief gesunkenen Zeit."[36] It is hard to understand for us, 'postmodernists', why so much energy was invested in this discussion and why it was deemed impossible that the *Satyricon* interacted with both genres simultaneously and in different ways, so that the influences can be seen as a grid rather than a one-dimensional linear model. The ancient Greek romance was definitely linked to Greek epic and to many other genres such as love poetry, travel narratives, and rhetoric already identified by Erwin Rohde in *Der Griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*.[37] Latin epic and love poetry had their own complex generic genealogies, and so a Latin novel like the *Satyricon* interacted both directly and indirectly with numerous genres and it did so consciously as we will see.

The so-called 'ideal' Greek novel was long summarized (and dismissed) as boy-meets-girl stories. John Morgan has a beautiful anecdote about the revolutionary paradigm shift in the attitude towards the ancient novel between his generation and the previous generation of classical philologists. When he expressed his interest in doing doctoral research on the Ethiopian Story, "I was reassured, in all kindness, by a very senior Oxford classicist that I need not feel downhearted at the prospect of spending three years on reading silly love stories, because there were some very interesting uses of the optative to be discovered in Heliodoros."[38] The 'classical' summary of the novels reads that the ideal lovers get separated, that their love is tested by all kinds of misfortune (shipwreck, pirates, bandits, false reports of the death of the loved one,…) but that they stay virtuous and true to each other, get reunited and continue their life in blissful monogamy. This cliché was even used by the otherwise so sophisticated Michel Foucault in the third volume of his *Histoire de la Sexualité*, *Le souci de soi* (1984) in which he presented the ancient novels as the expression of new sexual morals both predating and predicting Christianity, based upon the heterosexual couple, who have an almost symmetrical relation of mutual respect and engage only in moderate sexual activities in view of procreation as part of a complete physical and spiritual programme of care of the self. This romantic and crypto-catholic reading of the ancient novels was utterly

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[36] E. KLEBS, *Zur Composition*, p. 634.
[37] E. ROHDE, *Der Griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*, Leipzig, 1876.
[38] J. R. MORGAN, *The ancient novel at the end of the century: scholarship since the Dartmouth conference* in *Classical Philology* 91/1, 1996, p. 63.

destroyed (but with a perfect sense of humour) by Samuel Goldhill in *Foucault's Virginity*.[39] Recent work on the novel emphasizes the ambiguity of the works we have: the attempted rapes are no longer read as pagan virginity martyr stories but as voyeuristic turn-on's for the reader, and the silly stories reveal such a level of intertextual and rhetorical sophistication that they are now seen, not as middle-class 'pulp fiction' but as high culture masterpieces.

The *Satyrica* were long seen as a picaresque and erotic satire of these 'ideal' novels. But the study of the fragmentary Greek novels (such as the so-called 'Iolaus-novel' and the *Phoenicica/Phoenician Tale* by Lollianus) attest to the prior existence of erotic and 'picaresque' Greek novels.[40] Even with a revolutionized view on the ancient novel, the main story-line of the *Satyrica* (a pederastic love triangle obstructed by chronic impotence and put to the test in an endless series of bisexual escapades) remains *risqué* and Maderna seems to have been troubled by it because he introduced some drastic changes to the original *Cena Trimalchionis*. One could say that Maderna has censured the pluri-sexual core of the *Satyricon* to the extent that he eliminated it almost completely.[41] In Petronius, 'la grande bouffe' at Trimalchio's mansion is attended by the three wandering lovers Encolpius, Ascyltus and Giton, but Maderna has written them out of his opera altogether and replaced them by Eumolpus, an old and boring poet who, in the original, does not attend the banquet and who, in the other Petronian fragments (e. g. §§ 84-86), exhibits the same pederastic tendencies as all the other male characters in the book. But all of this has disappeared in Maderna. He chose Eumolpus as the main guest at the banquet and he created (with a cento of genuine Petronian lines and completely in line with what Petronius did with older Latin literature) an entirely new scene in which Fortunata tries to seduce Eumolpus.[42] From another point of view, Maderna has achieved symmetry in his cast of two men and two women and balance in the voices: the role of the host Trimalchio is written for a tenor (who also doubles as the merchant Habinnas), the one of

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[39] S. GOLDHILL, *Foucault's Virginity: ancient erotic fiction and the history of sexuality*, Cambridge, 1995.

[40] S. A. STEPHENS/J. J. WINKLER (eds.), *Ancient Greek Novels: The Fragments*, Princeton, 1995.

[41] This is mentioned by W. SCHUBERT, *Trimalchio*, p. 179 but without any further comment, besides the fact that Quartilla is taken from fragments before the Cena and Chrysis from fragments that belong to the end of our selection. He also notes that by leaving out Encolpius cum suis, Maderna obtained an equal number of men and women in his opera.

[42] Scene 9 in Maderna ('Fortunata e Eumolpus') with lines actually taken from an episode that has no connection to either Eumolpus, Trimalchio or his wife: the Chrysis and Circe-episode (§ 126) in Petronius.

Eumolpus for a bass; Trimalchio's wife Fortunata is a mezzo-soprano, and the servant Criside is performed by a soprano. But the essentially bisexual nature of Petronius' *Satyrica* has disappeared and has been replaced by a dinner-party between couples. Wild as this dinner-party might be, it is still much tamer than in Petronius. The only thing Maderna left in his libretto was Trimalchio's *Apologia pro vita sua* that, as a boy-slave, he was forced to 'service' both his mistress and his master. The wording in Petronius (§ 75) is more explicit but § 6 'Carriera di Trimalchio' is clear enough: "For fourteen years I was my master's pet but what's the shame in doing what you're told to do? But all the same, if you know what I mean, I managed to do my mistress a favour or two."

Reality and representation

Petronius usually interweaves two, three or even more intertextual threads in one and the same episode. The *Cena Trimalchionis* contains references to Plato's *Symposium*: the entrée of his drunken wife is reminiscent of the Dionysian Alcibiades; and Trimalchio sketching his own career becomes a farcical reminder of the biographical description of Socrates. As the story of a dinner party with many stories it reminds readers of Greek literature of Alcinous at whose court Odysseus tells his tale from Books VII to XII in the *Odyssey*. From Latin literature there is of course the disastrous dinner at Nasidienus of the Horatian *Satire* II, 8, but the long passage also contains general references to mythology: the house of Trimalchio has been compared to the underworld but also to the labyrinth and the all-devouring Trimalchio to the Minotaur.[43] The most interesting point is that all these references are there together which makes this novel (and the same goes for many others) so modern or postmodern.

But I believe yet another intertextual characterization of Trimalchio has been overlooked by Petronius-scholars and Maderna's double focus on "le flatulenze" (§§ 10-11) is what made me make the association: the flatulent 'wind-maker' Trimalchio is also Aeolus. In the *Odyssey* X, 1-27 Aeolus is said to have lived with his six daughters and six sons on an 'île flottante', in a palace where there was a continuous feast. Aeolus gave Odysseus the winds he needed to get home, bundled in a sack made of the leather of a nine year old bull. The twelve children of the god of the winds are commonly interpreted as the twelve months of the year, and Trimalchio's 'pièce de résistance' is a dish adorned with the twelve signs of the zodiac (§§ 35-36) and food (imaginatively)

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[43] See the references in note 33.

chosen to fit the signs. We have a nice variation on the association between a bull, a bag of sorts and wind in § 47: *alioquin circa stomachum mihi sonat, putes taurum*/'Besides, I have such rumblings inside me you would think there is a bull there.' And the anti-Socrates gives his guests some pseudo-medical and pseudo-philosophical advice about posterior *parrhèsia* and the 'care of the self': *Credite mihi, anathymiasis in cerebrum it et in toto corpore fluctum facit. Multos scio sic periisse, dum nolunt sibi uerum dicere*/'Take my word for it, vapours go to the brain, and make a disturbance throughout the body. I know many people have died this way, by refusing to admit the truth to themselves.'

The entire menu of the *Cena Trimalchionis* is about false appearances. One of the numerous dishes (§ 49) is an enormous pig which, as Trimalchio claims to notice, had not been gutted before it was cooked. The cook is stripped and flogged, but it is all part of an act, as becomes clear when he is ordered to clean the animal in front of the guests: 'The cook put on his shirt, seized a knife, and carved the pig's belly in various places with a shaking hand. At once the slits widened under the pressure from within, and sausages and black puddings tumbled out.' Nothing is what it seems in Trimalchio's house: eggs are, upon closer inspection, made out of dough, but they contain birds; a hare is served with wings to look like Pegasus, pins are attached to pears to make them look like sea-urchins, etcetera. Even the discourse becomes ambiguous. Several jokes made by Trimalchio are examples of an ambiguity which is almost impossible to overcome. A slave, called Carpus is brought in to carve some meat. Trimalchio orders § 36: *carpe, carpe*. It is impossible to decide which 'carpe' is the vocative of Carpus and which the imperative of carpo. The same goes for the order to a slave dressed as Dionysos in § 41: *Dionyse, inquit, liber esto*. This can mean 'be free' and this is how the slave interpreted it because he immediately leaves the house, but it can also mean 'be Liber', the Italian equivalent of Dionysos, and then we should use a capital L in our text but in the Latin original there was no way of solving the ambiguity. We could go on but these few examples might suffice in this context to illustrate that Petronius was well aware of the limits of our senses and of language to interpret reality.

One last example of the breakdown of codes is very ambiguous because it entails a cruel derision of the aristocratic author for his creation and for the 'nouveaux riches' without culture, but it can also be read as a reflection upon the fictional character of mythical history. But the passage is not totally postmodern because high culture and high cultural literacy still seem to be a criterion for social distinction for Petronius. During a Greek performance of Homeristae (reciters of Homer) the 'story-line' was explained by Trimalchio in Latin to his guests, § 59: 'Diomede and Ganymede were two brothers. Helen

was their sister. Agamemnon carried her off and took in Diana by sacrificing a deer to her instead. So Homer is now telling the story of the war between Troy and Parentium. Of course he won and married his daughter Iphigenia to Achilles. That drove Ajax mad,…'

The Circe-episode

The *Odyssey* is a central subtext to the *Satyricon*. Possibly, the first half of the novel took the *Iliad* as its main work of reference, thus re-inverting the order of travels and battles chosen by Vergil in the *Aeneid*. As Odysseus was persecuted by the wrath of Poseidon, and Aeneas by Juno's, so Encolpius is persecuted and punished by an angry divinity: Priapus. In a self-conscious allusion to both epics a fragment of the Satyricon reads (139): *Me quoque per terras, per cani Nereos aequor/Hellespontiani sequitur grauis ira Priapi/*'And me too the heavy wrath of Hellespontine Priapus follows over the earth and over the waters of hoary Nereus.'[44] One of the most explicitly intertextual scenes is the encounter between Encolpius and Circe (§§ 126-132), and here too the use Maderna made of the material is actually much less subversive than what Petronius had created, and not nearly as funny.[45] In the Petronian Circe-episode we are confronted with a genuine explosion of extremely funny intertextual references: there is Ovid, *Amores* 3, 7 about his own 'infirmity', there is an irreverent cento of Virgil, the legacy-hunting of Encolpius reminds us of Horace, *Satires* II, 5 et cetera, but we can not discuss them all. The Circe-character self-consciously refers to Homer and calls her lover Polyaenus (*Iliad* IX, 763). This is part of a larger strategy in which the characters of the novel and mostly Encolpius compare their own actions and adventures with epic and mythology, only to make clear to the reader that the analogy fails.[46] But of course the novel is structured according to the ancient grand narratives so, as Gottskálk Jennson and many others have remarked: "as a text, it resists its own interpretation, or even that it is 'anti-narrative', communicating only through the figures of language."[47] This puts Petronius in the category of writers who have felt and expressed that an era was coming to a close, comparable to the analysis offered by Michel Foucault of *Don Quixote* in *Les mots et les choses* (1966).

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[44] We have used the English translation of M. HESELTINE/E. H. WARMINGTON, *Petronius & Seneca, Apocolocyntosis*, Cambridge (MA), 1975.

[45] Maderna has put the words spoken by Chrysis, Circe's servant, to Encolpius into the mouth of Fortunata in the seduction scene § 9 'Fortunata e Eumolpus'.

[46] See especially G. B. CONTE, *The Hidden Author: An interpretation of Petronius' Satyricon*, Berkeley, 1997.

[47] G. JENSSON, *The Recollections of Encolpius*, p. IX.

In Homer Odysseus (*Od.* X, 299-301) was given a root by Hermes to protect him from the fate of his comrades who had become 'weak and impotent' from Circe's potion, so that he could sleep with her. The humour of the intertextual inversions is best expressed by John Morgan: "Even as Encolpius is identified with Odysseus through his name and his liaison, multiple ironies are at work below the surface of the narrative. In the *Odyssey*, the hero's companions are metamorphosed into animals by Circe's witchcraft (X, 203-43), while Odysseus, armed with a powerful counter-charm, is able to bed the enchantress (X, 274-347). In the *Satyrica*, Encolpius is likewise immune to Circe's spell, but only in the sense that he is repeatedly impotent with her."[48] And the companions have already behaved as pigs as legacy-hunters in Croton.

Encolpius starts talking to himself or rather to a certain part of himself, and spews invective at the unwilling member, which results in some of the funniest pages of Latin that have come down to us.[49] We will only discuss one passage where Petronius uses the famous scene in which Aeneas meets the ghost of Dido in the underworld, and tries to explain his betrayal of her love: 'She turning away, kept her looks fixed on the ground...'/*Illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat...* (*Aeneid* VI, 469)[50] The literary identification of the anti-hero with Odysseus through his non-connection with Circe is doubled and undermined at the same time by this association with Aeneas, who is himself strongly linked to Odysseus. But the humour is so brilliant and so irreverent that we feel the need to explain the jokes and hope we will not ruin it by doing so. Most humour is based upon the build-up of certain expectations and the contrast between what one would normally expect to follow and what actually does follow in the joke. Since cultured Romans knew Virgil virtually by heart, they will have recognized the following verses and been able to complete the next line. But in the context of Encolpius' sexual soliloquy, the feminine 'illa' will have been understand as referring, not to the Queen of Carthage, but to his *mentula* ("the basic obscenity for the male organ").[51] Petronius quotes two verses: *Illa solo fixos oculos aversa tenebat/nec magis incepto vultum sermone movetur*

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[48] J. R. MORGAN, *Petronius and Greek Literature*, p. 33. See also J. ADAMIETZ, *Circe in den Satyrica Petrons und das Wesen Dieses Werkes* in *Hermes* 123/3, 1995, p. 320-334; J. M. MCMAHON, *Paralysin cave: impotence, perception, and text in the* Satyrica *of Petronius*, Leiden, 1998.

[49] See J. ADAMIETZ, *Circe in den Satyrica Petrons*, p. 320-334 or J. M. MCMAHON, *Paralysin cave*.

[50] We have used the English translation of H. RUSHTON FAIRCLOUGH, *Virgil.* 2 vols., Cambridge (MA), 1978.

[51] J. N. ADAMS, *The Latin Sexual Vocabulary*, London, 1990, p. 9; see also p. 10: "The offensive character of *mentula* is also shown by the frequency with which some writers (e. g. Petronius) employ instead a feminine adjective or demonstrative unaccompanied by the noun."

(=*Aeneid* VI, 469-470: 'She/*It* turning away, kept her/*its* looks fixed on the ground and no more changes her/*its* countenance as he essays to speak…') which is normally followed by (verse 471) *quam si dura silex aut stet Marpesia cautes*/'than if she/*it* were set in hard flint or Marpesian rock'. Now the third line in Petronius equally starts with 'quam' as its first word, which is still in accordance with the literary expectation of the reader, but the line will actually read *quam… lentae salices lassove papavera collo*, which is still from Vergil, but is a Petronian cento of two verses from *Eclogue* V, 16 and *Aeneid* IX, 436 describing something neither firm nor upright: 'than pliant willows or poppies on their tired stalky necks.' The fifth *Eclogue* talks of the death of Daphnis (who is turned to stone by a jealous nymph, so there is even a second-degree intertextual joke referring to flint and rock) and the second part of the cento-verse is from the death-scene of Euryalus in the *Aeneid*. Here the jokes continue in several directions: first this character is known for his homo-erotic relationship with Nisus, comparable to Achilles and Patroclus in the *Iliad*, which is then a possible explanation for the defective behaviour of 'illa' with Circe, but Euryalus is also known from the *Odyssey* VIII, 158-164 where he chides Odysseus that he does not look like someone who is able or willing to fight or compete…

Explicit comoedia

Petronius was an Epicurean who, according to Tacitus, refused to listen to any of the philosophers or to grand narratives about the immortality of the soul when he was slowly and in perfect *ataraxia* committing suicide over a final dinner with his friends. As *arbiter elegantiae* his attitude to life and letters was both refined and ironic. May this little piece be accepted with good humour by the one it is dedicated to and add to the enjoyment of a long life lived to the fullest. Ad multos annos!

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