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SEDUCTIONS OF ART: ENCOLPIUS AND EUMOLPUS IN A NERONIAN PICTURE GALLERY

The age of Nero is universally considered – even by its more circumspect modern historians – to be a zenith of decadence. This view is not simply the invention of modern writers. It is one point on which the ancient sources, not only historians from Tacitus to Cassius Dio, but also biographers such as Suetonius and poets like Martial, are agreed. One problem with the almost monotonous tale of vice, sexual and gastronomic excess, cruelty and murder, by which Nero's reign has been characterised, is that this is a story written by the winners in the turmoil which followed Nero's fall. It is hardly, in other words, an objective or unbiased account.¹

In this paper I want to highlight another problem with the traditional story of Neronian decadence. It goes like this: what difference does it make to the portrayal of an era as morally decadent – what's more, artistically and philosophically degenerate into the bargain – if that portrait has its origins as an ironic *self*-image playfully propagated by writers of the very period which we dismiss using a version of their own words? The passage of Petronius which I shall look at is one where a Neronian writer (whose transgressive excesses are often seen as paradigmatic of his debauched historical context) not only explicitly discusses the 'indolence of the age' (*desidia praesentis*, *Satyrica* 88.1) but dramatises that indolence in the fictional characters he chooses as his discussants. In the *Satyrica* Petronius not only parades all the vices for which the Neronian era would later stand accused, but attacks them with the polemic of decadence (which was a cultural cliché in Roman moral writing) and at the same time frames that very polemic of decadence within the ironic assault of his own satire. Petronius builds both a highly self-aware picture of the susceptibility of Neronian culture to condemnation by the standards of Roman moral rhetoric and a penetrating critique of the limits and contradictions of such condemnatory rhetoric. At the very least we must begin to question the long-lived rhetorical image of Neronian Rome, for the image is in part the product of a sophisticated, reflexive self-fashioning by members of the Neronian elite.

The Petronian critique of *desidia* takes place in an art gallery and is constantly played off against the problems of ancient art criticism and imitation itself. The art gallery episode (83–90) serves to introduce the reader to Eumolpus, the *Satyrica*'s disreputable poet. Its dynamics involve attempts by both Eumolpus and Encolpius to find satisfactory ways of viewing the images they see. Both fail – Encolpius because he reduces the paintings ultimately to being simply reflections of his own state of mind, and Eumolpus because he attempts too ambitiously to assimilate his own and his listeners' sense of

identity into the imaginary world of the painting he views. Both attempts raise questions about the difficulties of viewing art and the nature of ecphrasis as a verbal celebration of viewing. I shall explore the episode by looking at each attempt in turn.

I *Encolpius*

The section of the *Satyrice* with which we are concerned takes place after Encolpius and his boyfriend Giton have left Trimalchio's feast.² Encolpius is jilted by Giton, who has been seduced by Ascyllus. To console himself, our hero visits a picture gallery (*pinacotheca*) hung with a wonderful (*mirabilis*) collection of paintings.³ Such galleries with remarkable paintings are, of course, a rhetorical setting for displaying the trope of ecphrasis. Whether the gallery described is fictional or actual, it provides a necessary setting for a writer who wants to present ecphrases of a *series* of pictures. The most famous example of such a gallery is that evoked by the Elder Philostratus as the setting for the paintings (*pinakes*) which he describes in his two books of *Imagines*.⁴ Likewise, in Lucian's *De domo*, an extensive ecphrasis in praise of an ideal house (*oikos*), the grand finale is a series of descriptions of mythological paintings hanging in the gallery. Such galleries (particularly in Rome) containing pictures or sculpture are frequently mentioned by the Elder Pliny (a contemporary of Petronius) in books 35 and 36 of his *Natural history*.

But, even by these standards, Encolpius' gallery is particularly outstanding in its collection of famous names:

I saw the works of Zeuxis still unaffected by the ravages of time. And I examined, not without a certain thrill, some sketches by Protogenes (*rudimenta*), so life-like they were a challenge to nature herself. I practically worshipped the masterpiece of Apelles that the Greeks call the Goddess on One Knee. The lines of the paintings were so subtle and clear-cut that you could see them as expressing the subjects' very souls. (83.1–2)

Here Encolpius betrays the taste of his time. His list of artists represents the highlights from any educated Roman's catalogue of the great and the good. In Pliny's *Natural history*, Zeuxis 'gave to the painter's brush ... the full glory to which it aspired' (35.61); Apelles 'excelled all painters who came before or after him' (35.79); Protogenes was Apelles' 'equal or superior in everything' except in knowing when to finish working on a painting (35.80). Likewise the orator Quintilian informs us that '[Zeuxis] seems to have discovered the method of representing light and shade ... For Zeuxis emphasised the limbs of the human body, thinking thereby to add dignity and grandeur to his style ... Protogenes was renowned for accuracy ... Apelles for genius and grace, in the latter of which qualities he took especial pride' (*Institutio oratoria* 12.10.3–6). Even Encolpius' *reasons* for liking the paintings are matched by Pliny: the

perfect emulation of nature is indeed the Plinian criterion for artistic excellence, and in Pliny too such naturalism does not exclude insights into the sitter's 'soul'. Apelles' portraits were such perfect likenesses that a physiognomist could tell from the paintings alone how long the sitter had lived or had to live (*Natural history* 35.88).

Our worry as readers about Encolpius being such a perfect exemplar of the taste of his time is that he exists in a text which aspires not to realistic likeness but to satiric distortion. If ecphrasis is a mode for introducing the romantic novel in antiquity,⁵ in Petronius' novel the art gallery as a setting for ecphrasis is itself introduced, framed, by the transgressive expectations set up in chapters 1–82. We should be alerted to the possibility that all may not be as it seems by the way the famous works in the Petronian gallery are (rather terrible) puns on their artists' names. The *rudimenta* of Protogenes are not only 'rough sketches' but a literal Latin translation of his Greek name (an unexpected 'rivalling of the truth of nature'!); the painting of Apelles which Encolpius adores may well be by Apelles only because they call it so (*appellant*, a dreadful joke).⁶ Indeed in this case even the image's name (*monoknemon*, 'one-kneed') may be a reflection of Encolpius' own act of adoring it (if *adorau* implies sinking to one knee) ...⁷ In the light of all this, the text describing the products of Zeuxis (whose name in Greek means literally 'yoking' or 'putting together') as *nondum ... uictas* ('not yet conquered') seems weak. Perhaps it should be emended to *nondum ... uinctas* ('not yet bound together'),⁸ or *nondum ... iunctas* ('not yet yoked'),⁹ to sharpen the pun. Sure enough, then, it is little surprise when Encolpius' Plinian assumptions are instantly coloured by and subverted in the paintings he describes:

In one the eagle [Jupiter], way up on high, was carrying off the Idaean youth [Ganymede], and in another a dazzling white Hylas repulsed the lascivious Naiad. Apollo cursed his murderous hands and decorated his unstrung lyre with a new flower [a hyacinth, sprung from the blood of his dead lover.] Surrounded by these faces of painted lovers, I cried out as though I were alone, 'So love affects the gods too.¹⁰ Jupiter can't find anything to love in heaven, but at least when going to sin on earth [with Ganymede] he injured no one.¹¹ The nymph that snatched Hylas away would have controlled her passion if she had thought that Hercules [Hylas' lover] would come to restrain her. Apollo called back the boy's soul into a flower – all of them enjoyed embraces free from rivalry. But I took to my heart a crueller friend than Lycurgus ...' (83.2–6)

What Encolpius actually sees in the gallery is what his immediate personal circumstances have conditioned him to see – homosexual love and its distress. Jupiter fails to find satisfaction in heaven, Hercules loses Hylas to the seduction of a nymph and Apollo loses Hyacinthus through a mistaken throw of the discus. These painted versions of love's misfortunes are idealised by contrast with Encolpius' own sufferings: 'they all enjoyed embraces free from rivalry; but *I* ...' The praised psychological penetration of naturalism and the exalted adherence of art to an external and

objective criterion (namely 'the truth of nature', *naturae ueritas*, 83.1) which a straightforward reading of Encolpius' version of the Plinian account appeared to offer, turns out to be a bathetic subjectivism in which the viewer sees only himself mirrored in the paintings he views.¹² From the ecphrases of Encolpius, despite the high claims about art rendering the sitter's very soul, we learn nothing more than Encolpius' own subjective misery in being jilted by Giton.¹³

At the very least, Encolpius is being highly *selective* about the paintings on which he fastens. These mythological evocations of love's distress are presumably not the naturalistic masterpieces of Zeuxis, Protogenes and Apelles which Encolpius just praised for their rivalry of nature rather than their seductive subject-matter. Later, we will find a picture of the Fall of Troy (89.1) in the same gallery. What Encolpius selects, appropriately for a jilted lover in an ancient novel, are *erotic* images which mirror *his own* plight. This erotic pattern whereby art imitates or prefigures the viewer's experience is a classic use of the figure of ecphrasis in the novels. As Froma Zeitlin has put it (describing the proem of *Daphnis and Chloe*):

Normally in the genre of romance, the spectators who come upon the spectacle of *erotic* paintings are themselves *lovers*, who react to the themes of the paintings they see out of a sense of their own subjective experience.¹⁴

In addition to the *Satyrica*, we find this romance pattern of the lover as viewer of erotic art in *Daphnis and Chloe* and Achilles Tatius' *Adventures of Leucippe and Clitophon*.¹⁵ However, in the novels, it is heterosexual lovers who are confronted with images of heterosexual love – for instance (in *Leucippe and Clitophon*) paintings of Europa and the bull (1.1–2) and Perseus with Andromeda (3.6–7).¹⁶ The *Satyrica* reverses, satirises and parodies the whole structure of erotic attachment which comes from romance by its constant theme of homoerotic rather than heterosexual love.¹⁷

To be sure, erotic paintings with homosexual themes did exist in the Roman world;¹⁸ and Petronius is using these paintings as a paradigm for the viewer's plight. This use is consonant with the erotics of ancient ecphrasis. But it is also entirely in keeping with a non-erotic, perhaps one might broadly call it 'philosophical' usage of ecphrasis, in other first-century A.D. writers like Cebes. In the *Tabula* of Cebes, a philosophic allegory of a picture drawing on eclectic sources and purporting to offer salvation both to the viewers of the image and the readers of the text,¹⁹ the viewers' initial *aporia* before the subject-matter of a picture is presented as a reflection of their *aporia* before the problem of life itself (from which a correct understanding of the image is going to save them).²⁰ While, on an erotic reading, Encolpius' response to the paintings is a normal self-reflexive vision of his own plight (although complicated by the theme of homosexuality), on a 'philosophic' reading his is a highly selective reaction indicative of *aporia*, confusion and the need for salvation. As usual in the *Satyrica*, Petronius marshals a literary cliché (with different uses in different discourses within the culture)

– in this case the epiphraastic context of an art gallery – and will employ all its contradictory suggestive associations to devastating satiric effect.

Moreover, the indulgent subjectivism of Encolpius may be more than simply a satiric deflation of the objectivist aesthetic claims of ancient art criticism. It may also attack a much deeper philosophical objectivism which underlies the very practice not only of ancient epiphraasis (at any rate, in the Roman period) but also of rhetorical theory itself. In Stoic philosophy, by contrast with earlier Platonic theory, truth itself (and not merely a relativistic impression) could be derived from sense perception. For the Stoics, external objects imprinted themselves upon the mind by means of *phantasia* or ‘presentation’.²¹ The mind was conceived as being like a wax tablet upon which an impression of an external object was in Cicero’s words ‘stamped and reproduced and impressed’.²² In ancient literary and aesthetic theory, the concept of *phantasia* was used to define the ‘visualisation’ in the artist’s mind which gives rise to his creative act of producing plastic art or writing a speech.²³ This is how ‘Longinus’ and Quintilian describe *phantasia* in oratory in the first century A.D.,²⁴ and how Cicero in the preceding century presents its operation on the mind of the sculptor Phidias.²⁵ Moreover, as ‘Longinus’ tells us, *phantasia* means ‘the situation in which enthusiasm and emotion make the speaker *see* what he is saying and bring it *visually* before his audience’ (15.1). In other words, what the listener ‘sees’ in epiphraasis is the vision which the orator himself ‘sees’, the vision communicated to him by the work of art. Despite the fact that this vision was subjective (it appeared only in the *mind* of speaker, listener and artist), it was nevertheless *objective* in that it bore the stamp of truth: it was (in each case) the *same* vision.

In other words, one key concept around which Roman ideas of artistic creativity, rhetorical theory, epiphraasis and even truth itself all intersected was *phantasia*. The word trips to Quintilian’s pen not only in contexts explicitly dedicated to rhetoric (e.g. 6.2.29 and 10.7.15) but also in those related to the plastic arts (e.g. 12.10.6). In setting Encolpius up in an art gallery, in referring to the theme of truth (*naturae ueritas*) and in causing Encolpius to deliver an epiphraasis about his own hapless situation as a jilted lover, I suggest that Petronius is alluding – among other cultural tropes – to the theory of *phantasia*.

While the theory of *phantasia* is not strictly ‘necessary’ to the text’s jokes, it is a target which Petronius implicitly subverts in the subjectivism of Encolpius’ response to the paintings. Whatever visions of surpassing beauty Zeuxis, Protogenes and Apelles may have seen to inspire their creativity (visions which according to Stoic theory their masterly art should inspire in the mind of the beholder), what Encolpius actually sees is not the objective vision of a higher *phantasia*, but the sordid reflection of his own disastrous love-life!²⁶ While the erotic and ‘philosophic’ frames of epiphraasis allow the painting to prefigure (and in Encolpius’ case to reflect) its spectator’s plight, Petronius here uses the device to undercut the more high-faluting claims of *phantasia* to communicate the artist’s higher vision to the viewer.

II *Eumolpus*

It is at this point that Eumolpus, described as a ‘white-haired old man’, enters the art gallery:

His face was troubled, but there seemed to be the promise of some great thing about him; though he was shabby in appearance, so that it was quite plain by this characteristic that he was a man of letters, of the kind that rich men hate ... (83.7)

Most accounts of Eumolpus in the *Satyrica* focus on his being a poet (something implied by the etymology of his name – which means roughly ‘Good Singer’), and tend to examine the poems he recites in the course of the novel.²⁷ But they miss the implications of the way Petronius chooses to *introduce* his *uates*. He shares his name with the famous Eleusinian priest Eumolpus, the eponymous ancestor of the Eumolpid clan of priests, who appears to have enunciated the sacred words and in some myths even to have founded the rites of the Eleusinian mysteries.²⁸ Petronius’ Eumolpus, whom we initially meet anonymously (like the other exegetes of art in the novels, in Lucian and in the *Tabula* of Cebes), is as much a philosopher, salvation-promising exegete and interpreter of art as he is a poet. What he has to offer Encolpius is a solution to his immediate problem of ‘striving with the empty air’ (*cum uentis litigo*, 83.7) in attempting to understand the paintings. Eumolpus presents his credentials not only as a poet but also as a moralist and pedagogue. While the story he tells to support these credentials (the Pergamene boy) ruthlessly satirises and undermines all his claims to being an ethically minded educator of the young, Encolpius immediately takes him as an expert on *art* (88.1) – a role to which Eumolpus responds not only with some potted philosophy and art history but also with his grand ecphrasis, the *Troiae halosis* (88–9).

In using this frame for his introduction of Eumolpus, Petronius plunges us here directly into one of the dominant tropes of ancient ecphrasis. Eumolpus’ entry is immediately presaged by the words ‘I strove thus with the empty air’ (*cum uentis litigo*). On an erotic reading, Encolpius is here telling his troubles to the winds, troubles represented on the paintings and evoked by them. On such a reading, like the interpreter of the painting sought out in the prologue to *Daphnis and Chloe* (2: *exegeten tes eikonos*), Eumolpus appears as a kind of saviour who will rescue the love-lorn Encolpius with some advice from an old hand. On a more directly art-historical reading, the viewer has a try at understanding the picture and fails – ‘I strove thus with the empty air’, as Encolpius says. Then a wise man appears who explains the real meaning of the image in the form of an ecphrasis. This pattern appears in the *Tabula* of Cebes (probably roughly contemporary with Petronius) where the interpreter is also an old man (1.3), in Lucian’s *Hercules* (4) and *Amores* (8 and 15), and in Callistratus’ *Descriptions* (6.4). It is also the pattern of which the Elder Philostratus, as a sophist describing pictures to a group of young men, takes advantage in the *Imagines* (1 proem 4).²⁹ The interpreter’s description is thus much more than simply an account of the

painting he describes – it is also an interpretation; in the case of some texts like the *Tabula* of Cebes it is even a mystic initiation, certainly it is always an enlightenment. When ecphrasis appears in an erotic context, the speaker (usually an older man) is one who offers to satisfy the viewer's desire, or to train the viewer in the interpretative skills whereby he may satisfy his own desire. The power-dynamics of such descriptions bring the allure of satisfaction; and the speaker acquires the potent authority of problem-solver and wise man.

In the particular case of Eumolpus, this trope works specifically to set up and satirise claims to philosophical, and moral and even religious initiation (presented in the *Tabula* of Cebes explicitly as *salvific*, 3.3–4). In the *Satyrica*, the *pinacotheca* (83.1) is set in a *templum* (90.1), like the sacred settings of the pictures in the *Tabula* (1.1), Achilles Tatius (1.2) and Longus (proem). Like the old man in the *Tabula*,³⁰ Eumolpus indulges in a good deal of eclectic philosophy. Like Philostratus in the *Imagines* (1 proem 4) and the old man in the *Tabula* (32), who both offer education through exegesis, Eumolpus' tale of the Pergamene boy (85–6) is explicitly the biography of a pedagogue (albeit a pedagogue in satire). In effect, Eumolpus is the *Satyrica*'s satiric version of the philosophic and mystical exegete (so often in ancient literature presented as the exegete of art). He is *uates* not only in the poetic sense, but in the prophetic sense as well. He is also, like the rhetorician Agamemnon from an earlier part of the *Satyrica*, a 'corrupt' scholar.

In other words, in the context of all the literary genres which Petronius is playing with here, Eumolpus indeed offers 'the promise of something great'. he is a poet (which explains his poverty – 'the worship of genius never made a man rich'). Moreover he begins his display of credentials to Encolpius with a true philosopher's parade of morality:

If a man dislikes all vices, and begins to tread a straight path in life, he is hated first of all because his character is superior; for who is able to like what differs from himself? (84.1)

Like the exegete in the *Tabula* of Cebes, Eumolpus (admittedly with a transparent vanity possible only in satire) presents association with himself as being of the highest moral import. His shabby appearance becomes proof of his persecution by the idle rich – for 'poverty is the twin sister of good sense'.

After this thoroughly (indeed unduly) worthy introduction, Eumolpus treats his listener to an account of how he came to be where he is today. But this is an outrageous story, by any standards. The philosopher-poet and moralist proves his credentials to teaching authority (at least to the exegesis of paintings) by describing how he presented himself as a philosopher above the sensual pleasures of the world to the parents of a pretty boy he fancied (85.1–3). The parents, as deluded by his claims as Encolpius is to be,³¹ find him convincing:

Soon I began to escort the boy to the gymnasium, to arrange his studies, to be his teacher, and to warn his parents to admit no corrupter into the house ...

The bulk of the narrative describes in vivid (some have said frankly pornographic)³² detail his seduction of the boy through gifts of doves, fighting cocks and the promise of a thoroughbred horse, which (like most of Eumolpus' promises) he fails to fulfil (85–7). Finally, in an elegant reversal, the boy is so keen on the sexual pleasures Eumolpus supplies that the old pedagogue has to threaten him with betrayal to his father in order to snatch any sleep at night!

The tale of the Pergamene boy undermines the erotic pattern with a presentation of the *sophos* as homosexual adventurer. While we might have expected the wise man to put Encolpius straight (as it were) on matters of love, we find him only outdoing Encolpius in the skills of gay seduction. But the story also undermines any credentials Eumolpus might have claimed as an interpreter of art, since his expertise is spectacularly irrelevant to describing pictures, although it demonstrates formidable abilities in the arts of deception.³³

Encolpius' response to this extraordinary speech of self-accreditation is a brilliant moment of high comedy:

Encouraged by his conversation, I began to draw on his knowledge about the age of the pictures and about some of the stories which puzzled me ...

How Encolpius imagines that this kind of encouragement will teach him anything about *paintings*, is left to the reader to work out. Petronius is explicitly satirising the erotics of ephrasis (both in its association with literature like the erotic novels and in its evocation of desire for further knowledge or satisfaction in the viewer). The desire of Encolpius to understand art is in Petronius a sublimation of his desire to learn more about the techniques of homosexual seduction from a self-proclaimed expert. Eumolpus' speech of accreditation, while admittedly couched in terms of a career as a pedagogue, is entirely directed at appealing to Encolpius' desire for a very different kind of education from what one would more usually expect in art and the art historian.³⁴

In effect, what guarantees Eumolpus' authority as interpreter to Encolpius is the theme of homosexual seduction which obsesses Encolpius throughout the plot of the *Satyrica* and determines his own reading of the pictures. But, while this may do for Encolpius, it undermines Eumolpus in the eyes of the reader – for the exegete is seen to be no better than his audience (on the very moral high ground which he claimed).³⁵ The wisdom of this wise man lies in his greater cynicism by contrast with Encolpius and in his truly outstanding talent for lies and dissimulation! And yet, ironically, this talent for deception is indeed a quality specifically suited to understanding the deceptive modes of the naturalistic art which is displayed in the gallery. Earlier in the *Satyrica*, it is the deceptivity of realism which is explicitly highlighted when Encolpius falls over at the terrifying sight of Trimalchio's painted dog (29.1).³⁶ Likewise deception is one of the key themes of naturalism in Pliny's famous anecdotes of the artistic duel between Zeuxis and Parrhasius (35.65–6) or his story of the horse painted

by Apelles which caused other horses to neigh (35.95).³⁷ Like naturalist paintings themselves, Eumolpus not only lies extravagantly (in appearing to be what he is not), but positively rejoices in parading his deceptions and strategies for dissimulation as transparently as possible. At stake here is the whole claim of ecphrasis to be providing any kind of greater insight into art. What the old man of Cebes' *Tabula*, Philostratus in the *Imagines* and the numerous other exegetes of art in the ancient literature of ecphrasis have in common is their offer of having something more, something better, 'something great' as Petronius puts it, with which to enlighten their listeners. This offer is usually couched in moral or philosophic terms. Eumolpus' authority, by contrast, lies in his ability to corrupt the young while pretending to educate them ... But such duplicity is entirely appropriate to the nature of illusionistic art, and such corruption is of course precisely the function of mimesis in Platonic theory. So Eumolpus the exegete is simultaneously undermined as being merely a duplicitous pederast and yet upheld as a perfect living exemplar of the deceptive nature of the kinds of images he is being asked to interpret.

Hence there is a fine irony about Encolpius' desire not only to learn about the pictures but

to discuss the *indolence* of the age (*causam desidiae praesentis*), since the fine arts had died, not least painting, which had vanished without the slightest trace ... (88.1)

Since the theme of the present decadence of the arts was a cliché in Roman art-historical writing (cf. *Satyrical* 2.9; Vitruvius, *De architectura* 7.5; Pliny, *Natural history* 35.2 and 28), Petronius is again subverting and satirising the pretensions of contemporary aesthetics. More forcefully still, he is also exploiting the jargon and tropes of art history to make from them a pervasive moral metaphor for the decline of the age. This metaphor of decline – embodied in the figures of Eumolpus and Encolpius in the picture gallery sublimating their sexual phantasies in talk about art and its decadence – is itself of course subject to the ironising context of satire. These Petronian heroes represent not only the sad reduction of the appreciation of the fine arts to the level of what Eumolpus later describes as 'wine and whores' (88.6), but also, paradoxically, the figure of Eumolpus as dissimulator is the perfect paradigm of the deceptive art he attempts to explain. Of course, in a Platonic discourse – which is one of the philosophical tropes Petronius at the same time upholds and attacks – mimesis and all the arts which embody it are themselves decadent. Ecphrasis is an ideal means for presenting this theme of decadence because of its traditional associations with mimetic images, its inevitable implication with pedagogy of a salvific and moralistic sort (above all in the frequently read *Tabula* of Cebes, to which several ancient writers including Lucian refer)³⁸ and its deeper roots in Stoic epistemology. But the genius of Petronius here is that a text which satirises and yet embodies decadence in the figures of Eumolpus and Encolpius, which ruthlessly attacks decline and yet luxuriously indulges

in a parade of all the features it attacks, should actually turn to discuss the theme explicitly.

Eumolpus' response to Encolpius's request for enlightenment is, like Trimalchio's expertise on history and myth, a wonderful mixture of philosophical and art-historical gobbledegook.³⁹ Returning to his role as moralising philosopher, Eumolpus pronounces that

Love of money began this revolution. In former ages virtue was still loved for her own sake, the noble arts flourished, and there were the keenest struggles among mankind to prevent anything being long undiscovered which might benefit posterity. (88.2)

He illustrates this (entirely trite) theme of a former golden age with some garbled references to the philosophers Democritus, Eudoxus and Chrysippus the Stoic (88.3–4). Again the philosophical eclecticism of doctrines on which he draws is directly paralleled by the eclecticism of the doctrine expounded in the *Tabula* of Cebes. To these philosophical sages he appends a number of artists, implicitly attributing to them the same status, inspiration and depth. Presumably the very juxtaposition of artists and philosophers (given, for instance, Plato's radically different attitudes to these two groups) is itself satirical – although it may be satirising what had become a commonplace in an age when the Emperor Nero styled himself a great poet and his chief minister Seneca claimed to be a philosopher.

Eumolpus continues:

If you turn to sculptors, Lysippus died of starvation as he brooded over the lines of a single statue, and Myron, who almost caught the very soul of men and beasts in bronze, left no heir behind him. But we are besotted with wine and whores and cannot rise to understand even the arts that are developed; we slander the past, and learn and teach nothing but vices ... (88.5–6)

The initial joke, of course, is that Eumolpus has got his facts about these artists exactly the reverse of how they are reported by ancient art history. Lysippus died rich after producing hundreds of statues according to Pliny (34.37) and Myron's major weakness was not giving enough 'expression to the feelings of the soul' (34.58).⁴⁰ More deeply, however, one wonders what actually recommends the lost golden age in Eumolpus' account when one of its chief geniuses is so abstracted that he starves, while the other is not competent enough to train an heir. They at least devoted themselves body and soul to art: such devotion could hardly be attributed to the exponent of this past, Eumolpus, whose later conduct in the novel will prove a truly wholehearted commitment to wine and whoring, and whose student (for whom all this is an education) is of course Encolpius. In the light of this, the reader must ask whether Eumolpus' accusation against modern decadents as 'slandering the past' does not

directly apply to himself and to this very speech. Certainly no one is a better exemplar of ‘learning and teaching nothing but vices’ ...

The speech rises to a climax with a grand denigration of the lust for money and ends on the somewhat peculiar artistic coda:

So don't be surprised in the decline of painting, when a lump of gold seems more beautiful to everyone, gods and men, than anything those poor crazy Greeks (*Graeculi delirantes*), Apelles and Phidias, ever did. (88.10)

Of course, there are few greater insults in Roman invective than being called ‘crazy little Greek’. However, even as he concludes his speech, Eumolpus notices that Encolpius’ interest

is riveted on that picture which represents the fall of Troy. Well, I shall try and explain the work (*opus*) in verse ... (89.1)

Instead of finishing, Eumolpus now concludes his diatribe with a truly grandiose peroration – an ecphrastic poem of 65 lines, both a pastiche of Vergil’s *Aeneid* Book 2 and of the style of Seneca (89).⁴¹ One of the jokes of this poem is that its inspiration is entirely textual – it tells a long narrative and entirely ignores any relation to that narrative which the picture might have had.⁴² This is unlike the norms of ecphrasis as exemplified in, say, the Elder Philostratus, who usually remarks in what ways his pictures depart from the texts which may have inspired them. Here Petronius puts an extreme position on the relation of words to pictures. This ‘description’ may be a *tour de force* in bathos but it fails to make any contact with the work of art it purports to describe.

The response to Eumolpus’ poem is another wonderful moment:

Some of the people who were walking in the colonnades threw stones at Eumolpus as he recited. But he recognised this tribute to his genius, covered his head and fled out of the temple ... (90.1)

Whether the much lamented decadence of the arts is here embodied in Eumolpus’ dreadful poem (which Encolpius ascribes to his ‘disease’, *morbo*, in being a poet – 90.3) or in the reaction of his listeners (to which Eumolpus is well used) or in both, is not made explicit.

However, in its literary reference to the *Aeneid*, the *Troiae halosis* recalls not only Aeneas’ account of the fall of Troy in Book 2 but also his confrontation with a series of pictures of the Trojan war on the walls of Dido’s temple in Carthage (1.450–93). In effect, it recapitulates not just the theme of the capture of Troy, but more significantly the problematic of response to that theme. Whereas Aeneas was an involved witness – a participator – who could rightfully frame his account (in *Aeneid* 2) in the first person and who sees *himself* depicted among the images of the temple (1.488: *se quoque*),

Eumolpus' use of the first person (as if he were a Trojan) is much more complex. For Eumolpus to say 'we thought the thousand ships were beaten off' (v. 11) or 'we look back [at the death of Laocoon and his sons]' (v. 35) presupposes a very different kind of viewing from that of Aeneas. While Vergil's hero weeps at the *phantasia* of his own past, Eumolpus' first person is a classic and multi-layered epichastic deception (encountered frequently for instance in the Elder Philostratus)⁴³ – an attempt to introduce vividness, to produce *phantasia* on the listeners' part. The response the poem receives implies that Eumolpus fails. His strategy of using the *enargeia* of the first person plural, a 'we' which encompasses both himself and his listeners, does not succeed in taking Encolpius and the others in the gallery 'into the picture'.

In this sense, the poem's inscription of the first person as both eyewitness and participant replays the problematic of Encolpius at the beginning of the passage, when he first entered the gallery. Encolpius was unsure where he stood as *viewer* in relation to the paintings, so that initially, despite his conventional Plinian taste, the pictures were puns on their artists' names and in the end the paintings came to imitate Encolpius' plight as lover, rather than evoking in his mind any naturalistic or visionary truths they might have promised. In the *Troiae halosis*, by contrast, Eumolpus attempts to evoke a much more heightened, epic theme for the painting than any so far suggested by his personal history or predilections. He assimilates his and Encolpius' subjectivity to the picture's visual and poetic narrative rather than turning its imagery to his own subjective interests as Encolpius did. While Encolpius had found the paintings merely to reflect his own experience, Eumolpus attempted a visionary transformation of his own and his listeners' experience into the high mythic world of the image's epic drama. But this attempt to parade his own epichastic authority and to save the dignity of epichasis from being merely an Encolpian self-identification fails all the more grandly than did Encolpius' initial mutterings to the empty air. Not only does his audience not listen, they pelt him with stones into the bargain!

Clearly, in the *Satyrica*, the attempt at a high-flown epichasis, instead of the self-image projected on the paintings by Encolpius, came to still greater grief. This failure is acknowledged as such by both Encolpius and Eumolpus, who promises to keep off poetry for the day and is in return rewarded by dinner. So the rewards for epichasis in Petronius lie in its failure and in the shutting up of its authoritative figure. That failure in this passage consists of a repeated inability for the viewer meaningfully to confront the paintings, for subject to relate with object. Either the pictures are assimilated into the identity of the subject to the extent that one doubts whether the viewer sees anything but himself (in the case of Encolpius), or the subjectivity of the viewer is so assimilated to the paintings that the gap between himself (the old pederast Eumolpus) and himself-imagined (the heroic Trojan witnessing the tragic fall of his city) is beyond credibility and in the end bathetic. But, ironically, this failure has now united the exegete and his listener in a relationship which will produce numerous initiations (of a largely sexual kind) in which Eumolpus will mostly have the upper hand. So the failure of epichasis in describing art, and the self-acclaimed failure of the exegete in living up to his own

moral code, form the foundation for a friendship of the old man and the young which runs through the rest of the novel.

III *Deception and decadence*

As in any satire, the positive point being made by the *Satyrica* in its systematic undercutting of the literary and philosophical presuppositions of ecphrasis is less clear than the ironic light which it casts on its theme.⁴⁴ But this irony, in that it reflects upon Stoicism, upon Platonic theory and upon the arts in the Neronian age, certainly has the potential for a social and political effect. Not only is culture itself seen through the distorting mirror of satire, but also all the standard responses to culture. Since the *Satyrica* is perhaps the supreme response to culture to survive from the reign of Nero, it may be that one element of the text's strategy is a deliberate satire on itself (and other writings somewhat like it, such as moralising satires) as a moral commentary on the age. In this sense, its persistent attack on the philosophical and pedagogic frame in which ancient ecphrasis is so often presented becomes a self-reflexive satire of the *Satyrica* (indeed of satire in general) as a frame for the exposure of the Neronian era. Like Eumolpus' speech in which he laments how 'we slander the past, and learn and teach nothing but vices', the *Satyrica* is a classic example of a text which indulges lavishly and self-consciously in all the crimes of which it accuses its age. One thing we learn from the ecphrastic episode in the art gallery is how clear Petronius is about exactly what he is doing – since he satirises the process with ruthless and pointed elegance.

The naturalistic qualities of Roman painting are useful to Petronius because their measure of success lies precisely in their ability to deceive.⁴⁵ Here again the *Satyrica*'s paintings fit into the normal criteria of taste displayed by the art criticism of Petronius' time (for instance in Pliny's famous anecdotes of Zeuxis and Parrhasius). Indeed deception (*apate*) was to be a quality of paintings explicitly recommended by ancient critics of art from Gorgias (*Encomium of Helen* 18–19) to the Younger Philostratus, who wrote:

The deception inherent in a work [of art] is pleasurable and involves no reproach; for to confront objects which do not exist as though they existed and to be influenced by them, to believe that they do exist – is not this, since no harm can come of it, a suitable and irreproachable means of providing entertainment? (*Imagines*, poem 4)

But for Petronius the success not only of the image but of the exegete himself, Eumolpus, is measured by *his* ability to deceive – in lying to the parents of the Pergamene boy and in cheating the boy of the 'Macedonian thoroughbred' he offered as the price of his desire. Just as Encolpius (like Pliny and the rest of Neronian taste) is taken in by the naturalism of painting so that he imports into the paintings of the

gallery a whole range of (his own frustrated) emotions,⁴⁶ so he is also taken in by the transparent dissimulations of Eumolpus – who is truly an expert in the art of deception.⁴⁷

Indeed, in this respect only is Eumolpus' ephrasis related to the painting it purports to describe: the *Troiae halosis* is all about the Greek *deception* of the Trojans by means of the Trojan horse. The poem is, in a sense, an epic paradigm both for the triumph of deception (showing how people 'trust a fraud' – *dolis addit fidem*, v. 22) and for the tragic price of deception in the destruction of Troy. In the poem these themes are interwoven with a moralising motif of sacrilege (vv. 52–3) which is itself connected with the theme of misplaced worship as a sign of decadence in the speech which served as a preface for the poem (88). In effect, Petronius' play with art and art-criticism in the age of naturalism makes a wonderful summary (just as so many pictures do in the ancient novels) of one of the main themes of the plot. But it is the constant deceits and dissimulations inherent in naturalism (rather than the content of any one painting, as in Longus or Achilles Tatius) which form the ephrastic summary of Petronius' theme as well as the butt of his satire. The text's pungent irony is that Petronius' characters (and indeed his culture) present the decline of art as being a decadence from the peaks of mimetic illusionism – an illusionism which, according to the *Satyrice*'s presentation of it, was already rotten to the core. The very theme of decline is itself undermined in the notion that the high point (the naturalistic – and hence deceptive – art of the famous Greek painters in the gallery and the Homeric narrative of the *Troiae halosis*) is itself a paradigm of decadence, through the motif of its inherent deceit.

Quite apart from revelling in the complexities of deception throughout the *Satyrice*, Petronius uses the deceptive qualities of illusionistic art to assert the decadence of modern times. And yet, even as he attacks decadence, Petronius is framing precisely such moral accounts of decline in the ironic light of satire. Petronian polemic, perhaps like Neronian dramatics, has the potential to ironise not only the very process of moralising rhetoric but even itself as a satiric reflection of such rhetoric. The key moment is perhaps that following the end of the *Troiae halosis*, when those in the gallery stoned Eumolpus as he recited but the poet recognised this as a tribute to his genius (*plausum ingenii sui*) and fled (90.1). The age is decadent, so stoning the artist is proof of his genius (like his poverty and shabbiness at 83.7–9). Indeed the quality of his verse is unjudgeable since a decadent age must always misjudge it. The very immorality of Eumolpus' many deceptions is itself hard to condemn as ultimately immoral, since it may represent the necessary and inevitable actions of a Socrates in the age of Nero. Yet to use the word 'genius' (*ingenium*) of Eumolpus is itself to beg the question, to put an ironising satiric frame around any reflections which readers' confrontation with him may have prompted ... Indeed, the very fact that the world the text portrays may on some level be taken as an image of the world in which it was produced only increases the already crippling accumulation of ironies.

As in the selection of artists in the gallery, Petronius shows a remarkable capacity both for being right up with the trendiest and most extravagant instances of modern

taste and for deflating them at the same time. Yet even as he deflates what he portrays, he questions ironically the very process of adopting such a critical stance. In Petronius, *the great satirist of the dining-room*, one is perhaps tempted to describe this quality as having one's cake and eating it.

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NOTES

Versions of this paper have been delivered at the Courtauld Institute and at the American Philological Association's Annual Conference in New Orleans in 1992, as well as at the Cambridge Philological Society. I am grateful to all those present for their comments on these occasions, especially to John Henderson and Ian DuQuesnay for various discussions of Petronius, to John Bodell for sending me an unpublished paper, and to Catherine Connors, Simon Goldhill and David Konstan for their careful readings of an early draft. My deepest thanks are due to Richard Hunter's excellent advice, Michael Reeve's very incisive observations and to Froma Zeitlin, who commented on my reading in a missive which was insightful, critical, helpful and lengthy far beyond the call of academic duty.

1. See further the editors' introduction to J. Elsner and J. Masters (eds.), *Reflections of Nero: culture, history and representation* (London, 1994, forthcoming).
2. On Petronius and the *Satyrica* generally, see J. P. Sullivan, *The Satyricon of Petronius* (London, 1968), the articles collected in *Arion* 5 no. 3 (1966); N. Slater, *Reading Petronius* (Baltimore and London, 1990). On the *Satyrica* as a satiric text, I have found most useful: J. P. Sullivan, 'Satire and realism in Petronius', in idem (ed.), *Critical essays on Roman literature: satire* (London, 1963) 73–92; F. I. Zeitlin, 'Petronius as paradox: anarchy and artistic integrity', *TAPA* 102 (1971) 631–84; Slater (1990). On the *Satyrica* specifically as a parody of the ancient novel, see R. Heinze, 'Petron und der Griechische Roman' *Hermes* 34 (1899) 494–519; E. Courtney, 'Parody and literary allusion in the Menippean satire', *Philologus* 106 (1962) 86–100, esp. 92–100. On the uses and dangers of satire in the writing of ancient history, see S. H. Braund (ed.), *Satire and society in ancient Rome* (Exeter, 1989) Introduction (esp. 1–3).
3. On the art gallery episode of the *Satyrica* as a parody of themes in the romances, see P. G. Walsh, *The Roman novel*, (Cambridge, 1970) 93–7; N. Slater, "'Against interpretation": Petronius and art criticism', *Ramus* 16 (1987) 165–76, 169.
4. This description has sufficiently convinced art historians that many regard the gallery as having existed; see especially K. Lehmann-Hartleben, 'The Imagines of the Elder Philostratus', *Art Bulletin* 23 (1941) 16–44, with the discussion of N. Bryson, 'Philostratus and the imaginary museum', in S. Goldhill and R. Osborne (eds.), *Art and text in ancient Greek culture*, (Cambridge, 1994), forthcoming).
5. On the device of the introductory painting, see especially O. Schissel von Fleschenberg, 'Die Technik des Bildeinsatzes', *Philologus* 72 (1913) 83–114; S. Bartsch, *Decoding the ancient novel* (Princeton, 1989) 40–79. On Longus, see R. Hunter, *A study of Daphnis & Chloe* (Cambridge, 1983) 38–51 on the prologue; B. D. MacQueen, *Myth, rhetoric and fiction: a reading of Longus's Daphnis and Chloe* (Lincoln, Nebraska, and London, 1990) 15–30 on the prologue; F. I. Zeitlin, 'The poetics of Eros: nature, art and imitation in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*', in D. M. Halperin, J. J. Winkler and F. I. Zeitlin (eds.), *Before sexuality: the construction of erotic experience in the ancient Greek world* (Princeton, 1990) 417–64.
6. My thanks to J. Henderson for his interest in these awful puns.
7. My thanks to M. Reeve for this suggestion. Delz's alternative, *monoglenon*, would lose this joke while preserving the Apelles/appellant pun (see J. Delz, 'Petron Satyrica ed. K. Muller', *Gnomon* 34 (1962) 676–84, 678).

8. As suggested by N. Hopkinson in discussion at the Philological Society.
9. Subsequently suggested by J. Henderson.
10. *ergo amor etiam deos tangit*: this is as crass a truism as Encolpius ever expresses, but also a parody of Vergil's *et mentem mortalia tangunt* (*Aeneid* 1.462) also from an epigrammatic passage, which will be evoked again later in Eumolpus' poem, the *Troiae halosis*, on which see below. On the many relations of the gallery episode to Vergil, see F. I. Zeitlin, 'Romanus Petronius', *Latomus* 30 (1971) 56–82.
11. Not quite the story given by the *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* 202–17. On the theme of Ganymede, with a number of parallel 'transumptions' of homoeroticism as art and art as homoeroticism in humanist writing and painting, see L. Barkan, *Transuming passion: Ganymede and the erotics of humanism* (Stanford, 1991) 48–74.
12. For an earlier *reductio ad absurdum* of naturalism, compare Trimalchio's comments at 52.1: Myself, I have a great passion for silver. I own about a hundred four-gallon cups engraved with Cassandra killing her sons [Trimalchio has of course confused Cassandra with Medea], and *the boys lying there dead – but you would think they were alive!*
13. On Encolpius' reactions to the paintings, see esp. Slater (n. 2) 220–30 and idem (n. 3) 168–71.
14. Zeitlin (n. 5) 432.
15. *Daphnis and Chloe* proem 1–2, with the discussions of Zeitlin, (n. 5) 430–6 on 'art and eros' and Hunter (n. 5) 38–51; Achilles Tatius 1.1–2; 3.6–7; 5.3.
16. However, on the theme of homosexuality in the novels, see B. Effe, 'Der Griechische Liebesroman und die Homoerotik', *Philologus* 131 (1987) 95–108.
17. Cf. Heinze (n. 2).
18. See e.g. J. R. Clarke, 'The decor of the House of Jupiter and Ganymede at Ostia Antica: private residence turned gay hotel?', in E. K. Gazda (ed.), *Roman art in the private sphere* (Ann Arbor, 1991) 89–104.
19. On the *Tabula*, see C. Praechter, *Cebetis Tabula quanam aetate conscripta esse videatur* (Marburg, 1885); R. Joly, *Le Tableau de Cébès et la philosophie religieuse* (Brussels, 1968); and (for an annotated translation) J. T. Fitzberald and L. M. White, *The Tabula of Cebes* (Chico, Calif., 1983).
20. For a discussion of this issue see J. Elsner, *Art and the Roman viewer: the transformation of art from the pagan world to Christianity* (Cambridge, 1994, forthcoming) ch. 1 'Viewing and "the Real": the *Imagines* of Philostratus and the *Tabula* of Cebes'.
21. On *phantasia* as the criterion for truth in Stoic thought, see Diogenes Laertius, *Lives of eminent philosophers* 7.49 on the Stoic Zeno, with J. M. Rist, *Stoic philosophy* (Cambridge, 1969) 133–55, J. Annas, 'Truth and knowledge', in M. Schofield, M. Burnyeat and J. Barnes (eds.), *Doubt and dogmatism* (Oxford, 1980) 84–104; C. C. W. Taylor, 'All perceptions are true', in Schofield, Burnyeat and Barnes, *op. cit.* 105–24; G. Watson, *Phantasia in classical thought* (Galway, 1988) 38–58. On earlier Greek views of *phantasia*, see Watson (1988) 1–37; A. Silverman, 'Plato on *Phantasia*', *Classical Antiquity* 10 (1991) 123–47; M. Schofield, 'Aristotle on the imagination', in G. E. R. Lloyd and G. E. L. Owen, *Aristotle on mind and the senses* (Cambridge, 1978) 99–140.
22. Cicero, *Lucullus* 77, with A. M. Ioppolo, 'Presentation and assent: a physical and cognitive problem in early Stoicism', *CQ* n.s. 40 (1990) 433–49 (esp. 433–41). See also A. A. Long, *Hellenistic philosophy* (London, 1974) 121–31; C. Imbert, 'Stoic logic and Alexandrian poetics; in Schofield, Burnyeat and Barnes (n. 21) 183–216; J. J. Pollitt, *The ancient view of Greek art* (New Haven and London, 1974) 52–5, 61–3 and 293–7.
23. On 'the transformation of *phantasia*', see esp. Watson (n. 21) 59–95.

24. Longinus, *De sublimitate* 15.1:

Another thing which is very productive of grandeur, magnificence and urgency, my young friend, is visualisation (*phantasia*). I use this word for what some people call image production. The term *phantasia* is used generally for any thing which in any way suggests a thought productive of speech; but the word has also come into fashion for the situation in which enthusiasm and emotion make the speaker see what he is saying and bring it *visually* before his audience.

Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 6.2.29.

There are certain experiences which the Greeks call *phantasiai* and the Romans *visiones*, whereby things absent are presented to our imagination with such extreme vividness that they seem actually to be before our very eyes.

Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 10.7.15:

Those vivid conceptions of which I spoke and which, as I remarked, are called *phantasiai*, ... must be kept clearly before our eyes and admitted into our hearts: for it is feeling and force of imagination that makes us eloquent.

Not only do these passages emphasise the creative importance of *phantasia* in inspiring the orator's eloquence, but that of Longinus also hints at a *shift* in meaning of the word in precisely the century when Petronius too was writing. The implication is that once *phantasia* moved from being a precise term in Stoic epistemology, it gradually became a concept for creative imagination which could be generally applied to a large number of creative activities.

25. Cicero, *Orator* 2.9:

Surely the great sculptor [Phidias], while making the image of Jupiter or Minerva, did not look at any person he was using as a model, but in his own mind there dwelt a surpassing vision of beauty; at this he gazed and all intent on this he guided his artist's hand to produce the likeness of the god. Accordingly ... there is some thing perfect and surpassing in the case of sculpture and painting – an intellectual ideal by reference to which the artist represents those objects which do not themselves appear to the eye ...

Cf. the Elder Seneca, *Contr.* 8.2 and 10.5.8; Quintilian, *Inst. or.* 12.10.9; Dio Chrysostom, *The Olympic discourse* (Oratio 12) 70–1; Philostratus, *Vit. Apoll.* 6.13; Plotinus, *Enneads* 5.8.1. On the theme of *phantasia* and the artist, see Pollitt (n. 22) 52–5 and 203–5.

26. Here I am in conflict with the generally excellent account of Slater (n. 2), who tentatively suggests that Petronius may have held the Stoic doctrine of *phantasia*, or at least used it to attack simple views of mimesis (228–30). While I agree that mimesis is being 'systematically satirized', I suggest that Stoic doctrines are no less immune from satiric undermining. (In general, Petronius is as happy to take up a Platonic position for satiric purposes, such as attacking the Stoics, as he is to adopt any other position – including ones which attack Platonic views.) On the Stoicism present in Petronius' rhetoric, see E. J. Barnes, 'Petronius, Philo and Stoic rhetoric', *Latomus* 32 (1973) 787–98.

27. On Eumolpus, see particularly P. G. Walsh, 'Eumolpus, the *Halosis Troiae* and the *De Bello Civili*', *Classical Philology* 63 (1968) 208–12; Zeitlin (n. 10); R. Beck, 'Eumolpus *Poeta*, Eumolpus *Fabulator*: a study of characterization in the *Satyricon*', *Phoenix* 33 (1979) 239–53. Brief accounts of his characterisation include Sullivan, 1968 (n. 2) 230–1; A. M. Cameron, 'Myth and meaning in Petronius', *Latomus* 29 (1970) 397–425, esp. 415; Slater (n. 2) 91–5.

28. On the Eleusinian Eumolpus, see N. J. Richardson, *The Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (Oxford, 1974) 197–8.

29. On this context for Eumolpus, see the brief accounts of Schissel von Fleschenberg (n. 5) 103–5 and Courtney (n. 2) 97.

30. See Fitzgerald and White (n. 19) 20–7 for a summary of the eclectic philosophising presented there.
31. Indeed, Eumolpus will later try to seduce Giton from Encolpius, just as he seduced the Pergamene boy (92–100).
32. E.g. Slater (n. 2) 93.
33. Contrast for instance the Elder Philostratus, whose self-accreditations include four years of study with the painter and writer Aristodemus of Caria (*Imagines* 1 proem 3), and the Younger Philostratus, who explicitly writes in the tradition of his uncle (*Imagines* proem 1–2).
34. Cf. Zeitlin (n. 10) 61; ‘The Milesian tale of the Pergamene boy ... provides a relevant contrast to Encolpius in that it takes up the story of a successful and clever seduction of a young boy.’
35. Cf. Slater (n. 2) 95: ‘The message thus far is clear: Eumolpus is just as much of an intellectual fraud as Encolpius.’
36. For a discussion of ‘Realism in Petronius’, see F. M. Jones in H. Hofmann (ed.), *Groningen Colloquia on the novel 4* (Groningen, 1991) 105–20 (esp. 110–12 on ‘visualism’, 112–14 on decorum and its inversions, 118–19 on the disruptions of verisimilitude). For the problems of realism and symbolism in the *Satyrica*, in connection with a riveting account of the paintings of Trimalchio’s life (29.3–6), see now J. Bodel, ‘Trimalchio’s Underworld’ in J. Tatum (ed.), *The search for the ancient novel* (Baltimore, 1993), forthcoming. For Trimalchio’s dog, see Slater (n. 3) 167, 169–70.
37. On Zeuxis and Parrhasius, see N. Bryson, *Looking at the overlooked* (London, 1990) 30–2; S. Bann, *The true vine: visual representation and Western tradition* (Cambridge, 1989) ch. 1.
38. See Fitzgerald and White (n. 19) 7–8.
39. On ‘this comically inaccurate survey of the philosophical and artistic geniuses of the past’, see Walsh (n. 3) 96–7.
40. See Walsh (n. 3) 96 and Slater (n. 3) 171.
41. On the *Troiae halosis* and its introduction in Eumolpus’ discourse, see Sullivan, 1968 (n. 2) 165–89, Zeitlin (n. 10) 58–67 and Slater (n. 2) 95–101 and 186–90.
42. Cf. Slater (n. 3) 172: ‘*The Troiae Halosis* is entirely unsatisfactory as an interpretation of a painting. It elucidates neither the visual nor the historical dimensions of the painting. The painting is merely an excuse ...’
43. See e.g. *Imagines* 1.4 (4) – ‘Let us catch the blood, my boy ...’; 1.6 (5) – ‘Let not yonder hare escape us ...’; 1.28 (1) – ‘Do not rush past us, ye hunters ...’ For some reflections on this ephrastic strategy – particularly its involvement of the viewer in a voyeuristic fantasy of engagement – see Elsner (n. 20) ch. 1.
44. Cf. Jones (n. 36) 118–19, esp. 119: ‘It is hard to believe there is a centre beneath the masks, and beyond this level, in the narrative itself there is no accessible reality, only layers of imitation, and only relative criteria to judge between different genres.’
45. As Slater points out: (n. 3) 167, (n. 2) 216.
46. This strategy of reading an emotional interpretation into art is specifically what a sophist like the Elder Philostratus aims to teach, see Elsner (n. 20) ch. 1.
47. If one sees illusionism and deception as central themes of the *Satyrica*, then Eumolpus as priest, poet and paradigm of Petronian deception becomes the embodiment of the strains and contradictions of the *Satyrica* as a whole. For another angle on the deceptions of Eumolpus – as the victim of false deaths – see C. Connors, ‘Famous last words: authorship and death in the *Satyricon* and Neronian Rome’, in Elsner and Masters (n. 1).