



## Petronius and the Greek Romance

C. W. Mendell

*Classical Philology*, Vol. 12, No. 2. (Apr., 1917), pp. 158-172.

Stable URL:

<http://links.jstor.org/sici?sici=0009-837X%28191704%2912%3A2%3C158%3APATGR%3E2.0.CO%3B2-Y>

*Classical Philology* is currently published by The University of Chicago Press.

---

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/about/terms.html>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/journals/ucpress.html>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

---

The JSTOR Archive is a trusted digital repository providing for long-term preservation and access to leading academic journals and scholarly literature from around the world. The Archive is supported by libraries, scholarly societies, publishers, and foundations. It is an initiative of JSTOR, a not-for-profit organization with a mission to help the scholarly community take advantage of advances in technology. For more information regarding JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

## PETRONIUS AND THE GREEK ROMANCE

BY C. W. MENDELL

Some years ago Professor Abbott published in *Classical Philology*<sup>1</sup> a stimulating article entitled "The Origin of the Realistic Romance among the Romans." In that article he indicated many possible sources from which Petronius may have drawn something of his tone or matter. As Abbott himself suggests, all of these are sources for various specific characteristics of Petronius rather than ancestors from which the literary type proceeded. He concludes with the statement that "so far as our present information goes, Petronius seems to have been the inventor of the realistic romance."

Among the possible sources of Petronius, Abbott mentions the love romances of the Greeks which, if we could be sure that they were written in their developed form as early as the time of Petronius, would furnish a type of source different from the rest. Heinze<sup>2</sup> assumed for the romances an early date and developed the theory that Petronius wrote a parody of them. He finds in this way a forerunner of the type rather than of particular characteristics. I believe that this is the right direction in which to look for the literary ancestor of Petronius and that there are more indications of this relation than Heinze makes use of; furthermore, that Abbott's enumeration of characteristics reinforces rather than controverts this view, but that Heinze's theory of the parody nature of the novel is not the correct one.

I am skeptical of the propriety of calling Petronius' work a *realistic* romance, if that implies, as it seems to, an attempt on the part of the author to present human life essentially as it is.<sup>3</sup> The term "realistic" was presumably first applied to the book because it dealt

<sup>1</sup> VI (1911), 257 ff.

<sup>2</sup> R. Heinze, "Petron und der griechische Roman," *Hermes*, XXXIV (1899), 494 ff.

<sup>3</sup> This is the position maintained by Martin Rosenblüth in a Kiel dissertation: *Beiträge zur Quellenkunde von Petrons Satiren* (Berlin, 1909). Bürger also calls Petronius' work *ein echt realistischen Sittenroman*; see "Der antike Roman vor Petronius," *Hermes*, XXVII (1892), 345 ff.

with everyday folk, not with superhuman or heroic characters. But so did the love romances. That the hero and heroine were superlatively beautiful and in most ways extremely noble did not of necessity remove them from the sphere of possibility. Frankly accepted impossibilities were excluded from these romances, indicating a conscious effort at realism. But they still without apology introduced improbabilities of an extreme sort, and a succession of unusual experiences which in their total are quite incredible even though no particular one is by itself impossible. And this is just what Petronius does. He never asks us to believe in marvels, but he sends his characters through a series of adventures which the most credulous mind could not find probable. And even so we have but a small portion of them.

A parallel from another literary field may make more clear the actual position of Petronius in the scale of realism. Greek tragedy dealt with exalted characters of the heroic past; gods and goddesses and personages purely mythological. Aeschylus did not scruple to deal with impossibilities; there was good ground for Aristophanes' thrusts at his horse-cocks and goat-stags; his gods and his sea-nymphs and his winged Erinyes all trod the earth among his characters. Euripides made the drama much more realistic, and although mythical kings and princes and the dwellers on Olympus still make up the personnel, they show the emotions and actions of real people. The New Comedy took the next step. The logical successor of Euripides' tragedy, it reduced every detail to the plane of the commonplace. Ordinary people with ordinary emotions are its material, and it is called, in contrast to tragedy, "the mirror of life." But it is a *speculum vitae* only by comparison. It depicts only one side of life and that too distorted by exaggeration, with experiences treading on the heels of one another in such rapid succession and with such a persistently comic phase that they can hardly be termed, with any strictness of expression, realistic.

What is true of the New Comedy in this respect is roughly true of Petronius' work. It does not show the marvels of the early tales of adventurous travel. It confines itself to what might conceivably happen, but not to any truthfully realistic depiction of life. The romance of adventure, pure and simple, presented the frankly

impossible with the utmost confidence. The romance of love confined itself to the realms of possibility so far as incidents go and, like Euripides, presented persons of an exalted rank, in a serious fashion, acting in a natural and human manner. Petronius reduced the characters to middle and low society and dwelt on a very different phase of their experiences. Just what that phase was and the resultant tone of the treatment will appear later.

The acceptance of some such evolution of the prose romance does not imply that with the beginning of one type the preceding ceased to be written, but merely that in a general way this was the order of their first appearance and development of type.<sup>1</sup> This Heinze doubts. He thinks that there is no such relation between the romance of adventure and the erotic romance. They are, he holds, two totally different and unrelated types, alike only in the one point that their plots are not stationary. He seems, however, to be influenced by the fact that he places the only writer of the romance of adventure that we know, Antonius Diogenes, too late to influence Petronius, while at the same time he posits erotic romances before the time of the Roman novelist. This is too cavalier. Even without the evidence of Lucian in the introduction to his *True History*, it would be clear that the romance of adventure was a very slight variation from the professedly historic work of such logographers as Ctesias and Iamboulos. Without positive proof it is almost impossible to give up the generally accepted theory of development which recognizes a logical sequence from the novel of adventure to the erotic romance.

The dating of Greek romances is at best a hazardous undertaking. But there is certainly no ground for putting Antonius Diogenes later than Petronius. It has been assumed that his bilingual name disproves the statement of Photius that he lived shortly after the time of Alexander.<sup>2</sup> But Livius Andronicus came to Rome in 275 B.C.; Rome had come much into contact with Greek cities in such a way as to acquire Greek slaves long before that; Naples and Cumae were

<sup>1</sup> This distinction is clearly drawn by Otmar Schissel von Fleschenberg in *Entwicklungsgeschichte des griechischen Romanes im Alterthum* (Halle, 1913).

<sup>2</sup> This is the position of J. S. Phillimore in his article on the romances in *English Literature and the Classics* (Oxford, 1912).

Roman before 300; and before Alexander began his conquests Rome had conquered many a Greek in Campania. Furthermore, regardless of exact dating, his nearness to Ctesias and the other logographers makes it more than likely that he wrote before formal rhetoric had begun its sway.

The erotic romances, too, must be given much earlier dates than they used to receive. Jebb stated without hesitation that Chariton was a writer of the fifth century,<sup>1</sup> but a papyrus of 100 A.D. with a considerable fragment of his novel deducts from this date more than two hundred years at a blow.<sup>2</sup> The Ninos fragment cannot have been written later than 50 A.D., and in all probability was distinctly earlier.<sup>3</sup> These two romances have one thing in common which seems to me significant. Chariton's novel has much more deliberate rhetoric than the others that we possess, and the Ninos fragments indicate that that romance was similar to Chariton's in this respect. In psychological analysis, in balanced arguments, in brilliant descriptions, and in dramatic scenes, Chariton is far ahead of Xenophon, for example, or Achilles Tatius. It seems therefore not improbable that, although Rohde was wrong in his *actual* date for Chariton, he was right in his *relative* dating, and that the two romances of whose dates we have some slight indication are among the latest.<sup>4</sup> If Chariton is two hundred years and more older than he was generally believed to be, there is no reason to think that the rest may not be too, and internal evidence strongly suggests that they mark an earlier stage of development.

In consideration of the possibility of an early date for the romances, it seems not unlikely that too little weight has been given to a passage from Plautus.<sup>5</sup> In *Men.* 247, Messenio says to his

<sup>1</sup> See *A Companion to Greek Studies*, Cambridge, 1906, p. 161.

<sup>2</sup> Grenfell, Hunt, and Hogarth, *Fayum Towns and Their Papyri*, p. 74.

<sup>3</sup> See U. Wilcken, "Ein neuer griechischer Roman," *Hermes*, XXVIII (1893), 161 ff.

<sup>4</sup> Rohde, *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*, 2d ed., p. 521: "Nur so viel scheint eine genauere Betrachtung seines Romanes zu lehren, dass er die Romane des Iamblichus, Heliodorus und nicht am wenigsten den des Xenophon vor Augen hatte und nachbildete." A fragment of Achilles Tatius of a date not later than 300 puts another of the romances much earlier than Rohde's dating. See *Oxyrhynchus Papyri*, X, 135, No. 1250.

<sup>5</sup> Professor Henry W. Prescott has kindly called to my attention the fact that this point is brought out by Bousset, *Zeitschr. f. d. Neutestamentl. Wiss.*, 1904, pp. 18 ff.

master: "Quin nos hinc domum | redimus nisi si historiam scripturi sumus?" He has already complained of the traveling as follows: "Histros Hispanos Massilienses Hiluros | mare superum omne Graeciamque exoticam | orasque Italicas omnis, qua adgreditur mare | sumus circumvecti." This sounds more like material for a romance than for a history, and his conclusion indicates the further ground of similarity which led him to associate their wanderings with those of the romantic hero: "Hominem inter vivos quaeritamus mortuom; | nam invenissemus iam diu, sei viveret." There is nothing to contradict this interpretation in the other instances of the use of *historia* in Plautus.<sup>1</sup>

It is obvious since the discovery of the Ninos fragments that the rhetoric which could have influenced the romance was the rhetoric taught by such men as Seneca and his predecessors, not the rhetoric of the new sophistic. The balancing of arguments and the descriptive chapters are exactly the sort of thing which the regular rhetorical training would have cultivated. It by no means follows that the romances were expanded rhetorical exercises. The condensed plots which Seneca and the other rhetoricians collected were much more probably summaries of longer stories which the teacher presented in the form of an abstract for the pupil to practice on. The fact that many of them deal with actual historical incidents bears out this supposition and the modern case system of studying law furnishes a fair parallel. That the school teacher invented and the novelist borrowed is certainly a harder theory than the reverse. Parthenius, some thirty years before Christ, culling plots for Gallus to use, is a good example of the sort of thing that Seneca probably did to obtain for his classroom the material that has survived him. The interesting point for the present study is that he evidently had romances from which to draw.

Another parallel from the drama may serve to clarify the understanding of this development of type. Even in the time of Aeschylus the desire for the romantic element was strong. Colonization

<sup>1</sup> *Bacchides* i. 2. 50; *Trinummus* ii. 2. 100. R. Reitzenstein, *Das Märchen von Amor und Psyche bei Apuleius*, pp. 32 ff. and 62 ff., interprets *historia* and *fabula* differently, but to take *historiae inseruisse* as "wrote at intervals while engaged on a serious work" is very hard, and the whole argument is based on the unfounded claim that Apuleius found his entire matter in Sisenna.

had no doubt fostered it. In Aeschylus it is satisfied by the marvelous, the supernatural, and the strange. Such long stories as Io's of her wanderings have little reason for existing except as they cater to a public craving for romance. In the later dramatists, who catered to less naïve audiences, the strange and weird drop out and the love element enters to make good the romantic loss. Euripides incurs the charge of degrading the stage by introducing women in love among his characters. Finally, in the New Comedy, the love element is more regularly the central theme, but is reduced to a lower plane and treated with much less of dignity and seriousness.

So the romantic element in prose story-telling proceeds from the original travel motif with its marvels of imagination, the sort of thing that Lucian reproduces as an extravaganza in his *True History*, to the love story with adventure as a contributory element. And when it has run its course on the high and arid plane of pure romance, it is revived by an infusion of Roman salt by Petronius. Even in the part that rhetoric plays in these two very different fields the parallel holds roughly. The rhetoric of the Greek romance is the rhetoric of Euripides; the naturalness of Petronius is the naturalness of the New Comedy.

If we could be absolutely sure what the *Milesian Tales* were and just what Aristides wrote, one step in the development of the romance might be cleared up. But entire agreement on this point seems impossible; I merely venture a suggestion. Ovid's phrase (*Tristia* ii. 413), "Iunxit Aristides Milesia crimina [or carmina] secum, Pulsus Aristides nec tamen urbe sua est," is pretty generally taken to indicate that Aristides formed some kind of a whole out of the Milesian stories which he found or invented. The tone of the Milesian tale was presumably erotic and piquant.<sup>1</sup> Now it seems to me that the second reference of Ovid to Aristides (*Tristia* ii. 443) implies that his book was in reality a consecutive story: "Vertit Aristidem Sisenna nec obfuit illi Historiae turpis inseruisse iocos." *Fabula* and not *historia* is the regular word for short incidental stories. Many references to Petronius and Apuleius confirm the results of

<sup>1</sup> The best summaries of the evidence are Hans Lucas, "Zu den *Milesiaca* des Aristides," *Philologus*, LXVI (1907), 16 ff., and Otmarsch Schissel von Fleschenberg, *Die griechische Novelle* (Halle, 1913).

a study of Ovid's usage on this point.<sup>1</sup> *Historia* indicates something sustained,<sup>2</sup> and such a meaning is demanded by the passage in order to make possible the insertion of the *iocci* which, as elsewhere in Ovid, are evidently erotic anecdotes. Sisenna then inserted short anecdotes into his translation of the book of Aristides. (Possibly Ovid was misled into thinking that the original book of Aristides was a compilation, by the title of it which was very likely *Milesiaca* after the analogy of the *Babylonica* of Iamblichus and the *Indica* and the like of his predecessors.) The resultant book was the novel that caused scandal when found in the luggage of one of Crassus' officers after the battle of Carrhae, and it was probably in its Latin version that it was known to the Romans who refer to it. So it is not strange that the scandalous insertions came to be looked on by them as the essential part of the romance and that the name of the Greek romance that gave them a setting was misconstrued into a title for them.

In view of some such possibility, Apuleius' statement about his own work in his introduction is significant: "At ego tibi sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conseram," etc. He means that in addition to merely Latinizing the *Onos* of Lucius of Patrae he will insert stories of erotic flavor and it is in these that much of his originality lies. He speaks of the inserts as *fabulae*, with the exception noted above, as does Petronius in introducing the story of the Matron of Ephesus (110, 113).

If this supposition about the *Milesian Tales* be true, then it is in the Latin romances only, in Sisenna, Petronius, and Apuleius, that there are short inserted anecdotes. The Greek romances have numberless episodic digressions which seem to take the reader far afield, but *fabulae* deliberately introduced as short stories they do not have. It looks very much as though the introduction of these were a Roman contribution to the romance. But before considering this point further it will be convenient to consider the characteristics of Petronius as presented by Abbott and to see how they bear on the suggested relation between the Greek and the Roman romance.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Petr. 39, 61, 92, 110, etc.; Apul. i. 20, 26; ii. 15, 20, etc.; Ovid *Met.* iv. 53; *Ex ponto* iii. 2. 97; *Tristia* iv. 10. 68, etc.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Quint. *Inst. Orat.* ii. 4. 2; in Apul. viii. 1, *historia* is used instead of the usual *fabula* and the insertion turns out to be a miniature romance.

Professor Abbott, in outlining the characteristics of Petronius' novel that must be considered in looking for a predecessor, notes, first, the place, Southern Italy; second, the generally low class of characters; third, the prominence of women; fourth, the efficient motif, erotic in spite of the framework furnished by an offended deity; fifth, the baffling tone of satire; sixth, the realism; seventh, the character-drawing, and, finally, the prose-poetic form. These must be compared one by one with the characteristics of the romance.

The scenes of the Greek novels range pretty freely over the known world, although one point is worth noting which I think has not been brought out. The range of scene is confined to the old Greek world, not to the expanded Roman world. Persia, Asia Minor, Egypt, Southern Italy, Sicily form the stage on which the characters of romance move. If the novels were a late invention, if they did not, as I believe they do, go back to Hellenistic times, this would be difficult to explain, but it is perfectly natural in the case of a type of literature firmly fixed before Rome had widened the bounds of the world. The early romance of adventure had treated in splendidly cavalier style Scythia and Thule, the lower world and the moon, until the tendency toward realism led the romancer to limit himself to the world his readers knew. But to return to the point, the scenes cover always a considerable range. Southern Italy and Sicily figure in Xenophon of Ephesus and also in Chariton, who is the representative of the romance who comes nearest to Petronius. The scene of the Roman novel in the fragment we possess is Southern Italy; there is indication that Massilia, too, figured in the story, and the haphazard wandering of the characters leaves little room for doubt that the scenes were even more varied.

The characters of the romances are mixed. From the great king of Persia to a humble herdsman, all stages of society are represented. The hero and heroine, ordinarily half-way between these extremes, are, in the greatest variety of ways, brought into contact with prince and pauper, pirate and pander. In Petronius there are no real potentates. But, granted the criteria by which his middle-class folk gauge position, the range is like that of the Greek. From Habinnas and Trimalchio to the fisherman who picks up the heroes after the wreck, we have the counterparts of the romantic satrap

and vassal. The general type of character must be noted (it is distinctly low by comparison), but the range of character is just as important, and in that Chariton and Petronius are alike.

In the matter of the prominence of women, I can find no reason to draw any distinction between Petronius and the romance. In Chariton, Callirhoe, Plangon, and Stateira are very prominent and sharply differentiated, and every romance furnishes its quota of well-drawn women. Manto, the Potiphar's wife of Xenophon, his ugly Kuno, Melite, the scheming widow of Achilles Tatius, the splendid farmer's daughter of Iamblichus—these can hardly be said to play a less important part than men.

In motif again there is little distinction beyond that of tone. The efficient motif of the romances is erotic just as much as is that of Petronius. In the romance it is circumstance that drives on the lovers through a mad succession of experiences even though these circumstances are sometimes motivated by the anger of a god offended by the obstinacy or arrogance of the lovers. Petronius, too, gives realism by making the force of circumstances govern the plot, but behind circumstances, he reminds us several times, is the anger of the offended Priapus. Like the low caste of his characters this choice of offended deity must be remembered as significant.

The baffling tone of satire is peculiar to Petronius. The romances are beyond all else ingenuous. The realism I have already discussed. The trend away from marvels had gone as far in Chariton as in Petronius. The only difference lies in the class of people treated: in keeping with his middle-class people, Petronius' adventures and melodramatic situations are middle class. I am inclined also to detect less difference than is usually found in the matter of character-drawing. What difference there is seems to me to be a result of the individual skill of a particular artist, not a question of type. As psychological analysis began to enter into the romance, characterization began to be more prominent. It is one of the chief results of strong rhetorical influences. And Chariton in particular depicts individualities: the faithful Polycharmus, a second Pylades, the gentleman Dionysius, the oriental queen Stateira, the big-hearted countrywoman Plangon; they are all real characters though not done with the genius of Petronius. Few of the romancers seem to

have been men of high genius. Finally, the prose-poetic form is peculiar to Petronius.

It is clear, I think, that in most of its characteristics Petronius' book is not far removed from the Greek romance. Further points of similarity might be noted. Heinze has dwelt on the framework and motivation, on the union and separation of Giton and Encolpius, on the steady chain of misfortunes, on the constant erotic temptations of the heroes. I would add the insistence on hairbreadth escapes which are the mainstay of both the Roman and the Greek novelist in holding attention, and the prevailing willingness of the characters to give up and die when crises arise. Details, too, bear out the parallel which framework and general characteristics make so clear. To name a few: the cloak motif or recognition by means of a garment (Petr. 12 ff.) is almost identical in the use made of it with the incident of Iamblichus in which Sinonius tries to sell a cloak and is arrested for robbing a tomb. Encolpius before the pictures (Petr. 83) recalls the opening of Achilles Tatius. The argument over punishment (Petr. 107) may be paralleled in any romance, perhaps best by the arguments of the pirates and the trial scene in Chariton. The shipwreck (Petr. 114, 115) might be taken bodily from Achilles Tatius or Xenophon of Ephesus. The comparison of Circe's beauty to that of a goddess (Petr. 126) suggests the familiar conceit that the Greek heroine would be taken for Aphrodite on the street. The magic potions of Greek romance are perhaps paralleled by the disgusting magic of Petronius (Petr. 134 ff.).

With all these points of similarity which cannot be mere coincidences, there remain the essential differences noted in passing: the class of characters treated, the baffling tone of satire, the prose-poetic form, and I would add the insertion of anecdotes unrelated to the plot.

It is time to consider the name under which the novel of Petronius has come down to us. Buecheler's *Petronii Satirae* is the accepted designation, but this title does not describe the book correctly if it implies conformity with one of the two types of satire distinguished by Quintilian, the Horatian and the Varronian. The hexameter form of the first is an unsurmountable obstacle, and Varro like Horace wrote short satires collected into books, not one long and

continuous composition divided into chapters. It is not surprising, therefore, to find that there is practically no manuscript authority for designating Petronius' book as a satire. On the other hand, it will not be difficult to see how the designation crept in during later years.

The majority of the best manuscripts read *saturicon*, either in superscription or in colophon (so BDEFG<sup>1</sup>). B, the oldest, has "Petronii Arbitri Saturicon." In the eleventh-century Paris manuscript alone appears any form of the word *satura*: "Petronii arbitri satirarum l. incipit," and this is corrected in the margin by the same or a contemporary hand to "Petronii arbitri affranii Satirici lib. incip." This has the appearance of being an attempt to remedy the strange-looking form *satiricon*, further changed to *Satyri* in the Trau manuscript (A), and modern editors have been equally prone to change it to suit their purposes. Savaron in his notes on Sidonius Apollinaris<sup>2</sup> says: "Petronii libellus mera est satura Varroniana, ut suo loco dicitur, ipse tamen Saturicum sive Satiricum maluit inscribere: quo modo commentarium dicitur pro commentario libro: Apologeticus pro apologetico libro." Casaubon says<sup>3</sup> that it is not worth while discussing why Petronius preferred *Satiricum* to *Satyra*. As a matter of fact there is no reason to think that he did. *Saturicon* is in all probability the Latinization of the Greek genitive plural, and the *satirarum* of P, which has been largely responsible for the classification of Petronius' novel as a satire, was an attempt by the copyist to correct this. The longer fragment of the Trau manuscript (A) shows that there were at least sixteen books in the novel so that βιβλία was probably the word understood in the Greek title which Petronius wished to suggest. His title was made on the analogy of τὰ Μιλησιακά<sup>4</sup> or τὰ Ἰνδικά,<sup>5</sup> and gives fair warning of the kind of romance that is coming, at the same time indicating clearly that here is no satire proper.

The characterization of Petronius' book which made appropriate his designation of it and which also led to its later classification as satire is twofold: first, characteristics of content, second,

<sup>1</sup> See Buecheler's edition of 1862.

<sup>2</sup> *Epistulae* viii. 11. Cited by Burmann, edition of Petronius (1709), p. 2.

<sup>3</sup> *De Satyra* ii. 4. Cited by Burmann, edition of Petronius (1709), p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Plut. *Crassus* 32.

<sup>5</sup> Cf. Photius, *Bibliotheca*, No. 72.

those of form. In content the two branches of satire did not differ widely. Aulus Gellius (ii. 18. 6) indicates the nature of Varro's subject-matter to some extent, explaining that he was called Menippean because he modeled his work on that of the Cynic Menippus. The writings of Menippus were partly philosophical but rarely in a wholly serious tone.<sup>1</sup> Varro's subjects have a range as wide as Horace's: literary, philosophical, mythological, satires on the miser, on wills, on the education of children, on food and dinners, and on Priapus. The field of satire seems not to have varied much from Lucilius' day to Juvenal's, and from this field Petronius chose many an object for satiric attack. Oratory and poetry, education, the influence of money, the wealthy upstart, the *recitationes*, Priapus, the *captatores*, the women's devotion to a gladiator, magic, all are touched on by Petronius as well as by Varro and Horace and Juvenal. And so they are by Martial. The difference is that in the novelist and in the epigrammatist they are incidental, in the satirists they are the chief themes of the satires, treated for their own sake. In Petronius they are quite subordinate to the story. They indicate the satiric spirit of the author but do not prove him a satirist.

This point is well illustrated by the enumeration of characteristics in the thesis of Rosenblüth. After outlining the peculiarities common to Petronius and to satire, he proceeds to list those common to Petronius and to the mime, and practically every point which he brings up is applicable to satire as well, while the one thing that would be significant in Petronius, the dramatic form, is, of course, wanting. He cites, for example, the mixture of real names and appropriate nicknames, the use of colloquialisms, types of character, enchantments, mimic episodes, and so on. No doubt the mime, like the epic, like the prologues of comedy, had its influence in the formation of the romantic type. And so, in a greater degree, satire, the literary type truly congenial to the Roman, encroaching as it did on the epigram, on the lyric, on drama, and even on history, encroached also on the romance, and is responsible for incidental subjects in Petronius and for much of the tone throughout. But the novel of Petronius is neither mime nor satire. The essentials of its literary type are those of the romance.

<sup>1</sup> Cf. Riese edition of Varro, *Introd.*, p. 9.

In form it is the Varronian satire only with which Hirzel and Schmid, Rohde and Ribbeck would allign Petronius.<sup>1</sup> Whatever theory we may hold of its origin or precise nature, there can be no doubt of the existence as far back as the time of Cicero of this prosimetric form of essay, probably not precisely defined as satire. And from the point of view of form there is a real and essential resemblance between Varro and Petronius and a difference between Petronius and the Greek romance. But in this respect too I think that an incidental resemblance is mistaken for identity of type. The metrical portions of the novel do not, with two or three short exceptions, further the narrative, while in the Varronian satire, so far as can be judged by the remains, the discourse was carried on indiscriminately by the metrical parts and by the prose. Seneca's farce on the death of Claudius furnishes a striking example of the actual mixing of prose and verse and shows the difference between such metrical passages and the insertions in Petronius which, except for form, are much like the ethnographical lore inserted in the romances. The Menippean satire made it seem natural to the Roman to introduce metrical inserts into his continuous discourse, just as the influence of satire in general led him to introduce satiric attacks on various familiar abuses.

In so far as the characters treated by Petronius are of a different class from those of the Greek romance I believe that this too is due to the spirit of satire. It is to a satirist like Juvenal that we must look for a parallel, to a man of nearly the same period who saw practically the same conditions. If he chose a bourgeois society to assail, it is only natural that Petronius should attack the same class, a class coming into great prominence during the early empire without too much credit in the eyes of the aristocracy. But I have already indicated that I do not feel the difference in this respect between the Roman and the Greek to be very great. It should be borne in mind that the part of the novel which we possess deals with a provincial town where Habinnas the *sevir* would be a man of no inconsiderable position.

<sup>1</sup> Hirzel, *Der Dialog* (Leipzig, 1895), II, 37; Schmid, "Der griechische Roman," *Neue Jahrbücher*, 1904, I, 476; Rohde, *Der griechische Roman*, 2d ed. (Leipzig, 1900), p. 267; Ribbeck, *Geschichte der römischen Dichtung*, III, 150.

Finally, like Sisenna and like Apuleius, Petronius inserts into his narrative anecdotes which are in no wise relevant or necessary to the progress of his novel, stories introduced for their own sake and not merely digressions in which even a Chariton might indulge. Such anecdotes are foreign to the atmosphere of feverish haste which marks most of the Greek romances, but absolutely in keeping with the rambling and casual tone of satire. Horace is full of them and rarely feels the need of his apology, *non longa est fabula*, which, however, is significant when taken in connection with the use of *fabula* by Ovid, Petronius, and Apuleius.

This scrutiny of the characteristics of Petronius as outlined by Abbott shows that the baffling tone of satire, the prose-poetic form, the class of characters treated, and, in addition to these, the insertion of anecdotes not strictly a part of the plot, are presumably the result of the influence of satire, while the remaining characteristics supplement the evidence which serves to define the literary type of the work as erotic romance.

Now, although Heinze maintains the similarity between Petronius and the erotic romance, he finds the tone of the former to be one of parody and makes this the determining factor in explaining the relation between the two. He cites the general tone of epic parody, the tragic pose of killing one's self at every crisis, always given up on a very slight pretext, and, finally, the exaggerated attitude toward dangers of every sort.

These are all parody in detail: of themselves they do not justify a characterization of the whole work. And when we stop to notice how such detailed parody appears in other branches of Latin literature, not remote from the romance, their significance seems even less probably that which Heinze would make it. For example, so far as the tone of epic parody is concerned, Horace and Juvenal offer much more obvious instances of the same, yet no one would feel that the satire of Horace and Juvenal was adequately defined as parody. The Roman comedy has passages which very obviously parody the tragedy, such as the recognition scene in the *Menaechmi*, but such details do not make the comedy as a whole a parody. The comedy furnishes also numerous instances of characters who express a fixed determination to die, usually a slave or a weak-willed lover, and this

determination presently vanishes. Dangers in the comedy are magnified enormously. But these facts do not prove that comedy belongs to the parody type of literature. It is true, to be sure, that the tone of the novel as a whole is largely a matter of feeling or impression and therefore dangerous ground for argument, but, so far as the consensus of feeling goes, the tone would seem to be nearer to one of realism than to one of parody, and I therefore feel more confident of my own impression that the tone of parody is confined to details.

To show that the romance as a whole was a parody it would be necessary, I think, to show that in its entirety, especially in so far as its main lines are concerned, the parody was obvious and sustained. Lucian, in the preface to his *True History*, gives fair warning that he is writing a parody and the reader is never given an opportunity to doubt the sincerity of the warning. The *Will of the Little Pig* is sustained parody. But if Petronius were the same, we should expect something more in the way of burlesque setting and fewer men with a normally developed sense of humor would have swallowed the romance as realistic and satiric.

Finally, the long incident of Trimalchio's dinner, forming as it does so considerable a portion of even the entire work, would be out of place in a parody of the erotic romance. Parody, as Heinze himself says in another connection, implies something parodied, and such an incident would be so totally foreign to the spirit and purpose of romance as to be utterly out of place in the parody. The dinner of the *nouveau riche* was an accepted subject of satire thoroughly congenial to the highly original writer of a romance penned in the satiric vein.

My conclusions are these. The novel of Petronius is not, strictly speaking, a realistic novel. It is an erotic romance and belongs to the developed, not to the early, type of romance. Its essential type characteristics are those of the romance. It is not a parody although it contains parody. It is not a satire although strongly influenced by the satiric spirit. It is a real romance written by a truly Roman artist; his national characteristics appear in the satiric bent, in the setting, and in much of the tone; his personal impress is felt in the excellent characterization, in the genial humor, and in the wealth of invention.