

Cena Trimalchionis 26-27: Notes

Narrator= Encolpius (Gk name: “in the bosom/crotch”). Setting seems to be Puteoli (*Graeca urbs* of 81.3). Episode seems likely to have been in Book 15 of the *Satyrical*. Opening of the Book possibly missing. Agamemnon (teacher of rhetoric: cf. myth figure), invites E et al to dinner at T's (freedman from Asia).

26

7 *tertius dies*: third day after what? Two days of Quartilla's abuses? After a conversation with Agamemnon?

Id ... cenae: nb a meal is given to gladiators before the arena show. Note continuation of previous gladiatorial references (e.g. 9.9 *gladiator obscene ... harena*) and forthcoming theme. Could be the banquet or review of the gladiators on the night before the show (see Schmeling 2011. *A commentary on the Satyrical of Petronius*). Smith (*libera* “open to all”) suggests a figurative description of some imminent danger.

tot ... quies: reference to a brawl at Quartilla's house?

8 *quonam genere*: in what way (= *quonam ratione*).

procellam: self-dramatizing typical of Encolpius.

unus i.e. “a”.

9 *quid*: “look”, “I say” (Smith).

vos acts as kind of vocative.

hodie apud quem fiat: Smith: “at whose place it'll be today” i.e. who is going to be the host today. *fiat* = slangy.

Trimalchio: probably Semitic root; tri-malekh “Thrice King”. Servile/east association?

lautissimus: “The adjective and noun *lautitia*, almost code words in the *Cena*, recur constantly in the description of the dinner, the host, and his possessions, generally with ironic overtones (e.g. 27.4, 31.8, 32.1, 34.8, 47.8, 57.2, 70.7, 73.5)... Their ambiguous relationship to *elegans* and *elegantia* is worth noting” (Schmeling ad loc); Smith ad 29.1 (suggesting E's simplicity) suggesting not always safe to assume irony in references to *lautitiae*.

homo: followed by lacuna?

horologium: water-clock. Typical extravagance. Time and death key in the *Cena*.

Fully-equipped trumpeter, dressed in special uniform who marks the changing of the watches. Cf ring-composition of trumpeter at end of episode.

ut subinde sciat ... “so that all the time he'll know how much of his life is behind him” (Smith)- not having to send a slave to forum to check time. NB T's obsession with the passing of time (cf. 77.2).

10 *Gitona*: Giton (Encolpius' boy-lover. Gk “neighbour”) pretending to be a slave (slave would look after master's clothes while he was in the bath). Bath typical preparation for dinner. For sequence of bath, ball-playing, cena see e.g Pliny *Ep.* 3.1.8

[*usque hoc*]: probably corrupt.

balneum: public baths, seemingly where T and guests are meeting.

27

1 *interim*: understand as “then/next” or as “meanwhile” while assuming lacuna.

coepe: + infinitive used for simple perfect.

calvum: bald; contrast *pueros capillatos* (attractive; long-haired slaves often *delicati*).

Schmeling suggests red and green as 'house' colours of T: 28.4, 28.8; 32.; 67. 4; 55.6; 68.1.

nb ball-games popular at baths (here seems to be playing a version of *trigon*, usually played by three persons each at one corner of a triangle, or by four players throwing and catching 6 balls. Variation here: T throws balls to other players which they catch and T counts in his favour the balls they miss.

2 *nec tam pueri...*: Encolpius' homosexual inclinations suggested.

spectaculum: show starts before “theatre” of dinner.

soleatus: “in slippers” (*soleae* worn in house and at baths).

What do we make of the colour effect?

nec amplius...: Smith “he didn't make any more effort to pick up...”; Schmeling “he did not bother to retrieve any ball which came in contact with the ground; a slave nearby had a bagful containing enough for the players”. Ostentatious display of wealth.

3 *notavimus*: i.e. “noticed”.

res novas: T getting it wrong or Encolpius not used to this sort of thing??

spadones: possession of eunuchs suggestive of wealth/importance/pretentiousness.

lusu expellente “the play driving them on” (Schmeling).

4 *lautitias*: ironic??

Menelaus: seems to be assistant of Agamemnon at his rhetoric school (cf. mythical Menelaus, younger brother of Agamemnon).

cubitum ponitis: whilst reclining, diner rests left elbow on pillow.

ponitis: present for future (colloquial).

5 Trimalchio signals and show starts.

matellam: diminutive of *matula*, a bottle-shaped receptacle for urine. Slave holds so T doesn't need to visit lavatory. Common for dinner-parties. Urine becomes a motif in the *Cena*. Precious metal> humour (usually earthenware/bronze).

6: using hair as towel has parallels at e.g. Statius *Theb.* 9.375. Effect here?