

THE MODERN GREEK TRANSLATION OF PETRONIUS' *SATYRICA*
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Resumen: Aris Alexandrou (nombre real: Aristóteles Vassiliadis, 1922-1978) fue un poeta griego, prosista y traductor (principalmente de literatura rusa). Su única traducción del latín es la de los *Satyrica* de Petronio en 1971. El libro se publicó en 1985, siete años después de su muerte. La traducción de Alexandrou es una de las tres traducciones griegas de esta obra latina que se han hecho hasta la fecha; las otras dos son las de Vagenas y Meraklis. Todos estos libros se elaboraron en un periodo de dos años (1970-1971), lo que demuestra que el *Satyricon* de Fellini (1969) despertó el interés de los traductores griegos por traducir por primera vez a su lengua materna la obra de Petronio. En este trabajo estudio el libro de Alexandrou, que contiene: a) una introducción, en la que se ofrece información sobre el autor romano y su obra; b) su traducción al griego moderno; y c) varias notas a pie de página. Identifico también las fuentes que siguió en estas partes y examino cinco pasajes de su traducción. Al final del artículo, expongo mis conclusiones.

Palabras clave: Aris Alexandrou, Petronio, *Satyrica*, Grimal, Ernout, Sullivan, Vagenas, Meraklis, traducción.

Abstract: Aris Alexandrou (real name: Aristotle Vassiliadis, 1922-1978) was a Greek poet, prose writer and translator (mainly of Russian literature). His only translation from Latin is that of Petronius' *Satyrica* in 1971. The book was published in 1985, seven years after his death. Alexandrou's translation is one of the three Greek translations of this Latin work that have been made to date; the other two are by Vagenas and Meraklis. All of these books were produced within two years of each other (1970-1971), a fact which

[93]

proves that Fellini's *Satyricon* (1969) piqued the Greek translators' interest in rendering for the first time into their native tongue Petronius' work. In this paper, I study Alexandrou's book, which contains: a) an introduction providing information on the Roman author and his work; b) his translation into Modern Greek; and c) several footnotes. I identify the sources he followed in these parts and examine five passages of his translation. At the end of the paper, I draw my conclusions.

Keywords: Aris Alexandrou, Petronius, *Satyricon*, Grimal, Ernout, Sullivan, Vagenas, Meraklis, translation.

1. INTRODUCTION

1a. A few words on Alexandrou's life and works

Aris Alexandrou (a literary pseudonym of Aristotle Vasileiadis) was born in Leningrad (today: Saint Petersburg) in 1922. His father, Vasileios Vasileiadis, was a Greek from Trebizond, while his mother, Polina Antonovna Vilgelmson, was Estonian. His native language was Russian. His family left the Soviet Union for Thessaloniki in 1928, and after two years (1930) settled in Athens, where Alexandrou went to school and learned Greek. In 1941 he was admitted to the Higher School of Commerce Studies (Ανωτάτη Σχολή Εμπορικών Σπουδών) and became a member of a communist organisation, but withdrew shortly afterwards. Nevertheless, he remained a communist until his death, although he had several disagreements with the Communist Party of Greece (ΚΚΕ). Due to his leftist ideology and political activity, he was exiled to Moudros (1948-1949), Makronesos (1949), and Agios Eustratios (1950-1951), and was imprisoned in several prisons until 1958, when he was released and married Kaiti Drosou, a Greek journalist and poet. In 1962, he was awarded the Moscow Prize of Peace. When the dictatorship of the colonels was imposed in Greece (1967), Alexandrou left for Paris, where he remained until his death on July 2, 1978¹.

Alexandrou is widely known for his only novel, *To Κιβώτιο* (*The Mission Box*), which was published in 1975 and translated since into many languages. This work is considered a masterpiece of the post-WWII Greek Literature. Alexandrou also published collections of poems (e.g. *Άγονος γραμμή* (*The Barren Line*), *Ευθύτης οδών* (*Straightness of the roads*)), as well as some theatrical works. He was a professional translator, and his translation work is truly extensive. He introduced Russian authors to the Greek readers (e.g. Dostoevsky, Gorky, Tolstoy, Ehrenburg, Mayakovski, Chekhov). He also translated several British (e.g. Bernard Shaw, Wilde, Kipling, Caldwell) and French authors (e.g. Voltaire, Honoré de

¹ For the important chronologies in Alexandrou's life, see Rautopoulos (1996: 393-398).

Balzac, Aragon)², as well as certain passages from other languages (Rautopoulos, 1996: 387-388), while his only Modern Greek rendering of a Latin work is that of Petronius' *Satyrica*.

1b. Petronius' reception in the West

As we will see below, Alexandrou's translation of *Satyrica* is one of the three completed Modern Greek (i.e. the language that is used by modern Greek people—that's why it is also called *dimotiki* [=the language of *demos*, i.e. people]—in oral and written form, which was established as the official language of the Greek State in 1976) translations of this work³. From this number, we can deduce the poor level of interest for Petronius in Greece, or the Greek-speaking public in general. On the contrary, the reception of Petronius (and Latin literature in general) in Europe (from the Renaissance onwards) has been markedly different. In 1694, the first English translation of Petronius was produced by Burnaby (Sandy and Harrison, 2008: 311), and many English translations followed over a period of 300 years (Gillespie, 2018). The fact that Petronius' text was used as a schoolbook in 17th-century England is truly impressive (Stuckey, 1972: 149, n. 28). In the 17th century, French and Italian translations of *Satyrica* were published for the first time, as well⁴. Furthermore, several scholars dealing with Petronius' reception have proven his high degree of impact upon neo-Latin authors⁵, as well as later novelists from the 17th until the 20th century (e.g., cf. Fitzgerald's *The Great Gatsby*) (MacKendrick, 1950; Maclean, 2016), and also on other arts, such as music and cinema⁶.

1c. Greek translations of Latin works: a brief overview

However, Petronius was not one of the favorite Roman authors for Greek translators, unlike Ovid, whose *Metamorphoses* and *Heroides* had already been translated into Greek by the monk Maximus Planudes in the 13th century. His *carmina amatoria* (*Amores*, *Ars amatoria*, and *Remedia amoris*) were also rendered into Greek by Planudes, or a student of his.

² For a detailed catalogue of Alexandrou's original works and translations, see Rautopoulos (1996: 375-392).

³ I write 'completed' because Raios' translation (2010) includes many passages from Petronius and Apuleius, rather than their entire works.

⁴ For French translations of Petronius, see Ernout (1962: xxxv-xxxviii). For Italian translations, see Onelli (2014), Onelli (2018) and Onelli (2019).

⁵ Indicatively, see Schmeling and Rebmann (1975); Schmeling and Stuckey (1977); McElroy (2002); Reeve (2008); Sandy and Harrison (2008).

⁶ Indicatively, for music, see Praet (2011). For cinema, see Segal (1971); Bondanella (1988).

During the period from the Fall of Constantinople to the Ottoman Turks (1453) until the Greek War of Independence (1821), we mainly find Greek translations of Latin works that covered ancient Greek and Roman history and mythology [e.g. Justin's *Epitome of Trogus* by John Makolas in 1686 and Daniel Philippidis in 1817, Cornelius Nepos' *De viris illustribus* by Spyridon Vlantis in 1798 (Nikitas, 1998), several translations of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, etc.] (Nikitas, 2012); a few translations of famous Latin poems (such as the translations of Virgil's *Aeneid* and *Georgics* in 1791/1792 and 1796, respectively, into Homerizing language and metre by Eugenios Voulgaris) (Papaioannou, 2008; Papaioannou, 2018; Paschalis, 2018); several translations from Neo-Latin philosophical, theological, and scientific treatises (Athanasiadou, Pappas, Stathis and Fyntikoglou, 2019: 198); and a few Greek renderings of Neo-Latin literary works (such as that of Ambrosio Marliano's *Theatrum politicum* by John Abramios in 1758) (Michalopoulos and Michalopoulos, 2020).

The number of Greek translations of Latin works increased significantly after the foundation of the Greek State (1830) and the establishment of the University of Athens (1837). Many Roman authors who were part of the curricula in schools and the university, such as Cicero, Caesar, Cornelius Nepos, Virgil, Horace, Livy, Ovid, and Tacitus were translated, mainly into *katharevousa* (= an artificial language, a kind of mixture of ancient and Modern Greek), which was the official language of the Greek education and administration (from the foundation of the Greek State in 1830 until 1976). The authors of these translations followed the *ad verbum* practice and frequently inserted comments in their books. Their readership consisted of pupils and students (Athanasiadou, Pappas, Stathis and Fyntikoglou, 2019: 197-200). Furthermore, we see a few Greek translations of the Latin poems of Catullus, Horace, Tibullus, Propertius and Ovid in books and literary journals at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th century. These translations were mainly made into Modern Greek, aiming to be read by a wider readership, and they have literary value, as most of them were composed in Modern Greek metres and could be read independently from the Latin original, as Modern Greek poems (Pappas, 2018; Athanasiadou, Pappas, Stathis and Fyntikoglou, 2019). During the 20th century, which saw the foundation of other universities in other cities of Greece, a few other Roman poets and authors were translated. Finally, in the 21st century, we observe a pleasant increase in Greek translations of Latin works with a high literary value (Vaiopoulos, Michalopoulos and Michalopoulos, 2021: 13).

1d. Greek translations of Petronius

From this brief presentation, we can deduce that the educational system was the main reason for Greek translations of Latin works to be produced; these books were used as textbooks, and the truth is that they were composed using rather dull language, and rarely offered any aesthetic pleasure. Nevertheless, a few translations

of Latin poems, most of them appearing in literary journals, could stand as new literary Modern Greek works.

Meanwhile, Petronius remained unknown to most Greeks. *Satyrica* was untranslated in Greek for centuries, apparently due to its immodest content. Apuleius' novel was rendered into Modern Greek by an anonymous translator in 1927 and published in Alexandria, Egypt, where «Egyptiotes» (Greeks who lived in Egypt) were a prosperous minority (cf. the poet C. P. Cavafy). Aristides Aivaliotis republished this translation, in 1982 in Athens⁷.

Things suddenly changed in 1969, when Fellini's *Satyricon* came out. The film, which refers to many episodes of *Satyrica* and a few from Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* (McElroy, 2002: 350), made Petronius' novel widely known to the entire world. The movie was played for the first time in Greece in the fall of 1970; we do not know in which version, but it is certain that it was censored by the Junta regime⁸.

This is why within two years (i.e. 1970-1971), three Modern Greek translations were produced: 1) by Achilleas Vagenas in 1970; 2) by K. Michael in 1970 (K. Michael was a pseudonym used by a Professor at the University of Athens, Michael G. Meraklis, who issued revised versions of his translation in 1981 and 1983, now signing with his real name)⁹; and 3) by Aris Alexandrou in 1971, which was published after his death, in 1985. In order to have a complete picture of the whole Greek translations of Petronius, I cite some information about Vagenas' and Meraklis' books below.

Vagenas' translation

Achilleas Vagenas (1906-1991), an economist and scholar from Zagori (Ioannina), published many of his studies on economical, sociological and philological subjects in Greek and international journals and newspapers. Aside from his translation of Petronius, he also translated fifteen theatrical works and three novels from French, Italian, and English (Tsetsis, 2003:38). His only translation from Latin has the title *Πετρονίου Σατυρικών* (*Petronius' Satyricon*), and was published in Athens, by the Publishing House Chrisima Vivlia (Useful Books). The book consists of a brief prologue (pp. 5-7) written by his compatriot, Zisis M. Papathanasiou (1901-1974),

⁷ The title of this book is *Απουλήιος. Ο χρυσός γάιδαρος ή οι Μεταμορφώσεις* [*Apuleius. The Golden Donkey or Metamorphoses*]. Apart from his interesting introduction, Aivaliotis informs us (in p. 19) that he completed the translation of certain passages that had been left untranslated (probably due to the translator's prudery, as Aivaliotis notes), corrected some mistakes, and added a few footnotes for the reader's information.

⁸ For the reception of Fellini's *Satyricon* in Greece, see lifo.gr (last access: 10/01/2023).

⁹ The edition of 1970 was published by the Publishing house Keimena. Those of 1981 and 1983 (by the Publishing house Gnosi) are the second and third editions of his translation, respectively. Meraklis' books did not include the Latin text, which was included in 1997 (in two volumes) and 2005 in two reprints by Patakis Publishing House (Athens). Therefore, Meraklis' translation of *Satyrica* was published three times (1970, 1981, and 1983). The reprints of 1997 and 2005 follow the edition of 1983.

whom I can find no further reference to (he may have been the editor of the volume), and Vagenas' translation, which includes several footnotes that offer valuable information (about Roman political terms, geographical clarifications, intertextual references, etc.) for Greek readers¹⁰.

Papathanasiou's prologue is very interesting, and is divided into three equal sections: in the first (p. 5), the author, after mentioning that Tacitus, Pliny, and Plutarch refer to Petronius¹¹, and that this work inspired Sienkiewicz's *Quo vadis* (1951) and Fellini's *Satyricon*, notes Dutourd's opinion that Diderot and Proust came to us via Petronius¹². In the second part, he discusses Dutourd's and Grimal's objections to the standard identification of Petronius with the *arbiter elegantiae* of Nero (p. 6) (Dutourd in Grimal, 1960: 12-14). In the third and final section of the prologue (p. 7), Papathanasiou provides five arguments in favour of the identification. I must note that he ends his prologue with one important comment—he welcomes Vagenas' translation, noting that although it came late, it was at an opportune time, as it recalls scenes from Fellini's *Satyricon* and contributes to a better understanding of the movie¹³. This statement explains why all the Greek translations of *Satyricon* were produced between 1970 and 1971.

Meraklis' translation

¹⁰ Vagenas follows Grimal's (1960) translation faithfully, even in its structure, e.g., the information that is given before each section of the narrative, which Vagenas translates *ad verbum* from Grimal, cf. Vagenas (1970: 2): «Η σκηνή ξετυλίγεται στο Γυμνάσιο μιας μεσημβρινής πόλης της Ιταλίας (Νεάπολη; Ποτσουέλο; Πομπηία;) κάτω απ' τη Στοά όπου συνηθίζει να διδάσκει ο δάσκαλος της ρητορικής Αγαμέμνων. Όταν αρχίζει για μας το μυθιστόρημα, δίνεται ο λόγος στον Εγκόλπιο» («The scene takes place in the Gymnasium of a southern city of Italy (Naples? Pozuelo? Pompeii?), under the portico, where Agamemnon, the teacher of rhetoric, habitually teaches. When the novel begins for us, the speech is given to Encolpius»), and Grimal (1960: 21): «La scene se passe dans un gymnase d'une ville d'Italie méridionale (Naples? Pouzzoles? Pompéi?), sous le portique où a coutume d'enseigner le rhéteur Agamemnon. Lorsque commence pour nous le roman, la parole est à Encolpe». The English translations of the Greek translators' texts throughout the paper are my own. The translations from Petronius come from Heseltine (1913), accessible in: [Perseus Digital Library](#) (last access: 13/06/2022). The French texts are cited without English translation.

¹¹ Papathanasiou probably drew this information from Dutourd, who wrote the introduction of Grimal's book, see Dutourd in Grimal (1960: 10-12).

¹² Cf. Papathanasiou in Vagenas (1970: 5) and Dutourd in Grimal (1960: 16-17).

¹³ Papathanasiou in Vagenas (1970: 7): «Και τώρα δεν έχουμε παρά να χαρούμε το κείμενο στην ελληνική του μετάφραση που ήλθε καθυστερημένα μεν, αλλ' επίκαιρα. Επίκαιρα διότι μερικές αναλογίες, εκδηλούμενες σ' άλλες ηλικίες ανακαλούν εικόνες από αυτές που ξετυλιγόνται στο «Σατυρικόν» και διότι θα μας βοηθήσουν να αντιληφθούμε την ταινία του Φελίνι» («And now we have nothing left but to rejoice the text in its Greek translation, which came late but at an opportune time. At an opportune time, because some proportions recall scenes from those that occur in *Satyricon*, and because they will help us to understand Fellini's movie»).

Michael Meraklis (1932-), an Emeritus Professor of the University of Athens, who has written many books on Modern Greek literature and folklore, published his Greek translation of *Satyrica* for the first time in 1970, signing with the pseudonym K. Michael. Following this, his translation was republished and reprinted several times under his real name¹⁴.

The quantity of Meraklis' book reprints proves that this translation of Petronius was the most popular. It consists of three parts: the prologue, the translation, and the endnotes. The prologues of his three editions have similarities, but also differences. For example, in the first edition, Meraklis deals with the form of *Satyrica* and the impact of Milesian tales upon it, but in the 1981 edition, he does not mention this information, and discusses Petronius' criticism of his era (regarding its society and literature) more, as is revealed in the *Cena Trimalchionis*. As Meraklis notes at the end of the prologue of his second edition, he rewrote this prologue in order to be closer to the truth¹⁵. The translation follows the Latin original but is simultaneously literary, as it can be read as a Modern Greek text. As Meraklis informs us in the prologue of 1981, he made some improvements to his translation, and so this is its final form¹⁶. In contrast to Vagenas' and Alexandrou's translations, Meraklis states that his own was made from the Latin text. Nevertheless, he confesses that he also referred to the German translations and commentaries by Wilhelm Heine and Ludwig Friedländer, as well as the French translation of Alfred Ernout¹⁷. In contrast to Vagenas, he does not refer to Petronius's reception in literature and cinema. Meraklis' endnotes offer valuable information for readers and contribute to the continuation of the interrupted narration of Petronius' problematic text.

Although Vagenas does not mention it, his translation was also made from the Latin original, as can be seen from a comparison with it. In the following section of my paper, I study Alexandrou's book, examining his introduction, translation,

¹⁴ See footnote 9.

¹⁵ Meraklis (1981: 10): «Τον πρόλογο της δεύτερης αυτής έκδοσης τον ξανάγραψα· ίσως τώρα είμαι πιο κοντά σ' αυτό που λέμε αλήθεια ενός έργου» («I wrote again the prologue of this second edition; perhaps now I am closer to what we call "the truth of a work"»).

¹⁶ Meraklis (1981: 10): «Αρκετές βελτιώσεις —όπως ελπίζω— επέφερα και στο κείμενο της μετάφρασης, ώστε να μπορώ, ίσως, να πω, ότι η μορφή αυτή είναι η οριστική» («I made several improvements —I hope— to the text of the translation too, so that I may, perhaps, say that this form is the final one»).

¹⁷ Meraklis (1981: 10): «Η μετάφραση έγινε από το λατινικό κείμενο. Πολύτιμη μού ήταν η βοήθεια που βρήκα σε σπουδαίες μεταφραστικές και σχολιαστικές εργασίες γνωστών φιλολόγων, προπάντων των Γερμανών Wilhelm Heine και Ludwig Friedländer, και του Γάλλου Alfred Ernout» («The translation was made from the Latin text. I found valuable help in great translations and commentaries of famous philologists, especially those of the Germans Wilhelm Heine and Ludwig Friedländer, and of the French Alfred Ernout»). See Heine (1773); Friedländer (1891).

and comments. A great further project would be a comparative study between Vagenas', Meraklis', and Alexandrou's translations of Petronius.

2. ARIS ALEXANDROU'S TRANSLATION

Aris Alexandrou's translation of Petronius's *Satyrica* was published after his death (1978), in 1985, by Nepheli Publishing house in Athens. The title of the book is *Πετρωνίου Σατυρικών. Μετάφραση: Άρης Αλεξάνδρου (Petronius' Satyricon. Translation: Aris Alexandrou)*. The editor was Alexandrou's wife Kaiti Drosou (1924-2016), who makes a few comments in the footnotes (annotated with an asterisk) in the introduction of the book.

Alexandrou translated *Satyrica* in 1971 in Paris, as Drosou informs us in a footnote, and as does the translator himself at the end of his introduction¹⁸. Alexandrou's book consists of an extensive introduction (20 pages) and then his translation, which includes many footnotes offering varied information to Greek readers (on Roman history, politics and society, Latin language and literature, etc.). We can observe that the three Greek authors accompanied their translations with helpful notes. However, we see that Vagenas and Meraklis began their books with prologues, while Alexandrou starts with an introduction. Prologues are shorter than introductions, and authors say little in them (regarding their book, their methodology, etc.). On the contrary, introductions are more extensive, and there the author offers much information about their book's subject, the research it needed, possible problems, their methodology, the use of the book, etc. This is also the case in Alexandrou's introduction, in which he deals with several subjects related to Petronius' identity, his methodology, the purpose of his work, etc.

Inside the inner cover, Alexandrou notes:

ΣΑΤΥΡΙΚΟΝ. Μυθιστόρημα του 1^{ου} μ.Χ. αιώνας αγνώστου συγγραφέως που λεγότανε πιθανότατα Τίτος Πετρώνιος ή Γάιος Πετρώνιος ή Πετρώνιος Διαιτητής (αποκαλούμενος και «Διαιτητής Κομψότητος» δηλονότι «Ηγεμών των κομψευομένων») ή ΠΙΕΤΡΩΝΙΟΣ νέτα-σκέτα. Μεταφρασμένο, προλογισμένο και σχολιασμένο από τον Άρη Αλεξάνδρου προς τέρψιν, διασκέδασιν και συμμόρφωσιν των απανταχού Ελλήνων.

Satyricon. Novel of the 1st century AD by an unknown author, who was probably called Titus Petronius or Gaius Petronius or Petronius Arbiter (also known as «*Arbiter elegantiae*», or «ruler of the elegant people») or simply

¹⁸ See Alexandrou (1985: 19) (Drosou's note): «Ο Άρης μεταγλώττισε το “Σατυρικών” στο Παρίσι το 1971. Σημ. Κ. Δρόσου» («Aris translated *Satyricon* in Paris in 1971. Note: K. Drosou»); Alexandrou (1985: 26): «Παρίσι, Άνοιξη 1971» («Paris, spring of 1971»).

Petronius. Translated, prologued and commented by Aris Alexandrou, for Greeks all over the world to take delight in, be entertained by, and comply with.

With these words, Alexandrou already implies the much-discussed subject of Petronius' identity, which he analyses in the introduction. Furthermore, he clearly states the double purpose of his book: to offer reading pleasure but also to contribute to the moral improvement of all Greeks, who will see many similarities between our modern era and that of Petronius, as Alexandrou tells us in his introduction¹⁹.

Alexandrou's introduction

In his highly interesting introduction, we see the harmonic coexistence of the bibliography on Petronius and Alexandrou's personal thoughts. His three main sources are Grimal's (with the preface by Jean Dutourd) and Ernout's French books, and the English version by Sullivan (Grimal, 1960; Ernout, 1962; Sullivan, 1965). Thus, in some passages Alexandrou translates or paraphrases these scholars. Simultaneously, he expresses his opinions of the Roman author and his work, using a colloquial Modern Greek language, several humorous similes, and his personal literary style —after all, we must not forget he himself was a published poet and novelist.

The introduction is divided into ten subsections. In the first (entitled «Η μόνη βεβαιότητα», «The only certainty»), Alexandrou informs his readers that *Satyricon* exists in one manuscript of the 7th century AD and that this manuscript probably had the same form that it does today. The majority of Alexandrou's words came from a footnote in Ernout's book. I cite below the Greek text, its English translation, and the French footnote:

Το μόνο σίγουρο, είναι ότι σώθηκε ως τις μέρες μας ένα χειρόγραφο (με πολλά κενά, δίχως αρχή και τέλος) με τον τίτλο «Σατυρικών». Γνωρίζουμε επίσης ότι η «εκμετάλλευση» του κειμένου, θα πρέπει να άρχισε τον 4^ο μ.Χ. αιώνα. Τον 7^ο αιώνα το χειρόγραφο θα πρέπει να είχε ήδη τη σημερινή του μορφή. Οι ανθολόγοι και οι συγγραφείς του Μεσαίωνα, όπως ο Ιωάννης του Σαλίσμπουρν (επίσκοπος της Σαρτρ τον 12^ο αιώνα) και ο Βικέντιος του Μπωβέ (που πέθανε το 1264) κρατήσανε στα χέρια τους το ίδιο αφήγημα, που κατέχουμε και μεις (Alexandrou, 1985: 7).

The only sure thing is that only one manuscript (with a lot of lacunas, without beginning and end) entitled *Satyricon* has survived until this day. We also know that the «exploitation» of the text must have been begun in

¹⁹ Notice the linguistic clash between the colloquial *νέτα-σκέτα* ('simply') and the katharevousian *προς τέρατιν* etc. ('to take delight in'), which is modelled on old recommendations of pieces of writing.

the 4th century AD. In the 7th century, the manuscript would have already been in its current form. Medieval anthologists and authors, such as John of Salisbury (bishop of Chartres in the 12th century) and Vincent of Beauvais (who died in 1264), held in their hands the same text that we have today.

L'«exploitation» du texte a dû commencer dès le IV^e siècle; au VII^e siècle, il devait être déjà réduit aux excerpta qui nous sont parvenus. Les florilèges, et les auteurs du moyen âge comme Jean de Salisbury (évêque de Chartres au XII^e siècle), Vincent de Beauvais (mort en 1264) ne connaissent pas d'autre Pétrone que le nôtre (Ernout, 1962: XIII, n. 3).

In the second and third sections of the introduction, Alexandrou deals with the well-known subject of Petronius' identity. In the second, entitled «Υπόθεση πρώτη: Ο Πετρώνιος ήταν αυλικός του Νέρωνα» («First hypothesis: Petronius was a member of Nero's court») (Alexandrou, 1985: 7-12), Alexandrou presents the arguments supporting this opinion based upon the books by Ernout and Sullivan. He starts by citing the well-known testimony of Tacitus (*Ann.* 16.17-20) on Petronius (Alexandrou, 1985: 7-9), which he draws from Ernout and Sullivan (Ernout, 1962: VII-X; Sullivan, 1965: 7-8). In one case, he translates the French text word-for-word, e.g., cf. (Alexandrou, 1985: 10):

Πρώτον, δεν χωρεί ουδεμία αμφιβολία, ότι το «Σατυρικόν» είναι ένα μυθιστόρημα της νερωνείου εποχής, συγγραφέν υπό ενός συγχρόνου. Τα ανέκδοτα, τα ονόματα των ιστορικών προσώπων τα οποία συναπαντώνται εις το κείμενον, αναφέρονται εις την άνω εποχήν, ή εις το πρόσφατον παρελθόν της.

First, there is no doubt that *Satyricon* is a novel of the Neronian era, written by a contemporary. The anecdotes, the names of the historical persons that figure in the text refer to this era or to its recent past.

And Ernout's words (1962: X-XI):

Le *Satyricon* est un «roman des temps néroniens», écrit par un contemporain. Les anecdotes, les noms de personnages historiques cités dans l'ouvrage se rapportent à cette époque, ou à celle qui l'a immédiatement précédée.

Regarding the other ancient testimonies on Petronius (Pliny, Lucan, Suetonius, etc.), Alexandrou also follows Ernout (1962: X-XII) and Sullivan (1965: 8-10). He mentions the name of the English translator once (Alexandrou, 1985: 10):

Επιπλέον ο Άγγλος ειδικός επί του θέματος Τζ. Π. Σάλλιβαν, υπενθυμίζει ότι ο Τριμάλχιος αναφέρει δίπαξ τον Πετραΐτην (εις τα κεφάλαια 52 και 71)

και ότι ο εν λόγω Πετραΐτης ήταν διάσημος μονομάχος της νερωνείου εποχής.

Furthermore, the English specialist on the subject, J. P. Sullivan, reminds us that Trimalchio mentions Petraitēs twice (in chapters 52 and 71), and that this Petraitēs was a famous gladiator of the Neronian age.

This is what Sullivan (1965: 10) says:

We know from the evidence of certain glass cups and inscriptions that Petraitēs (or Tetratēs) was a famous gladiator of the time of Nero. A gladiator Petraitēs is mentioned twice by Trimalchio (52.3 and 71.6).

In the third section, entitled «Υπόθεση Δεύτερη: Ο Πετρόνιος δεν ήταν αυλικός» («Second hypothesis: Petronius was not a member of the court»), Alexandrou (1985: 12-15) cites the arguments supporting the idea that Petronius was not Nero's contemporary. His source is Dutourd's introduction in Grimal's book²⁰. If we compare the language of these two sections, we observe that Alexandrou uses a mild *katharevousa*, in order to express the established opinion that Petronius was Nero's contemporary and member of his court, but Modern Greek (*dimotiki*) to present the less conventional opinion that he was not Nero's contemporary and a member of his court (Tatsopoulos, 2009). Furthermore, as a writer himself, Alexandrou analyses the contrary views of Petronian scholars with a degree of theatricality, presenting them as if they were two statements by arguing orators, cf. the beginning of these two opinions (1985: 9):

Οι οπαδοί της Νερωνείου θεωρίας, επιχειρηματολογούν περίπου ως εξής: «Κυρίες και κύριοι, μολονότι ο Τάκιτος δεν αναφέρει ρητώς ότι ο αυλικός Γάιος Πετρόνιος συνέγραψεν το “Σατυρικόν” ημείς πιστεύομεν ακραδάντως και θα αποδείξομεν ότι πρόκειται περί του συγγραφέως του ως άνω έργου».

The supporters of the Neronian theory argue approximately as follows: «Ladies and gentlemen, although Tacitus does not explicitly state that Gaius Petronius, a member of Nero's court, wrote the *Satyricon*, we firmly believe and shall prove that he is the author of the aforementioned work».

And (Alexandrou, 1985: 12):

²⁰ See especially Dutourd (1960: 12-14). E.g., cf. Alexandrou (1985: 14): «Απαντούμε, συμφωνώντας με τον Ζαν Ντυτούρ, ότι άλλο είναι ένα κύριο όνομα και άλλο ένα επίθετο» («We answer, agreeing with Jean Dutourd, that it is one thing the name and another thing the adjective»), with Dutourd in Grimal (1960: 12): «Certes un nom propre n'est pas la même chose qu'une épithète [...]».

Έχοντας ακούσει με όλον τον πρέποντα σεβασμόν τους συνηγόρους της νερωνίου θεωρίας, οι αντίδικοι απαντούν και λένε τα εξής περίπου [...].

Having listened with all due respect to the advocates of the Neronian theory, the opponents answer and say approximately the following [...].

The fourth section of the introduction is entitled «Ο τόμος με τα άκοπα φύλλα» («The volume with the uncut pages») (Alexandrou, 1985: 15-16). Here, by using an anecdote, Alexandrou refers to the subject of *Satyrical* and its lost parts. Furthermore, he ends this part by expressing the opinion he will repeat below, i.e. that Petronius' work does not contain a hidden message (1985: 16):

[...] προλογίζω μια συρραφή ανεκδότων, λίγο ως πολύ σκαμπρόζικων, μια διαδοχή επεισοδίων τα οποία, λόγω αβλεψίας προφανώς των αντιγραφέων, φιγουράρουν πριν ή μετά από την χρονολογική τους θέση (τα άφησα όμως εκεί που τα βρήκα, πρώτον για να μην πει κανείς ότι δεν σεβάστηκα την γραπτή παράδοση και δεύτερον διότι ο αναγνώστης πρέπει να συνηθίσει να συμπληρώνει τα κενά με την φαντασία του). [...] Κάτω απ' αυτές τις συνθήκες είναι πολύ φυσικό να λέει ο καθένας το μακρύ και το κοντό του και όχι μόνο σε ό,τι αφορά τον συγγραφέα που εξεπόνησε το «Σατυρικόν» μα και σε σχέση με το μήνυμα που υποτίθεται ότι μεταδίδει το έργο.

[...] I preface a stitching of jokes, more or less scabrous, a sequence of episodes, which —due to the apparent negligence of the copiers— occur before or after their chronological position (although I left them where I found them, firstly so that no one would say that I did not respect the textual tradition and secondly because the reader must get accustomed to filling the gaps using his own imagination). [...] Under these circumstances, it is very natural for everyone to say whatever they like about the author of *Satyricon*, and for the message that is supposed to be transmitted by this work.

In the fifth section, entitled «Η συμφιλίωση των τάξεων» («The reconciliation of classes») (Alexandrou, 1985: 17-19), Alexandrou deals with Henry de Montherlant's opinion about the supposed union of social classes in *Satyrical*, as he described it in his preface to Grimal's translation of Petronius in 1969²¹. He ends this section by commenting on literary criticism, stating that Petronius, who was perhaps

²¹ See *Pétrone. Le Satiricon* (1969). Meraklis also refers to this subject, cf. Meraklis (1970: 9): «Όμως και άλλα πράγματα σατιρίζει ο Πετρώνιος [...] κι ακόμη το απίθανο ανακάτωμα των τάξεων» («But Petronius satirises other things as well [...] even the incredible mixing of social classes»), and Meraklis (1981: 9): «Αηδία τού προκαλεί [...] εκτός από την κακή και άσημη ποίηση του καιρού του [...] και το ανέβασμα ψηλά πρώην κοινωνικών περιτριμμάτων» («he is disgusted with —apart from the poor and ugly poetry of his era— the rising of former low social classes»).

a hidden Christian²², may have implied a social message in his work (Alexandrou, 1985: 19):

[...] αποδεικνύεται άλλη μια φορά πως όλα τα έργα κουβαλάνε τα μηνύματα που τους φορτώνουν οι ερμηνευτές τους. Στην περίπτωση μας, μπορεί κάλλιστα να υποθέσει κανείς —και ίσως να υποστηρίχτηκε ήδη αυτή η άποψη από σοβαρούς μελετητές— ότι ο Πετρώνιος ήταν ένας κρυπτοχριστιανός, που διακωμώδησε την εν παρακμή κοινωνία της εποχής του, υπαινισσόμενος ότι ήταν πια καιρός να γκρεμιστεί ο παλιός κόσμος για να χτιστεί ένας καινούργιος.

Once again, it is proved that all literary works carry the messages that their interpreters add to them. In our case, one could well assume —and this opinion may have already been supported by serious scholars— that Petronius was a Crypto-Christian, who parodied the declining society of his age, hinting that the time has come to tear down the old world and build a new one.

In this part of the introduction, we can see traces of Alexandrou's leftist ideology: his specific interest in the equality of social classes, and the concept that the old world must be destroyed in order for a new one to be born.

In the sixth section, «Ποιος να ήταν ο Πετρώνιος;» («Who really was Petronius?»), Alexandrou (1985: 19-21) expresses his doubts about Dutourd's opinion that Petronius was an infamous man, who did not belong to Nero's court (Dutourd in Grimal, 1960: 12-14)²³. He confesses that by reading and translating the Latin

²² For the relation of Petronius and Christianity, see Raios (2021). Meraklis refers to the role of Christianity in the purification of Rome and its provinces, and wonders about the moral corruption of our modern age, see Meraklis (1981: 8): «...διαβάζοντας το “Σατυρικόν” ανατριχιάζει κανείς, όταν βλέπη πως υπάρχουν κάποιες αναλογίες ανάμεσα στον κόσμο εκείνο και το δικό μας: είμαστε ο σαπισμένος καρπός που θ' αποσυντεθή; Τότε εισέβαλε ο Χριστιανισμός σα χειμαρρός και καθάρισε τη Ρώμη και τις επαρχίες της, νέος, σφριγηλός και ακατανίκητος. Σήμερα —τι θα μας καθάρισε» («...when someone reads *Satyricon*, he shudders, when he sees that there are some analogies between that world and ours; are we the rotten fruit that will decompose? Then Christianity invaded like a torrent, and young, vigorous and invincible, cleaned Rome and its provinces. Today —what will clean us?»).

²³ Alexandrou translates some words by Dutourd verbatim, cf. Dutourd in Grimal (1960: 14): «Le vrai Petronius Arbiter, auteur du *Satyricon*, devait être un gros homme négligé, vivant obscurément, point très riche, fils d'affranchi peut-être, citoyen subalterne en tout cas, sans aventures et sans histoire, qui mourut de vains lit (et non dans sa baignoire) vers soixante-cinq ans, après avoir publié une vingtaine de volumes don't la perte est irréparable», and Alexandrou (1985: 20): «Ο πραγματικός Πετρώνιος Διαιτητής, που έγραψε το “Σατυρικόν”, θα πρέπει να ήταν ένας άνδρας χοντρός, που έζησε στην αφάνεια, γιος απελεύθερου ίσως, πολίτης κατωτέρας τάξεως εν πάση περιπτώσει, χωρίς περιπέτειες και ιστορία, που πέθανε στο κρεβάτι του (και όχι στον λουτήρα του) γύρω στα εξηταπέντε του χρόνια, αφού δημοσίευσε καμμιά εικοσαριά τόμους, που η απώλειά τους είναι ανεπανόρθωτη» («The real Petronius Arbiter, the man who wrote the *Satyricon*, must have been a

work, he deduced that Petronius' personal experiences and his own memory were sufficient to compose it. According to our translator, this kind of literary work does not require much effort. Alexandrou ends this section by expressing his view that the author of *Satyricon* is the aristocrat contemporary of Nero (1985: 20):

[...] διαβάζοντας και μεταφράζοντας το «Σατυρικόν», σχημάτισα την εντύπωση ότι δεν χρειάστηκε για την συγγραφή του, ούτε κοπιώδης συλλογή στοιχείων [...] ούτε διεισδυτική παρατηρητικότητα. Έφταναν και παράφταναν οι περιπέτειες και η ιστορία, που αρνείται ο Ζάν Ντυτούρ στον Πετρόνιο του, έφτανε και παράφτανε να έχει καλή μνήμη ο συγγραφέας και όρεξη να γράψει τα απομνημονεύματά του [...]. Μια τέτοια δουλειά δεν απαιτεί πολύ κόπο.

Reading and translating the *Satyricon*, I formed the impression that its writing needed neither a laborious collection of data, nor penetrating powers of observation. The adventures and history which Jan Dutourd denies of his Petronius were more than sufficient, a good memory on the author's part and a desire to write his memoirs were more than sufficient. This kind of work does not require much effort.

And (Alexandrou, 1985: 20-21):

Υπάρχουν ορισμένες λεπτομέρειες στο έργο, που με πείθουν ότι περάσανε στο κείμενο αρκετά αυτοβιογραφικά στοιχεία του συγγραφέα.

There are some details in the work that convince me that several autobiographical details of the author have made it into the text.

And (Alexandrou, 1985: 21)²⁴:

[...] δεν βλέπω τι μας εμποδίζει να υποθέσουμε ότι ο αυλικός Πετρόνιος πέρασε τα νιάτα του μεταξύ ρητορικών σχολών και υποκόσμου. Παρ' όλο που έχω μεσάνυχτα από ρωμαϊκή ιστορία, δεν νομίζω πως ένα τέτοιο παρελθόν θα τον εμποδίζει ποτέ να ανέλθει τα ύπατα αξιώματα του υπάτου, του αυλικού και τελικά του ευνοούμενου του Νέρωνα.

fat man, who lived in the shadows, a son of a freedman perhaps, a lower class citizen in any case, without adventures and history, who died in his bed (and not in his bath), around the age of sixty-five, after publishing about twenty volumes, the loss of which is irreparable»).

²⁴ For a similar opinion, cf. Papathanasiou's words in Vagenas (1970: 7): «Στην κοσμοκράτειρα Ρώμη τα ύπατα δημόσια αξιώματα άφηναν περιθώρια χρόνου και γι' απασχολήσεις άλλες, έξω απ' την υπηρεσία. Οι Ρωμαίοι και διοικούσαν και έκαναν την ζωή των» («In the world ruler Rome, high public offices left space for other, out-of-service activities. Romans both ruled and made their life»).

I do not see what prevents us from assuming that the courtier Petronius spent his youth between rhetorical schools and the demimonde. Even though I do not know the first thing about Roman history, I do not think that such a past would ever prevent him from ascending to the highest offices as consul, courtier, and finally Nero's favourite.

Therefore, according to Alexandrou, Petronius's sources are his personal memories and his readings —an opinion that Meraklis also shares²⁵.

In his highly interesting seventh section, entitled «Ο Πετρώνιος επί τῷ ἔργῳ» («Petronius at his work»), Alexandrou (1985: 21-23) deals with *Satyrিকা*'s generic identity, its innovation (or lack of), and Petronius' intentions. First of all, the translator repeats the established opinion that *Satyrিকা* is the first realistic novel²⁶, adding that it is the first text to feature semi-automatic writing (Alexandrou, 1985: 21):

Τον βλέπω να γράφει χωρίς καλά-καλά να ξέρει πώς θα προχωρήσει και πού θα καταλήξει. Κατ' αυτήν την έννοια, το «Σατυρικόν», δεν είναι μόνο το «πρώτο ρεαλιστικό μυθιστόρημα», όπως χαρακτηρίστηκε, μα και το πρώτο κείμενο ημιαυτόματης γραφής, που προχωράει βάσει τυχαίων συνειρμών μνήμης μάλλον, παρά βάσει προδιαγεγραμμένου σχεδίου.

I see him [i.e. Petronius] writing without knowing exactly how he will proceed and where he will end up. In this sense, the *Satyricon* is not only the «first realistic novel», as it has been characterised, but also the first text of semi-automatic writing, which proceeds on the basis of random associations of memory, rather than on the basis of a prescribed plan.

Is *Satyrিকা* a work of imitation or originality?²⁷ Alexandrou (1985: 22) gathers the opinions of various scholars, based on Sullivan:

Άλλοι λένε πως μιμήθηκε γνωστά ελληνικά πρότυπα, κυρίως τα ερωτικά μυθιστορήματα των συγγραφέων της Μιλήτου, άλλοι πως πρόκειται για έργο εξόχου πρωτοτυπίας. Ορισμένοι υποστήριξαν ότι ο Πετρώνιος παραωδεί (ο αναισχύντως άνανδρος!) τον θεόπνευστον Όμηρο και προσθέτουν ότι το «Σατυρικόν» είχε για κεντρικό του θέμα την οργή του

²⁵ Cf. Alexandrou (1985: 21): «Βλέπω λοιπόν τον Πετρόνιο [...] να κάθεται και να γράφει την παραμύθα του, αντλώντας από τις προσωπικές του αναμνήσεις και από τα διαβάσματά του» («So, I see Petronius sitting and writing his fairy tale, drawing his material from his personal memories and readings»), and Meraklis (1970: 8): «Θα μπορούσε να πη κανείς πως το “Σατυρικόν” είναι, βασικά, μια μυθοποιημένη αυτοβιογραφία, η καταγραφή της πείρας ενός αισθητικού ανθρώπου» («One could say that *Satyrিকা* is, basically, a mythical autobiography, the recording of the experience of an aesthetic man»).

²⁶ See Killen (1957: 194).

²⁷ For the impact of several genres on *Satyrিকা*, see Raios (2010: 58-65).

Πριάπου εναντίον του Εγκόλπιου, όπως το κεντρικό θέμα της *Οδύσσειας*, ήταν η οργή του Ποσειδώνα εναντίον του πολυμήχανου ήρωα.

Others say that he [i.e. Petronius] imitated well-known Greek models, mainly the love novels of the authors of Miletus, others that it is a work of excellent originality. Some have held that Petronius parodies (the shameless coward!) the divinely inspired Homer and add that *Satyricon* had as its central subject Priapus' rage against Encolpius, as the central subject of the *Odyssey* was Poseidon's rage against the cunning hero.

Sullivan had said (1965: 11):

[...] and the basic plot is the wrath of Priapus against the hero (gravis ira Priapi), a comic motif patently based on the wrath of Poseidon against Odysseus in the *Odyssey*.

Alexandrou (1985: 22) claims that Petronius had no serious purpose in writing his work. He only wanted to have fun, and thus offer pleasure to his readers:

Όπως και να 'χει, βλέπω τον Πετρόνιο να κάθεται και να γράφει, όχι επειδή αγανάχτησε ξαφνικά, βλέποντας να περισσεύει γύρω του η διαφθορά, η στενοκεφαλιά και ο παραλογισμός, όχι γιατί απλούστατα, όλη αυτή η ιστορία πολύ τον διασκέδαζε, πολύ την γλένταγε. Το κέφι του έκανε ο άνθρωπος [...] Δεν πήρε ποτέ στα σοβαρά την ασχολία του, το 'ξερε πως είναι ένα χόμπυ, ειρωνευότανε ο ίδιος τον εαυτό του ή τους ήρωές του, το ίδιο το γραφτό του ολόκληρο.

Anyway, I see Petronius sitting and writing, not because he was suddenly indignant, seeing corruption, narrow-mindedness and irrationality abounding around him, simply because the whole story amused him very much, he had a lot of fun with it. The man cared for his fun. He never took his job seriously, he knew it was a hobby, he was making fun of himself or his heroes, in all his writing.

The Roman author parodies powerful men indirectly (Alexandrou, 1985: 22):

Κι αν τύχαινε να θυμηθεί τους ισχυρούς της ημέρας —είτε γιατί τους γνώρισε, είτε γιατί άκουσε να μιλάνε για δαύτους— τους τάσουρνε κι αυτών, με τρόπο τόσο έμμεσο, που ακόμα και οι ίδιοι να μην το πάρουνε χαμπάρι.

And if he happened to remember the powerful men of the day —either because he knew them, or because he heard people talking about them— he

would scold them too, in such an indirect way that even they themselves would not understand it.

Alexandrou (1985: 23) finishes this section by writing that Petronius parodied the literary production of others, but above all of himself; he wrote whatever came into his mind by using his characters as actual actors that talk to each other with obscene and vulgar vocabulary — a practice that has caused many scholars to consider him an immodest and repulsive author, as Niebuhr wrote²⁸:

Έτσι, ειρωνευόμενος τα πάντα και τους πάντες, παρωδώντας τα ποιήματα των άλλων και τα δικά του, που είχε γράψει ή σκόπευε να γράψει, ξέροντας πως είναι ή θα είναι μέτρια και άρα άξια παρωδίας, παρωδώντας λοιπόν την παρωδία του, έγραφε ό,τι του 'ρχότανε, έβαζε τους ήρωές του να παίζουνε θέατρο εν θεάτρω, να χρησιμοποιούν το αισχρό και χυδαίο λεξιλόγιο του καθ' ημέραν βίου τους, με αποτέλεσμα να θεωρηθεί από πολλούς, συγγραφέας κακίστης φήμης, άσεμνος και αποκρουστικός όπως αναφέρει ο Γερμανός λόγιος Νημπούρ (1776-1831).

Thus, mocking everything and everyone, parodying the poems of others and his own, which he had written or intended to write, knowing that they were or would be worthless and, therefore, worthy of parody, so parodying his parody, he wrote whatever came to his mind, he made his heroes play theatre in the theatre, and he used the infamous and vulgar vocabulary of their daily lives, with the result that he was considered by many as an author of very bad reputation, obscene and disgusting, as the German scholar Niebuhr (1776-1831) mentions.

The reference to Niebuhr comes from Sullivan (1965: 13):

The disgusting indecencies of which the remains of Petronius are full... give him so bad a name, that he who confesses an intimate acquaintance with the fiction, and expresses gratification in it, exposes himself to a severe judgement, and affords a good opportunity for the display of sanctimonious hypocrisy.

In the eighth section entitled «Χαρακτηρισμοί» («Characterisations»), Alexandrou (1985: 23) cites two opinions on Petronius; the first belonging to a scholar named Pieter Burmann the Elder (1668-1741), and the second to David Herbert Lawrence (1885-1930):

²⁸ For Niebuhr's negative opinion of Petronius, see Beck (1857: 24-27).

[...] ο σοφός μελετητής Μπουρμάν (17^{ος} αιώνας) τον αποκάλεσε αγιότατο άνθρωπο —*Vir Sanctissimus*. Κατά τη γνώμη μου, ο χαρακτηρισμός αγγίζει ελαφρότατα τα όρια της υπερβολής.

Ο συγγραφέας της «Λαίδης Τσάτερλυ» Ντ. Χ. Λώρενς, γράφει για τον Πετρόνιο σε ένα γράμμα του προς την λαίδη Οττολίν Μορρέλ, με ημερομηνία 1^η Φεβρουαρίου 1916:

Στην αρχή, με ξάφνιασε, ύστερα όμως τον συμπάθησα. Τελικά, διαπιστώνει κανείς ότι είναι ένας τζέντλεμαν... Ό,τι κι αν κάνει, δεν προσπαθεί ποτέ του να ευτελήσει και να βρωμίσει το αγνό του πνεύμα.

The wise scholar Burmann (17th century) called him a morally very sound man —*Vir Sanctissimus*. In my opinion, this characterisation comes very close to the limits of exaggeration.

The author of *Lady's Chatterley's Lover*, D. H. Lawrence, writes the following about Petronius in a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell on 1st February 1916:

«At the beginning, he surprised me, but later I liked him. Eventually, one realises that he is a gentleman... Whatever he does, he never tries to humiliate and defile his pure spirit».

Burmann had published his book on Petronius in 1709, entitled *Titi Petronii Arbitri Satyricôn quae supersunt cum integris doctorum virorum commentariis*. As Alexandrou notes, Burmann calls Petronius *sanctissimus* twice, cf. *Petronium* [...] *virum sanctissimum* (Burmann, 1709: 18, not enumerated), and *sanctissimo* [...] *Scriptori* (Burmann, 1709: 24, not enumerated). However, the translator finds this characterisation exaggerating, probably due to the work's content. Alexandrou owes Lawrence's words to Sullivan, who had said (1965: 13):

The final word on this aspect was said by D. H. Lawrence in a letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell (dated 1 February 1916): «He startled me at first, but I liked him. He is a gentleman when all is said and done... Petronius is straight above board. Whatever he does, he doesn't try to degrade and dirty the pure mind in him».

Alexandrou also comments on his translation practice; he freely translated *Satyrica*, but this freedom is limited by definition, as he works on a given text. Alexandrou considers the translation process to be an answer to the Roman author (1985: 23-24):

[...] τον βλέπω να μου κλείνει κάθε τόσο το μάτι μέσα απ' τις αράδες, τώρα που τον μεταφράζω και του απαντάω συχνά με τον ίδιο τρόπο, επιτρέποντας στον εαυτό μου ορισμένες ελευθερίες —τρόπος του λέγειν δηλαδή, γιατί τι σόι ελευθερία είναι αυτή, που την περιορίζει ένα δοσμένο κείμενο;

I see him [i.e. Petronius] winking at me every now and then through the work's lines, now that I translate him and I often answer him in the same way, allowing myself some liberties —this is of course a way of saying, because what kind of liberty is that, which is limited by a given text?

In the ninth section of the introduction, entitled «Το πικρό κατακάθι» («The bitter dregs»), Alexandrou (1985: 24) makes an anthropological and philosophical analysis of human nature; humans, although two thousand years have passed since Petronius' era, have not changed at all:

Έγραφε λοιπόν διασκεδάζοντας ο Πετρώνιος, ελπίζω να διασκεδάσει και ο αναγνώστης, αν και ομολογώ ότι στο τέλος, μπορεί να περιπέσει εις μελαγχολίαν όπως λένε, διαπιστώνοντας πως λίγο αλλάξανε οι άνθρωποι ύστερα από είκοσι σχεδόν αιώνες. Αν αφαιρέσουμε μερικές επιφανειακές διαφορές, οι ήρωες του Πετρώνιου θα μπορούσαν κάλλιστα να είναι σύγχρονοί μας, όμοιοι και απαράλλαχτοι με μας στο ήθος, στη νοοτροπία, στον βαθμό πνευματικής ανάπτυξης, το ίδιο «πολιτισμένοι», δηλαδή βάρβαροι, όσο κι εμείς.

So, Petronius wrote for fun; I hope the reader will also have fun, although I confess that in the end he may fall into melancholy as they say, realising that people have changed little after almost twenty centuries. If we remove some superficial differences, the heroes of Petronius could very well be our contemporaries, similar and indistinguishable from us in their character, their mentality, their degree of intellectual development, «civilised» in the same way, that is barbarians, as we are.

Humans sometimes rejoice in material goods and enjoy seeing savage spectacles (Romans enjoyed the duels of the gladiators, as we now enjoy watching footballers and boxers on television, wars in cinema, etc.):

Και μη μου πείτε πως υπάρχει όσο να 'ναι μια τεράστια διαφορά, μια και εμείς δεν αρεσκομάστε στο θέαμα των μονομάχων που αλληλοσφάζονται στην αρένα, γιατί χειροκροτούμε κι εμείς και παροτρύνουμε ουρλιάζοντας με τον ίδιο φανατισμό τους ποδοσφαιριστές και τους πυγμάχους, που δεν σκοτώνονται βεβαίως, είναι όμως και είμαστε, εμείς οι θεατές, σκοτώστρες του πνεύματος, μια και ηρωοποιούμε την κλωτσιά και τη γροθιά και δυσανασχετούμε, σαν τον ήρωα του Πετρώνιου, όταν η ταυρομαχία καταντάει ανιαρή και ούτε μας σώζει το γεγονός ότι το αίμα που βάφει την αρένα είναι συνήθως του ταύρου όχι, δεν μας σώζει, πρώτον διότι ακόμα και ο φόνος ενός ζώου θα έπρεπε κανονικά να θεωρείται απολίτιστο θέαμα και δεύτερον διότι μας διασκεδάζει ο θάνατος ενός res, όπως κι εκείνους τους πάθιαζε η σφαγή ενός δούλου, που ήτανε res, σύμφωνα με όλους τους νόμους της τότε πολιτείας, σύμφωνα με όλες τις θρησκευτικές και

φιλοσοφικές αντιλήψεις και στο τέλος-τέλος, από πού κι ως πού τους θεωρούμε πιο άγριους από μας, μόνο και μόνο επειδή αντέχανε στο θέαμα του σπαθιού που βυθιζότανε στο στήθος ενός δούλου, τη στιγμή που εμείς αντέχουμε τα κινηματογραφικά επίκαιρα με τις χιλιάδες των σπαθιών (των βομβών θέλω να πω) που βυθίζονταν σε χιλιάδες σπίτια ελεύθερων, κατ' ομοίωσίν μας πλασμένων ανθρώπων.

And do not tell me that there is a huge difference, since we do not like the sight of gladiators slaughtering each other in the arena, because we also applaud and urge —screaming with the same fanaticism— the footballers and the boxers, who of course are not killed, but they are, as we, the spectators, the killers of the spirit, since we heroize the kick and the punch and we are impatient, like Petronius' heroes, when the bullfight becomes boring and the fact that the blood, which stains the arena, belongs to the bull, does not save us, firstly because even the killing of an animal should normally be considered an uncivilised spectacle, and secondly because we are amused by the death of a *res*, just as they were passionate about slaughtering a slave, who was a *res*, according to all the laws of their state, according to all their religious and philosophical concepts, and in the end, how come we consider them wilder than us, just because they could stand the sight of the sword sinking into a slave's chest, when we endure cinematic newsreel with thousands of swords (bombs, I mean) sinking into the thousand homes of free men, who are created like us?

Alexandrou writes these words without using a full stop (in 23 lines!), aiming to express his anxiety and his indignation, a practice that he follows in the last chapter of his masterpiece, *Το Κιβώτιο*, a work that he composed during the period 1966-1972 in Paris —the same period that he worked on Petronius' translation²⁹.

Furthermore, it is obvious that he had some knowledge of Roman law, as he mentions that to the Romans, slaves were considered as *res*³⁰ [a Latin word that the editor of the book, his wife Kaiti Drousou, explains in a footnote: *«πράγματος» στα λατινικά. Σημ. Κ. Δρόσου ('an object' in Latin. Note by K. Drousou)]. In this section of the introduction, we hear Alexandrou's original voice and his leftist beliefs. Moreover, it helps us to understand the translator's double purpose; by translating Petronius' *Satyrica*, Alexandrou aims to entertain his reader, but mainly to criticise the negative features of human nature. In fact, I believe that Alexandrou's critique concerns the political similarities that exist between Petronius' era and that of modern Greece in 1971, when Alexandrou translated the work. The *arbiter elegantiae* lived during Nero's tyranny, while Alexandrou was self-exiled in Paris (as were many Greek scholars and artists), far away from his

²⁹ See Alexandrou (1975: 257-293).

³⁰ See Buckland (2010: 10-38).

homeland, which was under the dictatorship of the colonels (1967-1974). Alexandrou translated *Satyrice* in a time of political turmoil in Paris (cf. the protests during the May of 1968).

The last section of Alexandrou's introduction (1985: 26) is entitled «Διά Σατυρικόν Περαινοῦσα» («Accomplished by the *Satyricon*»). The accent in the last word is apparently a typo, as the correct form is περαινοῦσα. By using this participle, Alexandrou alludes to Aristotle's well-known definition of the genre of tragedy (*Poetics* 1449b-1450b), as we will see: «[...] δι' ἐλέου καὶ φόβου περαινοῦσα τὴν τῶν τοιοῦτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν» («[...] through pity and fear it effects relief to these and similar emotions»)³¹. Alexandrou repeats his opinion that Petronius did not aim to teach anything to his contemporaries. However, he believes that the passage of time gave the *Satyrice* an ethical dimension; nowadays it functions as a medicine that contributes to the purification of human character and the expulsion of 'man's worst disease', i.e. self-conceit. Here, Alexandrou parallels the outcome of tragedy (according to Aristotle's definition) with the impact of Petronius' work on the human character. Thus, he manages to compare the purpose of a 'high' genre to that of a 'humble' genre, such as the novel (1985: 26):

Ας είναι, ο Πετρώνιος, επιμένω, δεν είχε πρόθεση να διδάξει τίποτα κι ούτε δίδαξε πιθανότατα τίποτα τους συγχρόνους του, σήμερα όμως, με την βοήθεια της προοπτικής του χρόνου, το έργο του, παρ' όλο που έφτασε ως εμάς σαν ένα θρυμματισμένο κρασοκάνατο, περιέχει ακόμα, (ή μάλλον το απόχτησε εκ των υστέρων) το φάρμακο που περαίνει την των τοιοῦτων παθημάτων κάθαρσιν, μας θεραπεύει δηλαδή ριζικά από την χειρότερη αρρώστια μας, την οίηση, δι' ελέου και φόβου —σαρκάζοντάς την τόσο, που να οικτιρούμε τον εαυτό μας, διακωμωδώντας τον τόσο που να τρομάζουμε μπροστά στο μέγεθος της γελοιότητάς μας.

Be that as it may, Petronius, I insist, had no intention of teaching anything and probably never taught anything to his contemporaries, but today, with the help of the perspective of time, his work, although it has come down to us like a crushed wine jug, also contains (or rather: has acquired afterwards) the medicine that effects relief from these and similar emotions, namely it cures us radically from our worst disease, that of self-conceit, through pity and fear —mocking it so much that we pity ourselves, travestying ourselves so much that we are frightened in front of the magnitude of our ridiculousness.

Alexandrou's introduction is the most extensive of all Greek translations of Petronius' *Satyrice*. He offers a great deal of information to his Greek readers regarding Petronius' identity, his work, its sociological dimensions, etc. His main

³¹ The translation comes from Fyfe (1932), accessible in the [Perseus Digital Library](#) (last access: 28/05/2022).

sources are Ernout, Grimal (with the preface by Dutourd), and Sullivan. Nevertheless, Alexandrou expresses his personal beliefs about Petronius. He is certain that he is Nero's contemporary and his *arbiter elegantiae*, not a later author. He states that Petronius aimed only to entertain himself and his contemporary readers. However, due to the passage of time, *Satyrica* can acquire a moral purpose, as it can heal people of their arrogance. In these two statements, I believe we see Alexandrou's double intentions for this translation: to offer literary pleasure, and to benefit his Greek readers.

Alexandrou's translation

According to Rautopoulos (1996: 387), Alexandrou did his translation from French, while also comparing it to the original, Latin text. Apparently, the Greek scholar means that Alexandrou in fact translated Ernout's or Grimal's translations (or combined them), while simultaneously referencing the Latin text (which is included in Ernout). Vagenas' translation follows that of Grimal, while Meraklis notes that he translated *Satyrica* from Latin, but also consulted —among others— Ernout's translation³². In other words, it was a regular practice for Greek translators to use these two French translations. However, as we will see, in several passages Alexandrou follows Sullivan's English translation as well³³.

Does this mean that Alexandrou did not know Latin? In this part of the paper, I will study some passages of his translation, comparing it to the Latin original (Ernout's edition) as well as their French and English translations. Furthermore, I will examine Alexandrou's comments, aiming to identify their source.

The first passage is *Sat.* 1:

Num alio genere Furiarum declamatores inquietantur, qui clamant: «Haec vulnera pro libertate publica excepi; hunc oculum pro vobis impendi: date mihi ducem, qui me ducat ad liberos meos, nam succisi poplites membra non sustinent»? Haec ipsa tolerabilia essent, si ad eloquentiam ituris viam facerent. Nunc et rerum tumore et sententiarum vanissimo strepitu hoc tantum proficiunt ut, cum in forum venerint, putent se in alium orbem terrarum delatos. Et ideo ego adulescentulos existimo in scholis stultissimos fieri, quia nihil ex his, quae in usu habemus, aut audiunt aut vident, sed piratas cum catenis in litore stantes, sed tyrannos edicta scribentes quibus imperent filiis ut patrum suorum capita praecidant, sed responsa in pestilentiam data, ut virgines tres aut plures immolentur, sed mellitos verborum globulos, et omnia dicta factaque quasi papavere et sesamo sparsa.

³² See above, footnote 17.

³³ I would like to thank Professor Vayos Liapis (Open University of Cyprus) for this remark.

Are our rhetoricians tormented by a new tribe of Furies when they cry: «These scars I earned in the struggle for popular rights; I sacrificed this eye for you: where is a guiding hand to lead me to my children? My knees are hamstrung, and cannot support my body»? Though indeed even these speeches might be endured if they smoothed the path of aspirants to oratory. But as it is, the sole result of this bombastic matter and these loud empty phrases is that a pupil who steps into a court thinks that he has been carried into another world. I believe that college makes complete fools of our young men, because they see and hear nothing of ordinary life there. It is pirates standing in chains on the beach, tyrants pen in hand ordering sons to cut off their fathers' heads, oracles in times of pestilence demanding the blood of three virgins or more, honey-balls of phrases, every word and act besprinkled with poppy-seed and sesame.

Alexandrou translates it as follows (1985: 27):

...Ε, λοιπόν, εγώ ο Εγκόλιπος σάς λέω πως οι καθηγητάδες μας της ρητορικής βασανίζονται απ' τις ίδιες Ερυνίες [*sic*] όταν υψώνουν τη φωνή τους, λέγοντας: «Ιδού, αυτά τα τραύματα τα έχω από τότε που αγωνίστηκα για τη δική σας λευτεριά! Το μάτι αυτό, για σας το έχω θυσιάσει. Ας έρθει κάποιος να με πάρει απ' το χέρι, να με οδηγήσει στα παιδιά μου, γιατί μου σακατέψανε τα πόδια και δεν μπορώ να περπατήσω.» Δε λέω, ακόμα και μια τέτοια υπερβολή θα την δεχόμουν, αν άνοιγε πλατιά τη λεωφόρο στους μαθητές τους, και τους οδηγούσε στην ευφράδεια. Μα όλα αυτά τα πομπώδη θέματα, όλες αυτές οι άδειες φράσεις, ίδιες σαπουνόφουσκες, τι χρησιμεύουν τελικά; Οι νέοι όταν βρεθούνε σ' ένα πραγματικό δικαστήριο, νιώθουν σαν να πέσανε σε άλλον πλανήτη. Κι αν θέτε να το πω έξω απ' τα δόντια, προσθέτω πως οι μαθητές μας αποφοιτούνε πιο στουρνάρια απ' ό,τι μπήκαν στη σχολή, διότι απλούστατα, τίποτα απ' όσα βλέπουνε κι ακούνε μες στην τάξη δεν τους προσφέρει την εικόνα της ζωής: θέματα των ασκήσεών τους είναι οι κουρσάροι που ενεδρεύουν στην ακτή, κρατώντας έτοιμες τις αλυσίδες στα χέρια τους, είναι οι τύραννοι, που συντάσσουν διατάγματα, υποχρεώνοντας τους γιους να αποκεφαλίσουνε τους πατεράδες τους, είναι απαντήσεις των μαντείων που συμβουλεύουν να θυσιάσουνε τρεις, ή περισσότερες παρθένες, είναι φράσεις μελιστάλαχτες σαν τα γλειφιτζούρια και για να μη μακρυγορώ [*sic*], όλα, τα πάντα, λόγια και πράξεις, έχουν πασπαλιστεί, αν επιτρέπεται η έκφραση, με μπόλικο παπαρουνόσπορο και σουσάμι (1).

Well, I, Encolpius, tell you that our great teachers of rhetoric are tormented by the same Furies, when they raise their voice saying: «Behold, I have had these wounds since I fought for your freedom! I have sacrificed this eye for you. Let someone come and take me by the hand, lead me to my children, because my legs have been crippled and I cannot walk». I would accept even this kind of exaggeration —that's for sure, if it opened the avenue to their

students widely, and led them to eloquence. But all these pompous topics, all these empty phrases, soap bubbles themselves, what are they used for finally? When young people are in a real court, they feel like they have fallen on another planet. And if you want me to tell you the clear truth, I will add that our students graduate more stupid (as stupid as flints) than they were when they entered the school, because simply, nothing they see and hear in the classroom offers them a picture of real life; the subjects of their exercises are the pirates that nest on the shore, holding the chains ready in their hands, the tyrants who edit decrees forcing the sons to behead their fathers, the answers of the oracles advising them to sacrifice three or more virgins, phrases dripping honey like lollipops, and —not to go into too much detail— everything, words and facts, have been sprinkled, if the expression is allowed, with plenty of poppy seeds and sesame.

Throughout his book, Alexandrou follows the *ad sensum* translation practice. In this passage, we observe that, as a writer himself, he makes some additions that contribute to increase the liveliness of the text, e.g. «Ε, λοιπόν, εγώ ο Εγκόλιπος σάς λέω» («Well, I, Encopius, tell you»), «Κι αν θέτε να το πω έξω απ' τα δόντια» («and if you want me to tell you the clear truth»), and «και για να μη μακρυγορώ [sic]» («and —not to go into too much detail»). In the same way, he also offers extra orality to certain phrases, e.g. «Δε λέω, ακόμα και μια τέτοια υπερβολή θα την δεχόμουν» («I would accept even this kind of exaggeration —that's for sure») for *Haec ipsa tolerabilia essent* («Though indeed even these speeches might be endured»). Furthermore, he uses the words of colloquial Modern Greek, such as «οι καθηγητάδες μας της ρητορικής» («our great teachers of rhetoric») for *declamatores* ('rhetoricians') and «κουρσάροι» («corsairs») for *piratas* ('pirates').

Comparing the Latin text, Alexandrou's rendering, the two French translations, and the one in English, I deduce that he likely combined all these translations. For example, he translates the phrase *date mihi duce[m], qui me ducat ad liberos meos* ('where is a guiding hand to lead me to my children?') as «Ας έρθει κάποιος να με πάρει απ' το χέρι, να με οδηγήσει στα παιδιά μου» («Let someone come and take me by the hand, lead me to my children»), following Sullivan's «Give me a hand to lead me to my children» (1965: 29).

Alexandrou renders the phrase *si ad eloquentiam ituris viam facerent* ('if they smoothed the path of aspirants to oratory') as «αν άνοιγε πλατιά τη λεωφόρο στους μαθητές τους, και τους οδηγούσε στην ευφράδεια» («if it opened the avenue to their students widely, and led them to eloquence»), a phrase that recalls Ernout's words, i.e. «si elle ouvrait à leurs élèves la route de l'éloquence» (1962: 1).

In translating the phrase *Cum in forum venerint, putent se in alium orbem terrarum delatos* ('a pupil who steps into court thinks that he has been carried into another world') as «Οι νέοι όταν βρεθούνε σ' ένα πραγματικό δικαστήριο, νιώθουν σαν να πέσανε σε άλλον πλανήτη» («When young people are in a real court, they feel like they have fallen onto another planet»), he apparently combines

Grimal's and Sullivan's words, cf. «lorsqu'ils viennent devant un vrai tribunal, ils se croient transportés dans un autre monde» (Grimal, 1960: 21-22), and «when young speakers first enter public life they think they have landed on another planet» (Sullivan, 1965: 29). I also believe that in rendering the Latin adjective *stultissimos* as «στουρνάρια» («stupid as flints»), Alexandrou translates Sullivan's «nitwits» (1965: 29).

At the end of his paragraph, Alexandrou includes a footnote (1985: 27, n. 1):

1) Τα ίδια παράπονα για την κατάντια της ρητορικής, εκφράζουν ο Κουίντιλιανός και ο Τάκιτος. Την ρητορική την διδάσκανε επαγγελματίες καθηγητές, που «ασκούσαν» τους νέους να «απαγγέλουν» πάνω σε δοσμένα θέματα, τα οποία δεν είχανε συνήθως καμιά σχέση με την καθημερινή ζωή. Τα μαθήματα γινόντουσαν σε διαρρυθμισμένες αίθουσες, κάτω από τις δημόσιες στοές, όπου οι διαβάτες μπορούσαν να σταθούν και να κρίνουν τα αποτελέσματα των λεκτικών διαξιφισμών.

Quintilian and Tacitus express the same complaints about the decline of rhetoric. Rhetoric was taught by professional teachers, who 'were training' young people to 'recite' on given topics, which usually had nothing to do with everyday life. Courses were held in arranged classes, under public porticos, where passers-by could stand and judge the results of the rhetorical crossing of swords.

At the beginning of the footnote, Alexandrou follows Sullivan's note (1965: 182):

1. Petronius' complaints in these opening chapters are echoed by Quintilian and Tacitus, among others.

The rest of his footnote is drawn from Grimal (1960: 21, n. 1):

1. L'éloquence était alors enseignée aux jeunes gens par des professeurs de métier, qui les exerçaient à «déclamer», sur des sujets divers, le plus souvent empruntés à des situations extravagantes. Cet enseignement était donnée dans des salles ménagées sous les portiques publics, et chacun pouvait assister aux exercices, jugeant en connoisseur.

As is well-known, Petronius includes brief poems in his *Satyrica*³⁴. An interesting example is Alexandrou's rendering of these passages. Petronius introduces his poem by making a reference to Lucilius, at the end of *Sat.* 4:

³⁴ For Petronius' poems, see indicatively Courtney (1991); Setaioli (2014).

Sed ne me putes improbase schedium Lucilianae humilitatis, quod sentio,
et ipsae carmine effingam.

But pray do not think that I impugn Lucilius' rhyme about modesty. I will
myself put my own verses in a poem.

After this statement, follows the poem of *Sat. 5*:

Artis severae si quis ambit effectus
mentemque magnis applicat, prius mores
frugalitatis lege poliat exacta.
Nec curet alto regiam trucem vultu
cliensve cenas inpotentium captet, 5
nec perditis addictus obruat vino
mentis calorem; neve plausor in scenam
sedeat redemptus histrioniae addictus.
Sed sive armigerae rident Tritonidis arces,
seu Lacedaemonio tellus habitata colono 10
Sirenumque domus, det primos versibus annos
Maeoniumque bibat felici pectore fontem.
Mox et Socratico plenus grege mittat habenas
liber, et ingentis quatiat Demosthenis arma.
Hinc Romana manus circumfluat, et modo Graio 15
exonerata sono mutet suffusa saporem.
Interdum subducta foro det pagina cursum,
et fortuna sonet celeri distincta meatu.
Dent epulas et bella truci memorata canore,
grandiaque indomiti Ciceronis verba minentur. 20
His animum succinge bonis: sic flumine largo
plenus Pierio defundes pectore verba.

If any man seeks for success in stern art and applies his mind to great tasks, let him first perfect his character by the rigid law of frugality. Nor must he care for the lofty frown of the tyrant's palace, nor scheme for suppers with prodigals like a client, or drown the fires of his wit with wine in the company of the wicked, or sit before the stage applauding an actor's grimaces for a price. «But whether the fortress of armoured Tritonis smiles upon him, or the land where the Spartan farmer lives, or the home of the Sirens, let him give the years of youth to poetry, and let his fortunate soul drink of the Maeonian fount. Later, when he is full of the learning of the Socratic school, let him loose the reins, and shake the weapons of mighty Demosthenes like a free man. Then let the company of Roman writers pour about him, and, newly unburdened from the music of Greece, steep his soul and transform his taste. Meanwhile, let him withdraw from the courts and suffer his pages to run free, and in secret make ringing strains in swift rhythm; then let him

proudly tell tales of feasts, and wars recorded in fierce chant, and lofty words such as undaunted Cicero uttered. Gird up thy soul for these noble ends; so shalt thou be fully inspired, and shalt pour out words in swelling torrent from a heart the Muses love».

Alexandrou translates these passages as follows (1985: 30-31):

Και για να μη νομίσεις πως περιφρονώ τους δίχως αξιώσεις αυτοσχεδιασμούς, σαν αυτούς που συνθέτει συχνά ο Λουκίλιος (7), θα σου σκαρώσω ένα ποίημα για να εκφράσω τη σκέψη μου:

Αν άξιος θέλεις αυστηρής, σπουδαίας Τέχνης να 'σαι
 κι αν κυνηγάει το πνεύμα σου το Μέγα Θέμα
 πειθάρχησε τα πάθη σου, τη ζώνη σφίξε
 και την καρδιά σου λείανε να γίνει σαν καθρέφτης.
 Τα ανάκτορα των ισχυρών, ναι, περιφρόνησέ τα. 5
 Κι αν σε καλέσουνε μην πας σε μεθυσμένα δείπνα.
 Μην πας, μη σβήσει η σπίθα του μυαλού σου μες στον οίνο.
 Λεφτά μην πάρεις για να πας στο θέατρο κλακαδόρος,
 στους μορφασμούς των μίμων μη φωνάζεις το εύγε.
 Τι κι αν της Τριτογένειας (8) σου χαμογελούν τα κάστρα 10
 τι κι αν πατάς τα χώματα των Σπαρτιατών αποίκων
 τι κι αν πολίτης είσαι εκεί στην πόλη των Σειρήνων
 σκοπός σου εσένα ο ίδιος πάντα: Πρώτη μαθητεία
 η ποίηση. Στην πηγή της Μαιονίας ξεδιψώντας (9)
 χόρτασε κάνοντας παρέα με τον Σωκράτη 15
 και τότε πια τα γκέμια αμόλησε και τρέξε
 το κοφτερό σπαθί κραδαίνοντας του Δημοσθένη.
 Μετά, στο δρόμο βγες ν' ακούσεις τους Ρωμαίους
 εμπνεύσου απ' τις κουβέντες τους, τα ελληνικά σου ξέχνα.
 Τις δίκες παρατώντας, πάρε πέννα φτερωμένη 20
 και τα γυρίσματα της Τύχης κάνε ν' ακουστούνε
 έχοντας πρότυπό σου υμνολογίες του πολέμου
 και τον Κικέρωνα, που εξαπολύει τους κεραυνούς του.
 Το πνεύμα σου άσκησε σε αυτά τα ωραία και ποτισμένος
 απ' τους μεγάλους ποταμούς που λέω, θα δεις, ω θαύμα 25
 να ξεπηδάν απ' την καρδιά, των Πιερίδων (10) ύμνοι.

And lest you think that I despise the unpretentious improvisations, such as Lucilius often composes, I will compose a poem for you, in order to express my thoughts:

If you want to be worthy of severe, great Art and if your spirit chases the Great Subject, discipline your passions, tighten your belt, and smooth your heart to become like a mirror. Oh yes, despise the palaces of the powerful

men. And if they invite you, do not go to drunken banquets. Do not go, do not extinguish the spark of your mind in wine. Do not take money to go to the theater as claqueur, at the mimes' grimaces do not shout «bravo». And what if Tritogeneia's castles are smiling at you, or if you step on the soils of the Spartan settlers, and if you are citizen in the city of Sirens; your purpose must be always the same: your first apprenticeship must be the poetry itself. Thirsting from the fountain of Maeonia, satiate by hanging out with Socrates, and then empty the gems and run waving Demosthenes' sharp sword. Then, go out and hear the Roman authors, get inspired by their talks, forget your Greek. Leaving the trials, take a feather pen, and make the spins of Luck to be listened, having as your model the war's hymnologies and Cicero, who unleashes his lightning. Exercise your spirit in these beautiful things and impregnated by these great rivers I say, you will see —oh, what a miracle!— hymns springing from the heart of Pierides.

The Latin text consists of eight choliambics (1-8) and fourteen hexameters (9-22) (Setaioli, 2002: 258)³⁵. Alexandrou translates it into Modern Greek free verse (which means a verse that does not have a certain number of syllables and a specific metre and is not divided into stanzas)³⁶. Thus, he follows Sullivan's practice, and not that of the French translators, who only render the Latin text into prose.

We see that the Greek rendering is more extensive than the Latin (26 rather than 22 verses), and shorter than Sullivan's (35 verses). Alexandrou translates Petronius' text freely, producing what is actually a Modern Greek poem, independent from its original, cf. the translation of *neve plausor in scenam | sedeat redemptus histrioniae addictus* (7-8) into «Λεφτά μην πάρεις για να πας στο θέατρο κλακαδόρος, | στους μορφασμούς των μίμων μη φωνάζεις το εύγε» («do not take money to go to the theater as claqueur, at the mimes' grimaces do not shout "bravo"»), and that of *Hinc Romana manus circumfluat, et modo Graio | exonerata sono mutet suffusa saporem* (15-16) into «Μετά, στο δρόμο βγες ν' ακούσεις τους Ρωμαίους | εμπνεύσου απ' τις κουβέντες τους, τα ελληνικά σου ξέχνα» («Then, go out and hear the Roman authors, get inspired by their talks, forget your Greek»). Of course, Alexandrou has the translations by Ernout, Grimal, and Sullivan next to him, e.g., cf. the translation of *Artis severae si quis ambit effectus | mentemque magnis applicat* (1-2) into «Αν άξιος θέλεις αστηρής, σπουδαίας Τέχνης να 'σαι | κι αν κυνηγάει το πνεύμα σου το Μέγα Θέμα» («If you want to be worthy of severe, great Art and if your spirit chases the Great Subject»). Here he renders the adjective *severae* as two Greek adjectives («αστηρής», «σπουδαίας»), and likely combines Ernout's and Sullivan's phrases, «Quinconque cherche à réaliser un art sévère, et applique son esprit à de grande objets» (Ernout,

³⁵ For the metre of the Petronian poems, see Ernout (1962: 211-213); Yeh (2007).

³⁶ Vagenas and Meraklis translated Petronius' poems into verse. Meraklis follows the same practice as Alexandrou, translating into free verse, while Vagenas creates seven unequal stanzas with rhyme.

1960: 4)³⁷ and «Ambition to fulfil the austere demands of Art, | The mind moving to major themes» (Sullivan, 1965: 31) respectively. In the phrase *prius mores | frugalitatis lege poliat exacta* ('let him first perfect his character by the rigid law of frugality'), he clearly echoes Sullivan's «Demands discipline, the tight belt, | The heart like a mirror» (1965: 31). Furthermore, in translating the verse *grandia-que indomiti Ciceronis verba minentur* ('and lofty words such as undaunted Cicero uttered') as «και τον Κικέρωνα, που εξαπολύει τους κεραυνούς του» («and Cicero, who unleashes his lightning»), he probably echoes Ernout's words: «où qu'elle rapporte les foudres ou la voix tonnante de l'indomptable Cicéron» (1992: 5).

Alexandrou includes four footnotes in this passage. One of these (7) comes from Sullivan, while two (8 and 9) came from Grimal. Footnote 10 is his own (Alexandrou, 1985: 31):

7) Γάιος Λουκίλιος, Λατίνος ποιητής (180-102 π.Χ.). Είναι ο αρχαιότερος και τολμηρότερος Ρωμαίος σατιρικός. Καυχιότανε πως μπορεί να σταθεί στο ένα του πόδι και να αυτοσχεδιάσει 200 στίχους την ώρα.

Gaius Lucilius, Latin poet (180-102 BC). He is the oldest and boldest Roman satirical poet. He boasted that he could stand on one foot and improvise 200 verses per hour.

8) Η πόλη της Τριτογένειας Αθηνάς είναι οι Θούριοι, που χτίσανε οι Αθηναίοι στη Μεγάλη Ελλάδα. Τα χώματα των Σπαρτιατών αποίκων είναι ο Τάραντας. Η πόλη των Σειρήνων, είναι η σημερινή Νεάπολη.

The town of Tritogeneia Athena is Thurii, which the Athenians built in Magna Graecia. The soils of the Spartan settlers is the town of Tarentum. The town of Sirens is modern Naples.

9) Η πηγή της Μαιονίας είναι τα ομηρικά ποιήματα.

The fountain of Maeonia is the Homeric poems.

10) Των Πιερίδων, δηλαδή των Μουσών.

Of Pierides, i.e. the Muses.

Sullivan's (1965: 183):

³⁷ Cf. Grimal (1960: 26): «quiconque applique son esprit à de nobles objets».

In this poem, Petronius criticises the corruption of the Neronian age, a corruption that appears in law, philosophy, and justice. Perhaps Alexandrou here saw the similarities between an ancient society and his own (a belief that he already notes in his introduction). His translation is free but gives the meaning of the original correctly. In one case, it seems that he follows Grimal's translation, as in rendering verse 2: *aut ubi paupertas vincere nulla potest?*, he translates «κι όταν η φτώχεια δεν μπορεί ποτέ να βρει το δίκιο;» («since poverty can never find justice?»), echoing Grimal's words (1960: 33), «et où la pauvreté ne peut avoir raison?», and not those of Ernout (1962: 10), «où la pauvreté ne peut jamais triompher?» (which is closer to the Latin text), or that of Sullivan (1965: 36), «Where poverty's helpless and can't fix a thing?».

Furthermore, his translation of verse 3 is very interesting: *Ipsi qui Cynica traducunt tempora pera*, into «Κι οι Κυνικοί που τάχατες περιφρονούν τα πάντα» («Even the Cynics, who pretend to despise everything»), as he does not give the exact meaning of the Latin text (*Ipsi qui Cynica traducunt tempora pera*, 'The very men who mock the times by carrying the Cynic's scrip'), but makes a sarcastic comment on the hypocrisy of Cynics. By using colloquial forms and phrases, such as «τάχατες περιφρονούν» («pretend to despise»), «παράδες» («some dosh») and «λάδωμα» («payola»), Alexandrou offers a delightful modern translation, while simultaneously managing to reflect the vocabulary of the demimonde that constitutes Petronius' *Satyrice*. We observe that he renders *iudicium* (5) as «κρίση» («judgement»), a translation that is not so successful but that nonetheless comes from Latin, rather than from Grimal, Ernout and Sullivan, who translate it correctly as «la justice» (Grimal, 1960: 33; Ernout, 1962: 11), and «justice» (Sullivan, 1965: 36), respectively. Alexandrou (1985: 37, n. 13) includes one footnote in this passage, which he drew from Grimal's book:

13) Το σώμα των ενόρκων απετελείτο [sic] κανονικά από εκπροσώπους της Γερουσίας, ιππότες και αξιωματούχους του Θησαυροφυλακίου.

The jury was normally composed of members of the Senate, knights, and Treasurer officials.

And Grimal's footnote (1960: 33, n. 2):

2. Les jurys sont normalement constitués de représentants du Sénat, des chevaliers et des tribunes du Trésor (les citoyens les plus riches après les Chevaliers).

The poem in paragraph 23 is also translated in the same way (Setaioli, 2003). A *cinaedus* recites a song in sotadeans:

Huc huc convenite nunc, spatalocinaedi,
pede tendite, cursum addite, convolate planta,
femore facili, clune agili et manu procaces,
molles, veteres, Deliaci manu recisi.

Here come together, here and now, you voluptuous gay men, stretch your legs, run, flock together with your foot-soles and your complaisant thigh, you, impudent ones with your buttocks and hands agile, softy old men, castrated by a Delian hand³⁸.

Alexandrou renders this as follows (1985: 46):

Τρέξτε, προστρέξατε, παίδες γλυκύτατοι
όλοι στον ίδιο ρυθμό και με πόδια γοργά, φτερωμένα
με σειστή την πυγή και τα χέρια σας πρόκληση
των ερώτων παλαίμαχοι εσείς και της Δήλου μουνούχοι. (16)

Run, run here, very sweet boys, all with the same rhythm and with fast, winged legs, with your buttocks erect and your hands as challenge, you veterans of love and eunuchs of Delos.

The translation of the «ἅπαξ λεγόμενον» *spatalocinaedi* (which is probably a transcription of **σπαταλοκίναιδος*, a term unattested in Greek, which seems an emphatic compound of *κίναιδος*, ‘lewd man’, ‘male prostitute’ and *σπάταλος*, which bears the same meaning) to «παίδες γλυκύτατου» («very sweet boys») probably comes from the French phrase of Grimal (1960: 44) and Ernout (1962: 20) «*délicieux mignons*» and «*mignons délicieux*», respectively.

Alexandrou translates freely again, e.g. he replaces the imperatives of the second verse (*pede tendite, cursum addite, convolate planta*, ‘wend your feet, speed up your course, with soles flying together’) with nouns and adjectives («όλοι στον ίδιο ρυθμό και με πόδια γοργά, φτερωμένα», «all with the same rhythm and with fast, winged legs»), although he gives the meaning of the original correctly. He translates the sexual phrase *femore facili, clune agili* (‘with pliant thigh, with your agile buttocks’) into «με σειστή την πυγή» («with your buttocks waggy»). Here he does not render the first part of the phrase and uses ancient Greek words for the second part (*clune agili* ~ *σειστή την πυγή*)³⁹. The phrase «των ερώτων παλαίμαχοι» («veterans of love») reflects Ernout’s translation «*vétérans*

³⁸ Heseltine (1913) leaves the poem untranslated, due to its sexual content. This translation is my own.

³⁹ See *LSJ*, s.v. *πυγή* (1550) and s.v. *σειστός, ή, όν* (1589). Also, see *CGL*, s.v. *πυγή* (1238), s.v. *σειστός, ή, όν* (1261).

de l'amour» (1962: 20), while the rendering of *manu recisi* ('castrated men') into «μουνούχου» («eunuchs») comes from the colloquial Modern Greek⁴⁰.

Alexandrou's footnote 16 (1985: 46, n. 16) is an accurate translation of Grimal:

16) Η Δήλος, ακόμα και μετά την καταστροφή της, είχε παραμείνει στα μέσα του 1^{ου} π.Χ. αιώνα κέντρο δουλεμπορίου.

Delos, even after its destruction, had remained in the middle of the 1st century BC a slave trade centre.

And Grimal's footnote (1960: 44, n. 1):

1. Délos resta longtemps, même après sa ruine, au milieu du 1^{er} siècle av. J. C., un centre du commerce des esclaves.

In paragraph 29, Encolpius describes an impressive wall painting in the entrance of Trimalchio's home. This passage ends as follows:

In deficiente vero iam porticu levatum mento in tribunal excelsum Mercurius rapiebat. Praesto erat Fortuna cornu abundanti copiosa et tres Parcae aurea pensa torquentes. Notavi etiam in porticu gregem cursorum cum magistro se exercentem. Praeterea grande armarium in angulo vidi, in cuius aedicula erant Lares argentei positi Venerisque signum marmoreum et pyxis aurea non pusilla, in qua barbam ipsius conditam esse dicebant. Interrogare ergo atriensem coepi, quas in medio picturas haberent. «Iliada et Odysseian, inquit, ac Laenatis gladiatorium munus».

At the point where the wall-space gave out, Mercury had taken him by the chin, and was whirling him up to his high official throne. Fortune stood by with her flowing horn of plenty, and the three Fates spinning their golden threads. I also observed a company of runners practising in the gallery under a trainer, and in a corner I saw a large cupboard containing a tiny shrine, wherein were silver house-gods, and a marble image of Venus, and a large golden box, where they told me Trimalchio's first beard was laid up. I began to ask the porter what pictures they had in the hall. «The *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*», he said, «and the gladiator's show given by Laenas».

Alexandrou's translation (1985: 51-52) is:

Εκεί που τέλειωνε η στοά, ο Ερμής ανασήκωνε τον Τριμάλχιο απ' το πηγούνι και τον ανέβαζε σε μια ψηλή εξέδρα. (18) Δεξιά κι αριστερά του, στεκότανε η Τύχη, κρατώντας ένα τεράστιο κέρασ Αμαλθείας και οι τρεις

⁴⁰ See *Λεξικό της κοινής νεοελληνικής*, s.v. μουνούχος, greek-language.gr (last access: 12/06/2022).

Μοίρες, που στρίβαν με τη ρόκα τους χρυσές κλωστές. Κάτω απ' τη στοά, είδα ακόμα μια ομάδα δρομέων, που κάνανε τις ασκήσεις τους, υπό την επίβλεψη του γυμναστή τους. Σε μια γωνιά, είδα επίσης ένα τεράστιο ντουλάπι και μέσα κει ένα μικρό ναό με ασημένιους Εφέστιους Θεούς, ένα μαρμάρينو άγαλμα της Αφροδίτης κι ένα χρυσό κουτί, όπου ο οικοδεσπότης —έτσι μου είπανε— είχε φυλάξει την πρώτη γενειάδα του. (19) Ρώτησα τον φύλακα της εσωτερικής αυλής τι παριστάνανε οι ζωγραφιές του κέντρου. «Την Ιλιάδα και την Οδύσσεια» μου είπε, «καθώς και τους αγώνες των μονομάχων, σε μια παράσταση που είχε δώσει ο Λάνας».

At the end of the porticus, Hermes lift Trimalchion by the chin and lifted him to a high platform. The goddess Fortune stood to his right and his left holding a huge horn of Amaltheia and the three Fates as well, who twisted golden threads with their distaff. Below their porticus, I also saw a team of runners practicing under the supervision of their trainer. In one corner, I also saw a huge cupboard containing a small temple with silver house-gods, a marble statue of Aphrodite and a golden box, where the host —so I was told— had kept his first beard. I asked the guard of the inner courtyard what the paintings of the center presented. «The Iliad and the Odyssey» he told me, «as well as the fights of the gladiators, in a show given by Laenas».

The Greek translator renders the meaning of the original correctly. In translating the phrase *In deficiente vero iam porticu* ('At the point where the wall-space gave out') he follows Sullivan (1965: 46), «Just where the colonnade ended». We observe that he calls Trimalchio Τριμάλχιος («Trimalchios»), and not Τριμαλχίων («Trimalchion») [Grimal (1960: 51) translates it as Trimalchion, Ernout (1962: 25) as Trimalcion, and Sullivan (1965: 46) as Trimalchio] —a practice that he follows throughout his book. In this way, he offers a Greek suffix to the name, although it is possible that he reflects Sullivan's rendering.

He translates the phrase *et tres Parcae aurea pensa torquentes* into «και οι τρεις Μοίρες, που στρίβαν με τη ρόκα τους χρυσές κλωστές» («and the three Fates as well, who twisted golden threads with their distaff»), adding the Fates' tool for waving. He omits the *non pusilla* ('large') from his text and translates the *aurea pyxis* ('large golden box') as «χρυσό κουτί» («golden box»).

The translation of the phrase *in qua barbam ipsius conditam esse dicebant* into «όπου ο οικοδεσπότης —έτσι μου είπανε— είχε φυλάξει την πρώτη γενειάδα του» («where the host —so I was told— had kept his first beard») is very successful, as he performs the meaning of the verb *dicebant* perfectly, by converting it in a parenthetical clause («έτσι μου είπανε», «so I was told») —reflecting Sullivan's (1965: 47) words «they told me». On the other hand, the translation of *ipsius* as ο «οικοδεσπότης» probably comes from Ernout's «*maître de maison*» (1960: 25). In his translation of *atriensem* ('the porter') to «τον φύλακα της εσωτερικής αυλής» («the guard of the inner courtyard»), it seems that he follows Ernout again («au

gardien de l'atrium») (1960: 25). Finally, the rendering of the phrase *ac Laenatis gladiatorium munus* ('and the gladiator's show given by Laenas') to «καθώς και τους αγώνες των μονομάχων, σε μια παράσταση που είχε δώσει ο Λάνας» («as well as the fights of the gladiators, in a show given by Laenas») is a little confusing, because it is as if Petronius writes that Laenas offered a show where gladiators fights took place⁴¹.

In this passage, Alexandrou (1985: 51-52) includes two footnotes (numbers 18 and 19). The first comes from Sullivan:

18) Η αλληγορία της τοιχογραφίας είναι αρκετά απλή. Ο Τριμάλχιος έχει προστάτη τον Ερμή, που είναι θεός του εμπορίου (και των κλεπτών). Η Αθηνά, θεά της σοφίας, συμβολίζει την κατά τη γνώμη του, εξαιρετική του μόρφωση και τις μεγάλες του ικανότητες. Ο Ερμής, τον ανεβάζει στην εξέδρα (όπου κάθονται οι αξιωματούχοι) κρατώντας τον από το πηγούνι (όπου εδράζεται η δύναμη του σώματος).

The allegory of the wall painting is quite simple. Trimalchios' protector is Hermes, who is the god of trade (and thieves). Athena, goddess of wisdom, symbolises his, in his opinion, excellent education and his great abilities. Hermes lifts him to the platform (where the magistrates sit), holding him by the chin (where the strength of the body rests).

And Sullivan's note (1965: 186):

3. The allegory of the mural is fairly simple. Mercury as the god of trade (and thieves) is an appropriate patron for Trimalchio. Minerva as the goddess of general and technical wisdom is there to reflect Minerva's high estimation of his education and capabilities. The platform or tribunal to which Mercury rushes him by the chin (the special bodily seat of power) is where the seats of magistrates are placed.

In footnote 19 he combines Grimal's and Sullivan's notes (Alexandrou, 1985: 52), cf.:

19) Το πρώτο ξύρισμα συμβόλιζε την μετάβαση από την εφηβική στην ανδρική ηλικία. Ο Νέρων είχε φυλάξει τις τρίχες από το πρώτο του ξύρισμα σε ένα κουτί. Δεν φαίνεται να πρόκειται για γενική συνήθεια. Είναι ένας από τους τρόπους που διάλεξε ο Τριμάλχιος για να κάνει τον σπουδαίο.

The first shave symbolised the transition from adolescence to masculinity. Nero had kept the hairs from his first shave in a box. This does not seem to

⁴¹ Cf. Grimal (1960: 52): «les jeux de gladiateurs donnés par Laenas», and Ernout (1962: 25): «et la fête de gladiateurs donnée par Laenas».

be a general habit. It is one of the ways that Trimalchios chose to present himself as a great man.

Grimal's (1960: 52):

1. La première barbe du jeune homme était solennellement coupée (fête de la *depositio barbae*) et déposée dans la chapelle des dieux Lares. Mais, naturellement, cela n'avait lieu que pour les jeunes gens de naissance libre. Dans les cas de Trimalchion, il est possible que son maître, dont il était le mignon [...] ait voulu célébrer sa *depositio barbae*.

And Sullivan's footnote (1965: 186):

4. The first shave was symbolic of a boy's reaching a man's estate and donning the *toga virilis*. Cases are heard of, such as Nero's, where the trimmings are kept in a box. It was probably not customary and seems here a part of Trimalchio's self-importance.

3. CONCLUSIONS

As was the case with Vagenas and Meraklis, Alexandrou translated Petronius' *Satyricon* following the appearance of Fellini's *Satyricon* in 1969. His book is more thorough than the other two, as it includes an extensive introduction where Greek readers can learn a great deal about Petronius' identity, his work, its aims, etc. Alexandrou's sources are mainly the books of Grimal, Ernout, and Sullivan. However, in several parts of his introduction he expresses his personal thoughts on Petronius' personality and intentions. He also at times reveals his leftist ideology, and comments on his era. There is no doubt that, while translating Petronius, he had these three books by his side. Nevertheless, in many passages he deviates from their form (and from the form of the Latin original), while keeping the meaning of Petronius' work. For the question of whether Alexandrou translated from the original, we should be very careful. I agree with Rautopoulos (1996: 387), who contends that our translator followed a combining method, translating Grimal and Ernout while also comparing these to the Latin original. However, as I believe I have proven above, in some passages Alexandrou also followed Sullivan's English translation. Moreover, he uses certain forms from modern colloquial Greek, giving an extra liveliness to his text and reflecting the atmosphere of the Petronian demimonde. As with his introduction and translation, his footnotes are also selective, as he translates some of Grimal's, Ernout's, and Sullivan's notes. Rarely does he add footnotes of his own. Finally, as he repeats in many places in

his introduction and states on the inner cover of his book, by translating Petronius' *Satyrica*, Alexandrou «aims to delight, entertain and conform Greeks all over the world».

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Abbreviations

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