

In Petronius' *Satyricon*, sexual relationships largely conform to a model of sexual aggression and passivity that amounts to a "zero-sum game" (Davidson 2001: 7): the relationships that preoccupy our narrator Encolpius and his companions are structured according to a model that relies on the passive reluctance of a younger male partner and his active pursuit by an adult male or female. When Encolpius attempts to engage sexually with the adult female Circe (*Sat.* 127-8), the assumed polarity between man and woman in penetrative sex is first problematized through the narrator's impotence and then reversed by an emphasis on Circe's superior social status. Generally speaking the sexual behavior depicted in the *Satyricon* (fragmentary as it is) supports Konstan's arguments (1994) about the lack of sexual reciprocity, or symmetry, in the Roman novel.

Still, there is clear evidence in the *Satyricon* for conceiving of sexuality in ways that belie the shame that has so frequently been associated with suffering penetration, a phenomenon especially associated with Roman culture (Williams 1999; cf. Puccini-Delbey 2007). Giton clearly suffers little shame from his own sexual submission, and his willingness to submit to others often increases his allure. At the same time, Encolpius' experiences and observations elicit other modes of sexuality that do not rely on a structure of dominance and submission. In particular, while dining with the freedman Trimalchio, our narrator describes the entrance of Habbinas and his wife Scintilla. The couple immediately request the presence of Trimalchio's wife, Fortunata, who arrives to share a couch and exchange kisses with a gleeful Scintilla (*osculataque plaudentem 'est te' inquit 'videre?' 67.5*). After a brief episode in which the two women show off their jewelry, they laugh drunkenly and exchange further kisses (*interim mulieres sauciae inter se riserunt ebriaeque iunxerunt oscula, 67.11*), all the while boasting of or lamenting their domestic situations. The exact nature of their kisses is perhaps impossible to define, though verbal parallels with Ovid's *Amores* would suggest an erotic nature (*Am.* 2.5.23, 59). The passage is mentioned in passing by Cantarella, who concludes that these are women who, particularly in light of their low social status, "may be suspected of homosexuality" (1992: 165).

As abbreviated as our description of the two women's conduct is, it can tell us something about that range of eroticism that lies beyond the scope of Roman sexuality conceived of as a form of masculine aggression (cf. Veyne 1978), and one that was, according to Foucault, gradually replaced in Rome by the privileging of conjugal love (Foucault 1986; cf. McGlathery). In this paper, I would like to examine the homosexual and homosocial relationship of Fortunata and Scintilla within three different contexts. First, I would like to situate their eroticism within the *Cena* itself, a literary context which foregrounds male-male pederastic relationships, and one that bears obvious allusions to Plato's own discourse on love, the *Symposium* (Cameron 1969). I would also like to look outside the scope of the *Cena* and consider the relationship of Fortunata and Scintilla within the larger context of the *Satyricon*, whose plot as we know it is generated largely by Encolpius' desire and failure to penetrate. How does the reciprocity of these two women and their grievances regarding their spouses' pederastic relationships reflect on the larger thematics of the novel? Finally, we should examine the sexuality of these two women amidst a wider range of imperial sources on female homoeroticism, often described as tribadism. If, as Hallett has shown (1997), nearly all of our sources on the topic view lesbianism as a masculine, Greek, and often mythical desire to penetrate, how should we read the anomaly of Fortunata and Scintilla? More precisely, how should we interpret our narrator's judgments (unreliable as they may be) of Fortunata and Scintilla, and how do they differ from the attitudes voiced in other imperial Roman writers such as Martial and Juvenal?

