

# Les beaux principes.

## Du discours à l'action dans le *Satyricon* de Pétrone

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This paper takes a closer look at speeches as *ethopeiae* in the ancient novel and their core function in the narrative plot: does a discourse delivered by a certain character define its personality and does it have any impact on the action? Two moral speeches in Petronius' *Satyrica* are particularly suited for this inquiry: the controversy on the utility of the declamation opening the novel and the discussion on decadence of arts and sciences in the picture gallery. The analysis reveals that the vices deplored by the characters of the *Satyricon* in appropriate and approved discourses are the very same in which they indulge in their actions: the act neither follows nor precedes the verb.

### *Autobiographical Note*

Danielle van Mal-Maeder is Professor of Latin Language and Literature at the University of Lausanne. Her main research subjects are the novel and rhetoric, as well as history and reception of classical works. Among other publications, she is the author of a commentary on book 2 of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* in the series *GCA* (Groningen 2001) and of *La fiction des déclamations* (Leiden/Boston 2007). She is preparing a commentary on the fifth *Major Declamation* of Pseudo-Quintilian and a new French translation of the *Metamorphoses* of Apuleius for a volume on the Ancient Novel (Belles Lettres).