

The Art of Deception: Longus and the Ancient Novel

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*For my wife and children*

*NOTE ON TEXTS AND TRANSLATIONS*

Standard Greek and Latin texts are used throughout. For the Greek and Latin passages of the novelists, the following were used:

Longus: Reeve's 2001 Teubner

Chariton: Reardon's 2004 Teubner

Xenophon: O'Sullivan's 2005 Teubner

Achilles Tatius: Garnaud's 1991 Bude

Petronius: Muller's 2003 Teubner

Apuleius: Zimmerman's 2012 Oxford Classical Text

Translations are mine unless stated otherwise.

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## Introduction: Fiction and Falsehood

When the horror movie *The Blair Witch Project* hit screens in 1999, the internet was abuzz with debate and discussion among ardent theater-goers, many of whom were convinced that the events in the film had actually happened. They pointed to “real” police reports online and newsreel-style interviews about the missing teenagers featured on screen, and the very real nature of the film itself. Even a trip to the Internet Movie Database revealed that the actors were “missing” and “presumed dead.”<sup>1</sup>

At the heart of this confusion was the movie’s documentary-style format, a format hitherto (with a few comic exceptions) reserved for *actual documentaries*. It authenticated itself in a variety of ways, stating in the beginning that what audiences were watching was the actual footage of three young people who vanished in the woods, and its cinematography presented a shaky, seemingly unscripted series of events that showed minimal amounts of traditional, horrific action. To make matters murkier, the filmmakers created a promotional website featuring those police reports and news interviews that believers were pointing to, leading many people to call the film the “first internet movie.”<sup>2</sup>

In fact, the “found footage” format – now so common that fewer individuals might be persuaded to take a movie like *The Blair Witch Project* as actual, documentary material – is a device with its roots in antiquity. The *Ephemeris Belli Troiani* of Dictys

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<sup>1</sup> Meslow 2012

<sup>2</sup> Weinraub 1999

Cretensis, a supposedly first-person account by the Cretan Dictys of the Trojan War

written in the first or second century CE,<sup>3</sup> includes just such an authenticating preface:

Dictys, genere Cretensis de civitate Gnoso  
iisdem temporibus quibus et Atrides fuit, peritus  
vocis ac literarum Phoenicum, quae a Cadrao  
Achaïam fuerant delatae. Hic fuit socius Idomenei,  
Deucalionis filii, et Merionis, ex Molo qui duces  
cum exercitu contra Ilium venerant, a quibus  
ordinatus est, ut annales belli Troiani conscriberet.  
Igitur de toto hoc bello sex volumina in tilias  
digessit Phoenicis literis : quae iam reversus senior  
in Cretam, praecepit moriens ut seciim  
sepelirentur. Itaque ut ille iusserat, memoratas  
tilias, instannea arcula repositas, eius lumulo  
condiderunt.

Verum secutis temporibus, tertio decimo anno  
Neronis imperii, in Gnoso civitate terraemotus  
facti, cum multa, tum etiam sepulcrum Dictys ita  
patefecerunt, ut a transeuntibus arcula viseretur.  
Pastores itaque prastereuntes cum hanc vidissent,  
thesaurum rati, sepulcro abstulerunt : et aperta ea  
invenerunt tilias incognitis sibi literis conscriptas :  
continuoque ad suum dominum Eupraxidem  
quendam noraine pertulerunt: quiagnitas quaenam  
essent literas Rutilio Rufo illius insulae tunc  
Consulari obtulit. Ille cum Eupraxide ad Neronem  
oblata sibi transmisit, existimans in his quaedam  
secretiora contineri.

Haec autem cum Nero accepisset,  
advertissetque Punicas esse literas, harum peritos  
ad se vocavit: qui cum venissent, interpretati suut  
omnia. Cumque Nero cognovisset, antiqui viri, qui  
apud Ilium fuerat, haec esse monumenta, iussit in  
Graecum sermonem ista transferri e quibus Trojani  
belli verior textus innotuit. Tunc Eupraxidem  
muncribus et Romana civitate donatum ad propria  
remisit. Annales vero nomine Dictys inscriptos in  
Graecam Bibliothecam recepit. Quorum seriem, qui  
sequitur textus, ostendit. (Preface)

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<sup>3</sup> Merkle, in Tatum 1994, 183-185



Dictys, a native of Crete from the city of Cnossos and a contemporary of the Atridae, knew the Phoenician language and alphabet, which Cadmus brought to Achaea. He accompanied the leaders Idomeneus and Meriones with the army that went against Troy. (Idomeneus and Meriones were the sons of Deucalion and Molus respectively.) They chose him to write down a history of this campaign. Accordingly, writing on linden tablets and using the Phoenician alphabet, he composed nine volumes about the whole war.

Time passed. In the thirteenth year of Nero's reign an earthquake struck at Cnossos and, in the course of its devastation, laid open the tomb of Dictys in such a way that people, as they passed, could see the little box. And so shepherds who had seen it as they passed stole it from the tomb, thinking it was treasure. But when they opened it and found the linden tablets inscribed with characters unknown to them, they took this find to their master. Their master, whose name was Eupraxides, recognized the characters, and presented the books to Rutilius Rufus, who was at that time governor of the island. Since Rufus, when the books had been presented to him, thought they contained certain mysteries, he, along with Eupraxides himself, carried them to Nero.

Nero, having received the tablets and having noticed that they were written in the Phoenician alphabet, ordered his Phoenician philologists to come and decipher whatever was written. When this had been done, since he realized that these were the records of an ancient man who had been at Troy, he had them translated into Greek; thus a more accurate text of the Trojan War was made known to all. Then he bestowed gifts and Roman citizenship upon Eupraxides, and sent him home. -  
*Trans.* R. M. Frazer Jr.

Likewise, the *Acts of Pilate*, a fifth-sixth century treatment of the Gospels material,<sup>4</sup> contains a very similar authenticating story of an account by Nicodemus discovered and then translated from the original Hebrew:

Ἔγω Ἀνανίας προτίκτωρ ἀπὸ ἐπάρχων  
τυγχάνων, νομομαθῆς, ἐκ τῶν θείων γραφῶν τὸν  
κύριον ἡμῶν ἐπέγνω τὸν κύριον ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦν  
Χριστὸν πίστει προσελθὼν, καταξιωθεὶς δὲ καὶ  
τοῦ ἁγίου βαπτίσματος. ἐρευνήσας δὲ καὶ τὰ  
ὑπομνήματα τὰ κατὰ τὸν καιρὸν ἐκεῖνον  
πραχθέντα ἐπὶ τοῦ δεσπότη ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ Χριστοῦ,  
ἃ κατέθεντο οἱ Ἰουδαῖοι ἐπὶ Ποντίου Πιλάτου,  
ταῦτα εὔρον τὰ ὑπομνήματα ἐν ἑβραϊκοῖς  
γράμμασιν, καὶ θεοῦ εὐδοκίᾳ μεθερμήνευσα  
γράμμασιν ἑλληνικοῖς εἰς ἐπίγνωσιν πάντων τῶν  
ἐπικαλοθμένων τὸ ὄνομα τοῦ κυρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησοῦ  
Χριστοῦ ἐπὶ τῆς βασιλείας τοῦ δεσπότη ἡμῶν  
Φλαβίου Θεοδοσίου, ἔτους ἑπτακαιδεκάτου, καὶ  
Φλαβίου Οὐαλεντινιανοῦ τὸ ἕκτον, ἐν Ἰνδικτῶνι θ'.

Πάντες οὖν ὅσοι ἀναγινώσκετε καὶ  
μεταβάλλετε εἰς ἕτερα βιβλία, μνημονεύετέ μου  
καὶ εὐχεσθε ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ, ἵνα ἰλεός μοι γένηται ὁ  
θεὸς καὶ ἰλάσῃται ταῖς ἁμαρτίας μου ἅς ἄμαρτον  
εἰς αὐτόν.

Εἰρήνη τοῖς ἀναγινώσκουσι καὶ τοῖς ἀκούουσι  
καὶ τοῖς οἰκέσαις αὐτῶν. ἀμήν. (Prologue)

I, Ananias, an officer of the guard, being  
learned in the law, came to know our Lord Jesus  
Christ from the sacred scriptures, which I  
approached with faith, and was accounted worthy  
of holy baptism. And having searched for the  
reports made at that period in the time of our Lord  
Jesus Christ [and for that] which the Jews  
committed to writing under Pontius Pilate, I found  
these acts in the Hebrew language and according  
to God's good pleasure I translated them into  
Greek for the information of all those who call  
upon the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, in the  
seventeenth year of the reign of our Emperor

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<sup>4</sup> Elliot 2005, 165

Flavius Theodosius and in the sixth year of the 'Nobility' of Flavius Valentinianus, in the ninth indiction.

Therefore all of you who read this and copy it out, remember me and pray for me that God may be gracious to me and forgive my sins which I have sinned against him.

Peace be to those who read and hear it, and to their servants. Amen. - Trans. Scheidweiler

Both of these stories were read and probably believed, and that so many believed a fictional documentary was real as recently as 1999 I think provides us with a useful analogue to what happened in the early imperial period of Greco-Roman antiquity: a format hitherto used primarily for historical purposes, prose narrative, was adapted for use in fiction – and not just any fiction – not the primarily fabulistic or mythic literary works perhaps best known from antiquity, most of which were metric. This was *prose fiction* that was somewhat believable, that was written in a historical format, and that also authenticated itself so as to make its credibility part of the driving force behind its enjoyment. People may have known they were reading fiction when they read the Greek and Roman novels, but that does not mean they did not often question where, in works specked with historical allusions and written in a historical format, fact ended and fiction began, most especially in a world in which “the boundaries between creative imagination and willful mendacity, between fiction and lying, often proved impossible to determine.”<sup>5</sup>

Not that many ancients did not try to differentiate the various divisions between fact and fable. As will be demonstrated more extensively in Chapter 2, a tripartite

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<sup>5</sup> Bowersock, 1

division between history, fiction, and fable developed and became widespread in the period coinciding with the rise of the novel, and shows up repeatedly as ancient rhetoricians and scholars attempt to navigate this new expressive reality. For now, the short outline provided by Sextus Empiricus in the second century will suffice:

... τῶν ἱστορουμένων τὸ μὲν ἐστὶν ἱστορία τὸ δὲ μῦθος τὸ δὲ πλάσμα, ὧν ἢ μὲν ἱστορία ἀληθῶν τινῶν ἐστὶ καὶ γεγονόντων ἔκθεσις, ὡς ὅτι Ἀλεξανδρος ἐν Βαβυλῶνι δι' ἐπιβούλων φαρμακευθεὶς ἐτελεύτα, πλάσμα δὲ πραγμάτων μὴ γενομένων μὲν ὁμοίως δὲ τοῖς γενομένοις λεγομένων, ὡς αἱ κωμικαὶ ὑποθέσεις καὶ οἱ μῖμοι, μῦθος δὲ πραγμάτων ἀγενήτων καὶ ψευδῶν ἔκθεσις, ὡς ὅτι τὸ μὲν τῶν φαλαγγίων καὶ ὄφεων γένος Τιτηνῶν ἐνέπουσιν ἀφ' αἵματος ἐζωγονῆσθαι ... (*Contra Math.* 263-264)

... of things narrated historically, one is history, another is myth, and another fiction, of which history is the exposition of any true things that have happened, such as that Alexander died in Babylon, having been poisoned by conspirators; while a fiction is that of deeds having not happened but told like things that did happen, such as comic plots and mimes; but a myth is the exposition of deeds that have not happened and indeed false, such as when they tell that the race of spiders and snakes was spawned from the blood of the Titans...

This tripartite division – history (ἱστορία), fiction (πλάσμα), and fable or myth (μῦθος) – and the uneasy relationship among the three parts, are outlined in Cueva's discussion of the five canonical Greek novels in his *The Myths of Fiction*. Here Cueva charts the use of myth in the novels and asserts that, "of the many genres capable of influencing the

development of the novel, the most significant, in an unusual way, was history.”<sup>6</sup> In fact, “the novelists employed what might be described as degenerate Hellenistic historiography in order to give their erotic writings a semblance of respectability.”<sup>7</sup> Cueva sees the emphasis on this as changing, however, as we approach the sophistic novels of Longus, Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus. “Notwithstanding the sources for the historical elements of the novel, it is undeniable that the earlier novels, *Chaereas and Callirhoe* and *Ephesiaca*, were more historical in nature than the later novels.”<sup>8</sup>

We will be examining just this trajectory when analyzing the earlier novels of Petronius, Chariton, and Xenophon, against the later “sophistic” tales of Apuleius, Achilles Tatius, Heliodorus, and most especially Longus. As the novel develops away from a more strict emulation of historical narrative (with a few flourishes of its own, of course), it becomes more fantastical. And yet even amidst the fantastic – even amidst a greater comfort with divine and/or supernatural intervention – the authors continue to strive for plausibility. In part this is because, as we shall see, acceptance of the supernatural was commonplace among many of the ancients, despite the existence of some famous skeptics.<sup>9</sup> But it also seems to suggest an acceptance of prose fiction as a genre, and a willingness to let it depart from its historiographic origins. Overall, we must always be aware of the often blurred lines between ancient myth and history, which led Brillante to suggest that the “notion of the historical content of a myth presupposes a distinction between myth and history which is fundamental for us but anachronistic for

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<sup>6</sup> Cueva 2004, 4

<sup>7</sup> Ibid, 10

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, 10

<sup>9</sup> See the famous verses of Xenophanes, or Lucretius’ account of the beginning of the world, for just two examples. Meanwhile, the contemporary Lucian’s skepticism will be treated at length in Chapter 3.

the Greeks.”<sup>10</sup> But in light of this new prose format in the imperial period, these blurs are becoming ever sharper and more distinct, as sophists, rhetorical teachers, and critics like Lucian begin to navigate a landscape in which prose no longer carries an assumption of fact and authenticity, even while fictional narrative still attempts to legitimize itself with factual allusions and authenticating strategies.

For us, fiction and lies are distinct, because fiction is picked up from a library or bookshop shelf (or in an online store category) so labeled, and thus the knowing suspension of the reader’s disbelief precludes the idea that he or she is being deceived. In this way, modern theory on deception often departs from ancient ways of thinking. Indeed, one way in which philosophical, theoretical definitions are necessarily complicated concerns the participation of the person being lied to or deceived. Philosophers like Carson have dispensed with certain definitions of lying on this score, for example, when they have shown how willing participation in a deception cannot be considered as true deception: if one is reading a book one knows to be fiction, then even the most vivid narrative cannot be called a deception, as the reader is a knowing participant in this game. However, such theorizing assumes a modern take on novelization or fiction. But how does this apply when genres are blurred and the viewer is left in a state of *aporia*, unaware of whether a work is fiction or fact, or which parts of it should be classified as each (as we have seen in our own time with *Blair Witch*)? As we will see, though boundaries existed between history and fiction among the learned elite, they did not always find themselves in the reception of our novelistic texts. Augustine

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<sup>10</sup> Brillante 1990, 91

himself seemed unable to always appreciate these divisions. In his *Soliloquies*, he seems to outline a helpful distinction:

Nam fallax id recte dicitur quod habet quemdam fallendi appetitum ... Illud autem quod mendax voco, a mentientibus fit. Qui hoc differunt a fallacibus, quod omnis fallax appetit fallere; non autem omnis vult fallere qui mentitur: nam et mimi et comoediae et multa poemata mendaciorum plena sunt, delectandi potius quam fallendi voluntate ... *Soliloquies*, 2.9.16

For a thing is rightly called deceitful which has some sort of desire of deceiving ... Moreover the thing which I call deceitful comes from those who are deceiving. These differ in this one point: that all who are deceitful seek to deceive, but not all who utter lies wish to deceive: for mimes and comedies and many poems are full of lies, but with the intention of delighting rather than deceiving ...

Yet in his *Civitas Dei*, Augustine seems unsure whether Apuleius' *Golden Ass*, narrated over eleven books by a man magically turned into an ass, was reported or invented (*aut indicavit aut finxit*).<sup>11</sup> Indeed, contemporary with our novelists is an entire genre of *apista* or *incredibilia* literature (paradoxography) which reports on "strange but true" tales and which are famously parodied by Lucian in his *True History* and also his *Lover of Lies*, both a direct satire of the notion that the tall tales in these works can be believed.<sup>12</sup> In other words, the very theoretical notion of deception is complicated in this time period by the ambiguity regarding "fact" and "fiction" in these ancient novels,

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<sup>11</sup> *Civitas Dei* 18.18. Indeed, Augustine's entire purpose of bringing it up is to hush skeptics who might doubt the existence of demonic powers. Cf. the discussion on 188-189.

<sup>12</sup> Reardon 2008, 621; cf. Chapter 3.

and the novelists seem acutely and self-consciously aware of that fact, and how it affects the entire project they undertake, given their repeated use of lies and deception throughout their narratives.

And yet another layer of deception has been noted of liars as old as Odysseus: the sophistication of the audience being lied to (and by implication, the sophistication of the liars themselves). Here, I suggest Carson's modern take can be directly applied to the ancient sophistic novelists: "Sometimes people are obtuse and fail to perceive that the things they are being told are said in jest."<sup>13</sup> This is directly related to a key portion of most philosophical definitions of lying: namely, the warranting by the speaker of the truth of what he says.<sup>14</sup> However, Carson concedes that the sophistication of a given audience can throw into doubt this definitional aspect, for one could make an assertion that warrants the truth to part of an audience, but does not warrant it to a more sophisticated part. He uses the example of a description seemingly ripped from the pages of ancient paradoxography: "Consider, for example, a greatly exaggerated account of a past event told to a mixed group containing both sophisticated adults and young children: 'The dog who was chasing me was huge; he was at least ten feet tall.' ... In such a case, one warrants the truth of what one says to the children but not to the adults."<sup>15</sup>

With the authors of fiction, perhaps even still today, lying is just such a rhetorical exercise: an attempt to make the unreal as real as possible; an attempt to make perhaps

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<sup>13</sup> Carson 2010, 28

<sup>14</sup> Ibid, 26

<sup>15</sup> Ibid, 29



even the most sophisticated adult gain concern and investment in the plausible experiences of people and stories that do not in the most rigid sense exist. The ease with which a reader is able to suspend disbelief is in many ways the true measuring stick of good fiction, no matter the genre, and the ancient novelists, with their various attempts at creating plausible, believable narratives out of the stories they invented out of whole cloth, were among the first to hone and sharpen those skills, which still hold us in thrall today.

## Chapter 1: Longus and the Art of Deception

Of all the novelists who treat lying and deceit, none perhaps does so as overtly and repeatedly as Longus.<sup>16</sup> This may not be surprising, given that with Longus we have perhaps antiquity's most psychological novel.<sup>17</sup> Throughout Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, the author makes us aware of the possibility of deceit, whether in storytelling (μῦθος) of how things happened, or in the skill (τέχνη) of how things are described or done. And while much has been made about how these two central foci of Longus – storytelling and skill – punctuate the entire program laid out by the author at the onset of his work, including the often-problematic ways in

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<sup>16</sup> The manuscripts all give us the name Λόγγος, though the Florentine manuscript states Λόγος, which at one time led some to suggest anonymity (Hunter 1983, 101 n.5). An inscription (IG XII.2.88) from Mytilene listing important citizens and dated to the late first century BCE records a Γν. Πομπήιος Λόγγος, indicating a Roman family (or a family with Roman patronage and thus an adopted Roman name) lived on the island. Cichorius found it obvious that the Longus of our novel was no doubt connected to this famous Lesbian family, both thanks to his name and his familiarity with the island: *Ich möchte nämlich auch an Longus, den Verfasser des erhaltenen Hirtenromans erinnern, der, wie allseitig anerkannt wird, nach der in seinem auf Lesbos spielenden Romane überall zutage tretenden ganz genauen Kenntnis der Verhältnisse auf der Insel notwendig von ihr stammen muß; undenkbar wäre es jedenfalls nicht, daß er zu der auf Lesbos bezugten angesehenen Familie der Pompei Longi gehört hat* (Cichorius 1922, 323). But other than that, we have no information or reference to the author. On Longus' date we are on even softer ground: there is no evidence of it prior to the 12<sup>th</sup> century Byzantine verse romance *Drosilla and Charikles* by Nicetas Eugenianus, 6.440-450 (Burton 2004, 130-131), which includes a short reference to "that famous boy Daphnis ... only a shepherd" (Δάφνης ὁ παῖς ἐκέϊνος ... ποιμὴν μόνον) and his lover Chloe, who joined themselves together in marriage (συνῆψαν αὐτοὺς (sic) εἰς γάμον). A ninth century work may contain an allusion to it: McCail (1988, 115) argues that a passage of Constantine of Sicily's *Daphniaca* might contain an allusion to Philetas' encounter with Eros in Longus. He connects Constantine to Longus' text through his onetime teacher Leo the Philosopher, who is thought to have held a copy of Achilles Tatius (122). Previous attempts at dating *Daphnis and Chloe* have centered on the three thousand drachmae Daphnis finds in 3.27.4, a sum that after the inflation of the latter third century would have been "virtually worthless" (Hunter 1983, 4). Otherwise, very little movement in dating Longus has happened in recent scholarship. The summary consensus thirty years ago was summarized by Hunter thus: "Most critics would now probably place Longus in the center of the 'Second Sophistic,' a movement which is usually regarded as a phenomenon of the period A.D. c. 50-250." (Hunter 1983, 3; cf. p. 44 n.72). While Morgan just ten years ago stated about the same, still citing Hunter's summary: "The scholarly consensus is to date the work to the late 2<sup>nd</sup> or early 3<sup>rd</sup> century, but none of the arguments adduced is in itself conclusive ... Pending conclusive proof, a date in the second half of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century is a plausible guess" (Morgan 2004, 2). My treatment will make clear my opinion that Longus belongs firmly within the traditions of Achilles Tatius and Apuleius, both of whose dating is much firmer and whose sophistic, stylistic affinities, especially with respect to the narration of deceptive tales, Longus shares.

<sup>17</sup> Kester (1973, 169): "Through pictorial space and chronological time Longus builds his detail to provide extraordinary psychological plausibility for the awakening sexual consciousness of the protagonists."

which they appear incongruous with one another, little to no attention has been paid to the immense amount of deception at work overall in the story.

These deceptions take many forms, from outright lies (ψεύδη), to mimicry (μίμησις), to “schemes” (τέχνη) designed to deceive, to lies of omission, and they seem to telegraph to us over and over again that stories, events, people and even natural places are not always what they seem. This chapter will track such lies and examine the repercussions they could have on scholarship on Longus, of late so often focused on the author’s preoccupations with *ecphrasis*, narrative framing, and embedded storytelling. It then poses the question: how seriously should we take the author’s word when he tells us the impetus behind his story in the preface?

Ἐν Λέσβῳ<sup>18</sup> θηρῶν ἐν ἄλσει Νυμφῶν θέαμα εἶδον  
κάλλιστον ὧν εἶδον: εἰκόνα, γραφήν, ἱστορίαν ἔρωτος.  
Καλὸν μὲν καὶ τὸ ἄλσος, πολὺ δένδρον, ἀνθηρόν,  
κατάρρυτον: μία πηγὴ πάντα ἔτρεφε, καὶ τὰ ἄνθη καὶ  
τὰ δένδρα: ἀλλ’ ἡ γραφή τερπνοτέρα καὶ τέχνην ἔχουσα  
περιττὴν καὶ τύχην ἐρωτικὴν: ὥστε πολλοὶ καὶ τῶν  
ξένων κατὰ φήμην ἤεσαν, τῶν μὲν Νυμφῶν ἰκέται, τῆς  
δὲ εἰκόνης θεαταί. Γυναῖκες ἐπ’ αὐτῆς τίκτουσαι καὶ  
ἄλλαι σπαργάνοις κοσμοῦσαι: παιδία ἐκκείμενα,  
ποιμνία τρέφοντα: ποιμένες ἀναιρούμενοι, νέοι  
συντιθέμενοι: ληστῶν καταδρομὴ, πολεμίων ἐμβολή.  
Πολλὰ ἄλλα καὶ πάντα ἐρωτικὰ ἰδόντα με καὶ  
θαυμάσαντα πόθος ἔσχεν ἀντιγράψαι τῆ γραφῆ: καὶ  
ἀναζητησάμενος ἐξηγητὴν τῆς εἰκόνης τέτταρας

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<sup>18</sup> Longus’ association and/or familiarity with Lesbos has been an ongoing topic of debate, though most have seen in his descriptions a more or less accurate knowledge of the island. Perry (1967, 351) was emphatic on this score: “The close familiarity with the island of Lesbos shown by Longus in his romance, and his obvious fondness for its rural scenery, tend strongly to confirm our belief that he was indeed a native of that island.” Morgan (2004, 1) is likewise convinced: “Although some elements of [Longus’] countryside clearly derive from the convention of literary pastoral, too many details for co-incidence, on matters such as natural features, flora, fauna, climate and political organization, both reflect the realities of Lesbos and are not to be found either in other pastoral or, in many cases, in factual texts treating of Lesbos.” Still others have researched the matter more thoroughly. Responding to two much earlier critics (Nabor 1877, Hiller von Gartringen 1932) who suggested Longus’ distances were too far off for him to be properly familiar with Lesbos, Mason (1979) suggests that Longus (like others) has given us precise distances to help us locate his story. Green (1982), while critical of Mason’s prediction of precisely where on Lesbos Longus had set his tale, nevertheless praises Mason for dismantling previous assumptions about Longus’ ignorance of the island, including a recurring criticism that suggested that the heavy winter described in Book 3 (discussed on pp. 29-30 below) would never happen in such a mild climate, something belied by the harsh winters experienced within recent memory on Lesbos (Green 1982, 210).

βίβλους ἐξεπονησάμην, ἀνάθημα μὲν Ἔρωτι καὶ  
Νύμφαις καὶ Πανί, κτῆμα δὲ τερπνὸν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις,  
ὃ καὶ νοσοῦντα ἰάσεται, καὶ λυπούμενον  
παραμυθήσεται, τὸν ἐρασθέντα ἀναμνήσει, τὸν οὐκ  
ἐρασθέντα προπαιδεύσει. Πάντως γὰρ οὐδεὶς ἔρωτα  
ἔφυγεν ἢ φεύξεται, μέχρι ἂν κάλλος ἦ καὶ ὀφθαλμοὶ  
βλέπωσιν. Ἡμῖν δ' ὁ θεὸς παράσχοι σωφρονοῦσι τὰ τῶν  
ἄλλων γράφειν.

On Lesbos while hunting in a glade of the nymphs I  
saw a sight most beautiful of the things I have seen: an  
icon, a painting, an account of love. The grove was  
beautiful, with many trees, flowered, and watered: one  
spring nourished it all, both the flowers and the trees:  
but the painting was more pleasing and had surpassing  
skill and an erotic subject: so much so that many  
foreigners came following after its reputation,  
suppliants of the nymphs and spectators of the image.  
Upon it were women giving birth and others adorning  
[their children] with swaddling clothes; an attack of  
pirates, an invasion of enemies. An urge seized me  
while looking and gazing at all the many other erotic  
things there to write in response to the painting. And  
having sought an exegete of the image I have worked  
out four books, an offering to Eros and the Nymphs and  
Pan, a possession pleasing to all people, which might  
both heal the sick and comfort the grieving, that will  
remind those having experienced love and teach those  
who have not. For no one has ever wholly escaped from  
love nor will escape, so long as there is beauty and eyes  
that see. And so may the god allow us to prudently  
write about the experiences of others.

As I will attempt to make clear, Longus' supposed inspiration for his story fails the standards for  
plausibility he himself lays out in his own tale, as almost none of what is to follow is spelled out  
in the painting that supposedly seizes his interest. Is it possible *Daphnis and Chloe* is not just one  
long μῦθος based on a painting as it purports to be, nor even (only) one long τέχνη or  
responding work of art as many have suggested, but perhaps even one long ψεῦδος? And given  
that lies and concealment form the backbone of the story as a whole, should this really surprise  
us?

Several types of lies are told by the characters of the novel, the most basic described as simply that, “lies” (ψεῦδα). But even more often (and more significantly for our analysis) than forms of ψεῦδος that appear in the novel are deceitful τέχναι – schemes, ploys, or contrivances that are employed for the purpose of deception. Many have examined τέχνη in broader detail as it applies to the skill that Longus employs to construct his elaborate *ecphrasis*, which responds (ἀντιγράφαι) to the painting seen by the narrator in the proem of the work. At its most basic, discussion has noted how central τέχνη is to the work as a whole, as an artistic program. Thus Teske, though perhaps not innovatively,<sup>19</sup> structures her entire monograph on how τέχνη makes for the program of the novel as a whole: “Die Hochschätzung der τέχνη, wie sie der Erzähler vermittelt, zeigt sich in der Ausarbeitung des Werks ... Die Favorisierung der τέχνη wird in gewisser Weise durch die akribische künstlerische Gestaltung des Romans noch einmal zum Ausdruck gebracht.”<sup>20</sup> Others have likewise seen a parallel between Longus and actual works of art. Mittelstadt meticulously divided the narrative of the novel into sets and subsets, attempting to show its conformity to Roman narrative painting, which, he argues, Longus sets up in his proem: “the skeletal structure of the plot as Longus envisioned it from the pictures.”<sup>21</sup> He then divides the narrative neatly up into twelve episodes, grouped into four sets of threes: the static/descriptive (setting of the scene), the narrative (plot), and the lyric (Daphnis and Chloe together alone in idyllic landscape). Meanwhile, Kestner likewise sees the whole work as framed by the *ecphrasis*. Newlands, also, sees both the painting that begins the work, and the one described in Book 4, as framing the novel: “The two paintings in microcosmic form illustrate the aesthetics of the macrocosm, the work as a whole.”<sup>22</sup> All of this is to say that the subject of

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<sup>19</sup> Teske’s “general conclusion is succinctly anticipated on p. 45 of Hunter’s *A Study of Daphnis and Chloe*,” notes a review by Anderson (1992, 184-185).

<sup>20</sup> Teske 1991, 117

<sup>21</sup> Mittelstadt 1967, 52

<sup>22</sup> Newlands 1987, 56

Longus' work as it relates to art has been an unexhausting one for scholars, and most have attempted, with more or less complexity, to fit the narrative into the structure, program or other confines of a painted work. Zeitlin, however, takes such an analysis much further, noting that the manner in which Longus unfolds his *ecphrasis* is wholly in line with the sophistic tradition in which he wrote: "In the texts of sophistic rhetoric ... there are other authors/viewers, who, for example, in collections of *ecphrases* of paintings ... have several underlying aims. The first is *mimetic* – to compete with the power of pictorial images through verbal means, while the second is *didactic* – to use description in order to make some moral (or aesthetic) point."<sup>23</sup> She links this to Longus' other subjects, namely the erotic education of the two youths and the natural, pastoral world in which he sets the tale: "The author's major innovation in plot is to center a romance on the extreme youth and naiveté of his lovers and to link up the 'natural' forces of eros to the processes of education, both innate (*physis*) and acquired by skill (*techne*), as well as the teaching (*paideia*) of others."<sup>24</sup> Therefore, we are treated to several layers of μίμεις, τέχνη, and παιδεία as the narrator imitates the painting, the narrative works mimetic effects on the reader, and the children learn about Eros through μίμεις.<sup>25</sup>

I would subscribe here to Zeitlin's thesis with a significant modification: that is, that while μίμεις, τέχνη, and παιδεία are indeed central to Longus' work, they are all also wrapped up in the narrator's preoccupation with deceit: that in addition to the erotic education and coming-of-age experienced by the two protagonists, part of the παιδεία they acquire or exemplify is detectable by tracking the lies they tell against the other (usually less sophisticated) lies of other characters.

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<sup>23</sup> Zeitlin 1990, 432

<sup>24</sup> Ibid, 430

<sup>25</sup> Ibid, 435

But before examining sophisticated lies, we should take a look at the simple lying that happens often and early in *Daphnis and Chloe*, as if a telegraph to us to take especial note of the more significant deceptions which this chapter will outline more elaborately below. The first and, I will argue, perhaps ultimately most significant time we encounter it is, of course, in the discoveries of the two children in the countryside,<sup>26</sup> abandoned by their biological parents and found by shepherds,<sup>27</sup> two symmetrical episodes which both involve deceit on their adoptive parents' parts, the continued concealment of which will, of course, eventually lead to the triumphant conclusion. Both children are found being suckled by an animal (Daphnis a goat; Chloe a ewe)<sup>28</sup> and discovered with aristocratic recognition tokens. Daphnis is found first in the narrative, and his adoptive parents take every precaution to conceal his true status:

τὰ μὲν συνεκτεθέντα κρύπτουσι, τὸ δὲ παιδίον  
αὐτῶν νομίζουσι .... Ὡς δ' ἂν καὶ τοῦνομα τοῦ παιδίου  
ποιμενικὸν δοκοίη, Δάφνιν αὐτὸν ἔγνωσαν καλεῖν.  
(1.3.2)

They hid the things exposed with him, and they considered the child their own. ... And so that the name of the child should seem rustic, they decided to call him Daphnis.<sup>29</sup>

Next Chloe's foster parents, Dryas and Nape, come up with the same scheme in 1.6:

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<sup>26</sup> Connor's study of *nympholepsy* (1988, 178) is particularly applicable with respect to the two protagonists, especially in light of the nymphs' prominent role in the story at large and the two youths' divine favor (see n.28 below). Connor notes that the nympholept "had a significant social role and status" that included "an emphatic severance from the normal world of family, kin, village, and polis, followed by a withdrawal into the wild," precisely the sort of journey the two youths will undergo.

<sup>27</sup> A common theme through ancient myth and literature, including the novels, abandonment was nonetheless a real phenomenon in antiquity, and was frequently the subject matter of Roman *controversiae* and declamations (Boswell 1988, 56 n.5).

<sup>28</sup> "The spontaneous suckling of a child by an animal implies superhuman status or divine favour, as with Asklepios (goats and hounds), Telephos (hind), Hippothoon, Pelias and Nereus (mares), Meletos, Romulus and Remus (she-wolves), Paris (bear) and Semiramis (doves); thus expectations are set at the start of the novel." (Morgan 2004, 152)

<sup>29</sup> Outside of Longus, Daphnis is best known as a herdsman who invents pastoral. For an interesting account of Daphnis' relation to Near Eastern myths (in connection with Theocritus 1's placement of him opposite Aphrodite), see Anagnostou-Laoutides and Konstan 2008, 499-503.

παρακελεύεται θυγάτριον νομίζειν καὶ  
λανθάνουσαν ὡς ἴδιον τρέφειν. ... καὶ τίθεται καὶ αὐτῇ  
ποιμενικὸν ὄνομα πρὸς πίστιν αὐτῷ, Χλόην. (1.6.2)

He bade (his wife) to consider the child her  
daughter and to nourish her secretly as though her  
own. And she gave a rustic name to the child for  
credibility: Chloe.

Already then, at the outset of Book I, the entire narrative movement of the work is based upon a double deception: both sets of parents take extra precaution to pass the children off as their own, and yet even this will prove to be unconvincing in the end, as we shall see. Daphnis' parents hide (κρύπτουσι) the tokens found with him, and Chloe's mother is told to raise the child "secretly" or "under the radar" (λανθάνουσαν). But the crowning scheme by both pair of parents is to give the children "rustic" (ποιμενικὸν) names, so as to avoid suspicion. The entire plot of the novel, then, is predicated upon the deceits of the adoptive parents: these will be rich, aristocratic children raised in the poor humility of the countryside, unbeknownst to almost everyone, including the children themselves.

Ignorant though they may be about their parents' deceit, neither Daphnis nor Chloe appear to need any lessons in outright lying, for both do so when expedient throughout the work, and this often takes shape through alternative stories or versions of events they tell in place of what really happened. The first example of an outright ψεῦδος occurs when Daphnis and one of his goats fall into a hole and are rescued by the cowherd Dorcon.

Τοῦτον μὲν δὴ τυθησόμενον χαρίζονται σῶστρα τῷ  
βουκόλῳ, καὶ ἔμελλον ψεύδεσθαι πρὸς τοὺς οἴκοι  
λύκων ἐπιδρομήν, εἴ τις ἐπόθησεν. (1.12.5)<sup>30</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> This passage belongs to the (in)famous blotted-out page of the Florentine manuscript, wherein the spilling of ink in 1809 was a bit of an international scandal. The passages were unknown until Paul-Louis Courier discovered the manuscript and set out to copy them, then somehow damaged the original, leaving his transcription as the only remaining witness. The incident caused an extensive flap and authorities in Rome actually forbade Courier from printing any form of the discovered and now obliterated text that he had transcribed. He later tricked a printer into printing it anyway, allowing for the hitherto unknown passage to be published and translated for the first time (Barber 1988, 57-60).



They thanked him by sacrificing (the goat) as an offering, and they were going to lie<sup>31</sup> to those at home about an attack of wolves, if anyone should miss it.

Daphnis makes up a similarly adventurous story in 3.20 when he has just had sex with Lukainion. Lukainion had herself made up a story (which we will examine presently) to lure Daphnis away, claiming that her prize goose had been snatched by an eagle, and Daphnis provides the equally fabricated sequel, lying to Chloe that he had snatched the goose from the claws of the eagle (τόν τε χῆνα τῶν τοῦ ἀετοῦ ὀνύχων ἐψεύσατο ἐξαπάσαι, 3.20.2).<sup>32</sup>

As seen above, the characters of the work are often said to lie, but just as often they are said to contrive more elaborate deceptions. Thus, besides the *skill* that τέχνη often denotes, it just as often refers to *contrivances* and *schemes* aimed to deceive. The success of these τέχνη appear to be directly dependent on the education or intelligence of the person employing them, and the ability to successfully deceive overall is directly linked to the intelligence and the *paideia* of the character in question. And so, the first unsuccessful deception we hear of in the story proper is that of the unsuccessful wolf traps the villagers construct in 1.11. These “mimic the ground” (ἐμμεμίμητο γῆν) and have the appearance of ground (γῆς εἰκόνα), but the wolf was not fooled because it knew the ground was *contrived* (αἰσθάνεται γὰρ γῆς σεσοφισμένης). The rustic villagers therefore only manage to lose many goats and sheep in the process (the very thing they were trying to prevent), but catch no wolves thanks to the crudity of their contrivance.

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<sup>31</sup> This is admittedly not much of a crafty lie. The same excuse upon the loss of an animal can be found in Apuleius Met. 7.22, when rustics likewise plot to sacrifice Lucius the ass: ‘*Obtruncato protinus eo intestina quidem canibus nostris iacta, ceteram vero carnem omnem operariorum cenae reserva. Nam corium affirmatum cineris inspersu dominis referemus eiusque mortem de lupo facile mentiemur.*’ / “Slaughter him straightaway and throw his intestines to our dogs, but keep all the rest of his meat for a dinner for us laborers. For we will bear back the hide to our masters firmed up by the sprinkling of some ash, and easily lie that his death was from a wolf.”

<sup>32</sup> Morgan (2004, 161) suggests that the young couple’s readiness to lie is “excused by their innocence and piety,” but I would suggest the opposite: their readiness, and indeed ability to lie, which will be seen throughout, is in fact aided by their aristocratic intelligence and craft.

Meanwhile, the city parasite Gnathon, enflamed for Daphnis, does not so much deceive as contrive a sophisticated harangue for his master Astylus about how in love he was with the goatherd despite his low status, and why that was perfectly acceptable, prompting Astylus to laugh and remark that Eros makes good sophists (ὁ Ἔρως ποιεῖ σοφιστὰς, 4.18.1). It is true that Gnathon is ultimately foiled, but not because his scheme failed; on the contrary, it wins over Astylus, who twice agrees to ask his father for Daphnis to present to Gnathon (4.17, 4.18). But that is eventually spoiled when Daphnis turns out to be the master's son.

Contrast Gnathon's sophisticated albeit sophistic argument with the attempt by the herdsman Lampis to sabotage Daphnis and his family. Lampis seeks "a device" (τέχνη) by which he might make the master angry with Daphnis and his family (τέχνην ἐζήτει, δι' ἧς τὸν δεσπότην αὐτοῖς ποιήσει πικρόν 4.7.2), but it is little more than the actions of a rampaging animal:

Δένδρα μὲν οὖν τέμνων ἔμελλεν ἀλώσεσθαι διὰ τὸν κτύπον: ἐπεῖχε δὲ τοῖς ἄνθεσιν, ὥστε διαφθεῖραι αὐτά. Νύκτα δὴ φυλάξας καὶ ὑπερβὰς τὴν αἰμασιὰν τὰ μὲν ἀνώρυξε, τὰ δὲ κατέκλασε, τὰ δὲ κατεπάτησεν ὥσπερ σῦς. Καὶ ὁ μὲν λαθὼν ἀπεληλύθει: Λάμων δὲ τῆς ἐπιούσης παρελθὼν εἰς τὸν κῆπον ἔμελλεν ὕδωρ αὐτοῖς ἐκ τῆς πηγῆς ἐπάξειν. Ἰδὼν δὲ πᾶν τὸ χωρίον δεδηρωμένον καὶ ἔργον οἶον ἄν ἐχθρός, οὐ ληστής ἐργάσαιτο, κατερρήξατο μὲν εὐθύς τὸν χιτωνίσκον, βοῆ δὲ μεγάλη θεοὺς ἀνεκάλει ... (4.7.3-5)

Since he was going to get caught cutting down the trees thanks to the noise, he took aim at the flowers, so that he might destroy them. Having watched by night, he climbed the wall, and some he dug up, others he snapped off, and some he trampled just like a pig. And concealing himself he left, and Lamon coming the next day into the garden was going to bring water to them from the spring. But seeing the whole place ravaged, and a deed as though done by a hated enemy, not a robber, he rent his garment straightaway and called out to the gods with a great shout ...

Lampis' desecration of the garden is a crude τέχνη – in which Lampis is among other things compared to a rampaging pig (τὰ δὲ κατεπάτησεν ὥσπερ σῦς). He even forgoes the tools of a

human vandal (Δένδρα μὲν οὖν τέμνων ἔμελλεν ἀλώσεσθαι διὰ τὸν κτύπον) and instead uses his bare hands to rampage through the garden. It is thus not surprising that it also ends unsuccessfully. In fact, the sole bit of craft Lampis employs (tearing up the flowers instead of cutting down the trees), ends up being the family's salvation. The master's son Astylos, moved with compassion at their story of bad luck, (οἰκτεῖρει τὴν ἱκεσίαν ὁ Ἀστύλος), agrees to lie to his father and "accuse the horses" tied up there of running amok, snapping off, cutting down, and trampling the flowers there when they got loose (κατηγορήσειν τῶν ἵππων, ὡς ἐκεῖ δεθέντες ἐξύβρισαν καὶ τὰ μὲν κατέκλασαν, τὰ δὲ κατεπάτησαν, τὰ δὲ ἀνώρυξαν λυθέντες, 4.10.2). Hence the animalistic rampage Lampis decides upon as his τέχνη ends up providing Astylos with a handy excuse, for it did not look like the run-of-the-mill vandalism.

Over and again, this type of rustic deception is contrasted with the more urbane sophistry employed by the tale's aristocrats in the service of deceit. But by far the starkest contrast occurs between two parallel characters with parallel pursuits: the rustic Dorcon, who attempts to pursue Chloe but more or less fails, and the sophisticate Lukainion, who pursues Daphnis, and succeeds.

The two passages beg comparison in a number of ways. Firstly, both characters are classed as predators of the two youths, and fittingly in a bucolic, are thus associated with wolves. Dorcon will don a wolf skin in an attempt to capture Chloe, and Lukainion's name means "little wolf."<sup>33</sup> Secondly, their initial tactics are the same: both at first resolve to win their targets (Chloe and Daphnis) with gifts:

ἔγνω κατεργάσασθαι δώροις ἢ βία. Τὰ μὲν δὴ πρῶτα δῶρα  
αὐτοῖς ἐκόμισε τῷ μὲν σύριγγα βουκολικὴν καλάμων ἑννέα  
χαλκῶ δεδεμένων ἀντὶ κηροῦ, τῇ δὲ νεβρίδα βακχικὴν: καὶ  
αὐτῇ τὸ χρῶμα ἦν ὡσπερ γεγραμμένον χρώμασιν. Ἐντεῦθεν δὲ

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<sup>33</sup> A name that no doubt has prostitution overtones. As notes Bretzigheimer (1988, 539), she appears both a benevolent teacher (*wohlthätige Lehrerin*) and the good-hearted courtesan from New Comedy (*gutherzigen Kurtisane in der Neuen Komodie*).

φίλος νομιζόμενος τοῦ μὲν Δάφνιδος ἡμέλει κατ' ὀλίγον, τῇ  
Χλόη δὲ ἀνὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ἐπέφερον ἢ τυρὸν ἀπαλὸν ἢ  
στέφανον ἀνθηρὸν ἢ μῆλον ὠραῖον. 1.15.1-3

[Dorcon] decided to accomplish his goal with gifts or force.  
At first he brought gifts to them – a bucolic syrinx for him of  
nine reeds bound with copper instead of just wax, and for her a  
Bacchic fawn skin, and the color on it was as though it has been  
painted with colors. And then, when he was considered their  
friend, he began to ignore Daphnis little by little, but to Chloe  
every day he was bringing a soft cheese or a flowery crown or a  
beautiful apple.

ἐπεθύμησεν ἐραστήν κτήσασθαι δώροις δελεάσασα. Καὶ δὴ  
ποτε λοχήσασα μόνον καὶ σύριγγα δῶρον ἔδωκε καὶ μέλι ἐν  
κηρίῳ καὶ πήραν ἐλάφου. 3.15.2-3

[Lukainion] set her mind to obtaining him as a lover by  
enticing him with gifts. And in fact, ambushing him alone she  
gave him a syrinx as a gift and some honey in a comb and a  
deerskin bag.

Not only do they first attempt gifts, their gifts are similar, if not remarkably so (pipes and skins  
and honey and apples are typical pastoral favors). Thirdly, both stalk their targets by watching  
when and where they go, and thus are able to know when they might find them alone:

ἔγνω διὰ χειρῶν ἐπιθέσθαι τῇ Χλόη μόνη γενομένη: καὶ  
παραφυλάξας ὅτι παρ' ἡμέραν ἐπὶ πότον ἄγουσι τὰς ἀγέλας  
ποτὲ μὲν ὁ Δάφνις ποτὲ δὲ ἡ παῖς (1.20.1)

He decided to waylay Chloe with his hands when she was  
alone: and so having watched when during the day they led the  
goats to drink, when Daphnis did and when the girl did ...

Αὕτη ἡ Λυκαίνιον ὀρῶσα τὸν Δάφνιν καθ' ἐκάστην ἡμέραν  
παρελαύνοντα τὰς αἴγας ἔωθεν εἰς νομὴν, νύκτωρ ἐκ νομῆς  
(3.15.2)

Lukainion herself, having watched Daphnis each day driving  
the goats out into the pasture in the morning, and at night out  
of the pasture ...

Also, in keeping with both of their roles as predators, both at one point hide in the bushes in the  
pursuit of their pray:

πᾶς ὁ τόπος ἀκάνθαις καὶ βάτοις καὶ ἀρκεύθῳ ταπεινῇ καὶ  
σκολύμοις ἡγρίωτο: ῥαδίως ἂν ἐκεῖ καὶ λύκος ἀληθινὸς ἔλαθε  
λοχῶν. Ἐνταῦθα κρύψας ἑαυτὸν ἐπετήρει τοῦ πότου τὴν ὥραν  
ὁ Δόρκων ... 1.20.3-4

The whole place was grown wild with thorns and brambles  
and low-hanging juniper and thistles: easily a true wolf could  
have remained unseen hiding there. Having concealed himself  
here, Dorcon waited for the watering hour.

αὐτοῖς παρηκολούθησε καὶ εἷς τινα λόχμην ἐγκρύψασα  
ἑαυτήν, ὡς μὴ βλέποιτο, πάντα ἤκουσεν ὅσα εἶπον, πάντα  
εἶδεν ὅσα ἔπραξαν. 1.15.4

[Lukainion] followed behind them and having concealed  
herself in some thicket so that she might not be seen, she heard  
everything they said, and saw everything they did.

Both thus attempt the same initial strategies to get their targets:<sup>34</sup> both try gifts at first, both  
watch and wait, and both hide – all in keeping with their wolfish symbolism. Having realized  
something cleverer is needed, both then “scheme” to get what they want:

ἐπιτεχνᾶται τέχνην ποιμένι πρέπουσαν ... 1.20.1  
He schemed a scheme befitting a rustic.

ἐπιτεχνᾶταί τι τοιόνδε. 3.15.5  
She schemed something of this sort ...

Thus we get the ultimate attempt by both wolves: a scheme of deception. Up until this point, it  
seems clear that Longus is inviting us to view these episodes in parallel. It seems only fitting,  
then, to compare the schemes both Dorcon and Lukainion come up with, and here they could be  
no different. Two things should be borne in mind while analyzing these two schemes: firstly, the  
characters, while obviously parallel, have vastly different statuses. Dorcon is a cowherd  
(βουκόλος) and a rustic (ποιμήν), as the above passage indicates with no little amount of irony,  
as we shall see. By contrast, Lukainion is a “lady from the city, young, pretty, and daintier than

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<sup>34</sup> Dorcon also tries the traditional route of courting Chloe through her father in 1.19, offering gifts to him  
in exchange for his daughter’s hand, but is unsuccessful here as well. This is a strategy unavailable to  
Lukainion both because she is a woman and because she is already married.

country life” (γύναιον ἦν ἑπακτὸν ἐξ ἄστεος, νέον καὶ ὠραῖον καὶ ἀγροικίας ἀβρότερον,

3.15.1).<sup>35</sup> It is perhaps not surprising, then, that she ultimately possesses the sophistication to

get what she wants through lies, unlike the bumbling attempt by Dorcon:

Λύκου μεγάλου δέρμα λαβών, ὃν ταῦρός ποτε πρὸ τῶν  
βοῶν μαχόμενος τοῖς κέρασι διέφθειρε, περιέτεινε τῷ σώματι,  
ποδῆρες κατανωτισάμενος, ὡς τοὺς ἔμπροσθίους πόδας  
ἐφηπλῶσθαι ταῖς χερσὶ καὶ τοὺς κατόπιν τοῖς σκέλεσιν ἄχρι  
πτέρνης καὶ τοῦ στόματος τὸ χάσμα σκέπειν τὴν κεφαλὴν,  
ὥσπερ ἄνδρὸς ὀπλίτου κράνος: [...] Χρόνος ὀλίγος διαγίνεται  
καὶ Χλόη κατήλαυε τὰς ἀγέλας εἰς τὴν πηγὴν, καταλιποῦσα τὸν  
Δάφνιν φυλλάδα χλωρὰν κόπτοντα τοῖς ἐρίφοις τροφήν μετὰ  
τὴν νομήν. Καὶ οἱ κύνες οἱ τῶν προβάτων ἐπὶ φυλακῇ καὶ τῶν  
αἰγῶν ἐπόμενοι, οἷα δὴ κυνῶν ἐν ῥινηλασίαις περιεργία,  
κινούμενον τὸν Δόρκωνα πρὸς τὴν ἐπίθεσιν τῆς κόρης  
φωράσαντες, πικρὸν μάλα ὑλακτῆσαντες ὥρμησαν ὡς ἐπὶ  
λύκον καὶ περισχόντες, πρὶν ὄλως ἀναστῆναι δι’ ἐκκληξιν,  
ἔδακνον κατὰ τοῦ δέρματος. 1.20.2, 1.21.1-2

Taking the skin of a big wolf, which a bull had killed with his horns protecting the cows, he stretched it around his body, carrying it on his back reaching to his feet, so that the front paws reached to his hands, and the back paws reached to his legs all the way to his ankle, and the maw of the mouth covered his head, just like the helmet of a hoplite. [...] After a little time had passed, Chloe drove the sheep to the spring, leaving behind Daphnis chopping some green foliage as food for the kids after the pasture. And the dogs, following for protection of the sheep and goats, with the sort of curiosity of dogs sniffing around, detected Dorcon moving toward his attack of the girl, and barking greatly and sharply, they set upon him as though upon a wolf, and surrounded him, until he stood up thanks to the disturbance and they bit him all over his flesh.

Longus says Dorcon’s τέχνη is fitting for a rustic (ποιμένι πρέπουσαν), and this must have more than one layer of meaning. Most obviously, a rustic might think in terms of a wolf in predation, so it was perhaps in keeping with both his surroundings and the pastoral literary genre for him to don the wolf skin in his attack on Chloe. But all it gets him is a mauling by Chloe’s dogs, who

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<sup>35</sup> It is perhaps no coincidence that this is the same word (ἀβρότερον) used to describe the fare Daphnis and Chloe are nourished on by their adoptive parents (τροφαῖς ἔτρεφον ἀβροτέραις, 1.8.1).

take him for a real wolf (ὡς ἐπὶ λύκον). Yet we are perhaps invited to raise yet another question: what, pray tell, is the purpose of the costume to begin with? If Dorcon is hoping to obtain Chloe by force as he had earlier resolved (ἔγνων κατεργάσασθαι δώροισ ἢ βίῃ), is he hoping the wolf suit will somehow disguise him? Despite his head showing through the open mouth like a helmet (τοῦ στόματος τὸ χάσμα σκέπειν τὴν κεφαλὴν, ὥσπερ ἄνδρὸς ὀπλίτου κράνος)? And how would disguising oneself as a wolf *divert* attention away from oneself in a pastoral setting? Moreover, Longus tells us Dorcon hides himself in a thicket overgrown with brush, where “easily even a real wolf” could remain unseen (ῥαδίως ἂν ἐκεῖ καὶ λύκος ἀληθινὸς ἔλαθε λοχῶν), until he can jump out and take Chloe. So why the need for a concealing disguise to begin with?

Clearly, this is not just a τέχνη ποιμένι πρέπουσα because he is dressed as a wolf attacking a shepherdess. This τέχνη is also befitting a rustic because it is so absurd, and thus we are not surprised when Dorcon’s bumbling attempt goes awry. Again, since Longus clearly sets Dorcon and Lukainion in parallel, the contrast of his scheme to Lukainion’s, a “series of unscrupulous and wholly charming lies,”<sup>36</sup> could not be more obvious. The entire Lukainion episode is rife with lies and deceit from the opening of the scene, where she lies to her husband Chromis that she is going to visit a woman giving birth (σκηψαμένη πρὸς Χρῶμιν ὡς παρὰ τίκτουσαν ἄπεισι γείτονα, 3.15.4), a deception that apparently worked so well the first time that she is able to repeat it again (Τῆς ἐπιούσης ὡς πάλιν παρὰ τὴν γυναῖκα τὴν τίκτουσαν ἀπιοῦσα, 3.16.1).<sup>37</sup> Though Lukainion hides and waits in a thicket much like Dorcon, it is not to ambush the couple, but rather to gain information to assist her in her scheme. There she hears and sees everything, especially the couple’s attempts at 3.14.5 to consummate their love. When Daphnis

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<sup>36</sup> Winkler, 26

<sup>37</sup> Hunter (1983, 11-12) connects this with Aristophanes *Ecc.* 528-529, when Praxagora is asked by her husband Blegyrus why she left the house silently at dawn: γυνὴ μέ τις νύκτωρ ἑταῖρα καὶ φίλη μετεπέμψατ’ ὠδίνουσα/“a woman, a companion and friend giving birth, sent for me.” Alciphron (2.7) also made use of this passage, albeit more verbatim: ὠδίνουσα με ἀρτίως ἤκειν ὡς ἑαυτὴν ἢ τοῦ γείτονος μετέπεμψε γυνή/“a woman, the wife of a neighbor just giving birth, sent for me to come to her.”

weeps that he is “more uneducated than the rams” in love (κριῶν ἀμαθέστερος, 3.14.5), not even Daphnis’ crying escapes her notice (ἔλαθεν αὐτὴν οὐδὲ κλαύσας ὁ Δάφνις, 3.15.5). She thus seizes upon a “double opportunity” (καιρὸν διπτόν) to both satisfy her own desire (τὴν ἑαυτῆς ἐπιθυμίαν) and offer them help (τὴν ἐκείνων σωτηρίαν, 3.15.5):

ἀπιοῦσα φανερώς ἐπὶ τὴν δρυῖν, ἔνθα ἐκαθέζοντο Δάφνις  
καὶ Χλόη, παραγίνεται καὶ ἀκριβῶς μιμησαμένη τὴν  
τεταραγμένην ‘σῶσόν με’ εἶπε ‘Δάφνι, τὴν ἀθλίαν: ἐκ γάρ μοι  
τῶν χηνῶν τῶν εἴκοσιν<sup>38</sup> ἓνα τὸν κάλλιστον ἀετὸς ἤρπασε καὶ  
οἷα μέγα φορτίον ἀράμενος οὐκ ἐδυνήθη μετέωρος ἐπὶ τὴν  
συνήθη τὴν ὑψηλὴν κομίσει ἐκείνην πέτραν, ἀλλ εἰς τήνδε τὴν  
ὑλὴν τὴν ταπεινὴν ἔχων κατέπεσε. [3] Σὺ τοίνυν, πρὸς τῶν [p.  
293] Νυμφῶν καὶ τοῦ Πανὸς ἐκείνου, συνεισελθὼν εἰς τὴν ὑλὴν  
ἴμῳ γὰρ δέδοικά σῶσόν μοι τὸν χῆνα, μηδὲ περιίδης ἀτελεῖ  
μοι τὸν ἀριθμὸν γενόμενον. [4] Τάχα δὲ καὶ αὐτὸν τὸν ἀετὸν  
ἀποκτενεῖς καὶ οὐκέτι πολλοὺς ὑμῶν ἄρναις καὶ ἐρίφους  
ἀρπάσει. Τὴν δὲ ἀγέλην τέως φρουρήσει Χλόη: πάντως αὐτὴν  
ἴσασιν αἱ αἴγες ἀεὶ σοι συνέμουσαν.’

Going openly to the oak where Daphnis and Chloe were sitting, and accurately mimicking a distraught woman, she stood beside them and said, “Save me, Daphnis, I’m miserable. An eagle has snatched from me one of my twenty geese, the most beautiful, and he was not able to lift so great a weight from the ground, to carry it off to his high accustomed rock, but bearing it into this here wood, he dropped it. So you, by the nymphs and that Pan, accompanying me into the wood (for I am afraid to go by myself), save my goose. Please do not disregard a number that has become incomplete for me. And having quickly killed the eagle itself, it will no longer snatch so many of your lambs and kids. Chloe will watch over your herd in the meantime; the goats especially know her since she is always herding with you.”

Lukainion thinks of everything. She acts the part “accurately” (ἀκριβῶς), mimicking a distraught woman,” (μιμησαμένη τὴν τεταραγμένην),<sup>39</sup> and not only comes up with a believable story,

<sup>38</sup> No doubt a reference to *Odyessy* 19.536ff, in which Penelope has a (prophetic) dream in which an eagle (Odysseus) kills her twenty geese (the suitors). Its playful irony here is surely no accident, for Lukainion has lost a goose (an extramarital lover) she wants to recover in the woods (where she will consummate her desire with Daphnis). Morgan (2004, 211) muses that this must make Lukainion the eagle, “who will take him into the wood and do her worst.”

<sup>39</sup> Mimicry is another way in which Longus conveys deceit and/or illusion. Innocent mimicry is found in Daphnis and Chloe mimicking the sounds and sights of spring in 1.9, where they are both mimickers of the



albeit one with clear literary allusions regarding fidelity, she adds to its credibility by including the excessive detail so commonplace in liars: one might have objected that he cannot get to an eagle on its perch, so Lukainion believably invents details about the eagle being unable to fly because of the weight, and unable to reach his accustomed high perch. She even is ready with a way to keep Chloe out of the way – someone must watch the sheep and goats, after all, and she has watched the two of them enough to know they care for each other’s flocks. As if this were not convincing enough, she adds self-interest into the mix, offering that if the eagle is killed, it will “no longer snatch so many of your lambs and kids” (οὐκέτι πολλοὺς ὑμῶν ἄρνας καὶ ἐρίφους ἀρπάσει ). Now, there is no eagle – so presumably no kids or lambs have gone missing thanks to a nonexistent bird of prey. But surely lambs and kids did go missing from time to time, and Lukainion’s remarks, brazenly “reminding” Daphnis of this false fact, as though it has actually happened (and thus will “no longer” – οὐκέτι – happen), is a brilliant crowning touch, not only for convincing the naïve goatherd, but also his shepherdess girlfriend. Indeed, her spiel is so convincing, in fact, that Daphnis “suspected nothing of what was going to happen” (Οὐδὲν τῶν μελλόντων ὑποπτέυσας ὁ Δάφνις, 3.17.1). Lukainion then proceeds to convince Daphnis to have sex with her in order to learn “the deeds of love” (ἔρωτος ἔργα).

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things they hear and see (νέοι μιμηταὶ τῶν ἀκουομένων ἐγίνοντο καὶ βλεπομένων) and of the bees in gathering flowers (τὰς μελίττας δὲ μιμούμενοι ἄνθη συνέλεγον). Often mimicry takes this innocent hue, which nonetheless conveys a theatrical sense of playing a part. Daphnis and Chloe later “mimic” Pan and Syrinx after Lamon tells their myth, as Daphnis plays the part of Pan, Chloe of Syrinx (Ὁ Δάφνις Πᾶνα ἐμμεῖτο, τὴν Σύριγγα Χλόη, 2.37.1), and Daphnis runs on his toes to “mimic hooves” (τὰς χηλὰς μιμούμενος, 2.37.2). In 2.38.1, after the conclusion of this mime, Daphnis is said to have kissed Chloe as though she had been found from a “true flight” φιλῆσας ὡς ἐκ φυγῆς ἀληθινῆς εὐρεθεῖσαν τὴν Χλόην). But mimicry can just as often be used by the story’s foils. Thus the Methymnaean soldiers, after plundering the Mitylenaean countryside, are said to “mimic a victory festival” after they are temporarily relieved of duties in 2.25 (ἐπινίκιον ἑορτὴν ἐμμοῦντο), and one of them helps lend to the appearance of a night battle by lying on the shore, “mimicking the sight of a corpse” (καὶ σχῆμά τις ἔκειτο νεκροῦ μιμούμενος). The parasite Gnathon in 4.17, making a sophistic case for his love for Daphnis, suggests he is “mimicking the gods” (θεοὺς ἐμμησάμην) in his lust for the young shepherd, likening his case to Zeus and Ganymede or Aphrodite and Anchises.

It is typically here that commentators suggest Daphnis (with Chloe to follow) has begun to pass out of childhood and into adulthood, but his and Chloe's ability to lie, and lie well, also sets them apart from the rustics whose schemes inevitably fail so miserably. It should be remembered that in addition to being in actuality aristocrats, the two are also fed daintier fare by their parents (αὐτοὺς καὶ τροφαῖς ἔτρεφον ἀβροτέραις) and taught to read (γράμματα ἐπαίδευον, 1.8.1). That they should enjoy the more sophisticated abilities, including craft and deceit, that come with that status and upbringing should therefore not surprise.<sup>40</sup>

It is perhaps then not accidental that the most pregnant uses of deception happen when utilized by the two protagonists, whose education away from naiveté is the central focus of the work. As seen above, the two lie about an attack of wolves when presenting Dorcon with a goat for his saving of Daphnis at 1.12. Likewise, each lies to the other about extra-romantic entanglements. As examined already, Daphnis lies to Chloe about rescuing Lukainion's goose after the two have sex in a secluded part of the forest. And while the naiveté of Daphnis is stressed more than once in this episode, it is also telling that he never questions the contrivance Lukainion has devised to get him there, and even conspires within it afterward in telling Chloe that he had rescued the goose instead of servicing Lukainion. Likewise, Chloe lies to Daphnis by omission at 1.31, retelling him the whole story of Dorcon's intervention via his syrinx-trained cattle but not telling him about the kiss he asked for in return because she was ashamed (μόνον αἰδεσθεῖσα τὸ φίλημα οὐκ εἶπεν, 1.31.2).

It is also suggested that the two have an ability to distinguish fact from reality, even if not always perfectly. After Philetas tells the couple a story about Eros romping through his

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<sup>40</sup> This falls in line with a general urban prejudice many observe in the author. As Morgan (2004, 155) notes: "The narrator's urban assumption (shared by the characters from both town and country) is that real rustics are ugly and oafish, when not actively malevolent ... As the pastoral elect, [Daphnis and Chloe] are distinguished from the peasant community by their urban qualities of beauty, refinement and leisure."

garden in 2.7, Longus suggests the couple enjoyed the account “as though hearing a story, not a fact” (ἐτέρφθησαν ὥσπερ μῦθον οὐ λόγον ἀκούοντες, 2.7.1).<sup>41</sup> This calls to mind the perhaps most self-referential part of Longus, in which a Mythemnaean commander, having kidnapped Chloe, is beset by madness sent by the god Pan, who appears to him in a dream and admonishes him for, among other things, taking “a maiden about whom Eros wishes to make a story” (παρθένον, ἐξ ἧς Ἔρως μῦθον ποιῆσαι θέλει, 2.27.2).

But even if Pan’s remark in 2.27 is the most overt reference to the fictionality of *Daphnis and Chloe* at large, perhaps the most elaborate discourse on deception – and thus on the persuasiveness of invented fictions – occurs at the novel’s midway point, in the only winter narrated in this heavily seasonal work. Here, at 3.4, while the rest of the country is enjoying a respite from labor, Daphnis and Chloe are distressed by their separation, and Longus says they are seeking a τέχνη by which they might see each other (εὐχόμενοι τέχνην ἐζήτουν, δι’ ἧς ἀλλήλους θεάσονται). Chloe, we are told, was helpless and stumped (Ἡ μὲν δὴ Χλόη δεινῶς ἄπορος ἦν καὶ ἀμήχανος) because her mother was always nearby, teaching her new skills. Daphnis, meanwhile, having more leisure time and smarter than a girl (ὁ δὲ Δάφνις, οἷα σχολὴν ἄγων καὶ συνετώτερος κόρης) discovers a contrivance by which he might see Chloe (τοιόνδε σόφισμα εὔρεν ἐς θεὰν τῆς Χλόης, 3.4.5). What follows is one of the novel’s most charming interior monologues, in which Daphnis, hunting birds near Chloe’s house as a pretext (προφάσει) and even catching many of them for credibility (ἐς πίστιν),<sup>42</sup> looks for a further

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<sup>41</sup> Much discussion has been made of the distinction between μῦθος and λόγος both in ancient literature and modern scholarship. Socrates in Plato’s *Gorgias* (523a) states the ancient differentiation succinctly: “Listen well, as they say, to a fine account, which you will regard a myth, I’m guessing, but I a fact: for the things which I am going to tell to you I tell to you as true things” (ἄκουε δὴ, φασί, μάλα καλοῦ λόγου, ὃν σὺ μὲν ἠγήση μῦθον, ὡς ἐγὼ οἶμαι, ἐγὼ δὲ λόγον: ὡς ἀληθῆ γὰρ ὄντα σοι λέξω ἃ μέλλω λέγειν). For Morgan (2004, 16-17, 182) this passage epitomizes a program of Longus’ whereby he attempts to break down the Thucydidean dichotomy of the utility of history vs. the pleasure of fiction – for Longus, fiction can be *both* pleasurable and instructive. The ancient rhetorical categorizations of fable, fiction, and history will be examined in greater detail in Chapter 2.

<sup>42</sup> Virtually the same construction used at 1.6.3, when Chloe’s parents named her thus “for credibility.”

pretext (again, προφάσει) to go to the door when those inside fail to notice him. Longus says he here examines what would seem most persuasive (πιθανώτατον), and embarks on a series of scenarios in which Daphnis foresees the implausibility of various excuses:

‘Πῦρ έναυσόμενος ἦλθον.’ ‘Μὴ γὰρ οὐκ ἦσαν ἀπὸ σταδίου γείτονες;’ ‘Ἄρτους αἰτησόμενος ἦκον.’ ‘Ἄλλ’ ἢ πῆρα μεστή τροφῆς.’ ‘Ὀῖνου δέομαι.’ ‘Καὶ μὴν χθὲς καὶ πρώην ἐτρύγησας.’ ‘Λύκος με ἐδίωκε.’ ‘Καὶ ποῦ τὰ ἴχνη τοῦ λύκου;’ ‘Θηράσων ἀφικόμεν τούς ὄρνιθας.’ ‘Τί οὖν [4] θηράσας οὐκ ἄπει;’ ‘Χλόην θεάσασθαι βούλομαι.’ Πατρὶ δὲ τίς καὶ μητρὶ παρθένου τοῦτο ὁμολογεῖ; 3.6.3-4

“I came to light a fire.” “But aren’t there neighbors a stade away?” “I came to get bread.” “But your bag is full of food.” “We’re in need of wine.” “But only just yesterday you picked the grapes.” “A wolf is chasing me.” “And where are the wolf’s tracks?” “I came to hunt birds.” “Why don’t you go away then, since you’re done hunting?” “I want to see Chloe.” But who would admit this to a girl’s father and mother?

So here we not only have deception, but the inner psychological machinations of deception, in which Daphnis is sophisticated enough to examine what would be a likely successful deception and what would more likely not. It must have taught Daphnis a great deal, for after he is finally noticed and allowed inside and enjoys an evening with Chloe and her family, Longus says he made many more journeys to her house that winter with other schemes (ἄλλαις τέχναις). But the end is especially important here, for he notices the improbability of telling the outright truth – “who would admit this to to a girl’s father and mother?” It calls to mind Daphnis’ earlier crowning sophistic achievement, during the trial with the Methymnaean youths in 2.16. There, he ends his speech with the question, “Who having a brain would believe that a ship carrying such great cargo would have a shoot for a cable?” (τίς πιστεύσει νοῦν ἔχων ὅτι τοσαῦτα φέρουσα ναῦς πεῖσμα εἶχε λύγον;) It matters not that we know that this *is exactly* what happened – Daphnis is able to point out the incredible nature of such a claim, and thus wins the day. Yet earlier, he and Chloe lacked such sophistication when it came to seeing through

Dorcon's or Lukainion's ruses. However sophisticated or not the deceptions are early in the work, Daphnis and Chloe in their embryonic state(s) of learning are not able to divine such deception. This is particularly significant with respect to Dorcon's scheme, which as we have seen, is a cartoonish disaster, but many have tied their ignorance of this and other matters to their general lack of (urbane) education: "Their misperception of this attempted rape is just that – a misperception due to their lack of education," notes Winkler.<sup>43</sup> Pandiri takes their ignorance one step further, applying it to her overall sense that Longus is sanitizing the world he is presenting for the (non-rustic) outsiders who are enjoying his work. Thus the children think it is pastoral fun, "as, in this artificial world, it must be."<sup>44</sup>

Indeed, the realism of the novel or lack thereof has been most often of late wrapped up with scholarship's preoccupation with art and *ecphrasis* in Longus. This still situates us in the realm of deceit, however, as art in this period was often aimed at deceiving the viewer into thinking it was real.<sup>45</sup> Indeed, where the model of reading Longus as an idyllic work of art does get challenged to any degree, it is by those who see traces of undermining realism in his work.<sup>46</sup> Pandiri notes that in this artistic expression, Longus gives hints of the "more practical, realistic, cruder dimension to such idealized figures" as those in the country.<sup>47</sup> "Several observations force themselves even on the reader who has determinedly suspended disbelief," she notes, "as

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<sup>43</sup> Winkler 1991, 24

<sup>44</sup> Pandiri 1985, 122

<sup>45</sup> See discussion immediately below, and in Chapter 3.

<sup>46</sup> Though plenty do not: *C'est un monde précisément pastoral, et des plus conventionnels ... un monde des plus purs, des plus irréels, car Daphnis et Chloé sont tout aussi loin d'être de vrais bergers qu'ils pourraient l'être; ils sont moins "réels" même que Chéréas et Callirhoé* (Reardon 1971, 376). Bowie (1977, 95) sees Longus as representing an urban aristocratic point of view but nonetheless striving to present his world and its people in a realistic fashion: "Both characters and landscape ... are seen selectively but realistically from the point of view of a rich city-dweller." Tatum (1994, 197ff) includes an entire section on the novels' relation to the "real world," including Arnott (cited above). In contrast, Hunter (1983, 21) sees preoccupation with the realism of the story to be misplaced: "The modern study of ancient bucolic literature has, however, been too concerned to label a given landscape or individual detail as 'realistic' or 'idyllic' where very often no such simple division is possible. There are many different shades of 'reality.'"

<sup>47</sup> Pandiri 1985, 120.

the preparations for the city-folk call attention to the normal state of the idyllic pastoral landscape in which Daphnis and Chloe disport themselves: the ground is covered with smelly dung, the streams are not pristine; animals get dirty; even the milking vessels are grubby ... Nature is fully pleasing only in art; to delight sophisticated eyes at all in the 'real' world, it must be carefully groomed, scrubbed, deodorized, pruned and arranged to suggest a painterly image."<sup>48</sup> The model of the novel as a painting then begins to break down, as we are made aware of the artifice of this world that Longus has created, which necessarily leads us to look outside the painting, perhaps even outside the novel itself. Thus Newlands, who takes Pandiri's model still further, sees this "cleaning up" as part of the narrator's program: "Lamo(n)'s cleaning and beautifying of the pastoral pleasance to suit urban taste is a metaphor of the narrator's own art, which seeks to obscure the harsh realities of rural life such as its dirt and its servitude by presenting an armchair view of nature. The visitors from the city, we are told, come to the country in order to find themselves *en eikoni*, in a picture (4.5). This is how the narrator has largely presented the countryside to us, as an illusionary painting in words."<sup>49</sup> Still, Arnott has set about suggesting that Longus wrote from accurate knowledge in the field of natural history, despite making a few mistakes. But the mistakes are where we might glean the most knowledge, for Arnott sees them in the trapping of animals, specifically the wolf traps and Daphnis' trapping of birds. But as we have already seen, both are part of more or less successful attempts at deception. Arnott makes much out of the incorrect depths that the villagers dig with their wolf traps,<sup>50</sup> but Longus is more concerned with their lack of artifice in covering the holes, which fails to deceive the wolf. And although the narrator calls Daphnis' bird traps successful,

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<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 125

<sup>49</sup> Newlands 1987, 57

<sup>50</sup> Arnott (1965, 206) notes they would only be 7.2 meters, not deep enough to trap a wolf at all. But then, Longus specifically claims they failed, so it is puzzling how this can be considered one of Longus' "blunders" as opposed to one belonging to the characters of the story.

they are nonetheless part of an elaborate design by Daphnis to see Chloe, not to actually trap birds.

Longus' preoccupation with deception is thus apparent both in the text itself and in the central and cursory concerns of modern scholarship. He appears to make a direct connection between intelligence and the ability to deceive successfully, and the two children, who are on a journey toward self-awareness and adulthood, seem to illustrate their steps along that path through their own use of (successful) deceit. As readers aware of the Big Lie (that the protagonists are actually aristocrats, not lowly shepherds), we know that they will inevitably end up together once their true statuses are recognized. But as devotees of New Comedy (with which Longus' educated readers were no doubt familiar), we also know that such a recognition will come with a goodly amount of complication. And with New Comedy, the status of *only one* of the lovers is typically in doubt, yet here *both* protagonists are being passed off as rustic while in actuality aristocrats, and neither set of parents is privy to the real status of the other set's child. This poses more or less no problems until Daphnis is attempting to win the hand of Chloe. Here Longus presents us with a host of lies, ironies, and seeming contradictions for us to work out, requiring us to focalize the events through the eyes of each character to keep straight what is going on.

First, Dryas (Chloe's foster father) begins to get gifts from pastoral suitors for Chloe's hand, and her mother Nape, despite knowing the status of her daughter, is elated at the prospect of marrying Chloe off to a well-off albeit farming suitor and getting money in return, and is likewise anxious that if this doesn't happen soon, Chloe may "make a man of some shepherd for apples and roses" (ἄνδρα ποιῆσαι τινα τῶν ποιμένων ἐπὶ μήλοις ἢ ρόδοις,

3.25.2).<sup>51</sup> Dryas is tempted, knowing that the gifts he is receiving from suitors are better than those afforded to shepherding girls (μείζονα γὰρ ἢ κατὰ ποιμαίνουσιν κόρην δῶρα). He demurs, however, knowing that she is better than rustic suitors (ὡς κρείττων ἐστὶν ἢ παρθένος μνηστήρων γεωργῶν, 3.25.3). So far, Longus appears to be sparing us the more ready conflict, which would see Chloe engaged to some farmer and thus unavailable for Daphnis. But the Big Lie allows for an even greater complication: for while Dryas is holding pastoral suitors at bay no matter the wealth they promise, hoping that if he preserves her and someday finds her true parents it will win him a fortune (εἴ ποτε τοὺς ἀληθινούς γονέας εὖροι, μέγας αὐτοῦς εὐδαίμονας θήσει, 3.25.3), Daphnis learns from Chloe about the numerous suitors and her mother's desire to marry her off. Daphnis then decides to tell his mother Myrtale about the suitors and his desire to marry Chloe, and she tells his father Lamon, who becomes angry at the suggestion, prompting Myrtale to herself concoct a lie.

Σκληρῶς δὲ ἐκείνου τὴν ἔντευξιν ἐνεγκόντος  
καὶ λοιδορήσαντος εἰ παιδὶ θυγάτριον ποιμένων  
προξενεῖ μεγάλην ἐν τοῖς γνωρίσμασιν ἐπαγγελομένῳ  
τύχην, ὃς αὐτοῦς, εὐρῶν τοὺς οἰκείους, καὶ ἐλευθέρους  
θήσει καὶ δεσπότης ἀγρῶν μείζονων, ἢ Μυρτάλη διὰ  
τὸν ἔρωτα φοβουμένη μὴ τελέως ἀπελπίσας ὁ Δάφνης  
τὸν γάμον τολμήσῃ τι θανατῶδες, ἄλλας αὐτῷ τῆς  
ἀντιρρήσεως αἰτίας ἀπήγγειλε. Ἐνήνητες ἐσμέν, ὦ παῖ,  
καὶ δεόμεθα νύμφης φερούσης τι μᾶλλον: οἱ δὲ  
πλούσιοι καὶ πλουσίων νυμφίων δεόμενοι. Ἴθι δὴ,  
πεῖσον Χλόην, ἢ δὲ τὸν πατέρα, μηδὲν αἰτεῖν μέγα:  
πάντως δὴ που κάκεινη φιλεῖ σε καὶ βούλεται  
συγκαθεύδειν πένητι καλῷ μᾶλλον ἢ πιθήκῳ πλουσίῳ.'

<sup>51</sup> Cf. Lukainion's parting remark to Daphnis in 3.19.3: "I have made you a man before Chloe (σε ἄνδρα ἐγὼ πρὸ Χλόης πεποίηκα). Nape's concern is not misplaced – Chloe has already had gifts given to her in amorous overture by Dorcon ("every day he was bringing Chloe some soft cheese, a crown, or a pretty apple"/τῇ Χλόη δὲ ἀνὰ πᾶσαν ἡμέραν ἐπέφερον ἢ τυρὸν ἀπαλὸν ἢ στέφανον ἀνθηρὸν ἢ μῆλον ὠραῖον, 1.15.3). But even more to the point, these gifts (and their payoffs) were expected of shepherding women: cf. Theocritus 11.10-11: "She was desired not by apples or a rose or ringlets, but by right passions" (ἦρατο δ' οὐ μάλοις οὐδὲ ρόδῳ οὐδὲ κικίνοις, ἀλλ' ὀρθαῖς μανίαις). Athenaeus, quoting Clearchus, suggests such an exchange is assumed: "For the request of pretty flowers or fruits calls for those receiving them to the repayment of the beauty of their body"/ἢ γὰρ τῶν ὠραίων ἀνθῶν καὶ καρπῶν αἴτησις εἰς ἀντίδοσιν τῆς τοῦ σώματος ὥρας προκαλεῖται τοὺς λαβόντας, 12.554a).



With Lamon having taken the idea harshly and having abused her as if he should marry a daughter of shepherds to their son, whose recognition tokens had predicted great wealth for them, and who, having discovered his own family, might make them free and the masters of great estates, Myrtale, fearing that on account of his desire Daphnis, having despaired of his marriage, might dare something deathly, reported to him different reasons for his father's answer: "We are poor, child, and we are in need of a bride bringing with her a bit more. But they are rich and are in need of rich bridegrooms. Come, persuade Chloe, and she her father, not to seek a great amount: after all, she loves you greatly, and would rather sleep with a hot pauper than a rich monkey."

These delays of the ultimate revelation of the status of the protagonists are stock comic motifs, but here they are further complicated by a narrative early in the story. For at 1.7, both Lamon and Dryas have identical dreams in which the nymphs give the children to Eros (whom they somehow do not recognize), who urges them to have the children tend the flocks. In 1.8, we are told that both were vexed at the notion that their adopted children should be herdsmen when they each showed such promise from their swaddling (τύχην ἐκ σπαργάνων ἐπαγγελλόμενοι κρείττονα, 1.8.1). They both decide to follow the dream, even tell each other about it (κοινώσαντες ἀλλήλοις τὸ ὄναρ, 1.8.2), and then make an offering together in the cave of the nymphs where Dryas had found Chloe. In order for the later narrative to hold water, we are forced to presume that they did all of this together without once revealing to the other the tokens found or the secret status of each's own child – in other words, we are forced to believe that they lied to each other, maintaining the Big Lie that forms the basis of the story. For in the latter part of the work examined above, each remains ignorant of the secret status of the other's child. Of course, their synchronized dream is one of several plot-turning dreams involving the nymphs in the novel (among others, Daphnis' dream telling him where to find the treasure in 3.27, Daphnis' dream instructing him to pay homage to Pan to rescue Chloe in 2.23),

all of which invite our scrutiny, for we are told of another dream of the nymphs' guidance at 3.17 – that of Lukainion's, which is, of course, a lie:

ἔρῃς' εἶπε Ἄφνι, Χλόης: τοῦτο ἔμαθον ἐγὼ νύκτωρ παρὰ  
τῶν Νυμφῶν. [2] Δι' ὀνείρατος ἐμοὶ τὰ χθιζὰ σου διηγήσαντο  
δάκρυα καὶ ἐκέλευσάν σε σῶσαι διδασαμένην τὰ ἔρωτος ἔργα.  
3.17.1-2

"Daphnis, you desire Chloe," she said. "I learned this last night through the nymphs. They told me through a dream about your tears yesterday and bade me to save you by teaching you the deeds of love."

The nymphs did not tell Lukainion about Daphnis' tears over his erotic failure, of course – she saw it for herself while spying on the couple in a bush. But this is a world where people, including the protagonists, have divinely inspired dreams all the time,<sup>52</sup> so we can excuse Daphnis for failing to be suspicious. That the novel's most consummate liar can make use of a fake dream in such a deceitful way should, however, beg consideration. It is precisely because rustics find such dreams compelling, and precisely because she is not, in fact, a rustic, that makes this particular ruse perfect for the urbanely educated Lukainion.

But nowhere is the connection between education and lying made more apparent than at the story's climax: after Dionysophanes has ordered Lamon to give up Daphnis to go home with Gnathon in exchange for two replacement goatherds, the aristocrat questions Lamon about Daphnis and at first is understandably skeptical of the rustic's tale:

τὸν δὲ Λάμωνα πάλιν ἀνέκρινε καὶ  
παρεκελεύετο τᾶληθῆ λέγειν μηδὲ ὅμοια πλάττειν  
μύθοις ἐπὶ τῷ κατέχειν τὸν υἱόν. Ὡς δ' ἀτενῆς ἦν καὶ  
κατὰ πάντων ὤμνυε θεῶν καὶ ἐδίδου βασανίζειν αὐτόν,  
εἴ τι ψεύδεται, παρακαθημένης τῆς Κλεαρίστης  
ἐβασάνιζε τὰ λελεγμένα. Ἔτι δ' ἂν ἐψεύδετο Λάμων,  
μέλλων ἀνθ' ἐνὸς δύο λαμβάνειν αἰπόλους; Πῶς δ' ἂν  
καὶ ταῦτ' ἔπλασεν ἄγροικος; Οὐ γὰρ εὐθύς ἦν ἄπιστον  
ἐκ τοιοῦτου γέροντος καὶ μητρὸς εὐτελοῦς υἱὸν καλὸν  
οὕτω γενέσθαι; (4.20.1-2)

<sup>52</sup> Cf. 1.7.1-2, 2.23, 2.26.5-2.227.3, 3.27.2-5, 4.34.1.

And Lamon questioned him again and ordered him to tell the truth and not to construct things like fables in order to hold on to his son. And when he was steadfast and swore by all the gods and offered himself to torture if he was telling some lie, with Kleariste (his wife) sitting by his side, he (Dionysophanes) began to examine the things that had been said. “Why would Lamon lie, when he’s going to get two goatherds in place of one? How could a rustic fictionalize such things? And was it not unbelievable that such a good-looking son might come from such an old man and shabby mother?”

It’s important to note the trajectory of Dionysophanes’ thoughts, all of which show an aristocratic bias: he begins by questioning the herdsman’s motives, and seemingly oblivious to the possibility that Lamon and his wife actually love their adoptive son and might want to keep him for purely affectionate reasons, concludes that he would have no reason to lie when he stands to profit by an extra goatherd. He next moves on to the story itself, and here I think Longus gives us an authorial wink, for the educated, urbane aristocrat essentially says that the story Lamon told is apparently too sophisticated or clever by far for a mere rustic to have invented it. The word Longus employs here, ἔπλασσεν, is in fact the verbal form of the word the rhetoricians use to denote “fictions” (πλάσματα), and it is used only here, with Longus preferring to focus more often on the word μῦθος for his tale. But μῦθος shows up here, too: Dionysophanes, having just heard the tale of Daphnis’ discovery, likens it to “things like fables” (ὅμοια μύθοις), and yet he only (quite literally) knows the half of it. Thus here, at the culmination of his novel, Longus provides us with the most authorial self-referential passage yet, an acknowledgment that what he has written is indeed a fairy tale (μῦθος), but one far too creative or sophisticated for any rustic to have concocted.

Having gotten near the end of the narrative and still finding echoes of deceit there, are we perhaps tempted to look back at the beginning – to examine the program of the work as a

whole laid out in the proem? We have already examined the numerous ways in which the proem has been read as a program for the narrative as a whole – most often, as either a model for its narrative structure, or as a work of art (τέχνη) to which the author feels compelled to respond against (ἀντιγράψαι). But many have found gaps in the proem when it is compared to the work as a whole. MacQueen urges caution when examining the prologue, noting that the chronology of what is presented in the painting is different from how the novel itself unfolds. Not only that, most of the novel is not even present in the painting: “All the rest of *Daphnis and Chloe* is apparently subsumed in the vague πολλά ἄλλα καὶ πάντα ἐρωτικά (‘many other things, all erotic’). The erotic education of Daphnis and Chloe, which occupies most of our attention throughout the novel, is scarcely mentioned; and the various divine interventions are also apparently missing from the painting.”<sup>53</sup> Mittelstadt, so set on finding narrative painting in Longus, dismisses these inconsistencies and suggests the remainder of the plot is depicted in the idyllic scene of the lovers exchanging oaths on the painting, this despite suggesting that the novel’s plot (“casually disconnected in its episodes”) displays a “psychological continuity”<sup>54</sup> – precisely that (the erotic education of the couple) just noted by MacQueen, an overt mention of which is not in the painting. However, Mittelstadt offers an intriguing idea: that there was no painting. Comparing his work on Longus to scholarship on Philostratus – the Second Sophistic’s *ecphrastic* extraordinaire<sup>55</sup> – Mittelstadt notes that one Philostratan scholar has conceded “we have no means of knowing whether the paintings and the gallery were real or figments of the imagination. Philostratus, however, was first of all a sophist who developed the description of paintings as a form of literary art. There would have been no inconsistency in describing imaginary paintings provided that he preserved the illusion that he was dealing with existing

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<sup>53</sup> MacQueen 1990, 21-22

<sup>54</sup> Mittelstadt 1967, 51

<sup>55</sup> See Chapter 3 for a more extensive treatment of the Philostrati.

paintings ... A student of Greek paintings may thus use his descriptions as data for his research whether or not the actual paintings existed.”<sup>56</sup> However, Bartsch notes that several times Philostratus appears to “do violence” to the image he is supposedly describing. “Not that Philostratus has through careless or ignorance made a mistake; on the contrary, the sophist has chosen to reinterpret the picture to extract from it the sense that he himself wants.”<sup>57</sup> But perhaps Mittelstadt is right and Longus has made up a painting that nonetheless adheres to the narrative style it otherwise would have. Still, another motivation should be considered here. MacQueen notes that “one of the great problems for any writer of antiquity was validation. Ancient readers were simply not prepared to accept out-and-out fiction,” comedy notwithstanding.<sup>58</sup> Most of the prose fictions we have, and which will be examined in this dissertation, seem to address just this problem, and MacQueen sees in Longus a self-consciousness here: “One might argue that Longus, too, feels compelled to find some external point of reference in order to validate his narrative. ... the fact remains that Longus, in the Prologue, clearly represents his work as his own creation ... The story derives its validation, not from any mythical or historical datum, but from itself, from its own construction.”<sup>59</sup> MacQueen is not alone here. Morgan, in examining fiction with regard to the Greek novels, highlights the “illusions of authority” the novelists often seek, and though he finds Longus “the least representational of the novelists,” he notes that Longus uses his vivid visual program to point out the “ambiguities it raises about the relationship of art to nature.” Indeed, Elsner sees the possibility of incorrect description in *ecphrasis* as one of its main attributes with respect to the gaze: “If it is difficult, under the regime of naturalism, to be sure that the viewing subject has correctly understood and related to the viewed object, then the examination of that difficulty in

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<sup>56</sup> Mittelstadt 1967, 50

<sup>57</sup> Bartsch 1989, 20-21

<sup>58</sup> MacQueen 1985, 132

<sup>59</sup> *Ibid.*, 133

Roman writers and painters demonstrates an acute self-awareness about the gaze's potential for failure, error, and deception. *Ecphrasis* itself, insofar as it provides a pedagogic model for the gaze, may be seen as both its enabler (in helping the viewers it is training to see) and its occluder (in the veil of words with which it screens and obscures the purported visual object).<sup>60</sup> These occlusions or ambiguities, these gaps where others have attempted to find artistic structure, should, I believe, lead us to question the self-conscious fictionality of the story, which is, perhaps, as alluded to by both MacQueen and Morgan, telegraphed to us by the author through the various fictions he puts in the mouths and actions of his characters. Just as his characters' abilities to lie seem linked to their education and intelligence, we might suggest the same of the narrator, who, everyone agrees, seems pre-occupied with impressing us with his ornate response to the painting he (supposedly) came across in the proem.

Such a model is hardly new, though I have yet to see it applied to Longus or even the Greek novel in general, despite routine attempts to divine the origin of this genre that takes as its subjects not established myth nor history (except tangentially), but rather wholly fabricated characters and stories. In her examination of archaic poetry, Pratt set out to establish just this relationship between poet, character, and lying in a model that seems applicable to Longus and the other novelists, their lying characters, and the deceits they try and sometimes accomplish. Though lying is assumed bad and truth-telling good in some ethical discussions in antiquity, Pratt notes that archaic narrative presents "a far more complex view."<sup>61</sup> It is worth noting (considering the lupine motifs throughout Longus) that in discussing one of the principles for lying she discovers in archaic poetry – namely, that lying to do one's enemy harm is wholly in keeping with Greek ideology – Pratt quotes Pindar's *Pythian* 2.84-85, where he promises to attack his enemy "in the manner of a wolf, treading devious courses." But another of her

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<sup>60</sup> Elsner 2007, 21

<sup>61</sup> Pratt 1993, 56

principles seems most applicable here. Pratt finds a direct connection between lying (well) and intelligence, even noting that “everyone does not deserve to hear the truth; in fact, the inability to perceive the truth may itself be proof of one’s not deserving to.”<sup>62</sup> In such an analysis of intelligence and lying, one should immediately think of Odysseus, and indeed much of Pratt’s analysis depends on the *Odyssey*. Ancient readers, she notes, not only saw connections between Odysseus and Homer in their storytelling, but also in their ability to lie, something Aristotle (*Poetics* 1460a) saw as an appropriate skill that Homer had taught other poets (δεδίδαχεν δὲ μάλιστα Ὅμηρος καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ψευδῆ λέγειν ὡς δεῖ.). “In so doing, Aristotle does not distinguish between the poetic skill at fictionalizing possessed by the author and the verbal skill at lying possessed by the author’s character.”<sup>63</sup> Pratt also finds that the poet regards poetry as a craft – a τέχνη – that is, a product of the poet’s “knowledge and intelligence.”<sup>64</sup> She notes that the *Odyssey*, “with its depiction of Odysseus’ lies, warns us against assuming that all credible tales, knowledgeably shaped, are true. It may be natural to deduce truth from coherence or credibility, but the *Odyssey* shows itself well aware that the skill of the liar depends on creating this same semblance, this same appearance of truth. ... Odysseus’ verbal *techne*, his ability to speak well and knowledgeably like a poet, makes him equally capable of truth (if he so desires) or of credible and persuasive lies.”<sup>65</sup> Pratt goes on to make the very same distinction among archaic poets I have made here with regard to Longus – that τέχνη is closely associated with deception. “Like our word craft, *techne* describes both the cunning and the useful arts, and a clear distinction cannot always be drawn between the two.”<sup>66</sup> Her ultimate conclusion to this particular examination of lying is one I wish to make about Longus: “The best way to reveal

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<sup>62</sup> Pratt 1993, 60

<sup>63</sup> Ibid, 64

<sup>64</sup> Ibid, 67

<sup>65</sup> Ibid, 69

<sup>66</sup> Pratt 1993, 70

one's *techne* verbally is through a lie ...The more conscious the poets become of their *techne*, and the more anxious to call attention to it, the more they must call attention to the artificiality of their work, to their own poetic inventiveness. This creates a context within which it may actually be desirable to suggest an affinity between the poet and the liar."<sup>67</sup>

Such a cynical interpretation of Longus is not new, even if no one, to my knowledge, has fully examined the ways in which deception plays such an integral thematic role in his work (or in the work of the other novelists). As McCulloh notes, Longus "refuses to be serious about his own 'message': he readily undercuts it at various points with foolery, irony, mockery, and lubricity."<sup>68</sup> McCulloh goes on to quote Rohde's famously cynical reading of Longus, who, he says, by repeatedly whipping up the desire of the protagonists (and the reader) and leaving it ungratified, "makes us most unpleasantly aware that all the naiveté of this idyllist is only an artificial concoction, and that he himself is in fact nothing more than a *Sophist*."<sup>69</sup> Indeed, in the Romance language translations and articles on Longus, he is still called "Longus the Sophist" (*Longo Sophista*) by tradition, without any real examination of what the title might mean.

But by examining the deceitful sophistry of the period contemporary with Longus, in the textbooks from which he would have learned, in the prose authors contemporary with him, and especially in the other six novelists we have from antiquity, we can perhaps get an idea of how telling his title of *Sophist* might in fact be. After all, what is more sophistic than the assertion that the story itself – not whether or not it happened, not whether or not it is true – is what should be of paramount importance? Can we shrug that even if Longus is not describing an actual painting, he is still structuring his narrative in line with the paintings of his day? Or does this possibility throw the entire program of the work, explicitly stated by the writer, to the

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<sup>67</sup> Ibid, 71

<sup>68</sup> McCulloh 1970, 111

<sup>69</sup> Rohde, *apud* McCulloh 1970, 111



wolves: namely, that he is going to write in response (ἀντιγράψαι) to this painting, to surpass or match its visual beauty – so stunning that the narrator suggests it was more pleasing with its τέχνη than the *locus amoenus* in which it sat – with his own verbal skill? For if there was no painting, then Longus' attempt at surpassing its τέχνη would seem grossly rigged. And if the existence of the painting can be so easily doubted, it makes the whole of *Daphnis and Chloe* a literary Chinese box of lies: the two protagonists, through whose eyes we witness the idyllic countryside, are living a lie: not only are they not really herdsmen, their respective adoptive parents have ensured that they eat “daintier food” and are taught their letters, unlike their rustic peers. Thus the whole of their experience is perhaps not wholly rustic at all, just as our reading of it is not the portrait of real rustic life.

Finally, Daphnis and Chloe are both named thus by their adoptive parents in an explicit act of deception, and a rather crude one at that. For while their bumpkin parents think their rustic names will conceal their true statuses, their beauty is constantly remarked upon and noticed; their true statuses clear to those who truly look. Moreover, Daphnis and Chloe were not just the names their parents give them; it was also, if the naming conventions of the other novels are any indication, the name of Longus' work. The Big Lie is, in the end, the entire work itself, and behind it – behind the “babes abandoned and shepherds picking them up” (παιδιά ἐκκείμενα ... ποιμένες ἀναιρούμενοι), lies the painting. And if Longus himself gives us enough to doubt the painting's existence, then behind its façade lies the author, and only the author, with a series of τέχνη of his own invention – the stuff fictions are born of.

## Chapter 2: Deception in the Second Sophistic

### Lies, Fiction, and Ancient Rhetorical Theory

As has been established, Longus is preoccupied with notions of deceit, but especially credible deceit. It is credibility, after all, that sets up the motion of the entire narrative, when the two sets of foster parents name Daphnis and Chloe as they do “for credibility” (πρὸς πίστιν, 1.6). This credibility again becomes an issue at the end of the work, when Lamon tells the story of finding Daphnis to Daphnis’ biological father, Dionysophanes, who doubts the account and demands the goatherd tell it again truthfully, all the while wondering aloud how a rustic could make up such a thing (Πῶς δ’ ἂν καὶ ταῦτα ἔπλασεν ἄγρικοις; 4.20). This same theme appeared earlier in the story when Pan warned the Methymnaean commander to let Chloe go, as Eros wished to make a μῦθος out of her (2.27), “an intensely and complexly self-referential moment.”<sup>70</sup> Assuming that the work that Longus wrote was, indeed, titled “Daphnis and Chloe,” the meta-discussions regarding the two youths’ names and the credibility of their placement in the countryside (the setting of the entire novel) can be seen as yet more examples of “self-aware and self-reflecting fiction.”<sup>71</sup>

In his preoccupation with the nature of fiction and lies, and especially with notions of credibility, Longus was not alone among his contemporaries. Within the so-called Second Sophistic (50-250 CE),<sup>72</sup> several authors likewise discourse on credible deceit, especially with

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<sup>70</sup> Morgan 2004, 193

<sup>71</sup> MacQueen 1990, 97

<sup>72</sup> The dates are rough and the period (and terminology) notoriously difficult to define. Coined by Flavius Philostratus in the introduction of his *Lives of the Sophists* (230s CE), the term “Second Sophistic” initially denoted a practice, not an era, though the second usage is most common today, referring to the declamation-oriented display oratory of the imperial period. Philostratus deemed orators to belong to

regard to storytelling. But before looking at Longus' literary contemporaries for complementary examples along these lines, it is perhaps instructive to start at a more basic level with some textbook examples (literally): namely, the rhetorical exercises with which many of them would have been trained – the various *progymnasmata* and the rhetorical theorists of his era.

Several examples of these exercises survive, and many quoted here will postdate Longus, assuming his widely agreed-upon dating of the late second or early third century.<sup>73</sup>

However, it is clear from reading over the various *progymnasmata* that many of the example speeches offered and the theoretical maxims that accompanied them were stock in trade going back centuries.<sup>74</sup> And many of them are, in fact, contemporaneous with Longus or earlier. The earliest rhetorical theorists for our era are Theon, writing in Greek, and the Roman Quintillian, both contemporaries of the late first century and both concerned with credibility as a hallmark virtue of good narration. Both orators invoke a common tripartite division among rhetors in the Roman world: “the virtues of narration are three,” Theon notes in his section *On Narrative* (Spengel 4): “clarity, conciseness, and credibility” (ἀρεταὶ δὲ διηγήσεως τρεῖς, **σαφήνεια**,

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two sets: the first were those like Gorgias and Critias, who addressed philosophy (τὴν ἀρχαίαν σοφιστικὴν ῥητορικὴν ἠγεῖσθαι χρὴ φιλοσοφοῦσαν, 480). The latter, “second” group practiced a form of display oratory that Philostratus dates all the way back to Aeschines upon his exile in the fourth century BCE (“we must not call the sophistic that followed that one ‘new,’ for it was old, but rather ‘second,’” / ἢ δὲ μετ’ ἐκείνην, ἣν οὐχὶ νέαν, ἀρχαία γάρ, δευτέραν δὲ μᾶλλον προσηρητέον, 481), but practiced primarily by those in the first three centuries of the Common Era (the sophist detailed after Aeschines, after Philostratus skips over those he deems of lesser quality, was Nicetes of Smyrna, who lived in the time of Nero (511-512). On recent treatments of the Second Sophistic, see Anderson 1993, Schmitz 1997, and Whitmarsh 2005.

<sup>73</sup> Cf. 12, n.16 above.

<sup>74</sup> Clarke 1996, 166, n26: “Our knowledge of the *progymnasmata* comes from the writers of the empire, but the system no doubt took shape earlier, perhaps in the second century B.C.” Also, Bonner 1977, 250-51: “It seems likely, therefore, that the formation of the standard set of preliminary exercises, known to us mainly from writers of the imperial period, was a gradual process, which took place during the Hellenistic Age. It must, however, have been fairly complete by the first century B.C., and maybe earlier ...” And in addition to Theon, a contemporary of Quintilian, “mention may be made here of later Greek compilations, on which, in view of the remarkably faithful adherence to tradition, it would not seem unreasonable to draw from time to time for the better illustration of the subject.” See too T. Morgan 1998, 3-4: “...surviving descriptions and examples of the exercises used to teach literacy and numeracy and their associated disciplines, suggest that much the same exercises in the same order were taught, from the third century BCE onwards, everywhere ...”

**συντομία, πιθανότης**). He is echoed by Quintilian, who attributes them to Isocrates: *eam plerique scriptores, maxime qui sunt ab Isocrate, volunt esse lucidam, brevem, verisimilem* (*Institutio Oratoria*, 4.2.31).<sup>75</sup> Likewise, Suetonius (d. 130 CE) lists much the same general topics of exercise that appear in the *progymnasmata*, not least of all those that concern us most: the credibility of fables.<sup>76</sup> It is therefore not important that in the manuscript tradition, many of the *progymnasmata* collections postdate Longus and the other novelists concerned here (and not all do). Much of the material found in them is clearly drawn from a store of exercises and discourses much earlier, and their fixation on matters of oratorical style and performance (on apolitical topics such as mythology or distant history) match what we know of the declamations of Longus' era and before. What is clear is that this training – what amounted to secondary education – had a tremendous impact on the novelists, as has been demonstrated by scholars before.<sup>77</sup> At first blush, the exercises in fable and narrative can seem too simplistic to offer much in the way of comparative analysis with the novels. But the theorists exhausted these exercises with an enormous amount of commentary. As early as the Hellenistic schools, “teachers, meticulous, finicky as they were, showed tremendous enthusiasm and put all their power of

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<sup>75</sup> Quintilian, *Institutio Oratoria*, 4.2.31. Indeed, Quintilian himself is often used to date Theon, assuming he is the same man referenced twice in the *Institutio Oratoria* (95 CE). Quintilian refers to a Theon on *status* theory at 3.6.48: (*fecerunt alii totidem status, sed alios, “an sit?” “quid sit?” “quale sit?” “quantum sit?” ut Caecilius et Theon*) and a Theon the Stoic at 9.3.76 (*Theon Stoicus πάρισον existimat, quod sit e membris non dissimilibus.*) Whether either of these are Theon, allowing an earlier date than the *Institutio*, “it is the consensus of scholarly opinion that it is, in any event, the earliest surviving work on exercises in composition, certainly written sometime between the Augustan period and the flowering of the Second Sophistic in the second century” (Kennedy 2003, 1). See also Cicero, *de inv.* 1.27, apud Trenkner 1958, 184

<sup>76</sup> *De Rhetoribus* 1: “... often they would affirm or deny the credibility of fables” (*saepe fabulis fidero firmare aut demere*).

<sup>77</sup> See Bartsch 1989 on *ecphrasis*, the *progymnasmata*, and the novel; and De Temmerman (2010, 2014) on characterization, whose work builds on the numerous contributions by Kennedy, who will be also cited often here. As Reardon (1974, 26) notes, “What is common, ultimately, to novel and sophistic, is the education received in the rhetorical schools.” O’Sullivan (1995, 166) concurs: “Later, romance-writing became an activity for rhetoricians, a development eased by the fact that the stuff of the romances had for long been the subject-matter of exercises in the schools of rhetoric.” Trenkner (1958, 184-185) also sees the romances as influenced by the rhetorical exercises, but asserts that they both drew from popular story-telling: “These were traditional stories which had the character of novelle or novels and were in written or oral form, but were in all cases popular .... The motifs of pirates, abductions and searches – the very stuff of the novel – were part of this literature.”

analysis into these apparently insignificant exercises.”<sup>78</sup> Not only the three cardinal qualities of brevity, precision, and verisimilitude need be present, but also a host of other sub-qualities: “agent, action, time, place, manner, and cause ... and three or four species – mythical, poetical, historical or civic.”<sup>79</sup> Even the final two species lapsed into purely literary exercises, as students were encouraged to make speeches in history that never actually happened or imagine events different from those that had originally occurred.<sup>80</sup> And some of these students were future historians! It is enough to prompt Gibson to muse, at the opening of his article examining the influence of the *progymnasmata* on the writing of history: “Imagine a world in which prospective historians were required by their teachers first to write historical fiction (e.g., about trials for treason set during the American Revolutionary War), to invent stories in the science fiction genre of ‘alternate history’ (e.g., what if Hitler had won World War II?), and to perform impersonations of historical characters for school plays and public festivals. What would be the effect of such a course of training on historians? Would they see this training as being in any way at odds with the project of writing history?”<sup>81</sup> Certain contemporaries, like Lucian, clearly did see such training as at odds with the project of writing history, as we shall see. But whatever its effect on history, it becomes rapidly apparent when reading the *progymnasmata* that Longus and the novelists are not alone in their preoccupations with fact, fiction, lies, and credibility. Rather, creating verisimilitude in a story they themselves invented – this was indeed what literate students (and future novelists) went to school to do, at least during a significant portion of their training, even if the primary purpose for that training was for the assemblies and

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<sup>78</sup> Marrou 1956, 173

<sup>79</sup> Ibid, 174

<sup>80</sup> It is a widely accepted view that roughly consonant with the close of the Hellenistic age (sometime around the first century BCE) and the advent of the Roman Empire, ancient rhetoric saw a shift that increasingly influenced later literature and narrative, a shift “from persuasion to narration, from civic to personal contexts, and from speech to literature,” a process that then cycles back and for which the Italian term *letteraturizzazione* has been coined (Kennedy 1980, 5).

<sup>81</sup> Gibson 2004, 103

law courts. Indeed, one walks away from the *progymnasmata* with the feeling that the novelists' various meta-narratives on these topics are not terribly unique (a conclusion also supported by contemporaries who likewise treat such topics, as we shall see). Nevertheless, given that Longus, Chariton, Apuleius and others are writing in a somewhat novel format (prose fiction) that does not draw from existing historical or mythological narrative but rather from stories seemingly invented by their authors alone, discourses on these matters can illuminate for us the sort of intellectual process at work in creating a genre that many consider the birth of fiction as we now know it. That intellectual process was introduced to these authors at a very young age, and examining the rhetorical exercises of the *progymnasmata* is a good first step toward understanding said process. And when we look at these exercises, we see many of the same themes explored, most notably matters of plausibility (εἰκός) and credibility (πίστις) in narratives and fables, which are themselves often termed lies (ψεῦδα).

As early as Quintilian, this association between fables (*fabulae* or μῦθοι) and lies had become engrained, most usually juxtaposed against history (seen as fact), and then a nebulous area in between that is the subject of this dissertation. Quintilian puts forth this triple divide (echoed by the later Greek rhetors below) early in his *Institutio Oratoria*: "We have received three types of narrative: the fable (*fabulam*), which is written in tragedies and poems, not only removed from the truth but also from any resemblance of the truth; the rational narrative (*argumentum*), which is false but is similar to the truth, as comedies fashion; and the history, in which there is an exposition of an event that happened (*narrationum ... tres accepimus species: fabulam, quae uersatur in tragoediis atque carminibus non a ueritate modo sed etiam a forma ueritatis remota; argumentum, quod falsum sed uero simile comoediae fingunt; historiam, in qua est gestae rei expositio*, 2.4.2). Because rhetoric often lapsed into narratives of any of these three stripes, oratory was often accused of being at odds with the truth, its practitioners so

unconcerned with truth that they were themselves self-deceived. Not so, says Quintilian. An orator is not self-deceived because “an orator, when he makes use of falsehood in place of truth, knows that it is false and that he is using it in place of truth. He himself therefore does not hold a false understanding, but deceives another” (*Item orator, cum falso utitur pro uero, scit esse falsum eoque se pro uero uti: non ergo falsam habet ipse opinionem, sed fallit alium, Institutio Oratoria, 2.17.20-21*). Responding to critics who refuse to call oratory an art because it contradictorily teaches what ought to be said and what not ought to be said (2.17.30-31), Quintilian instead asserts the difference is between what is probable and more probable: “if something is more credible than another, it is not contrary to it” (*si quid est altero credibilius, id ei contrarium est, 2.17.34-35*). Indeed, Quintilian writes that critics often claim that oratory is concerned not with truth at all, but only with what is probable (*rhetorice non utique propositum habet semper vera dicendi, sed semper verisimilia, 2.19.39*), to which he responds that the rhetor knows, in fact, that he is only concerned with probability, and so, again, he is not self-deceived.

It is important here to fully appreciate what the rhetoricians meant when they spoke of plausibility or credibility, especially when many of their exercises strayed often into the fantastic. The plausibility that the student is expected to render in a given speech in character, in a given narration or even in a given fable, is not dependent upon the underlying situation being itself plausible. Indeed, the rhetoricians divide fables into classes of the rational (involving human beings) and the ethical (when dealing with animals – from ἠθικός, that is, pertaining to an animal’s innate character).<sup>82</sup> And so, we must not import overly empirical notions of plausibility when examining these speeches, and in fact they invite us not to. Gibson’s comparison to

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<sup>82</sup> John of Sardis, 1.8-9; Aphthonius the Sophist, 1.1; Nicolaus the Sophist 2.7 (sometimes, as in Nicolaus, simply broken down as rational vs. irrational, but almost always maintaining this human vs. animal dichotomy).

science fiction is an apt one: while it might be implausible for any number of reasons that Hitler might have won World War II, it is not in the *protasis* of a given sci-fi plot, or in the case of the *progymnasmata*, a fable or character speech (if a eunuch were to fall in love; if a painter were to desire his own painting) that begs for credibility. The more fantastical of the exercises make this apparent. It is rather in the *apodosis* that the student seeks plausibility. If X were the case, what then would the person say? How should the situation be narrated? And what would be the moral? Indeed, the more incredible a given situation, the greater the skill demanded of the student. As film critic Terrence Rafferty noted about Pierre Boulle's 1963 novel *Planet of the Apes*, "It's a witty notion, of a kind that characterized old-school science fiction: the fantastic 'what if?' premise that allows the writer to examine the conditions of his own time from a different perspective."<sup>83</sup> The consumers of such fictions even today subscribe wholly to innumerable implausible *protases*, but each story's success derives from the relative believability of its *apodosis*. Such is the nature of fiction and credibility in the *progymnasmata*, and then by extension, in the more sophisticated of the novelists. If we look too skeptically at the stories themselves, with their supernatural interventions and all-too-tidy turns of fate (two youths exposed in the same way and adopted and reared in the same way, again with the aid of divine intervention), we miss the internal exercises in plausibility in which the authors invite us to engage. And, once again, these are quite literally textbook exercises: creating plausibility, even in so-called fables (*μῦθοι*), is what young writers were specifically trained to do in their secondary education.<sup>84</sup>

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<sup>83</sup> Rafferty 2011.

<sup>84</sup> Similar exercises are found in the *controversiae* (declamations) attributed to Quintilian. Here basic points of law (a son shall support his destitute father; a free man may not be submitted to torture), are used as pretexts for elaborate fictions in the form of court speeches, full of as much intrigue and whodunit spectacle as any modern pulp fiction: what if said son had not been ransomed by his father when he had been kidnapped by pirates, and had escaped, only to be then required to support his derelict father upon his return (*Major Declamation V*)? What if a poor but free man willingly wishes to submit to



For example, immediately following Theon’s above repetition on the virtues of narration, he specifically hones in on credibility: “It is necessary to cling always to credibility in narrative, for this is especially the unique aspect of it. With this lacking from it, the more clear and concise it may be, that much more non-credible it appears to those listening” (δεῖ γὰρ ἔχεσθαι ἀεὶ τοῦ πιθανοῦ ἐν τῇ διηγήσει. τοῦτο γὰρ αὐτῆς μάλιστα ἴδιον ὑπάρχει. καὶ τούτου μὴ προσόντος αὐτῇ, ὅσῳ ἂν σαφὴς καὶ σύντομος ᾖ, τοσοῦτῳ μᾶλλον ἀπιστοτέρα τοῖς ἀκούουσι καταφαίνεται).<sup>85</sup> Similarly, Nicolaus the Sophist<sup>86</sup> considered credibility the chief concern when writing a fable (a μῦθος): “And so fable is a false account resembling the truth in its persuasive composition. The account is false, since it unapologetically is composed from falsehood. But it resembles the truth, since it would not otherwise be like the truth. It should thus become like the truth from the credibility surrounding the invention” (μῦθος τοίνυν ἐστὶ λόγος ψευδῆς τῷ πιθανῶς συγκεῖσθαι εἰκονίζων τὴν ἀλήθειαν. λόγος μὲν ψευδῆς, ἐπειδὴ ὁμολογουμένως ἐκ ψεύδους σύφκεται. εἰκονίζων δὲ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἂν πρὸς τὸ ἀληθὲς ὁμοιόντα.

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torture to prove his case against a rich man (*Major Declamation VII*)? One element to note in most of these declamations is their inclusion of both sides of a given *controversiae*: that is, two mutually exclusive narratives of events are given side-by-side, without regard to a “true” version of events, but rather an emphasis on the most probable (see discussion of Quintilian’s defense of this above). The instruction is in the vividness and persuasiveness (and thus credibility) of each side of the dispute. But like the “unreal” situations detailed above in the *progymnasmata*, the declamations also often include outlandish scenarios and even supernatural intervention: *Major Declamation X* deals with a woman who routinely saw her dead son in her dreams. When she revealed this to her husband, he enlisted a sorcerer, who cast a spell on the boy’s tomb, ending the dreams. The controversy? The mother accuses her husband of cruel treatment for depriving her of her son’s appearances! As Sussman (1987, v) notes, “The common criticism ... is that cases such as these are unnatural and far removed from the world of reality. Yet one has only to scan the pages of a daily newspaper to find cases that parallel these, extreme though they are.” Similarities aside, the declamations will not be treated here, entertaining though they are. Quintilian himself exempted them from his “three types of narrative” (*tres species narrationum*) mentioned above (*excepta qua in causis utimur*, II.iv.1).

<sup>85</sup> Sp. 4.79

<sup>86</sup> Nicolaus’ dating is possible thanks to the age of Proclus, who was the same age as Nicolaus, according to Marinus. Proclus’ birth year has been determined thanks to an astrological prediction, and hence Nicolaus is said to have been (also) born about 410 or 412 CE (Felten 1913, xxii). What little else there is to know of him comes from the *Suda*, which mentions his *progymnasmata* (Felten 1913, xxi).

γένοιτο δὲ ἂν πρὸς τὸ ἀληθὲς ὁμοίος ἐκ τοῦ πιθανοῦ τοῦ περὶ τὴν πλάσιν).<sup>87</sup> He even goes on to outline the ways in which one can make a fable credible:

Ἐπειδὴ δὲ εἴρηται, ὅτι δεῖ πιθανῶς συγκεῖσθαι τὸν μῦθον, πόθεν ἂν γένοιτο πιθανὸς σκοπητέον. Πολλαχόθεν δὲ τοῦτο. ἐκ τόπων περὶ οὓς τὰ ὑποκείμενα ζῶα διατρίβειν εἴωθεν. ἐκ λόγων τῶν τῆ φύσει ἀρμοζόντων. ἐκ πραγμάτων, ἃ μὴ ὑπερβαίνει τὴν ἑκάστου ποιότητα, ἵνα μὴ λέγωμεν, ὅτι ὁ μῦς περὶ βασιλείας τῶν ζώων ἐβοθλεύετο ἢ ὅτι ὁ λέων ἐζωγρήθη ὑπὸ τυροῦ κνίσσης, κἂν λόγους τινὰς δεήσῃ περιθεῖναι, ἵνα ἢ μὲν ἀλώπηξ ποικίλα φθέγγηται, τὰ δὲ πρόβατα εὐήθη καὶ μέστὰ ἀνοίας. Τοιαύτη γὰρ τις ἢ ἑκατέρων φύσις. Καὶ ἵνα ὁ μὲν ἀετὸς ἀρπακτικός καὶ νεβρῶν καὶ ἀρνίων εἰσάγηται, ὁ δὲ κολοῖος μηδὲν τοιοῦτον μηδὲ ἔννοῶν. Εἰ δὲ ἄρα ποτὲ γένοιτο χρεῖα τοῦ καὶ παρὰ τὴν φύσιν τι συμπλάσαι, δεῖ τοῦτο προοικονομῆσαι καὶ παρασχεῖν αὐτῷ τὴν ἐκ τοῦ μύθου διάνοιαν. Οἷον εἰ διαλέγοιτο τὰ πρόβατα πρὸς τοὺς λύκους φιλικῶς, προοικονομῆσαι δεῖ τὴν φιλίαν καὶ ὅσα ἄλλα τοιαῦτα.

Since it has been said that a fable should be composed so as to be credible, we should consider how it may become credible. Many things can contribute to this: mention of places where the creatures imagined in the fable are accustomed to pass their time; from the occasions on which they are wont to show themselves; from words that harmonize with the nature of each; from actions which do not surpass the kind of thing each does-so we do not say that a mouse gave advice about the kingdom of the animals [8] or that a lion was captured by the savor of cheese-and if there is need to attribute some words to them, if we make the fox speak subtle things and the sheep naive and simple-minded things; for such is the nature of each; and so that the eagle is introduced as rapacious for fawns and lambs, and the jackdaw does not so much as think of anything like that. If there should ever be need to invent something contrary to nature, one should set the scene for this first and should connect the moral of the fable with it; for example, if the sheep were being described as having a friendly talk with the wolves, first you should set the scene for this friendship and anything else of that sort (2.7).

Meanwhile, John of Sardis<sup>88</sup> simply divides fables into two camps with respect to their credibility or lack thereof: “Fable is of two sorts, either altogether fictitious, or credible (διχῶς δὲ ὁ μῦθος,

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<sup>87</sup> 2.6

ἢ παντελῶς ψευδῆς ἢ πιθανός).<sup>89</sup> Fable (μῦθος), according to the *progymnasmata* upon which he is commenting, is a false statement (λόγος ψευδῆς) that imagines truth (εἰκονίζων ἀλήθειαν).

John expands on this succinct definition by focusing particularly on his earlier delineation between outright falsehood (one kind of fable) and that which is persuasive (πιθανός). For John, it is this second characteristic that takes the account from outright lie to something else altogether. Without persuasiveness, a fable can hardly be said to be accomplishing its goal.

‘λόγος’ μὲν οὖν ‘ψευδῆς’ πρόσκειται, ἐπειδὴ ὁμολογουμένως ἐκ ψεύδους σύγκειται. ‘εἰκονίζων’ δὲ ‘τὴν ἀλήθειαν’ ἀντὶ τοῦ εἰκόνα ἀληθείας ἔχων. εἰκόνα δὲ ἀληθείας ἔχει ὁ μῦθος, ἐπειδὴ οὐκ ἂν ἐργάσαιτο τὸ ἑαυτοῦ μὴ ἔχων τινὰ πρὸς τὸ ἀληθὲς ὁμοίότητα. Γένοιτο δ’ ἂν τὸ πρὸς τὸ ἀληθὲς ὅμοιον ἐκ τοῦ πιθανοῦ τοῦ περι τὴν πλάσιν. ψευδῆς οὖν κατὰ τὴν φύσιν, πιθανός δὲ κατὰ τὸν λόγον.

And so, “false statement” is put there, since it is agreed it is composed from falsehood. And “imagining truth” (because) it has an image of truth in response. The fable has an image of truth, because it would not accomplish its own purpose without having something similar to the truth. It becomes something near to truth from the persuasiveness that accompanies the fiction. Therefore it is false according to nature, but persuasive in accordance with its telling (1.6).

Indeed, John takes aim at those who consider fable to be useless with the rejoinder that while he agrees falsehood is useless in rhetoric, “if we set out the fiction in a simple way, teaching something credible from the fable while desiring only to give advice, the exercise is a useful

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<sup>88</sup> Most probably the bishop to whom a datable letter (Theodore the Studite, Ep. 2.108, *BG* 1367-70) was written in 800 CE, John’s commentary may seem too late for our purposes, but his exegesis on Athonius’ *progymnasmata* follows rather closely with authors of earlier date. Indeed, Kennedy (1983, 276) concludes that his work is “a compendium of earlier material strung together. ... John himself seems to have no independent ideas and is not even bothered if inconsistencies arise among his sources.” I thus include his comments here, despite postdating the novelists by some five centuries, because original or not, John succinctly expounds on the differences outlined in the various *progymnasmata* between truth and falsehood, fable and outright fiction.

<sup>89</sup> John of Sardis, 1.5

invention for the young” (εἰ δὲ τῆς συμβουλῆς μόνης γλιχόμεθα τὴν μὲν πλάσιν ἀφελῶς ἐκτιθέμενοι, τὸ δ’ ἀπὸ τοῦ μύθου πιθανὸν διδάσκοντες, οὐκ ἄχρηστος ἢ γυμνασία τοῖς νέοις εὐρίσκεται, 2.11). It is notable that fable is considered an exercise for the instruction of the young, and in fact, the moral is one of its defining characteristics, according to most teachers. Nicolaus the Sophist even notes that the moral can be attached to the fable in a number of ways, preferring to put it at the end, though noting, “Some put the moral at the beginning and call it a *promythion*.” One is perhaps tempted to see a *promythion* in Longus’ prologue when he notes that one of his motivations for the work is to “instruct those having not yet loved” (τὸν οὐκ ἐρασθέντα προπαιδεύσει), presumably the young.

Indeed, Longus’ work especially appears to hug closely to the examples of speeches that have reached us from antiquity. This can be seen most readily in the most extensive of the various *progymnasmata* that survive: the exercises of Libanius, comprising just one tome of this prolific writer’s career. Libanius (314-393 CE) differs from the other theorists treated in this chapter in that whole speeches survive as examples of the sorts of exercises otherwise only described or explained. Other such sets of examples from late antiquity or later also exist, but the exercises collected under Libanius’ name, especially in the two categories that concern us most here (fable and narrative), are among the largest and earliest of their kind.<sup>90</sup>

Among those exercises outside of fable and narrative that Longus especially appears to hone are those on refutation and confirmation. As noted already, Longus throughout his work examines lies or pretexts as to whether they are credible or sophisticated. The most notable example of this comes during Daphnis’ inner discourse on his stated reasons for showing up

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<sup>90</sup> While the authorship of some of the materials collected under Libanius’ name have been questioned (Gibson 2008, xxiii-xxv), I will refer here to the collection as Libanius’ for convenience. Whether he or another author offered a given exercise or exemplum is largely inconsequential for our investigation, which aims at demonstrating a literary milieu at the time of the novelists, especially preoccupied with fiction and falsehood.

outside Chloe's house in the dead of winter. After going through a series of scenarios more or less credible, and imagining Chloe's parents reacting with skepticism as to his pretexts for being there (If you're running from a wolf, where are its tracks? If you needed a light, why not go next door instead of all the way here?),<sup>91</sup> Daphnis gives up and decides to head home. Similarly, students were instructed to refute or confirm the plausibility (εἰκός) of characters' actions in a given story. Examples include arguments over whether or not Chryses would have truly visited the harbor of the Greeks in the *Iliad*, and whether Achilles' wrath, the accusations against Locrian Ajax, or the judgment of arms were plausible. Some of the specifics of the arguments are directly reflected in Longus, such as the recurring assertions that certain actions are out of character for the person involved (cf. Dionysophanes' incredulity above that Lamon, a rustic, could create such a story).<sup>92</sup> In the refutation of the accusations against Locrian Ajax, the example specifically casts doubt on the notion of love at first sight. Such things take a longer amount of time (χρόνου πλείονος), continuous gazing (συνεχοῦς ὄψεως) and a greater amount of time together (μακροτέρας ὁμιλίας). This is, of course, seemingly Longus' opinion as well; it is here, after all, that he departs perhaps most dramatically from the other novelists of his time, who do in fact have their protagonists fall in love at first sight.<sup>93</sup> In fact, one could argue that Longus uses just these ingredients to draw out the process of the two youths falling in love, the primary force of his narrative: he stretches it out over time, he includes several episodes of voyeuristic gazing (for the characters as well as the readers), and he gives them ample time together by having Eros direct their foster parents to send them out to tend the flocks.

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<sup>91</sup> Longus 3.6

<sup>92</sup> Libanius, *Refutations* 1 and 2.

<sup>93</sup> MacQueen 1990, 133: "In the other Greek novels, as we saw, the protagonists fall in love at first sight ... Daphnis and Chloe, by contrast, are raised in the same vicinity and are companions and playmates well before they become lovers."

Meanwhile, in the *progymnasmata*, discourses on character are not surprisingly given the closest examination in exercises of ἠθοποιία, or speeches in character.<sup>94</sup> Here the student would concoct speeches ranging from situations found specifically in myth (what Niobe might have said when she discovered her children dead; what Medea might have said before killing her children; what Andromache might have said upon the death of Hector; what Achilles might have said upon the death of Patroclus) to the fantastical (what a coward might say if someone were to paint a picture of a battle in his home; what a eunuch might say if he were in love; what a painter might say if he were to fall in love with his painting of a woman). Indeed De Temmerman has suggested that the characterization at work in the *progymnasmata* can serve as “a paradigm for the analysis of characterization in (ancient) narrative literature,”<sup>95</sup> calling speeches in character (as they appear in the *progymnasmata*) “one of the techniques adopted to express fictitious emotions.”<sup>96</sup>

As we have seen, those fictitious emotions have to be credible – they have to adhere to the expected characteristics of a person’s class, gender, and station – even if the situation underlying them is not. This is what lies at the heart of one of Longus’ most self-referential

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<sup>94</sup> These have seen a flurry of attention in recent scholarship, most especially with respect to gender. Maud Gleason (1995) has argued that sophistic performance allowed the assertion of masculinity, such that a eunuch could portray masculinity through his performance; Bloomer (1997) has gone further, suggesting that speeches in character, more specifically the προσωποποιία in Greek or the *fictio personae* in Latin, staked out the societal expectations of those “other” classes (most notably women and slaves) to which the schoolboy was expected not to belong, and thus the characteristics that he was then expected to avoid; more recently, Krauss (2007) has instead argued that female impersonation trained young male orators in “creating and displaying a range of emotions not found in male impersonation” (465), outbursts of *pathos* that would otherwise have been met with the lash of their schoolmasters.

<sup>95</sup> De Temmeran 2010 does with characterization what I am attempting to do with plausibility; namely, assert a specific rhetorical model upon which (later) ancient narrative built. That focus is necessarily on the speeches in character (at least as far as the *progymnasmata* are concerned) which are addressed below, but touches on one aspect of character formation (30) that is relevant to Longus and many of the other novelists: that name-giving or identification is one technique of characterization, either by proper name or *antonomasia*, the substitution of the proper name with a word of phrase, which perhaps sheds light on the formulaic names often present in the novels’ protagonists, most especially those of Daphnis and Chloe, whose names (and thus the likely name of Longus’ fiction) play such an important role in both the probable fiction created by the two youths’ foster parents, and in their self-referential nod to Longus’ own created work.

<sup>96</sup> *Ibid*, 35

passages, when Lamon is asked at the end of *Daphnis and Chloe* to repeat his account of finding Daphnis as a baby, swaddled with recognition tokens and suckling on a goat, and Dionysophanes, his aristocratic inquisitor, orders him not to make up stories (μηδὲ ὅμοια πλάττειν μύθοις). Upon hearing it again, Dionysophanes believes Lamon in part because he does not consider the rustic to have the skill necessary to make up such a tale (Πῶς δ' ἂν καὶ ταῦτα ἔπλασεν ἄγροικος;), but also because it seems incredible and out of character that Daphnis, so clearly beautiful and noble, could come from such parents (Οὐ γὰρ εὐθύς ἦν ἄπιστον ἐκ τοιούτου γέροντος καὶ μητρὸς εὐτελοῦς υἱὸν καλὸν οὕτω γενέσθαι;). All of these are considerations straight out of the rhetorical handbooks: making up such a tale was outside the expected character (and ability) of Lamon, as was his siring of such a child as Daphnis. It is in this way that the learned Dionysophanes is able to divine the “big lie” at the heart of the story (that Daphnis is a rustic, and was named to appear as such, when he is in fact an aristocrat from the city). It should be noted that both of Dionysophanes’ references to Lamon “making up stories” use the verb πλάττω, (ὅμοια πλάττειν μύθοις; ταῦτα ἔπλασεν) the only two times in Longus that he comes close to the noun πλάσμα, the term in the *progymnasmata* and elsewhere for a “fiction,” whether written or painted. It is perhaps significant, then, that if Longus includes meta discussions of fictionality, as Morgan, MacQueen, and I would argue; or if he includes such discourses on the nature of art, as Zeitlin, Kestner, Pandiri, or Teske would suggest, he never does so using the primary term for the so-called “plastic arts,” except here, in perhaps the most self-referential moment of his novel. This is made all the more significant when one notes how often πλάσμα is used referentially about the arts by both authors contemporary to Longus (as shall be shown later) and in the *progymnasmata*. Indeed, when the rhetorical handbooks aren’t discoursing outright on plausibility and believability, they are not sparing in their own meta discourses on πλάσμα as deceit in many of their example narratives. For example, when

Pasiphae falls in love with a cow and enlists the inventor (and programmatic artisan) Daedalus to assist her, he contrives (μηχανησάμενος) a wooden bull and puts skin around his contrivance (τὴν μηχανήν, *Narration* 22). In a previous example, however, the skin is said to “conceal his fiction” (καλύψας το πλάσμα, *Narration* 21). As we have seen, both καλύπτω and μηχανή are used in Longus to connote deception, alongside his most loaded term for it, τέχνη, which occurs in a particularly amusing speech in character (No. 26), where a eunuch is imagined to give a speech upon falling in love. Here τέχνη plays a key role, as the eunuch laments that he has become “an ambiguous human being via *techne*” (γέγονα διὰ τέχνης ἀμφίβολος ἄνθρωπος). The imaginary eunuch then contrasts himself to Pasiphae, who “had *techne* to aid her in sexual intercourse” (τέχνην ἔσχεν πρὸς τὴν μίξιν ἐπικουρονίκουρον), whereas *techne* (the actions that made him a eunuch) keeps him from acting on his love even though he received everything initially from nature (τῆς φύσεως). Teske and Hunter have noted Longus’ dichotomy between nature (φύσις) and skill (τέχνη), but it is not exclusive to him. Both the *progymnasmata* and other contemporary authors (as shall be seen) discourse on it as well: the plastic arts, including both paintings and literature, are deceptions: images and narratives that seem real, “physical” or “natural,” but in fact are not.

Aside from these largely meta-examples, many of the *topoi* in the *progymnasmata* make appearances in Longus. The story of Dorcon dressing up as a wolf to assault Chloe (particularly puzzling given the lack of any need for the disguise, since he likewise hides himself in some thicket), only to be attacked by her dogs, has similarities to Libanius’ first fable on the wolves and the sheep. Here, the wolves make a treaty with the sheep, promising not to attack them, but only if the sheep agree to send away the dogs, which harass the wolves. The sheep, considered excessively naive (εὐηθείας γέμον) agree and are, predictably, gobbled up. The moral here: don’t place credence in the words of your enemies (τοῖς ἐχθρῶν λόγοις οὐ



πιστευτέον). But it should be pointed out that Dorcon is not really a wolf: he is only dressed up as one, which explains why he in fact lacks the craftiness typical of wolves in ancient literature, or even the she-wolf mentioned in Longus 1.11, who is not fooled by the traps the villagers set for her. In contrast, Longus dismisses Dorcon's plan as a scheme "befitting a rustic." Meanwhile, a character who truly *is* a wolf, Lukainion, lives up to her lupine name in the cunning with which seduces Daphnis.<sup>97</sup>

Dorcon's decision to disguise himself in the first place is a common enough motif: in Libanius' third fable, a jackdaw gathers up feathers from other various birds to win a beauty contest, only to be outwitted by the owl, who with the help of other birds strips him and lays bare his deception. Deception (ἀπατή) also lands Acalanthis (*Narration 8*) into trouble when she imitated matters of rejoicing (ἐμμεῖτο τὰ τῆς χαρούσης) to trick Hera into loosening her grip on Alcmene, who was trying to give birth to Heracles. The goddess, having been deceived (παρακρυσθεῖσα), turned the woman into a weasel, an animal (again) befitting a deceptive character (ἔθος).

Likewise, two narrative exercises in Libanius (4, 32), tell the story of Pan and Pitys, which Morgan has seen reflected in Longus' first embedded myth (1.27) and throughout *Daphnis and Chloe* in various references to the pine (πίτυς). Here, Pan vies with Boreas for the affection of Pitys (*Narration 4*) by leaping and giving her gifts (cf. Dorcon to Chloe), ultimately attracting the nymph to him. This angers Boreas, who knocks her down onto the rocks and kills her. The earth makes her a pine tree, whose branches Pan uses to make his crowns (cf. Chloe's crown of pine upon her rescue by Pan), and Boreas mourns her by blowing into the trees to make a funeral

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<sup>97</sup> Epstein (1995) treats the wolf themes in Longus persuasively, and insists that Dorcon is to be read as an actual wolf. While I agree that Dorcon can be read as "a liminal figure" who "straddles the border between the human and the bestial," Longus' humorous depiction of his botched scheme in contrast with the craftiness of the she-wolf and Lukainion (or even Gnathon, whom Epstein also calls a "wolf") makes it difficult to suggest Dorcon has truly become a wolf in the fabulistic sense, his (failed) predation notwithstanding.

dirge (cf. the pine trees' piping in Theocritus *Idyll* 1, Longus 1.23). In a variant of the story in *Narration* 32, Pitys suffers the same fate but the blowing of the wind against the pine is said to be her own lamentation. Either way, Longus' use of this stock pastoral motif, coupled with parallels of the story to Longus' first embedded myth, suggest the myth of Pitys was, indeed, present in *Daphnis and Chloe*.

Also present are the praises of farming and country life that serve as a constant backdrop in Longus. Much of the encomium on farming in Libanius resonates with Longan ideology about the countryside. Rather than sexual dalliances and excess, *Daphnis and Chloe* engage in the exploration and ultimate fulfillment of "rightful mingling for the sake of birthing children" (τὰς δικαίας ἐπίστανται μόνον μίξεις τὰς ὑπὲρ παίδων γονῆς, *Encomium* 7.5).<sup>98</sup> Notes Libanius, "If someone thinks that life in the city is more pleasant, let him be reminded for himself what it is like to see a vine and grapes hanging, what it is like to sit under a pine or plane tree at noon, what it is like to see crops blown by the winds of the Zephyrs, what it is like to hear oxen lowing and sheep bleating, and what it is like to see jumping around and suckling milk" (εἰ δὲ τις οἶεται τερπνότερον εἶναι τὸν ἐν ἄστει βίον, ἐνθυμηθῆτω πρὸς ἑαυτόν, οἷον μὲν ἔστιν ἄμπελον ὄραν καὶ βότρυς κρεμαμένους, οἷον δὲ ὑπὸ πίτυι καὶ πλατάνω μεσημβρίας κεῖσθαι, οἷον δὲ ἰδεῖν λῆια ζεφυρων αὔραις κινούμενα, οἷον δὲ ἀκοῦσαι βοῶν μυκωμένων καὶ προβάτων βληχωμένων, οἷον δὲ θέαμα δαμάλεις σκιρτῶσαι καὶ ἔλκουσαι γάλα, *Encomium* 7). The picture painted by Libanius is the same one (drawn out, over four books) that Longus gives us.<sup>99</sup> It is here, in such descriptions, or *ecphrases*, including especially those of the seasons which

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<sup>98</sup> Cf. *Comparison* 5.7 (between country and city): ... "they draw near even to their wives only for the sake of the procreation of children" (ταῖς γυναιξίν αὐταῖς ὑπὲρ παίδων μόνον πλησιάζουσι γενέσεως). Cf. Chariton 3.2.2: "I will take you as a wife, for the siring of children, in accordance with Greek laws" (ὅτι ἔξω σε γαμετήν παίδων ἐπ' ἀρότῳ κατὰ νόμους Ἑλληνικούς).

<sup>99</sup> i.a., 1.9: "the leaping of the animals" (σκιρτήματα ποιμνίων ἀρτιγεννήτων); 1.23: "pleasant was the bleating of the sheep ... and the wind piping upon the pines" τερπνὴ δὲ ποιμνίων βληχὴ ... καὶ τοὺς

chart the narrative of *Daphnis and Chloe*,<sup>100</sup> that scholarship has been most preoccupied with the *progymnasmata*'s influence on the novels.<sup>101</sup> Bartsch has examined these passages to illuminate the *ecphrases* in Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus, noting that they represent "the general interest of the epoch in the descriptive ... the handbooks' discussion of proper topics for description provides a common denominator for the passages in contemporary rhetoricians and in the novelists."<sup>102</sup>

These more superficial similarities could perhaps be dismissed as merely parallel exercises within the literary milieu of later antiquity, if not for the amount of self-referential discourses on plausibility, fictionality, deceit, and description that punctuate both Longus and the rhetorical exercises of the *progymnasmata*. Whether Longus read exercises similar to the specific ones that survive for us is perhaps unknowable, but the themes he presents throughout share currency with them over and over again. And if these handbooks can be read to find topics of "general interest" and examples of a "common denominator" between them and the novelists, it seems only logical that we can extend that interest, that denominator, from the descriptions that have occupied Longus scholarship to the falsehoods and deceit on which I wish to focus.

And if the *progymnasmata* represent rhetorical preoccupations regarding falsehood in Longus' day that he also confronts in *Daphnis and Chloe*, one can naturally expect to find his classmates, the authors roughly contemporary with him, making use of them as well. It is to them that we now turn.

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ἀνέμους συρίττειν ταῖς πίτυσιν ἐμπνέοντας; 3.12: "these [the flowers] were being nurtured by Zephyrus" (τὰ δὲ ἄρτι ὁ ζέφυρος τρέφων).

<sup>100</sup> Morgan (2004), 156

<sup>101</sup> Typically the epoch's understanding of art is directly linked to its understanding of myth, both of which are wrapped up in a central preoccupation with truth and lying: *Car la vérité de l'art est semblable à celle du mythe que le rhéteurs de la second sophistique ont défini comme "un mensonge qui dit la vérité en images"* (Graziani 2006, 142).

<sup>102</sup> Bartsch 1989, 9

## The Progymnasmata at Work: Contemporary Authors of the Second Sophistic

Moving beyond the basic, educational, and rhetorical framework of Longus' time that can be gleaned from the rhetorical handbooks (*progymnasmata*) already examined, we move to a brief examination of those authors contemporary with Longus, many of whom display similar affinities for notions of lies and fiction. The most famous and prodigious of these, Lucian of Samosata, will be examined lastly, and the other ancient novelists separately. That leaves us to start with a few self-styled sophists of the late imperial period, most importantly (and perhaps most complicated), the Philostrati.

Philostratus is a name ascribed to four of the period's sophists. The most famous is arguably Philostratus "the Athenian," or Lucius Flavius Philostratus, whose father was a sophist of the same name. This (the former) is the Philostratus (born about 170) who supplied us with many of the works roughly contemporary with Longus, including the *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*, the *Lives of the Sophists*, *Gymnasticus*, *Heroicus* and the *Epistolae*. His son-in-law or nephew, usually referred to as Philostratus of Lemnos ("the elder," as he had a grandson also called Philostratus of Lemnos), is considered now the author of the *Imagines*, a series of *ecphrases* which will be examined below. To make matters even more complicated, the younger Philostratus of Lemnos (the other Lemnian's grandson, and noted above) wrote an additional series of *Imagines*, which do not entirely survive, styled after his grandfather's.

When searching through the texts of those authors contemporary with Longus (and scholarship on the same), one finds the same preoccupation with credibility and fictionality apparent in the *progymnasmata*, albeit often in subtler form.<sup>103</sup> Sometimes this depends heavily on genre – Longus is writing a fable, the very genre in which the *progymnasmata* is preoccupied with notions of credibility, believability, lies, and fiction. But when authors contemporary with

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<sup>103</sup> Except in Lucian, who explicitly plays with these notions, as we shall see in Chapter 3.

Longus venture into similar genres (when they either tell stories clearly invented or discourse on statues or paintings), attention rapidly turns to these matters as well. Thus, when we expect these other authors to engage in discourses similar to the ones being argued for in Longus, they do not disappoint. Rather, it is clear that they possess the same fascinations with the tensions present between a credibly invented reality and that produced in the natural world.

Perhaps the best place to start this examination is an area on which much of Longan scholarship has already been focused: namely, the visual descriptions (or *ecphrases*) that occur in Longus' work throughout, and indeed ostensibly give rise to his novel in the first place. Here Philostratus the Elder Lemnian's *Imagines* is a helpful text, for just as the "real world" in Longus' pastoral "must be carefully groomed, scrubbed, deodorized, pruned and arranged to suggest a painterly image,"<sup>104</sup> so too Philostratus, in describing the statues and paintings of his *Imagines*, presents this tension, or lack thereof, between the plastic, created image and the real-world person or place it is supposed to represent. Yet even amid his discourses on the tensions between art and reality, there has been an ongoing debate in scholarship on Philostratus as to whether or not the images that he describes are real to begin with.<sup>105</sup> More recently, scholars

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<sup>104</sup> Pandiri 1985, 125

<sup>105</sup> Lehmann-Hartleben (1941, 42) first asserted that the paintings described were real and Philostratus a good source for understanding painting in his own day: "As it is, these two books of the Elder Philostratus constitute a unique and very reliable source for the history of late antique painting." And later: "The subject matter of these paintings, as the long previous discussion about their authenticity has shown, is also largely identical with that known from earlier Roman wall painting." But fifty years later, Liz James and Ruth Webb cast serious doubt on the existence of an actual gallery being described, even if Philostratus had real paintings in mind that he had seen in the past: "But apart from occasional references to the technique and composition of these paintings, Philostratos concentrates on retelling the narratives depicted, constantly slipping from the material plane of the particular painting to the events behind. He situates the individual scenes within their narrative contexts, so that it is often unclear which particular moment is supposed to be depicted: figures are described as if they were moving, acting and feeling. His audience is also made to see more than could be visible in a painting: the sophist conjures up unseen figures and evokes appeals to senses other than sight, such as the fragrance of a garden, the sound of singing, or even the taste of fruit. ... Philostratos clearly had real paintings in mind when he composed some of these ekphraseis ... He is not, however, interested in reproducing the limitations of the visual arts. ... But Philostratus' gallery is surely a convenient fiction, constructed from a common knowledge of texts and images in the imagination of the sophist and his audience" (1991, 7).

like Bowie have deemed it unnecessary to declare them actual paintings in order to appreciate Philostratus' fictional program: "The *Pictures* purport to describe a set of paintings in a gallery at Naples, chiefly mythological in subject, and naturally Philostratus chooses scenes and techniques of rendering them with which his readers will be familiar from the paintings that decorated their public and private buildings. That he is actually describing a set of paintings that he saw is a possible but unnecessary conclusion, and it would cohere better with his other literary activity to suppose that here too is a set of fictional entities."<sup>106</sup> Noting the same "literary rather than pictorial understanding" on one painting in particular (the image of Galatea in 2.18), Kostopoulou notes that in "deflecting attention away from the visual appearance of the painting, the passage directs the focus, inevitably, to the textual nature of the story behind it, giving prominence to a verbal dimension more accessible to the ear rather than to the eye."<sup>107</sup>

Indeed, whether the paintings are real or fictional, Philostratus' main concern in describing them is just that difficult demarcation between the two. Immediately in his prologue, the elder Lemnian chides those who criticize art based on its seeming artificiality: "Whosoever scorns painting is unjust to truth ... for poets and painters make equal contribution to our knowledge of the deeds and the looks of heroes – and he (the scorner) withholds his praise from symmetry of proportion, whereby art partakes of reason (λόγου ἢ τέχνη ἄπτεται)." Going on, he asserts that "imitation (μίμησις) is an invention most ancient and most akin to nature (φύσις); and wise men invented it, calling it now painting (ζωγραφίαν), now plastic art (πλαστικήν)." This concern for how well (too well?) the painter or sculptor represents nature and reality recurs throughout Philostratus' descriptions. Thus in describing a painting of the Bosphorus (1.12), he notes that it "gives the very image of things that are, of things that are taking place, and in some

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<sup>106</sup> Bowie (in Morgan 1994, 182-83). Bowie here presumes (though concedes doubt) these were written by Philostratus the Athenian, but his analysis as to its literary character still stands.

<sup>107</sup> Kostopoulou, 83

cases of the way in which they take place, not slighting the truth by reason of the number of objects shown, but defining the real nature of each thing just as if the painter were representing some one thing alone” (ἐκμέμακται γὰρ ἡ γραφή καὶ τὰ ὄντα καὶ τὰ γιγνόμενα καὶ ὡς ἂν γένοιτο ἔνια, οὐ διὰ πλῆθος αὐτῶν ῥαδιουργοῦσα τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ἀλλ’ ἐπιτελοῦσα τὸ ἐκάστου οἰκεῖον, ὡς ἂν εἰ καὶ ἔν τι ἔγραφεν, trans. Fairbanks). Meanwhile, in perhaps the best mythological setting for a meta discourse on the inability to distinguish image from reality, Philostratus remarks on how real a bee appears painted on an image depicting Narcissus:

καὶ ἄνθη λευκὰ τῆ πηγῆ παραπέφυκεν οὐπω ὄντα, ἀλλ’ ἐπὶ τῷ μειρακίῳ φυόμενα. τιμῶσα δὲ ἡ γραφή τὴν ἀλήθειαν καὶ δρόσου τι λείβει ἀπὸ τῶν ἀνθέων, οἷς καὶ μέλιττα ἐφιζάνει τις, οὐκ οἶδα εἴτ’ ἐξαπατηθεῖσα ὑπὸ τῆς γραφῆς, εἴτε ἡμᾶς ἐξηπατηθῆσθαι χρὴ εἶναι αὐτήν. (1.23)

And white flowers have grown up beside the pool, not quite yet there, but growing forth for the boy. And the painting is so honoring of the truth that it pours forth some dew from the flowers, upon which a bee sits, whether a bee deceived by the painting or whether it is that we are deceived that it is really there, I do not know.

Of course, Philostratus does not let the perfect opportunity to remark on an image’s ability to deceive pass by, providing Narcissus and his reflection with an extended description.

σὲ μέντοι, μειράκιον, οὐ γραφή τις ἐξηπάτησεν, οὐδὲ χρώμασιν ἢ κηρῷ προστέηκας, ἀλλ’ ἐκτυπῶσάν σε τὸ ὕδωρ, οἷον εἶδες αὐτό, οὐκ οἶσθα, οὔτε τὸ τῆς πηγῆς ἐλέγχεις σόφισμα, νεῦσαι δέον καὶ παρατρέψαι τοῦ εἶδους καὶ τὴν χεῖρα ὑποκινῆσαι καὶ μὴ ἐπὶ ταύτοῦ ἐστάναι, σὺ δ’, ὥσπερ ἐταίρῳ ἐντυχῶν τάκεῖθεν περιμένεις. εἶτά σοι ἡ πηγὴ μύθῳ χρήσεται; οὔτος μὲν οὖν οὐδ’ ἐπαίει τι ἡμῶν, ἀλλ’ ἐμπέπτωκεν ἐπὶ τὸ ὕδωρ αὐτοῖς ὡς καὶ αὐτοῖς ὄμμασιν, αὐτοὶ δὲ ἡμεῖς, ὥσπερ γέγραπται, λέγωμεν. (1.23)

But you, boy, the painting does not deceive, nor do you cling to colors or wax, but you do not know that the water models you in the same way you look at it, nor do you question the fiction of the pool, all that is needed is to nod or turn away from the image or move your hand or to not stand in the same way, but you are waiting as though you are going to meet a friend there. Do you think the spring will call out to you in speech?

This one does not give heed to anything from us. He has fallen into the water both in eyes and ears, and we ourselves must say just how it has been painted.

Thus Philostratus' imitation of the painting in prose is a reflection (pun intended) of the imitation happening between Narcissus and the pool.<sup>108</sup>

Interestingly, when Philostratus' grandson, the so-called Philostratus the Younger, decided to write a series of *Imagines* in the year 300 that would mirror his grandfather's treatments, he by and large removed this most famous aspect of the elder's work. As Fairbanks remarks in his introduction to the Younger's *Imagines*, "While the elder Philostratus constantly stresses the illusion of reality in the paintings, perhaps as an inherited rhetorical device, his grandson rarely mentions it." While the younger mentions in No. 6 that the garments of Orpheus change color with his various motions (ἐσθῆς τε αὐτῷ μετανθοῦσα πρὸς κινήσεως τροπᾶς), and in No. 11 suggests the whirling of the wheels on Apsyrtus' chariot almost creates the sound of it rumbling (ἡ τῶν τροχῶν δίνη μόνον οὐ προσβαλοῦσα τῷ ἄρματι εὐρύματι τὰς ἀκοὰς), nevertheless, as Fairbanks notes, "he does not suggest that the painted object could be confused with the object itself."<sup>109</sup>

However, one contemporary of the younger Philostratus who quotes both sets of *Imagines*, and who indeed might have come much later,<sup>110</sup> is not sparing in this "inherited rhetorical device," namely, Callistratus, who imitated Philostratus' *Imagines* with his own *Ecphrases*, descriptions of 14 statues, which over and over again highlight the inability to distinguish painted or sculpted reality from actual reality. Though remarks about painted reality deceiving the viewer (as the real bee was deceived into thinking the flowers about Narcissus were real, or

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<sup>108</sup> As notes Beall (1993, 362): "The entire painting ... has to do with the ability of artistic imitation to shape one's perception of reality, for just as the pool "paints" Narcissus, the painter paints the pool. Philostratus' verbal imitation of the painting suggests that language also possesses this power of imitation."

<sup>109</sup> Fairbanks 1931, 277

<sup>110</sup> Schenkl and Reisch 1902, xxii-xxiii.



conversely, the viewer himself was deceived into thinking the bee was real when it was part of the painting) appear in only a few instances in the elder Philostratus, Callistratus makes it a stock motif in nearly all his descriptions: “While the elder Philostratus emphasized the realism, the illusion of reality in the paintings he described, and at times mentioned the technique by which this illusion was produced; while the younger Philostratus treated paintings primarily as expressing the character and the inner experiences of the persons represented, it was the aim of Callistratus to glorify the success of the sculptor in making bronze or marble all but alive in the figures he created.”<sup>111</sup>

In Callistratus’ first description,<sup>112</sup> that of a flute-playing satyr, he not only suggests the painting looks real, but that it makes you imagine how it might have sounded, too:

τῆ μὲν γὰρ ἀκοῆ μέλος οὐ προσῆπτεν ἀυλοῦντος, οὐδὲ ἦν ὁ ἀυλὸς ἔμφωνος, τὸ δὲ τῶν ἀυλούντων πάθος διὰ τῆς τέχνης εἰς τὴν πέτραν εἰσῆκτο. εἶδες ἂν ὑπανισταμένας καὶ φλέβας ὡς ἂν ἔκ τινος γεμιζομένας πνεύματος καὶ εἰς τὴν ἐπήγησιν τοῦ ἀυλοῦ τὴν πνοὴν ἐκ στέρνων τὸν Σάτυρον ἀνασπῶντα καὶ ἐνεργεῖν ἐθέλον τὸ εἶδωλον καὶ εἰς ἀγωνίαν τὸν λίθον πίπτοντα. εἶλαι γὰρ ἔπειθε καὶ πνοῆς ἐξουσίαν ἐν ἑαυτῷ ἔμφυτον καὶ ἄσθματος ἔνδειξιν ἐξευρομένην οἴκοθεν ἐκ τῶν ἀμηχάνων πόρον.

Though in reality the flute’s note was not reaching the player’s ear, nor yet was the flute endowed with voice, but the physical effect which flute-players experience had been transferred to the stone by the skill of the artist. You could have seen the veins standing out as though they were filled with a sort of breath, the Satyr drawing the air from his lungs to bring notes from the flute, the statue eager to be in action, and the stone entering upon strenuous activity – for it persuaded you that the power to blow the flute was actually inherent in it. (*trans.* Fairbanks)

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<sup>111</sup> Fairbanks 1931, 371

<sup>112</sup> As with Philostratus, it has been questioned whether or not Callistratus is describing actual works of art. Wolters (1885) was the first to suggest the sophist had simply invented the art he described, but more recently others, like Corso (2001) have found that less convincing. “Indeed, six statues described by Callistratus are also known through other surviving sources” (Corso 2001, 18).

In the next description, that of a Bacchante (2), Callistratus immediately notes that the statue, “has been transformed into a real Bacchante. For the stone, while retaining its own nature, yet seemed to depart from the law which governs stone; what one saw was really an image, but art carried imitation over into actual reality (ἀλλαττόμενον πρὸς τὴν ὄντως βάκχην. ἐν γὰρ τῇ οἰκείᾳ τάξει μένων ὁ λίθος τὸν ἐν τοῖς λίθοις νόμον ἐκβαίνειν ἐδόκει, τὸ μὲν γὰρ φαινόμενον ὄντως ἦν εἶδωλον, ἢ τέχνη δ’ εἰς τὸ ὄντως ὄν ἀπήγαγε τὴν μίμησιν, trans. Fairbanks).”<sup>113</sup> In the very next treatment, a statue of Eros is said to be “ready to display motion; for though it was fixed solidly on a pedestal, it deceived one into thinking that it possessed the power to fly (ἔτοιμος ἦν δεῖξαι κίνησιν, εἰς μὲν γὰρ ἔδραν στάσιμον ἴδρυτο, ἠπάτα δὲ ὡς καὶ τῆς μετεώρου κυριεύων φορᾶς, trans. Fairbanks).”

It is perhaps significant that for Callistratus, it is not just that these statues are “life-like;” rather, he repeatedly suggests (perhaps hyperbolically) that they deceive the viewer into thinking that they are not fixed, static objects (the very definition of a statue). So of Orpheus in No. 7, his hair is so “luxuriant and so instinct with the spirit of life as to deceive the senses” (κόμη δὲ οὕτως ἦν εὐανθῆς καὶ ζωτικὸν ἐπισημαίνουσα καὶ ἔμπνουν, ὡς ἀπατᾶν τὴν αἴσθησιν, trans. Fairbanks). The bronze strings of his lyre likewise “acted the part of strings and, being so modified as to imitate each separate note, it obediently carried out the deceit” (νευρᾶς ὑπεκρίνετο καὶ πρὸς τὴν ἐκάστου μίμησιν ἀλλαττόμενος πειθηνίως ὑπήγετο, trans. Fairbanks). Likewise, in No. 10 (about a statue of Asclepius), Callistratus flatly rejects that it is a statue at all: “To me, at any rate, the object being viewed seems to be, not an impression, but a fiction of truth (ἐμοὶ μὲν οὖν οὐ τύπος εἶναι δοκεῖ τὸ ὁρώμενον, ἀλλὰ τῆς ἀληθείας πλάσμα, trans. Fairbanks).”

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<sup>113</sup> “[Callistratus] evaluates these works of art on the basis of the sense of life that they exude as this is more interesting to him than the particular form of each work. In other words, it is the magical and supernatural substance of a work of art that matters” (Corso 2001, 19).

When not marveling at how alive a piece of plastic art can appear, many of the same authors are instead fretting over how plastic an alive person can appear. And so Philostratus the Athenian, writing presumably earlier than his nephew the Lemnian, writes in a series of love letters two treatises on cosmetics as a form of deception. He at one point admonishes a woman not to cover up her ankles, offering language replete with words of deception by now familiar:

μη̄ υποδήση ποτέ, μηδὲ κρύψεως τὰ σφυρὰ ἐψευσμένοις καὶ  
δολεροῖς δέρμασιν, ὧν ἀπατηλὸν τὸ κάλλος ἐν τῇ βαφῇ. ...  
ὅπου μὲν γὰρ τι ἡμαρτήθη τῇ φύσει, σοφισμάτων δεῖ πρὸς τὴν  
βλάβην, ἵνα κρύψη τὸ ἐλλυπὲς ἢ τέχνη (1.36)

Do not bind and conceal your ankles with deceitful and  
deceptive skins, by which your beauty is beguiled in dye ...  
When there has been some failing by nature, there is need of  
contrivances for the blemish, so that art/skill can cover the  
defects.

But such is not the case with this woman, so he urges her to take heart in herself and trust in her feet (θάρσησον σεαυτῆ καὶ πίστευσον τοῖς ποσί). But to a boy who has shaven to maintain his youthful appearance, the Athenian takes precisely the opposite approach to *phusis* and *techne* (perhaps because he sees it is called for). Instead of castigating his reliance on *techne*, he congratulates him:

ἐπαινῶ σε ἀντισοφιζόμενον τῷ χρόνῳ καὶ περικόπτοντα τὰ  
γένεια, ὃ γὰρ ἀπῆλθε φύσει, τοῦτο μένει τέχνη.

I praise you, for contriving against time, and your closely  
shaven cheeks, which had left you by nature, but remain such  
with craft. (1.58)

Of course, these letters, too, are literary, not necessarily actual letters, and Bowie sees in them the same fictional program found in the *progymnasmata's* speeches in character: "Such facility in the creation of verbal responses appropriate to particular situations occasions no surprise in a man who himself delivered Discourses and Declamations as a practicing sophist. The former might involve anecdotes which could be fictional, the latter required the sophist's speech to

assume and exploit a set of circumstances which to him and his audience were equally unreal, whether based on an episode in classical Greek history on an imaginary and improbable legal dispute.”<sup>114</sup>

But beyond the issues apparent in the letters of Philostratus the Athenian, studies of him of late – when they turn to issues of credulity and fiction – often focus on those prose works of his that skirt extraordinarily close to the material of the novelists. This includes his dialogue, *Of Heroes*, which has “a double fiction at work,” as a vintner tells an at-first skeptical sailor about the ghost of the Trojan hero Protesilaus.<sup>115</sup> As the dialogue goes on, the narrator tells of other unknown tales of Homeric heroes, all under the pretense that this vintner had access to a ghost from the past with knowledge beyond what readers then knew. Again quoting Bowie, this “framing of the far-fetched by the credible,” the “combination of a claim to a reliable channel of information and framing in a plausible material shows that Philostratus has some interest in presenting his fiction as truth.”<sup>116</sup>

Even more fertile for scholars contemplating the boundaries between fiction and reality have been works by Philostratus that up until recently were accepted as history. Swain examined Philostratus’ reliability in his *Lives of the Sophists* by noting that “the question of the reliability of Philostratus’s testimony is still open,” and he connected his skepticism to Philostratus’ *Apollonius of Tyana*.<sup>117</sup> Here, too, Philostratus lays claim to privileged information: “Philostratus’s story of the origin of the work, ostensibly an assertion of the fidelity of his source, is in fact a novelistic *topos*. Philostratus says the work was written up first by a

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<sup>114</sup> Bowie (in Morgan 1994), 182

<sup>115</sup> *Ibid*, 183

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid*, 185

<sup>117</sup> Instead of focusing on its unreliability, however, Anderson (2009), though conceding his “demonstrable bias” and “how he adorns rather than presents the historical record” (vii), suggests *Apollonius of Tyana* “is as illuminating as a document of the activities of a serious holy man as it is of a sophist’s technique of embellishment” (viii).

contemporary of Apollonius, Damis, who hailed from Nineveh. The tablets on which Damis wrote his narrative were brought to light by a descendant, and Philostratus claims to be merely restyling the ὑπομνήματα he found.”<sup>118</sup> This claim of authentication, typically at the outset of a narrative and purporting to give rise to it at the same time, is a stock feature of the novelists’ time that has been exhaustively studied in some of the most recent scholarship on the period. Notes Haag: “As is well known, the same type of fiction, or ‘pseudo-documentarism’ – the author has found an authentic report which he simply passes on to his readers – frequently occurs in the later history of the novel.”<sup>119</sup> Hansen explores pseudo-documentarism at length in several works, even delineating “conventional,” “light,” and “heavy” pseudo-documentarism depending on their claims to authority (the last he reserves only for religious or magical texts claiming divine authorship). Mheallaigh recently took Hansen’s model<sup>120</sup> and applied it to three texts, one of which (Lucian’s) we will reserve for the next chapter. Like my thesis on Longus, Mheallaigh sees in pseudo-documentarism not only a playful device the author can deploy with a wink to his educated and knowing readers, but one that at the same time undermines the text:

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<sup>118</sup> Swain 1991, 150. Meyer (1917) was the first to reject Damis as a worthy or even existent source, concluding he was a “fiction of the author himself” (420): “*Darin steckt nichts Geheimnisvolles oder gar eine literarische Tradition; sondern gerade hier wird noch einmal ganz deutlich, daß Damis’ Werk lediglich eine Fiktion des Schriftstellers selbst ist.*” And even today, as evidence by his citation regarding pseudo-documentarism in the various scholars to follow, “Apollonius’ disciple is still under the darkest suspicions” (Anderson 1986, 156). However, some scholars have attempted to clear Philostratus of pseudo-documenting this source. Anderson (1986, Chapter 9) builds a convincing case for why parts (and only parts specifically attributed to him) of Apollonius can be said to come from Damis. Among his stronger arguments, I would suggest, is that “with so much material available to Philostratus, why should he have had any need for a fictitious Damis?” (157). Anderson’s point is perhaps strengthened by the fact that authenticating a story with an unknown person is bad authenticating indeed, at least by the standards of the Second Sophistic. But then again, who had heard of Dictys or Dares before their Trojan War accounts became widely read? For a detailed account of the Damis controversy, see Anderson 1986, 169 n.1.

<sup>119</sup> Haag 1983, 119

<sup>120</sup> She attributes this, with some side criticism, to Hansen (“the texts I explore in this article ...are united by the feature defined recently by Hansen as pseudo-documentarism”), though the term goes back to at least Haag (1983).

“Its most basic purpose is to lend the fiction an air of authenticity, veracity, and documentary importance by creating for the fiction an extra-literary referent such as that which is normally attributed to historiography.

“... yet paradoxically, its emphasis on the text’s materiality, and the constant reminder of the very process of reading itself, threatens to undermine that fiction. Pseudo-documentarism in its various manifestations raises the stakes sharply in the game of make-believe, because it asks readers not only to concede the text’s fictional truth but also to enter into the fantasy of historical truthfulness as well: in other words, it fictionalizes the issue of historical truth – an ethically worrying thing to do – and in doing so, it tests the limits of the reader’s grasp of the rules that govern the make-believe.”<sup>121</sup> (404)

Two of the works that Mheallaigh treats are common ones in the study of ancient fiction-building: Dictys’ *Journal of the Trojan War*<sup>122</sup> and Antonius Diogenes’ *The Wonders Beyond Thule*. The former claims to be the “true” account of the Trojan War, written in Phoenician and rediscovered in the time of Nero, then painstakingly translated into Latin for its contemporary readers. The latter is supposedly the dictated biography of Deinias, which he gave in his old age to a scribe, who wrote down the account on cypress wood and then, as bidden, sent one to Arcadia and left the other to be buried with Deinias. Both accounts employ the excessive detail that is reminiscent of pseudo-documentarism.<sup>123</sup>

Among the “light” forms of the device seen by Hansen are those works which leave open the origin of their narratives but seem to suggest their roots at the end when the characters write down accounts of what happened to them. Into this class Hansen places the anonymous *Apollonius King of Tyre* (not to be confused with Philostratus’ similarly named title above), which ends with the king making two copies of his accounts and putting them in a temple and his library. Hansen also sees this convention in Xenophon’s *An Ephesian Story*, which ends with the lovers visiting the temple of Artemis and dedicating a record of everything they had suffered and done. Whitmarsh also sees Xenophon working this way: “In Xenophon, the act

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<sup>121</sup> Mheallaigh, 404

<sup>122</sup> See the discussion on 1-3 of the Introduction.

<sup>123</sup> Hansen (in Panayotakis 2003), 305-06; Mheallaigh 2008, 406

of narrative control comes in the form of a *'graphe* of all that they had endured and all that they had done,' deposited in the temple of Artemis. *Graphe* can mean either a 'written record' or a 'painted depiction,' but the sentence obviously advertises its availability to self-reflexive interpretation, whereby the dedication actually constitutes the book we are reading now."<sup>124</sup>

Of course, readers of Longus should at once take note of Whitmarsh's remarks on Xenophon, because Longus, too, sets up his narrative with a *graphe* – here clearly a visual image of some sort – in the prologue to *Daphnis and Chloe*. Indeed, Bowie extends his analysis of a "claim to a reliable channel of information" to Longus as well, seeing there a "remote but still analogous" claim to information in "Longus' presentation of the story of Daphnis and Chloe as a local exegete's interpretation of paintings seen in a shrine of the nymphs by the narrator while hunting on Lesbos."<sup>125</sup> Indeed, both Hansen and Mheallaigh consider Longus' claim of a painting at the beginning of his work to be case of pseudo-documentarism. Mheallaigh mentions it merely in a footnote,<sup>126</sup> while Hansen considers Longus "unusual in employing, as it seems, both (conventional and light) forms of authentication.

"In the tradition of conventional pseudo-documentarism the narrator claims in a prefatory statement that he got his tale from a narrative painting that he had chanced upon in a grove of the nymphs on Lesbos, while in the tradition of light pseudo-documentarism he says in passing at the end of his novel that the lovers dedicated images of themselves in the cave of the nymphs. Presumably these latter are the very same as the narrator discovered and used as his source, although the narrator makes no explicit connection between them."<sup>127</sup>

And so, an examination of authors contemporary with Longus brings us full circle, back to the same questions already posed with respect to the believability and fictionality present within *Daphnis and Chloe*. As Morgan notes, "If the discovery of the painting is a fiction, the discoverer

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<sup>124</sup> Whitmarsh 2011, 62

<sup>125</sup> Bowie (in Morgan 1994), 185

<sup>126</sup> Mheallaigh, 418, n.42

<sup>127</sup> Hansen (in Panayotakis 2003), 309-310

is fictitious too.”<sup>128</sup> Yet an analysis of the lies, fictions, and deceptions *within* Longus would perhaps work better to point outwardly at the specious nature of these authenticating devices at the beginning and end. To bolster my claims that Longus engages in discourses of that sort, I turn next to a contemporary of his who made a virtual career out of it – Lucian of Samasota.

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<sup>128</sup> Morgan (2004), 17



## Chapter 3: Lies in Lucian

So far, the *progymnasmata* have provided the framework for discourses on lies and fiction in Longus' time. Authors like the Philostrati and Callistratus, roughly contemporary with Longus, have utilized that framework to discuss the illusion of reality through lively artwork, while still others, like Dictys in his "account" of the Trojan War, and the author of the *Wonders Beyond Thule*, have made use of *pseudo-documentarism* in presenting a fictional narrative as historical fact. Longus himself, in fact, seems to adopt certain features of pseudo-documentarism.

Yet we are still left with a gap: for while we can certainly connect Callistratus and the Philostrati to Longus via the use of *ecphrasis*, and have connected him to (light) pseudo-documentarism via his prologue and epilogue, it would be even more valuable to find someone extending the discussions of fable, falsehood, and fiction found in the *progymnasmata* to a literary program not confined to visual description or *pseudo-documentarism* alone. We can find such a program, repeatedly, in the works of a direct contemporary to Longus who himself also forayed into the genre of prose fiction – Lucian of Samosata.

Writing in about the mid-second century, Lucian is about as contemporary with Longus as one can find in the classical corpus, assuming the now-prevalent dating of Longus is correct.<sup>129</sup> And in Lucian, we are not only treated to fictional stories in the fabulistic style as seen in Longus (including some of the earliest examples of fantasy and science fiction as we know them today); Lucian also provides us with inset stories that discourse upon that sort of

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<sup>129</sup> Lucian's date of birth is not precisely known, but can be placed between 115 and 125 (Jones 1986, 167). Rhode (1878, 173-175) demonstrated that the *Suda* was incorrect in placing his *floruit* under Trajan. Lucian himself states that he took up writing comic dialogues at about age 40 in the *Bis Accusatus* (καλῶς εἶχέ μοι ἀνδρὶ ἥδη τετταράκοντα ἔτη, 32). Meanwhile, several dialogues discussed here refer to specific people whose dating is not in dispute: Peregrinus threw himself on a pyre in 165, and Marcus Aurelius is referred to as deified in *Alexander* 48. Jones' Appendix B (1986, 167-169) contains a helpful outline of the chronology of his work.

storytelling and the lies that might be found therein. And he presents other narratives that flatly accuse the historians (who are supposed to be writing for posterity) of engaging in it as well.<sup>130</sup> Indeed, Anderson sees in Lucian's variations an employment of exercises found in the rhetorical handbooks examined earlier: "Lucian did indeed have a rhetorical training, and the programme of elementary *progymnasmata* in the schools clearly encouraged pupils to practice variation. By their very nature some of the exercises called for ingenious but stereotyped reworking."<sup>131</sup> This applies not only to variations of specific fables in the *progymnasmata's* repertoire, but also, as with Longus, to the credibility of storytelling and narration itself: "We should never underestimate the role of rhetoricians' handbooks in a sophist's education; but the novice in the schools was allowed to improvise *muthoi* of his own: he could take some of this material from tradition, some from his own reading; but the rest he could invent for himself. The same rule applies to *diegemata*, except that the writer had to confine himself to what was credible."<sup>132</sup> Indeed, Lucian discourses on the traditional track to rhetoric in his *Teacher of Rhetoric*, in which the narrator (presumably Lucian) advises a young aspiring speaker to avoid the hard road of education that he had to endure. Personifying two schools of thought on such education, Lucian casts one as a masculine, tanned, and muscular man who will assist the student up the rigorous road to oratory, the path which involves reading the classic orators of yesteryear and emulating them (9-10). The other path is guided by an effeminate man (a very Agathon himself, he points out at 11), who urges the youth to eschew all traditional rhetorical training (ἐκεῖνα τὰ πρὸ τῆς ῥητορικῆς) and instead rush right in (14). In fact, the teacher urges him to bring ignorance (ἀμαθίας), rashness (θράσος), impudence (τόλμα), and shamelessness (ἀναισχυντία, 15). He urges the young pupil to read only declamations, not the speeches of the classic orators (17),

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<sup>130</sup> In addition to Jones (1986), recent Lucianic scholarship has included J. Bompaigne 1958, Anderson 1976a, 1976b, and Hall 1981.

<sup>131</sup> Anderson 1976a, 3

<sup>132</sup> *Ibid.*, 41

and at the climax of caricature, Lucian has the charlatan teacher urge a ready lie and an oath always on his lips (καὶ ψεῦδος πρόχειρον καὶ ὄρκος ἐπ' ἄκροις ἀεὶ τοῖς χεῖλεσι, 22). That the latter teacher of the easy road is the object of Lucian's scornful satire is obvious;<sup>133</sup> at the end he contrasts such a man with himself, suggesting he is bereft of the traits by which Lucian himself seeks to court Lady Rhetoric (ἀσύμβολος ὦν πρὸς αὐτήν τὰ ὑμέτερα, 26). This echoes his earlier remark that he himself had taken the more difficult road to rhetoric (καὶ ἔγωγε κατ' ἐκείνην ἄθλιος ἀνῆλθον τοσαῦτα καμῶν οὐδὲν δέον, 8). All of this is to say, given the clear denunciation of the new rhetorical training Lucian offers in this dialogue and the believably biographical nature of his comments about his own education, it is safe to assume that the traditional training provided to students in the *progymnasmata* was Lucian's as well, including those exercises on fable, falsehood, and fiction, which figure among his favorite topics.

Lucian will apply his penchant for using fable sophisticatedly to his own account of his early life in *The Dream*. Here, Lucian describes, purportedly for a crowd, why he chose to be a writer instead of a sculptor, the job to which he was apprenticed as a young man. He suggests that two figures appeared to him in a dream, Craft and Culture. Originally, Lucian calls Craft more specifically "Sculpture (Ἐρμογλυφική)" but later refers to her more generally as Τέχνη, while Culture is referred to throughout as *Paideia* (Παιδεία), that nearly universal, late antique preoccupation.<sup>134</sup> *Techne* is referred to as stuttering and barbaric (διαπταίουσα and βαρβαρίζουσα, *Somnium* 8), while Culture shows to Lucian the many works of old, promising him like immortality. Ultimately, Lucian picks Culture, and *Techne* is so incensed she turns into stone. Lucian remarks, to the displeased crowd, that dreams are "wonder-workers"

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<sup>133</sup> Cribiore (2007, 73) offers just this analysis, noting the charlatan "dismisses the need for a rigorous training based on the preliminary exercises (προγυμνάσματα)." Cribiore sees in the oft-overlooked dialogue a critique of the changing nature of rhetorical education away from the rigors of the *progymnasmata*.

<sup>134</sup> On *paideia* in antiquity, see Jaeger 1934, Marrou 1956, and Whitmarsh 2001.

(θαυμαστοποιοί) so this outcome should not be surprising (*Somnium*, 14). When someone in the crowd calls his narrative “lawyerly” (δικανικόν), Lucian summarily notes that it is no different than the dream that Xenophon had in his *Anabasis* (3.1.11), thereby offering a snide commentary on what passes for history.<sup>135</sup>

Indeed, this skewering of historical storytelling and its gullible audiences recurs throughout Lucian’s work. His most famous work, *A True History*, perhaps unsurprisingly highlights this tendency the best. Narrating a supposed trip to the heavens and the strange worlds he discovered on the voyage, Lucian presents the outlandish and asks us over and again to examine whether what he is narrating is all that different from the stories whose truth so many take for granted.<sup>136</sup>

Lucian does not make us guess whether he is alluding to poets, philosophers, and historians who have written unbelievable accounts. He tells us outright in the introduction to his *True History*, remarking on those who have written so many monstrous, fictional tales (πολλὰ τεράστια καὶ μυθώδη, *V.H.*, 1.2). The founder of this sort of nonsense (διδάσκαλος τῆς τοιαύτης βωμολοχίας), he notes, was Homer’s Odysseus, who “spun many such marvels to the unschooled Phaiacians” (οἷα πολλὰ ἐκεῖνος πρὸς ἰδιώτας ἀνθρώπους τοὺς Φαίακας ἐτερατεύσατο, *V.H.*, 1.3). In his own work, Lucian promises that he has put forth a variety of lies both persuasively and truthfully (ψεύσματα ποικίλα πιθανῶς τε καὶ ἐναλήθως ἐξηγηνόχαμεν). Like those before him, Lucian wanted to be remembered by posterity without being denied the freedom to mythologize (τῆς ἐν τῷ μυθολογεῖν ἐλευθερίας). But since he had nothing of truth to report, he settled on lying (ἐπεὶ μηδὲν ἀληθὲς ἱστορεῖνεῖχον ... ἐπὶ τὸ ψεῦδος ἐτραπόμην, *V.H.*, 1.4). Notes Jones: “The only difference between Lucian and his models is that they told

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<sup>135</sup> One of many critiques he will make of historians and historical narratives. Yet elsewhere Lucian calls Xenophon a “just historian” (δίκαιος συγγραφεύς, *How to Write History*, 39). On Lucian as an anticipator of modern, objective history, see Fox 2001.

<sup>136</sup> For general commentary on the *True History*, see Georgiadou and Larmour 1998.

falsehoods in the guise of truth, whereas he truthfully declares his entire tale false.”<sup>137</sup> Lest there be any lingering doubt as to the falsity of what is to come, Lucian concludes his introduction by warning his readers that nothing he writes should be believed at all:

γράφω τοίνυν περι ὧν μήτε εἶδον μήτε ἔπαθον μήτε  
παρ’ ἄλλων ἐπυθόμην,<sup>138</sup> ἔτι δὲ μήτε ὄλως ὄντων μήτε  
τὴν ἀρχὴν γενέσθαι δυναμένων. διὸ δεῖ τοὺς  
ἐντυγχάνοντας μηδαμῶς πιστεύειν αὐτοῖς.

And so I write about things I have not seen and have not experienced and have not learned from others, indeed things not existing at all or even able to exist to begin with. Therefore it is necessary that those meeting upon this believe them not at all.

Indeed, Larmour sees Lucian as in a “dialogic tension” with himself – Lucian the author vs. Lucian the narrator. The former has told us not to believe anything, while the latter endeavors to make us do just that: “The dialogic tension and the truth-telling conventions of the narrative discourse work to ensure that the Otherworld of the *Vera Historia* is both credible and incredible: what appears to be believable is not necessarily true; likewise, what is patently untrue is not necessarily unbelievable.”<sup>139</sup> However, this tension collapses at one point in the narrative when Lucian is given an epigram by Homer on the Isle of the Blest (*VH* 2.28), which “implies that Lucian the narrator has returned from his voyage and is identical with Lucian the author who presented the *Vera Historia* to us in the Prologue.”<sup>140</sup> Indeed, Mheallaigh sees both this epigram and another Lucian finds on the Island of the Vine Women (recording Dionysus’ and

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<sup>137</sup> Jones 1986, 53

<sup>138</sup> εἶδον ... ἔπαθον ... ἐπυθόμην: The three traditional modes of investigation for historiographers. Notes Marincola (1997, 5): “The ancient historian did not, like the epic or didactic poet, profess inspiration or omniscience, nor did he swear an oath to the truth of his words. In place of these he used a variety of claims, promises, ‘proofs’, and advertisements. The earliest and most common was the assurance that the work before the reader rested on the author’s personal inquiry and investigation. Although the claim was to take many forms, from actual participation in events to the more sedentary perusal of previous histories, it was nevertheless a persistent feature of ancient historiography and can be found in nearly every historian from Herodotus to Ammianus.”

<sup>139</sup> Larmour 1998, 132-33

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid*, 134

Heracles' visit there) as parodic examples of pseudo-documentarism: "both the invention of obviously specious epigraphical texts and their use as an authenticating device within the avowed fantasy."<sup>141</sup>

But what is most fascinating about Lucian's introduction for our purposes is not only that he provides a veritable condensation of the sorts of discourses on fiction that we hear in the *progymnasmata* (discourses that, I argue, we can also find in more subtle forms in Longus), but that after this warning, he continues with his narrative as though none of the preceding had been said, with all the same timeworn rhetorical tricks used by his forebears to lend credibility to their most incredible stories. "Lucian's adventures may be so exaggerated and fantastic that no one could ever be expected to swallow them as having actually occurred (and in fact he acknowledges that they have not), but he goes out of his way to pepper his narrative with comments and mannerisms that are typically employed in historical literature to give assurance of credibility."<sup>142</sup> Thus in 1.13, the narrator holds off on describing the Crane Cavalry, because they never arrived so he never "saw" them, though reports of them were so "terrible" as to be "unbelievable" (τούτους ἐγὼ οὐκ ἔθεασάμην οὐ γὰρ ἀφίκοντο. διόπερ οὐδὲ γράψαι τὰς φύσεις αὐτῶν ἐτόλμησα: τεράστια γὰρ καὶ ἄπιστα περὶ αὐτῶν ἐλέγετο). In 1.18, he likewise refuses to report the number of Cloud Centaurs, because it would be ἄπιστον – "unbelievable" (τὸ μέντοι πλῆθος αὐτῶν οὐκ ἀνέγραψα, μή τω καὶ ἄπιστον δόξῃ — τοσοῦτον ἦν). He employs the same hesitation again in 1.25 when describing the people of the moon. After already relating a host of unbelievable features, he hesitates to describe their eyes lest someone think him lying owing to the unbelievable nature of the account (περὶ μέντοι τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν, οἷους ἔχουσιν, ὀκνῶ μὲν εἰπεῖν, μή τις με νομίση ψεύδεσθαι διὰ τὸ ἄπιστον τοῦ λόγου). In the very next chapter, while describing a well whose reflection shows everything happening down on earth, he concedes it

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<sup>141</sup> Mheallaigh 2008, 420-21

<sup>142</sup> Kim 2010, 145

sounds incredible but invites anyone who does not believe it to go to the moon themselves and see if he is telling the truth (ὄστις δὲ ταῦτα μὴ πιστεύει οὕτως ἔχειν, ἂν ποτε καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκεῖσε ἀφίκηται, εἴσεται ὡς ἀληθῆ λέγω). Not surprisingly (given his penchant for the fantastic), when the narrator and his travelers pass by CloudCuckooLand, he laments how so many did not believe Aristophanes, a “wise and truthful man,” regarding the things which he wrote (καὶ ἐγὼ ἐμνήσθην Ἀριστοφάνους τοῦ ποιητοῦ, ἀνδρὸς σοφοῦ καὶ ἀληθοῦς καὶ μάτην ἐφ’ οἷς ἔγραψεν ἀπιστουμένου). Finishing off Book 1, Lucian launches into a description of the islands around the battlefield even though he knows they will seem “incredible” (οἶδα μὲν οὖν ἀπίστοις ἐοικότα ἱστορήσων, λέξω δὲ ὁμως, *V.H.*, 1.40).

Book 2 continues the narrator’s fantastic adventures. At one point he finds the Isle of the Blest, where he asks Homer to write him the epigram referenced above. As if helping to imbue the writer with credibility, Homer writes that Lucian “saw all these things” (a common authenticating statement) and then went back home to his native land (Λουκιανὸς τάδε πάντα φίλος μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν εἶδέ τε καὶ πάλιν ἦλθε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν, *V.H.*, 2.28).

Meanwhile, on the Isle of the Damned, those who had lied (including Herodotus), were subjected to the harshest of punishments:

καὶ μεγίστας ἀπασῶν, τιμωρίας ὑπέμενον οἱ  
ψευσάμενοί τι παρὰ τὸν βίον καὶ οἱ μὴ τὰ ἀληθῆ  
συγγεγραφότες, ἐν οἷς καὶ Κτησίας ὁ Κνίδιος ἦν καὶ  
Ἡρόδοτος καὶ ἄλλοι πολλοί. τούτους οὖν ὁρῶν ἐγὼ  
χρηστάς εἶχον εἰς τοῦπιόν τὰς ἐλπίδας: οὐδὲν γὰρ  
ἐμαυτῷ ψεῦδος εἰπόντισυνηπιστάμην. (*V.H.*, 2.31)

And the ones having lied about something during their life underwent (awaited) the greatest punishments of everyone, and those having written down things not true, among whom was Ctesias of Cnidos and Herodotus. And seeing these things I had good hope for the future: for I do not believe that I have spoken any lie.

Perhaps Lucian's greatest lie<sup>143</sup> is reserved for the end of the *True History*. There, he promises to tell us about more marvels upon the earth in the books to come (τὰ δὲ ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐν ταῖς ἐξῆς βίβλοις διηγήσομαι, *V.H.*, 2.47) before promptly and abruptly ending the work.<sup>144</sup>

Discourses like this also recur (again, perhaps not surprisingly), in Lucian's *Lover of Lies*. Here the storytellers, who repeatedly insist they are telling the truth, attempt to get a skeptical friend to believe in the supernatural by embarking on a series of ghost stories and other tall tales, including the first known account of the *Sorcerer's Apprentice*.<sup>145</sup> Tychiades, the skeptic, is prompted to relate tall tales he has heard when he asks his friend Philocles his opinion on men who like to lie. And so, in a richly ironic twist, the skeptic himself becomes the storyteller of the very "lying" tales he had not believed. Regardless, he laments that there are those who lie not for advantage or any other understandable reason, but just for the sake of lying (φημὶ οἷ αὐτὸ ἄνευ τῆς χρείας τὸ ψεῦδος πρὸ πολλοῦ τῆς ἀληθείας τίθενται, ἠδόμενοι τῷ πράγματι καὶ ἐνδιατρίβοντες ἐπ' οὐδεμιᾷ προφάσει ἀναγκαίᾳ, *Philopseudes*, 1). Here again, Lucian works in some invective for Herodotus and Homer, who not only deceived themselves, but so many successive generations after them (ὡς μὴ μόνους ἔξαπατᾶν τοὺς τότε ἀκούοντας σφῶν, ἀλλὰ καὶ μέχρις ἡμῶν δικνεῖσθαι τὸ ψεῦδος ἐκ διαδοχῆς, *Philopseudes*, 2).

Another work similarly replete with embedded narration, and deception as metafictionality, is Lucian's *Toxaris*, in which a Greek and Scythian each tell five stories extolling

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<sup>143</sup> At least that is how one scholiast saw it (Reardon 2008, 649).

<sup>144</sup> Several scholars have commented on the ironic ending Lucian provides, first among them the scholiast: καὶ τὸ τέλος ψευδέστον μετὰ τῆς ἀνυποστάτου ἐπαγγελίας. As Georgiadou and Lamour (1998, 232) note: "there can be little doubt that this is the end of the work; Lucian may have wished to leave open the possibility of further adventures, but it is more likely that we should take the closing words as one final parodic stroke."

<sup>145</sup> Just how original Lucian is in his construction of the tale, which comes last and is afforded the greatest length, is perhaps still up for debate. Bompaigne 1958 concluded there were no real ancient parallels (*apud* Ogden 2007, 260), while Anderson has most recently suggested (2000, 103-105) that it represents a *Kunstmaerchen* fairytale of which he finds examples also in Scottish, Norwegian, and Irish tales. Ogden (2007, 232), meanwhile suggests Lucian, even if not drawing from specific literary sources, nonetheless derives it from a story-type found in Pseudo-Thessalus of Tralles and Pseudo-Democritus.



true friendship in a competition. Notes Anderson: “Like the [*True History*], Toxaris is another opportunity for *pseudos*.”<sup>146</sup> The story begins, as so many of the narratives treated here,<sup>147</sup> with an *ecphrasis* by Toxaris of the paintings in the Oresteion, to which Mnesippus responds that he is an excellent “painter” because he has brought the images vividly before his eyes with his description. The two agree to a story-telling contest similar to the pastoral singing contests famous in Theocritus<sup>148</sup> but they utilize military imagery to describe their match. Thus Mnesippus frets about engaging in “single combat” (μονομαχῆσαι) with such an enemy (πολεμιστής) as Toxaris, who responds by saying that if Mnesippus’ stories are better, they will inflict more serious wounds (καιριώτερα ... τραύματα) and he will succumb to the blows (τὰς πληγὰς). The winner will be not the one who tells more stories (they end up telling an equal number), but the one whose stories are better and sharper (ἀμείνους καὶ τομώτεροι). But these goals seem to conflict with another ground rule: the stories cannot be fictions: to make up such things, Toxaris says, is not at all hard (ἄλλως γὰρ ἀναπλάττειν τὰ τοιαῦτα οὐ πάνυ χαλεπὸν) and yet it is hard to refute them (καὶ ὁ ἔλεγχος ἀφανής, *Toxaris*, 11). Already, then, Lucian’s characters have traversed the boundaries of the *progymnasmata* – eschewing fictions (πλάσματα; cf the verb ἀναπλάττειν above), they swear oaths to tell only the truth (μὴν ἀληθῆ ἐρεῖν) yet their victories are dependent upon making the stories, though ostensibly true, as good (ἀγαθός) and sharp (τομός) as possible. In engaging in such a balancing act, “it becomes difficult to tell if Lucian is making fun of contemporary fiction, or paying it the compliment of imitation.”<sup>149</sup> Rostovsteff sees an explicit novelistic influence, surmising that some of the Scythian material could be from lost Greek novels set in Scythia, fragments of which had been

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<sup>146</sup> Anderson 1976, 13

<sup>147</sup> Cf. 13-14, above, and Zeitlin 1990, Bartsch 1989, Elsner 2007, and Kestner 1973.

<sup>148</sup> And to which Longus himself perhaps alludes in his beauty contest between Daphnis and Dorcon.

<sup>149</sup> Jones 1986, 46

recently published in his time, showing a setting in southern Russia.<sup>150</sup> But Bompaire sees less evidence of that than of Lucian's academic training in the handbooks.<sup>151</sup> Regardless of their origins, attention to their likely fictionality recurs throughout, most especially when the narrators are making claims to the contrary. When Mnesippus begins, he swears that whatever he tells to Toxaris, it will be either things he himself knows or things sought out from others with accuracy (ἂν λέγω πρὸς σὲ ἢ αὐτὸς εἰδὼς ἢ παρ' ἄλλων ὅποσον οἷόν τε ἦν δι' ἀκριβείας ἐκπυθανόμενος ἐρεῖν, *Toxaris*, 12)<sup>152</sup> and that he will not add any theatrics of his own (μηδὲν παρ' ἑμαυτοῦ ἐπιτραγωδῶν). Indeed, like Longus' characters, Lucian's, although telling narratives they swear are wholly true, nonetheless obliquely alert us to the possibility of narrative deceit by peppering their stories with intrigue. The very first story told by Mnesippus is a famous one (ἀοίδιμον) among the Ionians, about an aristocratic youth named Deinias whose toadies ensnare him in a doomed romance with a married woman, Caricleia, via gifts and letters from her – the sorts of things, Mnesippus says, that procuresses use to “contrive against young men” (ὅποσα αἱ μαστροποὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς νέοις μηχανῶνται, *Toxaris*, 13). In this way, Caricleia was clever (δεινή) and an artist (τεχνίτις). The woman's disingenuous acting convinced Deinias that he was in love:

ἀλώσσεσθαι ἔμελλεν ὑπὸ γυναικὸς καλῆς καὶ πρὸς  
 ἡδονὴν τε ὀμιλῆσαι ἐπισταμένης καὶ ἐν καιρῷ  
 δακρῦσαι καὶ μεταξὺ τῶν λόγων ἐλεεινῶς ὑποστενάξαι  
 καὶ ἀπιόντος ἤδη λαβέσθαι καὶ εἰσελθόντι  
 προσδραμεῖν καὶ καλλωπίζεσθαι ὡς ἂν μάλιστα  
 ἀρέσειε, καὶ που καὶ ᾄσαι καὶ κιθαρίσαι. (*Toxaris*, 15)

He was bound to be destroyed by a beautiful woman,  
 who knew how to be in his company with pleasure, and  
 how to weep at the right time, and how to moan  
 piteously in the middle of conversations, and how to

<sup>150</sup> Rostovtzeff 1931, 98: *Die Handschrift gehört in das II Jahrhundert n. Chr. Obwohl nur zwei kleine Fragmente erhalten sind, ist es klar, daß es eine Novelle ist, die sich in Südrußland abspielt.*

<sup>151</sup> Bompaire 1958, 455: *On serait en présence d'anecdotes plus scolaires que réalistes.*

<sup>152</sup> εἰδὼς ... ἐκπυθανόμενος: cf. 79 n.138 above.

embrace him before he was leaving and to run up to him when he was coming, and how to look as beautiful as would especially please him, and to sing anywhere and play the lyre.

She did all this until Deinias ran into misfortune. Then she contrived another way to destroy the wretch (ἄλλο ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐπενόει καὶ τὸν ἄθλιον ἀπώλλυε): she pretended to be with child from him (κύειν τε γὰρ ἐξ αὐτοῦ σκήπτεται, *Toxaris*, 15). By the end, Deinias had killed both her and her husband and been exiled, and his poor friend Agathocles (mentioned in the beginning of the story but by now virtually forgotten) had agreed to go into exile with him. And so not only is the ostensible purpose of the story – the friendship of Agathocles – subsumed in the narrative by the lurid and sordid love affair between Deinias and a married woman, but the very theatrics that Mnesippus foreswore in its telling have been colorfully demonstrated by Caricleia’s machinations. No wonder, then, that in response, Toxaris remarks, “Oh if only, Mnesippus, you had narrated such things without being oath-bound, so that I might be free to disbelieve them” (καὶ εἴθε γε, ὦ Μνήσιππε, ἀνώμοτος ὦν ταῦτα ἔλεγες, ἵνα καὶ ἀπιστεῖν ἂν ἐδυνάμην αὐτοῖς, *Toxaris*, 18).

Mnesippus begins his second tale (about a man washed overboard saved by a friend) with more authentication than the “famous” first one, asserting a specific chain of transmission from a Megarian sea captain, who himself had sworn an oath that he had seen what happened. When Mnesippus later mentions that the two men survived and are now in Athens studying philosophy, he ensures to provide a second source (since the sea captain would only have seen the two men go overboard) for what happened after they were spared. Mnesippus likewise authenticates his fourth story, suggesting that the man featured was pointed out to him when he was in Italy. This allows for an(other) embedded narrator to take over the tale, as the informant answers Mnesippus’ curiosity as to why the man – a handsome youth – was married to a woman who was an “unapproachable hobgoblin” (ἀπρόσιτον μορμολυκεῖον), with her right

side withered and her eye poked out (ξηρὰ τὸ ἥμισυ τὸ δεξιὸν καὶ τὸν ὀφθαλμὸν ἐκκεκομμένη, *Toxaris*, 24). Eventually we learn that the man wed her out of friendship with the woman's father (in spite of some farcical pleading from her father not to marry the ugly and disfigured girl).

After Mnesippus' final tale, Toxaris takes over, and after his first story (which does not suit our purposes to repeat), he asks Mnesippus how he could possibly tell a better tale, even if he were allowed to tell ten more and, without an oath, were allowed to "add many lies to them" (πολλὰ ἐπιψεύδοιο αὐτοῖς). He then berates his opponent for his embellishments (indeed, Toxaris' tales are shorter and less descriptive), claiming that he himself has narrated the naked action (γυμνὸν τὸ ἔργον), whereas if Mnesippus were telling the same story, he would no doubt have mixed elegant dressings with his story (κομψὰ ἐγκατέμιξας τῷ λόγῳ), the sorts of things Greeks are accustomed to contrive for their audience (ὅποῖα ὑμεῖς μηχανᾶσθαι εἰώθατε πρὸς τὴν ἀκρόασιν, *Toxaris*, 42).

Toxaris himself then launches into his own meta narrative on deceit. Arsacomas, a Scythian, falls in love with the daughter of the Bosporan king but his proposal is laughed at because he enumerates no property or possessions but merely boasts that he has two loyal friends. When he goes home to tell the two friends about the king's insult, the three concoct an elaborate scheme of revenge. One friend goes back to the king and pretends to be an informer about Arsacomas' planned revenge. He then lures the king into a sanctuary (away from guards), kills him, decapitates him, and smuggles his head out of the city to bring back to Arsacomas. Meanwhile, Arsacomas' other friend rides out to the king's new son-in-law (awarded the king's daughter over Arsacomas) and tells him that he should go claim the throne, for otherwise it will be taken by the king's illegitimate brother. He also claims to be a kinsman of the bride, and so he is allowed to conduct her back to Bosphorus while her husband goes on ahead to try to take

the throne. But rather than take the bride to Bosphorus, the friend of course takes her back to Arsacomas. A war ensues (which Toxaris himself fought in, allowing him another authenticating device), which Arsacomas and his friends win (*Toxaris*, 44-55)

Naturally, Mnesippus responds to this story with skepticism, much as Toxaris had responded to his story (also laden with deception) earlier. The stories were very dramatic (τραγικά), he observes, and similar to fables (μύθοις ὅμοια, *Toxaris*, 56).<sup>153</sup> If someone were to disbelieve them (εἰ δ' οὖν τις ἀπιστοίη αὐτοῖς), he would not altogether seem blameworthy (οὐ πάνυ μεμπτός εἶναι δόξειεν ἄν, *Toxaris*, 56). This allows Toxaris to wryly reply, "See to it, noble one, that your disbelief is not jealousy" (ἀλλ' ὄρα, ὦ γενναῖε, μὴ φθόνος ὑμῶν ἢ ἀπιστία ἦ, *Toxaris*, 56). Indeed, throughout the *Toxaris*, "the Greek and Scythian storytellers make equally elaborate protestations as they vie to outdo each others' lies."<sup>154</sup> Ultimately, the two swear friendship and hospitality to each other after remembering that because they had forgotten to appoint a judge, no one can be declared the winner. But key elements throughout make it clear why so many have seen in their tales echoes of the Greek romances, most especially their joint incredulity at each other's stories (especially stories containing elaborate narratives of deceit), set against the criteria at the outset that the winner's stories would be those told most vividly.<sup>155</sup> Jones sees clear influences on Lucian on this score: "Lucian must have been aware of the fiction being produced in his own time. The chronology of the ancient novel is still far from settled, but like Apuleius in Latin some, at least, of the Greek novelists were active in Lucian's day."<sup>156</sup>

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<sup>153</sup> Note this is the same phrase which Dionysophanes uses in his admonition to Lamon not to tell stories in Longus 4.20 (cf. 36-37 above). Cf. Plutarch, *De Faciis* 25: μύθοις ἄν ὅμοια καὶ τέρασιν ἔδοκει; and Diodorus, *Bibliotheca Historica*, 2.44: εἰ καὶ διὰ τὴν παραδοξολογίαν μύθοις ὅμοια φανήσεται τὰ ῥηθέντα.

<sup>154</sup> Anderson (1976a), 59

<sup>155</sup> Jones 1986, 56

<sup>156</sup> *Ibid*, 54

In addition to these references to fictionality as part of traditional tale-telling, Lucian also mentions lying and deception in his other dialogues, highlighting the thing that makes falsehood perhaps most dangerous: its seeming credibility. In his work *On Slander*, he warns at one point: “When someone comes to you and tells you [slandering] things, investigate the matter in itself, not regarding the age of the speaker or his life otherwise, or the cleverness in his words. For the more plausible someone seems, the more careful scrutiny is required” (ἐπειδὴν τοίνυν τοιαῦτα προσίη τις λέγων, αὐτὸ ἐφ’ ἑαυτοῦ χρητὸν πρᾶγμα ἐξετάζειν, μήτε ἡλικίαν τοῦ λέγοντος ὀρῶντα μήτε τὸν ἄλλον βίον μήτε τὴν ἐν τοῖς λόγοις ἀγχινοίαν. ὅσω γὰρ τις πιθανώτερος, τοσοῦτω ἐπιμελεστέρας δεῖται τῆς ἐξετάσεως, *On Slander*, 31). Indeed, earlier the narrator had warned that slanderers take pains to make their lies credible and that the surprising nature of what they say lends them credence (*On Slander*, 13).<sup>157</sup> This concern for the ability of slick talkers (i.e., sophists no different than himself) to dupe gullible followers recurs in one of Lucian’s preferred subjects: “If Lucian has a favorite topic, it is religion.”<sup>158</sup> In a famous passage of the *Peregrinus*, Lucian describes the new religion of Christianity with contempt and ridicule, noting how Peregrinus, after joining their numbers, was worshipped by them second only to Christ himself. They showered him with elaborate meals and money, from which, Lucian wryly notes, he made not a little profit (πρόσοδον οὐ μικρὰν ταύτην ἐποιήσατο, *Peregrinus*, 13). Lucian famously goes on to indict the gullibility of Christians in general, alleging they receive their practices without any accurate proof (ἄνευ τινός ἀκριβοῦς πίστεως τὰ τοιαῦτα παραδεξάμενοι, *Peregrinus*, 13). Because of this, “should any sorcerer or trickster come among them, being able to profit from these affairs, he in short order becomes wealthy, gaping at uneducated folks” (ἦν τοίνυν παρέλθη τις εἰς αὐτοὺς γόης καὶ τεχνίτης ἄνθρωπος καὶ

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<sup>157</sup> If these remarks are not resonant with Longus enough, early in *Slander* there is an *ecphrasis* of a painting of Slander herself, and a “guide” (*exegete*) is employed to make sense of the image.

<sup>158</sup> Jones 1986, 33.

πράγμασιν χρῆσθαι δυνάμενος, αὐτίκα μάλα πλούσιος ἐν βραχεῖ ἐγένετο ἰδιώταις ἀνθρώποις ἐγγανῶν, *Peregrinus*, 13). Indeed, Jones concludes that for Lucian, no matter how accurate his information may be about Christians, they are rather “merely another example of human incredulity and ignorance.”<sup>159</sup>

This twin danger of public gullibility and clever predators finds its greatest expression in perhaps the most famous invective of Lucian, *Alexander the False Prophet*. Here the topic not only allows Lucian to amuse his friend Celsus,<sup>160</sup> who requested the work, but also affords him the opportunity to discourse yet again on lying, deceit, sophistry, trickery, and gullibility. Such a treatment starts early, as Lucian promises Celsus in his introduction to elaborate on Alexander’s “clever schemes (ἐπίνοια) and “sleights of hand” (μαγγανεία, *Alexander*, 1). Lucian starts with some boilerplate invective, including the common accusation that Alexander had been a male prostitute in his youth. Lucian then concedes that Alexander was brilliant but put it to poor use. Indeed, he was made from a mixture of lying and tricks and false swearings and wicked craftsmanships (ψεύδους καὶ δόλων καὶ ἐπιτορκιῶν καὶ κακοτεχνιῶν), but also plausible and convincing (πιθανὴν καὶ ἀξιόπιστον, *Alexander*, 4). Throughout the *Alexander*, it will be this combination of plausibility and deceit that will most rile Lucian. To fool the people of Abonuteichos, Alexander uses a number of “contrivances” or “devices” (μηχανᾶται), “a word

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<sup>159</sup> Jones 1986, 122. For more on Lucian, *Peregrinus*, and Christianity, see: Bagnani 1955, Betz 1959, Benko 1980, Dodds 1990, 59-64; for a plea for caution on comparing Lucian to the New Testament, see Adams 2010.

<sup>160</sup> Whether this is the same Celsus against whom Origen defended Christianity has been the subject of recurring debate. In Chadwick’s edition of the *Contra Celsum* (1953, xxv), he rejects the prospect, noting that “it is perfectly clear from almost every page of the *contra Celsum* that Celsus is far from being in any sense an Epicurean.” But in his more recent edition of Celsus’ *On the True Doctrine*, Hoffman (1987, 32) argues that “Epicurean” was a general term (often of abuse) and that in any case Origen himself notes Celsus had converted from Epicureanism. This, coupled with the fact that Galen, Lucian, and Origen all characterize Celsus as an opponent of magic, not to mention the matching chronology (both Lucian’s Celsus and Origen’s opponent are writing at about 180 CE), certainly does not rule out the possibility that this is one and the same Celsus.

which recurs in his account” a half-dozen times.<sup>161</sup> First, in true authenticating fashion, Alexander “discovers” a snake and a goose egg after planting them the night before. Likewise, after setting up the oracle through which he would deliver prophecies, he had pilgrims deposit sealed scrolls and then returned them seemingly still sealed with answers to their questions. Lucian remarks that this trick was easy enough to see through, but the populace thought it amazing (ἄπιστα, *Alexander*, 20). He also devised a trick unworthy of an everyday robber (μηχανᾶταί τι ... τοῦ προστυχόντος ληστοῦ ἄξιον), namely that he would keep inquiries made to the god that were embarrassing to the petitioners so he could use them as blackmail (*Alexander*, 32). At one point, Lucian submits a phony inquiry just to trip the “prophet” up (*Alexander*, 53), reminiscent of his fabricated work by Hericlitus that he used to expose a philosopher and other grammarians unfortunate enough to be his target.<sup>162</sup> Indeed, in sealing the drumbeat of deceit and gullibility throughout the *Alexander*, Lucian ends the piece hopeful that it will be “useful to those happening upon it” (τοῖς ἐντυχοῦσι χρήσιμόν) since it “refutes some things while confirming others in the opinions of those of good mind” (τὰ μὲν διεξελέγχουσα, τὰ δὲ ἐν ταῖς τῶν εὖ φρονούντων γνώμαις βεβαιοῦσα, *Alexander*, 61).

Indeed, in the tradition of Thucydides, usefulness is Lucian’s benchmark for recording things for posterity. And we need not rely upon the satirical discourses above to tease out his thoughts on history, myth, lies, and fiction: in his *How to Write History* – a correspondence to an otherwise unknown Philo – Lucian spelled out his thoughts on the current crop of historians, who were eager to record the events of the Parthian War (162-165 CE), and their myriad shortcomings.<sup>163</sup> Despite the title, the majority of the work is occupied by Lucian’s laments

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<sup>161</sup> Jones 1986, 137

<sup>162</sup> Ibid, 19. The incident is mentioned by Galen.

<sup>163</sup> The work is thus easily dated: in section 31, Lucian criticizes a historian who has the temerity to even write “future history” (τὰ μέλλοντα) about how the war would end, including a city the Romans would no doubt build there – though the historian in question was unsure as yet what the name of it would be!



about the current state of historiography, but the recurring criticism is that history has become too blurred with poetry and fiction; that historians spend too much time on description; and that they insufficiently use truth as the measuring rod for their writings.

Lucian's first complaint is that would-be historians neglect the facts and instead give generous amounts of time to eulogies (ἀμελήσαντες γὰρ οἱ πολλοὶ αὐτῶν τοῦ ἱστορεῖν τὰ γεγενημένα τοῖς ἐπαίνοις ἀρχόντων καὶ στρατηγῶν ἐνδιατρίβουσι, 7). While panegyric can afford embellishment, history itself cannot tolerate a lie (ἢ δὲ οὐκ ἄν τι ψεῦδος ἐμπεσὼν ἢ ἱστορία, 7). What ails current writers of history, according to Lucian, is that these men seem not to know that the bar for history is not the same as for poems or poetry (ἔτι ἀγνοεῖν εἰκόσιν οἱ τοιοῦτοι ὡς ποιητικῆς μὲν καὶ ποιημάτων ἄλλαι ὑποσχέσεις καὶ κανόνες ἴδιοι, ἱστορίας δὲ ἄλλοι). In poetry, freedom is utmost (ἀκρατῆς ἢ ἐλευθερία) and there is but one rule: what seems right to the poet (καὶ νόμος εἷς, τὸ δόξαν τῷ ποιητῇ). If history were to do the same, however, it is nothing but a sort of pedestrian poetry (πεζή τις ποιητικὴ), which lacks its lofty sounds (μεγαλοφωνία), but because it is bare of meter, it shows its marvels to be all the more suspect (τὴν λουπὴν δὲ τερατείαν γυμνὴν τῶν μέτρων καὶ δι' αὐτὸ ἐπισημοτέραν ἐκφαίνουσα, 8). Indeed, Lucian rejects outright that history need be something pleasurable (τερπνόν) in addition to being useful (χρήσιμον). Such a division is spurious (κιβδήλω τῇ διαιρέσει) because history should have only one aim: the useful, which derives from one tool, the truth (ἐν γὰρ ἔργον ἱστορίας καὶ τέλος, τὸ χρήσιμον ὅπερ ἐκ τοῦ ἀληθοῦς μόνου συνάγεται, 9). In fact, Lucian goes so far as to say that something fabulistic (μυθῶδες) doesn't actually give pleasure anyway, except perhaps to the great unwashed (τὸν πολὺν δῆμον). Rather, one should be aware of those who will listen as judges or even fault-finders (τοὺς δικαστικῶς καὶ νῆ Δία συκοφαντικῶς), whom nothing will escape (οὓς οὐκ ἄν τι λάθοι). For they test each thing said like money-changers (ἀργυραμοιβικῶς δὲ τῶν λεγομένων ἕκαστα ἐξετάζοντας), throwing aside right away

the counterfeits (τὰ μὲν παρακεκομμένα εὐθὺς ἀπορρίπτειν, 10). Those who insist on the pleasurable in history are like ugly people (οἱ ἄμορφοι) who instruct artists nevertheless to paint them as beautifully as possible (τοῖς γραφεῦσι παρακελευόμενα ὡς καλλίστας αὐτὰς γράφειν, 13).

Moving on to specific examples of bad historians, Lucian reserves special disdain for an unnamed historian who took pains to describe all cities, all mountains, all plains, and all rivers in the most detailed and striking way possible ... so he thought (πάσας πόλεις καὶ πάντα ὄρη καὶ πεδία καὶ ποταμούς ἐρμηνεύσας πρὸς τὸ σαφέστατον καὶ ἰσχυρότατον, ὡς ᾤετο, 19). Historians of that stripe have either a weakness as to what is useful (ὑπὸ γὰρ ἀσθενείας τῆς ἐν τοῖς χρησίμοις) or an ignorance about what should be said (ἢ ἀγνοίας τῶν λεκτέων) and thus take pleasure in *ecphrases* about places and caves (ἐπὶ τὰς τοιαύτας τῶν χωρίων καὶ ἄντρων ἐκφράσεις τρέπονται, 20).

Nor does Lucian have much use for the various authenticating devices already examined. He notes wryly a writer who begins his narrative musing that “ears are less credible than eyes” (ᾤτα ὀφθαλμῶν ἀπιστότερα). He will thus “write about the things which I have seen, not those which I have heard” (γράφω τοίνυν ἃ εἶδον, οὐχ ἃ ἤκουσα.). Said writer saw everything so accurately (καὶ οὕτως ἀκριβῶς ἅπαντα ἐωράκει) that he was able to report on dragons of enormous size (ὥστε τοὺς δράκοντας ἔφη... παμμεγέθεις εἶναι, 29)! Still another styled himself as an historian of the future (τὰ μέλλοντα συγγεγραφότος), predicting the end of the Parthian war and the capture of Vologesus. These are the many trifles among historians thanks to their lack of education (τοιαῦτα πολλὰ ὑπὸ ἀπαιδευσίας). They simply dream up and fictionalize whatever is on the tips of their tongues (ἐπινοοῦντες δὲ καὶ ἀναπλάττοντες, ὅ τι κεν ἐπ’ ἀκαιρίμαν γλῶσσαν, 32). It is little surprise, then, that when Lucian turns to the subject of his discourse, his advice on how to write history, truth is the paramount virtue. A good historian

should sacrifice to truth alone (καὶ μόνῃ θυτέον τῇ ἀληθείᾳ), and must eschew all else (τῶν δὲ ἄλλων ἀπάντων ἀμελητέον, 40).

This admittedly short treatment of Lucian's vast corpus has I hope nevertheless illustrated that like his contemporaries (or indeed perhaps more so), Lucian was preoccupied with veracity and deceit, gullibility and credibility. When not lamenting the trends of his day in letters and dialogues, he often dovetailed these concerns into his own fictions and storytelling. He manages to treat such notions in stories intended by their tellers to be believed (as in the *Toxaris*), not believed (as in the *Lover of Lies*), or somewhere in between (as in the *True Histories*); when departing from narrative, Lucian's fixation on deceit continues in his attacks on those who used it for personal fame and gain, as did Alexander and Peregrinus, or in merely his own playful ends. The clear demarcation is indeed for what ends the lies are being told, though for Lucian, as the *True History* seems to suggest, the easy blurring of the lines between plausible storytelling for entertainment and credible contrivance for guile seems always in the background. As Jones sums up: "Lucian disliked 'lies' but not elegant and beguiling fiction."<sup>164</sup>

We thus have a direct contemporary to Longus whose own writings and whose laments on the writings of others illustrate a literary world preoccupied with credible storytelling and fiction; with the blurring of traditional demarcations between prose and poetry; and with the possibilities and challenges that await a skillful word artist who might wish to tell a thoroughly unbelievable tale. What we might hope to find when examining Longus' fellow novelists, then, is a reflection of these preoccupations, and an analysis of their fictional narratives does not disappoint on that score.

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<sup>164</sup> Jones 1986, 58

## Chapter 4: Lies and Fiction in the Greek Novels I – Chariton and Xenophon

### Chariton

Chariton's novel *Callirhoe* is most likely the oldest extant Greek romance, probably written in the middle of the first century CE.<sup>165</sup> Regardless of whether it is typical of the genre at the time, it is "simple and linear" and contains an "uncomplicated narrative manner,"<sup>166</sup> unlike the more "sophistic" novels of the second century and beyond, like those of Achilles Tatius, Longus, Apuleius, and Heliodorus. Simple though it may be, Chariton drives his linear fiction

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<sup>165</sup> Chariton shows fewer, if any, attempts at Atticizing like the later sophistic authors (such as Longus), and is thus typically dated to before the second century. Papanikolaou (1973) has done the most thorough and oft-cited study of Chariton's language, concluding from certain vulgarisms that he wrote in the latter half of the first century BCE, his lifetime overlapping with the advent of Atticizing reform: "*Damit aber gewinnen wir ein Indiz, das auf eine Datierung Charitons in die Mitte oder die zweite Hälfte des 1. Jhs v. Chr. fuhr, so daß sich seine Lebenszeit durchaus mit dem Beginn der attizistischen Reform überschneiden haben kann,*" 163. However, Papanikolaou admits that a dearth of Hellenistic prose offers little for comparison to Chariton, and his own dating is the very earliest, based on a *terminus post quem* thanks to a reference to Chinese silk in 6.4.2 (χρύσειον δὲ ἀκινάκην ὑπεζωσμένος δύο ἄκοντας ἐκράτει, καὶ φαρέτρα καὶ τόξον αὐτῷ παρήρητο, Σηρῶν ἔργον πολυτελέστατον). Giangrande (1974) was unconvinced by Papanikolaou, most especially on the grounds that a lack of Atticizing necessarily dates Chariton to before such a convention. Precisely because Chariton and the other novelists were "literate" (*belesen*, re: Papanikolaou) "explodes Papanikolaou's argument: they were artists, who created their diction and style as an act of deliberate literary choice, so that the absence or presence of certain features in such self-conscious writers cannot, in so far as being the result of calculated artistic choice, be regarded as a criterion for dating in the manner followed by those who study non-literary texts" (197). Of course, it is possible that traces of Atticizing can, in fact, be found in Chariton. Ruiz-Montero (1991), studying the vocabulary rather than syntax of Chariton, found broad agreement with him and authors of the late first and early second century, concluding, *contra* Papanikolaou, that Chariton shows a "knowledge of Atticist precepts which the author follows when he wants. Thus, Atticisms are indeed present in Chariton, although in moderate quantity" (489). Based on these considerations and Chariton's affinity for terminology found in Plutarch, Josephus, and Philo, Ruiz-Montero dates Chariton to the late first or very early second century CE, slightly later than Reardon, who advocates for a date in the middle of the first century CE (Reardon 2008, 17). Few anymore date him much later, thanks to papyrus finds in 1900 (*Papyrus Fayumensis* 1 saec. 2: 4.2.3-4.3.2), 1910 (*POxy* 1019, 2.3.5-2.4.2), 1955 (*Papyri Michaelidae* 1, saec. 2: 2.11.4-2.11.6), and 1972 (*POxy* 2948, saec. 3: 2.4.5-2.5.1), all of which date to the mid to late second century or early third. This *terminus ante quem* coincides with the brief, unflattering mention of a Chariton in Philostratus Epistle 1.66, where the author's posterity is questioned and attacked: "Chariton, you suppose that the Greeks will remember your words when you die: but who will those be when they are no longer here, who are of no account when they are here?"/Χαρίτωνι. μεμνήσεσθαι τῶν ὧν λόγων οἶε τοὺς Ἕλληνας, ἐπειδὴν τελευτήσης: οἱ δὲ μηδὲν ὄντες, ὅποτε εἰσίν, τίνες ἂν εἶεν, ὅποτε οὐκ εἰσίν; Notes Reardon (1991, 47): "It seems probable [that our Chariton is the addressee] ... we know of no other Chariton who wrote 'stories' (logoi), and Philostratus was a Bloomsbury figure, the biographer of the Second Sophistic."

<sup>166</sup> Reardon 2008, 20

forward at almost every turn using narrative deceit within his story. The plot of virtually every episode (each of which is typically contained within one of his novel's eight books), is set up by a deception weaved by one character to dupe others – a deception which is believed, acted upon, and which then moves the story into another narrative theater. In his use of narrative, plausible deception, then, Chariton is acting within the same milieu as Longus; but his use of said deceptions in such a linear fashion can perhaps shed light on the innovations which Longus and others attempt to bring to their own narratives. The indispensability of deception in Chariton's work, at such an early stage of the novel's development, suggests, as it does in the other novelists, that lying and fiction were inextricably linked in the minds of early imperial novelists and elites, and that this linkage expressed itself in self-conscious ways in the earliest forms of prose fiction we have today.

Though many have attributed the myriad twists and turns of Chariton's various episodes to fortune, or *tyche*,<sup>167</sup> that is not a very helpful distillation. For while chance maneuvers, like a sudden swelling of the Nile that quenches a burning pyre, can rescue a hero in Xenophon,<sup>168</sup> in Chariton virtually every turn of fortune is caused – within natural, not supernatural, means – by some deceptive scheme on the part of one of his characters: a scheme that is just plausible enough to be believed and thus fool the schemers' fellow actors in the story. Chariton owes much of this debt to the plots of New Comedy,<sup>169</sup> and indeed, Chariton will use the language of

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<sup>167</sup> Thus Reardon summarily notes that "dramatic turns of event, thrown into the story by Tyche, the goddess Chance, land hero or heroine in one pathetic plight after another" (1991, 24).

<sup>168</sup> *Ephesiaca* 4.2

<sup>169</sup> Cf. 48 above, where Quintilian lists comedic plots as one of the forms of narrative: "the rational narrative, which is false but is similar to the truth, as comedies fashion" (*argumentum, quod falsum sed uero simile comoediae fingunt*, 2.4.2). Reardon referred to the novel as "cousin-german to New Comedy; and this is because it reflects a similar world. Cousin-german, but not blood brother; there are important differences between the two. The major differences are two, and they reflect the passage of some centuries between New Comedy and novel: ... the elements of travel and divine intervention." (1969, 292) Perry (1967, 140) mostly agreed, arguing that the novel was "fundamentally drama in substance and historiography in its outward form ... The novel is the necessary successor to stage-drama on the popular level for a reading public; and since its subject matter is theoretically historical, and its form that of prose

the stage over and again to describe the sorts of deceptive schemes being plotted and carried out by his characters. The most famous is perhaps the action which sets up the typical romantic arc (the separation of the two lovers) of the entire novel: Chaereas' belief that Callirhoe has been unfaithful to him, the assault Chaereas makes on her, and the mistaken belief that she is dead.

### ***Callirhoe Book 1: Much Ado About Nothing*<sup>170</sup>**

Callirhoe and Chaereas are wed in the first chapter of the first book, and immediately in the second chapter, the rejected suitors of Callirhoe begin to scheme to end their union. Most of them prefer open force, but the tyrant of Acragas urges them otherwise. Because of the power of his father-in-law, an open fight against Chaereas is impossible, but they deem it better to use craft (ἀδύνατος ἡμῖν πρὸς αὐτὸν ἢ ἐκ τοῦ φανεροῦ μάχη, κρείττων δὲ ἢ μετὰ τέχνης, Chariton 1.2.4). Their first scheme, which proves unsuccessful, involved going to Callirhoe's house "secretly and unseen" (κρύφα δὲ καὶ ἀδήλως) and leaving "evidence" of a party (σημεῖα κώμου). Chaereas arrived at the house and burst in on Callirhoe, "able neither to disbelieve the things which he had seen nor to believe the things which he did not want to" (οὔτε ἀπιστεῖν οἷς εἶδεν οὔτε πιστεῦειν οἷς οὐκ ἤθελε δυνάμενος, 1.3.4). Nevertheless, the two lovers are reconciled, and the tyrant must embark on a more effective plot (ἤπτετο λοιπὸν ἐνεργεστέρας κατασκευῆς τι τοιοῦτον, 1. 4.1). He enlists one of his parasites who is talkative (στωμύλος) and full of every social grace (πάσης χάριτος ὁμιλητικῆς ἔμπλεως). He orders this man to play-act at being a lover (τοῦτον ἐκέλευσεν ὑποκριτὴν ἔρωτος γενέσθαι), and then bids him to seduce Callirhoe's maid. Then, "the craftsman of this drama" (ὁ δημιουργὸς τοῦ δράματος) found

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narrative, it naturally follows the conventions of historiography, some of which in turn were fundamentally dramatic." As this chapter and the next will demonstrate, the novelists are keenly aware of their dramatic debts, and self-consciously and repeatedly refer to their narratives in dramatic fashion.

<sup>170</sup> The deception that initiates the action of the novel, Chaereas' belief that Callirhoe is having an affair based on his witnessing Callirhoe's maid with a seducer, was in fact source material for the Shakespearean comedy by this name (Höttemann 2011, 122-123).

“another actor, not altogether as charming, but cunning and plausible in his speech” (ὕποκριτὴν ἕτερον ἐξεῦρεν, οὐκέτι ὁμοίως εὐχάρην, ἀλλὰ πανοῦργον καὶ ἀξιόπιστον λαλῆσαι, 1.4.2). Having told him what should be said and done, he sent him off to Chaereas (τοῦτον προδιδάξας ἃ χρὴ πράττειν καὶ λέγειν, 1.4.3). This actor knows precisely how to reel Chaereas in: when he is bidden to speak, he holds back, suggesting it is not the right time (δεομένου λέγειν ὥκνει καὶ προουφασίζετο μὴ εἶναι τὸν καιρὸν ἐπιτήδειον τὸν παρόντα), and fills Chaereas with hope, fear, and curiosity (ἐλπίδος καὶ φόβου καὶ πολυπραγμοσύνης, 1.4.4). When he does finally tell Chaereas (“acting as one in mourning, even crying a little bit”/ ὁμοίος γενόμενος λυπούμενω, μικρὸν δέ τι καὶ δακρύσας), he informs Chaereas that his wife is having an affair. Chaereas insists on seeing it with his own eyes, and so this “malicious slanderer set the scene” (ὁ δὲ κακοήθης ἐκεῖνος καὶ διάβολος συνέταττε τὴν σκηνήν, 1.4.8). The man who had seduced Callirhoe’s maid then arrives at the house:

ὕποκρινόμενος μὲν τὸν λαθραίοις ἔργοις ἐπιχειρεῖν προαιρούμενον, πάντα δὲ μηχανώμενος ἵνα μὴ λάθοι: κόμην εἶχε λιπαρὰν καὶ βοστρύχους μύρων ἀποπνέοντας, ὀφθαλμοὺς ὑπογεγραμμένους, ἱμάτιον μαλακόν, ὑπόδημα λεπτόν: δακτύλιοι βαρεῖς ὑπέστιλβον. Εἶτα πολὺ περιβλεψάμενος τῆς θύρας προσῆλθε, κρούσας δὲ ἐλαφρῶς τὸ εἰωθὸς ἔδωκε σημεῖον. Ἡ δὲ θεράπεινα καὶ αὐτὴ περίφοβος ἡρέμα παρανοίξασα καὶ λαβομένη τῆς χειρὸς εἰσήγαγε (1.4.9-10).

While pretending to attempt his purpose with secret deeds, he was in fact scheming openly so that he might not be overlooked: he had his hair shimmering and his locks smelling of perfume, his eyes had eyeliner, and he wore a soft cloak and dainty shoes, and his heavy rings gleamed. Then, after looking around him a lot, he went to the door. And the maiden, herself quiet and fearful, having opened the door a bit and taken him by the hand, led him within.

The actor's attire and performance are evocative of the exaggerated movements and appearance of comic stock characters,<sup>171</sup> but the naïve hero is taken in by them. He rushes in and kicks Callirhoe, who faints as though dead, is buried as such, and ends up kidnapped by piratical tomb raiders and taken out to sea.

Over and again, the stage is ever present in the tyrant's successful scheme. The parasite is asked to become an "actor" (ὑποκριτής), and the scheme is referred to as a "drama" (δράμα). The slanderer then sets the "scene" (σκηνή) and the so-called adulterer is a perfect stock portrait. But the difference between what Chariton is doing and the work of the comedic poets is obvious: here, the comic action is *within* the narrative, the betrayal of its staging known only to the omniscient narrator and reader, while to the characters deceived it is all too real. Yet the entirety of the novel is of course a giant stage, with Chariton play-acting for his audience, and it

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<sup>171</sup> See Porter's two treatments (1997, 2003). In the first of these two essays, Porter posits that Lysias "exploits the motifs of the stereotypical adultery tale" and draws on what he calls the "comic adultery scenario" (422). In the second, he responds to an attempt by Kapparis (2000) to specifically put Chariton in Lysias' debt, arguing that most of the scene here contains "generic elements." However, these "generic elements" can shed light on the scene and Chaereas' actions within it. Studies of "the adultery mime" indicate that it was a popular comic scenario, and possibly contained similarities to the scene constructed here by Chariton's schemers: according to Ovid (*Tristia* 2.497-500), the mime featured a "polished" or "elegant" adulterer (*cultus adulter*) and a "cunning wife" (*callida nupta*) who deceives her "foolish husband" (*stulto viro*), "who was no doubt played by the mimic fool, the *stupidus*" (Kehoe 1984, 90). Reynolds (1946) reconstructed the mime, wherein the wife admits her lover while the husband is away and then hides him in a chest when he unexpectedly arrives home (see discussion of the similar scene in Apuleius on 193 below). Reynolds, citing Capitolinus, argues that the mime perhaps started with the husband interrogating a slave as to his wife's lover and then setting about to expose her adultery, not entirely different than the action that sets up Chaereas' intervention. If the adultery mime was as popular as scholars contend, it is at least conceivable that even while mimicking its actions, Chariton has Chaereas influenced by its reputation. Reynolds concluded that "the weight of the ridicule was directed at the simple gullibility of the husband, and not at the lover ungracefully concealed in the chest" (82), so the humiliation of becoming the *stupidus* is perhaps behind his anger as much as the infidelity. Indeed, when the lover eventually is revealed in an adultery mime (perhaps when he runs out of air in the chest), Reynolds sees the farce coming to an end in perhaps two different ways: either the "guilty pair" is "ready with some fictitious story" or the "fat and awkward husband" barges in, consumed in "a clownish rage" (83). It is the latter that Chaereas does, but perhaps he is guarding against the former. One troubling aspect of Chaereas' impulsively violent act is his refusal to allow Callirhoe to defend herself (as she has before, 1.4), but the reputation of the *callida nupta* may have made him reluctant to allow her to use, in Reynolds' words, "all her feminine ingenuity" to fool the husband again while he, the "clumsy buffoon," rushed in the room, "stabbing the empty air, tripping over his own feet, perhaps even falling into the chest, which lies conveniently open" (83). Thus in refusing to play the fool, Chaereas becomes just that, duped by a suitor's machinations.



is an open question how many of his readers would have been aware that what they were reading was pure fiction.<sup>172</sup> Chariton himself lends credence to the upcoming narrative in his opening, referring to himself as a clerk (ὑπογραφεύς) to a presumably real rhetor, Athenagoras, and writes simply (yet ambiguously) that he is going to narrate (διηγήσομαι) an erotic event (πάθος ἐρωτικόν) that happened (γενόμενον). This is no once-upon-a-time opening: Chariton has told his readers this actually happened (whether or not it did), and lends the narrative more credence by situating it within a real historical context. Callirhoe is the daughter of Hermocrates, the general of Syracuse who defeated the Athenian invasion in 413 CE, a historical event alluded to often in the novel (*i.a.*, 1.1.13, 1.11.2). Chariton even may have been lending Callirhoe some historical credence: Diodorus writes that Hermocrates had an unnamed daughter who also married a Dionysius, as Callirhoe will in Book 3 – Dionysius I, the tyrant of Syracuse,<sup>173</sup> who incidentally started his life as a clerk like Chariton.<sup>174</sup> This daughter herself has an ill-fated history: before Dionysius' tyranny was fully secured, rebelling Syracusans ransacked his house and outraged his wife (τὴν δὲ γυναῖκα συλλαβόντες οὕτω διέθεσαν κακῶς) so that the tyrant's anger might remain deep (ὥστε καὶ τὸν τύραννον βαρέως ἐνέχειν τὴν ὀργήν, Diod. 13.112.4). Plutarch also writes that Dionysius married Hermocrates' daughter and also reports the outrage by the rebels, but adds that afterward she took her own life (εὐθὺς ἔγημε τὴν Ἑρμοκράτους τοῦ

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<sup>172</sup> This is perhaps the biggest issue currently in scholarship on the ancient novel. For general treatments, see two chapters in Gill and Wiseman 1993: Laird's "Fiction, Bewitchment and Story Worlds: The Implications of Claims to Truth in Apuleius"; and Morgan's "Make-Believe and Make Believe: The Fictionality of the Greek Novels." On *Callirhoe* specifically, Hagg (1987, 197): "Admitting the general probability of the historical background for the love story, different readers will have judged differently where the line is drawn between fact and fiction, exactly as is the case with modern historical novels and modern readers. No doubt some believed the whole story to be authentic." See also Hunter 1994 and Reardon 1967, 66-72, and 167-68: "the authors [of early romances] professed to be writing history (of a kind), and were classified as historians by ancient scholars who had no more exact term for romance as a literary form."

<sup>173</sup> "And so Dionysius right away married the daughter of Hermocrates, the conqueror of the Athenians" ὁ δ' οὖν Διονύσιος εὐθέως ἔγημε τὴν Ἑρμοκράτους θυγατέρα τοῦ καταπολεμήσαντος Ἀθηναίου, 13.96.3). The epithet is similar to that first given to describe Hermocrates in Chariton (νικήσας Ἀθηναίους, 1.1).

<sup>174</sup> "And so Dionysus, from a clerk ... became the tyrant of the greatest city of the Greeks (Διονύσιος μὲν οὖν ἐκ γραμματέως ... τῆς μεγίστης πόλεως τῶν Ἑλληνίδων ἐγενήθη τύραννος, Diodorus 13.96.2).

Συρακουσίου θυγατέρα, ταύτην, οὕπω τῆς τυραννίδος ἰδρυμένης βεβαίως, ἀποστάντες οἱ Συρακούσιοι δεινὰς καὶ παρανόμους ὕβρεις εἰς τὸ σῶμα καθύβρισαν, ἐφ' αἷς προήκατο τὸν βίον ἐκουσίως, Plutarch, *Dionysius* 3.1). Hunter has identified quasi-historical models for several other minor characters in the work as well.<sup>175</sup> And so while Chariton is drawing on the schemes and plots of New Comedy, he situates them within vaguely recognizable, historical contexts, nonfactual though they may be. And it should be remembered that Quintilian refers to comic plots as “like the truth” (*uero simile*),<sup>176</sup> for they mimic situations that could occur, however unlikely.

And so, Chariton, like Longus, is then engaging in the same narrative plausibility that his characters employ throughout the work, and it is, of course, Chariton who is pulling their puppet strings all along, anyway. At the opening of almost each book, a scheme sets the stage for the narrative action contained within it, and at the close of each book, another scheme sets the stage for the next. Thus the action of Book 1, which consists mainly of Callirhoe’s kidnapping and the pirates’ debates about what to do with her, is propelled forward thanks to the concocted schemes of the suitor from Acragas. Similarly, the action of Book 2, her initial time with the aristocrat Dionysophanes, will result from the lies and schemes of the pirate Theron, who first suggests he will give Callirhoe back to her parents (θέλω γὰρ αὐτὴν ἀποδοῦναι τοῖς γονεῦσιν, 1.9.7), but then reveals he aims to sell her into slavery (Ἐγὼ δὲ ἀποδώσομαι τὴν γυναῖκα μᾶλλον ἢ ἀπολῶ, 1.10.8). Upon making this decision, both captor and captive engage in some mutual deceit, as Theron “mollified Callirhoe, trying to deceive her with manifold designs” (Καλλιρρόην δὲ παρεμυθεῖτο Θήρων, ποικίλαις ἐπινοίαις πειρώμενος ἀπατᾶν, 1.11.1), but she understood

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<sup>175</sup> Hunter (1994, 1056-57) connects Bias, the general of Priene in 4.5.7 and 5.6.8 to Bias of Priene, one of the Seven Wise Men of archaic Greece; Rhodogoune, the Persian woman whose beauty is bested by Callirhoe, to a woman of the same name mentioned in Plutarch *Artax.* 27.7; and the Persians Zopyros and Megabyzos to men so named in Thucydides 1.109.

<sup>176</sup> Cf. 48 above. As Reardon (1991, 28) rightly notes, “Such a story is not simply a fantasy of the individual author. It has a basis in social reality, in the world as Chariton saw it.”

how matters stood with her and that she was saved in vain (Ἐκείνη δὲ ἠσθάνετο τὰ καθ' ἑαυτὴν καὶ ὅτι ἄλλως ἐσώθη) yet “pretended that she did not know” (προσεποιεῖτο δὲ μὴ νοεῖν, 1.11.2).<sup>177</sup> In order to effect the sale, Theron lies about where he got Callirhoe, telling a steward of the aristocrat Dionysius that she was a slave from Sybaris (1.12) sold out of the jealousy of her mistress (another stock motif that Chariton’s characters make capital of). When the sale was all but agreed upon, Theron “began to flatter Callirhoe” (Καλλιρρόην κολακεύειν ἤρξατο), spinning a fairly complicated yarn about a sea trip that he did not want her to endure and ensuring that she would be sent back to Chaereas “without insult” (ἀνύβριστος, 1.13.8) but that for now she would be staying with some “trusted friends” of his in Ionia (παραθήσομαί σε φίλους πιστοῖς, 1.13.9). Again, Callirhoe only pretends to be fooled, laughing to herself despite her grief (πρὸς αὐτὴν ἐγέλασε Καλλιρρόη, καίτοι σφόδρα λυπουμένη) and considering him a complete fool (ὅτι παντελῶς αὐτὴν ἀνόητον ὑπελάμβανεν), for she already knew she had been sold, but, wishing to get away from the pirates, she considered that a better fate than even the well-born status she had enjoyed before (ἤδη γὰρ πωλουμένη ἠπίστατο, τῆς δὲ πάλαι εὐγενείας τὴν πρᾶσιν εὐτυχεστέραν ὑπελάμβανεν, ἀπαλλαγῆναι θέλουσα ληστῶν, 1.13.10). She thus thanks Theron for his “kindness” (φιλανθρωπίας) and then cleverly and ambiguously wishes that the gods bestow all the repayments he deserves (ἀποδοῖεν δὲ ... πᾶσιν ὑμῖν οἱ θεοὶ τὰς ἀξίας ἀμοιβάς, 1.13.10). In finally closing the sale, Theron puts on one last show, affecting indifference (ἀκκισάμενος) when Dionysius’ steward offers him the money immediately before a legal contract has been secured – then taking the money anyway (1.14.5). This leaves Callirhoe to herself to utter a lengthy lament that serves to summarize the events of Book 1: events that began with a deceit leading to her kidnapping, and ended in another deceit which lands her in

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<sup>177</sup> Chariton often has his characters “pretend” (προσποιέω, a word that will recur at least seven times), as we shall see.

Dionysius' home, the stage for the next round of conflicts that serve her continuing separation from Chaereas, and thus the forward movement of the novel.

### **Callirhoe Book 2**

At the opening of Book 2, Callirhoe is a freeborn, married woman who has been sold as a slave to the aristocrat Dionysius. Greek social convention thus already poses a problem, for Callirhoe, if she is truly noble, must not *look* like a slave.<sup>178</sup> Dionysius himself voices this prejudice aloud. As an aristocratic man (άνηρ γάρ βασιλικός), Dionysius was loathe to take a slave as a concubine (άπηξίου κοίτην θερααινίδος) and tells his servant that “it is impossible that someone not born free is beautiful” (άδύνατον ... καλόν εἶναι σώμα μη πεφυκός ελεύθερον, 2.1.5). Yet if Dionysius is to be at all sympathetic, he must realize that she is not a slave, and indeed this preoccupation dominates the first half of Book 2. Dionysius rejects the prospect of satisfying his desire for Callirhoe as her master: “I could not do that, until I learn who the woman is and where she comes from. And so let us learn the truth about her in the morning” (“Οὐκ ἂν ποιήσαιμι ... πριν μαθεῖν τίς ἡ γυνή καὶ πόθεν. Ἐωθεν οὖν πυθώμεθα παρ’ αὐτῆς τὴν ἀλήθειαν’ 2.4.10). The emphasis on the “truth” concerning Callirhoe provides a nice counterpart to the lies told about her in the first book, but truth-telling will be short lived here, as well. Nevertheless, Dionysius’ servant urges Callirhoe to “tell the truth to him, who you are” (πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπέ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, τίς οὖσα τυγχάνεις, 2.4.3). And just as telling lies is typically fraught with skill and complexity, here Callirhoe is urged in contrast to “hide nothing of the truth,” but to “merely explain it to him simply” (μόνον ἀπλῶς αὐτῷ διαλέγου, καὶ μηδὲν ἀποκρύψης τῶν ἀληθῶν, 2.5.3). Dionysius himself, upon their meeting, reiterates this truth-telling theme: “It is right that you tell to us the truth about yourself” (δίκαιόν ἐστι καὶ σὲ περὶ σεαυτῆς εἰπεῖν ἡμῖν τὴν ἀλήθειαν, 2.5.5). Callirhoe at first demurs, calling her real life, prior to

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<sup>178</sup> Cf. Longus 4.20 (and 37 above), when Dionysophanes finds it “incredible” (ἄπιστον) that someone who looks like Daphnis could come from his rustic parents.

her kidnapping and Theron's sham sale, a "dream" and a "fable" (ὄνειρος ἦν τὰ πρῶτα καὶ μῦθος). One reason she gives for her demurral is her fear that once told, her story will be believed by no one: "I do not wish to seem like a charlatan nor to tell narratives that will not seem credible to those who are not familiar with them" (οὐ θέλω δοκεῖν ἀλαζῶν οὐδὲ λέγειν διηγήματα ἄπιστα τοῖς ἀγνοοῦσιν, 2.5.9). This allows Chariton himself to gain authority with his readers: even the title character herself understands that what has happened to her strains credibility, yet it is the truth. And so Callirhoe eventually does confess and tell the truth – most of it. But she leaves out the most crucial aspect of the story: her marriage to Chaereas, and the assault that led to her unconsciousness. Rather, she says that this condition was the result of a "sudden fall" (ἐξ αἰφνιδίου πτώματος, 2.5.10). Immediately upon the (better part of the) truth coming out, deceit again becomes a primary device, as Book 2 adopts typical comic motifs that see Dionysius enlisting his slave Plangon (Callirhoe's confidant and personal attendant) to take care of Callirhoe in every way, and as a woman "skillful by nature" (φύσει γὰρ ἦν ἐντρεχίς), Plangon fully understood the order (συνῆκεν ἡ Πλαγγὼν τῆς ἐντολῆς, 2.6.5). Plangon then becomes a double agent of deceit in Book 2, at first scheming on behalf of Dionysius and then later on behalf of Callirhoe. To get Callirhoe to approach Dionysius, Plangon makes up a story about the master's displeasure with her husband, and urges Callirhoe to plead on his behalf to Dionysius. As Callirhoe does so, Dionysius realizes Plangon's scheme (στρατήγημα) and plays along, telling Callirhoe she alone has spared the servant his wrath (2.7.6). Spurred on by his passion, Dionysius promises Plangon her freedom if she wins Callirhoe for him (another stock comic device) and Plangon brings forth all her craft and skill (ἡ Πλαγγὼν πᾶσαν πεῖραν καὶ τέχνην προσέφερον, 2.7.2). Yet for all her attempts, Callirhoe is unmoved, and remains faithful to Chaereas (ἀλλ' ἡ Καλλιρρόη πανταχόθεν ἀήττητος ἦν καὶ ἔμενε Χαϊρέα μόνῳ πιστή, 2.8.2). Faithful, that is, until a turn of fortune turns Callirhoe into the schemer, with Plangon again as

the chief agent. Callirhoe discovers she is pregnant with Chaereas' child, and Plangon (who first notices the pregnancy) sees it as a chance to advance her designs on Dionysius' part. Meanwhile, Callirhoe, after some arguing with herself and a dream featuring Chaereas, determines to keep the child. Plangon then follows the same strategy as the actor in Book 1 who feigned reluctance to tell Chaereas about Callirhoe's supposed adultery: she at first tells Callirhoe that it would be impossible for her to bear the child in Dionysius' house and that he would consider it an insult. When Callirhoe begs for her to help find "some scheme" (τινὰ τέχνην) by which she could raise her child, Plangon "declined everything" and delayed her answer for two or three days (πολλὰ τοίνυν ἀρνησαμένη, δύο καὶ τρεῖς ἡμέρας ὑπερθεμένη τὴν ἀπόκρισιν) until she seemed more trustworthy (ἀξιοπιστοτέρα), then made Callirhoe swear to tell their scheme to no one (μηδενὶ κατεπειῖν τὴν τέχνην) before suggesting the obvious: that Callirhoe lie with Dionysius so that he might think the child is his (2.10.2-4). Callirhoe at first recoils and suggests it would be better that the child die, something to which the clever Plangon "pretended to agree" (κατειρωνεύσατο, 2.10.6) readily, urging her to perform an abortion. Callirhoe, a "well-born young girl inexperienced with servile cunning," suspected nothing of Plangon advising this (Ταῦτα τῆς Πλαγγόνος παραινούσης οὐδὲν ὑπώπτευε Καλλιρρόη, μείραξ εὐγενῆς καὶ πανουργίας ἄπειρος δουλικῆς, 2.10.7). Finally, after another night of debate with herself, Callirhoe is "persuaded to live," not for herself, but for her child (οὐ δι' αὐτὴν ἀλλὰ διὰ τὸ βρέφος ἐπέιθετο ζῆν, 2.11.4). Reporting her decision to Plangon, the stage is set for the action of Book 3: Callirhoe's marriage to Dionysius, based on the doubly deceptive machinations of the slave Plangon.

### *Callirhoe* Book 3

Once again, the deception that closed the last book and drove the action forward opens the next book. After a bit of Chariton's trademark melodrama, Dionysius is told that Callirhoe

wishes to marry him and he quizzes Plangon about the turn of events: “What spirit is deceiving me?” (‘τίς με δαιμόνων ... ἀπατᾷ;) Plangon chides him for his hysterics, and insists that she is not deceiving him (οὐ γὰρ ἐξαπατῶ μου τὸν δεσπότην, 3.1.5) before doing precisely that, in spite of Dionysius’ request that she tell him the very words of Callirhoe, to not leave anything out or add anything, and to recount them accurately (καὶ λέγε αὐτὰ τὰ ἐκείνης ῥήματα. Μηδὲν ἀφέλης μηδὲ προσθήης, ἀλλ’ ἀκριβῶς μνημόνευσον, 3.1.5-6). She then omits almost everything and adds Book 3’s chief lie: that Callirhoe wished to marry him rather than be his concubine, but only if he agreed to raise any children from their union as his true heirs. In his lustful passion, Dionysius assents eagerly: “Oh Zeus and Helios, let there be a child from Callirhoe!” (ὦ Ζεῦ καὶ Ἥλιε, τέκνον ἐκ Καλλιρρόης). Upon confronting Callirhoe, he swears by the sea and Aphrodite and Eros that he intends to marry her. But left to himself, Dionysius prepares to defend his union. He envisions Rumor rushing to Sicily to announce that Callirhoe is alive, and her father’s warships demanding his daughter’s return (καταπλεύσουσιν ἤδη τριήρεις Συρακουσίων καὶ Ἐρμοκράτης στρατηγὸς ἀπαιτῶν τὴν θυγατέρα). In an interior monologue reminiscent of Daphnis’ (albeit far more innocent) monologue in the winter of Longus 3.6, Dionysius must then determine the most credible path to avoid inevitable conflict:

Τί μέλλω λέγειν; Ἐθήρων μοι πέπρακε. Ἐθήρων δὲ ποῦ; Κἂν πιστευθῶ τὴν ἀλήθειαν, ὑποδοχεύς εἰμι ληστοῦ. Μελέτα, Διονύσιε, τὴν δίκην. Τάχα δὲ ἐρεῖς αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως. Ἄριστον οὖν τότε λέγειν ἔγὼ γυναῖκα ἐλευθέραν ἐπιδημήσασαν οὐκ οἶδ’ ὅπως ἤκουσα: ἐκδομένην ἑαυτὴν ἐν τῇ πόλει φανερώς κατὰ νόμους ἔγημα. Πείσω δὲ ταύτη μᾶλλον καὶ τὸν πενθερὸν ὡς οὐκ ἀνάξιός εἰμι τῶν γάμων.

What am I going to say? “Theron has sold her to me.” But where is Theron? Even if I should be believed with respect to the truth, I am the customer of a pirate. Practice your case, Dionysius. Soon enough you will be speaking it before the great king. Therefore it would be best then to say, “I heard in some way that a free woman was living in town: I married her, having given

herself in marriage, in the city openly.' With this I will persuade even my father-in-law that I am not unworthy of the marriage. (3.2.8-9)

Here, Dionysius' rehearsed lie is proleptic, for he will indeed argue his case for Callirhoe before the Persian king in Book 5. For now, Callirhoe prays to Aphrodite in her shrine that the goddess, for the sake of her child, "keep hidden my scheme" (ποίησόν μου λαθεῖν τήν τέχνην, 3.2.13) and allow her child to pass for Dionysius' own. Lies and deceit become ever more complicated in Book 3, as illustrative as ever how much narrative deceit mirrors the forward action of the plot. First, the Syracusans figure out that tomb raiders have taken Callirhoe, and launch triremes to search for them. Theron and his pirates have been blown off course and starved, with only the chief pirate surviving thanks to his cunning (πανοῦργος, 3.3.12). His cunning also comes to bear when Chaereas boards his ship, demanding to know where Theron's crew obtained the funeral treasures from Callirhoe's tomb. Theron claims to be a Cretan stowaway (3.3.18),<sup>179</sup> but finally confesses the whole affair in front of the assembly, yet fails to mention the name of the man to whom he sold Callirhoe (3.4). He is then crucified, presumably before anyone thinks to get this crucial information from him. As in the previous two books, deception opens the narrative, and drives it forward. Chaereas now discovers that Callirhoe is married to Dionysius, and arrives in Ionia. As Plangon was the architect of Book 2's deceit, here Dionysius' steward Phocas takes that role, and upon discovering why Chaereas' trireme is there, and recognizing the threat to his master's happiness, he rides to a Persian base, announcing "that an enemy trireme was anchored and hidden either for spying or piracy" (τριήρης πολεμία λανθάνει τάχα μὲν ἐπὶ κατασκοπήν τάχα δὲ καὶ διὰ ληστείαν ὑφορμοῦσα, 3.7.2). His ruse persuades the Persians (Ἐπεισε τοὺς βαρβάρους, 3.7.3), and they destroy the warship during a night raid, leaving most

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<sup>179</sup> An obvious allusion to Odysseus' lie to Athena in *Odyssey* 13.256-86, where he claims to be a shipwrecked Cretan, and Epimenides' proverb that Cretans always lie (recorded, *i.a.*, in Callimachus' *Hymn* 1.8: Κρήτες ἀεὶ ψεύσται).



of those aboard dead. Chaereas, however, is captured and taken into slavery. Though Dionysius and Phocas are unsure if Chaereas is among the dead, Dionysius instructs his servant to report everything about the attack “but to remain silent about these two things: his own strategies (i.e., Phocas’ machinations prompting the Persians to attack Chaereas’ warship) and that some from the trireme were still alive” (δύο δὲ ταῦτα σιγᾶν, τὸ ἴδιον στρατήγημα καὶ ὅτι ἐκ τῆς τριήρους τινὲς ἔτι ζῶσι, 3.10.1). Thus Dionysius leads Callirhoe to believe that Chaereas is dead, and another lament (and deception) brings yet another book to a close.

#### Callirhoe Book 4

Book 4 is unique among Chariton’s books in that the truth is finally told here repeatedly, yet for deceitful ends. When Chaereas’ friend Polycharmus calls out Callirhoe’s name as they head to crucifixion (4.3), the two men are brought before the Persian satrap because Callirhoe is suspected of being an accomplice. The satrap Mithridates, who of course himself has developed an interest in Callirhoe, then gets Polycharmus to tell the complete story, which he does, truthfully. Mithridates then tells the two men the truth about Callirhoe, that she has wed Dionysius. However, Chariton notes that he does this even while “holding some hope of desire, because he was now able to talk about and do something regarding Callirhoe, while he seemed to be helping a friend” (ἐλπίδα τινὰ λαμβάνων ἐρωτικὴν, ὡς δυνάμενος ἤδη καὶ λέγειν καὶ πράττειν τι περὶ Καλλιρρόης, ἵνα δοκῇ φίλῳ βοηθεῖν, 4.3.11-12). Mithridates then becomes the schemer of Book 4, even while utilizing the truth. When Chaereas announces he is going back to Miletus to get Callirhoe back from Dionysius, the satrap feigns indifference much as his scheming predecessors in the novel, then urges him to instead write to her a letter that he will ensure is delivered to her (4.4). Mithridates then gives the letter to his trusted servant, “revealing to him his own passion” regarding Callirhoe (παραγυμνώσας αὐτῷ καὶ τὸν ἴδιον ἔρωτα), and then writes to Callirhoe himself and sends her expensive gifts, which the servants

were told were for Dionysius so as to “avoid suspicion” (εἴρητο δὲ πρὸς τοὺς ἄλλους οἰκέτας, ὅτι πέμπει ταῦτα Διονυσίῳ, πρὸς τὸ ἀνύποπτον, 4.5.2). Thus the truth is made to serve Mithridates’ own passions, and when the letters and gifts are then confiscated and diverted to Dionysius, the latter refuses to believe they are legitimate, and chiefly refuses to believe that Chaereas is alive. Rather, he sees them for what they are (despite being true): “an adulterous pretext by Mithridates, wishing to seduce Callirhoe with the hope of Chaereas” (σκῆψιν δὲ μοιχικὴν ὑπελάμβανε Μιθριδάτου διαφθεῖραι θέλοντος Καλλιρρόην ἐλπίδι Χαϊρέου, 4.5.10). And so this is how the entirety of the next book will progress, with the two antagonists, Dionysius and Mithridates, both using the truth in their disputes against each other even while concealing information that vindicates the other’s case: Mithridates conceals his own passion for Callirhoe, while Dionysius hides the fact that he does not know for certain that Chaereas is dead, leaving the reader to continually sift through layers of truth, falsehood, and pretense in a plot ever more complicated than the comic beguilement of the earlier books.

Dionysius eventually enlists Mithridates’ rival satrap to accuse him of adulterous plots to the Persian king, who summons them all to trial at his court. With that, Dionysius, Callirhoe, Chaereas, and Mithridates all travel to the king’s court, each driven there by true events that have nonetheless been manipulated to serve deceitful ends.

#### Callirhoe Book 5

The action of Book 5 is yet again established by a deceit at the end of the preceding book. This time, it is Dionysius’ lie to Callirhoe about why they are going to the king’s court. Rather than reveal anything concerning the letters (which asserted Chaereas was alive), Dionysius instead “did not admit to his wife the reason, but his pretext was that the king sent for him wishing to discuss affairs in Ionia” (καὶ τὴν αἰτίαν οὐχ ὠμολόγει πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα, ἀλλ’ ἢ πρόφασιν ἦν ὅτι βασιλεὺς αὐτὸν μεταπέμπεται, βουλευσασθαι θέλων περὶ τῶν ἐν Ἰωνίᾳ

πραγμάτων, 4.7.10). Thus Dionysius himself will become the chief schemer of Book 5, followed by the Persian king himself.

Book 5 continues the rivalry between Chaereas and Dionysius, ultimately leading to a courtroom showdown between the two. But Chaereas' entrance into the court is itself made as dramatic as possible, since he is believed dead by so many of the players. Indeed, Mithridates himself contributes to the heightened expectation. Though Dionysius was confident he would win out, convinced that Mithridates had forged the letter to Callirhoe in Chaereas' hand, he never expected that Chaereas lived (Διονύσιος μὲν θαρρῶν ταῖς ἐπιστολαῖς αἷς ἔγραψε Μιθριδάτης πρὸς Καλλιρρόην ὀνόματι Χαιρέου ἕζην γὰρ οὐδέποτε Χαιρέαν προσεδόκα, 5.3.3). Mithridates, meanwhile, was himself convinced he could not be convicted, since he could produce Chaereas (Μιθριδάτης δὲ Χαιρέαν ἔχων δεῖξαι ἐπέπειστο ἀλῶναι μὴ δύνασθαι). Nevertheless, the satrap "pretended to be afraid" and consulted his own advocates, "so that through surprise he might make his defense all the more brilliant" (προσεποιεῖτο δὲ δεδιέναι καὶ συνηγόρους παρεκάλει, ἵνα διὰ τὸ ἀπροσδόκητον λαμπροτέραν τὴν ἀπολογία πεισθῆται, 5.4.3). Here we continue the much more complex deceits than those found in the early books of the novel. There, simple, comic schemes on the part of servants and slavers shape the narrative, while here we have more sophisticated characters engaging in more ambiguous deceit. While Dionysius knows that some men from Chaereas' trireme had lived, and while he has concealed both that and the ultimate reason for the trip to the king from Callirhoe, he has no reason to conclusively believe that Chaereas is alive, and he appears to genuinely suspect Mithridates of ill motive with respect to the letters he receives. His suspicions, in fact, are not wrong: Chariton tells us Mithridates indeed nursed "his own passion" (τὸν ἴδιον ἔρωτα, 4.5.2), and tells us that he assists Chaereas in sending the letter specifically so that he could "do something with respect to Callirhoe" while appearing to "help a friend" (πράττειν τι περὶ Καλλιρρόης, ἵνα δοκῇ φίλω

βοηθεῖν, 4.3.12). So it turns out Dionysius' skepticism regarding the (actually genuine) letters is not entirely misplaced. Meanwhile, Mithridates, while guided by his own insincere motivations, is in fact planning a revelation typical in the resolution of comic plots.<sup>180</sup> As such, he is in many ways the (in-narrative) comic architect of the plot as were previous schemers. Just as the other schemers play-acted to keep the truth secret from other characters, Mithridates "pretends to be afraid" (προσεποιεῖτο δὲ δεδιέναι) to make his eventual revelation as dramatic as possible, and appears in court not brilliant and beaming (οὐ πάνυ τι λαμπρὸς οὐδὲ φαιδρός), despite contriving to make himself seem all the more brilliant (λαμπροτέραν) with his great reveal, but wretched, as one who would be liable for damages (ἀλλ', ὡς ὑπεύθυνος, ἐλεεινός, 5.3.7). Yet for all his acting and scheming, Mithridates does plan to eventually make the truth known – a truth that promises the reader the reunification of the two lovers. And yet, that reunification is further complicated by Callirhoe's status as wife to Dionysius and (ostensibly) mother of his child, and it will, ultimately, fail. Thus, while Mithridates comes closest to bringing to comic resolution (the reunification of the two lovers) the comic action of the novel (the separation of the two lovers), Chariton, as the author of the characters' ever-changeable τύχη, steps in to thwart its ending. In much the same way, the author will obliquely but self-referentially muse about the further twists and turns he might have given the two lovers when he finally does decide to bring the novel to resolution toward its end, in a way ironically far less dramatic than the one orchestrated by Mithridates.

Nevertheless, the reader is expecting a reunion, and the characters of Book 5 do all in their deceptive power to bring that about. Mithridates' part has already been explored, but the king's should not be forgotten, either. When he decided to summon Mithridates and Dionysius

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<sup>180</sup> Mithridates' planned reveal seems to be a form of *deus ex machina*, with the shade of Chaereas coming forth thanks to his entreaties to the gods to set aright the situation. When Chariton finally decides to resolve his narrative, he will do so much more plausibly but far less dramatically (see discussion on 121ff below).

to his court (knowing only that a beautiful woman was in dispute, but not knowing her name from his correspondence), the king, Chariton tell us, acted partly out of duty and partly out of a desire to avoid the contempt (καταφρόνησις) of Mithridates. But the king, too, is guided by lustful passion.

ἄλλο δὲ πάθος παρήγει μεταπέμπεσθαι καὶ τὴν  
γυναῖκα τὴν καλήν. Σύμβουλοι μὲν οὖν νύξ καὶ σκότος ἐν  
ἐρημίᾳ γενόμενοι καὶ τούτου τοῦ μέρους τῆς ἐπιστολῆς  
ἀνεμίμνησκον βασιλέα, προσηρέθιζε δὲ καὶ φήμη, Καλλιρρόην  
τινὰ καλλίστην ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰωνίας εἶναι: καὶ τοῦτο μόνον ἐμέμφετο  
βασιλεὺς Φαρνάκην, ὅτι οὐ προσέγραψεν ἐν τῇ ἐπιστολῇ  
τοῦνομα τῆς γυναικός, 4.6.7.

“But another desire exhorted him to send for the beautiful woman. For darkness and night were co-counselors in his desolation, and they reminded the king of that part of the letter. And the rumor that some Callirhoe was the most beautiful woman in Ionia was arousing him: this blame alone the king had for Pharnaces: that he did not write in his letter the name of the woman.”

The king follows through with this passion in Book 5, finding a pretense to get Callirhoe into the courtroom. Mithridates first questions why she is not present, central as she is to the dispute, and Dionysius objects to “placing another man’s wife before the crowd with her husband unwilling” (εἰς ὄχλον ἀλλοτρίαν γυναῖκα οὐ θέλοντος ἀνδρός, 5.4.10). Dionysius accompanies this plea with a legal case Chariton says was “justly made” (ταῦτα δικανικῶς, 5.4.11), but loses out to a crowd “eager to see Callirhoe” (ἐπεθύμουν γὰρ πάντες Καλλιρρόην ἰδεῖν, 5.4.12). Chariton notes that the king is “ashamed” (αἰδουμένου) to call her, but his friends devise a pretense (πρόφασιν ἔσχον οἱ φίλοι) from his original letter summoning them all to court, calling her presence necessary (ἀναγκαία, 5.4.12). At this point, Dionysius must ask for a postponement, for he has still not told Callirhoe of the real reason they were there. And so Dionysius, a man “sensible and educated” (φρόνιμος ἀνὴρ καὶ πεπαιδευμένος) spoke “the most plausible words” to his wife about these affairs (λόγους τῇ γυναικὶ προσήνεγκεν ὡς ἐν τοιούτοις

πιθανωτάτους, 5.1.1). When the trial comes, the crowd packs the courtroom, supposedly to hear the proceedings but really to see Callirhoe (τῷ μὲν δοκεῖν ἀκροαταὶ τῆς δίκης, τὸ δὲ ἀληθὲς Καλλιρρόης θεαταί, 5.5.8). Again we are reminded of Mithridates' motivation in all of this: Chariton notes that had he been required to speak first, he would have been unable to make a sound, for the sight of her had dealt him a more serious blow than even his initial passion (καὶ εἶγε Μιθριδάτην ἔδει πρῶτον εἰπεῖν, οὐκ ἂν ἔσχε φωνήν. Ὡσπερ γὰρ ἐπὶ τι τραῦμα παλαιὸν τὴν ἐρωτικὴν ἐπιθυμίαν σφοδροτέραν αὖθις ἐλάμβανε πληγὴν, 5.5.9).

Dionysius' case is peppered with half-truths. His central argument is based on a lie of omission: he asserts that "either Chaereas is alive or Mithridates is an adulterer" (ἢ Χαίρεάν ζῆν, ἢ Μιθριδάτην ἠλέγχθαι μοιχόν), and claims that Mithridates cannot claim he did not know Chaereas is dead because he was there in Miletus when his tomb was erected (τεθνηκέναι Χαίρεάν ἠγνόει: τούτου γὰρ ἐν Μιλήτῳ παρόντος ἐχώσαμεν ἐκείνῳ τὸν τάφον, 5.6.10). Of course, Dionysius omits that the tomb was empty and that he persuaded his wife to erect it and "bury" Chaereas because "it would profit his own desire if she despaired once and for all her former husband" (λυσιτελεῖν δὲ ὑπελάμβανε εἰς τὸν ἴδιον ἔρωτα, τὸν πρότερον ἄνδρα βεβαίως αὐτὴν ἀπογνῶναι, 4.1.2). In his crowing accusation, Dionysius beseeches the king to "consider how shameful an adulterer he is, when he lies even about the dead" (λόγισαι δέ, βασιλεῦ, πῶς ἀναίσχυντός ἐστι μοιχός, ὅπου καὶ νεκροῦ καταψεύδεται, 5.6.10). Mithridates, knowing the truth, urges the king in response not to allow "a Greek person, having cunningly crafted slanderous lies about me, to be more persuasive to you than the truth" (μηδὲ ἄνθρωπος Ἕλληνα, πανούργως συνθεὶς κατ' ἐμοῦ ψευδεῖς διαβολάς, πιθανώτερος γένηται παρὰ σοὶ τῆς ἀληθείας, 5.7.1). After some sound arguments about Callirhoe's legal status (that as a slave sold to him by Theron, she was not marriageable), Mithridates urges Dionysius to withdraw his complaint, warning him that he will lose Callirhoe if not. Dionysius responds that "you will not deceive me

with sophisticated and plausible threats, nor will Dionysius ever be discovered filing false suits”

(οὐδὲ γὰρ ἐξαπατήσεις με σοφίσμασι καὶ οὐκ ἀξιοπίστοις ἀπειλαῖς, οὐδ' εὐρεθήσεταιί ποτε

Διονύσιος συκοφαντῶν, 5.7.9). At that point Mithridates offers his surprise witness in a

dramatic flourish which he and Chaereas had “arranged” (διατεταγμένον) beforehand:

Mithridates ominously prays to the gods to produce Chaereas, “even if only in the trial” (κἂν εἰς

τὴν δίκην), and as if truly summoning a man from the dead (which can only be deliberate farce,

since his case rests on Chaereas being alive), he beckons him to “appear, good spirit” (Φάνηθι,

δαῖμον ἀγαθέ). Chaereas then dramatically enters, and Chariton embarks on some self-

congratulation:

Τίς ἂν φράσειε κατ' ἀξίαν ἐκεῖνο τὸ σχῆμα τοῦ  
δικαστηρίου; ποῖος ποιητῆς ἐπὶ σκηνῆς παράδοξον  
μῦθον οὕτως εἰσήγαγεν; ἔδοξας ἂν ἐν θεάτρῳ παρεῖναι  
μυρίων παθῶν πλήρει: πάντα ἦν ὁμοῦ, δάκρυα, χαρά,  
θάμβος, ἔλεος, ἀπιστία, εὐχαί, 5.8.2-3.

“Who could worthily describe that scene in the  
courtroom? What poet brought upon the stage such an  
unbelievable story? You would have thought you were  
in a theater, filled with myriad emotions, all of them at  
once: tears, joy, amazement, pity, disbelief, prayers.”

“What poet brought such an unbelievable story?” Chariton, of course, and the emotions felt by

the audience are precisely the sorts Chariton is hoping for readers to experience with his novel.

The courtroom, like the readers, is a gallery of spectators, and upon the verbal volleying of

Chaereas and Dionysius that follows, we are told they heard it “not without pleasure” (οἱ δ

ἄλλοι πάντες ἤκουον οὐκ ἀηδῶς, 5.8.6). The king has his servants look over Callirhoe while it is

decided whose husband she is, and each of the lovers despairs: Callirhoe is unable to believe she

has really seen Chaereas, wondering instead (perhaps taken in by Mithridates’ performance) if

he was a spirit conjured by a Persian magician (ἐκεῖνος ἦν Χαϊρέας οὐμός, ἢ καὶ τοῦτο

πεπλάνημα; τάχα γὰρ Μιθριδάτης διὰ τὴν δίκην εἶδωλον ἔπεμψε: λέγουσι γὰρ ἐν Πέρσαις

εἶναι μάγους, 5.9.4), while Chaereas laments that Callirhoe had married another. He even beseeches her in her absence, during a failed suicide attempt, to visit his grave, “even if your husband and child are watching” (κἄν ἀνὴρ, κἄν βρέφος ὄρᾳ, 5.10.8), and lie to him, saying, “you are truly gone, Chaereas, now you are dead. I was going to pick you in the court of the king.’ I will hear you, wife. Perhaps I will even believe you.” (‘οἴχη, Χαιρέα, νῦν ἀληθῶς: νῦν ἀπέθανες: ἐγὼ γὰρ ἔμελλον ἐπὶ βασιλέως αἰρεῖσθαι σέ.’ Ἀκούσομαί σου, γύναι: τάχα καὶ πιστεύσω, 5.10.8-9). The book then ends, with the lovers almost reunited yet still separated. Book 5, then, like Book 1, is an intricate set of deceptions that will propel the motion forward (the two will of course remain separated), and as in Book 1, the stage is ever-present. Not only do the two principal actors, Dionysius and Mithridates, concoct elaborate defenses based alternatively on truths, lies, and omissions, they are given an active audience in their performance, an audience ever present in the book – from the arrival of Callirhoe in Persia (5.3) to the final showdown between Dionysius and Chaereas (5.8), to the second trial between the two rivals, over which “all of Babylon was in suspense” (μετέωρος ἦν πᾶσα Βαβυλών, 6.1). And this is where Book 6 begins: a new narrative theater whose stage was set this time by a truthful revelation rather than a deceitful scheme, but built on several characters’ deceptive motivations and ambiguous truths nonetheless.

#### Callirhoe Book 6

Book 6 opens with Babylon debating the merits of Chaereas’ and Dionysius’ claims to Callirhoe, in much the fashion one might expect Chariton’s readers to do. In this way, and others, Book 6 is a mirror to Book 2, much as Book 5 was to Book 1. The arguments for Dionysius’s and Chaereas’s stakes for Callirhoe take us to the first twists and turns of the novel:

Διέσχιστο δὲ ἡ πόλις, καὶ οἱ μὲν Χαιρέα σπεύδοντες ἔλεγον  
 ἄπρωτος ἦν ἀνὴρ, παρθένον ἔγημεν, ἐρῶσαν ἐρῶν: πατήρ  
 ἐξέδωκεν αὐτῷ, πατρὶς ἔθαψε: τοὺς γάμους οὐκ ἀπέλιπεν,  
 ἀτελείφθη: Διονύσιος δὲ ἠγόρασεν, οὐκ ἔγημεν: λησταὶ



ἐπώλησαν: οὐκ ἐξὸν δὲ τὴν ἐλευθέραν ἀγοράσαι.’ Οἱ δὲ Διονυσίῳ σπεύδοντες ἀντέλεγον πάλιν ‘ἐξήγαγε πειρατῶν παρ’ οὐδὲν μέλλουσαν φονεύεσθαι: τάλαντον ἔδωκεν ὑπὲρ τῆς σωτηρίας αὐτῆς: πρῶτον ἔσωσεν, εἶτα ἔγημε: Χαιρέας δὲ γήμας ἀπέκτεινε: μνημονεύειν ὀφείλει Καλλιρρόη τοῦ γάμου: χρηστὸν δὲ Διονυσίῳ πρόσεστιν εἰς τὸ νικᾶν ὅτι καὶ τέκνον ἔχουσι κοινόν.’ 6.1.2-4

The city was split, and those favoring Chaereas said, “He was her husband first, he married her a virgin, he loving her, she loving him: her father gave her to him, her home country buried her: he did not abandon his nuptials, he was abandoned: but Dionysius bought her, he did not marry her, pirates sold her: they were not able to exchange a free-born woman.” But those favoring Dionysius responded back: “He took her from many pirates when she was going to be murdered. He gave a talent for her salvation. He saved her first, then married her. But when Chaereas married her, he killed her. Callirhoe ought to be mindful of her marriage: but what is serviceable for victory for Dionysius is that they have a common child.”

These are no doubt the arguments readers might pose to themselves when encountering the dilemmas present in Chariton’s novel, and it is perhaps safe to guess they are presented here to illustrate just that. Yet the people of Babylon are not, of course, privy to all the information of the omniscient reader, and so readers are also invited to fill in the gaps in the characters’ presented narratives just as they did during the trial,<sup>181</sup> which serves to undermine many of their arguments: Dionysius did not “save” Callirhoe from pirates *per se*, his slave merely bought her from one of them; and Chaereas did not simply “kill” Callirhoe: missing, of course, is the entire motivation for his assault, however justified (or more properly, not justified) a reader might consider it. And, of course, the most significant piece of information remains hidden to all except Callirhoe herself and the servant Plangon: that the child she has is not in fact Dionysius’, but Chaereas’.

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<sup>181</sup> Schema theory in narratology has illuminated this concept in recent decades, though there the gap-filling is typically done by readers drawing on common knowledge to assume material that is not explicitly stated in the text. Here, the readers are doing somewhat the opposite, standing over the audience within the text, an audience lacking such explicit knowledge, and supplementing their arguments with fuller versions of the truth. See Mandler 1984, Cook 1994 and Herman 2002.

Yet one aspect of Book 2 will reappear with slight modification in Book 6. While the Babylonian women appeal to Callirhoe to choose Chaereas because he is a fellow citizen (τὸν πολίτην) and it would mean she could see her father as well (ἵνα καὶ τὸν πατέρα ἴδῃς) rather than living as an exile in a foreign land (εἰ δὲ μή, ζήσεις ἐπὶ ξένης ὡς φυγὰς, 6.1.4-5), her status again comes under debate, though differently from before. While in Book 2 Dionysius and his servants beg Callirhoe to reveal the truth about her identity, not believing she is merely a slave, in Babylon Callirhoe, far from being suspected of noble rather than servile status, is rather questioned by the king and his eunuch as to whether she is even human, providing again some incredible self-referentiality for Chariton. The king admits to his eunuch that he is in love, something he had heard about before in “fables and poems” (μύθοις τε καὶ ποιήμασιν, 6.3.2), and that “this is equally true, as you say, that this woman is a goddess: for her beauty is not human” (τοῦτ’ ἴσως ἀληθές ἐστιν, ὃ λέγεις, ὅτι θεῶν τίς ἐστιν ἢ δε ἢ γυνή: οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀνθρώπινον τὸ κάλλος, 6.3.5).

πλὴν οὐχ ὁμόλογα. Προσποιεῖται δὲ Ἑλληνίς εἶναι Συρακουσία. Καὶ τοῦτο δὲ τῆς ἀπάτης ἐστὶ σημεῖον. Ἐλεγθῆναι γὰρ οὐ βούλεται πόλιν εἰποῦσα μίαν τῶν ὑφ’ ἡμᾶς, ἀλλ’ ὑπὲρ τὸν Ἴόνιον καὶ τὴν πολλὴν θάλασσαν τὸν περὶ αὐτῆς μῦθον ἐκπέμπει. Προφάσει δὲ δίκης ἦλθεν ἐπὶ ἐμὲ καὶ ὅλον τὸ δράμα τοῦτο ἐκείνη κατεσκεύασε, 6.3.5-6.

“But she claims that she is not. She pretends to be a Syracusan Greek. And this is proof of her deceit. For she does not wish to be put to the proof, naming a single city of those under me, but rather she sets forth the story about herself upon Ionia and across the whole sea. But she has set upon me with the pretext of a trial while she has fabricated this entire play.”

Here, Callirhoe (who might well be the lone title character<sup>182</sup>), is said to “set her story” (τὸν περὶ αὐτῆς μῦθον ἐκπέμπει) and is accused of having “fabricated” (κατεσκεύασε)<sup>183</sup> the whole

<sup>182</sup> Several matters argue for Callirhoe’s name alone in the title, despite the manuscript’s title (τὰ περὶ Χαίρεαν καὶ Καλλιρρόην ἐρωτικά διηγήματα) and a similar postscript at the end (τῶν περὶ Χαίρεαν καὶ Καλλιρρόην ἢ λόγων τέλος): Chariton’s last line of the work, discussed below, is in the first person and

“drama” (ὄλον τὸ δρᾶμα). Mingled with the story are the words of the courtroom: the case (δίκης) before the king is merely a pretense (προφάσει), while Callirhoe’s claims about herself are the evidence (σημεῖον) of her deception (τῆς ἀπάτης), and Callirhoe herself wishes to avoid being “put to the proof” (ἐλεγχθῆναι). The language is just the sort we should expect from the clerk of a rhetor (ῥήτορος ὑπογραφεύς) writing an erotic tale (πάθος ἐρωτικόν, 1.1.1), and counts as one of the most self-referential moments of the novel.

The pretense of legal reasoning as an engine to move the plot forward continues in Book 6 as its chief schemer – the king’s eunuch Artaxates – finally convinces the king, with a bit of legal sophistry, that he can indulge his passion for Callirhoe:

Καλλιρρόη γὰρ ἄνδρα οὐκ ἔχει, μένει δὲ τὴν κρίσιν, τίτι  
ὀφείλει γαμηθῆναι. Μέμνησο οὖν ὅτι χήρας ἐρᾷς: καὶ μήτε  
τοὺς νόμους αἰδοῦ, κείνται γὰρ ἐπὶ τοῖς γάμοις, μήτε μοιχεῖαν,  
δεῖ γὰρ πρῶτον εἶναι ἄνδρα τὸν ἀδικούμενον, εἶτα τὸν  
ἀδικοῦντα μοιχόν, 6.4.7-8.

“For Callirhoe has no husband, but awaits your judgment as to whom she ought to be married. And so, remember that you love a widow, and do not be ashamed before the laws or adultery, for they rely upon marriages, and it is necessary for there to be a husband first who has been wronged before there can be an adulterer doing the wronging.”

Chariton notes that this argument “pleased the king” (ἤρεσεν ὁ λόγος βασιλεῖ), since it was in accordance with his pleasure (πρὸς ἡδονὴν γὰρ ἦν, 6.4.8). So here again, legal wrangling, of higher sophistication than the servile deceits of the earlier books, drives the narrative forward. Yet of the eunuch’s confidence in carrying out his king’s orders to bring Callirhoe to him (with

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names Callirhoe only (τοσάδε περὶ Καλλιρρόης συνέγραψα); the colophon to *Papyri Michaelidae* 1 (cf. n.1 above) gives the title τὰ περὶ Καλλιρρόης διηγήματα; and (perhaps least convincing) a reference in Persius 1.134 (*his mane edictum, post prandia Callirhoen do*) may or may not refer to this work, again naming only the heroine. Whether Chaereas was or was not in Chariton’s original title, the attention afforded Callirhoe by the other characters in the work, including meta-discussions regarding her “story” and her status, are lopsided in comparison with her male counterpart.

<sup>183</sup> Liddell and Scott: “of fraudulent transactions, fabricate, trump up,” especially with πρόφασιν. Cf. Xenophon, *Cyropaideia* 2.4.17: ἀλλ’ ἔστιν, ἔφη ὁ Κῦρος, καὶ πρόφασιν κατασκευάσαι καὶ ἐνθάδε οὐκ ἄπιστον, καὶ ἦν τις ἐκεῖσε ἐξαγγελίη, ὡς ἐγὼ βουλοίμην μεγάλην θήραν ποιῆσαι: καὶ ἰππέας, ἔφη, αἰτοίην ἄν σε ἐκ τοῦ φανεροῦ.

much the same conditions Dionysius gave to his slaves in Book 2 – that she come willingly), Chariton notes that Artaxates was thinking “like a eunuch, like a barbarian, like a slave,” (ὡς εὐνοῦχος, ὡς δοῦλος, ὡς βάρβαρος, 6.4.10), allowing us to categorize his scheming in much the same comic fashion as earlier deceits, despite its higher sophistication. This categorization is made all the more pregnant by its immediate contrast to well-born Greek character (φρόνημα Ἑλληνικὸν εὐγενές), namely, “that of chaste Callirhoe” (τὸ Καλλιρρόης τῆς σώφρονος). And yet, as we have seen, Callirhoe herself has been most adept at deceit, most especially at convincing almost everyone that her child is the product of her union with Dionysius. She proves still adept in Book 6: adroitly comprehending the meaning behind the eunuch’s message that the king “looks on you pleasantly” (ἠδέως σε εἶδε, 6.5.5), she “pretended not to understand” (προσεποιεῖτο δὲ μὴ συνιέναι). When the eunuch tries for more clarity, she engages in even more sophistry, ironically (κατειρωνεύσατο) responding:

‘Μὴ γὰρ οὕτω’ φησὶ ‘μαινοίμην, ἵνα ἐμαυτὴν ἀξίαν εἶναι πεισθῶ τοῦ μεγάλου βασιλέως. Εἰμὶ δὲ θεραπαινίσιν ὁμοία Περσίδων γυναικῶν. Μὴ σύ, δέομαί σου, μνημονεύσης ἔτι περὶ ἐμοῦ πρὸς τὸν δεσπότην. Καὶ γὰρ ἂν ἐν τῷ παραυτίκα μηδὲν ὀργισθῆ, μετὰ ταῦτά σοι χαλεπανεῖ, λογισάμενος ὅτι τὸν γῆς ἀπάσης κύριον ὑπέρριψας Διονυσίου δούλη. Θαυμάζω δὲ πῶς συνετώτατος ὑπάρχων ἀγνοεῖς τὴν βασιλέως φιλανθρωπίαν, ὅτι οὐκ ἐρᾷ δυστυχοῦς γυναικὸς ἀλλὰ ἐλεεῖ. Πασσώμεθα τοίνυν λαλοῦντες, μὴ καὶ τῆ βασιλίδι τις ἡμᾶς διαβάλη,’ 6.5.9-10.

“May I not be so deluded,” she said, “that I am convinced I am worthy of a great king. I am like the servants of Persian women. Do not, I beg you, make mention of me anymore to your master. For should he not be angered presently, after these things he will be severe with you, thinking that you have thrown down the lord of the whole world to the slave girl of Dionysius. I am amazed how the wisest of the king’s subordinates could be ignorant of the king’s philanthropy: for he is not desirous of an unfortunate woman, but rather pities her. Let us stop chatting like this, lest someone slander us to the queen.”

Here, Callirhoe bests one of the most cunning schemers of the entire novel, not only escaping from the solicitation without outright rejecting the king, but also pointing out its shameful irony in the process, noting that an eavesdropper who understood the (real) subject of their conversation could use it as an accusation to the queen – an accusation that would be a slander (διαβολή) if it were not, in fact, true. Chariton notes that Callirhoe’s skill leaves the eunuch “speechless” (ἀχάνη, 6.5.10) as she runs off.

Ultimately, Callirhoe’s conflict with the king’s passion moves to another stage: a rebellion develops in Egypt, requiring the king’s attention and changing all erotic matters (πάσαν ἐρωτικὴν ὁμιλίαν). Meanwhile, the king “contrived” (ἐπενόησε, 6.9.5) a plan to have Callirhoe come along to war. Summoning the man in charge of the king’s caravan, he first gave all other instructions, then “made mention of Callirhoe with a rightly plausible expression, as though it were not a concern to him” (ἐμνημόνευσε Καλλιρρόης ἀξιοπίστῳ τῷ προσώπῳ, ὡς οὐδὲν αὐτῷ μέλον, 6.9.7). Calling her “that little foreign woman, about whom I was judging a case” (κάκεῖνο ... τὸ γύναιον τὸ ξένον, περὶ οὗ τὴν κρίσιν ἀνεδεξάμην, 6.9.7), the king orders her to be brought with the other women. Thus Book 6, like so many others, sets the stage for a new narrative theater through the machinations of one of its characters – this time no less than the king of Persia.

## Book 7

Book 7’s narrative theater, the war with the Egyptians, already has Callirhoe cast within it at the opening of the book. Chaereas soon joins her: when he goes looking for Callirhoe upon the outbreak of war and fails to find her, he instead goes to Dionysius’s house and finds a messenger who lies to him, saying that the king had awarded Callirhoe to Dionysius to ensure his loyal service in the war. Chaereas at once believes it – “for it is easy to deceive an unfortunate man” (εὐεξαπάτητον γὰρ ἄνθρωπος δυστυχῶν, 7.1.4). When Chaereas (again)

decides to commit suicide, his friend Polycharmus instead persuades him to go out fighting by joining the rebels and getting some revenge against the king in the process. The two men set out with the king's army, "pretending they wished to campaign with him" (προσποιούμενοι ἐθέλειν ἐκείνω συστρατεύεσθαι, 7.2.1), then desert to the Egyptians after they get to Syria. The two men are received into the Egyptian forces and have considerable success there, thanks in no small part to Chaereas' clever wiles. To take Tyre, Chaereas appears before the walls and tells the Tyrians he and his band are Greek mercenaries who wish to join the Tyrians because the Egyptians want them dead. Chaereas and his men then slaughter the Tyrians when they are let inside.<sup>184</sup> Meanwhile, Dionysius happens upon a bit of luck when the Egyptian king kills himself after a Persian raid, and he takes the Egyptian king's head to the Persian king, who awards him Callirhoe (for real) after all. Callirhoe herself, however, is with the Persian king's retinue on the island Aradus, which Chaereas successfully captures in a sea battle. A lacuna in the text makes it difficult to know precisely how the reunion of the two lovers is set up, but it appears that, after noticing the queen is among the Persian prisoners on the island, and hearing of a beautiful woman among them, Chaereas sends for the woman (not aware she is Callirhoe). Callirhoe, when told the admiral (who is, unbeknownst to her, Chaereas) plans to marry her, embarks on her trademark melodrama, refusing the marriage. Chaereas (like Dionysius and the Persian king

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<sup>184</sup> There appear to be traces here of historical references to Alexander's siege of Tyre in 332 BCE, albeit faint ones. It is possible that the Tyrians are here taken by a rather simplistic deception where they proved to be far more cautious with Alexander, who (genuinely?) requested access to the city's temple to Melkart and was denied, leading to his eventual siege (Arrian, *Anabasis* 2.15.7-2.18.1). Melkart was associated with Heracles by Alexander and the Greeks (Arrian embarks on a long digression as to this relationship), and Chariton makes mention of their devotion to this deity in 7.2.7, making his familiarity with Arrian's account at least plausible: "The Tyrians are by nature a most warlike race and wish to attain renown for her bravery, lest they seem to bring shame upon Heracles, the god most illustrious among them and to whom nearly alone they have dedicated their city" (Τύριοι δὲ φύσει γένος εἰσὶ μαχιμώτατον καὶ κλέος ἐπὶ ἀνδρεία θέλουσι κεκτηῖσθαι, μὴ δόξωσι καταισχύνειν τὸν Ἡρακλέα, φανερώτατον θεὸν παρ' αὐτοῖς καὶ ᾧ μόνῳ σχεδὸν ἀνατεθείκασι τὴν πόλιν). But Plepelits (1976, 18) rather saw him drawing on an early version of the Alexander romance: *Es scheint also, als ob Chariton von einer Vorstufe des Alexanderromans abhinge.*

before him) orders that she not be forced with violence, and Book 7 ends on the cusp of the two lovers' reunification, though both remain ignorant of the other's identity.

### Book 8

The beginning of Book 8 is self-consciously extraordinary, for here Chariton (under his usual authorial guise of τύχη), literally spells out the ways in which he could have prolonged the novel with further episodes, but then decides (under yet another guise, this time of Aphrodite) otherwise:

Ἔμελλε δὲ ἔργον ἢ τύχη πράττειν οὐ μόνον παράδοξον,  
ἀλλὰ καὶ σκυθρωπόν, ἵνα ἔχων Καλλιρρόην Χαϊρέας ἀγνοήσῃ  
καὶ τὰς ἀλλοτρίας γυναῖκας ἀναλαβὼν ταῖς τριήρεσιν ἀπαγάγῃ,  
μόνην δὲ τὴν ἰδίαν ἐκεῖ καταλίπη οὐχ ὡς Ἀριάδνην  
καθεύδουσαν, οὐδὲ Διονύσω νυμφίῳ, λάφυρον δὲ τοῖς ἑαυτοῦ  
πολεμίοις. Ἄλλ' ἔδοξε τοῦτο δεινὸν Ἀφροδίτῃ... Νομίζω δὲ καὶ τὸ  
τελευταῖον τοῦτο σύγγραμμα τοῖς ἀναγινώσκουσιν ἥδιστον  
γενήσεσθαι: καθάρσιον γάρ ἐστι τῶν ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις  
σκυθρωπῶν. Οὐκέτι ληστεία καὶ δουλεία καὶ δίκη καὶ μάχη καὶ  
ἀποκαρτέρησις καὶ πόλεμος καὶ ἄλωσις, ἀλλ' ἔρωτες δίκαιοι ἐν  
τούτῳ καὶ νόμιμοι γάμοι. Πῶς οὖν ἡ θεὸς ἐφώτισε τὴν  
ἀλήθειαν καὶ τοὺς ἀγνοουμένους ἔδειξεν ἀλλήλοις λέξω, 8.1.2-  
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But Fortune was going to do something not only unbelievable, but also sad, so that Chaereas, though having Callirhoe, was not going to recognize her, and boarding others' wives on his triremes, he was going to take them away, but leave his own there, not sleeping as Ariadne, not for the bridegroom Dionysus, but as spoils for his own enemies. But this seemed cruel to Aphrodite ... I think that this last book will be most pleasurable for the readers. For it is a cleansing from the sorrows of the first ones. No longer will there be piracy and slavery and court and battle and suicide and war and capture, but rightful desires and lawful nuptials. And so, how the goddess brought to light the truth and offered them recognized to each other, I will tell.

Chariton here engages in some thinly veiled subterfuge. The entirety of *Callirhoe* was, of course, his own invention, despite reporting at the onset of the tale that it was an event (πάθος) that happened (γενόμενον) within a vaguely recognizable, historical context. Yet this is a game, much

as his characters' schemes have been, schemes which have driven forth the narrative. How would the narrator know what Fortune had intended, if in fact it never happened? And how did Aphrodite intervene? No *deus ex machina* is presented here, in contrast to the (far more dramatic) revelation Mithridates planned in Book 5 – no divine intervention, staged or real, is presented as happening, just as supernatural forces hardly if ever make an appearance elsewhere in the novel. Indeed, hardly elsewhere does the author reveal himself, either, as he does here in the first-person verbs “I think” (νομίζω) and “I will tell” (λέξω), except, of course, at the very beginning (“I will narrate an erotic event that happened on Syracuse”/ πάθος ἐρωτικὸν ἐν Συρακούσαις γενόμενον διηγήσομαι) and at the very end (“I have written these things about Callirhoe”/ τοσάδε περὶ Καλλιρρόης συνέγραψα).

Aside, then, from Chariton labeling this book his last (τὸ τελευταῖον τοῦτο σύγγραμμα), we are assured the story will end, for by pledging to end the “sorrows,” he promises to put an end to what constituted the entire novel. What one might not expect is for Chariton to prove a man of his word. The recognition happens at once and without complication. Chaereas enters the room where Callirhoe is, she recognizes his voice, she uncovers her face and they both cry out each other's name – all before the first chapter of Book 8 closes. Rather than new narrative episodes, Chariton instead has the characters recap all that has happened to them – several times. Callirhoe first tells her tale, allowing Chariton to briefly recap everything and also provide us with Chaereas' reaction to various events (he at one point “recalled his inborn jealousy” / τῆς ἐμφύτου ζηλοτυπίας ἀνεμνήσθη, 8.1.15). Likewise, we are given the reaction of the Syracusan audience to the entirety of the tale, as it is told by Chaereas (including not a few inconsistencies with Chariton's version).<sup>185</sup> Routinely, Chaereas breaks the narrative wall and addresses them

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<sup>185</sup> In 8.8, Chaereas suggests Phrygian bandits destroyed his warship in Miletus (though they were “barbarians” in 3.7), and claims Polycharmus called out Chaereas' name when they were being led to be crucified (it was actually Callirhoe's, 4.2). Reardon (2008, 122) was of the opinion that “it seems pointless



directly (“don’t be afraid – she did not become a slave”/ μή φοβηθῆτε: οὐκ ἐδούλωσεν, 8.7.10; “There is a fellow citizen being raised for you, Syracusan men”/ Τρέφεται γὰρ ὑμῖν, ἄνδρες Συρακούσιοι, πολίτης, 8.7.12), in much the ways Chariton has just himself addressed the readers at the opening of Book 8.

Yet just as his characters have created elaborate stage-plays to beguile other players in the novel with narrative deceit, so too Chariton especially tips his hand at the end as to his program from the beginning. And just as the Persian audience of the trial in Book 5 listened to the proceedings “not without pleasure” (οὐκ ἀηδῶς, 5.8.6), so too now Chariton predicts his last book will be the “most pleasurable” (ἡδιστον). And chiefly, Chariton writes that Aphrodite will allow the “truth to come to light” (ἐφώτισε τὴν ἀλήθειαν), a truth whose obfuscation has, at every turn, allowed the novel to move forward into new episodes of “piracy and slavery and court and battle and suicide and war and capture” (ληστεία καὶ δουλεία καὶ δίκη καὶ μάχη καὶ ἀποκαρτέρησις καὶ πόλεμος καὶ ἄλωσις), the very things Chariton now collectively dismisses as “sorrows” (σκυθρωπῶν) in need of cleansing (καθάρσιον). The “cleansing” he offers has often been compared to that *catharsis* which Aristotle wrote about with respect to tragedy,<sup>186</sup> yet with both this and his promise of the goddess “bringing to light the truth,” we are offered more contrasts to tragedy than similarities. When the goddess Artemis reveals the truth at the end of Euripides’ *Hippolytus*, for example – that the title character’s father Theseus “was deceived by the contrivances of a god” (ἐξηπατήθη δαίμονος βουλεύμασιν, 1406) – she is present on stage and interacting with the other characters, her presence the key to revealing the deception behind the enmity between father and son so as to allow for their deathbed reconciliation (a

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for Chariton consciously to make him get them wrong; more probably Chariton himself is in some haste to finish his story.” Yet if this analysis has shown anything, one would hope it would be just how conscious Chariton is about narrative events. At least with respect to the second error, it would make sense (and be highly amusing) should the male protagonist of *The Callirhoe* alter this episode to feature himself more prominently.

<sup>186</sup> *Poetics* 1449b.21-28

classic *deus ex machina*, the sort of revelation teased in Book 5 by Mithridates and promised here by Chariton).<sup>187</sup> Here, however, no deity arrives; Chariton merely stops writing the story, and tells the readers that is precisely what he is doing! Yet if Chariton is indeed referencing the *Poetics* with the καθάρσιον he has planned, he may in fact be taking Aristotle's advice as to how to end his novel – advice that contained a criticism of Euripides' *ex machina* resolutions:

χρὴ δὲ καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἤθεσιν ὁμοίως ὥσπερ καὶ ἐν τῇ τῶν πραγμάτων συστάσει ἀεὶ ζητεῖν ἢ τὸ ἀναγκαῖον ἢ τὸ εἰκός, ὥστε τὸν τοιοῦτον τὰ τοιαῦτα λέγειν ἢ πράττειν ἢ ἀναγκαῖον ἢ εἰκός, καὶ τοῦτο μετὰ τοῦτο γίνεσθαι ἢ ἀναγκαῖον ἢ εἰκός. φανερόν οὖν ὅτι καὶ τὰς λύσεις τῶν μύθων ἐξ αὐτοῦ δεῖ τοῦ μύθου συμβαίνειν, καὶ μὴ ὥσπερ ἐν τῇ Μηδείᾳ ἀπὸ μηχανῆς ... (1454a.33-1454b.1).

“It is necessary in characters, just as also in the composition of events, to always seek out what is either necessary or probable, so that a type of person says or does the same sorts of things and that it is necessary or probable that this happen after that. Thus it is clear also that the resolutions of stories ought to come about from the story itself, and not as in *Medea* from a device ...”

Thus it is perhaps excusable that Chariton reconciles his story with a rather mundane reunification of the two lovers. But the repeated characterization of the novel's episodes as “sorrows” (σκυθρωποί) cannot be but ironic, since it is the author himself who is the architect of said sorrows, sorrows which the reader is intended to fully enjoy. This becomes apparent in the subsequent references to said sorrows: twice more they will be so disingenuously coined, and on each occasion, Chariton will allude to the reader's desire to hear them. When Chaereas tells the Syracusans the couple's tale, for example, “he began from the end, not wishing to grieve the crowd with the sorrows in the first parts” (ἀπὸ τῶν τελευταίων ἤρξατο, λυπεῖν οὐ θέλων ἐν τοῖς πρώτοις καὶ σκυθρωποῖς τὸν λαόν, 8.7.3). Here the crowd (as would no doubt the reader) insists, “Start from the top, tell everything to us, and leave nothing out” (ἄνωθεν ἄρξαι, πάντα

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<sup>187</sup> Cf. discussion on 113 above.

ἡμῖν λέγε, μηδὲν παραλίπης, 8.7.3-4). Later, he tries again to pass over events surrounding his capture and kidnapping (ἐπιτρέψατε ἐμοὶ τὰ ἐξῆς σιωπᾶν), calling them, again, “more sorrowful than the events in the beginning” (σκυθρωπότερα γὰρ ἐστὶ τῶν πρώτων), but again the crowd orders him to “tell everything” (λέγε πάντα, 8.8.2). These “sorrows,” then, are in fact the very entertainment Chariton has pursued from the beginning, and so the narrative’s closing is made manifestly less a divine intervention than an authorial intervention, a self-referential signpost as to the fictional program he has pursued from the beginning. The author will even reconcile himself with the title character at the end, for just as Chariton connects Aphrodite’s “bringing to light the truth” with his completion of the novel at the beginning of Book 8, at the end he again connects the two when Callirhoe addresses the goddess in her shrine:

Ἄφροδίτη: πάλιν γάρ μοι Χαϊρέαν ἐν Συρακούσαις ἔδειξας, ὅπου καὶ παρθένος εἶδον αὐτὸν σοῦ θελούσης. Οὐ μέμφομαί σοι, δέσποινα, περὶ ὧν πέπονθα: ταῦτα εἴμαρτό μοι. Δέομαί σου, μηκέτι με Χαϊρέου διαζεύξης, ἀλλὰ καὶ βίον μακάριον καὶ θάνατον κοινὸν κατάνευσον ἡμῖν.’ 8.8.15-16

“Aphrodite, you have delivered Chaereas to me again in Syracuse, where I first saw him by your will. I do not blame you, mistress, for the things which I have suffered: these things were my lot. I beg you, never part me from Chaereas, but assent to us a happy life and a common death.”

Of course, the trials which Callirhoe suffered (ὧν πέπονθα) are those that Chariton invented for her for the purposes of his novel. Thus the end is neatly framed with the beginning by the πάθος common to both: the πάθος that is the “suffering” (πέπονθα) of Callirhoe’s fate (εἴμαρτό μοι) reminds us of the preface of Chariton’s work, when he tells us he will narrate for us a πάθος (an event) which is shaped throughout by fate (τύχη). The author’s connection to these events/sufferings is then immediately solidified by his salutation: “These are the things I have written about Callirhoe” (τοσάδε περὶ Καλλιρρόης συνέγραψα).

Chariton’s narrative, then, from beginning to end, is self-consciously composed, skirting the boundaries between what is, what is not, and what could be, and the narrative deceits that drive the novel forward at every venture offer us an insight into the process of this self-conscious composition: a story neither history nor myth, but drawn together (συνέγραψα) wholly by the author himself. For Chariton, the stage is ever-present, even (especially) in the courtroom scenes, where the author displays a familiarity with the law befitting his introduction (τοῦ ῥήτορος ὑπογραφεύς) to us in the beginning. Characters are said to engage in a drama (δράμα) and are routinely actors (ὑποκριταί) or dramatists setting the scene (σκηνή). Just as Chariton’s characters engage in deceitful stagecraft that render their narratives indistinguishable from actual events, we are invited as readers, while shaking our heads at the characters taken in by the clever machinations of the connivers of the novel, to reflect on how much we ourselves are taken in by Chariton’s tale, and to consider him, like the other novelists, perhaps the most skillful schemer of them all. That he should move his narrative in such a way may seem obvious given the older material he is working with from New Comedy, but it is not inevitable. A short comparison of Chariton to his near-contemporary, Xenophon of Ephesus, can bear this out.

### **Xenophon**

Regardless of whether Xenophon’s novel is an epitome or not,<sup>188</sup> it has been called the most standard of the Greek novels – thought to present what the genre most likely looked like

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<sup>188</sup> If O’Sullivan is correct that “the theory that the *Ephesiaca* as an epitome has become orthodoxy, doubted by very few” (1995, 100), the supposedly heterodox position has to its credit an increasing number of scholars. Rohde first posited the idea of an epitome, in complete seriousness (“*Ich meine dies ganz ernstlich,*” humorous but notable in that it was certainly not the “orthodox” assumption of the time) that the novel might actually be a “skeleton” or “excerpt” (*Skelett ... Auszug*) from an originally longer novel (*Stellenweise liest sich diese Erzählung fast wie eine blosse Inhaltsangabe einer Erzählung; fast könnte man auf den Gedanken kommen, gar nicht einen voll entwickelten Roman, sondern nur das Skelett eines Romans, einen Auszug aus einem ursprünglich viel umfangreicheren Buche vor sich zu haben*, 1876, 401). In 1894, Bürger developed Rohde’s *Gedanken* and argued at length that the novel is an epitome (“*Nachdem wir so das Verfahren des Bearbeiters im Einzelnen kennen gelernt haben, wie er*

prior to its transformation under authors beginning with Chariton.<sup>189</sup> And while the similarities between Chariton and Xenophon cannot be ignored,<sup>190</sup> and while there is most certainly deceit and scheming in Xenophon, just as there is in any of the other novels, it does not typically drive the story forward into new narrative theaters. Where Chariton's characters might scheme or

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*einige Abschnitte ziemlich unverändert herübergenommen, andere aufs äusserste zusammengestrichen und noch andere ganz weggelassen hat,*" 59). Perry (1967, 346 n. 2) judged that Burger had "demonstrated convincingly, in a close-up study of the internal evidence, that such indeed is the case." But a year earlier a serious challenge had been mounted by Hagg, who noted Xenophon's tendency to recapitulate his narratives, doing so some one hundred and twenty times but only four times recapitulating something that cannot with precision be identified in the text, a feat that seems too tall for an epitomizer to have pulled off ("*Doch wäre es sonderbar, wenn das enge Netz der Rekapitulationen den Epitomator nicht einmal verstrickt hätte; irgendwie hätte er sich doch dadurch verraten, dass ein Rückblick zu viel oder etwas anderes als die erstmalige Erzählung sage!*" 1966, 126). Schmeling (1980) also found the evidence for epitome "circumstantial and frequently weak" (21), and Ruiz-Montero (1982), in a study of Xenophon's "καί style" (*estilo KAI*) concluded that the author's style is consistent throughout all five books, and it is thus, he argues, the work of a single author. O'Sullivan likewise has dismantled the case for epitome (1995, 100-139). However, as recently as Swain, scholars can summarily embrace Burger's claim and conclude Xenophon is "surely the victim of an epitomizer" (1996, 104). All of this debate stems, as O'Sullivan rightly points out, from the fact that the *Suda*, not known to be perfect, reports Xenophon's books to be ten while our text has only five ("It must be extremely doubtful that the epitome-theory would have won such acceptance, or even ever have been proposed, but for the statement from the *Suda* that Xenophon's novel contained ten books," 1995, 134). I tend to find Hagg's and Ruiz-Montero's work persuasive, and do not consider the passages Burger deemed "original" to be noticeably different enough in style to warrant notions of a later editor. However, whether any part of the novel has been epitomized or not does not affect my overall conclusions with respect to his departure from Chariton regarding scheming and deceit. It is possible, I suppose, that an epitomizer removed longer sections regarding schemes, but even Burger and others holding to the position of epitome do not allege the epitomizer changed significantly the *content* of episodes; rather they say he merely summarized them.

<sup>189</sup> Anderson (in Reardon 2008) considers Xenophon "a specimen of penny dreadful literature in antiquity; it exhibits in vintage form the characteristics of the melodrama and the popular novel ... The narrative exemplifies the basic pattern of late Greek romance" (125). Konstan (Morgan 1994, 49) considers such a (largely) negative view of Xenophon to be "a mistake. The novel is not only good fun, it is also very cleverly constructed, and subtly examines the erotic conventions that underpin the genre as a whole." Both, however, agree that such conventions are at play in Xenophon, though no one dates him prior to Chariton anymore. He is typically dated to the second century (O'Sullivan 1995, 3; Reardon 1967, 170, 358 n. 17).

<sup>190</sup> Schmeling (1980, 22) notes that while Xenophon uses language identical to Chariton (in describing Habrocomes as opposed to Chariton's Callirhoe), and while "the beginning of Xenophon's novel is intended to resemble Chariton's novel ... the contrasts to Chariton's opening lines are marked" in that "Xenophon ... cuts his story free from historical bonds, and describes a world which exists ... in his imagination only."

deceive to get their desired ends, Xenophon's more often will simply resort to direct action or violence.<sup>191</sup>

Hence when Manto, the daughter of the master who at first owns the protagonists Habrocomes and Anthia, inevitably falls in love with Habrocomes, no lies or schemes initially follow her attempts to pursue him. She at first confides in another slave, then when she cannot endure the delay any further, she writes Habrocomes a letter herself, professing her love immediately and entirely. Her letter does not scheme or deceive but does directly threaten:

ἌΒΡΟΚΟΜΗ ΤΩ ΚΑΛΩ ΔΕΣΠΟΙΝΑ ΣΗ ΧΑΙΡΕΙΝ.  
Μαντῶ ἐρῶ σου, μηκέτι φέρειν δυναμένη:<sup>192</sup> ἀπρεπές  
μὲν ἴσως παρθένῳ, ἀναγκαῖον δὲ φιλοῦσθι: δέομαι, μὴ  
με περιίδῃς μηδὲ ὑβρίσῃς τὴν τὰ σὰ ἡρημένην. Ἐὰν γὰρ  
πεισθῆς, πατέρα τὸν ἐμὸν Ἄψυρτον ἐγὼ πείσω σοί με  
συνοικίσει, καὶ τὴν νῦν σοι γυναῖκα ἀποσκευασόμεθα,  
πλουτήσεις δὲ καὶ μακάριος ἔσῃ: ἐὰν δὲ ἀντίπῃς,  
ἐννόει μὲν οἷα πείσῃ τῆς ὑβρισμένης ἑαυτὴν  
ἐκδικούσης, οἷα δὲ οἱ μετὰ σοῦ, κοινωνοὶ τῆς σῆς  
ὑπερηφανίας καὶ σύμβουλοι γενόμενοι. (2.5.1-2)

To the handsome Habrocomes, greetings from your mistress: I Manto am desirous of you, and I am no longer able to bear it: perhaps inappropriate for a maiden, but necessary for one who loves, I beg you, do not look away from nor insult the one who holds in her power your affairs. For should you be persuaded, I will convince my father Apsyrtos to wed you to me, and we will dispatch with your current wife, and you will be rich and blessed. But should you refuse, consider the sort of things which you will suffer when the one you have insulted exacts recompense for herself, and the sort of things those with you will suffer, since they were partners and conspirators in your contempt.

Here Manto clearly does not seek to beguile Habrocomes as the desirers of illicit love do in Chariton; rather, she confronts him immediately with her desire, tells him they will get rid of his

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<sup>191</sup> A study in its own right by Scippacercola (2010, 408): "La violenza è integrata nella trama del romanzo ed è spesso motore dell'azione." Notes Haynes (2003, 108), Xenophon often utilizes "the stereotype of violent barbarity eschewed by Chariton."

<sup>192</sup> O'Sullivan (1995) notes that this formulaic language recurs when Moiris desires Anthia (ὁ καλὸς Μοῖρις ἐρῶ σου, μηκέτι φέρειν δυναμένη, 2.12.1, discussed below).

wife Anthia, and then threatens both him and his friends for coercion. Only after Habrocomes' expected refusal (also stated bluntly) does Manto resort to a scheme, telling her father that Habrocomes attempted to take her virginity (ὁ γὰρ σῶφρων Ἀβροκόμης ἐπέειρασε μὲν παρθενίαν τὴν ἐμὴν ἀφανίσαι, 2.5.7). But the scheme only lasts a few chapters, and by 2.10, Manto's father has found her original letter to Habrocomes and released him. A similar scheme using the same Potiphar's wife motif<sup>193</sup> occurs in 3.12, when he is again sold as a slave. This time the master's wife desires Habrocomes, and after pressuring him to consummate her lust, he eventually gives in.

Καὶ νυκτὸς γενομένης<sup>194</sup> ἡ μὲν ὡς ἄνδρα ἔξουσα τὸν Ἀβροκόμην τὸν Ἄραξον ἀποκτινύει καὶ λέγει τὸ πραχθὲν τῷ Ἀβροκόμῃ, ὁ δὲ οὐκ ἐνεγκὼν τὴν τῆς γυναικὸς ἀσέλγειαν ἀπηλλάγη τῆς οἰκίας, καταλιπὼν αὐτὴν, οὐκ ἂν ποτε μαιφόνῳ συγκατακλιθῆναι φήσας.

And when it was night, she killed Araxos [her husband] as though she had Habrocomes as her husband, and told Habrocomes about what had been done. But he, having not endured the woman's wantonness, delivered himself from the house, leaving her behind, saying that he would not ever lie with a murderess. (3.12.5-6)

Again, only after she has been thwarted, the woman resorts to scheming, this time accusing Habrocomes of the death of her husband. Here the deceit does, in fact, move Habrocomes to a new theater (and new book, Book 4), but overall this is the exception in Xenophon, and this is a largely a repeat of the same stock scheme<sup>195</sup> we were treated to in Book 2.

Anthia, too, is treated to direct assault more often than schemes for her affection, distinguishing her from her counterpart Callirhoe. Manto, embittered toward Anthia because of

<sup>193</sup> Trenker 1958, 65 n. 1; Ruiz-Montero 2003, 45.

<sup>194</sup> Burger (1892, 54) saw this as evidence of epitomization, arguing that it must skip over a detailed part of the episode that occurred in the intervening time (54), but O'Sullivan (1995, 106) convincingly dismisses such suspicion: "νυκτὸς γενομένης means here no more than νύκτωρ, "at night," the proper time for murder."

<sup>195</sup> On parallelism in Xenophon, see Hagg 1971 and O'Sullivan 1995.

Habrocomes' spurning, "decided to join her to a slave, one of the most worthless, some rustic goatherd" (τὴν δὲ Ἄνθειαν οἰκέτη συνουσιάζειν ἐνενόει καὶ ταῦτα τῶν ἀτιμοτάτων, αἰπόλῳ τινὶ ἀγροίκῳ, 2.9.2). Manto bids the goatherd to make her his wife (κελεύει γυναῖκα ἔχειν), and should she demur, she commanded him to use force (καὶ ἐὰν ἀπειθῆ προσέταξε βιάζεσθαι, 2.9.3). Again, no scheming is present to seduce Anthia; the goatherd is instead told to use force (βιάζεσθαι). However, Anthia tells the goatherd her story and begs for mercy, leading the goatherd to swear to guard her chastity (ὄμνυσιν ἧ μὴν φυλάξειν ἀμόλυντον, 2.9.4).<sup>196</sup>

Things then go from bad to worse for Anthia when Manto's new husband Moiris falls for her, yet similarly few schemes result. Any attempts at hiding Moiris' passion are quickly dispatched by the character and author. Moiris immediately tells the goatherd, who immediately then tells Manto:

Καὶ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἐπειρᾶτο λανθάνειν, τελευταῖον δὲ λέγει τῷ αἰπόλῳ τὸν ἔρωτα καὶ πολλὰ ὑπισχνεῖτο συγκύψαντι. Ὁ δὲ τῷ μὲν Μοίριδι συντίθεται, δεδοικῶς δὲ τὴν Μαντῶ ἔρχεται πρὸς αὐτὴν καὶ λέγει τὸν ἔρωτα τὸν Μοίριδος. (2.11.1-2)

At first he tried to keep it hidden, but finally he told about his love to the goatherd and promised him many things for keeping it hidden. And the goatherd agreed to Moiris, but fearing Manto he went to her and told her about Moiris' passion.

This then leads Manto to order the goatherd to lead Anthia out into the woods and kill her. He does not wish to do this, but does not come up with some scheme to get out of it – instead, he merely takes her to the harbor, sells her to some Sicilian merchants, then takes the money and

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<sup>196</sup> This same motif is present in Euripides' *Electra*, when rather than kill Electra as Aigisthus insists, Clytemnestra marries her to a "powerless man" (ἀσθενεῖ, 39), who nonetheless keeps her a virgin (ἦν οὐποθ' ἀνήρ ὄδε — σύννοιδέ μοι Κύπρις — ἦσχυεν εὐνή: παρθένος δ' ἔτ' ἐστὶ δῆ, 43-44). Trenkner (1958, 45) notes the similarities but finds it most plausible that they both drew from an oral source: "It is not impossible that the author of the romance copied Euripides. But as no single detail in this episode ... is unique in the romance, it appears rather than Xenophon took this story from its common popular sources. Euripides borrowed it from the same source, namely popular story-telling."



returns back to the countryside (ὥχεται ἐπὶ τὸν λιμένα: εὐρών δὲ ἐκεῖ ἐμπόρους ἄνδρας Κίλικας ἀπέδοτο τὴν κόρη, καὶ λαβὼν τὴν ὑπὲρ αὐτῆς τιμὴν ἤκεν εἰς τὸν ἀγρόν, 2.11.9).<sup>197</sup> Ironically, when asked what happened to Anthia, Manto unintentionally tells the truth: that she has been sold into slavery, though Manto assumes the goatherd did her bidding and killed her, as he presents no schemes or lies to cover up this fact.

This avoidance of scheming and deceit runs throughout Xenophon. In Chariton, the author goes to great pains to indicate that none of his characters wish to force themselves on Callirhoe; rather, we are treated to a host of schemes as outlined above. In contrast, characters in Xenophon are quite comfortable with using force and violence. The key example of this is in Book 4, when the bandit Anchialos burns with love for Anthia and he simply tries to rape her:

Καὶ νύκτωρ ποτέ ... ἐπανίστατο καὶ ὑβρίζειν  
ἐπειράτο: ἡ δὲ ἐν ἀμηχάνῳ κακῷ γενομένη, σπασαμένη  
τὸ παρακείμενον ξίφος παίει τὸν Ἀγχίαλον, καὶ ἡ πληγὴ  
γίνεται καιρία: ὁ μὲν γὰρ περιληψόμενος καὶ φιλήσων  
ὄλος ἐνενεύκει πρὸς αὐτήν, ἡ δὲ κατεγκοῦσα τὸ ξίφος  
κατὰ τῶν στέρνων ἔπληξε.<sup>198</sup> Καὶ Ἀγχίαλος μὲν δίκην  
ἱκανὴν ἐδεδώκει τῆς πονηρᾶς ἐπιθυμίας. (4.5.5-6)

And once at night ... he got up and tried to rape her:  
but she, being in a resourceless bad spot, drawing a  
sword that was lying nearby, smote Anchialos, and the  
blow was just right: for he was going to embrace her  
and kiss her, lying down entirely on her, and pushing  
the sword down against his chest she struck him. And so  
Anchialos paid the appropriate penalty for his wicked  
zeal.

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<sup>197</sup> O'Sullivan (1995, 40 n. 11) notes that Lampon's "otherwise spotless character is blotted right at the end of his dealings with Anthia when he becomes a moral victim of compositional necessity: the plot says that he must sell the girl to slavers, not a very nice thing to do, and not really what we have come to expect of him."

<sup>198</sup> O'Sullivan (1995, 51-52), citing numerous textual parallels, connects this episode with the death of Aristomachus, who makes off with Hippothous' lover Hyperanthes in 3.2 and is stabbed to death by the former.

Here, in contrast to Callirhoe, who can talk her way out of a situation, Anthia also resorts to violence and kills her assailant.<sup>199</sup> Similarly, in Book 5, the Egyptian commander Polyidos falls in love with Anthia and also resorts to violence:

Ἐν τούτῳ ἐρᾷ καὶ ὁ Πολύιδος Ἀνθείας ἔρωτα  
σφοδρὸν ἦν δὲ αὐτῷ ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείᾳ γυνῆ: ἐρασθεὶς  
δὲ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἐπειρᾶτο πείθειν μεγάλα  
ὑπισχνούμενος: τελευταῖον δὲ ὡς κατήεσαν εἰς  
Ἀλεξανδρείαν ἐγένοντο δὲ ἐν Μέμφει, ἐπεχείρησεν ὁ  
Πολύιδος βιάζεσθαι τὴν Ἀνθειαν: ἡ δὲ ἐκφυγεῖν  
δυνηθεῖσα, ἐπὶ τὸ τῆς Ἰσιδος ἱερὸν ἔρχεται καὶ ἰκέτις  
γενομένη (5.4.5-6)

At that time Polyidos also developed an excessive passion for Anthia, though his wife was in Alexandria. Afflicted with this passion, he at first tried to persuade her, promising her great things: but at last they went into Alexandria, and when they were in Memphis, Polyidos attempted to force Anthia. And she, able to escape, went to the temple of Isis and became a suppliant.

Here again, force is attempted, and here again, rather than scheme or talk her way out, Anthia simply manages to escape.<sup>200</sup> And likewise, rather than scheming himself at this point, Polyidos instead goes to the temple and swears never to use force on her again. She relents, and the episode moves on. When Polyidos' wife finds out about his passion for Anthia, she, too, resorts to direct violence:

ἀπόντος δὲ αὐτοῦ Ῥηναία τοῦτο γὰρ ἐκαλεῖτο ἡ τοῦ  
Πολυῖδου γυνῆ μεταπέμπεται τὴν Ἀνθειαν ἦν δὲ ἐπὶ  
τῆς οἰκίας καὶ περιρρήγνυσι τὴν ἐσθῆτα καὶ αἰκίζεται  
τὸ σῶμα ὡς πονηρὰ λέγουσα καὶ τῶν γάμων τῶν ἐμῶν

<sup>199</sup> Schmeling (1980, 66) points out this is not in keeping with the conventions of the romance: "Regardless of the social implications of her actions and the role of a suppressed woman fighting off a would-be rapist, the mere fact that the heroine kills anybody is news in a Greek novel... Xenophon does not intend to have his readers marvel at Anthia's action; he intends to shock them." Hopwood notes that her punishment by the gang for this killing, to be buried alive with two dogs, is similar to that of Roman parricides: "Anthia had offended against the form of patriarchy represented by the topsy-turvy world of the bandits: the 'protection' of the predatory male" (in Foxhall 2013, 201).

<sup>200</sup> Bürger saw the brevity of this (and the Psammis episode above) as further proof of epitome, but O'Sullivan (1995, 107) dismisses such a claim: "Psammis and Polyidus ... have quite simple functions to fulfill and the parts of the text dealing with them are correspondingly short."

ἐπίβουλε, ματαίως ἔδοξας Πολυΐδῳ καλή, οὐ γάρ σε  
ὀνήσει τὸ κάλλος τοῦτο. Ἴσως μὲν γὰρ πείθην ληστὰς  
ἐδύνασο καὶ συγκαθεύδην νεανίσκοις μεθύουσι  
πολλοῖς: τὴν δὲ Ῥηναίας εὐνήν οὐποτε ὑβριεῖς  
χαίρουσα. Ταῦτα εἰποῦσα ἀπέκειρε τὴν κόμην αὐτῆς  
καὶ δεσμὰ περιτίθησι καὶ παραδοῦσα οἰκέτη τινὶ πιστῶ,  
Κλυτῶ τοῦνομα, κελεύει ἐμβιβάσαντα εἰς ναῦν,  
ἀπαγαγόντα εἰς Ἰταλίαν ἀποδόσθαι πορνοβοσκῶ τὴν  
Ἄνθειαν. (5.5.2-4)

While he was away, Renaia (for this is what the wife of Polyidos was called) sent after Anthia, who was in the house, and ripped her clothes and abused her body, saying, "You worthless woman, plotting against my marriage, you seem foolishly pretty to Polyidos, but this beauty won't avail you. Maybe you were able to lure pirates and to bed many drunken young men, but you'll never brag that you've insulted the bed of Renaia!" Saying these things, she cut off her hair and bound her in chains, and handing her over to some trusted slave named Clytos, she ordered that he load Anthia onto a ship, lead her away to Italy, and sell her to a brothel-keeper.

Hence yet again, Anthia's situation is changed not by guile or deceit, but rather by direct action and violence. Granted, when Clytos returns home, he tells Polyidos that Anthia has run away, but the lie here – like many of those already explored in Xenophon – is an afterthought, not the schematic by which the narrative is moved.<sup>201</sup>

One of the few schemes that does occur in Xenophon happens when Anthia finally goes on sale at the brothel. Here, while on display for sale in front of the brothel, a situation seemingly solutionless (ἀμηχάνῳ), she "discovered a scheme of escape" (εὕρισκει τέχνην ἀποφυγῆς), falling on the ground and imitating an epileptic seizure. This prompts pity on the part of the men considering her and gets her out of the purchase, but she still must explain to

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<sup>201</sup> As Reardon (1991, 36) rather critically puts it, in comparing the two, "Xenophon can think of no very effective means of conducting the parallel actions, and ends up moving his characters more and more widely around the Mediterranean, like demented chessmen."

her master, the πορνοβοσκός,<sup>202</sup> what happened. When asked to do so, she launches into a fantastic, supernatural tale about how she became afflicted with the disease:

Ἡ δὲ Ἄνθεια ‘καὶ πρότερον’ ἔφη, ‘δέσποτα, εἰπεῖν πρὸς σὲ ἐβουλόμην τὴν συμφορὰν τὴν ἐμὴν καὶ διηγήσασθαι τὰ συμβάντα, ἀλλὰ ἀπέκρυπτον αἰδουμένη: νυνὶ δὲ οὐδὲν χαλεπὸν εἰπεῖν πρὸς σέ, πάντα ἤδη μεμαθηκότα τὰ κατ’ ἐμέ. Παῖς ἔτι οὖσα ἐν ἑορτῇ καὶ παννυχίδι ἀποπλανηθεῖσα τῶν ἐμαυτῆς ἦκον πρὸς τινα τάφον ἀνδρὸς νεωστὶ τεθνηκότος: κἀνταῦθα ἐφάνη μοί τις ἀναθορῶν ἐκ τοῦ τάφου καὶ κατέχειν ἐπειρᾶτο: ἐγὼ δ’ ἀπέφευγον καὶ ἐβόων: ὁ δὲ ἄνθρωπος ἦν μὲν ὀφθῆναι φοβερός, φωνὴν δὲ πολλῶ εἶχε χαλεπωτέραν: καὶ τέλος ἡμέρα μὲν ἤδη ἐγένετο, ἀφείς δέ με ἔπληξέ τε κατὰ τοῦ στήθους καὶ νόσον ταύτην ἔλεγεν ἐμβεβληκέναι. Ἐκεῖθεν ἀρξαμένη ἄλλοτε ἄλλως ὑπὸ τῆς συμφορᾶς κατέχομαι. Ἀλλὰ δέομαί σου, δέσποτα, μηδέν μοι χαλεπήνης: οὐ γὰρ ἐγὼ τούτων αἰτία.’ (5.7.7-9)

And Anthia said, “Master, I wished to tell to you before about my misfortune and to explain its particulars, but being ashamed, I concealed it. But now it is not difficult to tell you, since the things that have happened to me have already been found out. When I was still a child, having wandered away from my family at an all-night festival, I came to some tomb of a man having recently died: and then some man appeared to me from the tomb and tried to take hold of me, but I fled and creid out. The man was fearful to behold but he had a voice even more savage: and finally it was then day, and he let me be, having struck me about the chest, and said that he had cast this sickness upon me. Thenceforth, I began to be seized by the disease sometimes. But I beg you, master, do not be harsh to me: for I am not at fault for these things.”<sup>203</sup>

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<sup>202</sup> A “well-known stock character in comedy,” unnamed because “his occupation is directly responsible for his function in the romance” (Hagg 1971b, 32-33).

<sup>203</sup> Though a bit hostile to his subject (“a survey of Xenophon’s novel reveals Anthia as a rather shallow personality prone to melodramatic outbursts and lamentation which may be justified only in part by her admittedly uncomfortable plights, an utterer of generally trite and repetitious comments, painfully in need of reassurance about her beauty, which is hard to reconcile with the fact that her fellow-citizens worship her on account of that beauty”), Garson nevertheless praises her “unexpected resources of initiative, inventiveness and even physical strength ... Aithia (sic) has an eye for just the weakness in those around her which will extricate her from her predicament.” (1981, 50) Nevertheless, Anthia’s resourcefulness appears more happenstance when compared with the survivalist Callirhoe. Schmeling (1980, 70) dryly notes: “Her story convinces her pimp, but certainly amazes the readers (among whom are married males thanking the gods that their wives are not as good at telling impromptu stories).”

Her master believed her and forgave her, Xenophon notes, since “she suffered these things unwillingly” (ὡς οὐχ ἐκούσῃ ταῦτα πασχούσῃ). This is the sort of scheme that features prominently in the other novelists, but here it seems to be a bit of comic relief: Anthia must make up a deceptive narrative to go along with her impromptu ruse, and rather than spin a plausible one (as her counterparts might have in the other novels), she instead offers up an unbelievable tale that the gullible pimp believes wholesale, a tale worthy of Apuleius (see Chapter 6).<sup>204</sup> More impressive is Anthia’s cunning when confronted with the Indian ruler Psammis, who buys her in Alexandria to be his handmaiden after falling in love at the sight of her:

Ὦνησάμενος δὲ ἄνθρωπος βάρβαρος εὐθύς ἐπιχειρεῖ  
 βιάζεσθαι καὶ χρῆσθαι πρὸς συνουσίαν: οὐ θέλουσα δὲ  
 τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἀντέλεγε, τελευταῖον δὲ σκήπτεται πρὸς  
 τὸν Ψάμμιν ἑδαισιδαίμονες δὲ φύσει βάρβαροί ὅτι  
 αὐτὴν ὁ πατὴρ γεννωμένην ἀναθεῖη τῇ Ἴσιδι μέχρι  
 ὥρας γάμων καὶ ἔλεγεν ἔτι τὸν χρόνον ἐνιαυτῷ  
 τίθεσθαι. Ἦν οὖν φησὶν ἑξυβρίσης εἰς τὴν ἱερὰν τῆς  
 θεοῦ, μηνίσει μὲν ἐκείνη, χαλεπὴ δὲ ἡ τιμωρία.  
 Πείθεται Ψάμμις καὶ τὴν θεὸν προσεκύνει καὶ Ἀνθείας  
 ἀπέχεται. (3.11.4-5)

And having bought her, the barbarian man at once set his hands to force and assault her for intercourse: unwilling, she refused his first advances, but ultimately she pretended to Psammis, knowing that barbarians are god-fearing by nature, that her father had dedicated her when she was born to Isis until it was time for her nuptials, and she said that that time was set at a year away. “So,” she said, “should you insult one under divine protection, she will be angry, and the

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<sup>204</sup> Schmeling (1980, 71) also sees a distinct contrast between Xenophon and Achilles Tatius in how alert the readers are made to the (limited) scheming of Anthia versus her counterpart Leucippe: “The reader knows that Anthia does not have epilepsy. Just before the sudden onslaught of her seizure, she had informed the reader that she intended to devise some means to preserve her chastity. The epileptic fit then comes as no surprise – unfortunately for the reader, who, in this predictable novel, needs a few surprises. Leucippe, in Achilles Tatius’ novel (4.9), also goes mad, but there the reader is caught by surprise because Clitophon, the narrator, did not tip his hand to the reader. ... The audience is left in the dark and the object of Achilles Tatius’ irony. Xenophon never excludes his reader from any secret.” I will be examining in detail just this narrative strategy of Achilles Tatius below in Chapter 5.

recompence harsh." Psammis believed her and prayed to the goddess and stayed away from Anthia.

Here we have a more Callirhoean scheme, one that utilizes nuance and intuition instead of direct action or a veritable Milesian tale. Anthia knows the religious weakness of her opponent, and "pretends" or "puts on a pretense" (σκήπτεται) about her divine protection. The pretense is still less sophisticated than Callirhoe can be, and yet again relies upon (an invented) supernatural intervention, but it successfully dupes yet another would-be assailant.<sup>205</sup>

At one point Anthia uses the truth to make her escape. When she is sold yet again and winds up in front of Habrocomes' best friend Hippothoos, Xenophon again puts her in an impossible situation, with her captor/master desiring her. Here, rather than direct action of violence to ward off the threat of rape, Anthia instead spills the entire truth of her marriage to Habrocomes and their separation (5.9.12). Hippothoos reveals he is Habrocomes' friend and the encounter leads ultimately to the reunion of the two lovers a few chapters later and thus the end of the novel.

Xenophon thus stands as a telling contrast to the sorts of narrative deceptions found throughout Chariton's novel, and illustrates that such lies and deceit are not (originally) endemic to the genre as a whole. However, as shall see, most of the novels that came down to us did consider deception and narrative to be inextricably entwined, and as the genre develops in later authors, narrative deceit becomes a recurring theme and variation in the telling of fictional tales.

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<sup>205</sup> Muses Schmeling (1980, 62): "I would hazard a guess that Xenophon sees her as a kind of witch, a priestess, someone with special powers to make men go wild or to control them. It is clear that her words carry a magical force over men who could be controlled by nothing else."

## Chapter 5: Lies and Fiction in the Greek Novels II – Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus

### *Leucippe and Clitophon: Death and Deception*

Not long after Chariton's novel *Callirhoe*, one appeared even more popular, judging by a papyrological witness almost double that of the earlier author.<sup>206</sup> Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon* was likely written in the mid to late second century,<sup>207</sup> and shares many similarities with *Callirhoe*, while introducing its own novelties. Yet again the ideal romance is present, with two lovers separated by the vicissitudes of fate, which takes them through numerous episodes, also contained within eight books. And yet again, those vicissitudes are often shaped and moved forward by deceptive plots within the novel. The key difference for Achilles Tatius is this: while Chariton announces early on that "I will narrate an erotic event that happened in Syracuse" (πάθος ἐρωτικὸν ἐν Συρακούσαις γενόμενον διηγήσομαι, 1.1.1)<sup>208</sup> and maintains that third-person, omniscient narration throughout, allowing the audience to know when central characters are being deceived in ways that will shape the episodes to come, Achilles Tatius abandons such a narration from the beginning, allowing the male protagonist, Clitophon, to

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<sup>206</sup> Plepeltis 1976, 391

<sup>207</sup> Achilles Tatius' date may in fact not be much later than Chariton's if we date the latter as late as the end of the first century CE (see 94, n.165 above). A reference to eight men who "shaved the hair from their cheeks" (τῶν γενείων ἐψίλωντο τὰς τρίχας, 2.18.3) has been seen as evidence that the text must postdate the emperor Hadrian (117-138 CE), who reintroduced the beard for the next two centuries, until Constantine reversed course (Plepeltis 1976, 391). Yet another Roman imperial reference has been seen in the description of the soldiers' shields ("reaching to their feet"/ποδήρεις) at 3.13.2, which Hilton (2009, 103) says "seems to clinch the identification of these men as Romans, since the Roman legions bore a full-length *scutum*, whereas Persian soldiers carried a round shield." Hilton goes on to compare Achilles Tatius' depiction of Andromeda to Roman wall paintings (2009, 107-108). But Achilles Tatius cannot be any later than the second century, thanks to two papyrological witnesses from that time (Vogliano 1938 and Willis 1990). Thus a date of the late second century is fairly commonly agreed upon for *Leucippe and Clitophon*.

<sup>208</sup> "The very first words in Chariton's romance show the distance from which the author is to tell the story." (Hagg 1971a, 114)

narrate the tale for him.<sup>209</sup> The author/narrator of the first two chapters, who meets Clitophon in front of a painting of the rape of Europa,<sup>210</sup> then disappears, never to return, even though “it can hardly be doubted that the author’s placement of this pictorial description at the very head of his work would give rise to certain expectations in the ancient reader about its role in the following narrative.”<sup>211</sup> But the frame is never again referenced, even at key points of the story where we are reminded of the beginning, such as when, after describing Egyptian bulls, the narrator remarks that “if the myth of Europa is true, Zeus surely mimicked an Egyptian bull” (Εἰ δὲ ὁ μῦθος Εὐρώπης ἀληθής, Αἰγύπτιον βούην ὁ Ζεὺς ἐμμήσατο, 2.15.4).<sup>212</sup> Nor does the author/narrator return at the end, a matter of recurring scholarly puzzlement.<sup>213</sup> Instead, we are

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<sup>209</sup> “... the author’s purpose in removing an omniscient viewpoint from the narrative is to make possible and complement the play on the readers’ expectations that constitutes his strategy on a larger scale.” (Bartsch 1989, 129)

<sup>210</sup> Much has been made of the choice of this painting to open the narrative. See first Harlan (1965, 94), as well as Bartsch (1989, 49), who says it “serves to set the *tone* of the novel” as an erotic one.

<sup>211</sup> Bartsch 1989, 40

<sup>212</sup> Bartsch sees this reference as obliquely pointing back to the novel’s opening *ecphrasis*. It occurs right before the maiden Calligone is mistaken for Leucippe and kidnapped by brigands, which Bartsch says is surrounded by references to the earlier Europa painting. In addition to this line, immediately prior (2.15.4), the sacrificial event at which the kidnapping takes place is said to be adorned with flowers -- τὰ ἄνθη νάρκισσος καὶ ρόδα καὶ μυρρίναι – “the very same three flowers ... found in Europa’s meadow, even listed in the same order” (1989, 64). Nevertheless, the narrator Clitophon, presumably still speaking to the author/narrator of the beginning, does not offer an apostrophe to his listener nor does the initial narrator interrupt the story with a (somewhat expected) comment regarding the painting that gave rise to the story to begin with.

<sup>213</sup> Indeed, Morales (2004) calls the ending “the ultimate frustration” in a work that [she claims] solicits and then frustrates the desires of the reader. Morales (2004, 144), Nikatani (2003, 74), and Most (1989, 115) all note that the work ends with the word Byzantium (Βυζάντιον) and begins with the word Sidon (Σιδῶν), punctuating a geographic inconsistency that leaves us wondering how Clitophon got there and why Leucippe is not with him (Morales 2004, 143). But Winkler sees the ending and its failure to resolve the frame as dependent upon (as many other allusions throughout) Plato’s *Symposium* (see discussion below), and as such a “deliberate act” (Reardon 2008, 284, n. 72). Morales concurs, noting, “It is hard to believe, given, for example, the care with which the author has taken to provide narrative justifications for Clitophon’s knowledge of certain events, that not completing the circle of narrative can be put down to improvisation rather than design” (2004, 146). But as deliberate as it might have been, it remains odd that Clitophon begins his tale with words of woe and lament more so than the joy the happy ending should prescribe. Most surmised that first-person narration within the novels (in embedded tales) were almost always tales of woe, leading to a tension between the expected ending of Achilles Tatius (a happy one) and the narration (woeful) by a character himself, “between the *content* of a narrative which can only turn out well (an erotic romance) and the *mode of a narration* which seems to presuppose that events have turned out badly (a first-person story in an erotic romance)” (1989, 119). Morales and Nakatani both depart from this, focusing instead on the ending as an example of closure-less narratives



completely subsumed into the point of view of Clitophon, who, like Chaereas, is duped a great many times throughout the story. But by focalizing the story through the character's eyes, we too become fooled by the action of the story, and must await its resolution and the explanation behind its machinations just as the character does.<sup>214</sup> Yet Clitophon is clearly narrating his experiences well after the events of the end of the novel, so the author can pick and choose whether to present the reader with events as they happen and as his character/narrator first experiences them (as he does most often), or to instead let the reader in on information that Clitophon was not privy to at that point in the narration.<sup>215</sup> As such, the character himself becomes a consummate story-teller, and self-referentiality is everywhere in Achilles Tatius, just as it was in Chariton. Indeed, Clitophon's role as an archetypal storyteller is clear from the very beginning. The early narrator (whether Achilles Tatius or someone else: he does not identify himself within the narrative as Chariton does) spies a painting of Europa's rape while in the city of Sidon, and after a lengthy *ecphrasis*<sup>216</sup> exclaims about the power of Eros. At this point a young man (νεανίσκος) overhears him and interjects, "Indeed, I could show you these things, having suffered such outrages from Eros" (ἔγω ταῦτ' ἂν ἐδείκνυν' ἔφη ἄτοσαύτας ὕβρεις ἐξ ἔρωτος παθῶν', 1.2.1-2). Here again, at the outset, is πάθος, at once suffering, desire, and a series of events that happened: most suitable for a love story, which is what the young man, Clitophon, is

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throughout the novel (Morales builds off of Bartsch's observation about *ecphrases* that end abruptly, 2004, 147-148), or on the embedded narrations of the other novels, of which Clitophon's extended story is merely an (overwhelming) example (Nakatani 2003 78-79). Hagg (1971a, 126), meanwhile, suggests "it is questionable whether the ordinary reader ever misses its resumption after 175 pages of first-person narration."

<sup>214</sup> For general treatments of this, see Whitmarsh and Bartsch in Whitmarsh 2008, 237-257; Reardon, in Morgan 1994, 80-96; Fusillo 1989, 166-78; and Hagg 1971a.

<sup>215</sup> As Reardon (2004, 381) notes, "It is to transpire, as the story unfolds, that this technique of misleading the reader is one of the main pillars of Achilles' whole narrative technique ... The deceptions that are practiced upon the reader are made possible by the fact that the story is being told by an internal narrator, namely Clitophon himself, who in the fiction relieves the author of authorial responsibility." This will be the conclusion of my analysis as well, though Hagg notes that the narrative fiction is broken during the Callisthenes episode (2.13), when Clitophon omnisciently tells of things happening far away of which the character will only be made aware at the end of the novel (1971a, 131).

<sup>216</sup> See discussion on 151ff below.

about to tell. The author/narrator is intrigued, and asks him what he has suffered (τί πέπονθας), but Clitophon at first demurs, warning him: “you are rousing a beehive of narrations, for the things that happened to me are like fables” (σμήνος ἀνεγείρεις’ εἶπε ἴλων: τὰ γὰρ ἐμὰ μύθοις ἔοικε,<sup>217</sup> 1.2.2). This only encourages our author/narrator, who urges him that if they are like fables, he is all the more eager to hear them (ταύτη μᾶλλον ἤσειν, εἰ καὶ μύθοις ἔοικε, 1.2.2-3). He then leads Clitophon to a grove: a “pleasant place suitable for erotic tales” (ὁ τόπος ἡδύς καὶ μύθων ἄξιος ἐρωτικῶν), one marked by plane trees (πλάτανοι) and a “water flowing cold and clear” (παρέρρει δὲ ὕδωρ ψυχρὸν τε καὶ διαυγές, 1.2.3). The presence of the grove is itself a signpost to the narration that is about to happen, modeled as it so clearly is on the beginning of Plato’s *Phaedrus*. There, Socrates and Phaedrus meet up on the road, and Socrates entreats him to tell of the “erotic trope” (τρόπον ἐρωτικός, 227c) he had just heard from his host Lysias. Looking for a suitable spot, Phaedrus spots a plane tree (ὄρᾳς οὖν ἐκείνην τὴν ὑψηλοτάτην πλάτανον; 229a) near a clean and clear stream (καὶ καθαρὰ καὶ διαφανῆ τὰ ὑδάτια φαίνεται, 229b) and then begins his tale.<sup>218</sup> Likewise, Clitophon begins his tale in a suitable grove, and the author/narrator then speaks his last before handing the story over exclusively to Clitophon: “And he began to speak thus” (Ὁ δ’ ἄρχεται τοῦ λέγειν ὧδε, 1.3.1).

<sup>217</sup> Cf. ὁμοία μύθοις, 36-37, 57, and 87 n.153

<sup>218</sup> Socrates then gives another description of the grove, part of which matches that of Achilles Tatius’ grove and part of which matches that of Longus: νῆ τὴν Ἥραν, καλὴ γε ἡ καταγωγή. ἢ τε γὰρ πλάτανος αὕτη μάλ’ ἀμφιλαφὴς τε καὶ ὑψηλὴ, τοῦ τε ἄγνου τὸ ὕψος καὶ τὸ σύσκιον πάγκαλον, καὶ ὡς ἀκμήν ἔχει τῆς ἀνθης, ὡς ἂν εὐωδέστατον παρέχοι τὸν τόπον: ἢ τε αὖ πηγὴ χαριεστάτη ὑπὸ τῆς πλατάνου ῥεῖ μάλᾳ ψυχροῦ ὕδατος, ὥστε γε τῷ ποδὶ τεκμήρασθαι. Νυμφῶν τέ τινων καὶ Ἀχελώου ἱερὸν ἀπὸ τῶν κορῶν τε καὶ ἀγαλμάτων ἔοικεν εἶναι. εἰ δ’ αὖ βούλει, τὸ εὐπνουν τοῦ τόπου ὡς ἀγαπητὸν καὶ σφόδρα ἡδύ: θερινόν τε καὶ λιγυρὸν ὑπηγεῖ τῷ τῶν τεττίγων χορῷ. πάντων δὲ κομψότατον τὸ τῆς πόας, ὅτι ἐν ἡρέμα προσάντει ἱκανὴ πέφυκε κατακλινέντι τὴν κεφαλὴν παγκάλως ἔχειν. ὥστε ἀριστὰ σοι ἐξενάγηται, ὦ φίλε Φαῖδρε/ By Hera, it is a charming resting place. For this plane tree is very spreading and lofty, and the tall and shady willow is very beautiful, and it is in full bloom, so as to make the place most fragrant; then, too, the spring is very pretty as it flows under the plane tree, and its water is very cool, to judge by my foot. And it seems to be a sacred place of some nymphs and of Achelous, judging by the figurines and statues. Then again, if you please, how lovely and perfectly charming the breeziness of the place is! And it resounds with the shrill summer music of the chorus of cicadas. But the most delightful thing of all is the grass, as it grows on the gentle slope, thick enough to be just right when you lay your head on it. So you have guided the stranger most excellently, dear Phaedrus. (230b-c, trans. Fowler)

Though the structure of Achilles Tatius' novel is linear much like Chariton's, it relies on narrative deceptions less so to drive the story forward into new episodes and theaters of action than it does to simply enrich the story's telling (or more to the point, the reader's reading of it). And as in Chariton, the stage is ever present in Achilles Tatius, even as the character Clitophon begins telling of the complications that set up his tale ("Fortune made a start to her drama"/ ἤρχετο τοῦ δράματος ἢ τύχη). The most obvious example comes in the novel's first *Scheintod*, as Clitophon (along with the reader) is tricked into thinking that his lover Leucippe has been disemboweled during a human sacrifice:

Ἄγουσι δὴ τινες δύο τὴν κόρην ὀπίσω τῷ χεῖρε δεδεμένην. Καὶ αὐτοὺς μὲν οἵτινες ἦσαν οὐκ εἶδον, ἦσαν γὰρ ὀπλισμένοι, τὴν δὲ κόρην Λευκίππην οὖσαν ἐγνώρισα. ... Εἶτα ἀπὸ συνθήματος πάντες ἀναχωροῦσι τοῦ βωμοῦ μακράν, τῶν δὲ νεανίσκων ὁ ἕτερος ἀνακλίνας αὐτὴν ὑπτίαν ἔδησεν ἐκ παττάλων ἐπὶ τῆς γῆς ἐρηρισμένων, οἷον ποιοῦσιν οἱ κοροπλάθοι τὸν Μαρσύαν ἐκ τοῦ φυτοῦ δεδεμένον: εἶτα λαβῶν ξίφος βάπτει κατὰ τῆς καρδίας καὶ διελκύσας τὸ ξίφος εἰς τὴν κάτω γαστέρα ῥήγνυσι: τὰ σπλάγχνα δὲ εὐθύς ἐξεπήδησεν, ἃ ταῖς χερσὶν ἐξελκύσαντες ἐπιτιθέασι τῷ βωμῷ. ... ἐγὼ δὲ ἐκ παραλόγου καθήμενος ἐθεώρουν. Τὸ δὲ ἦν ἐκπληξίς: μέτρον γὰρ οὐκ ἔχον τὸ κακὸν ἐνεβρόντησέ με. Καὶ τάχα ὁ τῆς Νιόβης μῦθος οὐκ ἦν ψευδής, ἀλλὰ κάκεῖνη τι τοιοῦτον παθοῦσα ἐπὶ τῇ τῶν παίδων ἀπωλείᾳ δόξαν παρέσχεν ἐκ τῆς ἀκινήσιας ὡσεὶ λίθος γενομένη. 3.15.2, 4-6

Two men were leading a maiden bound with both her hands behind her back. And I did not see who they were, for they were in armor, but I did recognize that the maiden was Leucippe. ... Then, at a signal they all moved far away from the altar, and the other of the youths laid her down on her back and bound her from pegs planted in the ground, just as figurine makers make Marsyas bound from a tree: then, taking a sword, he plunged it into her heart and tearing the sword through her stomach, rent it asunder: immediately her guts sprang out, which they placed on the altar, after pulling them out with their hands. ... Sitting there, I watched beyond all reason. It was shocking. The wickedness, senseless, struck me like lightning. Indeed, perhaps the myth of Niobe was no lie, but she, suffering such a thing upon the loss of her children, betrayed the appearance of becoming like stone from her stagnancy.

The scene is made as vivid as possible, leaving almost anyone (including both Clitophon and the reader) little doubt as to what has happened: she is not just stabbed, but torn “through her stomach” (εἰς τὴν κάτω γαστέρα); her innards do not just leap out: attendants remove them to an altar. We, and Clitophon, are not left with much hope that Leucippe is still alive.<sup>219</sup> This is no Charitonian stagecraft, where the hero simply witnesses a gussied-up seducer enter his house from afar, while the reader remains knowledgeable that what he does not see (his lover) would otherwise betray the truth of the situation.<sup>220</sup> Nor is it an interrupted episode, “narrated in a few lines, without rhetorical color,” as is its sacrificial counterpart in Xenophon’s *Ephesiaca*.<sup>221</sup> Here all is seen, and described, in detail. Yet stagecraft it remains, and self-consciously so. When Clitophon later almost kills himself upon Leucippe’s coffin, his two friends (who had infiltrated the bandit camp that had ordered the sacrifice) arrive to stop him and inform him that Leucippe is in fact alive. What seemed vivid and certain is then explained: the two men had come upon the chest of a Homeric theater actor (τις ἐν αὐτοῖς ἦν τῶν τὰ Ὀμήρου τῷ στόματι δεικνύτων ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις, 3.20.2) that washed up on shore and that included a trick sword whose blade

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<sup>219</sup> As notes Fusillo (1989, 166): “C’è un rigore estremo in questa focalizzazione sull’io attore e sulle sue percezioni limitate: la distanza da cui è vista la scena è valorizzata ... sottolineando il fatto di non sentire i suoni ...” Bartsch’s comments also bear repeating: “Achilles Tatius ... is interested in surprise and trickery, in shaking the readers up; it is precisely these goals to which his deployment of the restricted viewpoint contributes. Leucippe’s first false death ... is an elaborate piece of trickery by which the first-time readers cannot but be deceived; when they consequently discover that Leucippe is quite alive, they are (like Clitophon) considerably surprised, and driven again to an awareness of the continual play of deception and discovery” (1989, 129).

<sup>220</sup> Hagg (1971a, 116) provides a useful examination and comparison of points of view between Chariton and Achilles Tatius. “Instead of choosing such a point of view – besides Chaereas, it would also be possible to select some passive eye-witness – the author [Chariton] is content with retaining his own point of view which was apparent at the very beginning of the romance, thus letting the reader look at each of the characters in turn, directly and objectively.” While in Achilles Tatius, “from the start ... we are consistently made to follow the particulars of the actions in the same sequence as they are experienced by Clitophon. [...] On this level, things that happen when Clitophon is absent can be transmitted to the reader only when the hero himself is informed” (129-130).

<sup>221</sup> Xenophon *Ephesiaca* 3.3. As elaborated upon by Konstan (1994, 61): “The differences between the ordeals of Anthia [in Xenophon] and Leucippe are striking. For Xenophon, the ritual has been only one more ordeal for Anthia ... In Achilles Tatius’ account, however, the sacrifice of Leucippe is described for its effect on Clitophon.” Hence the ego-narrator helps not only to delay our knowledge that the sacrifice was a farce, but also to enhance our pathos on Clitophon’s behalf.

retracted into the hilt, “used in the theater for fraudulent slaughters” (ἐν τοῖς θεάτροις ἐχρήτο πρὸς τὰς κιβδήλους σφαγὰς, 3.20.7). The men add the device (τῆς μηχανῆς, 3.21.5) to an animal skin filled with animal entrails to form a “fabricated stomach” (τὴν πλαστὴν ταύτην γαστέρα, 3.21.2). The proscription for the sacrifice is useful for deception (εἰς τὸ λαθεῖν χρήσιμος, 3.21.3) because the maiden is required to wear a long robe. Those watching will seem to see the blade plunged all the way into the stomach (οἱ μὲν ὀρῶντες δοκοῦσι βαπτίζεσθαι τὸν σίδηρον κατὰ τοῦ σώματος), but in reality it will only penetrate the sack, allowing the animal entrails to come forth and “deceive those watching” (τοὺς ὀρῶντας ἀπατᾷ, 3.21.4). Since the two friends were required to carry out the sacrifice (and burial) themselves as part of their initiation into the gang, they were sure that with such a plan, “the bandits would not perceive the contrivance” (οὐκ ἂν εἶδεῖεν οἱ λησταὶ τὴν τέχνην, 3.21.5). Thus the first instance of *Scheintod* in the novel is inextricably linked to the stage, as stagecraft was quite literally used to pull off the deception and persuade everyone (including possibly the reader) of Leucippe’s convincing death.<sup>222</sup> And ever-present as always is the overlapping, lexical nexus between deceit and literary skill: “the contrivance” of the sword is a τέχνη; the stomach “fictional” (πλαστή), designed to deceive (κιβδήλους, λαθεῖν, δοκοῦσι, ἀπατᾷ) the spectators (ὀρῶντες). And it can hardly go unnoticed that the very contrivance designed to deceive the robbers, which also for a time deceived Clitophon, also of course deceives the reader, all thanks to Achilles Tatius’ strategy of employing

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<sup>222</sup> The shocking nature of the death and eventual explanation makes this a veritable precursor for the medieval *gothic explique* or *supernatural explique*, the tendency in gothic literature to “explain” at the end of the story the mechanisms behind what appeared to be supernatural. It might be argued that there is no claimed supernatural here, though Clitophon’s friend Menelaos, the architect of the scheme, farcically “calls Hecate to the deed” (καλῶ γὰρ τὴν Ἑκάτην ἐπὶ τὸ ἔργον, 3.18.2) before removing the fake stomach and allowing that “Leucippe live again now for you” (Λευκίππη δέ σοι νῦν ἀναβιώσεται, 3.17.4). For *gothic explique* and the fantastic, see Todorov 1975, 41.

the ego-narrator in a genre wherein deception of the hero (cf. Chariton's Chaereas) appears to be a recurring trope.<sup>223</sup>

But an even more convincing *Scheintod* will occur in Book 5 – more convincing in so far as it is not immediately resolved and explained, as is the first example, but lasts eleven chapters before we see Leucippe again, while six months pass within the narrative chronology of the novel. Even after we see her again, we do not learn the truth about her apparent death until the very end of the novel some three books later (8.16). Like before, this *Scheintod* is full of so much detail that it seems solidly true. Leucippe has been kidnapped by pirates, and Clitophon is on a ship with the town general in pursuit:

Ὡς δὲ εἶδον οἱ λησταὶ προσιοῦσαν ἤδη τὴν ναῦν εἰς  
ναυμαχίαν, ἰστᾶσιν ἐπὶ τοῦ καταστρώματος ὀπίσω τῷ χεῖρε  
δεδεμένην τὴν κόρην, καὶ τις αὐτῶν μεγάλη τῆ φωνῇ ἴδου τὸ  
ἄθλον ὑμῶν' εἰπὼν ἀποτέμνει αὐτῆς τὴν κεφαλὴν καὶ τὸ λοιπὸν  
σῶμα ὠθεῖ κατὰ τῆς θαλάσσης.

But when the pirates saw our ship advancing now into a sea battle, they stood the maiden up on the deck, her hands bound behind her back, and one of them, saying with a great shout "Here, your prize!" cut the head from her and pitched the rest of her body into the sea (5.7.4).

As before, Clitophon is an eyewitness ("when I saw this, I groaned a loud cry"/Ἐγὼ δὲ ὡς εἶδον, ἀνέκραγον οἰμώξας, 5.7.5) and tries to immediately kill himself, but is stayed. Here the grisly nature of the death helps to advance the *Scheintod*, for Clitophon successfully advocates that they retrieve her for burial (ἐδεόμην ἐπισχεῖν τε τὴν ναῦν καὶ τινα ἀλέσθαι κατὰ τῆς θαλάττης, εἴ πως κἂν πρὸς ταφὴν λάβοιμι τῆς κόρης τὸ σῶμα), but they only discover her body (τὸ σῶμα

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<sup>223</sup> Or in the very least, the expectation that the hero will be in the dark as to his beloved's whereabouts or status, as virtually all the protagonists of the ancient novel are until the ultimate recognition/reconciliation scene at the story's end.

ἀναφέρουσιν, 5.7.5). Clitophon's lament over the headless corpse<sup>224</sup> is intended to leave no (apparent) doubt that Leucippe is gone. Indeed, he says as much himself:

‘Νῦν μοι Λευκίππη τέθνηκας ἀληθῶς θάνατον διπλοῦν, γῆ  
καὶ θαλάττη διαιρούμενον: τὸ μὲν γὰρ λείψανον ἔχω σου τοῦ  
σώματος, ἀπολώλεκα δὲ σέ. [9] Οὐκ ἴση τῆς θαλάττης πρὸς τὴν  
γῆν ἢ νομῆ: μικρόν μοί σου μέρος καταλέλειπται ἐν ὄψει τοῦ  
μείζονος: αὕτη δὲ ἐν ὀλίγῳ τὸ πᾶν σου κρατεῖ. Ἄλλ' ἐπεὶ μούτων  
ἐν τῷ προσώπῳ φιλημάτων ἐφθόνησεν ἡ Τύχη, φέρε σου  
καταφιλήσω τὴν σφαγὴν.’

Now you have truly died for me a double death, Leucippe,  
cloven in twain on earth and sea: for I have the remnant of your  
body, but I have lost you. The distribution for the sea and the  
land is not equal: the smaller share of you has been left behind  
to me in the appearance of the greater: yet it [the sea] holds  
possession of the wholeness of you. But since Fortune has  
begrudged me of kisses upon your face, come, let me kiss upon  
your slaughtered neck” (5.7.8-9).

Here we are referred back to the first *Scheintod* repeatedly yet obliquely. When Clitophon initially laments that Leucippe has died “a death truly twice over” (ἀληθῶς θάνατον διπλοῦν) we might initially presume he is referring to her first “death,” but his elaboration immediately thereafter speaks of her rending into two (διαιρούμενον) and the separate fates of her head and body, affording her two burials of sorts, one at sea and the other on land.<sup>225</sup> There are also hints that we might, against all odds, be witnessing yet another *Scheintod*: for Clitophon is missing “the wholeness” (τὸ πᾶν) of Leucippe, and though he holds the leftovers (λείψανον) of her body, he has truly lost her (ἀπολώλεκα δὲ σέ). He kisses her slaughter, or wound: her σφαγή, which is also the word for the neck of a sacrificial victim (i.e., where it is struck) – the

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<sup>224</sup> Harlan (1965, 132) sees the *pathos* evident in Clitophon's telling of the Philomela myth (see discussion on 154ff) reflected in this lament.

<sup>225</sup> Morales (2004, 43) sees this as one of several in the “motif of doubleness which recurs with striking frequency during the narrative.” Bartsch (1989, 126-127), building off of Harlan's connection between the *pathos* of this scene with that of the Philomela myth, sees “hilariously gruesome paradoxes and antitheses Achilles Tatius has had fun with in both these passages: Tereus mourns his meal and recognizes he is father to his food; Clitophon (embracing Leucippe's headless trunk) cries that although he has the greater part of her he really has the lesser, and the division between the land's share and the sea's is unfair.”

fate she met in the prior *Scheintod*. What is more, the contrivance that aided the last *Scheintod*, the trick sword, was said to stage “fraudulent slaughters” (κιβδήλους σφαγάς), and so we are left with some hope here, too, that some such narrative deceit has been pulled with respect to this σφαγή. Yet the fruits of such a hope are not short in coming: Clitophon immediately “buried the body” (θάψας τὸ σῶμα) and then returned to Alexandria, where he “endured living” but lived nonetheless. The narrator even suggests that he makes it through the stages of grief as the story lapses forward six months:

Καὶ ἤδη μοι γεγόνεσαν μῆνες ἕξ, καὶ τὸ πολὺ τοῦ πένθους ἤρχετο μαραίνεισθαι χρόνος γὰρ λύπης φάρμακον καὶ πεπαίνει τῆς ψυχῆς τὰ ἔλκη: μεστὸς γὰρ ἥλιος ἡδονῆς, καὶ τὸ λυπηῆσαν πρὸς ὀλίγον, κἂν ἦ καθ' ὑπερβολήν, ἀναζεῖ μὲν ἐφ' ὅσον ἡ ψυχὴ κάεται, τῇ δὲ τῆς ἡμέρας ψυχαγωγία νικώμενον καταψύχεται (5.8.2).

And already six months had passed for me, and the enormity of the sadness began to be quenched; for time is the drug of mourning and it softens the wounds of the soul: for the sun is full of pleasure, and the grieving only lasts a little while, even if it should be excessive, while the soul burns and boils as much, but it cools, conquered by the persuasion of the day.

Here the hero’s reaction to the death lends credence to the *Scheintod*, and threatens to overturn the structure of the romance entirely. The male protagonist is not supposed to “get over” his lover, and yet Achilles Tatius (or the narrator) here makes it appear that is precisely what is happening, invading the ideal romance with the realism of overcoming grief, a realism none too few of his readers must necessarily be acquainted with. Six months are said to pass, and Clitophon even agrees to indulge the advances of the beautiful widow Milete upon chidings from his friends that he is “thinking to himself that Leucippe will be restored to life” (νομίζων αὐτῷ Λευκίππην ἀναβιώσεσθαι, 5.11.6). Yet again we are reminded of the previous *Scheintod*, when Leucippe was, in fact “restored to life” (Λευκίππη δέ σοι νῦν ἀναβιώσεται, 3.17.4). But the hero/narrator abandons such a hope, and agrees to meet at last with Milete, who will become a



major player in the last half of the novel. It is not for several more chapters, when Clitophon arrives on Milete's estate, their union eminent, that we see Leucippe again, and her appearance is gradual and unrecognizable at first. A slave throws herself at Milete's feet and says her name is Lakaina,<sup>226</sup> and Clitophon reports that he was confounded (συνεχύθη) for she seemed to have some resemblance to Leucippe (γάρ τι ἐδόκει Λευκίπτης ἔχειν, 5.17.7). He is then handed a letter written by Leucippe (and revealing that she is, in fact, the slave Lakaina) and rebuking him for taking another wife. Then, just as Chariton had used the audience of a court drama to replicate the feelings he envisioned of his readers, here too the narrator experiences a series of emotions, chief among them wonder and disbelief: "I turned pale, I marveled, I doubted, I rejoiced, I was vexed" (ὠχρίων, ἐθαύμαζον, ἠπίστουν, ἔχαιρον, ἠχθόμην, 5.19.1-2). He immediately demands of his friend: "Have you come carrying this letter back from Hades? Or what do these things mean?" (πότερον ἐξ Ἄδου ἦκεις φέρων τὴν ἐπιστολήν, ἢ τί ταῦτα θέλει;). And then, of course, the question we have been expecting: "Does Leucippe live again?" (Λευκίππη πάλιν ἀνεβίω; 5.19.2). As before, the resolution of the *Scheintod* is made effective for the reader precisely because we have remained focalized through Clitophon's experiences as they occurred, rather than retrospectively, a point of view into and out of which the narrator will move at his own pleasure. Several chapters later, Milete employs her slave Lakaina (Leucippe) to help her win Clitophon's passion, and betrays to Leucippe Clitophon's denial of her sexual advances. This conversation of course takes place out of Clitophon's earshot and yet after narrating them, he notes: "But I was in despair, knowing nothing of these things" (Ἐγὼ δὲ τούτων ἐπιστάμενος οὐδὲν ἠθύμουν, 5.23.1), thus alerting the reader to the narrative game he

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<sup>226</sup> Mignogna (1995, 27) connects this scene directly with the "doubling" technique mentioned by Morales on 145 n.225 above: *Die Vorliebe, die Achilleus für einige Bilder hat, verrät seinen Wunsch, im Text den trügerischen Charakter der Dinge widerzuspiegeln; das Thema des Doppelten, das sehr wichtig vom erzählerischen Standpunkt aus ist (ich erinnere ganz kurz daran, daß Leukippe gezwungen ist, ihre Identität zu verstecken und als Sklavin unter dem Namen Lakaina zu leben) ...*

has been playing.<sup>227</sup> He could have spared the reader the suspense of the two *Scheintode*, and indeed will do so at his next opportunity: in 7.1, a rival for Leucippe's affection plots (ἐβουλεύετο) to make Clitophon, who has since been imprisoned, despair again over Leucippe's death. This time we, unlike the protagonist at the time, are privy to the plot, while Clitophon (who remains unaware) explicitly references his reactions to previous news and then goes even further with his melodrama:

Ὡς δ' ἤκουσά μου τὸν μῦθον τῶν κακῶν, οὔτε ἀνώμωξα  
οὔτε ἔκλαυσα: οὔτε γὰρ φωνὴν εἶχον οὔτε [p. 176] δάκρυα:  
ἀλλὰ τρόμος μὲν εὐθύς περιεχύθη μου τῷ σώματι καὶ ἡ καρδία  
μου ἐλέλυτο, ὀλίγον δέ τί μοι τῆς ψυχῆς ὑπολέλειπτο (7.4.1).

When I heard this story of my ills, I neither groaned nor  
cried out: for I had neither voice nor tears: but a tremor  
immediately spread through my body and my heart slackened,  
and only some small part of my soul was left behind.

When Clitophon yet again resolves to die, his friend Cleinias speaks what must be on every reader's mind: "Who knows if she lives again? For has she not died many times? Has she not lived again many times?" ("Τίς γὰρ οἶδεν εἰ ζῆ πάλιν; Μὴ γὰρ οὐ πολλάκις τέθνηκε; μὴ γὰρ οὐ πολλάκις ἀνεβίω; 7.6.1-2), to which the clueless Clitophon responds, "You're foolish. How could you know it more surely than this?" (Ληρεῖς: τούτου γὰρ ἀσφαλέστερον πῶς ἂν μάθοις; 7.6.2). Of course, this is a tongue-in-cheek remark to put in the mouth of Clitophon, who has "known" Leucippe to die much more certainly (ἀσφαλέστερον) than this twice already, witnessing her apparent death with his own eyes (and even burying her supposed body) rather than merely

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<sup>227</sup> "Rather than forgetting that he has adopted the fiction that the story is being recounted by Clitophon and lapsing instead into the easier option of omniscient narration, Achilles Tatius frequently inserts small details or turns of phrase into his text to remind us that it is Clitophon who is telling his story. ... For it is a remarkable and not adequately appreciated aspect of Achilles Tatius' narrative technique that, near the very end of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, he takes great care to provide an explanation for the way in which his narrator had been able much earlier to report certain events which we know to have happened outside his direct cognizance. ... His scrupulous care in explaining how Clitophon came by the knowledge of what he had reported as many as six books earlier is practically unparalleled in ancient fiction; it testifies to a degree of sophisticated reflection about the exigencies of first-person narrative we are more familiar with from modern novels" (Most 1989, 116).

hearing it secondhand from a stranger in a prison cell. And so while Clitophon comes off as somewhat foolish, the author is afforded the chance of reminding us just how much more convincing were the previous “deaths,” which we experienced alongside Clitophon. This quasi-*Scheintod* is resolved a few chapters later when Leucippe escapes her captors and arrives at the temple of Artemis, where she is eventually reunited with Clitophon at the end of Book 7. Only at the end of the novel, as Leucippe is finally afforded the opportunity to “narrate her events with pleasure” (τὰ συμβάντα μεθ ἡδονῆς διηγείτο, 8.15.3), do we find out what happened three books earlier with Leucippe’s supposed beheading aboard the ship:

‘Γυναῖκα’ ἔφη ‘κακοδαίμονα ἐξαπατήσαντες οἱ λησταὶ τῶν ἐπὶ μισθῷ πωλουσῶν τὰ Ἀφροδίτης, ὡς δὴ ναυκλήρω τινὶ συνεσομένην ἐπὶ τοῦ σκάφους, ταύτην εἶχον ἐπὶ τῆς νεώς, ἀγνοοῦσαν τὴν ἀλήθειαν ἐφ’ ὃ παρῆν, ὑποπίνουσιν δὲ ἡσυχῇ σὺν τινὶ τῶν πειρατῶν: λόγῳ δ’ ἦν ἐραστὴς ὁ ληστής. Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀρπάσαντές με, ὡς εἶδες, ἐνέθεσαν τῷ σκάφει καὶ πτερώσαντες αὐτὸ ταῖς κώπαις ἔφυγον, ὀρῶντες τὴν διώκουσαν ναῦν φθάνουσιν, περιελόντες τὸν τε κόσμον καὶ τὴν ἐσθῆτα τῆς ταλαιπώρου γυναικὸς ἐμοὶ περιτιθέασιν, τοὺς δὲ ἐμοὺς χιτωνίσκους ἐκείνη: καὶ στήσαντες αὐτὴν ἐπὶ τῆς πρύμνης, ὄθεν διώκοντες ὄψοισθε, τὴν κεφαλὴν ἀποτέμνουσιν αὐτῆς, καὶ τὸ μὲν σῶμα ἔρριψαν, ὡς εἶδες, κατὰ τῆς θαλάσσης, τὴν δὲ κεφαλὴν, ὡς ἔπεσεν, εἶχον ἐπὶ τῆς νεώς τότε. Μικρὸν γὰρ ὕστερον καὶ ταύτην ἀποσκευάσαντες ἔρριψαν ὁμοίως, ὅτε μηκέτι τοὺς διώκοντας εἶδον. Οὐκ οἶδα δὲ πότερον τούτου χάριν προπαρασκευάσαντες ἔτυχον τὴν γυναῖκα ἢ διεγνώκότες ἀνδραποδίσαντες πωλῆσαι, ὥσπερ ὕστερον πεπράκασι κάμέ: τῷ δὲ διώκεσθαι πρὸς ἀπάτην τῶν διωκόντων ἀντὶ ἐμοῦ σφάττουσι, νομίζοντες πλεον ἐμπολήσειν ἐκ τῆς ἐμῆς πράσεως ἢ τῆς ἐκείνης (8.16.1-3).

The pirates, having deceived an ill-fated woman (one of those who sell for a price the matters of Aphrodite) that she was to be joined to some shipowner in the hull, took her, unaware of the truth of her purpose there, onto the ship, and she was drinking a little bit quietly with one of the pirates – the bandit who was to be her lover (in their account). When they took me, as you saw, and put me on the hull, they fled, spreading their oars. And seeing your pursuing ship overtaking them, stripping the adornment and clothing from the pitiful woman, they put them on me, and my short chiton on her: and standing her upon the stern, from where you all pursuing might

see, they cut the head from her, and they pitched the body, as you saw, down into the sea. But the head, as it fell, they grabbed and then held it upon the ship. A little bit afterward they pitched this in the same way, when they no longer spied their pursuers. I do not know whether they were preparing this woman beforehand for this purpose, or whether they were knowing slavers planning to sell her, just as afterwards they sold me: [perhaps] in the pursuit they slew her in place of me for the deception of their pursuers, thinking that they might gain more from my sale than from hers.

And so this *Scheintod* contains even more deceit than the first: the deceit of the “unfortunate woman,”<sup>228</sup> the deceit of the pursuers through the swapping of clothes, and of course the deceit necessary (as in *Callirhoe*) to sell a free-born woman into slavery, not to mention the grisly deceit in keeping the head (to avoid the woman’s identification) aboard the ship until the pursuers were gone. The passage is a difficult one to translate, for Leucippe is telling it with excitement, using over a dozen participles (ἐξαπατήσαντες, συνεσομένην, ἀγνοοῦσαν, ὑποπίνουσιν, ἀρπάσαντές, πτερῶσαντες, ὀρῶντες, διώκουσαν, φθάνουσιν, περιελόντες, στήσαντες, διώκοντες, ἀποσκευάσαντες, διώκοντας, προπαρασκευάσαντες, διεγνωκότες, ἀνδραποδίσαντες, διωκόντων, νομίζοντες) alongside forms of διώκω some five times to emphasize the thrill of the chase: Leucippe herself knows how to tell a story. And yet, the information she does not have, “whether they were preparing this woman beforehand for this purpose, or whether they were knowing slavers planning to sell her” (πότερον τούτου χάριν προπαρασκευάσαντες ἔτυχον τὴν γυναῖκα ἢ διεγνωκότες ἀνδραποδίσαντες πωλῆσαι), only adds, as it often does in Clitophon’s own narration, an aura of authenticity to the tale. Similarly, the pirates are here explicitly said to engage in *narrative* deceit when tricking the poor woman,

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<sup>228</sup> Morales (2004, 216) notes that Leucippe here does not refer to the woman as a “*porne* or speak dismissively of her” but rather refers to her as “unfortunate” (κακοδαίμονα); and while the woman is treated as “expendable ... to the readers as well as the pirates,” in the plot, “the details about how the prostitute was conned into thinking she was to marry one of the pirates, and how he pretended to be interested in her provide just a glimpse, albeit short-lived, of poignancy and sympathy for this ‘poor woman.’”

who was drinking with the man who “was to be her lover” (ἦν ἐραστής ὁ ληστής), at least, “according to their story” (λόγῳ).

And so, like Chariton and Longus, Achilles Tatius utilizes narrative deceit to color his novel, but innovates the ideal romance by focalizing the narrative through the eyes of his male protagonist, whose convincing eyewitness accounts of his beloved’s grim death(s) leave us wondering just how the story will resolve itself. In contrast, when Callirhoe first “dies,” Chariton writes that she “gave the appearance of a corpse” (νεκρᾶς εἰκόνα πᾶσι παρέχουσα, 1.5.1), and so when he later remarks that she experienced a “rebirth” (παλιγγενεσία, 1.8.1), the reader is not likely too surprised. Achilles Tatius, meanwhile, provides vivid and ghastly details about his heroine’s apparent deaths, leaving little room for sleight-of-hand, making their eventual revelation as just that all the more “pleasurable,” just as Leucippe experienced pleasure in her retelling of one of them (μεθ ἡδονῆς, 8.15.3). Again, deception of these sorts could merely be extrapolated as comic motifs imported into the novel, and they are that, of course. But they are also self-conscious insights into the fictional process. In order to demonstrate that, we should turn to the many ways in which Achilles Tatius’ tale is self-referential, even as it is told in the mouth of his protagonist.

### ***Achilles Tatius: Ecphrasis and Self-Referentiality***

As in Chariton, the clearest examples of self-referentialism in Achilles Tatius occur with repeated references to the stage.<sup>229</sup> As noted above, when the protagonist Clitophon first begins his story, he not only warns the author/narrator that his “narrations” (λόγων) are “like fables” (μύθοις ἔοικε, 1.2.2), he immediately refers to the impending story as a “drama” that Fortune began (ἤρχετο τοῦ δράματος ἡ τύχη). Similarly, when Leucippe is almost caught by her mother in her bedroom with Clitophon and he escapes without Leucippe’s mother seeing who he was,

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<sup>229</sup> For a discussion of prose narrative taking over the form aims and aesthetics of drama, see Perry 1967, 72-79.

she demands to know what is happening: “Will you not tell the plot of your drama?” (‘οὐκ ἔρεϊς’ ἔφη ‘τὴν συσκευὴν τοῦ δράματος;’ 2.28.1). Likewise, in 3.10, after Leucippe has been kidnapped by Egyptian bandits, Clitophon laments that she is in the hands of non-Greek speakers. If he spoke the same language as the bandits, he reasons, things might turn out differently:

Ληστὴν γὰρ Ἑλληνα καὶ φωνὴ κατέκλασε, καὶ δέησις ἐμάλαξεν: ὁ γὰρ λόγος πολλάκις τὸν ἔλεον προξενεῖ: τῷ γὰρ πονοῦντι τῆς ψυχῆς ἢ γλῶττα πρὸς ἱκετηρίαν διακονουμένη τῆς τῶν ἀκουόντων ψυχῆς ἡμεροῖ τὸ θυμούμενον. Νῦν δὲ ποῖα μὲν φωνῆ δεηθῶμεν; τίνας δὲ λόγους προτείνωμεν; Κἂν Σειρήνων τις γένηται πιθανώτερος, ὁ ἀνδροφόνος οὐκ ἀκούει. Μόνους ἱκετεύειν με δεῖ τοῖς νεύμασι καὶ τὴν δέησιν δηλοῦν ταῖς χειρονομίαις. Ὡ τῶν ἀτυχημάτων: ἤδη τὸν θρῆνον ὀρχήσομαι. (3.10.2-3)

For our voice could break down a Greek bandit, and our entreaty would soften him. Speech often patronizes mercy: as the tongue, ministering through supplication for the one careworn of soul, tames the angered part of the soul of those listening. But now, with what voice should we beg favor? What words might we stretch forth? Even if there were one of the more persuasive Sirens, the cutthroat would not listen. Only with signs is it possible for me to supplicate, to show my entreaty with hand gestures. Oh misfortunes, that I should now pantomime my adversity.

Clitophon thus runs the gamut of dramatic performance, from verbal persuasion and supplication, intended to soften (ἡμεροῖ) his listener, to dramatic stage gestures (χειρονομίαις) and orchestral dance (ὀρχήσομαι).<sup>230</sup> Likewise, in 6.10, when the widow Milete’s supposedly dead husband, Thersandros, returns from being lost at sea and demands to know what she is doing with another man, she spins an incredibly long yarn about Clitophon’s presence that she “acted out persuasively” (ὑποκριναμένη πιθανῶς, 6.10.2).

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<sup>230</sup> “Clitophon is portrayed as the *khoregos*: the director, producer, casting manager, and general impresario of the show” (Morales 2004, 63).

But the most pregnant bit of acting in the novel is Leucippe’s “disguise” as the slave Lakaina on Milete’s estate, which she contemplates shedding in 6.16 after she has caught the eye of Thersandros:

Νῦν οὖν ἂν Θέρσανδρος ἔλθῃ πυνθανόμενος, τί πρὸς αὐτὸν εἶπω; Ἄρα ἀποκαλύψασα τοῦ δράματος τὴν ὑπόκρισιν διηγήσομαι τὴν ἀλήθειαν; Μὴ με νομίσης ἀνδράποδον εἶναι, Θέρσανδρε. Στρατηγοῦ θυγάτηρ εἰμὶ Βυζαντίων, πρώτου Τυρίων γυνή: οὐκ εἰμὶ Θετταλή: οὐ καλοῦμαι Λάκαινα: ὕβρις αὕτη ἐστὶ πειρατική: λελήστευμαι καὶ τοῦνομα. Ἄνῆρ μοι Κλειτοφῶν, πατρὶς Βυζάντιον, Σώστρατος πατήρ, μήτηρ Πάνθεια. Ἄλλ’ οὐδὲ πιστεύσεις ἐμοὶ λεγούσῃ. Φοβοῦμαι δὲ καὶ ἐὰν πιστεύσης περὶ Κλειτοφῶντος, μὴ τὸ ἄκαιρόν μου τῆς ἐλευθερίας τὸν φίλτατον ἀπολέσῃ. Φέρε πάλιν ἐνδύσωμαί μου τὸ δρᾶμα: φέρε πάλιν περίθωμαι τὴν Λάκαιναν’ (6.16.4.-6).

And so now should Thersandros come investigating, what might I say to him? Should I, having revealed my casting in the drama, narrate the truth? Do not think that I am a captive slave, Thersandros. I am the daughter of the general of Byzantium, and wife of a first man of Tyre: I am not Thessalian, nor am I called Lakaina. This is piratical hubris: I have been plundered even of my name. My husband is Clitophon, my homeland Byzantium, my father Sostratos, my mother Panthia. But you will not trust me saying these things. And should you believe me regarding Clitophon, I fear that my ill-timed license would destroy my most beloved. Come then, let me again dress for my drama: come, let me again put on Lakaina.

Here more than elsewhere, Achilles Tatius makes a direct link between the deceitful plots of his characters and the stagecraft inherent in putting on a play, the terminology of which abounds. Leucippe frets about revealing her “casting” or her “acting” (τὴν ὑπόκρισιν), and at the end of her internal debate, she resolves to put on the costume (ἐνδύσωμαί) of Lakaina. As always, the notion that she is a slave, in contrast to “the truth” (τὴν ἀλήθειαν) she would otherwise tell Thersandros, is referred to repeatedly as a “drama” (τὸ δρᾶμα).

Even more specific terminology for the stage comes in the novel’s court scenes, a requisite for its genre, wherein Thersandros faces off against Clitophon, whom he has accused of adultery with his wife. After Clitophon is defended by his friend Cleinias, Thersandros

dismisses his (in actuality, true) version of events by calling them “mythologies” (μυθολογῶν), and chides the audience for “listening to a sorocerer play-acting plausibly” (γόητος ἀκούοντες πιθανῶς μὲν ὑποκρινομένου, 7.11.1). When a follow-up trial over the various disputes occurs in Book 8, a priest takes the role of advocate for Clitophon, who notes that he “especially emulated Aristophanic comedy” (μάλιστα δὲ τὴν Ἀριστοφάνους ἐζηλωκῶς κωμωδίαν, 8.9.1). Indeed, his speech against Thersandros is very much a stock one, at first starting with routine accusations suggesting Thersandros was a male prostitute in his youth.<sup>231</sup> His later case is marked in contrast by declamation, at one point responding to Thersandros’ demands with rhetorical exaggeration: “Close the courts! Cast out the councils! Throw away the magistrates! ... Withdraw to Thersandros, president. You are president scarcely by name alone. This one conducts all your affairs” (Κλειῖσον οὖν τὰ δικαστήρια, κάθελε τὰ βουλευτήρια, ἔκβαλε τοὺς στρατηγούς. ... Ὑπανάστηθι Θερσάνδρω, πρόεδρε. Μέχρι μόνων ὀνομάτων πρόεδρος εἶ. Οὗτος τὰ σὰ ποιεῖ, 8.9.9-10). The stylistic change is not lost on Thersandros’ rhetor Sopatros, who (apparently agreeing with the narrator’s unspoken characterization of it) calls his earlier remarks “comedy” (τῆς μὲν τοῦ ἱερέως κωμωδίας’ ἔφη ἠκούσαμεν,’ 8.10.2), then remarks that “after the comedy he waxed tragic” (μετὰ τὴν κωμωδίαν ἐτραγώδησεν, 8.10.4).

Throughout *Leucippe and Clitophon*, δράμα and μῦθος become virtually synonymous, perhaps no place more so than when the company comes upon a painting of the rape of Philomela, which prompts Clitophon to recount her myth to an anxious Leucippe (because women are naturally myth-lovers, φιλόμυθον, according to the narrator, 5.5.1). In the myth, a tongueless Philomela informs her sister about her rape through weaving its depiction on tapestry, and Clitophon at this point explains that she “wove her drama” (τὸ δράμα πλέκει, 5.5.5). The entirety of the episode is self-referential, in that Clitophon is prompted to act as an

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<sup>231</sup> This was a common allegation in invective, the most famous of which is recorded in Aeschines’ *Against Timarchus*. See also the discussion of Lucian’s portrait of Alexander on 89.



exegete for the story painted, a common preoccupation of the Second Sophistic<sup>232</sup> and a recurring feature of Achilles Tatius' novel. Leucippe asks him: "What does the myth of this painting mean? And who are these birds and who are the women and who is that shameless man?" ('τί βούλεται τῆς εἰκόνοσ ὁ μῦθος καὶ τίνεσ αἱ ὄρνιθεσ αὐταὶ καὶ τίνεσ αἱ γυναῖκεσ καὶ τίσ ὁ ἀναιδὴσ ἐκεῖνοσ ἀνὴρ;' 5.5.1). This affords Clitophon (and the author) the chance at a lengthy inset myth. The set-up will remind us of Longus, where the painting in the grove (also interpreted by an exegete) provides us with the story that follows,<sup>233</sup> but it is also a reference to the story we are being told now: for Clitophon's tale is prompted by the painting of the myth of Europa, which both he and the author/narrator are viewing at the opening of the novel.<sup>234</sup> While it is true that Clitophon's story is not Europa's story (and indeed, that even a mention of the myth of Europa failed to spark a reference to the beginning),<sup>235</sup> the narrator or author alerts us to its relevance to the story proper just one chapter before. When Clitophon's group initially discovers the Philomela painting, his friend Menelaos considers it reason to postpone their planned trip:

'έμοι δοκεῖ τὴν εἰσ Φάρον ὁδὸν ἐπισχεῖν: ὄρασ γὰρ οὐκ ἀγαθὰ δύο σύμβολα, τό τε τοῦ ὄρνιθοσ καθ ἡμῶν πτερόν καὶ τῆσ εἰκόνοσ τὴν ἀπειλήν. Λέγουσι δὲ οἱ τῶν συμβόλων ἐξηγηταὶ σκοπεῖν τοὺσ μῦθοσ τῶν εἰκόνων, ἂν ἐξιοῦσιν ἡμῖν ἐπὶ πρᾶξιν συντύχωσι, καὶ ἐξομοιοῦν τὸ ἀποβησόμενον τῷ τῆσ ἱστορίας λόγῳ. Ὅρασ οὖν ὄσων γέμει κακῶν ἡ γραφή: ἔρωτοσ παρανόμου, μοιχείασ ἀναισχύντου, γυναικείων ἀτυχημάτων: ὅθεν ἐπισχεῖν κελεύω τὴν ἔξοδον,' 5.4.1-2

"It seems to me that we should withhold our trip into Pharos: for do you not see two serviceable omens, both the

<sup>232</sup> See discussions on 63ff.

<sup>233</sup> Cf. 13-14 above

<sup>234</sup> In addition to Longus, this was a common trope in the Second Sophistic: not only the *ecphrasis* of a given painting, but "descriptions of paintings as introductions to large sections or whole books" (Mittelstadt 1967, 52, n1). Bartsch (1989, 40) adds, "It can hardly be doubted that the author's placement of this pictorial description at the very head of his work would give rise to certain expectations in the ancient reader about its role in the following narrative. The use of a descriptive passage as an introductory device was familiar enough from the work of contemporary sophists."

<sup>235</sup> See citation of 2.15.4 on 138, n.212 above.

wing of the bird set against us and the threat of this painting?  
The exegetes of signs say to watch out for the myths of  
paintings, should any meet with us going about our business,  
and to consider our outcome to be similar to the narration of its  
story. And you see what sort of ills this painting is full of:  
unlawful desire, shameless adultery, womanly misfortunes.  
Hence, I bid that we check our departure.”

The passage is the most self-referential in Achilles Tatius, for it describes, from beginning to end, what the novel is.<sup>236</sup> It begins with the ecphrasis of a painting of Europa (just as this passage is preceded by an ecphrasis of a painting of Philomela), and the painting is made the impetus for Clitophon’s supposedly analogous tale. The power of Eros evident in the painting – leading the king of the gods to don bovine form in order to satisfy his lust for a woman – is considered similar (ἔξομοιοῦν) to the story that Clitophon is about to tell, prompted by Clitophon’s sympathy with its subject matter, much as Clitophon warns the author/narrator that his stories are like the myths (τὰ γὰρ ἐμὰ μύθοις ἔοικε, 1.2.2) they are viewing in paint. Likewise, the portents that Menelaos sees in the Philomela painting – unlawful desire, shameless adultery, womanly misfortunes (ἔρωτος παρανόμου, μοιχείας ἀναισχύντου, γυναικείων ἀτυχημάτων) – serve as a nice summation of what the novel will indeed be about henceforth, irrespective of how exhaustive a summary they are.<sup>237</sup> Little wonder: despite the warnings of the painting and Menelaos, Clitophon and Leucippe leave for Pharos the next day anyway. Menelaos stays behind.<sup>238</sup>

Indeed, Bartsch has suggested that Achilles Tatius includes such *ecphrases* in a deliberate attempt to bamboozle his *learned* readers, for it is they who will be most equipped

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<sup>236</sup> For further exploration of self-referentiality in the novels, see Hunter in Whitmarsh 2008, 267-271

<sup>237</sup> Bartsch (1989, 68) suggests this painting ends up having very little to do with what follows, aside from its broad, general outline.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid* (66-69) sees this signpost as an attempt by Achilles Tatius to throw his readers off the trail of what is to come, thereby setting “the stage for their own deception.” But whether a painting seems to fit the meaning foisted upon it, such evocations of a “fictitious allegorical scene” were “routine” in second-century rhetoric (Harlan 1965, 58), and the passage clearly alludes to the same rhetorical process (an *ecphrasis* used as an introductory bridge to the story proper) as that which begins the novel.

(and most inclined) to interpret the various paintings and scenes described as signposts for the action that is likely to follow: “Achilles Tattius uses the expectations of observant readers versed in conventions of interpretation against the readers themselves.”<sup>239</sup> It is thus not only the casual reader who is fooled by the first-person narration into thinking that, for example, Leucippe has been disemboweled and truly killed: Bartsch suggests the learned and alert reader, too, would be surprised to learn that Leucippe is in fact alive, for the paintings described beforehand, that of Andromeda the “bride of death” chained to a rock and Prometheus likewise bound and disemboweled by Zeus’ eagle, are “proleptic similes” for Leucippe’s sacrifice and disembowelment. “And precisely because this fate was foreshadowed, we accept it all the more unquestioningly. It is thus an even greater shock to learn that we, along with Clitophon, have been completely fooled.”<sup>240</sup>

As in Longus, the self-referentiality so clearly outlined in this passage helps illuminate those passages where the characters of the novel engage in narrative deceit. Myths, dramas, and lies are woven together throughout the work, making them indistinguishable from one another, and often indistinguishable from the truth, which – as the action of the novel becomes more and more like myths, just as Clitophon warned us in the beginning – itself becomes all but unbelievable.

What these treatments of Achilles Tattius, in comparison to Chariton, seek to demonstrate, then, is that both authors, like Longus, consider the skill (τέχνη) they are employing in the writing of their works to be similar to the deceit (τέχνη) used by the characters of their works. Just as the characters of their dramas are duped unknowingly by stagecraft within the narrative, the authors know that it is their goal to dupe their readers, as best as possible, into believing the events of their novels. They realize, as their elementary training

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<sup>239</sup> Bartsch 1989, 60

<sup>240</sup> Ibid, 58-59

taught them, that fables are lies, but that lies can be told ever more persuasively to make them seem like truth, even while remaining lies. Were the writers of these works writing in poetry, this would be an empty observation – as old as the stories Homer told through Odysseus, the “founder of this nonsense,” to use Lucian’s words, this was the case.<sup>241</sup> But they were writing in prose, and prose lent their writings an air of authenticity they might not otherwise enjoy,<sup>242</sup> one that Chariton especially exploits: situating his novel in a recognizable time period with recognizable, historical figures; but one that Achilles Tatius can innovate, casting his protagonist as the narrator and taking the comic-style *Scheintod* of an unconscious Callirhoe and turning it into a disemboweled or decapitated Leucippe, whose death we mourn alongside Clitophon and whose eventual safety we must wait to learn definitively. This waiting, this concealment of the truth – for now – to heighten the curiosity of the reader and propel the reader forward by means of that curiosity, will ultimately be taken to the greatest lengths by the last novelist of antiquity, Heliodorus.

### Heliodorus

Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica* is often considered the most sophisticated of the five “canonical” Greek novels we have extant from antiquity, and aside from its sophistication, it is perhaps best known for its outsized girth. At ten books long and more than three hundred pages in most modern editions, it is double the size of the next-longest novel (Achilles Tatius’). Added to its length and sophistication is its intense complexity: the novel begins *in medias res* and includes several embedded narrations. Almost three full books (2-4) are an inset tale by one of its

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<sup>241</sup> Cf. 78 above.

<sup>242</sup> See Hagg 1983, 100-101: “Even if there were no formal rules against using prose for fiction, there was undoubtedly the tradition. It is true that already in the classical period imaginative story-telling did occur also in prose, but then it was always within a historiographical, ethnographical, or some other ‘serious’ framework. ... Nevertheless, it seems reasonable to suppose that for an educated person, as Chariton and the unknown author of the Ninus Romance certainly were, there would still in the fourth century BC have been a psychological barrier to cross before he could use prose for an extended narrative of his own invention, designed for entertainment. ... many generations later things were obviously fundamentally different.”

characters, Calisiris, whose story also includes an inset narrative (that of Charicles, 2.29-34), and whose mendacity has been treated at length.<sup>243</sup> With so much material so complicated by displaced chronology and dozens of characters who often tell their tales themselves, an exhaustive treatment of Heliodorus' tome would be far outside the comparative scope of this one section of a single chapter. What Heliodorus does lend my investigation, however, is a look at how the narrative innovation of Achilles Tatius – the concealment of information known to the narrator (in his case the protagonist giving a retrospective first-person account) – can be innovated even further by an omniscient narrator who remains all but aloof throughout the prolonged pages of his novel, requiring his many characters to bear the brunt of the complex tale's exposition and thereby keeping the readers in the dark (and in the process, in the novel) until the very end.<sup>244</sup> For at no point does Heliodorus take a break from the telling of his tale to inform his readers about its background, but rather utilizes long flashbacks (most notably Calisiris') to meet that end. Indeed, it becomes apparent by the novel's end, after several stories are truncated to be finished at a later time (1.14, 2.6, 4.11, 5.1, 5.21, 7.15, 10.22, 10.30) that the length of the novel itself, driven by the concealment of the truth for the time being and the postponement of pertinent information and storytelling, constitutes Heliodorus' unique contribution to self-conscious artistry.<sup>245</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> Winkler (1982, 109-135) explores an apparent contradiction in Calisiris' narration and concludes that it entails "a deliberate narrative strategy" on his part as a "crafty narrator, who fools various audiences."

<sup>244</sup> I am not the first to note this general strategy between the two authors. In examining the use (or lack thereof) of mythology in Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus, Reardon (2004, 385, 389) notes that "If ... it is as much misinterpretation [of mythological foreshadowing] that Achilles Tatius invites, that is one of the prime qualities of this idiosyncratic novel; and it fits the technique of the ego-narrative, since both are used to intrigue and mystify the reader, to engage and challenge his attention. [...] Both base their narrative technique on the process of misleading or mystifying the reader, Achilles in the way already illustrated, and Heliodorus by the device of releasing information about the overall situation only slowly and partially."

<sup>245</sup> As noted by Futre Pinheiro (1998, 3149), "Heliodorus' capacity to present the pieces of his narrative puzzle in an original way presupposes such a skill. He knows his craft well: by the clever use of literary manoeuvres and devices, he allows himself the sublime pleasure of not only suspending but also conquering time."

Much of the discussion of late regarding Heliodorus and the interpretation of his work has been framed by Winkler's seminal 1982 study comparing the flashback stories of Cnemon to those of Calisiris: in short, Winkler has suggested that Cnemon's story represents a simple, linear, chronological narrative most like a romance, while Calisiris' inset narratives and the novel itself at large are most definitely not, requiring instead that the reader remain in states of temporary puzzlement as the pieces of the story fall into place. This temporary concealment of the truth, a narrative strategy termed by Winkler "incomplete cognition,"<sup>246</sup> indeed punctuates the entire work. "Heliodorus' principal narrative excellence ... is his disposition of material so as to arouse interest in the careful reader by the giving or withholding of information ... [He] regularly manipulates points of view so as to contrast and highlight states of relative knowledge and ignorance."<sup>247</sup> The author accomplishes this in a narrative technique that takes Achilles Tatius' first-person narration a step further, offering a third-person narration that nonetheless refuses to fill in omnisciently the gaps that readers will only fill by plodding through more of his pages. Notes Wolff, "[Heliodorus] will tell as little as possible; he declines the role of the omniscient novelist speaking of his men and women in the third person; they must do their own talking."<sup>248</sup> Though some, including especially Morgan, have departed from Winkler on some of his specifics, especially his characterization of Cnemon's tale, his general assertion that "our reading strategy and the strategies of 'reading' which form part of the narrative itself are very closely related phenomena" has been "widely accepted."<sup>249</sup> It is important to point out, then, although it is never stated explicitly by Winkler, that the length of the novel itself serves as a tangible manifestation of this overall literary program, which is to conceal the truth about his various characters and only slowly release the information that readers crave so as to keep

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<sup>246</sup> Winkler, in Swain 1999, 288

<sup>247</sup> Ibid, 287-88

<sup>248</sup> Wolff 1912, 194

<sup>249</sup> Hunter 1998, 40

them moving through the tale.<sup>250</sup> Several self-conscious moments make reference to this strategy of delay, and it is in them that Heliodorus is most instructive in our present investigation.

Indeed, a good tagline for the novel writ large could be Caricleia's remark at 9:24, where while declining Theagenes' urgings to tell the king of Ethiopia that he is her father, she observes that "God has cast down tangled beginnings of these things, and it is necessary to conclude their endings through longer time" (ὧν γὰρ πολυπλόκους τὰς ἀρχὰς ὁ δαίμων καταβέβληται, τούτων ἀνάγκη καὶ τὰ τέλη διὰ μακροτέρων συμπεραίνεσθαι). Such self-conscious advertisements of Heliodorus' long narrative strategy recur throughout, as do predictions by the author of how his readers may well be interacting with said strategies. If as Winkler suggests, Caliris' twisting tale is meant to serve as a model of the author's own work, the character Cnemon expresses the impatience that no doubt many of Heliodorus' readers have felt about its subplots and digressions, to say nothing of Cnemon's frustration at Caliris' attempt to cut to the end without telling the part of the story Cnemon wants to hear. In a flash of frustration, Cnemon likens Caliris' tale to the narrative equivalent of the shape-changing Proteus:

Ὑπολαβὼν οὖν ὁ Κνήμων "ἄλις" ἔφη "βουκόλων καὶ σατραπῶν καὶ βασιλέων αὐτῶν, ἔλαθες γὰρ με μικροῦ καὶ εἰς πέρας τῷ λόγῳ διαβιβάζων, ἐπεισόδιον δὴ τοῦτο οὐδὲν φασι πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον ἐπεισκευκλήσας ὥστε ἐπάναγε τὸν λόγον πρὸς τὴν ὑπόσχεσιν· εὐρηκα γὰρ σε κατὰ τὸν Πρωτέα τὸν Φάριον, οὐ κατ' αὐτὸν τρεπόμενον εἰς ψευδομένην καὶ ῥέουσιν ὄψιν ἀλλὰ με παραφέρειν πειρώμενον." 2.24.4

Thus Cnemon, interrupting, said, "Enough of herdsmen and satraps and kings as such, for you almost

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<sup>250</sup> Morgan (1994, 98) has even noticed this penchant of Heliodorus in his description of a giraffe 10.27.1-4, noting that "an essential piece of information, the creature's name, is not divulged until the last possible moment ... This mode of presentation, involving the suppression of an omniscient narrator in direct communication with the reader, has the effect that the reader is made to engage with the material with the same immediacy as the fictional audience within the frame of the story." This sort of strategy recurs throughout, and serves as a nice microcosm of his program overall.

deceived me, wrenching me into the end of your story, unrolling this episode that, as they say, has nothing to do with Dionysus, so bear your tale to the part you promised. Indeed, I have discovered you to be on par with Pharon Proteus, not turning yourself into false and flowing appearances, but trying to steer me off course!”

If this is Heliodorus’ acknowledgment of the sort of reaction he expects from readers, he also offers his portrait of an ideal reader: “Not only are you insatiate for stories, Cnemon, but you are also unconquered by sleep. Already now, with a large part of the night having passed, you have held out awake and are not worn out by my prolonged narration” (οὐ μόνον ἀκοθσμάτων ἀκόρεστος ἄρα ἦσθα, ὦ Κνήμων, ἀλλὰ καὶ ὕπνω δυσάλωτος. ἤδη γοῦν οὐκ ὀλίγης μοίρας τῆς νυκτός παρωχηκυίας ἀντέχεις ἐγρηγορώς καὶ τὴν διήγησιν μηκυνομένην οὐκ ἀποκναίει). And like us, Cnemon is driven by his desire to know what the end (τέλος) of the story will be (“fulfill your promise and bring your narration to its end” πλήρου τὴν ἐπαγγελίαν καὶ εἰς τέλος ἄγε τὴν διήγησιν, 3.4.10). Heliodorus even allows his *hero* to wish for the story’s end: in a moment of despairing melodrama (one of many), Theagenes suggests that the two protagonists end their story early:

Κερδήσωμεν ἄλην ἀνήνυτον καὶ πλάνητα βίον  
καὶ τὴν ἐπάλληλον τοῦ δαίμονος καθ’ ἡμῶν πομπείαν.  
... τοιοῦτον παίζει καθ’ ἡμῶν πόλεμον, ὥσπερ σκηνὴν  
τὰ ἡμέτερα καὶ δρᾶμα πεπονημένος. τί οὖν οὐχ  
ὑποτέμνομεν αὐτοῦ τὴν τραγικὴν ταύτην ποίησιν, καὶ  
τοῖς βοθλομένοις ἀναιρεῖν ἐγχειρίζομεν, μὴ πη καὶ  
αὐτόχειρας ἡμᾶς ἑαυτῶν ἐκβιάσῃται γενέσθαι. (5.6)

“Let’s cash in our endless wandering and roaming lifestyle and the god’s repeated abuse of us. ... Thus it plays a war against us, as though it has made our lives a scene and a drama. So why do we not truncate this tragic fabrication it has made and entrust ourselves to those plotting to kill us, lest it somehow pride itself in an excessive end to its drama, and force us to be our own murderers.”



Theagenes' equation of his unrequited love for Charikleia and the progress of their story is echoed throughout as Heliodorus overlaps both "textual and sexual desire," delaying both so as to deter the death of said desire by its fulfillment.<sup>251</sup>

But in a novel where we do not know the main characters' full backstory until almost halfway through, it is little wonder that many self-referential moments can be seen in the various characters' deliberate concealment and/or postponement of information. These various "teasings, deferrals, and digressions are one of the most characteristic features of the novel."<sup>252</sup> We get our first taste of this early, when Charikleia tells an elaborate tale (1.22) to the bandit Thyamis. "Her account is not only a lie, it is nearly a parody of the Greek romance as a genre, conflating typical motifs from several novels, as a sort of least common denominator of what such a story could be expected to be."<sup>253</sup> Her lies not only deceive the robber; they also postpone our knowledge of who she truly is and what her and Theagenes' story is. Notes Ormand, "we are charmed by Charikleia's story, and therefore willing to suspend our desire to know her until the plot plays out."<sup>254</sup>

This postponement of ultimate knowledge of the heroine is no more gruelingly on display as when the story is finally moving toward its inevitable recognition scene and thus resolution, and the chief character needed for said recognition – the Ethiopian king and erstwhile father of Charikleia – keeps failing to grasp the hints dropped by other characters. Between his obtuse dismissals and other comic interruptions of the recognition, the reader must await the eventual, painful resolution, ten books into the narrative, for the truth to finally emerge that the two youths are already married. When Charikleia first attempts to tell her father Hydapses that she already has a husband, he responds with a somewhat comical

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<sup>251</sup> Hardie, in Hunter 1998, 30

<sup>252</sup> Ibid, 25

<sup>253</sup> Winkler 1982, 111

<sup>254</sup> Ormand 2011, 171

puzzlement, recounting all the many ways in which she has hitherto concealed the truth about

Theagnes:

"ὦ θεοί" ἔφη, "ὡς κακὰ τοῖς καλοῖς εἰκόκατε μιγνύναι καὶ τὴν ἅπ' ἐλπίδος μοι δωρηθεῖσαν πρὸς ὑμῶν εὐδαιμονίαν τὸ μέρος κωλύειν, θυγατέρα μὲν ἀπροσδόκητον ἀλλὰ παράφρονά πωσ ἀναδείξαντες.

Πῶς γὰρ οὐ παραπλήγος τὸ νόημα τῆς ἀλλόκοτα ῥήματα προιεμένης; Ἀδελφὸν ὠνόμαζε τὸν μὴ ὄντα· τὸν ὄντα ὅστις ἐστὶν ὁ ξένος ἐρωτωμένη ἀγνοεῖν ἔλεγεν. Αὔθις ἐζήτει περισώζεσθαι ὡς φίλον τὸν ἀγνοούμενον· ἀδύνατον εἶναι μαθοῦσα τὴν αἴτησιν αὐτὴ καταθύειν ὡσανεὶ πολεμιώτατον ἰκέτευε.

Καὶ τοῦτο ὡς οὐ θεμιτὸν λεγόντων, μιᾶ μόνῃ καὶ ταύτῃ ὑπάνδρῳ τῆς τοιαύτης θυσίας καθωσιωμένης, ἄνδρα ἔχειν ἐμφαίνει τὸ τίνα οὐ προστιθεῖσα· πῶς γὰρ τὸν γε μηδὲ ὄντα μηδὲ γενεῆσθαι αὐτῇ διὰ τῆς ἐσχάρας ἀποδειχθέντα; εἰ μὴ ἄρα παρὰ ταύτῃ μόνῃ ψεύδεται μὲν τὸ παρ' Αἰθίοψιν ἀψευδῆς τῶν καθαρευόντων πειρατήριον καὶ ἐπιβᾶσαν ἄφλεκτον ἀποπέμπεται καὶ παρθενεύειν νόθως χαρίζεται· μόνῃ δὲ ἕξεσι φίλους καὶ πολεμίους τοὺς αὐτοὺς ἐν ἀκαρεῖ καταλέγειν, ἀδελφοὺς δὲ καὶ ἄνδρας τοὺς μὴ ὄντας ἀναπλάττειν, 10.22.1-3.

"O gods," he said. "How you seem to mix the wicked with the good and to give to me happiness un hoped for but hinder me from part of it, showing me a daughter unexepected but insane.

"For in uttering such strange things, how could she not be insane with respect to her mind? She named a brother, who does not exist. When asked who this stranger is who does exist, she said she doesn't know. But then she sought to save this unknown man as though he were a friend. Having learned that was not possible, she supplicated the request to sacrifice him herself as though he were her greatest enemy.

"And when we told her this was not lawful, this performance of these sacrifices being done by one woman alone and this one a married one, she indicates she has a husband while not putting forth who he is by name. And how could she since he does not exist and has been shown by her not to exist by the fire? Unless the purity trial that has never lied to the Ethiopians has lied for her alone, has sent her away unharmed after she stepped upon it, and rejoices that she is a virgin illegitimately. But for her alone is it possible to call the same people both friends and enemies within a hair's breadth of time, and fictionalize both brothers and husbands who do not exist!"

Here the king echoes many of the statements by characters in our previous novels, who lay the responsibility for the novel's plots and schemes at the feet of the title characters. Charikleia is, of course, responsible for these lies and misdirections, and the king's befuddlement might echo that of the reader, who has had to keep straight an ever-evolving set of perspectives and stories concerning the two lovers for ten books on. The king wonders aloud how Charikleia can be anything but insane when she is uttering "strange" or quite literally "foreign" words (ἀλλόκοτα ῥήματα), reiterating a language barrier which has, of course, been a challenge for her ever since 1.3, when she melodramatically dares a group of foreign brigands to go ahead and kill her and Theagenes, but to no avail ("Though she waxed tragically about these things, they understood not one thing said"/Ἡ μὲν ταῦτα ἐπετραγώδει, οἱ δὲ οὐδὲν συνιέναι τῶν λεγομένων, 1.3.2). She will face another key moment of misperception a few chapters later, when Theagenes is dangerously attempting to wrangle a mad bull to prove his worth. Charikleia begs her mother Persinna to intervene and save his life, a request that Persinna misunderstands, assuming that Charikleia merely has some excitement about him "improper for her virginity" (παρθενία μὴ πρέπον, 10.29.4).<sup>255</sup> Here again, Charikleia laments the imperceptions of those around her:

Ἐπιδακρύσασα οὖν ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἡ Χαρίκλεια "καὶ τοῦτο" ἔφη "δυστυχῶ πρὸς τοῖς ἄλλοις ὅτι καὶ τοῖς συνετοῖς ἀσύνητα φθέγγομαι καὶ λέγουσα τὰς ἑαυτῆς συμφορὰς οὐπω λέγειν νομίζομαι," 10.29.5

And so, crying all the more, Charikleia said, "I am unfortunate in this in addition to other things, that even to intelligent people I sound unintelligible, and when speaking about my misfortunes I am thought to be speaking not at all."

Two chapters later, Theagenes himself tries to hint to the king about his relationship with his daughter, hoping aloud that by either striking or suffering some blow (τι ῥέξας ἢ παθῶν) in an

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<sup>255</sup> Virginity is, of course, a major concern in both Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, though peripheral to our concerns here. For an extensive treatment of this theme in both novels, see Ormand 2011, which builds off of Foucault's conclusion that the novels introduced a new obsession with sexual integrity previously unknown.

armed contest he might “jolt Charikleia, who up till now has stubbornly remained silent about us” (ἐκπλήσσω Χαρίκλειαν, τὴν σιωπᾶν εἰς δεῦρο τὰ καθ' ἡμᾶς καρτεροῦσαν, 10.31.1). Again, the king remains oblivious: “What is purposed by inserting Charikleia’s name only you would know” (Τί μὲν βούλεταί σοι" εἶπε "τὸ παραπλέκειν ὄνομα Χαρικλείας αὐτὸς ἂν γινώσκεις, 10.31). In fact, it is not until 10.38 that Charikleia finally comes rushing toward her father and ultimately reveals the truth, which is confirmed by her mother, who has also just heard it. By 10.39, the crowd is arguing for the acceptance of their marriage by asserting that the gods themselves have orchestrated the whole spectacle, “revealing as the climax of the drama that this foreign young man is the bridegroom of the maiden” (ὥσπερ λαμπάδιον δράματος τὸν νυμφίον τῆς κόρης τουτονὶ τὸν ξένον νεανίαν ἀναφήναντες, 10.39).<sup>256</sup> The work then promptly stops, whether or not it truly “ends” (see below).

This admittedly short treatment of Heliodorus’ long novel is enough to illustrate how Achilles Tatius’ innovation in narrative could lead to storytelling strategies all but modern in their slow release of information. Rather than narrate the story from a character’s point of view to maintain suspense about what is really going on, Heliodorus himself conceals information from the readers for long periods within the novel, revealing it only eventually and through character flashbacks. This slow process is delayed even further by the sheer length of the novel, such that by the end, the rapid succession of unsuccessful resolutions explored above becomes almost absurd. If Winkler is correct that Calisiris’ narration is most akin to Heliodorus’ himself, then we, like Cnemon, are left also yearning for the story’s end (τέλος) as Heliodorus drags out

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<sup>256</sup> With λαμπάδιον (“torch”) translated as “climax,” as suggested by Arnott (1965, 254-55): “In Old Comedy a *komos* procession, with torches blazing, was one of the characteristic methods of producing a memorable exodos. This feature, insofar as it often involved revelry with its visual symbolism of torch and garland, seems to have been preserved, perhaps in a fossilized form only, by New Comedy; and though our evidence is limited, it strongly suggests that torches and garlands were as traditional a feature of New-Comedy endings as the appeal for applause ...” Montiglio (2013, 148-149) suggests that the torch, by whose light the lovers recognize each other in a number of scenes (3.5.4, 5.5.2, 7.7.7), harkens here back to those previous scenes.

his “prolonged narration” (διήγησιν μηκυνομένην). And indeed, this does not seem lost on Heliodorus: not long after the Ethiopians recognize that the identification of Theagenes as Charikleia’s husband serves as the climax of the novel in 10.39, the novel abruptly ends two very short chapters later, after which Heliodorus gives us his *sphragis*, introduced by the two words readers have perhaps longed to see for a time now: τοιόνδε πέρασ, “this is the end.”

Τοιόνδε πέρασ ἔσχε τὸ σύνταγμα τῶν περὶ Θεαγένην  
καὶ Χαρίκλειαν Αἰθιοπικῶν· ὁ συνέταξεν ἀνὴρ Φοῖνιξ Ἐμισσηνός,  
τῶν ἀφ' Ἡλίου γένος, Θεοδοσίου παῖς Ἡλιόδωρος.

This is the end of the story of the *Ethiopica* concerning Theagenes and Charikleia, which was written by a Phoenician man of Emesa, descended from those of the Sun, the child of Theodosius, Heliodorus.

This strange ending is difficult to render, but in taking ἔσχε to mean, as it does often, *to check or reign in*, and πέρασ to mean not so much an “end” as a *boundary or limit*, Heliodorus’ last line seems to again reference his novel’s inordinate length, as it could very well be translated: “this *limit stops* the story of the *Ethiopica* regarding Theagenes and Charikleia.”<sup>257</sup> For even here Heliodorus has, as has been his trademark throughout the novel, left off telling the rest of it. Immediately prior to the ending, we are told that the two lovers are being escorted away “with the more mystical rites for the marriage to be finished more brilliantly down in the city” (τῶν ἐπὶ τῷ γάμῳ μυστικωτέρων κατὰ τὸ ἄστῦ φαιδρότερον τελεσθησομένων). With τελεσθησομένων, Heliodorus essentially delays the end (τέλος) of the story (the marriage of the two heroes) to beyond (πέρα) the end of the book. Even after making it to the end of Book 10, then, we are still left with the most enthralling part of the story -- the one we have ostensibly waded through ten books to reach -- concealed from us. Heliodorus has thus pulled off perhaps the most artful deception of all: we read through ten books, awaiting the eventual τέλος, but instead we are

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<sup>257</sup> Since both τοιόνδε πέρασ and τὸ σύνταγμα are neuter, either could technically be the object or subject. This reading translates the aorist here as present, but thanks to the finality inherent in *stop*, it remains an aoristic aspect all the same.

given a πέρας, a boundary that stops the story – a boundary we are not permitted to cross in order to see the “more brilliant” (φαιδρότερον) wedding ceremony that is beyond the limit of our pages.

## Chapter 6: Deception and Storytelling in the Latin Novel

Hitherto we have examined all five of the extant Greek novelists, but the two extant Latin novelists, Petronius and Apuleius, also show a tendency to cast their storytelling against a spectrum of deception and truth. And like the Greek novelists, with the two Latin authors we also see many of the same differences in “sophistic” narration already outlined between the earlier Chariton and Xenophon on the one hand, and the later Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus on the other, with the earlier Petronius usually seen as presenting a more gritty and less sophistic (not to be confused with less *sophisticated*) narration than that of Apuleius, a contemporary of Achilles Tatius.<sup>258</sup> Nevertheless, the two Roman novelists also discourse in their own ways on fable, storytelling, and deceit, sufficient enough to underscore that, whether they adopted their crafts from Greek models or not<sup>259</sup>, this nexus of narrative and deceit is not limited to only those ancient novels written in Greek.<sup>260</sup>

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<sup>258</sup> Apuleius’ birth is fairly securely dated to the 120s CE using internal evidence referring to his age and that of others in his writing. For a detailed examination of this, see Harrison 2000, 3.

<sup>259</sup> The recent discussions of the Greek novels’ influence on the Latin ones (perhaps the central preoccupation of scholarship on the latter) have focused mostly on whether the Latin works are parodies of the ideal romances handed down to us or whether they are merely comic novels in their own right. Two main problems face analysts on either side of the issue, both centering on limited evidence: the *Satyricon* that we have now is undoubtedly only a portion of a much larger whole, now lost, and it is impossible to conclude definitively whether the remainder of it would have focused on the same plot points or even featured many of the same characters (like Giton); likewise, we have extant only five examples of the Greek novel upon which to craft the portrait of a literary genre, yet many others were known to have existed (see below) and could have varied widely. Within these limitations, Collignon (1892, 324) was first to suggest a model for Petronius that may fall within a tradition of comic narrative not necessarily taking as its model the Greek novels (*La forme générale de l'oeuvre n'est pas celle du roman grec, mais de la Ménippée, et cette combinaison tout à fait nouvelle suffirait à faire de Pétrone un créateur, quoi qu'il ait pu devoir à tel ou tel modèle*). Heinze later (1899) suggested that while (to him) Petronius seemed to be missing the key element of the Greek romance – the lovers (*das Liebespar*) – *es scheint nur so*, since in fact, Encolpius and Giton fulfill this role: *Sie wird denn auch in den Formen geschildert, die für das romanhafte Liebespaar typisch sind* (495-96). For Heinze, then, the pair of lovers, because they were both male, must constitute an inversion, something *untypisch*. Sullivan pointed out the problems with this view in 1968, noting that if this is a parody of the Greek novel, it should be recognizable, yet a key feature of it (the separation of the lovers) is not present in the *Satyricon*: “Giton and Encolpius are separated in our extant narrative for a very short time and there is nothing to frustrate the reunion but lack of inclination,” and it is not clear that “Romans, particularly at the court of Nero, would regard homosexuality as a parody of heterosexuality” (95-96). Walsh, acknowledging at the time (1970) that the theory had fallen “out of favor,” nonetheless attempted to revive it, claiming it was a

## Petronius and the Prose Mime

Petronius' *Satyricon*, most likely written in the late 60s C.E., is fragmentary and incomplete in our reception, but regardless contains enough of the work to chart its affinity with the intellectual discussions taking place and already outlined in the chapters on Lucian and the *progymnasmata*. The student Encolpius in Petronius' story appears to be just that – a student of rhetoric, and he engages in frequent commentary on the nature of popular declamation and the schools of rhetoric of the author's own time. Indeed, one such harangue opens the text as we

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“sustained skit on the Greek romance” (8), a “burlesque of the ideals and motifs of the Greek love-romance” (79), in part because he believed that “the love-romance is the sole type of extended episodic fiction in Greek for which any evidence exists before Petronius” (8). However, almost immediately, papyrus finds (specifically *POxy 3010*, which features a *cinaedus* speaking with a *gallus* in a prosimetric work) shattered any notion of romantic parody when it was shown that comic models existed in Greek that were similar to Petronius' narrative, without the need for an inversion (Parsons 1971). Nevertheless, whether Petronius drew upon Greek models, and precisely which ones if so, continues to be debated: in their commentary on the *Iolaus* fragment, Stephens and Winkler presume a bias against Petronian originality on the part of Hellenists (1995, 364), who, they suggest, believe that “Petronius ‘must have had’ a Greek antecedent.” Laird echoes such sentiments, accusing Hellenists of attempting to push back the dating of material otherwise only attested in the second century CE, or “even to posit material that has not been discovered,” due to a “Hellenocentric chauvinism” – a “‘natural reason’ which dictates that the author of the *Satyricon* could not create anything new, anything that lacked a clear precedent in Greek literary history” (in Paschalis 2007, 156). Jenson, meanwhile, sees the bias tilting the other way: “It is not difficult to demonstrate that the truth is exactly the opposite, for a strong bias has existed for well over a century towards viewing Petronius as the quintessential Roman or ancient Italian author, whose artistic ‘originality,’ supposedly, was not compromised by ‘foreign’ Greek influence” (2004, 247). Regardless, whether Petronius was “original” or not bears little on the present discussion of how the author discourses on lies and fiction: surely he was conscious of crafting his story, whether originally or based on an existing literary model, and the ways in which his narrator and other characters tell stories and falsehoods allows us, like with our other authors, a chance to investigate his fictional program. For a useful summary of recent scholarship on the issue, see Zimmerman 2002.

<sup>260</sup> Some have specifically connected Achilles Tatius' novel with Petronius': “Of all the novelists who have survived from antiquity, [Achilles Tatius'] fiction resembles Petronius' *Satyricon* most closely” (Hilton 2009, 102). See also Anderson (in Beaton 1988, 192): “Moreover of all the ideal novels that of Achilles stands closest to Petronius: both share an ethos of self-indulgent rhetoric and sexual opportunism.” Hilton goes beyond style and ethos to compare the two works' use of the ego-narrator (cf. the discussion of Achilles Tatius' first-person narration on 138-139), presented in both cases as “weak, naïve, gullible, and selfish” (2009, 105), and also specific scenes, such as Petronius' exclamation in an art gallery to Eumolpus that “even the gods feel love” (*ergo amor etiam deos tangit*, 83), which is very similar to the episode that opens Achilles Tatius, in which the author (or initial narrator) exclaims much the same thing before a painting of Europa (οἷον' εἶπον ἄρχει βρέφος οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάττης, 1.2), drawing the attention of Clitophon, who ultimately then tells his tale.



now have it, complete with complaints about the novelistic nature of many declamatory speeches of the day.<sup>261</sup>

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 adolescentulos 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.<sup>262</sup> (1)

Even now with the exaggeration of matters and with utterly empty creaking of sentimentalities, they accomplish only this: that when they come into the forum, they may think themselves carried off into another world. And so I figure that the youth become wholly stupid in schools, because they neither hear nor see anything from them that we consider of use, but rather pirates standing on the shore in chains; rather kings writing edicts, in which they order that sons lop off the heads of their own fathers; rather oracular responses given against pestilence, that three virgins or more be sacrificed; rather honeyed globs of words, and everything spoken and done as though besprinkled with poppy and sesame seeds.

The aspects of rhetorical education most lamented by the character Encolpius (and perhaps by Petronius also) are, in fact, novelistic tropes: the pirate on the shore, edicts by kings, and, as seen in the Greek novels, repeated attempts at virgin sacrifice. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, these quite literally feed the novelists their plot points and episodes, including none too few that Petronius himself will employ.<sup>263</sup> Thus his narrator's long harangue is laden with irony:

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<sup>261</sup> Kennedy (1978, 173) notes that while Encolpius' remarks are "declamatory in tone ... they are not strictly speaking a declamation." Rather, he appears to be outside the school of rhetoric where a declamation is taking place and accosts the teacher Agamemnon with this litany of complaints.

<sup>262</sup> Schmeling (2011, 4) observes that this is the longest sentence in the extant *Satyricon*.

<sup>263</sup> *Ibid*, 4, also notes these were no doubt motifs used in school exercises.

Encolpius is taking aim at a rhetorical education he is simultaneously using to craft his condemnation.<sup>264</sup>

The remarks are one of many throughout the work that reference the very storytelling and rhetorical narration Petronius himself is presenting to us. The rhetorician Agamemnon<sup>265</sup> seems to echo the sentiments in Lucian's *Teacher of Rhetoric* when he laments that parents "drive the crude learning (of their children) into the forum and clothe their boys, while still babes, in eloquence, than which they confess nothing to be greater" (*cruda adhuc studia in forum pellunt et eloquentiam, qua nihil esse maius confitentur, pueris induunt adhuc nascentibus*):

Quod si paterentur laborum gradus fieri, ut studiosi iuvenes lectione severa irrigarentur, ut sapientiae praeceptis animos componerent, ut verba atroci stilo effoderent, ut quod vellent imitari diu audirent, ut persuaderent sibi nihil esse magnificum, quod pueris placeret: iam illa grandis oratio haberet maiestatis suae pondus. Nunc pueri in scholis ludunt, iuvenes ridentur in foro ... (4)

But if they would allow the steps of labors to happen,<sup>266</sup> so that eager youths might be nourished by serious reading, so that they might order their minds with the precepts of wisdom, so that they might unearth words with an exacting pen, so that they might listen for a long time to that which they wish to imitate, so that they might persuade themselves of nothing that

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<sup>264</sup> Kennedy (1978, 176) however points out that Encolpius is acting a part – trying to win an invitation to dinner from Agamemnon, and so issues a list of criticisms he knows will suit Agamemnon well, and that his criticism should not be read necessarily as those of Petronius or even Encolpius himself. "The ploy works perfectly. It is important to note that Agamemnon is not at all offended, not at all hostile, as we might expect him to be, considering what is said about his profession. Quite the contrary, he is delighted, commends what has been said, flatters Encolpius, and takes him into his professional confidence ..."

<sup>265</sup> Salles (2002) sees Petronius as using both the character Agamemnon, and Trimalchio's and the freedmen's characterization of rhetorical instruction, as a means of providing us with what the general public thought of such education: "*Pétrone a su tirer parti des confusions régnant dans le grand public à propos des finalités de l'enseignement pour introduire un savoureux personnage romanesque, le rheteur Agamemnon.*" (207-08)

<sup>266</sup> Cf. Lucian's *Teacher of Rhetoric*, which presents the road of proper rhetorical training as a nearly unclimbable mountain: "When you draw near the mountain, you will despair that there is no way up ... it is a narrow and thorny and jagged pathway, promising much sweat and thirst" (ἐῖτ' ἐπειδὴν πλησιάσης τῷ ὄρει, τὸ μὲν πρῶτον ἀπογιγνώσκεις τὴν ἄνοδον ... ἢ μὲν ἀτραπὸς ἐστὶ στενὴ καὶ ἀκανθώδης καὶ τραχεῖα, πολὺ τὸ δίψος ἐμφαίνουσα καὶ ἰδρῶτα, 7).

is fantastic, which might be pleasing to boys: now, then, that grand oratory might have the weight of its own majesty. But now the boys play in the schools, and the youths are laughed at in the forum.

Here again, the base irony to which Petronius is appealing is the fact that this diatribe is placed in the mouth of a character within such a story of special magnificence, which will have, as already pointed out, many of the stock elements contained in the *progymnasmata* that the character appears to be specifically lamenting. This recurrent critique of the fictional qualities of rhetorical education, even while utilizing such training to himself narrate the story of stories, runs throughout the *Satyricon*, and virtually no character is immune from unconsciously voicing such censure. Petronius even manages to give the buffoon Trimalchio a somewhat offhand critique of the rhetorical exercises. When he asks Agamemnon to recount for him the *controversia* he spoke that day (*sed narra tu mihi, Agamemnon, quam controversiam hodie declamasti?* 48) and the teacher of rhetoric explains it was one involving a rich man and a poor man at odds (*'pauper et dives inimici erant' ... et nescio quam controversiam exposuit*), Trimalchio replies, "This ... if it happened, is not a *controversia*; if it did not happen, it is nothing" (*Hoc ... si factum est, controversia non est; si factum non est, nihil est*). Trimalchio's comments are at once both absurd and profound, but altogether in keeping with the characters' continual remonstrance of rhetorical training. A *controversia* was, of course, a *fictional* legal exercise in the rhetorical schools, often luridly and entertainingly fictional<sup>267</sup> (like, again, the *Satyricon* itself), so of course Agamemnon's *controversia* for that day did not "happen" (*facta*) in reality, but was instead crafted (*ficta*) for training and entertainment purposes, yet that is the measuring stick of Trimalchio, who with this statement reveals his ignorance of what a *controversia* is: by suggesting that a *controversia* should be judged on whether or not its events happened is as absurd as asserting the same with respect to a modern novel. Trimalchio thus

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<sup>267</sup> Cf. 50 n.84

(unconsciously) invokes the *controversia*'s defining characteristic (its very fictiveness) in a humorously unschooled attempt to negate its usefulness, yet as we have seen, it is the very usefulness (or lack thereof) of rhetorical education, including the *controversiae*, that is an especial target in Petronius. Trimalchio's overall critique, then, appears ignorantly paradoxical: on the other hand, it is precisely the sort of criticism both Encolpius and Agamemnon have themselves made against the schooling of the day: that is, if the matter happened, it is in fact not a rhetorical *controversia* because it is an *actual case*, not a fictional exercise; and if it did *not* happen, it is of no consequence whatsoever by way of the fact that it is "nothing of use" (*nihil ex his, quae in usu*) but rather a story designed to make the listeners think they have been carried into another world (*putent se in alium orbem terrarum delatos*), which is precisely Encolpius' complaint about education from his opening rant. So here the cartoonish host services Petronius' recurring rhetorical criticisms almost in spite of himself. And yet despite the fact that Trimalchio has just voiced (albeit perhaps unwittingly) the same criticisms as he himself did, Encolpius reports on the flattery bestowed upon the host with droll dismissiveness: "we followed up these and other things he said with effusive eulogies" (*haec aliaque ... effusissimis prosequeremur laudationibus*, 48). As if to punctuate the host's buffoonery, Encolpius follows this account with Trimalchio's famous butchering of a host of well-known myths (*fabulae*), asking Agamemnon what he made of them.

Such *fabulae*, like the  $\mu\theta\omicron\iota$  of the Greek novels, are recurring targets of ironic derision in both Petronius and Apuleius' novels, themselves fantastic *fabulae* in their own rights. Thus when Quartilla, the priestess of Priapus, berates Encolpius and his friends for their prior sins, she asks, "Where did you learn banditry surpassing even the *fabulae*?" (*ubi fabulas etiam antecessura latrocinia didicistis*, 17)<sup>268</sup> And unlike the later Apuleius, whose story will be

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<sup>268</sup> Schmeling (2011, 49) concurs that this likely refers to either "novels or the theater."

predicated upon the supernatural, Petronius' forays into the fantastic are for the most part confined to the inset narrations of his baser characters, leading some scholars to characterize his novel at large as borderline realism.<sup>269</sup> When said characters do venture into the fantastic, it is with trepidation. In the famous *Cena Trimalchionis*, the diners at one point agree to tell ghost stories, but not without a bit of hand-wringing about the unbelievable nature of their tales. The freedman Niceros, who tells the story of a soldier-werewolf, fears that he will be laughed at for his account by the scholar friends of Trimalchio (*timeo istos scholasticos, ne me rideant*, 61), but decides to tell his tale anyway. After his unbelievable story, he swears he is telling the truth not only once ("Don't think that I am joking; I make my patrimony of no account, should I be lying"/*Nolite me iocari putare; ut mentiar, nullius patrimonium tanti facio*), but twice ("If I am lying, may I anger your guardian spirits"/*ego si mentior, genios vestros iratos habeam*, 62), two of several "iterated protestations of sincerity" he appears to use for narrative effect.<sup>270</sup> Maria Plaza argues that Niceros is sublimating his fear of the students' mockery by symbolizing it via the fear of the werewolf, noting that the servile status of everyone but the werewolf-outsider is stressed in his story, and he ends his story with the determination never to eat with his shape-

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<sup>269</sup> Thomas (1893), offering one of the oldest examinations of the *le réalisme dans Pétrone*, concludes it is only half true (*moitié vraie*), and instead asserts it is more closely akin to (written) pornography, which he suggests resides on the underbelly of idealism: *L'ouvrage de Pétrone appartient pour une bonne partie à ce genre de littérature licencieuses qui a reçu de nos jours l'épithète flétrissante de pornographique. Or, la pornographie n'a rien de commun avec le réalisme: c'est le produit artificiel d'une imagination dépravée, une sorte d'idéalisme à rebours* (3-4). Abbott (1909), meanwhile, was among the first to champion the realistic thesis, comparing it to the realistic Spanish novels of his own day, and suggesting (perhaps a bit too strongly) that "magic, the supernatural, and the element of perilous adventure are carefully excluded." (441) But as we have seen, the supernatural *is* present, albeit in the tales of the freedmen, and how else might one describe the Lichan episode, which ends in shipwreck, other than perilous adventure (even if acknowledging its comedic tone)? Nevertheless, Petronius as realist has maintained a steady following: in 1953, Auerbach deemed Petronius' work "the ultimate limit to which realism attained in antiquity (31)." In this he followed Bakhtin's characterization in 1941, which highlighted the *Matron of Ephesus* tale as one "completely credible" (1981, 222-23). However, with this specific observation Rimell (2002) takes issue, noting that this isolates the *Matron* tale from the rest of the novel and ignores its Virgilian allusions (138-139). Cf. the discussion on 180-181 below.

<sup>270</sup> Boyce 1991, 87

shifting friend again (*nec postea cum illo panem gustare potui*, 62.13).<sup>271</sup> However, Niceros' preceding remarks could also represent something we have seen repeatedly in our examinations of the ancient novels: a typical authenticating story-telling device. Boyce notes that while Niceros indeed feels an "uneasy sense of inferiority" seen also in other characters, he prefaces his story in this manner to "heighten the listener's interest and arouse suspense." Hence Niceros himself becomes a consummate storyteller much as the narrator Encolpius: "We must remember that the credulity and superstitiousness which he expresses belong to his narrative persona and not necessarily to Niceros himself, despite his protestations of sincerity."<sup>272</sup> It seems clear that Niceros is, indeed, relating a common folktale,<sup>273</sup> perhaps even self-consciously *performing* the narration of the story as a *persona* in the first-person. But Niceros does more than merely assert his sincerity – he also authenticates the narrative by convincingly casting himself within it, including some geographical and first-person detail for persuasive effect:

Cum adhuc servirem, habitabamus in vico angusto; nunc  
Gavillae domus est. Ibi, quomodo dii volunt, amare coepi  
uxorem Terentii coponis: noveratis Melissam Tarentinam,  
pulcherrimum bacciballum. (61.6)

When I was still a slave, I was living on a narrow street –  
now it is the house of Gavilla. There, as the gods willed it, I  
began to desire the wife of Terentius the inn-keeper: you know  
Melissa Tarentina<sup>274</sup> – a most pretty little buttercup.

Indeed, Niceros goes on even further to describe just what it was he liked about Terentina, and the nature of their relationship, before setting the scene of his story (which begins with her husband taking a trip away). As we have seen, superfluous amounts of unnecessary detail are

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<sup>271</sup> Plaza (2001), 84-85

<sup>272</sup> Boyce 1991, 85

<sup>273</sup> Smith 1894, 7-8

<sup>274</sup> Schmeling (2011, 254) sees further cause to see more literary than historical detail here. He notes that Melissa (whose name means "honeybee") is also said to come from Tarentum, which is "noted for its honey." That "her name is the same as that of a courtesan in Athenaeus 13.578c" also sets a "unified stage."

often the hallmark of authenticating a (possibly untrue) story, and Niceros engages in such sophistry, even while worrying aloud that the sophistic students in his presence will mock him for it. Indeed, Sandy has suggested that Niceros is one of Trimalchio's jesters, or *scurrae*, and that his tale is a recurring performance that clearly has been told before, since Trimalchio specifically requests it (61.2).<sup>275</sup> Plaza sees Niceros' statement that (as emended), he would rather be laughed *with* than laughed *at* (*satius est rideri quam derideri*, 61.4) as indicative that he is performing a set piece, and that "as an entertaining banquet buffoon offering his tale as *hilaria mera* (61.4) he does not mind theatrical laughter" directed at his tale, but fears the satirical mocking of the educated guests.<sup>276</sup> Indeed, the theatrical quality of his tale is punctuated in parts by clear references to mimic characters,<sup>277</sup> and at least one scholar has suggested that Niceros' decision to tell the tale illustrates the comic character of the *Satyricon* as a whole.<sup>278</sup>

However unbelievable Niceros' tale, it is followed by another supernatural yarn by Trimalchio that ends in the guests' "sense of wonder and a plea to the supernatural not to

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<sup>275</sup> Notes Sandy (1970, 468): "Niceros is pressed into service to entertain the guests at Trimalchio's *cena*. To arouse interest, he apologetically disclaims ability. It is obvious, however, that ... he has told the story on numerous occasions ... The circumstances surrounding Niceros' tale are, then, very much a part of the traditional devices used to embellish a yarn."

<sup>276</sup> Plaza 2001, 86

<sup>277</sup> Rosenblüth (1909, 55), suggests that in addition to the many other stock mime characters that dot the *Satyricon* can be added that of the "whipped innkeeper," which Niceros himself invokes at the close of his tale: "*Von den erbschleichern, ausrufen, barbieren, die wir bei Petron treffen, ist schon gezeigt worden, daß sie zum ständigen personal des Mimus gehören. hinzu kommen die wirt. wenn Niceros erzählt (51.12): domum fugi tanquam copo compiliatus, so muß der 'geprügelte wirt' eben eine ganz bekannte figure gewesen sein.*"

<sup>278</sup> Ferrera (2005, 808-809) suggests it is precisely the unbelievable nature of the tale, told in a less-than-serious posture, which marks it as comedic: "*Su recelo es vencido finalmente con decisión: narrabo tamen. Esta determinación última es una clara marca textual del choque esencial entre realidad y fantasía, verosimilitud e incredulidad. ... Racionalizar moralmente todo este proceso significa poner gradación a una fantasía, la cómica, que, por naturaleza, escapa a los límites de la razón.*"

intervene” in their own lives,<sup>279</sup> as Encolpius narrates that they, “having kissed the table, prayed that these night spirits keep to themselves until we might return from dinner” (*osculatique mensam rogamus Nocturas, ut suis se teneant, dum redimus a cena*, 64.1). It should be borne in mind, then, that tales of the supernatural were not always greeted with skepticism by readers/listeners at large, even when or if the authors relaying such stories convey some doubt of their own.<sup>280</sup>

Similar authentication accompanies Eumolpus’ two stories, which are no doubt both well-trodden Milesian tales.<sup>281</sup> The story of the Pergamene boy in its original state probably begins and ends with the amorous overtures of the older man and the younger boy’s eventual desire for him, culminating in the punchline wherein the boy’s original threat to tell his father is hurled back at him by his exhausted older lover. The latter part of Eumolpus’ version, however, contains no references to the frame that he set up, authenticating it by presenting it as biographical, and asserting that it took place once as he was hosted in Pergamum and became the guardian of the household’s son:

“In Asiam cum a quaestore essem stipendio eductus, hospitium Pergami accepi. Ubi cum libenter habitarem non solum propter cultum aedicularum, sed etiam propter hospitis formosissimum filium, excogitavi rationem, qua non essem patri familiae suspectus amator. Quotiescunque enim in convivio de usu formosorum mentio facta est, tam vehementer excandui, tam severa tristitia violari aures meas obsceno sermone nolui, ut me mater praecipue tanquam unum ex philosophis intueretur. Iam ego coeperam ephebum in gymnasium deducere, ego studia eius ordinare, ego docere ac praecipere, ne quis praedator corporis admitteretur in domum ...” (85)

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<sup>279</sup> Frangoulidis 2008), 82, who goes on to suggest Trimalchio’s ghost story foreshadows his mock funeral at the end of the *Cena*, and that the witches of his story are symbolic of himself, a sort of “sorcerer, with the ability to deceive his guests at every turn.”

<sup>280</sup> Cf. the discussion of Lucian’s *Lover of Lies* on 82ff above, and Augustine’s reaction to Apuleius’ *Golden Ass*, examined on 188-189 below.

<sup>281</sup> Beck 1979, 249 n.36



“When I had been led into Asia on a quaestor’s employment, I received hospitality in Pergamum. While there I was residing cheerfully not only because of the nice quarters, but also because of the most stunning son of my host, and I devised a plan whereby I would not be suspected a seducer by the father of the house. And so whenever at dinner mention was made about pretty boys taken advantage of, I burned with anger so vehemently, and I bid with such severe harshness that my ears not be violated with obscene talk, that the mother especially began to look upon me as though one from among the philosophers. And so now I began to lead the young lad to the gymnasium, I began to arrange his studies, and I began to teach and instruct him, lest some predator of his body might be admitted into the house ...”<sup>282</sup>

Not only does Eumolpus begin the tale with some self-authenticating language, giving the story a specific provenance (in Pergamum) and himself a specific reason for being there (on the employ of a quaestor), but he then asserts his own presence in it repeatedly, including the manner he devised (*excogitavi rationem*) to gain the household’s trust (involving a bit of play-acting that will serve Eumolpus well again in Croton, as will see below), and the way in which he came to be a trusted companion of the young boy. In this last part, right before what must have been the stock tale Petronius has the old poet repeat as his own, Eumolpus is most emphatic about his involvement, continuing not only the first-person narration but repeating also the first-person pronoun for effect: “I began to lead ... I began to arrange ... I began to teach”/ *ego coeperam ... deducere ... ego ... ordinare ... ego ... docere*. Of course, this serves not only to emphasize Eumolpus’ own part in the tale but also the frame of slow, conniving seduction he has used to get us to the well-known retelling of it and its ironic result within the

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<sup>282</sup> Schmeling (2011, 359-60) suggests “the narrative of Eumolpus is a novel in miniature and starts, as ancient novels do, with an introduction of the handsome boy and beautiful girl, except that in this case, since the story involves homosexuals, there is no girl.” While the story clearly has novelizing tendencies, it seems a stretch to connect it simply by the existence of a handsome boy. A more novelizing story would have had his beauty attracting prospective lovers from across the globe, as Callirhoe or Psyche do (cf. n.284 below).

narrative: the family's most trusted guardian is himself the *preadator* he is employed to ward off.

Eumolpus' (re)telling of the Matron of Ephesus story, while not biographical in the way the Pergamene boy is, nonetheless also contains traces of authentication in spite of its stock Milesian roots.<sup>283</sup> The narrator (Encolpius), before handing the telling of the tale off to Eumolpus, suggests that the examples of feminine fickleness which the poet was about to tell came "not from old tragedies or famous names through the ages, but a matter from his own memory that had happened (*nec se tragoedias veteres curare aut nomina saeculis nota, sed rem sua memoria factam*, 110). The story he then embarks upon, however, carries with it the obvious markings of a *fabula*: "There was a certain matron of Ephesus of such famous modesty, that she summoned the women from neighboring towns and clans to the spectacle of herself" (*Matrona quaedam Ephesi tam notae erat pudicitiae, ut vicinarum quoque gentium feminas ad spectaculum sui evocaret*, 111).<sup>284</sup> Despite being a no-doubt recognizable fable, Eumolpus' authenticating works on at least one member of his audience: even while most of the rest of those listening collapse into laughter (*risu exceperere fabulam nautae*, 113), Lichas finds fault with the actions of the fictional characters, treating it as though a real occurrence: "If his commander had been just," he said, "he ought to have returned the body of that lord of the household to his tomb and fixed the woman to the cross" ("Si iustus" inquit "imperator fuisset, debuit patris familiae corpus in monumentum referre, mulierem affigere cruci"). Such an obtuse observation of course misses the humor of the fantastically absurd climax entirely, allowing

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<sup>283</sup> Walsh (1970, 11) notes that though Eumolpus poses the story as one "of which he had personal knowledge," it is also found in Phaedrus Appendix *Fab.* 15 Perry, "and must have been a favorite in the Greek world." In this Walsh connects the protest of truth with Niceros' story specifically: "the claim of personal knowledge is in fact one of the conventions of the Tale."

<sup>284</sup> Cf. Psyche (*iam multi mortalium longis itineribus atque altissimis maris meatibus ad saeculi specimen gloriosum confluebant*, 4.29) and Callirhoe (Φήμη δὲ τοῦ παραδόξου θεάματος πανταχοῦ διέτρεχε καὶ μνηστῆρες κατέρρεον εἰς Συρακούσας, δυνασταὶ τε καὶ παῖδες τυράννων, οὐκ ἓκ Σικελίας μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἔξ Ἰταλίας καὶ Ἠπείρου καὶ νήσων τῶν ἐν Ἠπείρῳ, 1.2)

Petronius to not only play with Eumolpus' weak authentication at the start of his tale, but also give us a model of reading, much as Winkler suggests Heliodorus does,<sup>285</sup> that we should decidedly *not* follow in Lichas, who appears unable to appreciate a good yarn.

The characters' inability to distinguish fiction from reality has been touched on before,<sup>286</sup> but it would be remiss here not to turn such an observation onto the narrator himself: as outlined exhaustively by Conte, Encolpius, more than any other character, seems determined to interpret his petty adventures through the lens of epic heroicism, exalting himself by "identifying with heroic roles among the great mythical and literary characters of the past."<sup>287</sup> For Conte, the hidden author (Petronius) takes pains to put the "mythomaniac narrator" (Encolpius) in ever more absurd situations, which the young student inevitably narrates with hyper-melodramatic flair for the pleasure of the reader. Hence the more obvious examples of characters "not getting it" (Trimalchio's reaction to Agamemnon's *controversia*; Lichas' response to Eumolpus' story above), told of course by Encolpius himself, is made further ironic by his own elevated, heroic interpretation of things farcically mundane.

Yet even while being deceived by their own narrative experiences, the characters nevertheless continue to deceive their fellow actors in the story through the skill of inventing fictions. This perhaps finds its ultimate fulfillment in the final episode available to us, when the party (Eumolpus along with Encolpius and Giton) approaches the town of Croton.<sup>288</sup> Once there, a farm overseer tells them that there is no prosperity to be found there save one:<sup>289</sup>

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<sup>285</sup> Cf. 160ff

<sup>286</sup> See the discussion above of Trimalchio's reaction to Agamemnon's *controversia* on 173-174.

<sup>287</sup> Conte 1996, 2.

<sup>288</sup> So many have noted that Petronius' description of Croton departs from the real Italian town's actual geography that mention of it often goes without citation. Courtney (2001) connects it with the description of Carthage in *Aeneid* 1.419, itself modeled on Odysseus' arrival at Aea at *Odyssey* 10.148, and summarily remarks that "topographical accuracy is less important to Petronius than literary resonance." (178) However, one of the most recent scholarly treatments of the Croton episode takes it much further, convincingly connecting it to Horace *Sermones* 2.5, in which Ulysses is counseled by the prophet Tiresias in the underworld of how he might go about recouping his fortune upon his descent into poverty: legacy-

“O mi” inquit “hospites, si negotiatores estis, mutare propositum aliudque vitae praesidium quaerite. Sin autem urbanioris notae homines sustinetis semper mentiri, recta ad lucrum curritis. In hac enim urbe non litterarum studia celebrantur, non eloquentia locum habet, non frugalitas sanctique mores laudibus ad fructum perveniunt, sed quoscunque homines in hac urbe videritis, scitote in duas partes esse divisos. Nam aut captantur aut captant. In hac urbe nemo liberos tollit, quia quisquis suos heredes habet, non ad cenas, non ad spectacula admittitur, sed omnibus prohibetur commodis, inter ignominiosos latitat. Qui vero nec uxores unquam duxerunt nec proximas necessitudines habent, ad summos honores perveniunt, id est soli militares, soli fortissimi atque etiam innocentes habentur. Adibitis” inquit “oppidum tanquam in pestilentia campos, in quibus nihil aliud est nisi cadavera, quae lacerantur, aut corvi, qui lacerant...” (116)

“O, my strangers,” he said, “if you are businessmen, change your plan and seek out some other assistance for your life. But if you maintain that you are men of more urban prestige and liars always, you are running straightaway toward profit. For in fact, in this town the pursuits of literature are not celebrated, nor does eloquence have any place, nor do frugality and sacred customs come to any profit in praises, but whatever men you do see in this city, know that they are divided into two factions: those who take or those who get took. In this city, no one raises children, because someone who has his own heirs does not come to dinner, is not admitted to the games, but he is kept away from all opportunities; he is ignored among the disgraced. But those who have not ever taken a wife nor have next of kin, they arrive at the highest honors -- it is the case; they alone are considered patriots, they alone the bravest and even faultless. You will go,” he said, “to a town the likes of fields in pestilence,

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hunting. Hence the “unreal world” of Croton is integrally linked to Petronius’ literary program: “Petronius has recourse to the model set by Horace in his *Sermones*—he adopts the metaphor of captation to describe and examine the process of participating in literary history, but from his own perspective. ... The situation provided by Horace (Ulysses as a legacy hunter), derived from Homer (Odysseus in the Underworld) has been dramatized by Petronius (a legacy-hunter-hunter acts out an Odyssean role in a cannibalistic and Underworld-like setting)” (Woods 2012, 95).

<sup>289</sup> Conte 1996 refers to Croton as a “hyper-realistic city,” in that it represents “the rhetorical topos of the ‘corrupt city’” that has been transformed into “narrative reality.” (192). Teixeira (2008, 81) notes Croton is a dystopia, and it thus meets certain formulaic criteria for qualifying as such, including its (albeit “inaccurate”) geography, which provides isolation, and it is this dystopia which puts us on the narrator’s side: “the characteristics of the city of Croton furnish a reason for empathizing with the antiheroes’ way of life. In this way, in spite of possessing nothing, they will offer themselves to the material exploitation by the society.”

where there is nothing but cadavers which are picked at, and crows doing the picking.”<sup>290</sup>

Eumolpus takes this advice to heart and concocts with his two companions an elaborate ruse whereby he will be an heirless, dying man, with the other two men play-acting as his slaves.

“Quid ergo” inquit Eumolpus “cessamus mimum componere? Facite ergo me dominum, si negotiatio placet.” Nemo ausus est artem damnare nihil auferentem. Itaque ut duraret inter omnes tutum mendacium, in verba Eumolpi sacramentum iuravimus: uri, vinciri, verberari ferroque necari, et quicquid aliud Eumolpus iussisset. Tanquam legitimi gladiatores domino corpora animasque religiosissime addicimus. Post peractum sacramentum serviliter ficti dominum consalutamus, elatumque ab Eumolpo filium pariter condiscimus, iuvenem ingentis eloquentiae et spei, ideoque de civitate sua miserrimum senem exisse, ne aut clientes sodalesque filii sui aut sepulcrum quotidie causam lacrimarum cerneret. Accessisse huic tristitiae proximum naufragium, quo amplius vices sestertium amiserit; nec illum iactura moveri, sed destitutum ministerio non agnoscere dignitatem suam. Praeterea habere in Africa trecenties sestertium fundis nominibusque depositum; nam familiam quidem tam magnam per agros Numidiae esse sparsam, ut possit vel Carthaginem capere. Secundum hanc formulam imperamus Eumolpo, ut plurimum tussiat, ut sit modo solutioris stomachi cibosque omnes palam damnet; loquatur aurum et argentum fundosque mendaces et perpetuam terrarum sterilitatem; sedeat praeterea quotidie ad rationes tabulasque testamenti omnibus mensibus renovet. Et ne quid scaenae deesset, quotiescunque aliquem nostrum vocare temptasset, alium pro alio vocaret, ut facile appareret dominum etiam eorum meminisse, qui praesentes non essent. His ita ordinatis, “quod belle feliciterque eveniret” precati deos viam ingredimur. (117)

“Why don’t we,” said Eumolpus, “compose a mime? So make me out to be your master, if the affair is pleasing to you.” No one dared to condemn this contrivance from being carried out. And so, that we might keep the lie safe among everyone, we swore surety in words to Eumolpus: to be burned, bound,

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<sup>290</sup> “The above speech of the *vilicus* is not intended to provide accurate information about Croton or about the level of Latin spoken by overseers in Bruttium. Rather Petronius is setting the stage with the speech for the comedy to follow. ...We should probably read [it] as the dramatist’s prologue to his work: the speech conforms to the setting in which it appears. The *vilicus* has become either the announcer of the play or the orator laying down the outline for a *controversia* ... which the performers will then act out” (Schmeling 1996, 475-476).

beaten, and killed with a sword, and whatever else Eumolpus ordered. As though actual gladiators, we swore most religiously our bodies and souls to our master. After the overdone oath, we saluted our master as fictitious slaves, and learned as well from Eumolpus that he had lost a son, a youth of great eloquence and promise, and that he had left his own city a thoroughly miserable old man, lest he look upon his son's clients and companions, or his tomb, the daily cause of his tears; that a recent shipwreck had from here added to his sadness, by which he had lost two million sesterces, not that he was bothered by the loss, but bereft of a servant he now did not experience his own dignity; that meanwhile he had three hundred sesterces deposited in Africa in lands and debts, for his family was indeed spread so great throughout Numidia that he could all but capture Carthage. In accordance with this fabrication, we urged Eumolpus that he cough a lot; that he be as though with an upset stomach and that he condemn all his food openly; that he talk of gold and silver and his deceitful crops and the perpetual sterility of his lands; moreover, that he sit daily over his accounting books and make changes to his will every month. And lest something of the scene be missing, however often he should try to call upon one of us, he should call one by another's name, so that it could easily appear that the master was remembering even those who were not present. With these things all framed, having prayed to the gods, "that it turn out well and lucky," we made our way along the path.

Here, just as in the many schemes in Chariton's novel, the account is replete with the language of the stage and deceit.<sup>291</sup> The entire scheme is called a "mime" (*mimos*) and the idea to have Eumolpus "mistakenly" remember fictitious slaves' names in place of their own is added to

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<sup>291</sup> Collignon 1892 was the first to posit a serious influence of mime on Petronius, something he thought Petronius must have genuinely enjoyed (*La fréquence de l'emploi du mot mimus ou de termes analogues chez Pétrone me fait supposer qu'il a dû prendre plaisir à ces pièces populaires, dont les gens de la plus basse condition étaient souvent les héros*, 272-73). He argued for its primacy over new comedy as a model given the explicit references to drama in the *Satyricon* like this one (*Aussi rares sont les rapprochements qu'on peut établir entre Pétrone et les auteurs de palliatae. Il ne semble pas que le romancier se soit inspiré directement des comédies de Plaute et de Térence*, 282). Rosenbluth (1909) followed shortly after (*Petron und der Mimos*), calling mime the essence of the work at large (*das wesen des werkes überhaupt*, 36). More recently, Panayotakis, while seeing more influence from New Comedy than his predecessors, nonetheless also concluded, after examining the theatrical elements here in detail, that "their significance lies in the fact that Eumolpus visualizes the behaviour, actions and appearance of himself and his friends, as a theatrical roleplaying based on the infallible combination of deception (the figure of the childless and rich old man) and reality (the incident of the shipwreck), with no other purpose than the lucrative pleasures they are going to enjoy when they reach Croton (117.2), and the amusement the audience of the novel will derive from an episode structured in the manner of a mimic farce" (1994, 459).

complete the “scene” (*scaena*). Not only is the language describing their plot fictitious and dramatic, the story they concoct is itself a novelistic one, including the stock motifs of mourning by the tomb (*sepulcrum quotidie causam lacrimarum*), separation from one’s homeland (*de civitate sua ... exisse*), and shipwreck (*proximum naufragium*), the latter two having already occurred to the protagonist himself,<sup>292</sup> and the first one having already been narrated in Eumolpus’ story of the Matron of Ephesus (*quotienscumque defecerat positum in monumento lumen renovabat*, 111.5). Indeed, much of the “mime” the trio composes is in fact a sort of best-of-Petronius compilation of his greatest hits. The caricature that Encolpius and Giton encourage Eumolpus to fulfill is in fact a picture-perfect description of a character we have already encountered at length: aside from the ailments that Eumolpus is expected to pretend, his other general attributes as the heirless old man seem remarkably similar to Trimalchio and his band of freedmen, who also talk of dried up crops and lands (Ganymedes at 44), call attention to the names of Trimalchio’s many and numerous slaves (Carpus, 36), and of course (sometimes) pay especial attention to his riches and acquisitions (53). Indeed, a dinner guest at Encolpius’ left all but describes Eumolpus’ character while informing Encolpius about Trimalchio:

Ipse nescit quid habeat, adeo saplutus est. ... Ipse Trimalchio fundos habet, qua milvi volant, nummorum nummos. ... Familia vero babae babae, non mehercules puto decumam partem esse quae dominum suum noverit. (37)

“He himself doesn’t even know what he has, he’s that rich. Trimalchio has estates it would take birds to fly over, riches upon riches. ... And his slaves – egad! By Hercules, I bet a tenth part of them wouldn’t know their own master.”

And just as Trimalchio requires his guests to pretend he has died (78), Eumolpus too concocts a sort of proleptic re-enactment when he details in his will the grisly task his inheritors are to perform with his corpse.

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<sup>292</sup> He describes himself “abandoned in a foreign place” in 80.8 (*in loco peregrine ... abiectum*), and suffers shipwreck aboard Lichas’ craft in 114-115.

All of this is aside from the overt language of deceit that recurs throughout the Croton episode, from the *mendacium* they are committed to keep safe (*ut duraret inter omnes tutum mendacium*), to their performance as “fictive slaves” (*serviliter ficti*), to the use of *ars* to describe Eumolpus’ idea.<sup>293</sup> *Ars*, or skill, holds much the same nexus of meanings as the Greek τέχνη at the heart of much of our earlier analyses: it is both the skill necessary to carry out a craft, or craftiness and thus contrivance itself.<sup>294</sup> It is here where Encolpius and Eumolpus will supposedly be granted an opportunity to allow their respective rhetorical and poetical skills to dupe the unsuspecting legacy-hunters for their own personal gain. And immediately upon entering Croton (after Eumolpus’ lengthy poem on the Roman civil war during their journey there), the party is given its first chance to act out the ruse but falls short of a smooth rehearsal.

postero die amplioris fortunae domum quaerentes  
incidimus in turbam heredipetarum sciscitantium, quod  
genus hominum aut unde veniremus. Ex praescripto  
ergo consilii communis exaggerata verborum  
volubilitate, unde aut qui essemus, haud dubie  
credentibus indicavimus. Qui statim opes suas summo  
cum certamine in Eumolpum congesserunt. (124)

On the next day, seeking a house of more ample  
luck, we fell upon a throng of inheritance-hunters  
interrogating us as to what manner of men we were  
and whence we came. Therefore, from the script of our  
conspiracy and with an exaggerated whirlwind of  
words, we declared whence and who we were to these  
men, who believed our account without hesitation.  
They immediately gathered together all their resources  
on Eumolpus in an utmost contest.

The passage is meant to convey both the clumsy torrent of rehearsed explanations from the three players (*exaggerata verborum volubilitate*) and the obvious gullibility of the men they fool,

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<sup>293</sup> Schmelting (2011, 446) concurs with this general reading of the Croton episode: “The fiction created by Eumolpus ... is a novel in the novel, fiction in the modern sense – Eumolpus’ tricks are akin to literature.”

<sup>294</sup> Cf. Virgil of the Trojan horse in his *Aeneid* (*instar montis equum divina Palladis arte*, 4.15) or of Greek deception in general (*ignari scelerum tantorum artisque Pelasgae*, 4.106), and Sinon in particular (*Ille, dolis instructus et arte Pelasga*, 4.152).



who are “trusting hardly hesitantly” (*haud dubie credentibus*) their outlandish account. Yet even here Petronius, ever willing to knock his narrator down a peg, has Encolpius amusingly fret that a penniless yet shrewd (*callidus*) legacy-hunter might somehow have the resources to send a spy all the way to Africa to uncover their lies (*quid... si callidus captator exploratorem in Africam miserit mendaciumque deprehenderit nostrum?* 125). Whether they are eventually found out or not may never be known, as after an intervening episode regarding Encolpius and the matron Chrysis, the text ends with the legacy hunter Gorgias’ infamously gruesome description of cannibalism, which includes a sophistic defense (worthy of his namesake) of the taboo as it had been practiced historically, urging his fellows into agreeing to eat Eumolpus’ flesh once he passes away.<sup>295</sup>

Much like Chariton’s *Callirhoe*, then, the characters within Petronius’ *Satyricon* refer to stage devices and dramatic narratives in an ironic commentary on the novelistic process, and then scheme and plot their own such mimes to deceive the other characters in the narrative. And in the same way that later Greek novelists will expand this play-acting *within* the narrative to make the narrative itself a sort of play, titillating the readers with narrative sleights-of-hand, Petronius’ Latin successor in the genre, Apuleius (himself an accomplished orator), will take the Latin novel to new heights of authenticated and yet fantastical storytelling, combining inset narratives of deceit and intrigue with his own overarching “experiences” of magic, mysticism, and transformation – and all against continual assertions as to his tale’s validity.

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<sup>295</sup> Some have considered this to be an actual posthumous joke on Eumolpus’ part, but a staged *Scheintod* is more likely, and more in keeping with the trio’s ruse and the conventions of the novel in general (see Conte 1987, 530).

## Apuleius' Fantastical History

That Apuleius, whose life “falls at the height of the Greek intellectual revival of the Second Sophistic,”<sup>296</sup> should write a novel replete with discourses on the demarcation (or lack thereof) between fact and fiction, should perhaps be of no surprise. His novel, which shall be examined here, is merely one of his many works, and perhaps (at least in the eyes of his contemporaries) his most trivial. He is otherwise known as an accomplished orator and philosopher, and thus the *Golden Ass*, which revels in sophisticated narrative masquerading as history, and likewise includes an inset tale many see (often alongside the rest of the work)<sup>297</sup> as a Platonic allegory, is not an unexpected production given his body of work.

When evaluating Apuleius' truth claims, it bears remembering that at least one learned reader of his from antiquity was himself apparently undecided as to whether the story recounted in *The Golden Ass* was history or fiction: Augustine, while discussing in his *City of God* the very real dangers that supernatural demons can pose, chides those who might discount such things by asserting that he has heard firsthand about tales similar to Apuleius':

Si enim dixerimus ea non esse credenda, non desunt etiam nunc, qui eius modi quaedam uel certissima audisse uel etiam expertos se esse adseuerent. Nam et nos cum essemus in Italia audiebamus talia de quadam regione illarum partium, ubi stabularias mulieres inbutas his malis artibus in caseo dare solere dicebant quibus uellent seu possent uiatoribus, unde in iumenta ilico uerterentur et necessaria quaeque portarent postque perfuncta opera iterum ad se redirent; nec tamen in eis mentem fieri bestialem, sed rationalem humanamque seruari, sicut Apuleius in libris, quos asini aurei titulo inscripsit, sibi ipsi accidisse, ut accepto ueneno humano animo permanente asinus fieret, aut indicauit aut finxit. (*de Civitate Dei*, 18.18)

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<sup>296</sup> Harrison 2000, 3.

<sup>297</sup> See Smith 1972, 528: “In a novel of magical metamorphosis, nothing remains what it seems to be; and this factor of sudden change should be considered central to an explanation of the most unexpected surprise of all in the novel, the transformation of the *Metamorphoses* itself from a collection of anecdotes providing varied edification and entertainment into a fable about the journey of the soul through life.” Or Festugiere (1960), 77: “... he has there traced for us the story of a soul which fell, which suffered by reason of that fall, and which the merciful hand of Isis raised up and saved ...”

But if we should say that these things are not to be believed, there are not absent those who even now would assert earnestly that they have heard definite things of this sort or have experienced them themselves. For indeed when I was in Italy I heard that there were such things in a region of those parts, where they said innkeeper women imbued with these malicious skills were accustomed to give to whichever travelers they wanted or were able something in a piece of cheese, whence they were turned into beasts of burden at that point and carried whatever was necessary and returned to themselves again after the work was done; and that nevertheless in these events they did not become of beastly mind, but preserved their human thinking, just as Apuleius either reported or invented happened to himself in his books (which he wrote under the title of “The Golden Ass”) when after a potion was taken he became an ass, though his human mind remained.

Note that while Augustine cites Apuleius’ story as a mere illustration of the sorts of things he has heard that have actually happened, he does not discount the possibility that Apuleius’ account is, in fact, real, ending his remarks in this section with the chance that the book was “either reported” (*indicavit*) or “invented” (*finxit* – quite literally, “fictionalized”).<sup>298</sup>

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<sup>298</sup> Apuleius subscribed to the basic Middle Platonic doctrine on demonology, namely that the world cannot tolerate “gaps” and thus there must be middle beings between God and humans. This is spelled out most elaborately in his *de deo Socratis*, “the most complete connected version of Middle Platonic demonology extant” (Dillon 1977, 320): “But there are certain middle divine powers between the highest ether and the lowermost lands in that space of intermediate air, through which both our desires and our rewards pass. The Greeks called these by name demons, conveyors through the lands and skies of petitions hence and aid thence ...” / *Ceterum sunt quaedam divinae mediae potestates inter summum aethera et infimas terras in isto intersitae aeris spatio, per quas et desideria nostra et merita ad eos commeant. Hos Graeci nomine daemones nuncupant, inter terricolos caelicolasque vectores hinc petitiones inde suppetias* (*de deo Socratis*, 6). Apuleius and Augustine thus both shared the “general concern of intellectuals in the first few centuries AD with ideas about intermediate divine powers” (Harrison 2000, 137). Thus the existence of such powers, or their intervention in human affairs, was taken for granted among most learned men of the time, even if they disagreed (especially between Christians and non-Christians) over what or who those semi-divine powers were. Augustine appears to be embracing a Christian demonology equating *daimones* with fallen angels that was only then recently established (Martin 2010, 675-77), whereas the Middle Platonists like Apuleius and even earlier Christians merely thought of them as intermediate spirits, whether good or bad. In the words of Apuleius himself: “I believe Plato that there are certain intermediate powers of divinities in the middle both in nature and space, and that these govern all the divinations and miracles of the magicians. (*Platoni credam inter deos atque homines natura et loco medias quasdam diuorum potestates intersitas, easque diuinationes cunctas et magorum miracula gubernare, Apologia*, 43.1). It should be pointed out, then, that it is not the *content* of

Augustine's remarks are not surprising, in that Apuleius himself specifically plays with the distinction between fiction and reality throughout his novel. In Book 6, when as an ass he escapes from the bandits' hideout with the maiden Charite, she sings his praises, promising that he will one day himself live on in tales and that his story will make people believe in myths:

Nec ... deerit tibi dignitas gloriosa: nam memoriam praesentis fortunae meae divinaeque providentiae perpetua testatione signabo, et depictam in tabula fugae praesentis imaginem meae domus atrio dedicabo. Visetur et in fabulis audietur doctorumque stilis rudis perpetuabitur historia 'Asino vectore virgo regia fugiens captivitatem.' Accedes antiquis et ipse miraculis et iam credemus exemplo tuae veritatis et Phrixum arieti supernatasse et Arionem delphinum gubernasse et Europam tauro supercubasse. Quod si vere Iupiter mugivit in bovem, potest in asino meo latere aliqui vel vultus hominis vel facies deorum. (6.29)

"Nor will glorious merit be absent for you: for I will mark the memory of my present luck and divine providence with a lasting witness, and I will dedicate a painted image of my present flight in the atrium of my house. It will be seen and heard and our uncultivated story will be preserved by the pens of the cultivated: "A stately maiden fleeing captivity by her asinine conveyer." You yourself enter the ancient wonders and we will believe by the example of your truth that Phrixus did swim across on a ram and that Arion did steer a dolphin and that Europa did rest atop a bull. But if Jupiter truly did low as a bull, it is possible that the face of some man lies hidden in my donkey, or even the image of the gods."

Apuleius here frames his story in conjunction with myths of old, all of which included miraculous participation by an animal in conveyance across the sea.<sup>299</sup> The analogy is somewhat absurd, but Augustine's apparent confusion is not hard to understand when one reads Apuleius' narration as Lucius, much of which happens while he is an ass. Though the author starts out his novel

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Apuleius' story that might perhaps cast it into doubt for Augustine, but rather the method of his telling of it, which, as this section attempts to demonstrate, skirts the boundaries between fiction and reality.

<sup>299</sup> A favorite in the Second Sophistic as it was a favorite in art at the time. Cf. Achilles Tatius' opening treatment of the painting featuring Europa on 138 above.

enumerating his plans to tell a “Greekish yarn” (*fabulam Graecanicam incipimus*) woven together in a “Milesian story” from “various tales” (*sermone isto Milesio varias fabulas conseram*, 1.1), his transition from (presumably) the author Apuleius to the character of Lucius is so seamless as to be nonexistent. Immediately after telling us he is beginning his Grecian story and bidding us to enjoy ourselves, he begins his tale, still in first person,<sup>300</sup> and throws in some genealogy in conjunction with his geography – leading us to wonder if this is still the author or the narrator:

Thessaliam, nam et illic originis maternae nostrae  
 fundamenta a Plutarcho illo inclito ac mox Sexto  
 philosopho nepote eius prodita gloriam nobis faciunt,  
 eam Thessaliam ex negotio petebam. (1.2)

Thessaly – for thence does the foundation of my  
 maternal origin, sprung from that famous philosopher  
 Plutarch and then his nephew, produce its glory for us –  
 this Thessaly I was seeking on business.

The tale will begin in Thessaly, the capital of magic in antiquity, as Lucius will point out (“the middle places of Thessaly ... where the native enchantments of the magical arts are celebrated by the accordant acclaim of the whole world/*media Thessaliae loca ... quo artis magicae nativa contaminata totius orbis consono ore celebrentur*, 2.1), and while this allows for the above biographical digression for the narrator, we will not learn his name until a full twenty-two chapters later (*‘Mi Luci’*, 1.24), when a schoolmate from Athens recognizes him on the way to the baths. It appears thus no accident that the author’s identity so often blurred with his lead character,<sup>301</sup> and he will keep up such a charade throughout the novel. It is clear, then, why Augustine himself remained noncommittal about the fictional quality of the work,<sup>302</sup> much less the identity of the narrator, for Augustine suggests the events of the *Golden Ass* had happened

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<sup>300</sup> Cf. the discussions of first-person narration regarding Achilles Tatius and Petronius above, 170, n.260.

<sup>301</sup> Gaisser 2008, 29ff, nicely charts Apuleius’ reputation as it blended with that of his protagonist, earning him the reputation of a magician from late antiquity into the Middle Ages.

<sup>302</sup> See Van Der Paardt in Harrison 1999, 237ff

to Apuleius himself (*sibi ipsi accidisse*), using both the reflexive and intensive pronouns as if to remove all doubt. No wonder: Lucius will address the readers many times during his narration in much the same authorial voice as that of the introduction, implying that he is, in fact, reporting on experiences that he himself had, while at times undermining just such an implication in the process.

Some such undermining remark accompanies virtually all incursions by the narrator into the story when he addresses the reader: immediately after his verbally ornate and perhaps philosophically metaphorical tale of Cupid and Psyche (supposedly told by a “drunken old hag”), Lucius the ass laments that he had no tablets, whereby he might mark down so beautiful a tale (*pugillares et stilum non habebam, qui tam bellam fabellam praenotarem*, 6.25). Meanwhile, a young man telling of the death of the young maiden Charite makes a less-than-oblique reference to Apuleius (or Lucius) when embarking on her story: “But so that you might know everything, I will tell to you what happened from the top – things that more learned men, to whom Fortune has bestowed pens, might be able to appropriately roll open on sheets as a token of history” (*sed ut cuncta noritis, referam vobis a capite quae gesta sunt, quaeque possent merito doctiores, quibus stilos Fortuna subministrat, in historiae specimen chartis involvere*, 8.1). Yet in both of these instances, we are left wondering how we came to have the story, as the ass did not have tablets to write down the fairy tale, nor were there any “learned men” with “pens” available to jot down the young man’s story. Nevertheless, Apuleius will routinely invoke the exacting standards of historiography to authenticate his tale, even though said authentication is quite easy for the reader to puncture.

For example, when events happen he could not have known about because his character was not around, Apuleius is careful to have his narrator acknowledge that to his

readers outright.<sup>303</sup> Amid telling of the machinations of a miller's cheating wife,<sup>304</sup> the narrator abruptly interrupts his suspenseful story right as the wife's hired witch has determined to raise a woman from the dead to attack her husband:

Sed forsitan lector scrupulosus reprehendens  
narratum meum sic argumentaberis: 'Unde autem tu  
astutule asine, intra terminos pistrini contectus quid  
secreto, ut affirmas, mulieres gesserint scire potuisti?'  
Accipe igitur quemadmodum homo curiosus iumentum  
faciem sustinens cuncta quae in perniciem pistoris mei  
gesta sunt cognovi. (9.30)

But perchance you, a scrupulous reader faulting my narrative, might reprove thus: "But how, you astute little ass, were you able to know what the women were carrying out in secret when you were kept within the confines of the mill?" Therefore listen in what way I, a curious person holding the guise of a pack animal, learned everything that was carried out to the destruction of my miller.

What Apuleius then tells the reader raises even more skepticism: as he watched, still an ass, the disheveled apparition of a woman appeared and led the miller inside, where he remained behind locked doors until his servants finally burst in and found him hanging from a noose. Then the next day, the miller's daughter showed up in a piteous state:

quae nullo quidem domus infortunium nuntiante  
cuncta cognorat, sed ei per quietem obtulit sese flebilis  
patris sui facies, adhuc nodo revincta cervice, eique  
totum novercae scelus aperuit, de adulterio, de  
maleficio, et quemadmodum larvatus ad inferos  
demeasset. (9.31)

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<sup>303</sup> Cf. Achilles Tatius 5.23.1, where Clitophon acknowledges that he was in a jail cell and could not have heard what was said.

<sup>304</sup> A common mime (cf. 98 n.171 above). The adultery mime, "by far the most popular motif of the mime from the classical to the late antique period," is one of several such mimes retooled in the *Golden Ass* and recently examined by Kirichenko (2010, 21). As he notes, Apuleius' humorous take on the adultery mime turns on the fact that the typical roles of the husband and adulterer (the former typically duped, the latter typically triumphant) are reversed, and the adulterer is made to satisfy the desires of the man he hoped to cuckold.

She had learned everything that had happened, indeed not from someone announcing the misfortune of the house, but rather during her sleep the image of her pitiable father, still bound about the neck by the noose, brought himself before her, and he revealed the entire scandal to her, about the adultery, about the witchcraft, and how the enchantment had dragged him down to the underworld.

Thus does Apuleius at once invoke the exacting standards of historical narrative (how and where did you learn of these events?),<sup>305</sup> only to then immediately undermine them by giving us his answer: he learned it from the daughter, who had a dream, which featured her father's ghost, who told us all about it! The attention to which he calls us with respect to the story's credibility is thus directed toward the unbelievable provenance of the tale.

Oftentimes, Lucius will couple these authenticating strategies with other acknowledgements about things he does not know and never found out ("What my master the gardener did the next day I do not know"/ *die sequenti meus quidem dominus hortulanus quid egerit nescio*, 10.1), but he routinely continues the charade that he is writing an account of things that happened ("After a few more days I remember a significant scandal and nefarious crime, but so that you might also read about it, I put it here in the book"/ *post dies plusculos ibidem dissignatum scelestum ac nefarium facinus memini, sed ut vos etiam legatis, ad librum profero*, 10.2). A few short chapters after the miller's demise, Lucius will again acknowledge that he was not present for the events he is about to tell (about a trial concerning yet another wretched woman, this time a stepmother who frames her stepson for murder), but in the accepted manner of historiography, he tells what he has learned from others:

Haec ad istum modum gesta compluribus mutuo  
sermocinantibus cognovi: quibus autem verbis accusator  
urserit, quibus rebus diluerit reus, ac prorsus orationes  
altercationesque neque ipse absens apud praesepium scire

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<sup>305</sup> Cf. 79 n.138 for the three traditional modes of historical investigation: to see for oneself, to experience oneself, or to learn from others (εἶδον ... ἔπαθον ... ἐπιθόμην).



neque ad vos quae ignoravi possum enuntiare, sed quae plane comperi ad istas litteras proferam. (10.7)

The things that happened concerning this matter I learned in turn from several conversations: but what words the prosecutor made use of, and in what ways the defendant undermined them, the precise speeches and debates, being myself absent and in my stable, I cannot know and cannot report to you things which I do not know, but the things which I ascertained clearly I will set forth in these letters.

And like before, Lucius' protestations and supposed care are immediately undermined by the story that follows, in which the surprise turning point will come in the form of two ornate speeches (precisely what he has just confessed to have *not* heard and *cannot* report) given by a doctor, who narrates how he himself sold the poison used to supposedly infect the boy who has died (yet who is, of course, not really dead). The doctor informs the court that the "poison" he sold to the slave was not really poison at all, but rather only induced a death-like sleep, like the drug in Xenophon of Ephesus' tale (θανάσιμον μὲν οὐχὶ φάρμακον, ὑπνωτικὸν δέ, 3.5.11), and when the boy is discovered fully alive, Lucius remarks that "now, with the crimes of the vile slave and the viler woman clearly laid bare, naked truth came forth into view" (*iamque liquido servi nequissimi atque mulieris nequioris patefactis sceleribus procedit in medium nuda veritas*, 10.12). That such a tale should have so great an investment in ultimate truth is perhaps the height of irony.

Even Apuleius' beautiful, extended inset tale of Cupid and Psyche, the subject of philosophical treatises and Renaissance art despite supposedly coming from a drunken old woman,<sup>306</sup> offers several discourses on deceit akin to those found in Longus' similar fairy tale. This elaborate, sophisticated, and ornate tale, which some have seen as a Platonic allegory

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<sup>306</sup> Though clearly based on several traditional, folkloric motifs as illustrated exhaustively by Swahn in 1955, most consider Apuleius' tale of Cupid and Psyche original enough in its adaptation that it should stand alone in analysis: "Apuleius has grafted on to the folk-tale a story of a love-encounter between Eros and Psyche which derives from a Platonist myth and which becomes popular in the Hellenistic age." (Walsh 1970, 195).

about the soul's (*psyche*) relationship with the divine,<sup>307</sup> an allegory usually seen as reflective of the whole,<sup>308</sup> is nonetheless presented to us by a less-than-sophisticated character, something which Apuleius will not let us forget, playfully framing the entire story with reminders of its provenance:

“Sed ego te narrationibus lepidis anilibusque fabulis protinus avocabo.” et incipit: “erant in quadam civitate rex et regina ...” (4.27-28)

“But I will distract you with dainty narrations and old-lady tales straightaway.” And she began: “There were in a certain city a king and queen...”

Despite its fabulistic beginning, the story will be no mere children's tale, much less an old wives' tale, as the old woman suggests, though its affinity with the Greek romances already examined cannot be denied.<sup>309</sup> The *ecphrases* alone within the tale are worthy of Apuleius' sophistic education: after Venus has ordered her son Cupid to make Psyche fall in love with a man condemned by Fortune (*Fortuna damnavit*, 4.31), she leaves her son and returns to the sea, in the process striking a pose with her retinue no doubt taken from any number of paintings of the love goddess.<sup>310</sup>

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<sup>307</sup> Schlam (1970, 477-487) provides a helpful overview of much of the scholarship on this issue. DeFilippo, attempting to straddle two approaches to charting the Platonism of the *Golden Ass* (either culling its pages for Platonic references, or examining the whole work against the Middle Platonism contemporary with him) adds to the discussion a needed focus on *curiositas* (in Harrison 1999, 269ff). Meanwhile, Penwill summarizes the typical interpretation nicely (1975, 53).

<sup>308</sup> Wlosok (1969, 75), *i.a.*, sees the fates of Psyche and Lucius wed by an initial folly owing to their similar *curiositas*: *Die eigentliche bedeutung der Psyche-Erzählung liegt, wie wiederholt ausgesprochen wurde, in ihrer symbolischen Beziehung auf die Haupthandlung. Das Schicksal Psyches spiegelt im Großen das Schicksal des Lucius wider und trägt zu dessen Erhellung bei. Die entscheidende Parallele sehe ich in der Ursache für den Fall und den folgenden Leidensweg der beiden Helden: Psyche erliegt der gleichen curiositas wie Lucius.* Cf. Hooper (1985, 399): “The tale of Cupid and Psyche is not an allegory about love or a stylish myth inserted for relief from the bandits' cave: it is a miniature version of the whole novel, and a careful foreshadowing of its religious significance.”

<sup>309</sup> Penwill 1975, 51: “The old woman who tells it calls it a *narratio lepida* ('pleasant story' 4.27); but perhaps the most telling way in which this atmosphere is created is in the obviously intentional similarity between its plot and that of the standard Greek romance.”

<sup>310</sup> See Amat 1972, 125: “... *la marine fameuse du cortège de Vénus, thème iconographique particulièrement à la mode en Africa.*”

Sic effata,<sup>311</sup> et osculis hiantibus filium diu ac pressule saviata proximas oras reflui litoris petit, plantisque roseis vibrantium fluctuum summo rore calcato, ecce iam profundum maris sudo resedit vertice, et, ipsum quod incipit velle, et statim, quasi pridem praeceperit, non moratur marinum obsequium. Adsunt Nerei filiae chorum canentes, et Portunus caeruleis barbis hispidus, et gravis piscoso sinu Salacia, et auriga parvulus delphini Palaemon iam passim maria persultantes Tritonum catervae; hic concha sonaci leniter buccinat, ille serico tegmina fragrantiae solis obsistit inimici, alius sub oculis dominae speculum progerit, curru biiuges alii subnatant. Talis ad Oceanum pergentem Venerem comitatur exercitus, 4.31.4-7.

Thus she spoke, and having kissed her son closely for a while with open lips, she seeks the nearby banks of the receding shore, and when the uppermost dew of the billowing waves was trodden by her rosy feet, behold! the depth of the sea calmed with a serene surface, and the thing which she had only begun to wish itself immediately happened, and her marine retinue tarried no more: there present were the daughters of Nereus, singing a chorus, and Portunus, bristly with his sea-blue beard, and Salacia, laden with her fish-full folds, and little Palaemon, the steersman of dolphins; and now throngs of Tritons were leaping through the seas here and there; this one was trumpeting lightly on a resounding conch shell, that one blocked the fragrance of the hostile sun with shields made from silk; another held forth a mirror under the eyes of his mistress; still others swam beneath her chariot, yoked two by two. Such was the company attending Venus as she drove toward the ocean.

Far from being a narrative commonplace for drunken old women, the *ecphrasis* here and also at 5.1 (the description of Cupid's palace) and 6.6 (Venus' departure for the sky) mirror those earlier in the work as told by Lucius, especially the description of Byrrhaena's atrium at 5.4.

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<sup>311</sup> Kenney (1990, 126) suggests this, and others, are epicizing tags that underline Venus' "Apollonian-Virgilian *persona*," which Apuleius is co-opting for his tale.

But the author does not undermine his inebriated and elderly narrator simply by making his tale sophisticated. He will also explicitly break through the supposedly secondhand narration when Apollo gives a prophecy regarding the fate of Psyche in a hexameter oracle:

Sed Apollo, quanquam Gracus et Ionicus, propter  
Milesiae conditorem sic Latina sorte respondit. (4.32)

But Apollo, although Greek and Ionian, on account of  
the author of a Milesian tale, responded thus in Latin.

Yet as stated above, the entirety of the tale is framed by the old woman, and when the tale is done and Psyche has been apotheosized and her daughter Pleasure (*Voluptas*) introduced,<sup>312</sup> Apuleius, amidst this celestially serene scene, abruptly returns to her again, and again (as noted above) laments he did not have stilus and tablets to write down “so beautiful a tale”:

Sic captivae puellae delira et temulenta illa narrabat  
anicula; sed astans ego non procul dolebam mehercules  
quod pugillares et stilum non habebam, qui tam bellam  
fabellam praenotarem. (6.25)

That was the story that crazy and drunken old  
woman was telling to the captive girl; but I, standing not  
far off, was grieving, by Hercules, that I did not have  
tablets and a pen, with which I might jot down so  
beautiful a tale.

Of course, Lucius undermines the narrative fiction of his own tale by suggesting he did not have a way to record such a story, since it ends up told to us here in great detail, and indeed one wonders how such a contradictory sentence can be written with a straight face: on the one hand, the tale was narrated by a crazy, drunken old woman (who had already warned us what sort of tale she would be telling), yet it was “so beautiful” (*tam bellam*) it leaves the ass wishing for writing apparatus. But chiefly undermining the narration of the wider tale (a supposedly delightful ditty meant only to entertain a young maiden) is of course the tale itself, which many

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<sup>312</sup> Again seen as philosophically significant: “The birth of a child with this name, as the happy resolution to the tale of Psyche, represents the soul’s discovery of spiritual joy at its deliverance from the power of blind fortune (in Psyche’s tale, represented by Venus),” Tatum 1969, 514.

have read as an allegory about the soul's progress to divine perfection. However, even in the perennially *simplex* Psyche's transformation from suffering mortal to apotheosized goddess, Apuleius manages to discourse on the nature of narrative deceit, deceit both unsuccessfully crude and sophisticatedly successful.

Like in the other novels and in Apuleius' novel at large, deceit plays a chief role not only in authorial interventions, but within the narrative action of *Cupid and Psyche* itself. A much longer examination of these deceits (the tale is, after all, predicated upon the overarching deceit of Cupid hiding his identity from Psyche) could be offered here, but for the sake of brevity I will focus especially on the relationship between Psyche and her sisters, so archetypically wicked they will enjoy a long bookshelf life in folktales such as *Cinderella*. When the jealous sisters discover that Psyche is married to a rich man who has put her up in a breathtaking mansion, they inquire about him while "nourishing envy within their hearts" (*praecordiis penitus nutritent invidiam*, 5.8). Because she has sworn to her husband Cupid (whose identity she still does not know) that she would not let them spark her curiosity as to his true identity, she lies when pressed about who he is:

nec tamen Psyche coniugale illud praeceptum ullo  
pacto temerat vel pectoris arcanis exigit, sed e re nata  
configit esse iuvenem quendam et speciosum,  
commodum lanoso barbitio genas inumbrantem,  
plerumque rurestribus<sup>313</sup> ac montanis venatibus  
occupatum, et ne qua sermonis procedentis labe  
consilium tacitum proderetur, auro facto gemmosisque  
monilibus onustas eas statim vocato Zephyro, tradit  
reportandas. (5.8)

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<sup>313</sup> Kenney notes that "the distinction between different types of hunting seems pointless and indeed improbable, since the mountains were the traditional scene of the sport" (1990, 150). And Watt (to whose conjecture, though unpublished at the time, Kenney was privy) went so far as to suggest the addition here of *rebus* in order to fulfill the typical distinction between farming and hunting (apud *ibid*, 150). Yet it's possible that Psyche's account is supposed to sound "improbable," since as we will see, she fails to even remember this story when asked to describe him again shortly. As I will be arguing, Psyche's transformation is not simply from human to divine: she also demonstrates a transformation from soft naiveté to harsh cleverness.

Nevertheless, Psyche did not dishonor that command of her husband in any manner nor did she expel it from the secret places of her heart, but spontaneously she fictionalized that he was a certain youth, handsome, just now darkening his cheeks with a woolly beard, occupied often with country and mountain hunts, and lest by some slip of proceeding speech she might betray her silent plan, she immediately handed them over, laden with gold-wrought work and gemmed necklaces, to summoned Zephyr to be carried back.

Cupid himself recognizes the danger that the sisters pose, and attempts to warn Psyche about their designs, remarking on her natural naiveté:

“Perfidae lupulae<sup>314</sup> magnis conatibus nefarias insidias tibi comparant, quarum summa est, ut te suadeant meos explorare vultus, quos, ut tibi saepe praedixi, non videbis si videris. Ergo igitur si posthac pessimae illae lamiae noxiis animis armatae venerint—venient autem, scio—neque omnino sermonem conteras et, si id tolerare pro genuina simplicitate proque animi tui teneritudine non potueris, certe de marito nil quicquam vel audias vel respondeas.” (5.11)

“The treacherous she-wolves are preparing insidious traps for you with great effort, the greatest of which is this: that they might persuade you to seek out my face, which as I have often warned you, you will not see again should you ever see it. And so, therefore, if after this those most destructive witches should come, armed with their noxious intents – and they will come, I know it – you must not waste words with them at all, and if you are not able to tolerate that because of your inborn naiveté and because of the softness of your brains, certainly you must respond to nothing about your husband and you must hear nothing of him.”

When the sisters return and interrogate her again, *simplex* Psyche cannot even keep her lies straight, this time telling a completely different account of who her husband is:

Tunc illa simplicitate nimia pristini sermonis oblita,  
novum commentum instruit atque maritum suum de  
provincia proxima magnis pecuniis negotiantem iam

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<sup>314</sup> A recurring insult hurled at women, almost always including overtones of prostitution. Cf. 21 n.33.

medium cursum aetatis agere, interspersum rara  
canitie. Nec in sermone isto tantillum morata rursum  
opiparis muneribus eas onustas ventoso vehiculo  
reddidit. (5.15)

Then she, with excessive naiveté, forgetful of her  
older story,<sup>315</sup> constructed a new fabrication, that her  
husband was a businessman of great wealth, middle-  
aged, and had lived through the middle stretch of his  
life, and that he was speckled with a few white hairs.  
Not delaying in that story for even a bit, she returned  
them back to their windy transport laden with rich gifts.

The sisters are quick to note that the two accounts do not mesh, referring to her tales as a  
“monstrous mendacity” (*monstruoso mendacio*, 5.16). This of course leads ultimately to the  
sisters’ grandest design, an elaborate lie in which they convince Psyche, “naturally simple and of  
tender mind” (*utpote simplex et animi tenella*, 5.18) that her husband is really a giant serpent  
who will devour her once her child is born.

‘Tu quidem felix et ipsa tanti mali ignorantia beata,  
sedes incuriosa periculi tui; nos autem, quae pervigili  
cura rebus tuis excubamus, cladibus tuis misere  
cruciamur. Pro vero namque comperimus nec te, sociae  
scilicet doloris casusque tui, celare possumus immanem  
colubrum multinodis voluminibus serpentem, veneno  
noxio colla sanguinantem hiantemque ingluvie  
profunda, tecum noctibus latenter acquiescere. Nunc  
recordare sortis Pythicae, quae te trucis bestiae nuptiis  
destinatam esse clamavit: et multi coloni, quique  
circumsecus venantur, et accolae plurimi viderunt eum  
vespera redeuntem e pastu proximique fluminis vadis  
innatantem. Nec diu blandis alimoniis obsequiis te  
saginatum omnes affirmant, sed cum primum  
praegnationem tuam plenus maturaverit uterus,  
opimio fructu praeditam devoraturum. Ad haec iam  
tua est existimatio, utrum sororibus pro tua cara salute  
sollicitis assentiri velis et declinata morte nobiscum  
secura periculi vivere, an saevissimae bestiae sepeliri  
visceribus: quod si te ruris huius vocalis solitudo vel  
clandestinae Veneris faetidi periculosique concubitus et

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<sup>315</sup> As dryly noted by Kenney, “Something of an understatement ... Psyche’s improvisations illustrate the age-old truth that liars should have a good memory” (1990, 160).

venenati serpentis amplexus delectant, certe pia  
sorores nostrum fecerimus.' (5.17-18)

You sit there all happy and blessed in ignorance of so great an evil and negligent of your own danger. But we, who lie awake with concern for your affairs, are tortured wretchedly by your misfortunes. For we know for a fact, nor are we able, as the sure allies of your pain and misfortune, to conceal from you, that it is a large creeping snake with many-knotted coils, bleeding about its neck with poisonous venom and gaping with its deep maw, that sleeps with you secretly every night. Remember the Pythian prophecy, which proclaimed that you were destined for the nuptials of a ferocious beast. Many farmers and those who hunt around these parts and several neighbors have seen him coming back in the evening from feeding and wading in the nearby shoals of the river. They all swear that it will not be long before you are fattened up with the charming complaisance of food, but once your full womb ripens to a full pregnancy, he will devour you, a meal gifted with fatter delight. As to these things it is now your decision, whether you wish to assent to your sisters concerned for your precious safety and live with us delivered from death and secure from danger, or whether you wish to be entombed in the viscera of a most savage beast. But if the sonorous solitude of this country or the fetid and dangerous copulations of clandestine love and the embraces of a poisonous serpent are more to your liking, at least your pious sisters will have done what they could.

Psyche's sisters are consummate liars, authenticating their tale by beginning it with their faux concern for her safety (*pervigili cura rebus tuis excubamus; sociae scilicet doloris casusque tui*), and protesting that they wish they could keep the matter concealed from her (*nec te ... celare possumus*). For good measure, they invent eyewitness accounts of people who have seen her lover returning to their home, mimicking the strategy among historiographers, and likewise invest their tale with an air of authority by using *comperimus*, a word often used to express



certainty of knowledge.<sup>316</sup> Their lies are of course aided by Psyche's inborn *simplicitas*, but like all good liars, they also provide a proof text for their deception with a bit of truth: the prophecy that proclaimed Psyche would marry a beast, unbeknownst to anyone a reference to Cupid. Hence Psyche's naiveté cannot and should not negate what amounts to a sophisticated narrative deceit on the sisters' parts. And so unsurprisingly, Psyche at once believes them, and ultimately will burn her lover Cupid with the hot oil of a lamp she bore to his bedside to learn of his identity, leading to her trials by Venus. But before her trials commence, she gets her revenge on her sisters by telling them equally convincing lies, far more sophisticated than the ones she had unsuccessfully attempted before. Recounting how she had spilled the oil on Cupid, she narrates a slightly different account of how he reacted:

‘Tu quidem’ inquit ‘Ob istud tam dirum facinus confestim toro meo divorte tibi que res tuas habeto,<sup>317</sup> ego vero sororem tuam ‘—et nomen quo tu censeris aiebat—’ lam mihi confestim farreatis nuptiis coniugabo,’ et statim Zephyri praecipit ultra terminos me domus eius efflaret.’ (5.26)

“‘Indeed, you,’ he said, ‘On account of that so dire a crime, immediately take yourself from my bed and take your things with you, but I will yoke your sister’ – and he said the name by which you are called – ‘to myself now immediately with solemn nuptials,’ and immediately he called upon Zephyrus to fly me beyond the walls of his house.”

When Psyche gets to the part of her tale that is fiction, she invests it with high urgency, having the Cupid of her story repeat *confestim* – *immediately* – thrice for emphasis. This is all according to her plan, for the urgency is not lost on her sister, who, while Psyche was still speaking (*necdum sermonem Psyche finierat*), departs, deceives her husband with a lie (*mendacio fallens*

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<sup>316</sup> And often in distinction from uncertainty and rumors: ‘non ego haec’ inquit ‘incertis iactata rumoribus et cupidius credita ... adfero ad vos, patres conscripti, sed conperta et explorata’ (Livy 42.13).

<sup>317</sup> Psyche has gone from an “improbable” description of hunting to now quoting “technical and specifically Roman terminology. *tuas res habeto* was the regular formula for repudiation of a spouse” (Kenney 1990, 178).

*maritum*, 5.27), and then throws herself off the cliff where Zephyr had before conveyed her to Cupid's house (but would not, unbidden, do so this time), plummeting to her death. Psyche follows up this vengeance with another, telling her other sister the exact same lie (ensuring she did not repeat her previous mistake of inconsistency) and getting the same results.

The sisters' demise at the hands of Psyche has caused many scholars a bit of discomfort and *aporia*. I would agree with Walsh that the episode holds a "symbolic import in the context of Psyche's pilgrimage,"<sup>318</sup> but would depart from him on what the import is. For Walsh, Psyche has to dispense with her sisters to continue her Platonic journey toward divinity: "The sisters represent the earthly attachment which are the cause of her fall from grace, and which she must now slough off."<sup>319</sup> Perhaps, but by killing them? And what of Psyche's parents? Both Walsh and Kenney consider the *simplex puella's* behavior here "inconsistent" with her earlier characterization, "a yearning for revenge and a hitherto unknown craftiness."<sup>320</sup> While it is believable that the sisters should "overreach," that "she, however, *simplex et animi tenella*, should suddenly become both vindictive and crafty to this degree is not."<sup>321</sup> Yet I would argue that her journey from naiveté to harsh reality, from gullibility to craftiness, is precisely the same journey witnessed in *Daphnis and Chloe*: that an evolution away from such *simplicitas* is – no matter how implausibly accelerated it occurs in the story – exactly one of the points of growth Apuleius is showing us here, and directly connected with the typical coming-of-age of a novel's young protagonist(s), always ultimately symbolized by their induction into marriage.

Within *simplex* Psyche's journey from mortal to divine, then, rests an equally powerful trajectory from unsophisticated gullibility to crafty sophist. While originally too daft to even remember the first set of lies she made up about her divine husband, a misstep her sisters seize

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<sup>318</sup> Walsh 1970, 208

<sup>319</sup> *Ibid*, 208

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid*, 208; Cf. Kenney 1990, 177

<sup>321</sup> Kenney 1990, 177.

upon to prompt her troubles, her revenge against them not only involves a story that is believable to them and consistent, but also shrewdly takes into account her sisters' enviously devious motivations – motivations to which she was naively blind before. Psyche's primary quest may be that of mortal girl to divine goddess, a path that no doubt mirrors the inward transformations of Lucius himself, but she also at once undergoes maturation away from her trademark *simplicitas* and toward the *calliditas* necessary to take revenge on her scheming sisters and remove them as obstacles toward her heavenly destiny. Psyche thus goes through a psychological transformation similar to the one(s) we saw with Daphnis and Chloe,<sup>322</sup> and her maturation to adulthood is punctuated by deceit in much the same way. For deceit is inextricably linked to sophistication – the sophistication to detect a lie being told, or the sophistication to tell a convincing, plausible lie. And in this way we have found here again, as we have so often throughout this investigation, an analogue to the author's narrative program – a project aimed at creating a convincing, plausible story that will at its best fool its most unsophisticated readers into thinking it is fact, while in the very least aiding its most sophisticated readers in their suspension of disbelief. The preoccupation with credible narration, therefore, even for fictional ends, was not one of the Greek novelists alone. It stretches into the western empire, no doubt fueled in part by the common rhetorical training undergone by the educated Roman and Greek alike. Wherever one stands on the originality of the Roman novel, then, and whether it springs from the Greek romances or is its own genre developed alongside them, it is clear both sets of novels contributed both individually and together as a group to the sorts of fantastical narrations now so prevalent in our own literary worlds.

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<sup>322</sup> Cf. chapter 1.

## Conclusion

Telling stories is perhaps as old as humankind, but though it may seem such today, it was not inevitable that the ancient writers examined here would innovate the sorts of narratives that they did in the early imperial period, laying the groundwork for the most common literary expression known to us today, the modern novel. There were stories before the ancient novels, even written stories, which were understood to be just that – stories from the minds of their creators. But in casting their narratives in prose, and in mimicking the strategies of historiography, even for fantastical ends, the ancient novelists set about on a somewhat newer project: that of telling their stories in a way that would make them the most believable, that would make their readers more fully invested in the suspended disbelief that the digestion of all good fiction requires.

When most of us are initially introduced to books, one of the first things we are taught is the distinction between fiction and non-fiction. Often this distinction is explained rather succinctly by a grammar school librarian, no doubt overworked and overwhelmed by children, who can therefore perhaps be excused for her somewhat flippant and categorical literary fail: “non-fiction is true, while fiction is not true.”

Of course, well-written fiction, full of pathos and intrigue, can be just as true as a handbook of facts. But the overarching requirement for this to ring true is the story’s believability. Without believability, even amid a fantastic, impossible premise, readers are unable to relate to the story at all, and its function as fiction becomes limited. Believability and credibility, then, were two of the birth pangs of prose fiction, and two indispensable parts of enjoying fictional literary forms that we today take for granted. Without believability and credibility in narrative, suspension of disbelief is difficult (try reading bad fiction if you doubt this is true), and rather than being transported to and subsumed within another world, one finds

oneself continually and consciously aware that one is reading someone's (badly) made-up story, centering on superficial characters in whom one has no emotional investment. To make a story believable, and to make its characters credible, and to make the reader care about what happens to them and believe enough in their travails so as to keep reading – this was the novel project, the new, groundbreaking goal, of the ancient writers of prose fiction.

So how does one go about this? Initially, the ancient novelists simply wrote their stories in the manner of histories, peppering their narratives with historical places and people so as to leave their readers unsure of the story's fictional or factual parts. As we have seen, boundaries existed between history and fiction among the learned elite, but these boundaries were not always appreciated by the readers of ancient fiction – even intelligent, learned readers like St. Augustine.<sup>323</sup> Augustine and others exemplified this seemingly paradoxical (to us) attitude toward fiction in the ancient world – the paradox of at once recognizing that it is *ficta* (literally “made up”) and yet often so believable as to be taken as *facta* – things that actually happened. Yet why would Augustine at once recognize that plays, mimes, and poems are “full of lies” but not deceptive because they are *not meant* to deceive, while not apparently having such a conviction about Apuleius' fantastical tale?<sup>324</sup> The answer lies in the genre's format: plays and mimes were performed on stage, the former in verse, and poems were also in verse (and also likely performed). But however one digested the ancient novel – whether reading it to oneself or hearing it read – it was not written in verse. It was not (for the most part) poetry, which would be typically recognized as literary. Instead, the novel was written in prose, a format up until now reserved for philosophy, rhetoric, and especially history – not “stories” or fables or tales. Again, this is where ancient understandings of fiction depart (usually) from ours: it was a new thing to read an “untrue” story in prose. For modern analogies, we have examined the

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<sup>323</sup> Cf. pp. 188-189.

<sup>324</sup> Cf. pp. 8-9, 188-189.

mockumentaries that present fictional movies or shows in the format of documentaries. This is now so common, with comedies such as *The Office* or *Modern Family*, that it is easy to forget that such a format has really only been in vogue for the past 15 years or so. Yet as we have seen, when *The Blair Witch Project* opened in 1999, thousands of viewers sharing their experiences of the film were convinced it was real footage of real people who had died in the woods, despite being just another movie with actors. We less often find people mistaking written fiction for fact, though one only need tally up the number of non-fiction books devoted to exposing the historical fallacies of Dan Brown's *Da Vinci Code* to realize we are not ourselves immune to deceptive fancies.

Regardless, in both ancient and modern fiction, the authors are engaging in a rhetorical exercise undeniably akin to lying: an attempt to make the unreal as real as possible; an attempt to make perhaps even the most sophisticated adult gain concern and investment in the plausible experiences of people and stories that do not in the most rigid sense exist. The ease with which a reader is able to suspend disbelief is in fact the true measuring stick of good fiction, no matter the genre, and the ancient novelists, with their various attempts at creating plausible, believable narratives out of the stories they invented, were among the first to hone and sharpen those skills, which still hold us in thrall today.

As we have seen, this process evolved over centuries. The novelists began this project by crafting more or less "realistic" narratives with few appeals to the supernatural and with generous amounts of history to give their stories a veneer of fact. But ever present in these novels is the specter of deceit, as characters make up stories to deceive one another. In Chariton's *Callirhoe*, our earliest Greek novel, we get just that: eight books of the adventures of Chaereas and Callirhoe told by an omniscient narrator who makes us privy to the machinations and deceptions of his poor characters, who are oblivious to it all and helpless to find their happy

ending until said narrator finally relents and gives it to them. A century later, Achilles Tatius takes the same formula – boy meets girl, they experience a series of adventures amid their separation, both are deceived as to the whereabouts and fidelity of each other – but with a major twist that is now so commonplace as to be underappreciated: he hands the story over to one of the characters, his protagonist Cleitophon, and has *him* narrate the tale in the first person. Hence the deceptions aimed at his character become *our* deceptions as well, until the truth is eventually revealed to him sometime later.

And by the time antiquity and the ancient novel were coming to a close, the last extant novelist we have, Heliodorus, had taken the project one step further. Returning to the third person, he nonetheless refuses to be our omniscient guide, and hence the characters do, in fact, end up telling their own stories. To make matters even more complicated, Heliodorus also refuses to give us a straight, chronological narrative. Instead, he starts the story right in the middle of things – a shipwreck with a host of slaughtered bodies, a woman with a bow and arrow looking sadly around her, spied by another group of men who don't even speak her language. Heliodorus is thus all but modern in his slow release of information, and in the character-building narratives that help us piece together the backstories of the characters we love over long periods of time, enriching them as we go. And even amid Heliodorus' globe-spanning tale, with its incredible twists and turns and a supernatural purity test as one of its crowning episodes, the characters he builds are credible and believable, as they must be.

That we should be talking about believability, even credibility, with respect to the romances is perhaps puzzling at first glance. The ancient novels, like the pulp fiction of today, are often unbelievable in their turns of fate, or in their idealistic assurances that the heroes will turn out fine, or that evil will lose. Yet such a structure appears to be engrained in our souls, and as such we return to hear variations on the romance time and again. It stands to reason, then, that

with each new visit, the author must strive to present it afresh, or his characters will be lost, or canceled, or denied publication, bereft of reader sympathy. Though many today prefer their stories to have a dose of realism, the fantastic, incarnated especially in today's fantasy and science fiction, continues to draw us. As Oscar Wilde quipped a century ago, "M. Zola sits down to give us a picture of the Second Empire. Who cares for the Second Empire now? It is out of date. Life goes faster than Realism, but Romanticism is always in front of life."<sup>325</sup>

For Northrop Frye, the romance is a form of "secular scripture," its formulae so deeply embedded within us that we intuitively know we are reading or watching the same tales over and again, but they nonetheless have authority and cultural currency – operating separately from sacred myth only by the lack of authoritarian support. More directly related to our study, Frye also contends that romance – this idealistic genre our writers formed from the stern roots of ancient prose – is at the heart of all fiction:

Romance is the structural core of all fiction: being directly descended from folktale, it brings us closer than any other aspect of literature to the sense of fiction, considered as a whole, as the epic of the creature, man's vision of his own life as a quest.<sup>326</sup>

The study of the roots of fiction, then, is a viable study of the human condition, so eager to experience by proxy the same anxieties and hopes about life's turns as have accompanied us from the beginning. "The improbable, desiring, erotic, and violent world of romance," Frye continues, "reminds us that we are not awake when we have abolished the dream world: we are awake only when we have absorbed it again."<sup>327</sup>

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<sup>325</sup> 1909, 62

<sup>326</sup> Frye 1976, 15

<sup>327</sup> *Ibid*, 61



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