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Lucian’s Paradoxa: Fiction, Aesthetics, and Identity

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Abstract

This dissertation represents a novel approach to the Lucianic corpus and studies paradox, with rhetorical, philosophical, and aesthetic implications, as Lucian’s distinctive discursive mode of constructing cultural identity and literary innovation. While criticizing paradoxography - the literature of wonders - as true discourse, Lucian creates a novel, avowed false, discourse, as a form of contemplation and regeneration of the Greek literary tradition.

Paradoxography is Lucian’s favorite self-referential discourse in prolaliai, rhetorical introductions, where he strives to earn doxa through paradox - paradigms of exoticism applied to both author and work. Lucian elevates paradox from exotic to aesthetic, from hybrid novelty to astonishing beauty, expecting his audience to sublimate the experience of ekplexis from bewilderment to aesthetic pleasure.

Lucian’s construction of cultural identity, as an issue of tension between Greek and barbarian and between birthright and paideutic conquest, is predicated on paradoxology, a first-personal discourse based on rhetorical and philosophical paradox. While the biography of the author insinuates itself into the biography of the speaker, Lucian creates tension between macro-text and micro-text. Thus, the text becomes also its opposite and its reading represents almost an aporetic experience.
To my family for their love, sacrifices, and prayers

and

to the memory of Ion Popescu, Doina Tatiana Mănoiu, and Nicolae Catrina
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Introduction

1. Paradox

A study on Lucian’s treatment of paradox (τὸ παράδοξον) entails the analysis of two distinct discursive modes: ‘paradoxography’, the speech on paradoxa as marvels (θαύματα), and what this study will term ‘paradoxology’, the speech in paradoxa as rhetorico-philosophical instruments. Lucian uses paradoxographical discourse to criticize the literature on marvels and its claim to truth, while displaying his own form of paradoxography as avowed false discourse. At the same time, paradoxography becomes Lucian’s favorite self-referential discourse, using paradoxa as enargetic paradigms of cultural exoticism and aesthetic excellence. Paradoxology, on the other hand, built on rhetorical and philosophical paradoxa, is a constantly startling and deceiving discursive mode of constructing and deconstructing ideas and identities, creating a dense text, particularly resistant to interpretation.

What exactly is paradox for Lucian? What does paradox mean in ancient terms? In The Rhetorician the teacher of rhetoric promises a young interlocutor or addressee to show him a short path to becoming a rhetor in no time. The subtle ironical undertones of this piece cannot, however, wipe out entirely the shock a startled reader experiences throughout at least its first few passages, until finally grasping the meaning hidden in this paradox.¹ As often Lucian vividly illustrates statements and situations with anecdotes, many of Hellenistic inspiration, in The Rhetorician he uses as exemplum a Sidonian merchant who promised to show Alexander a much

¹ Pernot 1993, 533 finds features of a paradoxical encomium in Luc. Rhet.praec.
shorter route from Persia to Egypt, through the mountains. After confirming the existence of such path (καὶ εἰχὲν οὐτω), the teacher of rhetoric continues: “Except that Alexander did not believe it (οὐκ ἔπιστευσεν), but thought that the merchant was a charlatan (γόητα). Thus, the paradoxical character (τὸ ποράδοξον) of a promise seems incredible to many (ἀπιστον δοκεῖ τοῖς πολλοῖς). However, this should not be the case with you. For you will know, through your own experience (πειρώμενος), that nothing will prevent you from being considered a rhetor (ῥήτορα δοκεῖν) in one single – and not even entire – day, by flying over the mountain from Persia to Egypt” (5-6).

A few general aspects of the term ‘paradox’ are revealed in this passage. First, paradox is always circumscribed by the general opinion (δοκεῖ τοῖς πολλοῖς). It is coupled with lack of credence (οὐκ ἔπιστευσεν, ἀπιστον) and with magic tricks and deceit (γόητα). Yet it does not necessarily mean that something paradoxical, however unbelievable, cannot exist (καὶ εἰχὲν οὐτω) or be experienced (πειρώμενος) – although this argument is subject to interpretation, given the paradoxical context of the advice. Paradox is, therefore, fundamentally a matter of opposition to the opinion and the expectation of the many, and thus creates shock and disbelief.

In the Suda, ποράδοξον is defined, as well as in other lexica, as unexpected (ἀπροσδόκητον) and marvelous (θαυμαστόν), while the phrase παρὰ δόξαν means contrary to expectation (παρὰ προσδόκιαν, παρ᾽ ἐλπίδα), a sense that is obviously transferred to the substantive adjective as its primary meaning (παρὰ προσδόκιαν – ἀπροσδόκητον). On the other hand, different grammatical forms of ποράδοξον are used in the Suda either in definitions of other terms, or – within these definitions – in association with others, as partial or absolute synonyms. ‘Paradox’, ‘paradoxical’, ‘paradoxically’ are therefore associated with terms meaning

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2 Hesych. Lex. π 493 (cf. π 514); Phot. Lex. π 383.10, 386.18; Ps.-Zonaras Lex. π 1513.25; Lex. Seg. Bekker 289.2.
3 Hesych. Lex. π 492.
new and strange (ξένον, ἄτοπον, νεοχυμός, νέος, καινῶς, ἄτοπιας πλέων),
4 magical (μάγγανον, γοητεία, μαγγανεία),
5 contrary to the general opinion and therefore unexpected (ἀδοξότατα, παράλογον, ἀνέλπιστον, ἄλογον),
6 monstrous (τερατώδης),
7 marvelous (θαυμάσιον, δαιμονίως, ύπερφυῶς, θαυμαστά, θαύμα), frightening (φοβερός), rare (σπανίων), different (κατὰ ἄλλου τρόπου), un holy and unlawful (ἀνόσιον, παράνομον),
8 and thus morally bad (κακόν, μοχθηρόν).
10 Paradoxology too is linked with reports of marvels or falsehood (τερατεία, τερατολογία, ψευδολογία) and, by conjecture, with disbelief: τερατολογεῖν means “to tell things that are incredible and beyond human nature” (τὸ ἀπίθανα διηγεῖσθαι, καὶ λέγειν πράγματα ἔξω τῶν ἀνθρωπίνων).
12 The effect of paradox is recorded as ekplexis, astonishment (ἐκπλαγεῖς, ἐκπληξέως πλέοι).
13 Contrary to the general opinion, paradox does not, however, equal impossibility. The entry for ἀδοξότατα in the Suda is, in fact, an approximate quotation from Alexander of Aphrodisias’ commentary on Aristotle’s Topica: ἀδοξότατα are “paradoxical (παράδοξα), impossible things (ἀδύνατα) in Aristotle; paradoxical things are opposed to things approved by the general opinion (τὰ τοῖς ἐνδόξοις ἔναντία), yet they are not quite entirely impossible (οὐ

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5 Hesych. Lex. τ 509; Phot. Lex. μ 240; Etym. magn. 359.36; Ps.-Zonaras Lex. π 1510; Lex. Seg. Bachmann 294.3.
6 Ael. Dion. π 16; Phryn. Praep. soph. 79; Hesych. Lex. α 1169, π 494 (cf. π 514); Phot. Lex. α 379, π 386.17-20; Ps.-Zonaras Lex. ε 855.8; Lex. Seg. Bachmann 31.15, 229.15, 392.12.
7 Phot. Lex. τ 578.5; Lex. Seg. Bachmann 384.21.
8 Ps.-Zonaras Lex. ε 652, ε 785.11-12.
9 Ps.-Zonaras Lex. θ 1036.7-8.
12 Phot. Lex. τ 578.1-3; Etym. magn. 752.24-26; Ps.-Zonaras Lex. δ 474.4.
13 It is documented with an approximate quotation from Polybius, 1.76.7: ἐκπλαγεῖς δὲ γενόμενοι οἱ Λίβιες διὰ τὸ παράδοξον.
Aristotle’s definition of a paradoxical thesis as:

a paradoxical assumption (ὑπόληψις παράδοξος) of a distinguished philosopher – such as that contradiction is impossible, as Antisthenes said, or that everything is in motion, according to Heraclitus, or that being is one, as Melissus says – for it would be silly to pay attention to a nobody who happens to say things that are opposite to the general opinions (ἐναντία ταῖς δόξαις); or, it could be an opinion for which we have a reasoned argument that contradicts the general opinion (λόγον ἔχομεν ἐναντίον ταῖς δόξαις) – such as the sophists’ tenet that not everything that is has come to be or is eternal [...]; even if one does not agree with such theses, he might accept them because of their reasoned argument (εἰ καὶ τινὶ μὴ δοκεῖ, δόξειεν ἄν διὰ τὸ λόγον ἔχειν).

Paradox, as opposition to ἐνδοξος and δόξα, the general opinion, becomes an established mode of expression for philosophy, and in dialectics it leads to aporia. Among the pre-Socratics, especially Heraclitus formulates philosophical theses as paradoxa. Paradox is almost monopolized by the Stoics, whose paradoxa are defined by Cicero as “admirabilia contraque opinionem omnium” (Paradoxa Stoicorum 1.4). According to the Stoic Cleanthes, philosophers may say things that are contrary to the general opinion (παράδοξα), yet not contrary to reason (οὐ μὴν παράλογα). This is a reiteration of the idea that paradoxa as a mode of philosophical discourse may be reasonable, as Aristotle claims (λόγον ἔχειν), and thus possible, as Alexander

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14 A rhetorical distinction between παράδοξος and ἐνδοξος appears in Rhetorica ad Alexandrum, attributed to Anaximenes of Lampsacus (Ars rhetorica), in the classification of maxims (11.1-2).
16 See Arist. Top. 104a-b; Eth. Nic. 1146a 21-24; Soph. el. passim. For strange and unexpected topics in philosophy that find their way into rhetoric also, see Isoc. Hel. 1-15. For more on philosophical paradox see Reschen 2001; Olin 2003.
17 Arr. Epict. diss. 4.1.173. Cf. Gnomologium Vaticanum, Sternbach 295: “The philosopher Zeno, when some people said that he was uttering paradoxical things (παράδοξα), answered: “yet not unlawful” (άλλ’ οὐ παράνομα)".
concludes (οὐ πάντως ἀδύνατα). Lucian’s teacher of rhetoric, in the passage from *The Rhetorician* discussed above, only puts a different spin on these old ideas.

In rhetoric, Aristotle considers paradox a *topos* of demonstrative enthymemes. It results from the “hypocritical deception”\(^\text{18}\) of an opponent whose secret wishes are different from his public statements. When confronted with either by inferring their opposite, he ends up in self-contradiction and paradox.\(^\text{19}\) Paradox is a feature of the urban style (τὰ ἀστεία), when witty, clever thoughts are expressed through metaphors and surprise, literally *deceit beforehand* (διὰ μεταφοράς καὶ ἐκ τοῦ προεξάπατᾶν), i.e. creating a false expectation and then undercutting it. Metaphors, apophthegms, riddles, jokes based on comic alteration of words, puns, and so forth, are ἀστεία because they involve a paradox (γίγνεται δὲ ὅταν παράδοξον ὑπελαβεῖ). They are based on the discrepancy between what is said and what is meant (μὴ ὁ φησὶ λέγειν, οὐχ ὁ λέγει λέγειν, ἄλλο γὰρ λέγει), on the use of novelties (τὸ καὶ ἥν λέγειν, a phrase attributed to Theodorus of Byzantium), or on the deceit of expectations just created (παρὰ τὸ ἐναντίως ἔχειν, ἔξαπατᾶ, οὐ ὃσπερ ὁ ἀκοῦσθαι ὑπέλαβεν). When grasping the clever thought beneath the elegant expression, the listener is startled to discover the opposite of his misled expectation (παρὰ τὸ ἐναντίως ἔχειν) and “his mind seems to say: *how true! I was wrong!*”\(^\text{20}\) Paradox – as ἀπροσδόκητον, παρὰ προσδοκιάν, παρ’ ἐλπίδα – is thus also a source of the comic, when the audience is startled by the unexpected.

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18 Kennedy 2007, 179.
19 Arist. *Rh.* 1399a 30-34: “since men do not praise the same things both publicly and secretly, but publicly they mostly praise things that are just and noble, while secretly they prefer things that are profitable, another topos is to try to infer the opposite from each of these situations (ἐκ τούτων πειράσθαι συνάγειν βάτερον); and this is the most important topos in dealing with paradoxes (τῶν γὰρ παράδοξων οὗτος ὁ τόπος κυριώτατος ἐστιν).” Cf. Arist. *Soph.el.* 172b 36-173a 6; Romo Feito 1995, 41-60.
Dionysius of Halicarnassus frequently emphasizes the value of paradox as a figure of thought in rhetorical *inventio* (ἐὕρεσις). He praises Thucydides’ invention in speeches, with its endless flow of new and paradoxical ideas and arguments (ξένων καὶ παραδόξων)\(^{21}\), as well as Demosthenes’ imitation of the historian in this aspect (ἐκ παραδόξου τὰ ἐνθυμήματα)\(^{22}\). Dinarchus, on the other hand, seems to fall short of these qualities, since, unlike Demosthenes, he avoids new and paradoxical arguments (τῶ ἀμφίδοξα καὶ παράδοξα λοιμβάνειν) and prefers those that are obvious and common and indisputable (φανερὰ καὶ ἐν τῷ μέσῳ κειμένα)\(^{23}\). Dionysius admires also Lysias’ cleverness of invention (τὴν δεινήτητα τῆς εὐρέσεως) especially in difficult speeches, lacking direct evidence or composed on paradoxical subject matters (οἱ περὶ τὰς παραδόξους συνταχθέντες ύποθέσεις). Thus, just as the sophists make the weaker argument the stronger, Lysias makes easy and possible (εὐπορα καὶ δυνατά) cases that to others seem hopeless and impossible (ἄπορα καὶ ἀδύνατα)\(^{24}\).

In terms of subject matters, paradox is associated by Dionysius with small and difficult topics (μικρὰ καὶ παράδοξα καὶ ἄπορα), as opposed to those dignified, great, and therefore simple and straightforward (σεμνὰ καὶ μεγάλα καὶ εὐπορα).\(^{25}\) This is, however, a different equation from that which Isocrates had presented in his *Helen*. For him, the composition of serious and dignified subject matters is definitely more difficult than that of a strange and paradoxical topic (ὑπόθεσιν ἄτοπον καὶ παράδοξον, 1.1). Isocrates goes even further by associating paradox with falsehood (ψευδὴ μηχανήσασθαι λόγον, 4.3), jest and joke.

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\(^{25}\) Dion. Hal. *Lys.* 16.9-11. Menander Rhetor classifies the encomia into ἐνδοξα, ἀδοξα, ἀμφίδοξα, παράδοξα (Men. Rhet. 346). Cf. the *genera causarum* in Latin rhetoric; *honestum*, *turpe*, *dubium*, *humile* (Rhet. ad Her. 1.3.5); *honestum*, *admirabile*, *humile*, *anceps*, *obscurn* (Cic. *Inv.* 1.15.20); *honestum/endoxos*, *humile/adoxos*, *dubium/anceps/amphidoxos/, *admirabile/paradoxos*, *obscurn/dysparakoloutheton* (Quint. *Inst.* 4.140).
(σκώπτειν, παίζειν), as opposed to dignity and seriousness (σεμνώνεσθαι, σπουδάζειν), yet he admits that small and insignificant topics, unlike the orthodox ones (τῶν δόξαν ἐχόντων), open the road to originality (ἁπαν ἰδιόν ἔστιν).

This strong difference of opinion is probably due to the fact that, unlike Dionysius, Isocrates speaks only of some epideictic pieces, specifically of the paradoxical encomia, criticizing their absolute lack of common practical and didactical usefulness.

For Dionysius of Halicarnassus, the difficulty of paradox lies not only with the rhetor’s performance, but also with the audience’s ability to understand it. He mentions a style that is very dense, bold, composed with brevity, intricate and paradoxical (ἐκ παράδοξου) that is “understood neither by everyone, nor easily”. Anaximenes of Lampscus had actually prescribed further explanations in a paradoxical maxim (γνώμη), to anticipate a difficult reception: “whenever you say something generally approved (ἐνδοξον), there is no need to explain your reasons; for what you say is neither unknown, nor unbelievable (οὔτε γάρ ἂγνοεῖται οὔτε ἀπιστεῖται); but whenever you say something paradoxical (παράδοξον), you need to briefly indicate your reasons, in order to avoid being overly subtle or disbelieved” (ἳνα τὴν ἀδολεσχίαν καὶ τὴν ἀπιστίαν διαφύγῃ, Ars rhetorica 11.1-2). The same idea appears in Aristotle’s discussion on paradoxical maxims (ὁσα παράδοξον τι λέγουσιν), which need some sort of explanation or supplement. The audience is able to perceive the cleverness of style only if they understand the context of the paradox.

Finally, paradox is in rhetoric a source of pathos. According to Dionysius, rhetoricians recommend that the rhetor say amazing and unexpected things (θαυμαστά καὶ παράδοξα) in

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26 Isocr. Hel. 13.
28 Arist. Rh. 1394b 7-10.
29 Arist. Rh. 1412a 34-b 4.
captatio benevolentiae and beg the judges to listen.\textsuperscript{30} For Aristotle, on the other hand, it is paradox in encomia, as an unexpected subject of praise (περὶ παράδοξου λόγος), that needs to borrow pathos from the forensic exordia.\textsuperscript{31}

As we have seen, the rhetorical paradox can be unexpected, deceiving, witty, new, funny, contradictory, subtle, difficult, demanding, and even low key and useless. Paradox can also have a divine dimension (πρὸς ἡμᾶς δαιμονιωτέρου), signaling greatness and beauty (τὸ περὶ τῶν ἐν πᾶσι καὶ μέγα καὶ καλὸν), regardless of uselessness, which is always the object of indefatigable passion (ἀμαρχόν ἐρωτα), admiration, amazement, wonder and awe (θαυμάζομεν, ἐκπληττόμεθα, ἀξιοθαυμαστότερον νομίζομεν): “the paradoxical is always wonderful” (θαυμαστὸν δ’ ὀμως ἀεὶ τὸ παράδοξον, \textit{On the sublime} 35).

It is probably this wondrous dimension of paradox, which always incited human curiosity, that insinuated itself into historiography and then became the focus of a new type of literature – paradoxography. Stories of wonders go as far back as the \textit{Odyssey}. Herodotus, although he never uses the term παράδοξον, but rather θώμα (Ionic for θαῦμα), inserts many wonders in his \textit{Histories}, and historians after him follow the same path. Hecataeus of Abdera explains that the purpose of this tendency in historiography, the preference for paradoxology and fabrication of myths (τὸ παραδοξολογεῖν καὶ μύθους πλάττειν) to the detriment of truth (προκρίναντες τῆς ἀληθείας), is the seduction of the reader (ψυχαγωγίας ἐνεκα).\textsuperscript{32}

Under the influence of this development in historiography, but also of peripatetic scientific works, the Hellenistic period saw the birth of paradoxography, of collections of wonders. A newly developed taste and an unquenchable curiosity for what lies beyond human understanding feed this new culture of \textit{paradoxa} that survives though ages of change and

\textsuperscript{31} Arist. \textit{Rh.} 1415a 1-3.
\textsuperscript{32} \textit{FGrH} 264 F 25. 993-997.
undergoes a revival in Lucian’s time. Paradoxographical anecdotes constitute a frequent discursive mode in the ‘Second Sophistic’. The Greek novel uses abundant paradoxographical material. Collections of marvels in the paradoxographical vain continue to be produced (Phlegon of Tralles, Claudius Aelianus, etc.).

Terms like παράδοξον, θαύμα, τέρας, ίδιος, ξένος, τερατώδης, and ἄπιστος are keywords that define the paradox. These terms, as well as paradoxographical hypotext in general, are frequent in Lucian. They sustain Lucian’s criticism of paradoxography as true discourse. Lucian invests the paradoxographical material with new aesthetic values, as he uses it to express his literary novelty and its aesthetic validity. He also uses the dialectical paradox as a mode of refutation and self-refutation to translate the tensions of the cultural milieu in which he attempts to establish himself. Both author and work present themselves as paradoxa and aim to astonish not only through one’s ethnic and the other’s generic exoticism, but also though one’s artistry and the other’s beauty.\(^{33}\)

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\(^{33}\) Cf. Giannini’s classification of marvels: (1963, 249-251): naturale = of φύσις, esotico = of νόμος, divino = of μύθος, fiabesco = of μυθολογία, fantastico = of πλάσμα, and estetico = of τέχνη or εἴδος.
2. Sophistry and Paradox

Paradox, as novelty and unorthodoxy, is a distinguished feature of the first sophists.\(^{34}\) Isocrates in his *Helen* criticizes the strange and paradoxical topics (ὑπόθεσιν ἀτομον καὶ παράδοξον) that, from the area of philosophy, had recently (νεωστὶ) penetrated rhetoric through the sophists (1-2). He acknowledges that novelty of invention (ἐπὶ τῇ καινότητι τῶν εὐρημένων) has nevertheless a strong influence on young disciples whose inclination towards the extraordinary and the astonishing (πρὸς τὰς περιπτώσεις καὶ τὰς θαυμάτωσις) is exploited by the sophists, to the detriment of what is true and useful (6-8). Isocrates finds the source for the development of this tendency in the professional weakness (διὰ ἁσθένειαν, 10) of such rhetors and in the facile nature of such topics: “for there is one single road (μία τις ὀδὸς) for such compositions, which is not difficult either to find (εὑρεῖν), or to learn (μαθεῖν), or to imitate (μιμήσασθαι)” (11).

Paradox, for the first sophists, is manifest in the new focus of literature, this time, on rhetoric, with persuasion and *epideixis* as its primary goals, but in the detriment of common usefulness. It is evident in their intention to make the weaker argument the stronger,\(^{35}\) in their practice of exploiting relativism in both defending and accusing the same position,\(^{36}\) and in stunning statements, such as Protagoras’ agnosticism,\(^{37}\) Prodicus’ rationalization of the worship

\(^{34}\) Cf. Gagarin 2002, 17 (in a subchapter entitled *Paradox and Play*): “The innovative, experimental nature of sophistic activity commonly found expression in challenges to traditional ways of thinking. Sophists favored challenges that were provocative, often to the point of shocking, and paradoxical.”

\(^{35}\) Traditionally attributed to Protagoras; cf. *Pl. Phaedr.* 267 a-b (τά ... μικρά μεγάλα καὶ μεγάλα συμφαίνεσθαι ποιοῦσιν διὰ ῥωμὴν λόγου, καὶ τά τε ἀρχαῖα τά τε ἐναντία καινῶς); *Arist. Rh.* 1402a 23.

\(^{36}\) Protagoras’ *Antilogies* (cf. *Diog. Laert.* 9.51 = DK 80 B 6a: “and he was the first to say that, on every matter, there are two arguments, opposite to one another; and he used them in his argumentation, being the first to practice this” — καὶ πρῶτος ἐφ’ ἄνω λόγους εἶναι περὶ πάντος πράγματος ἀντικειμένους ἄλληλοις· ὃς καὶ συνηρώτα, πρῶτος τούτῳ πράξας), Antiphon’s *Tetralogies*, the *Dissoi logoi*.

\(^{37}\) *Diog. Laert.* 9.51 = 80 B 4 DK.
of gods, Thrasymachus’ views on justice and injustice, Gorgias’ claim that nothing exists. Cratylus, as a disciple of Heraclitus, the master of formal and logical paradox, did not fall short of his teacher. Language and style took a different turn, especially through Gorgias. Theodorus of Byzantium was preoccupied, according to Aristotle, with the use of paradox (τὸ καὶ τὰ λέγειν). This may be the reason why Plato, through the mouth of Socrates, calls Theodorus “cunning in words” (λογοδαίδαλος). The sophists’ predilection for paradox appears also in their choice of topics, mostly in the paradoxical encomia. Although its origin is unclear, the earliest known examples are Gorgias’ *Encomium of Helen* and *Defense of Palamedes* (in spite of its apologetic form).

His disciples, Alcidamas and Polycrates, continued the practice, the former with encomia of the courtesan Nais and of death, the later of Busiris, of Clytaemestra, of mice, of pots and pebbles. Isocrates did the same in his *Busiris* and *Encomium of Helen*, in spite of his obvert criticism of the genre.

The ‘Second Sophistic’ embraced the inclination to paradox of the first sophists, although often in different ways. The tendency for archaism of language, style, subject matter, and

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38 Sext. Emp. *Math.* 9.18 = 84 B 5 DK.
39 Cf. Pl. *Resp.* 1. 338c and especially 344c: “injustice, when sufficient, has more strength, freedom and mastery than justice” (καὶ ἱσχυρότερον καὶ ἐλευθερώτερον καὶ δεσποτικώτερον ἀδικία δικαιοσύνης ἐστὶν ἰκανῶς γίγνομεν).
40 Sext. Emp. *Math.* 7.65 = 82 B3 DK.
42 Philostratus says that the sophistic manner of speaking paradoxically (παραδεξολογίας) started with Gorgias (VS 492) and that also Critias’ manner of arguing and speaking was paradoxical (παραδεξος, VS 503).
treatment, seen “as a flight from the present”, and the “re-creation of the past”, speak not only of a culture that keeps up with long established canons, but also of a self-claimed anachronistic culture. Rhetoric is channeled towards *epideixis* as its sole purpose, emphasizing the importance of the self, or rather of the display of the self. The bent for ‘paradox and play’ is concretized in the ‘adoxographical’ works, such as the paradoxical encomium, inherited from the first sophists, the *lalia* and *prolalia*, both typical creations of the ‘Second Sophistic’, and other “generically innovative literary products”, such as Lucian’s satirical dialogue, the sophistic novel, and the “art of the miniature” seen in the production of mini-dialogues, epistolography, ekphraseis, and the already mentioned *prolaliai*.

Graham Anderson makes a short inventory of the use of paradox by the authors of the ‘Second Sophistic’ in their attitude toward the literary tradition. Such practice can be detected in their attitude towards Homer, in their misuse of Homeric quotations and paraphrases, in “manipulating the clichés of his biography”, in exploiting his contradictions, in exaggerating the meaning of certain passages, and especially in calling him a *ψεῦδης*. *Symposium*, an established form of philosophical literature, is turned into an “ultimate development of paradox and *paideia*”. The cult of the past has also a playful and paradoxical side, especially in the

52 Cf. Pernot 1993, 532 : “Cette notion de jeu tient un rôle capital dans deux formes oratoires [...] l’éloge paradoxal et la *lalia* ou *prolalia*. Là, les exigences de justice et de vérité sont simplement mises entre parenthèses, pour le plus grand plaisir de l’auditoire, si bien que l’esprit sophistique triomphe impunément.” And again: “*Lalia* et *prolalia* manifestent autant d’esprit sophistique que l’éloge paradoxal; mais, à la différence de ce dernier, ce sont des créations de la Seconde Sophistique. [...] Leur caractéristique commune, qui les distingue en principe de tous les autres discours, est d’être bêtes, plaisantes, informelles.” (546). For a complete list of paradoxical encomia, *laliai*, and *prolaliai* in the Second Sophistic, see Pernot 1993, 533-535, 555-557, and 547-554, respectively.
53 Whitmarsh 2001, 75; see his whole discussion of the Second Sophistic and the “crisis of posterity” in 41-89.
54 Anderson 1993, 190-196.
56 Anderson 1993, 175.
57 For a detailed discussion of Lucian’s use of Homer see Bouquiaux-Simon 1968, esp. 358-365.
58 Anderson 1993, 176.
propensity for trivial anecdotes and the abuse of canonized heroes like Alexander the Great. Courtesans, parasites, and speaking animals are the utterers of “paradoxical paideia”\(^\text{59}\).\(^\text{59}\) And finally the taste for phantasia and exoticism are also elements of the innovative approach of the ‘Second Sophistic’ on literature and rhetoric.

The newly developed taste of the audience and the competitiveness of the ‘Second Sophistic’ required innovation and exoticism, yet carefully blended with tradition and familiarity.\(^\text{60}\) Tradition, of course, – whether used or abused – plays an important role in the ‘Second Sophistic’,\(^\text{61}\) which thus becomes a “central medium for second-century Greek culture’s self-examination”,\(^\text{62}\) and is characterized synthetically in oxymoronic, paradoxical phrases as “at once conservative and radical, traditional and innovative, centripetal and centrifugal.”\(^\text{63}\)

\(^{59}\) Anderson 1993, 183-188. See also 197 for the discussion of Lucian’s Charon as “an expert in Homeric recitation” (in Charon sive Contemplantes).

\(^{60}\) Whitmarsh 2005, 35, 87.

\(^{61}\) Bompaire 1958 made a tour de force case for the role of mimesis in Lucian’s work.

\(^{62}\) Whitmarsh 2005, 22.

\(^{63}\) Whitmarsh 2005, 3.
3. Lucian’s Claim to Paradox

As either an “Improper Sophist” (Hall) or “the most original among the sophists” (McCarthy), Lucian shows an even greater inclination to paradox than the average. It is not just obvious in all his literary production (‘adoxographical’ works, genre innovation and crossing, etc.), but it is a constant, loud, and confident claim.

*Literal Prometheus* is a programmatic text in which Lucian uses paradoxographical imagery and vocabulary to define and defend his literary innovation, and to ensure its proper reception. Traditionally, Prometheus is the molder and creator of humans and, as such, he becomes an honorable comparison for plastic artists. Here, Lucian extends this comparison, which he interprets as criticism, rather than as praise, to the epideictic rhetor, a creator of *logos*. Yet he claims, right from the beginning, that he too, just like Prometheus, is a worker in clay (πηλοπλάθος), and keeps playing with this metaphor throughout the text, as well as with πλάσμα, another derivative of πλάσσειν. Both πλάσμα and πλάσσειν are associated in sophistic rhetoric with fiction and *pseudos*, and Lucian plays with crossing undetected from the concrete to the abstract.

The real reason for the comparison – Lucian’s literary innovation, the comic dialogue – is intentionally delayed, by examination and exclusion of other possibilities. It is finally introduced

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64 Hall 1981, 6; McCarthy 1934, 55; Cf. Anderson 1982 (“in an age obsessed with *doxa*, most of [Lucian’s] output verges on ‘adoxography’ – the elevation of the undignified just for the fun of it”, 63; “a professor of *pseudos*, paradox and parody”, 91); Schmitz 2004, 103 (“somehow on the fringe of the sophistic movement”; “[Lucian’s an Alciphron’s] marginal position gave them distance for reflecting on the culture they were living in, instead of blindly adopting its values”).


66 Apollod. 1.45; Paus. 10.4.3; Ael. NA 1.53; Pl. *Prot.* 320e; cf. Erinna, G-P 3, Antipater of Sidon, *AP* 9.724.


as an explanation offered by yet another (potential) receptor. Lucian’s novelty is represented here by the *mixis* of dialogue and comedy. This a simpler definition of the comic dialogue than in *The Double Indictment*, where the complete list of ‘ingredients’ includes also jest, satire, cynic diatribe, and Menippean satire (33). The reduction of the newly invented genre to only comedy and philosophical dialogue fits better with other bipolarities in *Literary Prometheus*, such as tradition and novelty, serious and comic, male and female (an allusion to ὁ διάλογος καὶ ἡ κωμῳδία), and other bipartite mixtures (ἵπποκένταυροι, ἵπποκαμποι, τραγέλαφοι, *mixis* of wine and honey).

In choosing all these types of *mixis* to oppose traditional poetics and traditional *doxa*, Lucian places his work under the sign of paradox. He exemplifies his own paradox and its possibly inadequate reception with an historical anecdote: Ptolemy’s display of a black camel and a two-colored man before the Egyptians, which provoked either fear, or laughter and repulsion. Unlike Ptolemy’s, Lucian’s display is intended for a Greek educated audience who, at least, will be able to admire the camel’s bridle and its sea-purple, the novelty’s adornments (ἐκκόσμητο). Yet he fears this is all they might admire, only the traditional, the familiar, the recognizable. They might reject his novelty, accepting only the cover and not the essence, only

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69 Dialogue complains about his treatment by Lucian: “he shut up along with me jest (τὸ σκῶμα) and satire (τὸν ἰαμβὸν) and Cynicism (κοινισμὸν) and Eupolis and Aristophanes, two men skillful (a pun on δεινοῦς, meaning both *clever at and dreadful*) in mocking what is holy and scoffing what is right. Finally, having also dug up Menippus, one of the old dogs / Cynics, barking loudly – as it seems – and biting, he introduced him too to me, a really frightening dog and biting unexpectedly, in as much as he bites while laughing at the same time (καὶ γελῶν ἄμα ἔδακνεν). How, therefore, have I not been terribly maltreated (δεινὰ ὑβρίσματι), while no longer in my proper position, but being a comedian (κωμῳδόων) and a buffoon (γελωτοποιῶν), and playing strange plots (ὑποθέσεως ἄλλοκότους) for his sake? For, the strangest of all things (πάντως ἀτοπωτότου), I have been blended into some paradoxical mixture (κρασίν τινα παράδοξον κέρκαια), and I am neither on foot / in prose, nor have I been riding verses, but I seem to the audience a hybrid and a strange monster (σώθετον τι καὶ ξένον φάσμα), like a Centaur.” For the discussion of Lucianic dialogue as the result of contamination (of dialogue and comedy, of dialogue and Menippean satire) and transposition (of tragedy, New Comedy, etc. into dialogue) see Bompaire 1958, 549-585 and Reardon 1971, 171-174.

70 Possibly “citazioni poetiche inserite nel testo” (Camerotto 1998, 79 n. 22). Romm (1990, 83) is probably wrong in assuming that Lucian “fears that his ‘camel’ will be admired rather than rejected for its strangeness.” It is rather his novelty he fears may be repugnant to the audience able to admire only the familiarity.
the parts and not the whole. Therefore, Lucian insists on the aesthetic value of τὸ χάριεν as the final result of a harmonious *mixis* that, he hopes, generates his novel literary product. He illustrates this perfect blending with that of wine and honey and opposes it to the clear separation between colors in the case of Ptolemy’s man. One *mixis* is invented by man for his own pleasure, the other is an accident of nature; Lucian chooses one as the representation of his creative act, the other of its possibly negative perception by a startled audience.

The parallelism between Ptolemy and Lucian resides not only in the display of novelty (καινά), but also in the purpose (ἐκπλήξειν, 4). Thus, the intended effect of Lucian’s rhetoric goes beyond traditional persuasion, aiming much higher at *ekplexis*. Astonishment converted into admiration is the reaction he expects from his audience, the expression of the confounding of their established values, yet also of their aesthetic pleasure.

Lucian defines his literary innovation as a *paradoxon* (θαῦμα, καίνοποιεῖν, καίνότης, καίνον, ξένον, μιξίς, ἀλλόκοτον, ἰπποκένταυροι, ἰππόκαμποι, τραγέλαφοι) from two different perspectives, with double implications. First, through innovation he defies tradition and works with the literary heritage in an unorthodox manner. Secondly, his innovation defies expectations and it takes the audience into unknown territory. From the perspective of literary tradition, Lucian introduces a new genre, which – surprisingly – he does not take the care to name, but for which he only uses paradoxographical imagery and terminology. Modern scholarship oscillates between the terms ‘comic dialogue’ and ‘satirical dialogue’. This generic innovation is based on a certain mimetic device – *mixis*. There is a *mixis* of genre, of comedy and philosophical dialogue in *Literary Prometheus*, of these two and others in *The Double*

71 Cf. Ps.-Long.: “by all means, that which is wonderful (τὸ θαυμάσιον), with an astonishing effect (σὺν ἐκπλήξει), is superior to that which is persuasive and pleasant”, 1.4.

72 Cf. Bis acc. 33, Dialogue’s accusations against Lucian: “he took away from me that tragic and sober mask (τραγικὸν ἐκεῖνο καὶ σοφρονικὸν προσωπεῖον), and put another one on my face, a comic (κωμικὸν), satyric (σατυρικὸν), and all but ridiculous mask (γελοῖον).”
Indictment. This implies further mixing of other traditionally unmixable elements like comic and serious, verse and prose.  

Thus, Lucian reactivates and questions the traditional poetics of unity and purity, especially the clear Aristotelian distinction between serious and comic; in Literary Prometheus he confesses to a mixis between σεμνότης and γέλως κωμικός (7), and in The Double Indictment Dialogue has to change his tragic mask with a comic one.  

By comparing his generic mixis to a hippocentaur (among other mixed creatures), Lucian subtly undermines Aristotle’s prescription of purity – as in his criticism of Chaeremon’s use of mixed meters in his “Centaur”.  

Lucian’s hippocentaur is υβριστότατος, his novelty is, therefore, a form of hybris towards literary tradition (5). In The Double Indictment, both Rhetoric and Dialogue accuse the Syrian’s hybris (υβρίζειν, περιυβρισμαί, υβρισμαί). Thus, two revered elements of the Greek culture are completely disparaged and turned into two whining, mistreated lovers. In Literary Prometheus the tradition in question is not just the literary one, but the artistic tradition in general (“if credit should be given to the painters”, εἰ χρὴ πιστεύειν τοῖς ζωγράφοις, 5). In the prolalia Zeuxis, Lucian praises the famous painter not only for his harmonious blending of contrasting elements, but also for his predilection for unusual, untraditional themes:

[Zeuxis] did not paint these popular and common themes (τὰ δημῶδη καὶ τὰ κοινά) at all, or as little as possible, that is heroes, or gods, or wars, but he always tried to innovate (καινοποιεῖν), and, having thought of something strange and paradoxical (ἀλλόκοτον καὶ ξένον), in that he displayed the precision of his art (Zeux. 3).  

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73 For a complete discussion of mixis and parody in Lucian, see Camerotto 1998, 75-140.
76 Whitmarsh 2001, 77: “Lucian ironically figures his work as a form of affront υβρις to literary tradition, and in particular to the parochial Hellenocentrism of Greek culture: the theme of cultural alienation is marked in this text. Lucian’s synthetic technique is set up as an offence to literary propriety; but it is the reader who is really challenged, for her or his overinvestment in received categories and cultural values.”
77 Luc. Bis acc. 28, 33.
Branham sees in Lucian’s use of these monstrous creatures as representations of his literary innovation “a deliberate caricature of the classical conception of literary unity as a reflection of natural unity” such as prescribed in Plato’s *Phaedrus*: “every discourse has to be one (συνεστάναι), like a living being (ὁσπερ ζῶον), having a body (σῶμα) of its own, so as not to be headless or footless, but to have a middle and extremities, composed as fitting each other and the whole.” This prescription of the natural unity of the rhetorical text, as well as Plato’s views on *mimesis*, had already been questioned by Dionysius of Halicarnassus in his treatise *De imitatione*, where the essence of *mimesis* is seen in *techne*, in artful creation as opposed to natural creation. Dionysius illustrates his theory with two anecdotes, one of which – happy coincidence? – describes Zeuxis’ creative process in painting his naked Helen: he chooses different best features from different young girls acting as his models, and his *techne* blends them together in a single perfect image (ἐν τι συνεθηκεν ἢ τέχνη τέλειον εἶδος). A paradoxically reversed process is used by Lucian in *On Portraits* where *logos* mixes heterogeneous images from famous sculptures and colors from famous paintings, or even from ‘painting’-poets like Homer (τὸν ἄριστον τῶν γραφέων, 8) and Pindar, emphasizing thus the visual power of words, to represent as a unity the natural beauty of Panthea.

Lucian rewrites the traditional poetics to suit his own literary personality and, at the same time, he reeducates the audience to appreciate and also to enjoy his work (τέρψις, παιδία, 2). He does not defend only his novelty, the *mixis*, but also his art of mixing, since novelty is not seen as a valid counterpart to tradition unless it is done with *techne* and the final product is beautiful (χάριεν, 3). Novelty (here *mixis*) is not the purpose of his art, but rather its creative form of

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expression, and Lucian insists that the qualities of *mixis* (ἐναρμόνιος καὶ κατὰ τὸ σύμμετρον) are to be considered in terms of their reflection upon the quality (κάλλος) of the final product (5). He claims not only the validity of his hybrid and hybristic novelty as discursive form, but also its aesthetic value that epitomizes the author’s *techne* of mixing and harmonizing opposites.

The strong feeling of self-consciousness and self-confidence, although cleverly disguised through the use of subtle irony and *dissimulatio artis*, is nevertheless pervasive in *Literary Prometheus*. His identification, in the end, with Prometheus in opposition to Epimetheus clearly speaks for the future: Lucian does not look back (past/tradition/change of mind), but forward (future / novelty), and he prepares the ground not only for present, but also for future works. He consciously takes an important and obvious risk, which he plays down, at the beginning, in the ironical statement about the fragility of his work, yet reiterates anxiously in the end by mentioning a possible charge of deceit.

Lucian makes in *Literary Prometheus* a convoluted claim to have used no archetype (ἀρχέτυπον), but – just like the god – to be himself the master creator (ἀρχητέκτων) of an archetype by combining different, already existing, molds into a single new one. The only instance in which he separates himself categorically from Prometheus concerns the accusation of theft: “for, as to the matter of theft (and indeed he is the god of theft), off with you!” (7). He thus claims the full credit for his invention, like Horace once his primariness (*princeps*).

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82 Luc. *Prom. es* 2: “And if Prometheus for you means this (i.e. workers in clay), you have shot your arrows aiming perfectly well, with an Attic pungency of jokes too, since my works also are fragile, just as their little pots, and, if you should throw a little stone, you would brake them all.” Luc. *Prom. es* 7: “But rather [I am afraid] that I may seem such (i.e. like Prometheus) with respect to another thing, deceiving, perhaps, my audience and giving them bones covered with fat, comic laughter under philosophic solemnity (γέλοιον κωμικόν υπὸ σεμινότητι φιλοσοφόφοι).” Cf. Brandão 2001, 81: “O sentido do texto parece-me denunciar, portanto, um elevado grau de consciência do trabalho poético proposto: há riscos e é preciso ousar; há riscos com relação ao produto; há riscos com relação à sua recepção. Mas desses riscos não há como fugir.”
83 Hor. *Carm.* 3.30.10-14
therefore, of form of artistic *sphragis* that seals not only Lucian’s authorship, but also his *paradoxon*.

Constant and varied exploitation of the same motif – the artist’s comparison with Prometheus, pervasive irony and self-deprecation, the exaggerated separation from *utile* and real life, and the exclusive embrace of *dulce* (τέρψις ἄλλως καὶ παιδία τὸ πράγμα, 2) and artificiality (εἰδωλος) make of *Literary Prometheus* a difficult and often frustrating text.\(^8^4\) Just as its theme is the introduction of the Lucianic dialogue in terms of organic structure and creation process, its style and tone introduce the very style and tone of this novelty.

4. The Paradox of Lucian’s Reception

For an era so generous with prosopography, Lucian’s foggy image is, beyond frustrating, quite paradoxical. Not only is he not mentioned by any surviving contemporary sources, with one possible exception, but even Lucian himself “has some pointed fun being chary with his name” (Goldhill) and, we may add, with his own reality. The absolute lack of mention in Philostratus’ *Lives of the Sophists* has been mostly intriguing, and the only proper justification has been found in the fact that Lucian was “a highly Improper Sophist”, one “using typical sophistic themes in an untypical way”, using therefore *doxa* to create *para-doxa*. One of the earliest references to Lucian appears in *Lives of the Philosophers* by Eunapius (late 4th c.): Λουκιανός δὲ ὁ Ἐκ Σαμοσάτων, ἀνήρ σπουδαῖος ἐς τὸ γελασθήναι... (“Lucian of Samosata, a man serious-minded in producing laughter”...87). This is a mere last example (Lucian’s *Life of Demonax*) in a list of biographies of philosophers, a possible criticism of Philostratus’ omission of Lucian, and just a common sense observation. Nevertheless, Eunapius’ characterization of Lucian, in its oxymoronic form, encapsulates our author’s paradoxical image. It may echo explicitly the end of the famous advice given in *Menippus* by Teiresias to the man from Gadara.

When the Cynic inquires about the best way of life (ποιῶν τιμα ἡγεῖται τὸν ἄριστον βίον), the

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86 Hall 1981, 6.
87 The whole passage runs as follows: “Lucian of Samosata, a man serious-minded in producing laughter, wrote about the life of Demonax, a philosopher of that time, being entirely serious (δι’ ἀλόου σπουδάσας) in that book and in a very few others (καὶ ἄλλοις ἐλαχιστοῖς)”, 454.
88 Baldwin 1973, 99: “Eunapius’ comment is placed in his general preamble, in which he plays that most professorial of games and justifies his own book by criticising the deficiencies of his predecessors in the field. His attitude to Philostratus is patronising, and the inclusion of Lucian might be taken as an implied rebuke for his omission by the earlier biographer. Eunapius was forthrightly anti-Christian, and his failure to adduce or defend Lucian in this context is perhaps significant. His view of Lucian as a serious satirist is unremarkable; however, we would like to know those works other than the *Demonax* which were considered by him to be wholly serious.”
seer answers: “laughing a lot and being serious about nothing” (γελών τὰ πολλὰ καὶ περὶ μηδὲν ἐσπουδακώς, 21). But, while in Lucian the two phrases (γελών τὰ πολλὰ καὶ περὶ μηδὲν ἐσπουδακώς) concur in meaning, Eunapius chooses to cleverly exploit the association of opposites (σπουδαίος – γελασθῆναι) to label Lucian, an author he only mentions for his exactly opposite virtue, for “being entirely serious” in writing the life of Demonax. As “unremarkable” (Baldwin) an observation as Eunapius’ is, it still grasps the reality of Lucian’s text, painfully felt by scholars, that it still is very difficult to interpret Lucian’s tone and to see when he is being serious and when the authorial persona is deliberately undermined by self-irony.90

The Byzantine patriarch Photius (9th c.) also chooses a paradoxical phrase to characterize Lucian: “he seems to be one of those who are wholly serious about nothing (τῶν μηδὲν ὅλως πρεσβευόντων); for, while satirizing and mocking (κωμῳδῶν καὶ διαπαίζουν) the beliefs (δόξας) of others, he does not state in what he himself believes (αὐτὸς ἢν θείαξε ϋν τίθησι), unless one will say that his own opinion is to opine nothing (αὐτοῦ δόξαν…τὸ μηδὲν δοξάζειν).”91 On the one hand, despite the fact that Photius is rather generous with Lucian, these words echo the often narrow criticism of Lucian by Christians for his alleged atheism. Yet on the other hand, they seem to transgress their cultural context and crystallize a more general

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89 Branham (1989a) argues against the interpretation of this passage as the expression of Lucian’s nihilism or as a typical example of Cynic diatribe. He rather connects it with a paraphrase of Simonides (fr. 141 Page) preserved as a chreia by Theon (παίζειν ἐν τῷ βίῳ καὶ περὶ μηδὲν ἄπλως σπουδάζειν, 3.268) or with a sympotic fragment (Eleg. adesp. fr. 27, in M. L. West, Iambi et Elegi Graeci). Therefore, he interprets it as “an oblique commendation of Lucian’s own seriocomic stance” (160) or even as a possible “Lucianic gloss on the idea of the seriocomic” (160 n. 6), given Strabo’s characterization of Menippos as σπουδογέλαιος (16.2.29). Cf. Branham, 1989, 25: “Teiresias’ dictum is so expressive of the mock-serious of this narrative, which, like so much Lucian, seems to stop short of taking anything quite seriously, including itself, that it is tempting to see it as an oblique reflection of the author’s own modus operandi as a touring sophist playing an astonishing number of traditional roles, all unseriously, with the calculated detachment of the comic performer.”

90 Baldwin 1973, 99. Cf. Branham 1989, 22 on Lucian’s use of ‘Menippus’: “The point is not that Lucian is ambiguously serious, but that the serious qualities of his texts are the product of a subtle style of impersonation that wavers between wry caricature and authoritative evocation of a given role or mental attitude…”

91 Phot. Bibli. 128.

92 Baldwin 1973, 100: “His failure to condemn Lucian as a notorious anti-Christian is notable, for he is rarely unwilling to stigmatise the impious and the heretics.” See Suda s.v.: βλάσφημος ἢ δύσφημος ἢ ἄθεος εἴπεῖν μᾶλλον.
perception of an author whose *doxa* appears to stand on the opposite side of the general *doxa*, whose thoughts and beliefs are deliberately and sophisticatedly veiled, and whose real stance is never obviously stated. While he constantly criticizes and mocks the others’ *doxai*, indeed very rarely does Lucian reveal his own personal beliefs, and even then caution must be applied in identifying his words with his own thoughts.

These two passages, by Eunapius and Photius, both expressing the perception of Lucian at different moments in time through a paradox (σπουδαίος ἐς τὸ γελασθηναι and αὐτοῦ δόξαν...τὸ μηδὲν δοξάζειν), epitomize the paradox of the history of critical interpretation and reinterpretation of Lucian, the upside-downs of his reception from antiquity to modern times. Lucian’s own contemporaries apparently neglected him. Some Christian scholars in late antiquity and Byzantine era demonized him, yet others zealously read, glossed, commented, quoted, paraphrased, imitated, and – most importantly – eventually brought him to the attention of the West.93 The Renaissance successfully consecrated Lucian a classic, yet still reduced him to an exclusive and limitative label.94 Early modern scholars minimized his importance and reduced him to a simple imitator, or to a superficial, spiritless atheist who dared to mock the sublime

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93 See the long list of indignant epithets in Baldwin 1973, 101-2. Brandão (2001, 13-14) sums up very well the paradox of the reception of Lucian in this period and implies that its bipolarity extended also to modern criticism: “De um certo modo, perpetua-se o desconforto já registrado pela *Suda*, por Fócio e pelos inúmeros escoliastas que anotaram, à margem dos manuscritos, a expressão de sua admiração e indignação (não uma ou outra coisa, mas ambas ao mesmo tempo, como se uma não se pudesse manifestar sem a necessária contraparte).” For a general discussion of Lucian’s influence among the Byzantine authors see Robinson 1979, 68-81. A comprehensive survey of the reworking of Lucanian texts by the Byzantines is still needed and might contribute substantially to the history of the reception of our author.

94 Cf. Robinson 1979, 65-66: “Lacking any understanding of the nature of the so-called ‘Second Sophistic’, neither the Byzantines nor the Renaissance Italians were equipped to see Lucian as other than a moralist who happened to write in a particularly entertaining way. Furthermore, the moral preoccupations of their own civilizations were easily transferred into the interpretation of these texts, with their didactic surfaces. It was a Lucian filtered via such channels who was to reach the Europe of the Northern Renaissance. The bizarre effect of this is that we must turn our backs on the real Lucian, and substitute for him a series of shifting masks, whose common feature is the element of derision (however light) and of moral intent (however negative).” Good surveys of Lucian’s influence in the West can be found in Robinson 1979, 81-235, and in Marsh 1998.
diction of Plato. Yet soon Lucian would be restored again as a creative spirit, although somewhat abused by sometimes an obtuse historical approach, identified with some of his characters and personae and thus subdued to alleged conversions and developments. This Lucian, therefore, – of whom we know so little, yet are tempted to infer so much – still defies labels and classifications and escapes attempts to catch him within the frame of a portrait of definite shape.

For a performer, and Lucian was a performer by excellence, one’s personality is not the real object of display, but one’s persona. Indeed, all that the Lucianic corpus seems to deliver is the persona. As there are no reliable external sources, any obstinate attempt to unmask the personality, however important a bearing it has on the persona, inevitably ends either in fallacy or aporia. The two entities cannot absolutely be identified with each other, especially in the case of such a playful author like Lucian. From turning upside-down Lucian’s critical observations and inferring the opposite as being his own doxa, as well as from his scarce ‘direct’ statements, all we could get is a commonsense position, a claim that would fit an authentically intellectual

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98 Cf. Hall 1981, 1: “…such is the power of wishful thinking that the critic constantly faces the danger of allowing the ‘conceivable possibility’ to become a hopeful ‘probability’, of imperceptibly transforming the ‘probability’ into a ‘certainty’, and of then deluding himself into thinking that a mere tissue of conjectures is a solid foundation on which he may base an account of the ‘development’ of our author from the standpoint of his literary artistry or his thought.” See also her balanced and comprehensive discussion of the historical approach on Lucian (1-63).
99 G. Anderson (1982, 92) criticizes previous labels applied to Lucian, such as ‘sophist and satirist’, ‘satirist and belletrist’, ‘writer of dialogue’, etc., and ends up by proposing two new labels: ‘sophist’s apprentice’ (“for a writer who plays with the raw materials of rhetoric and turns the sophist’s lecture-room upside down at every opportunity”) and ‘a sophist’s sophist’ (“we can say that his manipulation of sophistic material and techniques come closest to realizing the real literary potential of this uniquely well-equipped literary movement”). The title of Anderson’s article (Lucian: a sophist’s Sophist) shows clearly the author’s preference for the second label.
100 Reardon summarizes the problem under the expression “question lucianesque” (1971, 160 n. 9).
and literarily educated man. Yet, who among Lucian’s peers would not like to make the same claim? Therefore, in spite of all the attempts to read through the masks, it only leads us to a generic image: that of a man who claims to be the guardian of commonsense and to serve an intellectually and morally commonsense community. This persona confers a convenient position from which one can engage in criticism and ridicule of all sorts of immoderation.

In *Menippus* the life of the ἱδιῶται – here both poor, as opposed to the recklessness of the rich, and ignorant, as opposed to the pretenses of the philosophers – is recommended as best, along with an absolute lack of seriousness. In the *Symposium* again the ἱδιῶται are the keepers of the common sense:

Anyway, with so many philosophers being present, it was impossible to see, by chance, a single one without fault, but some were acting shamefully, and others were talking even more shamefully (οἳ μὲν ἔποιον σινχρά, οἳ δ’ ἔλεγον σισχίω). [...] Then the situation turned completely upside down and the common people (οἳ μὲν ἱδιῶται) were seen dining and in absolute decency (κοσμίως πάνυ), neither acting like drunken, nor behaving disgracefully, but they were only laughing at and disapproving of those – I guess – whom they really used to admire (οὗς γε ἐθαυμάζουν), considering them to be some great men, judging by their attire (34-35).

Lucian uses the ἱδιῶται here to emphasize the grotesque behavior of those who claimed to be learned. The ἱδιῶται are only used as a foil for Lucian’s own perception of the false philosophers. He does not, by any means, identify himself with them; nor does he idealize them. As one with a real claim to paideia, he is not impressed by the philosophers’ appearance. On the contrary, he often assumes the role of unmasking the false philosophers who display their paideia through a dirty cloak or a long beard. Although in the *Apology* (15) he claims not to consider himself a sophos, but one of the crowd (τῶν ἐκ τοῦ πολλοῦ δῆμου), there are,

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101 E.g.: “I am an impostor-hater, a trickster-hater, a liar-hater, a vanity-hater, and I hate all such sort of disgusting people” (Μισαλαξών εἰμι καὶ μισογόνη καὶ μισοψευδής καὶ μισότυφος καὶ μισώ πᾶν τὸ τοιούτωδες εἴδος τῶν μιαρῶν ἀνθρώπων, *Pisc.* 20).
however, details that point towards his clear separation from the many and unmask his claim as deceitful. First, he is “one skilled in words and moderately praised for them.” Secondly, he casts serious doubts on the real existence of the sophos: “if there is one anywhere” (εἰ δὴ τις καὶ ἀλλος ἐστὶ που σοφός); and again: “I, in any event, have not met with another who fulfilled the promise of being wise” (μηδὲ ἄλλῳ ἐγὼ γοῦν ἐντεῦχηκα τὴν τοῦ σοφοῦ ὑπόσχεσιν ἀποπληροῦντι). This takes us back to the advice of Teiresias and its comical incongruities, already signaled by Branham. We should add that Teiresias is a character with ambiguous qualities (blind, yet a seer), and with ambiguous gender identity. In Menippus he also has an ambiguous moral standing: although he admits that it is not permitted to answer Menippus’ question – οὐ θέμις λέγειν, nevertheless he takes the Cynic aside and reveals to him the secret of the best way of life.

This is just one example of how Lucian constantly misleads and deceives his audience, of how he makes – either directly or indirectly, through the mouth of his characters – startling and contradictory statements, of how he makes a paradox out of his own image. It is an example of his versatility, often noticed by scholars, and which earned him the comparison with the octopus and with his own character – Proteus (Dial. mar. 4). Lucian’s versatility is seen in his ability either to adapt to different expectations from the audience, or to cross different genres and different literary traditions. His deliberate elusiveness, the intentional deceit of an author who does not let himself be easily grasped, deciphered, and then classified and criticized, best fits the

102 Luc. Apol. 15.
103 1989a, 160; [Lucian] “gives Tiresias a line with archaic precedent but one suggesting a point of view comically unsuitable to the traditional representation of the Theban prophet in epic and tragic poetry. […] The unexpected way in which elements of varied traditions are here combined – the Theban prophet covertly echoing the words of a lyric poet to a puzzled Cynic – is what makes the passage distinctively Lucianic.”
104 Luc. Dial. mort. 9.1. Cf. Luc. Gall. 19, Salt. 57, Astrol. 11, Dial. meret. 5.4, Dial. mort. 9 (also Macr. 3 and Am. 27 among the spurious works).
105 On the octopus see Thgn. 215-216; cf. Philostr. VS 486.5; Ath. 7.317a; Julian. Mis. 349 D; Eunap. VS 495; Luc. Dial. mar. 4.2; cf. Hall 1981, 62; MacLeod 1991, 13; Dobrov 2002, 174; Sinko 1947, 68.
comparison with the octopus, which changes colors for survival, or with the mysterious and mischievous Proteus. In Lucian, Menelaus gives up (οὐκ ἀσφαλῆς ἢ πείρα) his attempt to rationalize Proteus’ constant changes, especially into both fire and water, and ends up in aporia: “I saw it. But it is a wonder (τὸ πράγμα τεράστιον) that the same person be both fire and water.”

If this mini-dialogue could be read as a parable for the critic’s attempt to understand Lucian, then we may find many scholars who, more courageous than Menelaus, have not hesitated to put their hand into the fire for his sake and to touch the πράγμα τεράστιον of his craft, in a distinct category by itself, a marvelous thing, a paradoxon.

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107 Cf. Od. 4.463: μ’ ἔλοις ἄκοντα. Branham 1989, 13: “It is not simply that Lucian worked in a bewildering variety of forms and styles, some of which confound traditional generic distinctions. That in itself need cause no problem. It is rather the difficulty of deciding how to gauge the tone of whole works and the emphasis of crucial passages. Are they seriously satiric, anarchically comic, or frivolously epideictic? Or has Lucian left us with a collection of cultural dinosaurs that have outlived any suitable audience?”

108 Luc. Dial. mar. 4.2-3; cf. Od. 4.418; Cf. καὶ ὑδατομή καὶ θεσπιδαές πῦρ.

109 Cf. Luc. Prom. es 2, where Lucian defines his art as “mere pleasure and play” (τέρψις ἄλλως καὶ παιδιά τὸ πράγμα). Giannini 1963, 251 lists among the frequent terms used for mirabilia in the paradoxographical literature the adjective τεράστιος and the noun τέρας. The use of τεράστιος, a related adjective, is pretty rare before the 1st century A.D. (some instances occur in Pherecydes of Athens, FHG, fr. 24.3, Theophrastus, Char. 19.9.2, etc.), but it increases considerably in frequency with the change of the era (especially in Philo, Plutarch, Lucian, Artemidorus, Aelian).
Chapter 1

Paradoxography and False Discourse

For I see that unexpected things, if good, bring rather joy to people, if bad, cause astonishment. (Xen. Hipp. 8.19-20)

1.1. Paradoxography. An Overview

In Literary Prometheus Lucian says that Ptolemy Philadelphus brought two novelties (καινά) to Egypt and displayed them in the theater: a black Bactrian camel and a two-colored man (4). The insistence on the preciseness of their features and on strong contrasts emphasizes their paradoxical nature: the camel was all-black (παραμελαίνων) and the man’s body was equally divided (ἐπὶ ἵσης δὲ μεμερισμένον) into a half precisely black (ἀκριβώς μέλαν) and a half extremely white (ἐς ὑπερβολὴν λευκόν). These were supposed to be the apex of the show, after many other things, probably some mild paradoxas, were displayed (ἐπιδείκνυτο αὐτοῖς ἄλλα τε πολλὰ θεάματα καὶ τὸ τελευταίον καὶ ταύτα). Ptolemy’s intention and expectation were to amaze the public (ῥετὸ ἑκπλήξειν), but the reaction, Lucian says, was disappointing: the spectators were frightened at the sight of the camel, while the strange man was either laughed at or abhorred like a monster (ὡς ἐπὶ τέρατι). Consequently, Ptolemy, seeing that through this novel display he gained neither popularity nor admiration (οὐκ εὐδοκιμεῖ...οὐδὲ θαυμάζεται) from a public that preferred rather beautiful and proportional forms (τὸ εὑρυθμὸν καὶ τὸ εὐμορφὸν), distanced himself from his paradoxas and neglected them completely.
This anecdote, rooted in the Hellenistic tradition, may be taken as a rather vaguely accurate echo of the birth and development of paradoxography. There are a few details that need to be taken into account when considering the passage. First, this is most probably not a historically accurate account. Thus, we do not know exactly whether the public’s reaction, as described by Lucian, was indeed unexpected and disappointing. It certainly did not discourage Ptolemy from taking interest in paradoxa. In fact we have sources, far more reliable than Lucian, for the king’s interest both in live paradoxa and possibly in paradoxographical literature.¹¹⁰

Secondly, Lucian illustrates through this anecdote – as shown above in the Introduction – a possible reaction to his literary novelty. He takes into account here only the good side of ἐκπληξίας (astonishment) – a reaction to paradoxa that should trigger good repute and admiration for the one who displays them – and thus he compares his own intention to that of Ptolemy. Yet ekplexis covers also the Egyptians’ reaction – whether historically accurate or not – to one of Ptolemy’s paradoxa: fright and flight (ἔφοβηθησαν καὶ ὀλίγου δεῖν ἔφυγον ἀναθορόντες). For how else do the masses react to natural monstrosities and freaks? In the second anecdote of Zeuxis or Antiochus, the Galatians are expected to react much in the same way (φοβηθησονται...φεύγουντες, 9) when they are confronted with a live paradoxon (τὸ παράδοξον τῆς ὁψεως): the elephants, animals that they would see for the first time ever. Their reaction is in accord with the expectation of Antiochus’ strategist: τὸ καὶνὸν τοῦ θεάματος ἐξέπληξε τοὺς πολεμίους (11). This response illustrates an improper perception of Lucian’s work as mere novelty, neglecting its aesthetic value.

¹¹⁰ Ptolemy Philadelphus supported expeditions for hunting elephants and other strange beasts that were the object of public display (Agatharch. F 1 Burstein = Phot. Bibl. 250. 441b, F 80 Burstein = Diod. Sic. 3.36-37, Str. 17.1-5). At the Great Procession animals both familiar and strange were displayed (Callixenus of Rhodes, FGrH 627 F2 = Athen. 5.31-32). It is also possible that both Archelaus and Philostephanus of Cyrene, Callimachus’ disciple, flourished at his court. Schepens makes a good case for the propagandistic use of paradoxa by the first Ptolemaic kings (1996, 404-407).
These anecdotes exemplify, therefore, two types of *ekplexis* as response to *paradoxa*: one – a strong fright triggered by physical perception, here by sight – and the other – a strong emotion, amazement triggered by the experience of art, here of literature. However, while in Lucian’s case, *paradoxon* is the novel literary product itself, in the Hellenistic era, the cradle of paradoxography, *paradoxa* were objects of visual display, which became also objects of literary display for paradoxographers. Schepens talks of the paradoxographers as “some kind of literary counterpart to the activities of the hunters and explorers” sent by Ptolemy Philadelphus in search of elephants and other paradoxical beasts (παραδόξους θήρας).\(^\text{111}\) Paradoxography was, therefore, a softer and more elevated alternative to the crude and popular visual spectacle. It nevertheless counted on *ekplexis*, although in a milder form, as reaction to and participation in the literary experience.

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The fascination of the Greeks with wonders is documented very early in their literature. Wonders reflect the Greek perspective on the unknown, on the virtually unexplored universe that lay beyond the familiar world, on the otherness that was expected to be the unexpected, that is *paradoxon*. Herodotus says that the extremities of the world are usually perceived as possessing the most beautiful and rare things.\(^\text{112}\) Not without reason, therefore, *paradoxa* are connected with travel, with exploration, with curiosity in the very process of being satisfied. Many false or exaggerated accounts of far-away lands, however incredible, proliferate because they are difficult to disprove.\(^\text{113}\) In his proem to *True Stories*, Lucian proclaims Odysseus as the founder and master of *paradoxa*-telling, a genre he qualifies as βωμολοχία, coarse jesting (3). Indeed the Homeric poems, and the *Odyssey* in particular, with the pervasive travel motif, contain

\(^{111}\) 1996, 406 in reference to a fragment of Agatharchides preserved in Diodorus Siculus (3.36.3).
\(^{112}\) Hdt. 3.116.
\(^{113}\) Strab. 11.6.4.
numerous references to wonders: monstrous creatures and strange natural phenomena related to waters, plants, animals.\textsuperscript{114}

An interesting character of early Greek literature is Aristeas of Proconnesus, a seventh century B.C. semi-legendary epic poet to whom was ascribed \textit{Arimaspea} or \textit{Arimaspeia},\textsuperscript{115} a poem on the author’s travel into Scythia and beyond, to the Hyperboreans. He describes strange human beings – the one-eyed Arimaspi, and wondrous creatures – the gold-guarding griffins.\textsuperscript{116} Aristeas is the first name on a list of writers of \textit{paradoxa} whose old books, full of wonders (\textit{miraculorum fabularumque pleni}), Aulus Gellius – Lucian’s contemporary – was able to buy at Brindisi on his way back from Greece.\textsuperscript{117}

Both Scythia and the land of the Hyperboreans evoked a world of \textit{paradoxa} for the Greeks. Like India and the lands of Africa, they represent the remote, unreachable world populated with wonders and they often furnish Greek writers with paradoxographical material.\textsuperscript{118} Even as late as the second century A.D. they are still stereotypically used as symbols of a faraway and paradoxical world. Lucian makes reference to the Scythians’ barbaric customs, while the land of the Hyperboreans is coupled with India to circumscribe the borders of the


\textsuperscript{115}Hdt. 4.14 (\τὰ ἔπεα ταῦτα τὰ νῦν ὑπ’ Ἑλλήνων Ἀριμάσπεα καλέται); cf. Strab. 1.2.10 (ἐν τοῖς Ἀριμασπείοις ἔπεαν), 13.1.16 (Ἀριστέας ὁ ποιητής τῶν Ἀριμασπείων καλουμένων ἐπῶν) and Paus. 1.24.6 and 5.7.9, who does not mention the title of the poem.

\textsuperscript{116}Hdt. 4.13.

\textsuperscript{117}Aul. Gell. NA 1.4. The other authors mentioned are the paradoxographers Isigonus of Nicaea (1st c. B.C. or A.D.) and Philostephanus (his name is conjectured from \textit{Polystephanus}), the historians Ctesias of Cnidus (5th-4th c. B.C.), who wrote a book on India, full of wonders and without reliable sources, and Onesicritus of Astypalaia (4th c. B.C.), the Alexander historian whom Strabo qualified as the “chief pilot of wonders” (τῶν παραδόξων ἀρχικυβερνήτην, 15.1.28), and the rhetor Hegesias of Magnesia (early 3rd c. B.C.), probably on account of his historical work on Alexander.

\textsuperscript{118}Pindar speaks of the inaccessibility of Hyperboreans and of their utopian bliss (Pyth. 10.29-44) mentioned also in Aesch. \textit{Choe.} 373. Herodotus (4.32-35) insists on their remoteness and their little contact with the outside world. He also describes the wonders of Scythia, mainly of its waters (4.52-53), and the huge footprint of Heracles on the bank of the river Tyras (4.82).
world. Also, *paradoxa* are attributed to both regions.¹¹⁹ Lucian’s fascination with Scythians is obvious in *Toxaris, Anacharsis*, and *The Scythian*. Not only do they provide him with a model that fits his own cultural identity, a ‘barbarian’ among the Greeks,¹²⁰ but also the astonishment they experience at the contact with the Greek culture is actually the mirror of what Greeks typically experience when discovering other cultures and their *paradoxa*.¹²¹

Now Aristeas of Proconnesus was a *paradoxon* himself.¹²² Strabo refers to him as the embodiment of sorcery, or rather charlatanry.¹²³ According to Herodotus, Aristeas was possessed by Apollo. After he died in Proconnesus, his body disappeared. Then, seven years later, he reappeared in his hometown to compose his epics. Yet he vanished again only to come back two hundred and forty years later in Metapontum, saying that he had accompanied Apollo as a raven and bidding the Metapontines to set up an altar of the god and a statue of himself.¹²⁴ A later tradition says that, immediately after he died and disappeared, Aristeas was seen teaching in Sicily.¹²⁵ Aristeas’ ability to repeatedly vanish and reappear or to be present in more than one place at the same time bears resemblance to other semi-legendary characters who experience reincarnation or migration of soul. The paradoxographer Apollonius mentions Aristeas’ wonders as well as similar or different miracles of the Cretan Epimenides, Hermotimus of Clazomenae, and Pythagoras, or of the Hyperborean Abaris, himself a devotee of Apollo, a wonderworker and a prophet, and of Pherecydes of Syros.¹²⁶ Lucian constantly pokes fun at Pythagoras’ lives, and he mentions, in a comic context, the out-of-body experiences of Hermotimus, to support his

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¹²² Delcroix 1996, 413.
¹²³ Strab. 13.1.16: ἀνὴρ γόης εἶ τις ἄλλος.
¹²⁵ Apol. Paradox. 2.
¹²⁶ Apol. Paradox. 1-6.
argument on the immortality of the fly’s soul. In Lovers of Lies the story of a Hyperborean wonderworker who flies, who walks on water and on fire, who is able to invoke Hecate and the dead, and who performs love spells, meets with Tychiades’ laughter and disbelief (13-15).

Travel made possible the expansion of the Greek world, opened new horizons and prompted the curiosity for newly discovered lands and their inhabitants. Scylax of Caryanda (6th c. B.C.) was mandated by Darius to sail down the river Indus and then westward along the shores of the Indian Ocean to the Red Sea. He wrote a story of his journey which is celebrated (compiled?) in a Hellenistic work, falsely attributed to the explorer, the Periplus of Pseudo-Scylax, and which must have contained some information on the fascinating regions through which he journeyed. Hecataeus of Miletus (6th c. B.C.) wrote a Periegesis, a description of the world, on the periplus (sailing around the world) pattern, in which he showed interest in foreign customs, plants, and animals. Whether or not the result of the personal traveling experience of their authors, the works of the Ionian ‘logographers’ of the fifth century B.C. are often focused on these new worlds, such as the Persica, Aethiopica, and the Periplus of Charon of Lampsacus, or the Persica of Dionysius of Miletus, all now almost completely lost. We have better evidence for the Lydiaca of Xanthus of Lydia. Xanthus is a barbarian who writes in Greek about his own country. His work doubtlessly contained some material that was paradoxographical avant la lettre for his readers, regarding natural phenomena or human customs. Hellanicus of Lesbos, a contemporary of Herodotus, also wrote on the customs of foreign peoples.

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127 Luc. Gall. passim, VH 2.21, Vit. auct. 5, Musc. enc. 7.
128 Hdt. 4.44.
129 Arist. Pol. 7.13.1 (ὁσπερ ἐν ἱδωίς φησι Σκύλαξ…).
130 He mentions, for example, a Lydian custom of castrating women and using them as eunuchs (Athen. 12.11), or the astounding story of the Lydian king Cambles who cut up his wife and ate her during a nightly epicurean episode (Athen. 10.8). Pliny the Elder, in the book on the properties of plants, mentions the treatises on plants by Pythagoras and Democritus, who astonished their ancient readers (attonita antiquitas fuit) with unbelievable stories (incredibilia dictu), and then presents the story, taken from Xanthus, of a dead young dragon restored to life through the properties of a plant called ‘balis’ and of a man killed by a dragon who was revived in the same way (NH 25.5).
The Histories of Herodotus are abundant in \( \theta \omega \mu \alpha \tau \alpha \), a topic suitable for travel-stories and ethnographic discourse.\(^{132}\) In his programmatic prologue Herodotus claims to record for posterity “great and marvelous works” (\( \epsilon \rho \gamma \alpha \mu \varepsilon \gamma \alpha \lambda \alpha \ \varepsilon \kappa \iota \ \theta \omega \mu \alpha \sigma \tau \alpha \)), whether just deeds and works of men, or also natural marvels, so frequent in the Histories. The marvels of exotic lands, such as Egypt, Scythia, Arabia, Lydia, are here, as elsewhere in historical/ethnographic narrative, the intrinsic expression of the difference between the familiar world and the otherness.\(^{133}\) Frequent digressions dedicated to \( \theta \omega \mu \alpha \tau \alpha \) release the narrative tension and avoid narrative monotony by creating variety (\( \pi \omega \kappa \iota \lambda \iota \alpha \)) and thus a pleasant effect (\( \iota \delta \delta \iota \iota \)). Hecataeus of Abdera (4th c. B.C.) interpreted this interest in the marvels of exotic lands, shared by Herodotus and other historians, as deliberately (\( \epsilon \kappa \omicron \upsilon \sigma \iota \omega \varsigma \)) overcoming their interest in truth (\( \pi \rho \omega \kappa \iota \alpha \nu \tau \varepsilon \varsigma \tau \omega \varsigma \mu \alpha \mu \rho \alpha \delta \omicron \alpha \lambda \omicron \lambda \omicron \varsigma \nu \mu \alpha \nu \varsigma \)) for the sake of entertainment (\( \psi \upsilon \chi \alpha \gamma \omega \gamma \iota \alpha \varsigma \ \epsilon \nu \varepsilon \kappa \alpha \)).\(^{134}\)

The fourth-century historians Ephorus and Theopompus, both disciples of Isocrates and therefore coming from a strong rhetorical education, followed the example of Herodotus by using paradoxographical material to confer \( \pi \omega \kappa \iota \lambda \iota \alpha \) to their histories. Ephorus, a universal historian, is credited by Suda with a work on Paradoxes from Everywhere.\(^{135}\) He recorded strange barbarian customs and natural phenomena.\(^{136}\) Theopompus, who also wrote an epitome of Herodotus, had an obvious interest in paradoxa. His historiographical work recorded the

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Xanthus may also have been the source of a note in the pseudo-Aristotelian paradoxographical work Mirabiles auscultationes on a huge fire in Lydia, which lasted for seven days (39).\(^{131}\) Cf. Hartog 2001\(^3\), 356. \(^{132}\) Hartog 2001\(^1\), 357: “Le récit lui faisant place, le \( \theta \omega \mu \alpha \) peut donc être compté au nombre des procédures de la rhétorique de l’altrerit. […] … le \( \theta \omega \mu \alpha \) se présente comme une traduction de la différence : il est une des transcriptions possibles de la différence entre ici et là-bas.”\(^{133}\) FGrH 264 F25, 992-994.\(^{134}\) Cf. Hartog 2001\(^1\), 357: “Le récit lui faisant place, le \( \theta \omega \mu \alpha \) peut donc être compté au nombre des procédures de la rhétorique de l’altrerit. […] … le \( \theta \omega \mu \alpha \) se présente comme une traduction de la différence : il est une des transcriptions possibles de la différence entre ici et là-bas.”\(^{133}\) FGrH 264 F25, 992-994.\(^{134}\) FGrH 70 F42, F134a (Strab. 7.3.9, 5.4.5).\(^{135}\) FGrH 70 F42, F134a (Strab. 7.3.9, 5.4.5).
marvels of every place.\textsuperscript{137} He wrote amazing stories on Epimenides and Pherecydes of Syros.\textsuperscript{138} Very telling for his paradoxographical inclination is the fact that later sources refer to a work of his on marvels (\(\Theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\alpha\sigma\alpha\)\(\iota\)).\textsuperscript{139} Dionysius of Halicarnassus defends Theopompus’ interest in marvels (\(\theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\alpha\sigma\alpha\tau\omicron\nu\ \iota\ \pi\alpha\rho\alpha\delta\omicron\xi\omicron\nu\)) as aiming not exclusively at entertainment (\(\psi\upsilon\chi\alpha\gamma\omega\gamma\iota\alpha\)), but also at practical usefulness (\(\omega\phi\epsilon\lambda\iota\alpha\))\textsuperscript{140}.

Ctesias of Cnidus, another historian of the fourth century B.C., favored so much paradoxographical material in his historiographical work, especially in his \textit{Indica}, that he gained a bad repute even in Antiquity. Aristotle qualifies him as unreliable (\(\omicron\upsilon\kappa\ \iota\omicron\nu\ \alpha\xi\iota\omicron\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\sigma\zeta\)).\textsuperscript{141} Antigonus, the paradoxographer, manifestly avoids excerpting from Ctesias’ work, because his reports are false, incredible, fabulous (\(\psi\epsilon\upsilon\delta\epsilon\sigma\theta\alpha\iota\), \(\tau\epsilon\rho\alpha\sigma\tau\omega\delta\eta\)).\textsuperscript{142} Ctesias’ name is associated by Gellius with those of well known writers of \textit{paradoxa} whose books are \textit{miraculorum fabularumque pleni}.\textsuperscript{143} Ctesias is the first to be mentioned in Lucian’s prologue to \textit{True Stories}, in a similar context: writers of old whose works are full of marvelous and incredible things (\(\tau\epsilon\rho\alpha\sigma\tau\iota\alpha\ \kappa\alpha\mu\theta\omega\delta\eta\)). These features seem to be the result of a faulty \(\iota\sigma\tau\omicron\iota\alpha\), of his erroneous historical methods: “neither did he see them, nor did he hear them from somebody who was telling the truth” (2). For Lucian Ctesias is one of those “lovers of lies” (\(\phi\iota\lambda\omicron\psi\epsilon\upsilon\delta\epsilon\iota\zeta\)), among whom Herodotus and Homer are counted also.\textsuperscript{144}

\textsuperscript{137} \textit{FGrH} 115 F67b (Apol. \textit{Mirab. hist.} 1): \(\tau\acute{a}\ \kappa\alpha\tau\alpha\ \tau\omicron\pi\omicron\upsilon\upsilon\ \theta\alpha\upsilon\mu\alpha\sigma\alpha\iota\).  
\textsuperscript{138} \textit{FGrH} 115 F71 (Diog. Laert. 1.116).  
\textsuperscript{139} \textit{FGrH} 115 F72 (Diog. Laert. 1.115-116), \ F6 (Apol. \textit{Mirab. hist.} 10). For the discussion on this work see Giannini 1964, 102-104.  
\textsuperscript{140} Dion. Hal. \textit{Ad. Pomp.} 6. (\textit{FGrH} 115 T20a).  
\textsuperscript{141} Arist. \textit{HA} 8.28.  
\textsuperscript{142} Antig. 15.  
\textsuperscript{143} Aul. Gell. \textit{NA} 1.4.  
\textsuperscript{144} Luc. \textit{Philops.} 2.
The conquests of Alexander the Great pushed even more the boundaries of the explored world and the limits of Greek curiosity for the otherness. The Alexander historians, many of whom, like Callisthenes, Nearchus, Onesicritus, Aristobulus, Cleitarchus, took part, more or less, in the big military and cultural journey towards East, took also interest in the marvels of the new lands and the new civilizations, describing wonderful natural phenomena and marvelous customs. They all meet with Strabo’s criticism for having acknowledged the marvelous in the detriment of the truth (τὸ θαυμαστὸν ἀντὶ τάληθος ἀπεδέχοντο μᾶλλον). Among them Onesicritus stands up, in Strabo’s text, as a chief pilot of *paradoxa*, rather than of Alexander (οὐκ Ἀλεξάνδρου μᾶλλον ἢ τῶν παραδόξων ἀρχικυβερνήτην προσείποι τις ἄν). Onesicritus surpasses the other Alexander historians in his interest in the fabulous and the incredible (τῆς τερατολογίας), although some of his reports are plausible (πιθανά) and therefore worthy to be mentioned (μνήμης ἔξις) even by someone who disbelieves them (καὶ ἀπιστοῦντα).

Hegesias of Magnesia (early 3rd c. B.C.), whose name in connected with the foundation of the Asianic style in rhetoric, is also mentioned in Gellius’ list as an author of *paradoxa*. The reason for this might be his work on Alexander. Also, Vitruvius acknowledges Hegesias as one of his Greek sources on waters and their miraculous properties. Megasthenes (late 4th - early 3rd c. B.C.) traveled to India on an embassy for Seleucus I and wrote on his journey-experience, including paradoxographical material. He and the other writers on India are qualified by Strabo as mostly liars (ψευδολόγοι).

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145 See Aerts 1994, for Alexander’s own desire to explore unknown worlds and its echoes in ancient travel stories.
146 Strab. 15.1.28.
147 Strab. 14.1.41; Cic. *Orat.* 230; Ps.-Long. 3.2.
148 *FGrH* 142; Plut. *Alex.* 3.
149 Vitri. 8.3.26-27.
150 Antig. 1.132; Phleg. 1.33.
151 Strab. 2.1.9.
The historian Timaeus, from Tauromenium in Sicily, although writing about the familiar west and not the recently discovered west, included many paradoxographical details in his work. On account of his mention of these *paradoxa* Polybius blames his errors and Strabo considers him a *paradoxa*-teller (παραδοξολογεῖσθαι). Similar terms are also used elsewhere in Polybius’ criticism of Timaeus: παραδοξολόγος and παραδοξολογία. Yet Polybius’ interpretation of these terms, in the context, is rather rhetorical and philosophical. He compares Timaeus’ unjustifiable emphasis on Sicilian superiority to the rest of Greece with rhetorical paradoxical exercises (τὰς παραδόξους ἐπιχειρήσεις): the paradoxical encomium of Thersites, or the paradoxical blame (ψόγος) of Penelope, for example. Timaeus’ exaggeration in such paradoxes (διὰ τὴν ὑπερβολὴν τῆς παραδοξολογίας) has an effect that is opposite to the author’s expectation: he provokes the ridicule (εἰς καταμωκῆσιν) of both the men and the deeds he values the most. His logical fallacies are compared with the paradoxes and the skeptic exaggerations of the Academy.

All these authors, most of them also travelers themselves, offered an enormous quantity of material for the Hellenistic collectors of *paradoxa*. Another development in the history of Greek thought and literature had also an important influence on the birth of paradoxography as a new genre: the Peripatetic school. The pseudo-Aristotelian paradoxographical work *De mirabilibus auscultationibus*, which claims to belong to the peripatetic tradition, and numerous quotations from or references to the Peripatetics in other paradoxographers stand as proof of this influence. Aristotle’s interest in natural phenomena is concretized in his scientific treatises, especially those on the animal world. Acknowledging that in all aspects of nature there is

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152 Antig. 1.1, 1.134, 1.140, 1.152; Par. Pal. 13.
153 Polyb. 12.3; Strab. 5.4.9.
154 Polyb. 12.26. b-d.
something marvelous (θαυμαστόν).\textsuperscript{155} Aristotle dedicated an enormous effort to systematic inquiry into the rules of natural phenomena. On the other hand, he also manifested interest in foreign cultures, which provide rich paradoxographical material.\textsuperscript{156} Theophrastus, Aristotle’s disciple, had a particular eye for identifying the peculiar and paradoxical in his treatises on plants and stones. Paradoxographical terminology avant la lettre is frequent in his texts, sometimes in suggestive accumulations: θαυμασίωτατον δ ὃν δόξει καὶ ὀλὼς ἀτοπὸν τι καὶ παράδοξον.\textsuperscript{157} Strato of Lampsacus, the leader of the Lyceum after the death of Theophrastus, is also credited with having shown interest in the atypical elements of the animal world, a topic frequent in paradoxographical literature. Diogenes Laertius, in his list of works by Strato, mentions several treatises on animals, among them one on doubtful animals (περὶ τῶν ἀπορουμένων ζῷων) and one on mythological animals (περὶ τῶν μυθολογουμένων ζῷων).\textsuperscript{158}

Giannini acknowledges also the influence of Stoicism on paradoxography, especially through their interpretation of the marvelous in nature as the manifestation of the divine providence.\textsuperscript{159} His argument that Zeno of Citium, the founder of Stoicism, “aveva definito e circoscritto la nozione di παράδοξον nel senso della letteratura di genere” is based on a passage from Diogenes Laertius, which offers insufficient proof:

And [the Stoics also say] that the wise man (τὸν σοφὸν) does not wonder (θαυμάζειν) at any of the things which seem paradoxical (τῶν δοκοῦντων παραδόξων), such as

\textsuperscript{155} Arist. Part. an. 1.5, 645a 16-17.
\textsuperscript{156} Ancient authors mention Aristotle’s treatise on barbarian customs (νόμιμα βαρβαρικά): Apol. Paradox. 11; Varro Ling. Lat. 7.70; Athen. Epit. 1 p. 23d.
\textsuperscript{157} Theophr. Caus. plant. 2.17.1.
\textsuperscript{158} Diog. Laert. 5.59.
Charoneia, and tides, and springs of hot waters, and fire eruptions. But the good man (ὁ σωφρονὴς), they say, will not live in solitude; for he is by nature sociable and fit for action. Indeed [they say that] he will accept physical exercise for strengthening the body’s endurance. And the wise man will pray, they say, asking for good things from the gods, as Posidonius says in the first book of his work On Appropriate Actions and also Hecaton says in the third book of his work On Paradoxes.

The passage contains a series of indiscriminate statements, paradoxographical material mixed with ethic prescriptions. The source for its first part, concerned with paradoxa, is unclear; therefore it cannot be undoubtedly identified with Zeno himself. Moreover, Hecaton’s treatise On Paradoxes, which may have influenced Giannini’s conclusion, seems to be concerned with Stoic philosophical paradoxes, rather than with paradoxa as marvels. The interest of Posidonius of Apamea, a Stoic philosopher who also wrote geographical and historical works, in natural and ethnographic paradoxa, has no bearing on the argument at hand, since he is quite late (1st c. B.C.). Nor can it be plausibly argued that Bolos of Mendes, one of the first true paradoxographers, wrote paradoxography in the Stoic tradition, since his Stoic profession is yet to be proved.

Paradoxa, whether concerning the natural world or human societies, have a long history in Greek literature before Hellenistic times. They are the expression of the Greeks’ contact with others, of their reaction to new encounters made possible by travel. Travel, real or imaginary, is the vehicle for discovery. As in other aspects of the Hellenistic intellectual activity, the paradoxographers processed the large literary material at hand and reshaped it as an answer to new cultural tastes. Yet they reduced the real travel to an imaginary journey through books, as

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160 Caverns which emitted mephitic vapors and were considered gates towards the Underworld; cf. Strab. 12.8.17, 14.1.11, 14.1.44, and 5.4.5 (where they are called Plutonia).

Guido Schepens puts it: “the guided tour around the wonders of the world offered to the reader of a paradoxographical work was essentially a tour effectuated within the walls of a great library, be it at Alexandria, Athens or Pergamon”.  

Paradoxography is, strictly speaking, a slender literary genre, officially born in the Hellenistic culture, whose signs it proudly bears. As a slim, but continuous current, it survives up to Lucian’s time and beyond. It is the genre of excerpting (ἐκλογή) and collecting (συναγωγή) wonders, referred as παράδοξα, θαυμάσια, ἀπίστα, θαυμαζομένα, ἴδια, or παράδοξολογομένα. These paradoxa were assigned to the natural world, to its physical and functional otherness perceived as anomaly, especially in waters, plants, animals. They were also extended to the anthropic world, to both physical anomalies and behavioral otherness of human individuals and societies.

Callimachus is, if not the founder, certainly one of the earliest representatives of paradoxography. The problem of ‘the first’ is extremely delicate in the case of a genre long in developing, that has the tendency to insinuate itself and take over other genres, and with an already established horizon of expectation. Whether ‘the first’ or not, Callimachus obviously boosted the spread of the new genre through his cultural status. His propensity for cataloguing

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162 Schepens 1996, 388.
164 Cf. Delcroix 1996, 411: “Paradoxography in its widest sense can be defined as the activity which describes παράδοξα, phenomena or creatures which occur against all δόξα, human expectation. […] Paradoxography in a narrower sense consists of a double activity: both collecting and describing παράδοξα.”
165 All the paradoxographical references here are to the texts in Giannini’s edition (1966).
cultural acquisitions, reflected in his famous *Pinakes*, lists of the works in the Library of Alexandria, may have had an important contribution to the development of a genre that catalogues the marvels from all around the world with which Greeks came into contact and which paradoxographers gathered mostly from other books.\(^{166}\) His paradoxographical works, surviving only in titles or in fragments in Antigonus and other paradoxographers, are concerned with natural marvels arranged geographically and, within this division, by topic.\(^ {167}\)

Two other important paradoxographers are connected to the cultural milieu of early Hellenistic Alexandria: Philostephanus and Archelaus. The name of Philostephanus of Cyrene, a fellow citizen and disciple of Callimachus, appears in Gellius’ mixed list of *mirabilia*-writers.\(^ {168}\) He focused on wonders related to waters, especially rivers. He may also have written verse paradoxography.\(^ {169}\) Archelaus is credited with a paradoxographical work of a suggestive title: Ἰδιοφυη (Peculiar things/phenomena).\(^ {170}\) He was, according to Antigonus, “one of those who explained paradoxa in epigrams to Ptolemy”, either Philadelphus or Euergetes.\(^ {171}\) The few preserved fragments of this sort of epigram are concerned with metamorphoses in the animal world, specifically the birth of some animals from the carcasses of others: scorpions from a crocodile, wasps from a horse, and the like.\(^ {172}\) A less known contemporary paradoxographer is Philo of Heraclea who wrote mostly on animal paradoxa.

Many authors from the same period either contributed to the development of paradoxography as a new genre, or used paradoxographical material in their works, reflecting a cultural tendency of their time. Strato of Lampsacus, the Peripatetic teacher of Ptolemy

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166 Cf. Fraser 1972, 454.
167 Θεαμάτων τῶν εἰς ἀπασαν τὴν γῆν κατὰ τόπους δύντων συναγωγή (Suda s.v. Καλλίμαχος).
168 Philostephanus is a generally accepted conjecture from Polystephanus and Polistephanus, as the name appears in the manuscript tradition of Gellius’ text.
170 Diog. Laert. 4.17.
171 Antig. 19: τῶν ἐν ἑπιγράμμαισιν ἐξηγομένων τὰ παράδοξα τῷ Πτολεμαῖῳ.
172 SH 125-129.
Philadelphus, wrote treatises on strange animals.\textsuperscript{173} Bolos of Mendes is credited with writing on supernatural phenomena.\textsuperscript{174} A collection of wonders is attributed to an author identified with Monimus of Syracuse, a disciple of Diogenes. In this case, also given the late nature of the sources, we may deal with a work on absurd human behavior, in the spirit of the Cynic diatribe rather than with a proper paradoxographical collection.\textsuperscript{175} Myrsilus of Methymna, on Lesbos, wrote a collection of historical wonders (Ἰστορικὰ παράδοξα). Apollonius of Rhodes reused paradoxographical material in the episode where Talos is bewitched by Medea in book 4.\textsuperscript{176} In the recently discovered papyrus (P. Mil. Vogl. VIII 309) containing a collection of epigrams attributed to Posidippus of Pella paradoxographical material is pervasive in epigrams on stones and omens brought by birds or even by a sweating statue (Austin-Bastianini 30).\textsuperscript{177}

The best preserved collection of wonders from this period comes not from Alexandria, but from rival Pergamum. It is attributed to Antigonus of Carystus.\textsuperscript{178} Antigonus uses a wide variety of sources that he emphatically mentions, especially Aristotle and Callimachus. His topics cover almost all the traditional range, from animals to waters, plants, air, fire. This collection is an inestimable source for the modern understanding of the genre, from the principles of organizing the material, to the authorial intentions.\textsuperscript{179}

The period between the second half of the third century and the first century B.C. was highly prolific for paradoxography. Some collections are more or less superficially set in the frame of travel stories, like the \textit{Periploi} of Nymphodorus of Syracuse, the work of Polemon the

\textsuperscript{173} See above p. 10 and n. 45.
\textsuperscript{174} Cf. Suda s.v. Βόλος.
\textsuperscript{176} Dickie, 1990, 267-296, especially 275-278.
\textsuperscript{177} Krevans 2005, 88-92.
\textsuperscript{178} Musso edited most recently Antigonus’ paradoxographic work (1985). For a contrary opinion on the paternity of this collection, see Dorandi 1999.
\textsuperscript{179} See below in this section an overview of observation on paradoxography (Jacob 1983; Schepens 1996) based mostly on the text of Antigonus.
Periegetes, or that of Agatharchides of Cnydus. Agatharchides wrote historiographical and geographical works with a keen eye to *paradoxa*. Photius attributes to Agatharchides an epitome of the literature on wonders related to winds.\(^{180}\) Giannini takes this information as partly true, considering that the collection might have included a rather wider range of topics, and it would reflect a typical practice in the development of the paradoxographical genre: the tendency to epitomize a short, yet already rich tradition.\(^{181}\) Iambulus wrote the story of his alleged sea journey to a blissful island with utopian features, which offers the author the occasion to record paradoxographical information related to the local climate, the fertility of the land, local flora and fauna, human physical peculiarities and social behavior.\(^{182}\)

Lysimachus of Alexandria represents a different direction in paradoxography. In his *Theban Paradoxes* he deals with mythical wonders. There is another parallel current dealing with mythological *paradoxa*, but the approach is very much different from that of paradoxography: the intention is to rationalize the wonders of mythical stories.\(^{183}\) This is the case of Palaephatus' collection *On Incredible Things* (*Περὶ ἀπίστων*), probably more than a century earlier, and of that of Heraclitus, also entitled *On Incredible Things* (*Περὶ ἀπίστων*), and even harder to date.\(^{184}\)

Apollonius is an enigmatic paradoxographer whose identity is still unclear.\(^{185}\) His work, *Amazing Histories* (Ἅστορια θαυμασίαι), presents, among other *paradoxa*, the prosopography of famous legendary thaumaturges like Epimenides of Crete, Aristeas of Proconnesus,

\(^{180}\) Phot. *Bibl.* 212.
\(^{181}\) Giannini 1964, 124.
\(^{182}\) Diod. 2.55-60.
\(^{183}\) See Cameron 2004.
\(^{184}\) Stern 2003 argues properly against labeling Heraclitus a paradoxographer in *LSJ*, since his approach is essentially different than that of proper paradoxographers. Heraclitus' work is intended to de-mythicize the paradoxical stories by rationalizing them or by interpreting them allegorically, to be, according to its epigraph "α refutation or a cure of traditional myths on unnatural things" (ἐνασκευὴ ἢ θεραπεία μύθων τῶν παρὰ φύσιν παραδεδομένων),
Hermotimus of Clazomenae, Abaris the Hyperborean, Pherecydes of Syros, and even Pythagoras.

Isigonus of Nicaea and Nicolaus of Damascus, two of the most important paradoxographers, flourished towards the end of the first century B.C. Isigonus is mentioned by Aulus Gellius along with other proper or improper paradoxographers, but not much is known of his work, with the exception of a few fragments. Nicolaus was a very prolific author of the Augustan period, with a large variety of cultural and literary interests, including philosophy and history. He wrote also a collection of paradoxa dedicated to King Herod and focused on the customs of different nations.

Two Hellenistic authors who wrote works on rural economy, Aristander, whose precise dates are unknown, and Diophanes, first century B.C., yielded to the tendency of their times by incorporating paradoxographical material in their books. The same seems to be the case with Charms (Κεστοί), the much later work of the Christian philosopher Iulius Africanus (2nd-3rd c.).

In the first century A.D. Alexander Myndius, if indeed the collection of marvels mentioned by Photius is to be attributed to him, compiled paradoxa on a wide variety of topics, animals, plants, waters, etc. Sotion focused exclusively on aquatic paradoxa concerning rivers, springs, stagnant waters. Phlegon of Thralles, a contemporary of Lucian, confers more narrative treatment to paradoxa and develops the collection of wonders into a collection of paradoxical anecdotes of longer length. His work, in which verse quotations are mixed with prose, focuses

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188 Giannini 1964, 120; 127; Giannini 1966, 369-371.
190 Phot. Bibl. 188-189.
191 For Phlegon see Hansen 1996 and Brodersen 2002.
exclusively on human anomalies, such as physical abnormalities, resurrection, or teratologic births – an atypical and unprecedented approach within the paradoxographical tradition. Another novel approach might be considered that of Protagoras the Periegetes (1st?/3rd? c. A.D.) whose collection of wonders was apparently conceived as an appendix to his geographical treatise.\textsuperscript{192}

Little is known about the works and lives of other paradoxographers like Agathosthenes, Hieron, Aristocles, or Trophilus.\textsuperscript{193} An important part of the Greek paradoxographical corpus is represented by anonymous works, such as Ps.-Orpheus’ work on peculiar things (‘Ιδιοφυῆ), the pseudo-Aristotelian \textit{De mirabilibus auscultationibus}, written in the Peripatetic tradition and falsely attributed to Aristotle himself, and the collections contained in \textit{Paradoxographus Florentinus} (Ms. Laur. 56.1), \textit{Paradoxographus Vaticanus} (Vat. Gr. 12. 211-215), and \textit{Paradoxographus Palatinus} (Vat. Pal. Gr. 93, Vat. Pal. Gr. 96). Giannini’s edition (1966) ends with a list of works written in the paradoxographical spirit by authors he labels as pseudo-paradoxographers or \textit{seriores}: \textit{On the Peculiarity of Animals} (Περὶ ξυνων ἰδιότητος) of Claudius Aelianus (2nd-3rd c. A.D.), Ps.-Plutarch’s treatise on rivers and mountains, the Λόγοι παράδοξοί of the neo-Platonist Damascius (5th-6th c. A.D.), the treatise \textit{On paradoxical mechanisms} (Περὶ παράδοξων μηχανημάτων) of the mathematician and architect Anthemius of Tralles (6th c.), a paradoxographical epitome by Psellus (11th c.), and the \textit{Paradoxical History} of Ptolemy Chennus (1st-2nd c. A.D.). Travel and \textit{paradoxa} are pervasive in the Greek novel and in the \textit{Alexander Romance}, especially the \textit{Letter of Alexander to Aristotle}.

Paradoxography reaches the Roman world as early as the echo of Hellenistic culture and literature in general does. In Latin literature \textit{paradoxa} are called \textit{admiranda}, \textit{mirabilia}, or \textit{admirabilia}. Paradoxographical interests are detected in the \textit{Origines} of Cato the Elder who,

\textsuperscript{192} Giannini 1964, 130.
\textsuperscript{193} Giannini 1964, 131-132.
according to Cornelius Nepos, described also the *admiranda* of Italy.\textsuperscript{194} As early as the first century B.C. prominent authors like Varro\textsuperscript{195} and Cicero\textsuperscript{196} wrote paradoxographical collections and such activity continues in the next century with Licinius Mucianus.\textsuperscript{197} Although not a paradoxographer proper, the Elder Pliny recorded an impressive volume of paradoxographical material and *paradoxa* are pervasive in his *Naturalis historia*. Geographers fall under the same tendency: it is the case of Pomponius Mela (1st c. A.D.) and C. Iulius Solinus (3rd c. A.D.). Roman narrative fiction, just like the Greek, makes use of *paradoxa*, such as metamorphoses and witchcraft.\textsuperscript{198} Paradoxography in general seems to be quite popular in Italy in Lucian’s time, according to Gellius,\textsuperscript{199} and continues to survive many centuries later, after having been “converted” by Christian writers.\textsuperscript{200}

Giannini harshly labels paradoxography as a “by-product of the literature of consumption.”\textsuperscript{201} Gabba explains more subtly the emergence of the genre through a change in cultural interests, through “a wider, though not a deeper, public interest in history” that led to a new manner of producing historiography. Improperly made historiographical anthologies functioned as a “popular pseudo-history” that catered to “social strata which had not earlier read history” and that made easier the production of paradoxographical anthologies.\textsuperscript{202}

Schepens looks more in detail at the methods and the projected audience of the paradoxographers. His study outlines the fact that paradoxography was originally conceived as a

\textsuperscript{194} Nep. Cat. 3.4.  
\textsuperscript{195} Schanz-Hosius 1927, 560-561; Ziegler 1949, 1164-1165; Zucchelli 1981, 56-57.  
\textsuperscript{196} Schanz-Hosius 1927, 534-543; Ziegler 1949, 1165.  
\textsuperscript{197} Delcroix 1996, 430.  
\textsuperscript{198} Petr. 61-63; Apul. passim.  
\textsuperscript{199} Aul. Gell. NA 9.4.  
\textsuperscript{200} Delcroix 1996, 448-452.  
\textsuperscript{202} Gabba 1983, 14-15.
truthful discourse. In order to maintain the credibility of their works, often and insistently paradoxographers acknowledge their sources. Moreover, they make their discourse appear as the product of their own ἱστορία, the inquiry into and the critical judgment of their sources. Their criticism is either positive, reflected in the emphasis on the reliability of a source, or negative, leading to correction or omission of information on account of its lack of credibility (ἀπίθανον, ψεύδος).

Paradoxography, as the genre of wonders, obviously avoids rationalizing because “θαυμα is no match for explanation; the sense of the marvelous cannot survive on a rational basis.” A deceiving method is that of rationalizing a paradoxon through a mythical αἰτία, which “adds to the paradoxon in its own way.”203 The agglutination of excerpts, the basic structure of the paradoxographical discourse, gives the paradoxographers the freedom to manipulate their material, the freedom of what Jacob called “la fabrication du merveilleux.”204 By exercising this freedom, they shape a new genre, one which focuses on paradoxa as such, without explanation, without rationality, without context, just wonders for the sake of wonders. The absence of the original context of a paradoxon isolates it and emphasizes its peculiarity (ἰδιον). The overwhelming accumulation of extraordinary facts, with a careful attention for the detail, deceives the reader’s awareness and deprives him of his own freedom to rationalize.205

Some paradoxographical works, mostly earlier ones, seem to have been conceived, in the scholarly Hellenistic spirit, as “reference books” for further use and rewriting in other literary genres, either by the author himself, or by others.206 This is probably the case with Callimachus’ collection of wonders.

204 Jacob 1983.
As the demeaning label “letteratura di consumo” underlines and as is made obvious by the volume and the continuous production of this type of literary material, paradoxography had a large popular audience. The level of intellectual and artistic education of this audience seems gradually to decrease or at least it has been perceived to do so.\textsuperscript{207} If at the beginning, in Hellenistic Alexandria, court poets like Callimachus, Archelaus, and Philostephanus, as well as the Ptolemaic kings themselves, especially Ptolemy Philadelphus and Euergetes, conferred authoritative validity on the quickly expanding interest in \textit{paradoxa}, later on paradoxography frequently incurs harsh criticism and reports of \textit{paradoxa} become synonymous with falsehood – \textit{ψευδολογία}.\textsuperscript{208} Thus, the fervent consumers of paradoxography become consumers of lies, and this sometimes reflects negatively on their cultural status. Gabba argues that paradoxographical literature in general and paradoxography as a genre in particular are part of a whole, more general cultural change. In his opinion, they would be suggestive of the tastes of an audience not acquainted with proper historiographic discourse.\textsuperscript{209}

However, the \textit{paradoxa} literature seems to be designed as both instructional and entertaining discourse, partly expropriating the forms and functions of historiography, yet constructing a different mode of discourse.\textsuperscript{210} Historiography, generally considered a fundamentally true discourse, combines instruction (\textit{διδαςκαλία}) with gratification (\textit{ψυχαγωγία}), not only satisfying the need to learn, but also creating the pleasure of reading, mostly through stylistic means and not seldom through myths and other entertaining digressions like \textit{paradoxa} – if we are only to consider the classical example of Herodotus. Even Strabo, the harsh critic of those historians who indulge too much in this latter ingredient, admits that novelty

\textsuperscript{207} Gabba 1983.
\textsuperscript{208} Strab. 15.1.28.
creates pleasure and helps instruction. Of course, he refers specifically to the use of myth in the didactic process and acknowledges its efficiency on the grounds of its novelty (καινολογία), of its telling things that are different and opposed to the established ones (οὐ τὰ καθεστηκότα φράζων ἀλλὴ ἔτερα παρὰ ταὐτὰ): "because what is novel (τὸ καινὸν) is pleasant (ηδὺ)".211

Paradoxography, however, exploits mostly this effect of novelty. Unlike historiography and didactic discourse in general, paradoxography takes a new turn in its manner of blending instruction and gratification. The process of instruction suffers and loses some of its validity when the reader/consumer of paraadox, under the manipulation of the paradoxographer, gradually surrenders his critical sense for the benefit of pleasure. Besides satisfying an appetite for learning or often pseudo-learning, reading paradoxography produces pleasure not so much through style, which is often wanting, but mostly through the shock of mere novelty and marvel.212 For ‘Longinus’ astonishment (ἐκπληξία) is the effect of the sublime, of a wonderful style (θαυμάσιον).213 In paradoxographical terms, the wonderful (θαυμάσιον), which at this level is synonymous with paraadoxon, produces astonishment that results in a more primitive pleasure that the aesthetic one. Since pseudo-instruction gains overwhelming precedent over real value instruction, with many paraadox being frequently dismissed as lies by more objective critics, the pleasure of reading paradoxography comes from the exposure to paraadox and therefore often to shocking but pleasant lies.

211 Strab. 1.2.8. Cf. his criticism of the Alexander historians (15.1.28), the writers on India (2.1.9), and Timaeus (5.4.9) for paraadox-telling.
213 Ps.-Long. 1.4.2-5.
Lucian’s *True Stories* celebrate exactly this pleasure of writing and reading/listening to lies, as Jacob puts it – “le plaisir du ψεύδος”. The Greek title itself, ἀλήθων διηγημάτων [λόγοι], places the work under the sign of paradox. The term διήγημα refers to a tale, a story that is not necessarily bound by the element of truth. In fact, Polybius often argues that διήγημα is nothing but the decadent form of ἱστορία stripped out of truth. This Hellenistic historian, in his strong reaction to Asianism, is a champion of the argument that historiography must be above all a true and instructive, therefore useful, discourse: the purpose of writing history (τὸ τέλος ἱστορίας) is opposed (τούναντίον) to that of writing tragedy; it is not to enthrall and entertain (ἐκπλήξαι καὶ ψυχαγωγήσαι), but to teach and persuade (διδάξαι καὶ πείσαι), and therefore to benefit the lovers of learning (διὰ τὴν ὄφελειαν τῶν φιλομαθῶντων) by presenting the truth (διὰ τῶν ἀληθινῶν ἑργῶν καὶ λόγων, τάλητές). He opposes διήγημα to history, as being deprived of truth (ἀλήθεια) and, therefore, usefulness (ὤφελεια). Thus the title of Lucian’s work, “true διηγήματα”, marks obviously a break in the literary tradition. However, this is not to be interpreted as a serious stance on the matter either, since the introduction to *True Stories* presents all the διηγήματα that follow as, in contradiction to the title, void of truth and

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214 Modern scholars often prefer the title *True Histories*; so Georgiadou & Larmour 1994 and 1998.
215 Jacob 1983, 135-139, esp. 138-139.
216 We shall waive here the problem of the paternity of the titles in Lucian’s corpus, since whoever chose this title, if not the author himself, reflected surprisingly well the author’s general disposition for paradox.
217 Pol. 2.56 specifically presents his criticism of tragic history. For a discussion of this passage in the context of the Hellenistic literature see Gutzwiller 2007, 150-151.
218 ἀνωφελὲς... διήγημα (Pol. 1.14.6, 12.12.3; cf. 13.6.1).
credibility – the second paradox already. This opens the door to the third paradox, Lucian’s own variant of the classical liar’s paradox: “I shall tell the truth (ἀληθεύω) with respect to this one single thing (ἐν τούτῳ): when I say that I lie (λέγω ὅτι ψεύδομαι, 1.4).”

**Paradoxographical overview**

After a quite long programmatic prologue, to which I shall return, *True Stories* represents the tale, told in the first person, of an amazing sea journey that takes the protagonist to wonderful places with marvelous creatures and customs.\(^{219}\) He and his companions set sail from the Pillars of Heracles westwards and arrive at a strange island that bears the marks of the former presence of both Heracles and Dionysus. There they discover a river of wine, become drunk with its fish, and meet the Vine-women who speak in tongues and try to seduce them (1.5-9).\(^{220}\) After leaving the island, a storm throws them onto the moon where they are involved in a cosmic battle between Endymion, the ruler of the moon, and Phaethon, the ruler of the sun, both mythological characters who suffered physical transformation.\(^{221}\) This presents the storyteller an occasion to give a detailed description of strange creatures, monstrous, mixed, mythical or simply huge, like three-headed-dog-faced men, sparrow- or ostrich-acorns, cloud-centaurs, enormous fleas and spiders, etc. Many other strange creatures complete the paradoxographical atmosphere, although they are deceivingly designated by compound nouns that do not actually refer to a physical *mixis*, but rather incorporate a feature or an instrument, such as the horse-cranes, wind-runners, horse-vultures, millet-fighters, garlic-fighters, flea-archers, sky-gnats, and stalk-mushrooms.

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\(^{219}\) The term ‘storyteller’ or the reference ‘Lucian’ are used here for the traveler and at the same time the narrator of the travel experience. This referential preference avoids the confusion between the ‘actor’ (identified as ‘Lucian’ within the story) and the ‘author’ (historical Lucian and the speaker in the prologue). Cf. Rütten 1997, 103-107, Fusillo 1999, 356-362; see also Winkler 1985.

\(^{220}\) Cf. the legend of Daphne and Par. Vat. 15 on trees that used to be maidens.

\(^{221}\) Cf. Luc. *Musc. enc.* and *Electr.*
Moreover, in the pure spirit of paradoxographical literature, strange physiological and behavioral features of the people of the moon are added to the list of *paradoxa* (καὶ παράδοξα). Women are absent from their society. Children are conceived from men and borne in the calf of the leg; others are ‘harvested’ from trees grown from cut off genitals. The moon people have artificial genitalia, at the moment of their death they dissolve into air, they feed themselves by sniffing the fumes of roasted frogs and drink a sort of dew squeezed from the air, have no digestive or urinary tracts, no toenails, have extremely long beards, one single toe, removable eyes, ears made of wood or plane-leaves, and a cabbage-leaf for a tail. In addition, their noses run honey and they sweat milk. They have strange practices like making cheese by mixing their physiological honey and milk, drawing perfume from onions, or using their belly as a pocket or, since it is hairy inside, to shelter the children from cold. They dress in glass or bronze. Moreover, even their mentalities are strange: for example, their idea of beauty is absolute baldness everywhere. The storyteller even ventures into using this strange world to rationalize natural phenomena that happen on earth: for example, hailstones on earth might be the result of strong winds that shake the stones of the moon water-vines (1.6-26).

After leaving the moon, the travelers reach the Lamp-town (Λυχνόπολις), occasion for the storyteller to digress on some aspects of the political system of this society of lamps, and the Cloud-cuckoo-town (Νεφελοκοκκυγία πόλις), a reminiscence of Aristophanes whose works, in the storyteller’s opinion, are unreasonably distrusted, in spite of his knowledge and truthfulness (άνδρος σοφός καὶ ἀληθοῦς, 1.29).

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222 Luc. *VH* 1.22.
223 Cf. Phleg. 6, 7, 8, 10 on androgyynes.
224 Cf. Antig. 72.2, 98; *Par. Vat.* 7.2 on regeneration of the eyes and sight in snakes and swallows; *Mir. ausc.* 12.1 on a sort of weasel with solid bone-like genitalia.
Then, having fallen back on the sea, the storyteller describes the encounter with sea-monsters and whales, one of which swallows the ship. Inside the creature, our travelers meet two other victims of the whale, Scintharus and his son, who have been living there in a paradoxical state: “We figure that we are dead, yet we believe that we are alive” (τεθνάναι μὲν γὰρ εἰκάζομεν, ζῆν δὲ πιστεύομεν, 1.33). The world inside the whale looks surprisingly similar to the familiar earth, with trees, vines, springs, mountains, and a sailable lake, yet populated with monstrous creatures like eel-eyed and crayfish-faced people, others that are half men – half weasels or swordfish,225 crab-handed and also tunny-fish-headed creatures, the crab-people, and the flatfish-footed people. Through the opened mouth of the whale our storyteller can see other incredible things (ἀπίστοις ἐοικότα, 1.40), such as the battle among huge people sailing on enormous islands as on ships (1.30-42).

The last and more elaborate episode of the *True Stories* follows the escape from the whale and is mostly dedicated to the adventures on the Isle of the Blessed. On their way there our travelers stop at an island with hornless bulls.226 Afterwards, they enter a sea of milk, arrive at an island of cheese with milk-vines, run into cork-footed men walking on water, and reach a city built on a cork island (2.1-4). Then they arrive at the Isle of the Blessed, all fragrant with flowers and resounding with bird songs and the sweet whisper of tree branches. Everything is stuck in an eternal spring, with utopian fertility of the plants and richness of the waters (springs and rivers of honey, myrrh, milk, and wine). The city itself is built of gold, ivory, and precious stones, with glass baths fragrant with burnt cinnamon, and surrounded by a river of myrrh. The

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225 τὰ μὲν ἄνω ἀνθρώπων ἐοικότες, τὰ δὲ κάτω τοῖς γαλεώταις; γαλεώτης = gecko lizard, sword-fish, or weasel for this passage in LSJ. Winkler 1980 argues for a sword-fish.
people there are incorporeal and do not grow older than the age at which they died.\footnote{Cf. Alex. F8 on an Illyrian man who reached the age of 50 without growing old physically; cf. Phleg. 32 on Craterus, the half-brother of Antigonus Gonatas, who lived the whole span of his life in only seven years.} After attending the judgment of Rhadamanthhus in a few cases of famous historical and mythical characters, the journeyers attend the symposium of the blessed, which the storyteller describes in all its marvelous details: glass trees that bear cups which fill themselves with wine, birds that pluck and then drop flowers on the heads of the banqueters, clouds that drop a myrrh-dew over them, springs of laughter and pleasure that entertain the general disposition (2.4-16).

The last part of the \textit{True Stories} is reserved to more paradoxographical material: encounters with pumpkin-pirates and nut-sailors (2.37-38), men riding dolphins (2.39), a huge halcyon on whose nest the travelers’ ship lands (2.40), cannibal ox-heads (2.44), phallonauts using a novel way of sailing (καινῷ τῷ τρόπῳ ναυτιλίας) and people sailing on corks drawn by dolphins (2.45).

Miraculous signs (τέρατα μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστά) appear to the travelers in ascending marvelousness (καὶ τὸ πάντων δὲ παραδεξότατον): the wooden goose-head on the ship’s stern post comes to life, bald Scinthurus grows hair, and the ship’s mast puts forth branches with fruits. The travelers reach a sea covered by a thick rootless forest, lift the ship and sail on top of the trees, then cross a bridge of water over a steep breaking into the sea (2.42-43). Before the end of the story, in an episode analogous to that of the Vine-women, they come to an island inhabited by the Ass-legs, mixed feminine creatures, quite seducing at first. Yet they turn out to be monstrous, having ass legs, killing and eating their guests after getting them drunk and having sexual intercourse with them.\footnote{Cf. Apoll. Rhod. 1.609 ff. on the Lemnian women. For more on the correspondence of episodes in \textit{True Stories} see Georgiadou & Larmour 1998.} After escaping this danger, our travelers finally catch a glimpse of mainland which, in virtue of Rhadamanthhus’ foretelling (2.27), they suppose (εἰκάζομεν) must
be the other continent, the one lying on the opposite side of their own world (τὴν ἤπειρον...τὴν ἀντιπέρας τῇ ὑφ' ἡμῶν οἰκουμένη κειμένην). While debating whether to land and explore it or not, a sudden storm wrecks their ship and they find themselves helpless on the other continent. As to their adventures there, the storyteller ends this story by promising a report of them in future books (ἐν ταῖσ ἔξις βιβλίοις διηγήσομαι, 2.47), probably a final deceiving statement.229

**Contradicting tradition (παρὰ δόξαν) and deceiving expectation (παρὰ προσδοκίαν, παρ’ ἐλπίδα)**

The catalogue of symposiasts on the Isle of the Blessed mixes mythical and historical figures altogether and points out the absence of some famous individuals or philosophical schools like Plato, the Stoics, and the Academy, or the exclusion of others like Chrysippus and Empedocles. Some participants behave in an opposite way than they did during their life. Diogenes the Cynic, for instance, has married a courtesan, gets drunk occasionally, and then dances or acts foolishly. The general behavior of the blessed is no less paradoxical: for example, except for Socrates, all indulge publicly in sexual intercourse with no gender discrimination (2.17-19).

The storyteller takes the opportunity to interact with Homer himself and thus to ‘solve’ some eternal scholarly disputes. All the Poet’s answers are, paradoxically, the opposite of the scholarly opinion held in Lucian’s time: Homer was not Greek, but a barbarian from Babylon, had truly written the lines later excised by Hellenistic scholars as interpolations, was not the author of the *Odyssey*, and was not blind (2.20). Another paradoxical detail is added: Homer’s defeat by Hesiod in the… foot-race (2.22).

229 A scholiast remarks: “and the end is most deceiving with its vain promise” (καὶ τὸ τέλος ψευδέστατον μετὰ τῆς ἀνυποστάτου ἐπαγγελίας, Rabe 1906, 25).
Significant for the history of the rhetorical paradox is the mention of Busiris and Phalaris, two of the leaders of the army of the wicked in the war against the blessed: both are the subject of paradoxical encomia, one by Isocrates, the other by Lucian himself (2.23). No less important is a detail slipped in the story of the abduction of Helen by Cinyras, which leads to a miniature variant of the Trojan War: unlike Gorgias’ Helen, the subject of a paradoxical encomium, this Helen willingly approves the plan of her own abduction and gladly goes along with it (2.25-26).

There are also numerous elements of frustrating deception of the audience, paradoxical situations that result from building an audience expectation that is immediately crushed. Homer writes a poem on the war between the wicked and the blessed and entrusts it to our storyteller to bring it on earth; yet this one lightly confesses that he lost it (2.24). Rhadamanthus’ prophecy is vainly detailed with regard to the near future of our traveler, about which information is soon given to us as the journey continues. Yet it is frustratingly vague with regard to the last part of the journey and the time of the return home, on which the story becomes suddenly silent and only makes vain promises for future accounts in the end (2.27 and 2.47). Breaking the pattern, only one curiosity of the audience, deliberately built by the author, is eventually satisfied, yet later, not without some suspense: the content of Odysseus’ letter to Calypso. The letter is entrusted to the storyteller (2.29) who, without scruples, opens it and discloses its content before handing it to the addressee (2.35).

The deceiving art reaches its peak with the inscription, set on the Isle, containing an epigram by Homer which documents Lucian’s – the only time when the name of the storyteller is disclosed – visit there. As the last and more powerful proof of his incredible journey, since ‘Lucian’ fails to produce others – like the new Homeric poem, for example – the physical form

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230 Cf. Hdt. 1.4.2.
of this epigram remains on the site of the adventure. It therefore fails to support the account and bears no relevance as document in the ‘real’ world (2.28). This is more than “just another Homeric lie.” It is a Lucianic lie altogether, fitting perfectly in the general pattern of deception of the audience. The Homeric background only offers a hint for how it is to be received.

After leaving the Isle of the Blessed, ‘Lucian’ passes by the Isles of the Wicked and stops at one where he beholds their punishment: the more severe sentence, which is however not described, is reserved for the liars (οἱ ψευσάμενοι τι) and the writers of lies (οὶ μὴ τὰ ἀληθῆ συγγεγραφότες), among whom Ctesias of Cnidus and Herodotus are specifically mentioned. In paradoxical contrast with the initial statement, our ‘Lucian’ feels relieved since he has no knowledge of having said a lie (οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐμαυτῷ ψεύδος εἶπόντι συνηπιστάμην, 2.32). Georgiadou and Larmour argue that this statement is “true from the perspective of the storyteller, false from the viewpoint of the author; by this stage of course Lucian has far exceeded Ctesias and Herodotus in his fabrications.” Yet even from the point of view of the author the statement has a degree of validity/truthfulness in the context of literary culture. The writers of lies named here are virtually historians, whose works should be concerned with the truth. Yet they, just like liars in general, pass lies as mere truth. Whereas Lucian tells lies that he admits that are lies, therefore, paradoxically, in a way he does not lie. He does not claim to be a historian and to tell the truth; therefore his lies lie in a different category and acquire literary value by themselves.

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233 Cf. Sciolla 1988, 58: “La Storia Vera è vera, perché il falso che vi viene raccontato è presentato come falso, non spacciato come avente una corrispondenza con la realtà al di fuori del testo (al contrario altri autori, afferma polemicamente Luciano, raccontano i fatti più inverosimili affermando di averli vissuti (2).”
Before reaching the island of Ogygia (2.35), our travelers stop on the Isle of the Dreams, an episode that is significant for the reading of the *True Stories* (2.32-34). Besides ‘correcting’ an alleged Homeric inaccuracy related to the number of gates on the island, and paradoxically attributing human-like features, both physical and psychological, to dreams, this passage is an extremely discreet warning on how to interpret the whole work. Significant for the fundamental problem that *True Stories* poses, that of the true and of the false discourse, the island has two temples, one of Truth (Ἀληθείας) and the other of Deceit (Ἀπάτης). Our travelers, suggestively, enter the island through the ivory gates (ἐλεφαντίνα), a detail that would remain pointless for an audience unaware that the ivory gates are in Homer the gates of deceitful dreams (ἐλεφαίρωνται) through which unfulfilled, fruitless words are brought in (ἔπε’ ἀκράοντα).²³⁴

**Mimesis and mimics of paradoxography²³⁵**

In *True Stories*, Lucian draws heavily on the paradoxographical tradition, not just on paradoxography as a literary genre per se, but mostly, on the insertion of *paradoxa* in other literary genres, chiefly historiography, ethnography, utopia, and travel stories in general, that fundamentally claim, or sometimes just pretend, to represent a true discourse.²³⁶ In making use of *paradoxa* Lucian often mimics the discourse of an authentic paradoxographer, his methods, style, motifs, mannerisms, etc. Lucian acknowledges a long literary paradoxographical tradition (πολλὰ τεράστια καὶ μυθώδηι, 1.2) starting with Odysseus, “the originator and the teacher of this sort of coarse jesting” (ἀρχηγὸς… καὶ διδάσκαλος τῆς τοιαύτης βωμολοχίας, 1.3).

²³⁵ The hyphenated forms ‘paradoxo-graphy’ and ‘paradoxo-grapher’ will be used, in this chapter, as comprehensive terms, referring not just to the specific area of paradoxography proper, but to a wider literary practice of writing on *paradoxa*, to paradoxographical literature in general.
²³⁶ Cf. Fusillo 1999, 353: “It is not fantasy literature that is the target of Lucian’s satire, but its travesty under the appearance of true experience, that is, all the extravagant descriptions of societies and codes of behaviour reported as true and personally experienced by ethnographers.”
The stated purpose of these True Stories is to offer a “suitable rest” (ἐμμελὴς ἢ ἀνάπαυσις) from more serious readings (τῶν σπουδαιοτέρων ἀνάγωσιν), to offer not just “mere pleasure” (ψιλὴν τὴν ψυχαγωγίαν), but also the occasion for thought and meditation (θεωρίαν). The goal therefore is to mix the entertainment with the practice of the mind, just as initially paradoxography was conceived. This work is supposed to be seductive (ἐπαγωγόν) not only based on the novelty of subject (τὸ ξένον τῆς ὑποθέσεως), pleasantry of thought (τὸ χαρίεν τῆς προαιρέσεως), and the variety of lies (ψεύσματα ποικίλα), i.e. paradoxa, told in a plausible way (πιθανῶς τε καὶ ἐναλήθως). Its seduction comes also from comic allusions to and implicit criticism of those who mixed paradoxa (τεράστια καὶ μυθώδη) in their writings, pretending to be truthful. Whereas we sense Lucian’s categorical distancing from the practices of the paradoxo-grapher, we need to retain for now, for the sake of the argument, the insistence on discourse not just as mental exercise, but also as seduction (ψυχαγωγία, ἐπαγωγόν) having its sources, among others, in novelty (i.e. paradoxon) and poikilia, two essential features of the paradoxographical discourse. Even closer to the paradoxo-grapher’s motivation and purpose, presumptively anticipated in his audience too, are the stated reasons and goal of the journey (αἰτία… καὶ ὑπόθεσις): a curious disposition (ἡ τῆς διανοίας περιεργία), a passion for novelty (πραγμάτων καινῶν ἐπιθυμία), and the desire to learn about the distant otherness (πέραν, 1.5). Whereas the paradoxographer proper performs an imaginary journey through books and then, through compilation, facilitates for his reader a similar, yet less laborious journey, paradoxographers like Ctesias, Iambulus, and Herodotus travel themselves, or at least claim to, in order to satisfy both their own and their reader’s curiosity. Lucian mimics the latter’s enterprise – the travel, but ends up doing somehow just as the former: his is an imaginary, therefore wholly fictitious journey.
The **vocabulary** in *True Stories* is suggestively sprinkled with terms suited for a paradoxo-grapher: παράδοξον, θαύμα, τεράστιον, καινόν, ξένον, and their derivatives. In claiming antecedents for the practice of writing on marvelous things, Lucian mentions Iambulus, as the author of many *paradoxa* (πολλὰ παράδοξα, 1.3). Phaethon’s army of winged horses and men is the strangest sight (θέαμα παραδοξάτατον, 1.18), and so are also the men of huge size floating on islands (θεαμάτων παραδοξάτατον, 1.40). The customs of the inhabitants of the moon are novel and strange to the foreigners (καινὸν καὶ παράδοξον, 1.22). The precipice that marks an interruption of the sea is strange and terrifying (φοβερὸν καὶ παράδοξον, 2.43). In a series of strange events (τέρατα… καὶ θαυμαστά), the wood of the ship mast coming back to life is the strangest (τὸ πάντων δὴ παραδοξάτατον, 2.41).

The writers who indulged in lies, actually indulged in accounts of many monstrous things that are fabulous rather than real (πολλὰ τεράστια καὶ μυθώδη, 1.2). The Vine-women are monstrously strange (χρήμα τεράστιον, 1.8), and so are also the incredible stories on some creatures that were supposed to participate in the battle between Endymion and Phaethon, but never arrived, so that our storyteller does not get the chance to see them and therefore omits such reports (τεράστια γὰρ καὶ ἀπιστά, 1.13).

The mirror through which ‘Lucian’ looks down from the moon onto earth is a marvel (θαύμα, 1.26). Marvelous are also the sweet and fragrant breeze on the Isle of the Blessed (θαυμαστή, 2.5), and the portents in 2.41 (θαυμαστά). Marveling (θαυμάζειν) at *paradoxa* is a frequent reaction in *True Stories*. The travelers marvel at the view of the Cloud-cuckoo-town (ἐθαυμάσαμεν, 1.29), at huge size bodies (ἐθαυμάζομεν, 2.2), at seeing the cork-footed men (ἐθαυμάσαμεν, 2.4), or at the savage sight of the place where the wicked were punished (ἐθαυμάζομεν, 2.30). Scinthurus marvels when he hears about the adventures of our travelers.
before being swallowed by the whale (ὑπερθαυμάσας, marveling exceedingly, 1.34). On the other hand, we have also a report on the reaction of some of the strange creatures to the encounter with our journeyers who would appear, in their turn, strange from the perspective of the others: the people sailing on corks drawn by dolphins experience amazement at the view of the big ship (τὸ εἴδος τοῦ ἡμετέρου πλοίου θαυμάζοντες καὶ πάντοθεν περισκοποῦντες, 2.45).

The journey related in *True Stories* is a search for novelty (πραγμάτων καινῶν ἐπιθυμία, 1.5) and the exotic *paradoxa* are generally defined as novel, thus strange (καινά καὶ παράδοξα, 1.22-25; καινῷ τῷ τρόπῳ, 2.45). As have seen, the topic is fundamentally new and strange (ξένου, 1.2), consisting of *paradoxa*. Finally Lucian uses a term that is not canonical to paradoxography, but for which he manifests a real fondness: the adjective ἄλλόκοτος (strange, unusual) and its nominal neuter form. Thus the creatures inside the whale are strange with respect to the shapes of their bodies (μορφὰς ἄλλόκοτοι, 1.35) and the portents in 2.41 are also extraordinary (τὸ ἄλλόκοτον τοῦ φαντάσματος).

The subject matter (ὑπόθεσις) of *True Stories* consists in overabundant paradoxographical material, or I should rather say pseudo-paradoxographical, since, contrary to the paradoxography practice, Lucian labels it as mere lie in his prologue (1.4). In the very first episode of *True Stories*, Lucian sets the tone by mentioning a stele, recording the visit of Heracles and Dionysus on the island, and also the huge footprints of the two. This alludes, of course, to a landmark of Herodotean paradoxography: the huge footprint of Heracles found in Scythia.²³⁷

²³⁷ Hdt. 4.82. Cf. Mir. ausc. 97.2 on the footprints of Heracles in Pandosia and Iapygia.
The main subject matters of paradoxography, reduced here to travel story (συνέγραψαν ὡς δή τινας ἐαυτῶν πλάνας τε καὶ ἀποδημίας, 1.3), are summarized as being natural paradoxa, of physis (in both animal and human world), and exotic paradoxa, of nomos: beasts of huge size, savage people (a reference to exotic paradoxa that may also hint at human natural paradoxa), and strange, novel ways of life (βίων καινότητας, 1.3).\(^{238}\) We find them reflected in True Stories, the story of a journey prompted, among other reasons, by curiosity for novelty (πραγμάτων καινότητας ἐπιθυμία, 1.5). While many huge beasts and strange people populate both the lunar and the marine world of True Stories, Lucian mimics also the pseudo-ethnographic discourse with his fictitious paradoxa of nomos: the novel and strange way of life on the moon (καινὰ καὶ παράδοξα, 1.22-25), or the phallonauts’ novel, odd fashion of sailing (καινῶ τῷ τρόπῳ, 2.45).

However, paradoxography is not concerned only with huge beasts, savage people, and strange ways of life embedded in the frame of a travel story, as in the case of Iambulus, or supernatural powers, physical monstrosities, cannibalism, metamorphoses and magic, as in the case of Odysseus the ‘founder’ (1.3). Many other frequent topics are exemplified by Lucian himself in this work, such as strange phenomena related to waters, plants, and trees or physical and physiological features of animals and people. I shall not attempt a comprehensive survey of possible sources or allusions, which would take the space and time of a whole study by itself, but rather try to put in evidence the rich and diverse paradoxographical atmosphere that Lucian creates in True Stories, in good resonance with paradoxography, and exemplify it with paradoxa on waters.\(^{239}\)

\(^{238}\) Cf. Giannini 1963, 249-250.
\(^{239}\) Comprehensive, yet not exhaustive information can be found in Georgiadou & Larmour 1998. Since they point out mostly passages from literature other than paradoxography proper, I will limit my references almost exclusively to the latter.
Early paradoxographers manifest a predilection for wonders related to waters. Water is symbolically essential for True Stories both as the vehicle for exploration of new and remote worlds and as the element which provides many instances of marvels. On their first stop the travelers find a river of wine with sources in springs of wine. The fish from the river resemble wine in color and taste. They are full of lees and make them drunk; therefore they need to be mixed with fish from water (1.5-7). This is a paradoxical mixture, of fish from different sources instead of the liquids themselves, reflected also in the paradoxical compound: wine-eating (οἰνοφαγία, 1.7). There are many passages in the paradoxographic corpus related to water and wine. There are reports on a spring consecrated to Isis which provides a spontaneous and pleasant mixture of water and wine whenever a cup of wine is dipped into it (Antig. 149; Par. Flor. 18). There are references to waters that alter disagreeably the taste of wine (Par. Flor. 14), or that even make those who drink from them hate wine (Par. Flor. 12, 13, 24; Par. Pal. 5). Some waters have on men the same effect as wine has (Antig. 164), specifically make people drunk (Pal. Flor. 20; Pal. Vat. 12, 22). Other effects too may be similar to those produced by wine. There are, for instance, waters that induce madness (Antig. 145; Par. Flor. 1), that make people confess things done in secrecy (Par. Flor. 17), or that cure lovesickness (Par. Vat. 37). There are many other strange effects produced by waters, among which also a sudden and lasting erection (Apollon. 14), with which the men who sail by using their big phallus as ship mast in True Stories (2.45) may be connected.

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240 Cf. Apollon. 43: Theophrastus reports that the seeds of pomegranates in Egypt have the taste of wine.
241 Other paradoxical effects of waters are healings (Antig. 138, 142, 150; Mir. ausc. 117, 130; Par. Flor. 9), change in color of hair for people, or animals, or their offspring (Antig. 78, 134; Nymph. F4; Isig. F14; Sot. F2; Mir. ausc. 169, 170; Par. Vat. 10; Par. Flor.1, 19; Par. Pal.13, 15), sickness (Mir. ausc. 152; Par. Vat.18), loss of hair, toenails, or teeth (Par. Flor. 21, 26), ability to prophesy (Par. Vat. 30), lack of senses (Par. Flor. 25; Par. Vat. 33), petrifaction (Mir. ausc. 95b), death (Antig. 141, 152a; Par. Flor. 15, 16, 22; Par. Vat. 13, 38), proving of adulteries and false oaths (Polem. F2; Mir. ausc. 57, 152; Par. Vat.16, 17), etc.
In *True Stories* the journey to the moon is occasioned by a storm during which the sea waters spring up into the air and carry the ship on high (1.9). On one occasion the travelers reach a steep precipice that cuts the sea in two and they have to cross it by sailing through a bridge of water high above it (2.43). There are paradoxographical reports on surging waters. A river in Liguria raises its waters so high that it makes the other bank impossible to see (*Mir. ausc.* 92). A spring in Sicily launches its waters high up in the air (*Mir. ausc.* 57; *Par. Flor.* 8). In the middle of a lake in Sicily the waters spring up sometimes cold, sometimes warm (Antig. 154). There is also a record of the opposite situation: a Sicilian river, scared by the thunder, hides beneath the earth and then comes up again (*Par. Vat.* 20). Related to the topic of waters rising up are also the reports on sea tides (Antig. 125; *Mir. ausc.* 55, 136), or those on waters that violently throw out and back on the land those swimming or bathing in them (Philosteph. F8; *Mir. ausc.* 112; *Par. Flor.* 3, 30).

While living inside the whale, the travelers look out, through the open mouth of the monster, and behold a sea battle between huge men sailing on enormous floating islands as on ships (1.40-42). Then, after escaping from the whale, they come across cork-footed men running above the water towards a city built on a big cork (2.4-5). In *Paradoxographus Florentinus* there are three consecutive reports (37, 38, 39) on floating islands (on three lakes in Italy and on one near Sardes), some very fertile, that change their place when pushed by the winds.

In the next episode our travelers are confronted with a frozen sea, the result of a strong cold wind blowing from the north (2.2). Aside from numerous paradoxographical reports on the mixture of warm and cold waters, there is a mention of rivers that freeze during the winter (*Mir. ausc.* 168). A lake in Liguria turns into solid earth and its water vanishes from sight when strong winds stir up the dust from its bottom; thus the locals take out the fish by breaking
through the solidified lake with tridents (*Mir.ausc.* 89), just as our travelers get their fish by digging into the frozen sea.\textsuperscript{242}

Towards the end of the journey, our travelers fight pirates riding on huge dolphins that neigh just like horses (2.39). Later on they meet harmless people who sail sitting on corks drawn by dolphins and wonder at the nature of the ship (2.45). Lucian mentions somewhere else the transformation of pirates into dolphins by Dionysus as the *aition* for the benign character of these sea creatures towards men in general and in particular towards Arion, who was saved by a dolphin and carried without harm to land.\textsuperscript{243} Myrsilus of Methymna, who wrote a collection of historical *paradoxa*, mentions a similar story related to his island of Lesbos: Enalus, a local hero, was saved by a dolphin when he plunged into the sea after his beloved, the daughter of Smintheus, had been thrown into the sea by the Penthilidae who were complying with an oracle of Amphitrite, herself a sea goddess connected with dolphins (F6).\textsuperscript{244} Antignon dedicates a passage to the mildness of dolphins, the tamest of sea creatures, especially towards their own offspring and kin (55). There are also other references to strange things relative to water creatures. In the very first episode of *True Stories*, the river of wine on the island beyond the Pillars of Heracles is full of wine-fish (1.7). This resonates with a paradoxographical account on the extreme abundance, exquisite quality, and great size of tunny fish that the Phoenicians brought from the waters beyond the Pillars of Heracles (*Mir.ausc.* 136). Antignon (71) and *Paradoxographus Vaticanus* (6) coincide in their report on the lack of esophagus in fish: a bigger fish, when chasing a smaller one, pushes its belly close to its mouth. Lucian’s account of the ship and travelers being swallowed by the whale echoes the paradoxographical description: the

\textsuperscript{242} On mixture of cold and warm waters see Antig. 133, 148, 154; *Par. Flor.* 11. Cf. reports on boiling waters, or waters that emit warm vapors or flames (Antig. 130, 133, 139.3, 143, 159, 160; *Mir. ausc.* 114, 152; *Par. Pal.* 9) or on a mixture of sweet and salty waters (Antig. 129.2, 133).


\textsuperscript{244} *Hyg. Ast.* 2.17.
monster approaches gaping and showing its teeth; when it swallows the travelers, they slip unharmed through its teeth, directly into the belly; once inside they look around and discover a wide hollow, large enough for a big city in which they will be living unharmed for quite a long time (1.30-31).

There is also a paradoxographical report on whales having milk, information for which Antigonus mentions Aristotle’s authority (Antig. 22.2). In True Stories water and milk are interconnected: the travelers cross a sea of milk (πέλαγος... γάλακτος), then they land on an island of cheese (νήσος... τυρός) where milk-vines grow (ἀμπελόι... πλήρεις... γάλα) and where there is a temple dedicated – of course – to Galatea, and they eat the cheese-soil itself (2.3). Nicholaus of Damascus mentions a Scythian tribe of galactophagoi among whom Anacharsis, a character dear to Lucian, was born. Two parallel paradoxographical accounts connect goat milk with the sea: some goats born in Thrace do not drink water for six months, while they only look towards the sea and take in the sea breezes through their open mouth (Alex. F2); and the goats on Cephallenia do the same thing always, during the day (Mir. ausc.9). An even stranger case is that of goats who breathe through their ears (Archel. F1). While these animals satisfy their needs in unexpected ways, Lucian’s men on the moon have a strange way of satisfying both their thirst and hunger: they drink air from which they squeeze some sort of dew and they eat by sniffing the smoke of roasted frogs (1.23). Since their elderly do not die but turn into air, the men on the moon, by drinking air, practice in fact a sort of anthropophagy, or rather anthropo-drinking (1.23). The paradoxographical corpus contains references to...

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246 Cf. Antig. 128b: the goats on Zacynthus, another Ionian island, during the etesian winds turn their open mouth in the direction of Boreas and thus do not need to drink water.
248 Cf. Par. Vat. 59: in Liguria the useless elderly are thrown down into a precipice.
anthropophagy, especially among the Scythians (Isig. F15; Par. Vat. 47 and 61). Another custom of the moon men, the eating of cheese made of their own sweat-milk and mucus-honey (1.24), can be connected with the paradoxographical story on people who pluck flowers and make honey themselves, just as good as the honey produced by bees (Apollon. 38). 249

While the sea in True Stories can paradoxically provide milk and cheese, more nourishment than just ordinary seafood, the springs and rivers on the Isle of the Blessed run with myrrh, honey, milk, and wine (2.11, 2.13). Likewise, there are in the paradoxographical corpus numerous accounts of rich waters that provide, aside from the already mentioned wine, other useful things such as gold (Mir. ausc. 46), oil (Antig. 139, 150; Mir. ausc. 113.2; Par. Flor. 5), salt (Antig. 143, 157; Mir. ausc. 138.1; Par. Pal. 12.2), even vinegar (Antig. 139). Other waters, although not running with oil, have nevertheless the same anointing effect (Par. Flor. 23; Par. Pal. 9, 16). In fact, the pseudo-Aristotelian description of Uranius, a mountain in northern Africa with a spring of fragrant oil, is echoed in Lucian’s description of the Isle of the Blessed, not just in the richness of its waters, but also in the extraordinary fragrance of its air. The perfume of various flowers spreads widely from Uranius and charms the travelers (Mir. ausc. 113). In True Stories the travelers are delighted by the sweet fragrance of various flowers (roses, narcissi, hyacinths, lilies, violets, etc.) when they approach the Isle of the Blessed (2.5).

The interior of the whale is a paradoxical combination of sea bottom and land. Inside, the travelers discover, besides fish and wreckage traces (ships, human remains, anchors, and cargoes), a whole terrestrial world, almost a replica of the world above: an island with trees, a vegetable garden, sea birds, a temple of Poseidon, graves, a spring with sweet water, the house of Scintharus, etc. (1.31-33). A large, thick, rootless forest grows on the sea in True Stories (2.42). According to Megasthenes trees grow in the Indian sea (Antig. 132). There are also

249 See Mir. ausc. 22.1 on the use of honey to produce something different, in this case wine.
paradoxographical reports on submerged worlds. On the bottom of two Italian lakes one could see though the limpid water foundations, temples, and statues, all the signs of submerged cities (Par. Flor. 41). On the bottom of a lake in Macedonia splendid dinner tables, a huge quantity of silver as well as gold tableware, and other signs of royal opulence could be seen (Par. Flor. 42).

We have already seen some of the destructive effects of water (loss of hair, of toenails, of teeth, sickness and even death), as well as a regenerative, healing effect. There are, in the paradoxographical corpus, other references of even more spectacular regenerative effects of waters, such as the resurrection of dead creatures or the physical restoration of objects. Choked birds and animals are brought back to life when immersed in a Cilician lake (Mir.ausc. 29; Par. Flor. 6). Besides healing the wounds and bruises of both men and yoke-cattle, a little Thessalian spring is able to restore into a pristine condition a broken piece of wood, as long as it has not been completely split (Mir.ausc. 117). In one of the last episodes of True Stories Lucian introduces a sequence of similar marvels (τέρατα μεγάλα καὶ θαυμαστά): the wooden goose on the stern post claps its wings and shouts, bald Scintharus suddenly has long hair, and the ship’s mast grows branches and fruits (2.41).

As we have seen, Lucian evokes persistently in True Stories, at the level of ὑπόθεσις, paradoxographical material. Many of these topics had found their way into historiographical and travel narrative – as hinted in the prologue through the names of Ctesias and Iambulus – and in self-proclaimed true discourse in general – as alluded throughout the text and particularly suggested by placing Herodotus and other writers of lies among the ever punished wicked.

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250 See n. 22 above.
251 See Georgiadou & Larmour 1998, 225 for details on the obvious literary allusions in this passage as well as their observation that “Scintharus’ sudden sprouting of hair may signify the return to the world of the living”. Cf. Dial. mort. 6.4, where Menippus observes that all the dead around him are bald.
252 For these allusions see Stengel 1911; Georgiadou & Larmour 1994.
Lucian does not mimic just the vocabulary and topics of paradoxo-graphy, but also the paradoxo-grapher’s **methods** used to emphasize the truthfulness of his discourse.

Paradoxographers used to confer truthfulness on their works by acknowledging their sources and by applying some rudimentary **critical judgment** on them. Positive criticism and thus trustworthiness is given to sources whose authority comes from competence, experience and autopsy. Negative criticism and thus lack of credibility is given to sources whose authority is traditionally discredited, usually because of lack of autopsy. Their accounts are branded as ἄπιστα, τερατώδη, or simply ψεύδη, yet nevertheless mentioned, even if very briefly sometimes. The perfect example for this is the infamous case of Ctesias who is criticized by Antigonus for his fabulous lies (15.3b), and whose lack of autopsy is mentioned in *True Stories* (1.3). When it comes to causality, paradoxographers would not attempt to explain and rationalize marvels; at most there would be a mythical explanation, quite the opposite of what mythographers such as Palaephatus or Heraclitus do.

Within the frame of the travel story ‘Lucian’, the traveler and storyteller, plays with these practices. From the perspective of the traveler, **autopsy** is emphasized throughout the entire narrative. When he has not the chance to see or experience himself some of the marvels, ‘Lucian’ avoids mentioning them because they seem incredible. Thus, he omits details on sparrow- or ostrich-acorns and horse-vultures because what he hears about them seems unbelievable (τεράστια γὰρ καὶ ἄπιστα περὶ αὐτῶν ἐλέγετο, 1.13). Even when autopsy would allegedly entitle him to mention some things, he would play coy and avoid doing it, as in the case of the huge number of cloud-centaurs, lest it seem incredible (μὴ τῷ καὶ ἄπιστον δῷ, 1.18).

There are variations on this practice. One is to simulate hesitation in mentioning a seen marvel that – as the storyteller himself would admit – seems really hard to believe, yet to

eventually mention it nevertheless. Thus, he hesitates to talk about the removable eyes of the moon-men (ὅκυρо μὲν εἰπεῖν) lest he be considered a liar, given the incredibility of the *paradoxon* (μὴ τίς με νομίσῃ πεφύσθαι διὰ τὸ ἀπίστον τοῦ λόγου, 1.25). However, he chooses to do it (ὁμώς δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ἐρῶ). In other cases, the storyteller seems very much aware that certain *paradoxa*, even allegedly sanctioned by autopsy, seem incredible. Yet he boldly ventures to mention them, as it happens with the floating islands used as ships (οἶδα μὲν οὖν ἀπίστοις ἑοικότα ἱστορήσων, λέξω δὲ ὁμώς, 1.40), or with the mirror on the moon through which he sees his family back on earth. In the latter case, we see a further (pseudo-) argument for credibility, the future autopsy of the incredulous receptor: whoever does not trust this account (ὅστις δὲ ταύτα μὴ πιστεύει) would certainly do so (εἰσεται ώς ἀληθῆ λέγω) whenever he would go to the moon and see the marvel himself (ἄν ποτε καὶ αὐτὸς ἐκεῖσε ἀφίκηται, 1.26).254

This argument is hardly valid, as improbable as a trip to the moon would be, and just as implausible as other pseudo-arguments for truthfulness are in *True Stories*. One of them is the argument from autopsy and competence for the fact that comet-people, unlike moon-people, consider long hair to be beautiful (a pun on κομῆτης); these reports come from comet-people who are visiting the moon at the same time as our storyteller (1.23).

Then, there are pseudo-*documents* of the travel: the gifts from Endymion, that would document the trip to the moon, are left in the whale (1.27); the new Homeric poem is lost (2.24), the epigram on the presence of ‘Lucian’ on the Isle of the Blessed is inscribed and set there (2.28), the letter of Odysseus is given to Calypso (2.35), although the storyteller lets us peek generously at its intimate content (2.29). ‘Lucian’ also takes on an impossible mission when he uses his alleged autopsy and experience to attempt to prove a comic poet right and truthful: the

trip to the Cloud-cuckoo-town is an occasion to prove, against all odds, the true existence of Aristophanes’ city built by birds (1.29). The same method is applied in the case of Homer to prove the existence of a city of Dreams (2.32-34), although a ludic twist is added in trying to correct distorted information, and in the case of Antimachus, whose verse on “sailing through the forest” is proved by our travelers’ experience to reflect reality.255

The paradoxographer proper would hardly attempt to explain the reasons for which paradoxa may occur, since marvel itself is his object and marveling is the main reaction expected from his targeted audience. On the other hand, the paradoxo-grapher would, at least sometimes, try better to incorporate paradoxa into an avowed true discourse that mainly addresses the reason and understanding of the audience – such as historiography – by a feeble attempt to reasonably explain them. This explanation can simply take the guise of a mythological cause, such as Ctesias uses to explain the appearance of Derceto, the goddess mother of Semiramis, who has the body of a fish and a woman’s face, if indeed he is the source for the local reports in Diodorus.256 The rationalizing attempt is sometimes reduced to the mere wondering about causes, which nevertheless fails to produce them, as we see in Herodotus’ inability (θωμαζεσυε το αμιτιον) to explain why the lions ate only the camels, animals unknown to them, and did not touch the yoke-cattle and the men of Xerxes’ army.257 The same Herodotus fails to explain (θωμαζεσ) the causes of a strange phenomenon, the impossibility to breed mules in Elis, and thus reduces them to the local reports of a possible curse.258 Yet another time, he filters a θῶμα through more consistent reasoning, although still failing to be persuasive: among the bones scattered on a former battlefield in Egypt, the skulls of the Egyptians are considerably

255 For more on “concretization of metaphors and myths” see Fusillo 1999, 372-374.
256 FGrH 688 F1b.83-116 (ap. Diod. 2.4.2-3).
257 Hdt. 7.125.
258 Hdt. 4.30.
stronger than those of the Persians because the Egyptians use to shave their heads and thus their bones become thicker and stronger being exposed to the sun.\textsuperscript{259}

Lucian mimics such attempts in \textit{True Stories}. The storyteller too takes a step further and attempts at least once to confer more authenticity on his account by exposing the cause of a \textit{paradoxon}. However, he does this deceivingly. He invokes a fabulous explanation for the existence of the island inside the whale: it was formed of the mud the monster must have swallowed (1.31). Or he finds explanations on mythological grounds: the personal presence of Dionysus on the first island the travelers reach beyond the Pillars of Heracles explains the existence there of the river of wine (1.7). Further on Lucian gives this practice a new twist: he attempts to explain the obvious through a complicated concoction of a \textit{paradoxon}. Thus hailstones falling on earth may actually be the grapes of water-vines on the moon, shaken by winds (1.24). Such paradoxical explanations even get an etymological flavor: the origin of the Greek compound \textit{γαστροκνημία} (\textit{calf of the leg}, literally \textit{belly of the leg}) lies in the moon-men’s practice of conceiving and carrying their children in their calves (1.22). The Greek name of Homer (\textit{Ὅμηρος}) is explained by ‘revealing’ a popular etymology to which details heard from the man himself are added: the Babylonian Tigranes changed his name after falling hostage (\textit{ompiler}}) among the Greeks (2.20).

\textit{True Stories} through the \textit{kάτοπτρον} of the prologue

The obvious exaggeration and accumulation of \textit{paradoxa} and the noticeable twists of the paradoxo-grapher’s style are all internal clues that these ‘true stories’, although rooted in the paradoxographical literary tradition, fall deliberately short of an authentic paradoxographical

\textsuperscript{259} Hdt. 3.12.
The fact that Lucian names Odysseus the founder of this type of discourse (1.3) is very suggestive and part of the transition from the prefatory statements to the stories themselves. Paradoxically, here the character becomes author and this “phenomenological slippage”\textsuperscript{261} is a hint that the True Stories are to be read more through the lens of myth and fiction, rather than that of truth. Moreover, when considered from the perspective of the prologue, which frames the stories, none of the persistent attempts to emphasize the truthfulness and the legitimacy based on autopsy and experience stand, since the prologue states that everything that follows is a lie (μηδὲν ἀληθὲς λέγειν). The author strongly undermines here any future claim to autopsy, experience, and personal inquiry, and even to the truth of the stories, turning completely up-side-down the paradoxo-grapher’s topics and methods: “well then, I am writing about things which I have neither seen, nor experienced, nor heard from others, and still things which do not even exist at all, and which, in the first place, cannot exist” (1.4).

This is the main point in which Lucian distances himself from a paradoxo-grapher: he admits to the unreality of his accounts. In doing this he separates himself from the traditional prose discourse, be it historiography, ethnography, travel story, or philosophical prose (even Plato uses historical features, like characters and events, that confer realism to his dialogues), because the values of truth and falsehood apply differently to his own discourse. Lucian’s type of prose is from a different stock and it demands a different analysis when it comes to the true/false dichotomy, as the prologue to True Stories clearly claims. First of all, this is not the regular introduction to a traditional prose work:

\begin{quote}
Just as athletes and those engaged in physical training are not only preoccupied with a good physical condition and with exercising, but also with timely relaxation (τῇς κατὰ καιρὸν
\end{quote}


\textsuperscript{261} Laird 2003, 126.
γινομένης ἀνέσεως [φροντίς]) – and indeed they consider this the greatest part (μέρος τὸ μέγιστον) of their training –, thus also for those earnestly pursuing literary studies (τοῖς περὶ τοὺς λόγους ἐσπουδασκόντων) I think it suitable, after a long reading of more serious works (μετὰ τὴν πολλὴν τῶν σπουδαιοτέρων ἀνάγωσιν), to relax their mind (ἀνίεναι τὴν διάνοιαν) and to strengthen it (ἀκμαιοτέραν παρασκευάζειν) for future effort. And it would be a suitable recreation (ἔμμελῆς ἢ ἀνάταυσις) for them, if they should spend time with such reading which will not only offer simple pleasure (ψυλὴν τὴν ψυχαγωγίαν) based on cleverness and charm (ἐκ τοῦ ἀστείου τε καὶ χαρίεντος), but will also show (ἐπιδείξεται) some refined thought (θεωρίαν οὐκ ἀμουσον), as I think they will deem this work. (1.1-2)

Lucian therefore introduces *True Stories* not as the most serious reading, but as one that should provide timely relaxation from and mental strength for more serious, more important literary studies. Yet this does not at all make it less important and less useful for literary culture. On the contrary, its lack of seriousness is essential to it (μέρος τὸ μέγιστον) because it performs a spiritual regeneration on the reader, and it offers a recharging break from more serious mental exercise. It is not just a sophisticated jeux d’esprit, but also displays the author’s deep thought, observation, and meditation (θεωρία), which I will discuss in detail below. Enthrallment and seduction (ψυχαγωγία, ἐπαγωγόν) are the effect of the novelty of topic (τὸ ξένον τῆς ύποθέσεως), of a charming style (τὸ χαριέν τῆς προσαρέσεως), and of ψεύσιμα ποικίλα, varied or (why not?) subtle, intricate lies, presented in a plausible and truth-like manner (πιθανῶς τε καὶ ἐναλῆθεως). The objects of θεωρία, on the other hand, are τεράστια καὶ μυθώδη, the astonishing and marvelous stories of the writers of old, to which Lucian hints through parody, through an amusing riddle (οὐκ ἀκωμωδήτως ἦμικται).

From the perspective of traditional literary criticism, serious literature is associated with the main purpose of instruction (διδακτικία) and, therefore, usefulness (ὤφελεια). Less serious
literature, on the other hand, attains seduction and produces pleasure (here ἐπαγωγήν and ψυχαγωγία). Yet Lucian performs a paradoxical mixing in the terms of these equations, and states that a lighter literary work like his is essential to more serious literature and thus useful, and that, although focused on producing pleasure and keeping with a light tone, including humorous satire (οὐκ ἀκωμῳδήτως), it nevertheless cannot be denied a subtly concealed serious value. The paradoxographer’s subject was “the strange” too (τὸ ξένον), and his purpose was a combination of entertainment and instruction, with the balance initially inclining towards the latter, but ending up by favoring the former. Something similar happens to paradoxographers: their intention is just to spice their serious works with paradoxa, but some indulge too much in them. Lucian’s True Stories seems to surrender completely to paradoxa, to abandon any plan for usefulness and instruction, and yet the prologue makes a different claim. Underneath this apparently reinless paradoxographical discourse, underneath the intricate lies (ψεύσματα ποικίλα) and the pretense of relaxation, there is a cleverly veiled aim at ὑφέλεια. The prologue insists on it through the opposition οὐ/μὴ μόνον... ἀλλὰ καὶ, as also through the emphatic use of the adjective ψιλὴν (simple, mere) with restrictive value: μὴ μόνον... ψιλὴν παρέξει τὴν ψυχαγωγίαν. This usefulness is masked under the resting and recharging metaphor: ἀνιέναι τε τὴν διάνοιαν καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἑπειτα κάμιστον ἀκμαιοτέραν παρασκευάζειν. What makes True Stories a less serious work is not the intention therefore, but rather the design, the presentation, the appearance. It is lighter not because it is not serious, but because it works with a low-key material and a ludicrous method, paradoxa and their presentation as mere reality; because its reflection of such discourse has a humorous tone (οὐκ ἀκωμῳδήτως), and, most importantly,
because it is different (τὸ ξένον), other than the generally approved literary corpus, epitomizing what Brandão calls “uma retórica da diferença”.

The seduction comes from the refreshing difference; the otherness helps the reader gain a wider perspective on standard literature. The prologue defies a simple reading/reader, because Lucian translates one polarity through another. The otherness of his work is rendered in familiar terms of traditional literary criticism: the traditionally approved literature is the one worth serious attention, the good, the excellent one (τὰ σπουδαῖότερα), whereas the novelty is, well, less, on account of being different. The prologue itself is therefore deceptive, given the improper use of terms. In fact, we sense the hint that allows us to interpret it as such in the parenthetic irony of the initial statement that relaxation is not just an important, but actually the greatest, part (μέρος τὸ μέγιστον) of physical training. This irony casts a shadow of doubt on the serious-humorous polarity for which this works as a simile. It blurs the division light – serious, and converts Lucian’s work into one not less valuable and pertinent when displayed against the background of the literary tradition. It becomes, in fact – stated in a convoluted, delicate, and not radical and offensive tone – of great importance for the studious reader (τοῖς περὶ τοὺς λόγους ἐσπουδακόσιν) because in its otherness it offers the reader a suitable viewpoint for a useful contemplation of the Greek literary heritage.

This contemplation, θεωρία, renders, as von Möllendorff observes, the term διδασκαλία, which is traditionally set in polarity with ψυχαγωγία. This is another translation, but now in the other direction, of a familiar through an unfamiliar term in a given context. As von Möllendorff suggests, Lucian uses the term θεωρία here with several levels of signification. It refers to the travel motif (seeing and exploring the world), and, by implied association with

262 Brandão 2001, 76.
263 LSJ s.v. σπουδαίος I.2 and II.
264 Cf. Pl. Leg. 4.724a-b: σπουδῆς τε πέρι καὶ ἀνέσεως.
διδασκαλία, to the skilled knowledge that a reader gathers from a travel story.\textsuperscript{265} Von Möllendorff also sees θεωρία here as contemplation, mental activity, and as -- related to it -- sight (θεαμα), connecting thus this passage with the general idea in The Hall, where the sight of a splendid hall incites and inspires the educated receptor to be creative in logos.\textsuperscript{266} Therefore, for him Lucian’s True Stories is presented by the author himself as the paradigm of a skilled logos that aims at a similar activity on the part of the reader through educated reception. Based on the use of the litotic phrase οὐκ ἀμοισον to qualify θεωρία, and on the analogy with The Hall (2), where the reception by an uneducated audience (ἰδιωταί), characterized by ἀμοισία among other terms, is opposed to the reception by an educated audience (πεπαιδευμένοι), von Möllendorff’s observation that the intended audience of True Stories is one of pepaideumenoi seems valid. However, his idea that the reception should consist in a literary activity by the reader himself, “nicht nur in der Form eines (mentalen) ‘ästhetischen Objektes’, sondern in der eines konkreten Artefaktes,” appears too drastic and rather vaguely supported in the case of True Stories. It is in fact Lucian who creates in True Stories an “artifact” as the result of his contemplation of paradoxographical discourse and its claim to truth;\textsuperscript{267} and his inspiration seems to come by no means from the contemplation of the most splendid literary display. That his reader could follow him in this reconsideration of paradoxographical literature seems a safer assertion. The reception, in this case, does not necessarily involve creative literary activity, but rather the development of a new perception on the literary heritage and the willingness to be open to a new type of literature, that works with and reflects on old material in a new way.

\textsuperscript{265} Von Möllendorff 2000, 39-41; cf. LSJ s.v. θεωρία III.1.
\textsuperscript{266} Cf. LSJ s.v. θεωρία III.2, III.3; Dom. 2-4, 13.
\textsuperscript{267} Cf. Brandão 2001: “não se trata apenas de uma narrativa a mais que se tece, mas de um texto sobre as narrativas […]; “se recusa a narrativa por um discurso das narrativas (sobre as narrativas e a partir das narrativas)”, 255-256.
The expressed manner in which θεωρία is facilitated for the audience is a sort of low-key intellectual challenge that counterbalances ψυχαγωγία, which results from the enjoyment of novelty and lies. This mental exercise for pepaideumenoi seems an easy and amusing guessing game that consists in recognizing the fabulous lies of the authors of old, at which Lucian only hints, because presumably they would be easily recognizable (1.2). In making this playful θεωρία seem easy and light, Lucian alludes to the sub-cultural and intellectually unchallenging character of the literature of paradoxa in general. Yet, as Whitmarsh polemically observes, “it is implausible to conclude […] that the hypotextual repertoire would have been instantaneously transparent to a second-century readership.”\textsuperscript{268} Indeed Lucian’s claim that the hypotext is easily identifiable seems to be another deception and challenge, since when it comes to most of paradoxa, for instance, he does not echo specific instances, but rather the general paradoxographical ambiance, reconstructed in its general motifs and mannerisms.

Therefore, the essence of θεωρία is not the amusing game of identifying specific passages in different authors, but a higher-key intellectual exercise, the contemplation, i.e. reconsideration and reevaluation of a type of literature that displays similar ambiance and claims the truth of paradoxa. Lucian offers his audience the opportunity of en-strangement\textsuperscript{269} from what tradition holds valuable, gaining perspective from the otherness to revaluate literary standards. At the same time, inherently, this exercise of en-strangement leads the audience to accept and value the otherness, the literary other. The strangeness of subject matter translates the strangeness of the discourse of True Stories – the literary other that Lucian creates. Therefore the true/false dichotomy seems to be suspended, since the text is not itself the object of θεωρία, but

\begin{footnotesize}


\textsuperscript{269} Cf. Sher’s introduction to Shklovsky and his coinage of the term ‘enstrangement’, 1990, xviii-xix.

\end{footnotesize}
rather the means, the distorted mirror that reveals the reality of other texts in their more lively incongruity: their *paradoxa* in literary disguise, obvious lies masquerading as truth.

The audience addressed in *True Stories* consists of those with literary education (τοίς περὶ τοὺς λόγους ἐσπουδακόσιν, 1.1). They would be able to read the stories through the lens of the prologue, and – while enjoying them – not believe they are true and altogether real. This reception is opposite to that of Odysseus by the uneducated Phaeacians (ιδιώτας ἀνθρώπους, 1.3), and obviously the opposite of the regular reader of paradoxography, one who is expected to suspend any critical judgment when it comes to the truth value of *paradoxa* and to be bewildered by the text on the presumption that everything in it is true. In arguing for the multiplicity of possible readings of *True Stories*, Whitmarsh notices that Lucian uses *pepaideumenoi* not as usually for educated men, but for “serious” (ἐσπουδακόσιν) ones, so that the term deepens even more the problem of the text’s interpretation.270 The device of using a term with simultaneous polysemy, so as to extend its semantic sphere, is not strange for Lucian. In the end of *Zeuxis* he addresses his educated audience as γραφικοί, when he relies on them to fully appreciate both his art and that of the famous painter. A serious readership (τοίς περὶ τοὺς λόγους ἐσπουδακόσιν) for a less serious text, therefore, implies not just a relaxation from readings that are considered to be more valuable, or to require more attention, but also from those deemed more sober in tone (τῶν σπουδασιοτέρων). Consequently, the work that offers such relaxation would appear less valuable, less challenging, and more humorous. Yet the invitation to the serious readers to relax with *True Stories* seems rather a cunningly set trap. Beyond and by means of ψυχαγωγία and

270 Whitmarsh 2006, 112: “That the readership is described as ‘serious’ (ἐσπουδακόσιν), and not, for example, ‘educated’, is crucial. To begin with, it draws the text into the orbit of the familiar Lucianic rhetoric of ‘serious play’ (τὸ σπουδογέλαιον). But more pertinently: is a ‘serious’ reader of a comic text the ideal interpreter? The question is immediately redoubled: the narrator defines the text we are reading as a relaxation from ‘serious matter’ (τῶν σπουδασιοτέρων): which is to say, the *True Stories* will be, pointedly, a renunciation of the serious. Will serious readers be able to handle a text that defines itself as non-serious? If we self-select as the σπουδαῖοι, the educated readership, will we be laughing with Lucian, or is the joke on us?”
comic tone (οὔκ ἀκωμωδήτως), this work challenges them to θεωρία, a literary exercise on their part, facilitated by the author. There seems to be no real relaxation indeed (ἀνεσίς, ἀνάπαυσις), but rather a sophisticatedly hidden invitation to let go (ἀνιέναι271) of their previous opinion (τὴν διανοίαν272) regarding what they considered more serious literature and to form a new, more excellent (ἀκμαιοτέραν) and more seasonable one.273

Having analyzed the purpose and the addressee of the text, let us look more carefully at the expressed means by which Lucian reaches his audience and, at the same time, performs and facilitates the exercise of θεωρία. The text of True Stories consists of varied and intricate lies (ψεύσματα ποικίλα) narrated in a plausible and truth-like manner (πιθανῶς τε καὶ ἐναλήθως, 1.2). The adverb ἐναλήθως is a hapax; the substantive adjective (τὸ ἐναλήθες) is used in ‘Longinus’ to describe the appropriate type of rhetorical imagery as corresponding to the truth of reality (τὸ ἐμπρακτον καὶ ἐναλήθες). Whenever the style (τὸ πλάσμα) of a speech transgresses into the poetic and fabulous (μυθῳδεῖς) and ends up in an impossibility (ἀδύνατον), the digressions become strange and alien (δεινὰ δὲ καὶ ἐκφυλοι αἱ παραβάσεις)274.

On the other hand, πιθανῶς refers to the mode of credible, persuasive narrative,275 including good fiction,276 unlike that of Iambulus, for instance, where the lie is conspicuous (γνώριμον μὲν ἄπασι τὸ ψεῦδος πλασάμενος, 1.3). Lucian himself acknowledges that an effective and persuasive lie, as in slander for example, requires artfulness, wit, and extreme diligence (πολλης μὲν τέχνης, οὐκ ὀλίγης δὲ ἀγχινοίας, ἀκριβοῦς δὲ τινος ἐπιμελείας) in

271 LSJ s.v. ἀνίημι II.
272 LSJ s.v. διάνοια A.2.
273 LSJ s.v. ἀκμαιός II.
274 Ps.-Long. 15.8.
275 Cf. Hdt. 1.214.
276 Cf. Strab. on Homer 1.2.36 and 3.4.4 (οὔκ ἀπίθανον ἐποίει τὸ πλάσμα).
making it plausible (πιθανόν τινα τρόπον) and stronger than the truth. Therefore, the authors to whom Lucian refers in the prologue certainly do not display these features, since he is amazed not so much at their lies, but rather at the fact that they thought they would easily escape notice in presenting lies as truth (ἐκεῖνο δὲ αὐτῶν ἐθαύμασα, εἰ ἐνόμιζον λήσειν οὐκ ἀληθῆ συγγράφοντες, 1.4).

Both terms, πιθανῶς and ἐναλῆθως, are applied by Lucian to the manner in which he himself tells lies. Their use is paradoxical here, since he claims plausibility for what he admits to be lies, thus clearly destroying any possibility for their credibility whatsoever. In fact, nothing is plausible in True Stories, and everything is intentionally exaggerated. Even when, sometimes, the storyteller simulates concern for plausibility, he does it in an implausible way in a pseudo-paradoxographical discourse. These terms, therefore, refer not to Lucian’s deliberately undermined technique in True Stories, but rather to the general technique of the paradoxographers which fails pathetically and which he mimics.

The lies (ψεύσματα ποικίλα) make hidden allusion (ἡμικταί) to the incredible and fabulous writings (πολλὰ τεράστια καὶ μυθῳδη) of consecrated poets, historians, and philosophers. Thus, the terms τεράστια καὶ μυθῳδη become interchangeable with ψεύσματα, clearly undermining any credibility. Yet, in choosing the more radical term (ψεύσματα) to qualify his own work, Lucian not only imposes this key for reading his text, but also expresses the difference between himself and the writers to whom he alludes: the author’s acknowledgment of his own lies, in anticipation and acceptance of the critic’s judgment. While other authors – like

\[\text{277 Luc. Cal. 11.}\]
\[\text{278 Cf. Ligota 2007, 66: “The use of these terms enacts Lucian’s claim to truth by the avowal of falsehood: the terms mean the opposite of what they say, his presentation is anything but plausible or truthlike, and thus confirms the truth of his avowal.”}\]
\[\text{279 See above on the use of various forms of ἄπιστος. Cf. Eur. F. 396 Kannicht: “but if indeed it is possible among mortals to falsely tell plausible things (i.e. to tell plausible lies, ψευδηγορεῖν πιθανά), you have to believe also the opposite, that many incredible things that are true (ἄπιστ’ ἀληθῆ) happen to mortals.”}\]
Ctesias – present as true that which is based neither on autopsy, nor on proper inquiry (ἱστορία), or – like Iambulus – claim their own experience of things that are obvious lies (γνώριμον μὲν ἀπασι τὸ ψεύδος πλασάμενος, 1.3), Lucian acknowledges from the start that he lies.

He reiterates this in more detail at the end of the prologue (1.4). He claims that in his vain desire for literary posterity (ὑπὸ κενοδοξίας ἀπολιπεῖν τι σπουδάσας τοῖς μεθ’ ἡμᾶς), lest he be the only one without a share in the freedom to write on fabulous things (ἐπεὶ μὴ μόνος ἀμοιρὸς ὡς τῆς ἐν τῷ μυθολογείν ἐλευθερίας), but having nothing true to say (οὐδὲν γὰρ ἐπετόνθειν ἀξιόλογον), since he experienced nothing worthy to be said (οὐδὲν ἀληθεῖν εἰχον), he turned to lying (ἐπὶ τὸ ψεύδος ἐτραπόμην). Yet his lying is more reasonable, more prudent than the lies of others (πολὺ τῶν ἄλλων εὐγνωμονέστερον): “for, at least, I shall tell the truth (ἀληθεύσω) with respect to this one thing (ἐν τούτο): when I say that I lie (λέγων ὅτι ψεῦδομαι).” His lies are more considerate, because the author frees the reader altogether from the effort of exerting any critical judgment concerning the truth or falsehood of these stories: he eliminates any doubts from the very beginning. They are, at the same time, more prudent, because the author, by admitting that he lies, avoids any accusation of his lying (τὴν... κατηγορίαν ἐκφυγεῖν). Moreover, Lucian ends his prologue with the ultimate advice: that the reader should not believe anything in these stories (μηδαμῶς πιστεύειν).

Sciolla argues for two distinct realities in True Stories: “una realtà referenziale, che per dichiarazione esplicita dell’autore non ha alcuno riscontro nella Storia Vera, ed una realtà creata, inventata, che, pur non esistendo al di fuori del testo, permette a Luciano di affermare ἀληθῆ λέγω.‖280 Similarly, Ligota observes that “Lucian the internal narrator undermines Lucian the

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280 Sciolla 1988, 59.
external narrator, which in turns unsettles the ‘true’ of the title.” While one cannot deny the two levels of reality in *True Stories*, or rather three – if we admit that the prologue represents another level too, it is hard not to notice that the “internal narrator” makes a weak claim to truth, deliberately undermining himself.

Therefore, through this “delicious paradox”, these *true stories* resist any conventional interpretation from the perspective of the traditional true/false dichotomy, since Lucian’s discourse does not have a claim to truth. Or does it? Because the author still admits to at least one truth – the truth of his lying. Has he indeed nothing true to say? Or is truth none of his concern when it comes to his own text? Why then insist on one truth? Does the lying extend only forwards, or also backwards, therefore to the whole prologue and to the one alleged truth too? If he lies in that he tells the truth about lying, what is the reader supposed to believe? That he should believe nothing, or that he should believe the one truth of the whole lying? Is the acknowledgment of the one truth superfluous here? Because the lies it refers to are surely conspicuous.

**Instead of conclusion**

Lucian describes his lies as “things which I have neither seen (μήτε εἴδον), nor experienced (μήτε ἐπαθον), nor heard from others (μήτε παρ’ ἄλλων επιθόμην), and still things which do not even exist at all (ἐτι δὲ μήτε ὅλως ὑπωτων), and which, in the first place, cannot exist (μήτε τὴν ἀρχὴν γενέσθαι δυναμένων).” While the first part of the sentence denies any claim to the proper methods – autopsy, experience, and inquiry – of true discourse in general, the second part denies any claim to its factual content. This is the supreme assertion of

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282 See above.
283 Whitmarsh 2004, 466.
the otherness of Lucian’s text, which resembles an essential passage from the *Contest of Homer and Hesiod*. There Hesiod challenges Homer, in hopes of leading him into aporia, with these lines:

Μοῦσα ἄγε μοι τά τέ έόντα τά τέ ἐσσόμενα πρό τέ έόντα,

τῶν μὲν μηδὲν άείδε, σύ δ’ άλλης μνήσαι άοιδής.

*Come Muse, sing to me none of the things that are, shall be, have been, but reveal another song.*

To this, Homer’s answer is:

οὐδέ ποτ’ ἀμφὶ Δίος τύμβῳ καναχίποδες ἵπποι

άρματα συντρίψουσιν ἐρίζοντες περὶ νίκης.

*Never ever shall horses with sounding feet shatter chariots about the tomb of Zeus, contending for victory.*

Hesiod’s challenge demands an impossible subject, one that lacks reality, just like Lucian’s subject matter. Homer’s answer strongly confirms the lack of factuality of his topic, just as Lucian also does with obstinate emphasis. Hesiod makes a request for literary otherness (ἄλλης μνήσαι άοιδής), just as Lucian indirectly claims to create such otherness in *True Stories*. Our text is not only about things which cannot exist, but it breaks up with the promise of a future description of the other continent, of the opposite world (τῇν ἢπειρον...τῇν ἀντιπέρας), a promise the author does not keep. The empty promise becomes itself a text without truth, without reality, bringing to a perfect end the bigger text essentially devoid of truth. Moreover, Lucian leaves his audience gaping curiously at the promised other world, which is a symbolical reference to his literary otherness and which can now only be reached through retrospective θεωρία. Instead of being frustrated by the narrator’s broken promise, the reader should, therefore, look back and acknowledge retrospectively the otherness of the whole text.

On the one hand, the subject matter – *paradoxa* – represents the other world, the unfamiliar, different, strange, foreign world. The adventures carry our storyteller through worlds that stand, each and every one, in a strong polarity with the familiar world: moon versus earth, sea versus land, dead versus living. The essential otherness needs not be further sought. Yet the authorial approach to his subject matter and audience is startlingly different. Defying the traditional criticism of intermingling falsehood with what claims to be a true discourse, Lucian claims for himself the freedom to lie, to construct absolute fiction (τὴν ἐν τῷ μυθολογεῖν ἐλευθερίας, 1.4). At the same time, he claims the right to be judged according to the literary value of his new type of discourse, in spite of, or rather especially because of its deliberate and strongly emphasized lack of truthfulness. Lucian’s text is artistically valid: well designed, charming, not lacking in *poikilia* (1.1-2). It therefore could bring immortality to its author (1.4). Lucian reassesses the status of fiction by giving it a place and a genre of its own, not disguised under other genres, such as paradoxography, historiography, poetry, or philosophy.

Lucian places his text within a tradition he modifies through a paradoxical treatment: he claims the right to *paradoxa*, yet he admits they are nothing but lies. Suggestively, on the Isle of the Dreams our storyteller enters the city through the ivory gates, the gates of deceit (2.32). Among the marvels on the moon, there is a κάτοπτρον, which – paradoxically – does not function like a proper mirror, but rather like a lens, since those who look into it do not see a reflection of themselves, but see through it and behold the world back on earth. Our text operates just like that κάτοπτρον – a lens whose degree of distortion comes from displacement, from the perspective of the otherness. Thus, our text claims to make possible the beholding of the Greek

\footnote{Cf. *Od.* 19.564-567.}
literary heritage through an exaggeratedly deforming lens that highlights its sometimes distorted and badly manipulated conception of truth.

The κάτοπτρον here is obviously different from the one in *How to Write History* (50), where Lucian compares the γνώμη of the ideal historian with a clear and faithful mirror of the facts related. Thus, here Lucian transfers the right to pure fiction from poetry to prose, the typically true and instructive discourse. Like other authors, Lucian uses ψυχαγωγία to reach the values of ωφέλεια and διδασκαλία, yet through an oblique rhetoric. He renounces any sense of balance and exceedingly indulges in pleasant lies, more so than the authors he denounces, yet – unlike them – he does not intend to escape notice, but admits to lying (1.4-6). The lie is invested with the power of instruction and usefulness, traditionally reserved to what was considered true discourse. This is possible because the power of usefulness and instruction lies not in his text per se, but rather in the intricately concealed referential system that this text creates, and which illuminates the truth-value and usefulness, or occasional lack thereof, in texts that claim to tell the truth.

In *Lovers of Lies*, as we shall see, ψεύσματα are useful and justifiable only in a few situations: to ensure safety and help surmount crises, to spare the livelihood of tourist guides, and to spice up the poets’ works. These same cases apply to *True Stories*: Lucian uses lies to overspice his fictional prose. He uses them also as an expedient to surmount the crisis of the writer who has nothing true to say, thus to salvage his ‘livelihood’ both as an author, and as a literary ‘guide’ – and our text itself is a literary voyage. Last, but not least, these lies ‘save’ Lucian’s life, i.e. keep him alive for posterity, as he overtly claims in the prologue.

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The paradoxographers were literary guides too, yet of another sort. Schepens describes them as “some kind of literary counterpart to the activities of the hunters and explorers”, in search of paradoxical beasts, and notes that “the guided tour around the wonders of the world, offered to the reader, was […] a tour […] within the walls of a great library”.\textsuperscript{288}

The paradoxographer excerpted and collected marvels. Lucian, on the other hand, excerpts and collects the paradoxographical tradition itself, i.e. paradigms of lies from the works of the authors of old. Thus, these works become themselves marvels, not only for the audience of \textit{True Stories}, but also for the author, who confesses his amazement at the fact that those authors thought they would escape notice. While the lies here are pleasant too, they also become useful by helping the reader raise an eyebrow in amazement and re-position himself within the values of the literary tradition.

\textsuperscript{288} Schepens 1996, 406, 388.
1.3 Lovers of Lies

Aulus Gellius writes that, coming back from Greece to Italy, at Brundisium he bought some old Greek books of paradoxography and paradoxographical literature for an extremely cheap price. However, it was not just the price that seemed attractive, since he confesses to have gone through them somehow impatiently during the course of the following two nights (eosque omnis duabus proximis noctibus cursim transeo). Gellius prefaces his excerpts from these books with his reasons for this authorial choice: “so that whoever will read them may not be found completely ignorant and unaware (rudis omnino et ἀνήκοος) when hearing things of such contemptible kind (istiusmodi rerum, 9.4.5).” Thus Gellius’ paradoxographical excursus is meant to instruct the reader, to make him aware of the existence and low value, as he emphasizes it, of such literature. His text is designed to operate somehow like Lucian’s True Stories, yet there is a strong difference between the two authors’ attitude towards their own texts. While Lucian greatly enjoys his pseudo-paradoxographical discourse, Gellius, on the other hand, turns his text containing paradoxographical references into a necessary evil. When starting to insert paradoxographical excerpts in his text, he is suddenly struck with disgust: “but while I was writing these things, the repulsion for this improper literature that has nothing to do with providing or helping the profit of life seized me” (sed cum ea scriberemus, tenuit nos non idoneae scripturae taedium nihil ad ornandum iuvandumque usum vitae pertinentis, 9.4.12). However, he immediately finds it appropriate (libitum tamen est, 9.4.13) to add a similar piece of information taken from Pliny the Elder, a Latin author and authority (auctoritate magna), who related not paradoxa that he had heard or read, but those he himself knew and had seen (non
Yet, although he promised only one single reference (id), Gellius cannot abstain from adding one more (9.4.16).

In his assessment of Gellius’ passage, Baldwin notices the ambivalence displayed by the Latin author: “Gellius perhaps demonstrates an unexpected talent for getting the best of both worlds; inclusion of mirabilia catered to one taste, contempt for such items to another”. A similar ambivalent stance can be detected in Lucian too, although essentially different. In True Stories he does not denounce paradoxa as such, but their appropriateness in a true discourse. On the other hand, he himself indulges in paradoxographical exaggerations that far exceed the extant paradoxographical literature. According to Aristotle, the tendency to report marvels by adding and exaggerating in order to please translates their seductiveness. Lucian’s paradoxographical story-telling is pleasant per se. It is also instructive in warning the reader with respect to paradoxa in literary disguise, sensible lies masquerading as truth. The same attitude appears also in Lovers of Lies. If in True Stories he targets mostly historiography, ethnography, and travel story, in Lovers of Lies philosophers become his direct target. Philosophical discourse should be supremely guided by reason, as suggested in True Stories where Lucian feels the need to stress the fact that even (καὶ, 1.4) philosophers condone the practice of lying.

Paradoxographical hypotext

Lucian composes Lovers of Lies in the manner of a philosophical dialogue. Tychiades, literally the son of Tyche (chance) relates to Philocles the stories he heard in the house of the philosopher Eucrates. These were told by the host himself and by other philosophers and a

291 Arist. Poet. 1460a 17-18: τὸ δὲ θαυμαστὸν ἢδυ· σημεῖον δὲ, πάντες γὰρ προστιθέντες ἀπαγγέλλουσιν ὡς χαριζόμενοι.
physician who were paying him a visit to offer him comfort in his illness. All the anecdotes involve paradoxographical elements of a different type than those in True Stories, concerning mostly miraculous healings, haunting ghosts, monstrous apparitions, walking statues working miracles, visits from the dead, possessed men, oracles, and the like. Magic and wonderworking are at the core of the majority of these paradoxa, and the magicians and wonder-workers are mostly foreigners – a Libyan, a Babylonian, a Hyperborean, a Syrian, an Arab, and an Egyptian, as exemplars of the otherness.

The lexical elements referring to paradoxa are recurring, although it is more developed to fit the subject matter and more colorful. There are forms of παράδοξος (31, 37), καινός (25), θαυμαστός (26, 33), θαυμάσιος (11), θαυμάζω (12, 15) τεράστιος (2, 5, 29, 34), τέρας (39), τερατολογέω (37), ἀλλόκοτος (2, 5, 37), ἄτοπος (6), θεσπέσιος (marvelous, 12), ἀόρατος (unseen, 25), ἀπροσδόκητος (unexpected, 31), φοβερός (frightening, 22, 31, 37), ἐκπλήττω (31). Other terms are intimately connected with the topics of the anecdotes, such as γοητεία (magic, 8), γόης (5, although here derogatory), κολοσσός (23), γεγαντείων τι μορμολύκειον (some gigantic monster, 23), δαίμων (13, 16, 17, 29, 30, 31, 39, 40), φάσμα (14, 15, 16, 29, 31), φαντάζομαι (14), ἐπωδή (7, 8, 11, 12, 15, 17, 35, 36), ἐξάδω (16), πολύμορφος (14), etc.

There are also qualifying terms that refer derogatorily to paradoxa-telling: forms of ἀπιστος (5, 8, 13, 38), ἀπίθανος (23), ἀπιστέω (3, 15, 17, 20, 28, 32, 38, including the form ἀπιστών, which is converted into an alternative title), μυθώδης (4, 5), μυθολόγημα (37), μυθολογέω (39), μυθιδιον (2), ύπερβολή (5), δεισιδαιμονία (superstition, 37, 38), ψεύδος (1, 2, 3, 10, 24), ψεύδομαι (1, 3, 5), ψεύσμα (2, 4, 29, 39, 40), and φιλοψευδής (in the form φιλοψευδείς, converted into an alternative title, 2).
Lucian plays with some of these terms to emphasize the incongruity between the one’s claim to philosophy and his belief in the truthfulness of *paradoxa*. For example, the Pythagorean Arignotus, who tells a story about how he freed a house in Corinth from a haunting δαίμων (*spirit, ghost, 30-31*), is ironically qualified as ἄνὴρ δαίμόνιος τῆς σοφίας ("a man of divine wisdom", 32).\(^{292}\) While most of the stories are associated with wonder-working (γοητεία), Tychiades qualifies Eucrates, the host of such a horrific pseudo-symposium, as either out of his mind, or a γόης, “wonder-worker”. Yet in this case, the term is obviously depreciative, meaning “charlatan” and implying that Eucrates only pretends to be a philosopher (5). Although Tychiades will often deem these anecdotes ἄπιστα, incredible and far-fetched, at the beginning Philocles praises Eucrates as ἀξιόπιστος, a trustworthy man (5). In an accumulation of certainly ironical praises showered on the philosophers partaking in this love for lies, such as “extremely wise and virtuous” (πανοσφόρος καὶ παναρέτους), “the very best of each school” (τὸ κεφάλαιον αὐτὸ ἐξ ἐκάστης προαιρέσεως), and “venerable” (αιδεύσιμος), the final touch is added by the phrase “almost terrifying to look at” (μονονοχή φοβερός τὴν πρόσοψιν, 6). The adjective φοβερός, on the other hand, is constantly used to qualify either *paradoxa* per se (monstrous apparitions in 22 and 31), or *paradoxa*-narrative (φοβερὰς διηγήσεις, 37). Moreover, amid such marvelous stories, θαυμαστά, the epithet of choice for philosophers, when it comes to their wisdom (τὴν γνώμην), is θαυμαστός (2, 32). This formulation is quite close to that used for a magician: θαυμάσιος τὴν σοφίαν (34).\(^{293}\)

Equally ironical is the use of the adjective ἀοίδιμος, *renowned in song, famous*. It first refers to the renowned writers of old (ἀοίδιμος ἀνδρᾶς) – among whom Herodotus, Ctesias,

\(^{293}\) See also the use of the verb θαυμάζω in 23 with respect to the admiration for philosophers, as well as in 6 with respect to Ion’s aspiration to be admired as a philosopher.
and Homer are named – who wrote lies (ἔγγράφω τῷ ψεύσματι κεχρημένους), deceived their audience (ἐξαπατάν), and established a long practice of lying (2). It is then used in reference to Arignotus, the Pythagorean, who arrives later and is welcomed by Tychiades as a deus ex machina (θεὸν ἀπὸ μηχανῆς) in the hope that the philosopher would reestablish reason among his peers. Arignotus is described as a highly venerable person: his look is majestic (ὁ σεμνὸς ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου), people call him “the holy one” (τὸν ἱερὸν ἐπονομαζόμενον), and he is famous for his wisdom (ἀοίδιμον ἐπὶ τῇ σοφίᾳ, 29). The renown of his wisdom is expressed particularly by an adjective – ἀοίδιμον – that is closely related with ἐπωδῆ (< ἐπ-ἀοιδῆ), incantation, spell, charm, a noun that appears twelve times in the paradoxical stories told in the house of Eucrates.294

The pleasure of lies…

The main problem that Lucian’s text exposes is that of the use of lies and its reasons. Tychiades considers justifiable (συγγνωστοί) and even commendable (ἐπαίνοι ἀξιοῖ) those who use necessary lies (ἀναγκάζει, εἰς τὸ χρήσιμον, τῆς χρείας ἐνεκα) that can bring safety and help surmount crises (ἐπὶ σωτηρίᾳ, ἐν τοῖς δεινοῖς, 1). He even concedes to Philocles that lies in mythological disguise are permissible when used by poets and cities. For the former need to blend in their works the charming delight of mythological stories (τὸ ἐκ τοῦ μύθου τερπνὸν ἐπαγωγότατον ὄν) for the pleasure of their audience (πρὸς τοὺς ἀκροατάς), while the latter embellish their history for the sake of a prosperous tourism, since tourists do not like to hear the plain truth (3-5). Lucian plays down here the wrong of lying in poets and historians, unlike in the True Stories, in order to stress the gravity of the philosophers’ falling into this practice.

294 Luc. Philops. 7, 8, 11 (twice), 12, 15 (twice), 17, 35 (three times), 36; cf. also ἔξαποντες in 16.
Otherwise, lies without a reason (ἄνευ τῆς χρείας, ἐπ’ οὐδεμιᾶ τούτω τῷ κακῷ, ἀναγκαίᾳ, 1; μηδεμιᾶς ἐνεκα αἰτίας, 4) only satisfy the pleasure of the liar. This seems to be the capital sin in lying: to take pleasure in doing so. Thus, people like the fore-mentioned writers and our philosophers are possessed by this evil practice (ἐπιθυμίαν τοῦ ψεύδους, 1; ἐμφυτός ὁ ἐρως...πρὸς τὸ ψεύδος, φιλοψευδείς, 2). In satisfying this strong passion they take great pleasure in deceit (ἐξαπατᾶν, 2): χαίρειν (1), χαίρουσιν ἐξαπατώντες (2), χαίροντες τῷ ψεύσματι (4). Tychiades considers the philosophers in Eucrates’ house, who take on the role of educating young men on matters of wisdom and draw general admiration, even more attracted towards lies and fabrication than children are (εὐαγωγότεροι πρὸς τὸ ψεύδος, 23). They are absolutely ridiculous and absurd, παγγέλοιοι, for lying without a reason (4).

Palaephatus, in his mythographical collection On Incredible Things (περὶ ἀπίστων), a title that is kin to paradoxographical collections, uses the adjective παγγέλοιος ("utterly ridiculous") to characterize a mythological story (μῦθος) deemed as impossible (ἄδύνατον, 26). The healer Polyidos revived Glaucon, the son of Minos, drowned in a vat of honey, by applying an herb, after he had seen a snake restoring to life a dead snake in like manner. The topic is closely connected with some of the stories in Lucian’s Lovers of Lies: a man is revived twenty days after his burial (26); a Chaldean uses spells and other magic tricks to restore to health a man bitten by a venomous snake and then, having summoned all the snakes in the area, destroys them (11-12). Thus παγγέλοιος, just like the simple adjective or adverb (γελοῖος, γελοίως) applied by Palaephatus to other myths, is used in the sense of ludicrous, absura.

295 The adversative adverb ὅμως is used with forms of χαίρω both in 2 and 4.
297 Palaeph. 7, 31, 38.
298 Cf. LSJ s.v. γέλοιος / γελοίος II.
and even incredible (cf. περὶ ἀπίστων), impossible (ἀδύνατον), and thus acquires a paradoxical connotation.

The same term has a special nuance in philosophical discourse. In Plato, παγγέλοιος, just as often γέλοιος, refers to an absurd, paradoxical argument. In the course of the discussion on rhetoric and its means of persuasion (ψυχαγωγία), either according to opinion or according to the truth, Phaedrus qualifies as παγγέλοιον the possibility invoked by Socrates that an ignorant speaker may earnestly praise an ass instead of a horse. On the one hand, the situation would rather be against the common opinion, and thus paradoxical, whereas the praise (ἐπαινοῦ) of an ass would rhetorically amount, in spite of it being sincere (σπουδῆ), to a paradoxical encomium. In the seventh book of the Republic, when Socrates develops his argument on the necessity of mathematics in the education of the ideal ruler, he points out that Palamedes’ claim to have invented number makes Agamemnon appear an utterly ridiculous, or rather completely absurd, general (παγγέλοιον στρατηγόν), since he would have not been able to count his troops and ships. Glaucon agrees with Socrates’ reasoning and equals in his answer παγγέλοιον with ἄτοπον, “out of place, strange, paradoxical”, a term with a strong paradoxographical connotation, including in Lucian’s Lovers of Lies.

In his refutation of Protagoras’ claim of the teachability of virtue, Socrates introduces the topic of ἀκρασία (weakness, lack of control). While common people associate pleasure with good and pain with bad, they claim that often one, being overcome by the desire to obtain pleasure and avoid pain, chooses to do what he knows to be bad instead of what he knows to be good. Socrates makes this argument seem absurd and paradoxical (γέλοιον τὸν λόγον

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299 See note above.
300 Pl. Phaedr. 260c.
γίγνεσθαι) because it consequently implies that people, tempted to experience pleasure, i.e. good, deliberately do bad things that they know to cause pain.\textsuperscript{303}

This argument seems to have been taken over as such, in a simplified form, by Lucian, whose Tychiades applies it to the philosophers in the house of Eucrates. These men, who allegedly know what is good and what is evil (συνετοὺς τάλλα καὶ καὶ τὴν γνώμην θαυμαστοὺς, 2), who, moreover, are supposed to teach wisdom (αὐτοὶ νέοις τε ὀμιλοῦσιν ἐπὶ σοφία καὶ ύπὸ πολλῶν θαυμάζονται, 23), nevertheless themselves choose to do what is evil, i.e. telling lies, being overcome (ἠἀλωκότας, 2) by pleasure, specifically the pleasure of lying (χαίρειν, 1; χαίρουσιν ἐξαπατώντες, 2; χαίροντες τῷ ψεύσματι, 4; ἐπιθυμίαν τοῦ ψεύδους, 1; ἔμφυτος ὁ ἔρως...πρὸς τὸ ψεύδος, φιλοψευδεῖς, 2). The paradox is here reduced simply by identifying the pleasure with its cause; therefore, these people do what is evil (i.e. lying) being overcome by that evil itself.

Indeed the power and the seduction of lies are presented as overwhelming. The writers of old, “possessed by this evil” (ἠἀλωκότας τοῦτῳ τῷ κακῷ, 2) made lying penetrate deep into the Greek culture (δικυεῖσθαι τὸ ψεύδος, 2) and made possible the perpetuation (ἐκ διαδοχῆς, 2) of the longing (ἐπιθυμίαν, 1) and the innate love (ἐμφυτὸς ὁ ἔρως, 2) for lies. Lies produce even bigger lies. Aristotle noticed the general human inclination to exaggerate (προστιθέντες) reports in order to please (ὡς χαριζόμενοι).\textsuperscript{304} In Lovers of Lies, for example, Eucrates has a strange encounter with a terrifying Hecate that occasions him a glance into the underworld (22-24). To confer more authenticity on his report, our philosopher invokes as an eyewitness one of his servants, who not only confirms his master’s report, but also feels the need to exaggerate his experience and add even more details than are expected from him (ἐπιμετρῆσαντος, 24).

\textsuperscript{303} Pl. Prot. 352d - 355a.
\textsuperscript{304} Arist. Poet. 1460a 17-18.
Not just servants, presumably uneducated people, do this. Even people claiming to be well educated, like the famous writers of old or our philosophers, are strongly inclined towards lying. What is more, the practice of lying is characteristic not only of individuals, but also of entire communities, and lies prevail to such an extent (εἰς τοσοῦτον ἐπικρατεῖ τὸ ψεῦδος) that whoever disbelieves them (ἄπιστῶν) as obvious falsehood is deemed blasphemous and brainless (ἀσεβῆς, ἀνόητος, 3).

… and the temptation to amplify

The philosophers gathered in Eucrates’ house develop their pseudo-symposiastic conversation by picking up a speaker’s topic and bringing in even more incredible accounts. Thus, when Tychiades enters, he finds the philosophers debating possible cures for Eucrates’ ailment. Cleodemus, the Peripatetic, suggests a bandage containing the tooth of a field mouse wrapped in a lion skin. The Stoic Deinomachus claims that the skin of a hind is better, but Cleodemus caps the debate with a relevant detail, that he learned the cure from a Libyan, probably a wonder-worker; and this last argument wins over the enthusiastic audience (7-8). Tychiades, the ἄπιστων, protests and tries to use reason to explain his incredulity, tacitly approved by Antigonus, the doctor. Yet both Cleodemus and Deinomachus vehemently refute him and brand him as ἱδιώτης (9), a dilettante in the middle of a refined society of lovers of lies (8-10). Finally, Ion, the Platonist, adds a second climax to the debate with a long and strange story of a Babylonian wonder-worker who cured snakebites and talked to snakes (11-12).

With the wonder-workers let out of the box, Cleodemus mentions a Hyperborean sorcerer and his wonders, sampled with a story of a love spell cast on Chrysis on behalf of Glaucias (13-14). After Tychiades’ ironic attempt to rationalize the whole story, that Chrysis was probably a
debauched woman easily charmed by money (15), Ion caps the wonders on the topic with the story of a Syrian exorcist (16). Picking up on the subject of spirits, Eucrates tells the story of a wandering and wonderworking statue in his court (18-20), paired by that of a miraculously wandering statue of Hippocrates in Antigonus’ house (21).

According to the pattern, Tychiades again expresses his strong doubt, yet without any attempt to refutation and somehow abruptly Eucrates breaks the topical chain and describes his frightening encounter with Hecate and his glimpse into the underworld through a chasm made by the goddess (22-24). Cleodemus caps this with an even more inflated story: he did not just glance, but he actually descended into the underworld. While he was sick, a young man appearing by his bedside led him there through a chasm. Yet Pluto sent him back, because he had been mistakenly taken down there instead of an ailing neighbor, who in fact died immediately afterwards, while Cleodemus recovered completely (25). The climax is added by Antigonus, the doctor, who narrates the amazing resurrection of one of his patients twenty days after burial (26).

Tychiades’ habitual disbelief, comparing the resurrected man with the wonderworking Epimenides,305 is left without an answer, when Eucrates’ sons come into the room and occasion a change in topic: ghosts. The host therefore relates a story about his deceased wife’s ghost that came to reproach him for having neglected to burn on the pyre one of her golden sandals, misplaced under a chest (27). The climax for this topic is intricately suspended. First, Tychiades is cornered and apparently brought to agree that, since such apparitions occur so routinely, they must be true. Therefore, “those who disbelieve them (οἱ ἀπιστοῦντες) and are so impudent towards the truth (οὗτος ἀναισχυντοῦντες πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν) would deserve, just like children, to be slapped on their buttocks with a golden sandal (σανδάλῳ γε χρυσῷ εἰς τὰς πυγὰς ὠς περ ἃ παῖδια παῖεσθαι ἢξιοὶ ἂν ἔπειν, 28)”, obviously an allusion to Eucrates’ story.

305 FGrH 457 T 1-11.
This, however, does not amount to renouncing his previous position, but to rather treating his opponents like children and pretending to agree with them, since his use of logic was unsuccessful on them. The irony is obvious not just in the allusion to Eucrates’ story. It is inherent to Tychiades’ dialogue with his immediate audience – Philocles – and, through him, to the tacit dialogue established with the external audience of the text. Tychiades had previously compared our philosophers with children. He did it indirectly, when he said that strange and unbelievable stories (πάνυ ἀλλόκοτα καὶ τεράστια μυθίδια) are able to enthral (κηλεῖν δυνάμενα) the souls of children (παιδῶν ψυχάς) who still fear Mormo and Lamia, notorious female goblins used to frighten children (2), while at the same time he insists on these philosophers’ propensity towards such stories. Then, in the frame dialogue, when revealing his thoughts during the inner dialogue, he directly compares them with children, since they believe in Eucrates’ story on the apparition of a terrifying Hecate and “prostrate themselves” (an obvious pun) before what is described as an incredibly huge female goblin (οὕτως ἀπίθανον κολοσσόν, ἡμισταδιαίαν γυναίκα, γιγάντειόν τι μορμολύκειον):

Meanwhile I, on my part, was thinking: “what sort of people are these who themselves associate with young men to teach them wisdom and are admired by many, yet being different from babies (διαφέροντες τῶν βρεφῶν) only in their gray hair and their beard, but otherwise drawn towards falsehood even more than babies (καὶ αὐτῶν ἐκεῖνων εὐαγγελότεροι πρὸς τὸ παθῶν θεοῦ)”(23).

Thus Tychiades turns the joke on his interlocutors who, in his opinion, behave like children and would, in fact, deserve to be punished as such, since, through their proclivity towards lies, they are “impudent towards the truth” (ἀνασχυντοῦντες πρὸς τὴν ἀλήθειαν, 28).

The climax of the ghost topic is furthermore suspended by the entrance of Arignotus, the Pythagorean. Tychiades describes him as a greatly revered person (σεμνός, ἱερὸν, ἄοιδιμον), and welcomes him as a deus ex machina (θεόν ἀπὸ μηχανῆς), who would restore reason among his
fellow philosophers (29). Yet Arignotus soon smashes such hopes and adds a story of a ghost which used to haunt a house in Corinth and which he appeased and drove away with Egyptian spells (31). Tychiades makes a final attempt to restore reason by chastising Arignotus, who was in his eyes “the only hope of truth” (ἡ μόνη ἐλπὶς τῆς ἀληθείας), yet now he reveals a disappointing reality, just like in the proverb “the treasure turned out to be just coal” (ἀνθράκες ἡμῖν ὁ θησαυρὸς πέφηκε). Asked then whom he holds more trustworthy (ἀξιοπιστὸς) than his present company, Tychiades praises the philosopher Democritus of Abdera whom he considers truly wonderful (μάλα θαυμαστός). He now uses the occasion to tell a story himself, in fact an anecdote on Democritus, of exactly the opposite nature than his company’s stories. While Democritus, he says, shut himself in a tomb to write in peace, some young men, disguised as dead, tried to scare him, yet they failed because the philosopher did not believe in such apparitions. Tychiades’ story is different not only because it shows that a famous philosopher did not believe in ghosts (Democritus’ philosophical creed is also relevant here), but also because the narrator chooses to present the so-called ghosts not as visions of a blurry, exhausted mind among tombs, but as a prank, as an imposture. The truth prevails, yet the magic is gone. Therefore, clinging to the magic of falsehood, Eucrates intervenes by calling Democritus a foolish man (ἀνόητὸς τις ἀνδρα).306

Henceforward, the pseudo-symposium is left at the hands of sick Eucrates who first narrates extensively his experiences in the company of an Egyptian wonder-worker, whom Arignotus also knew and whose authority and credibility are thus reinforced (33-36). Then everything goes downwards, as Eucrates rambles about the image of Apollo engraved on his ring, which delivers prophecies, and about numerous other personal oracular experiences (38).

306 Luc. Philops. 32.
Amid such interminable exaggerated stories, Tychiades invokes a pretext for leaving and the report on the conversation ends abruptly. The narrator does not address the issue of Tychiades’ use of a lie to escape from such a gullible company. Unlike these people’s lies, his is a better, more reasonable one, and not that obvious. Moreover, his reason for lying consists not in pleasure, but rather, as he ironically puts it, in necessity.

Lucian’s lies

Tychiades explains to Philocles that he went first to the house of a friend, Leontichus, with whom he needed to converse (Λεοντίχω συγγενέσθαι δεόμενος). Being told that Leontichus was at the time visiting ill Eucrates, he decided to visit the philosopher, with whom he was quite familiar, for two reasons: both to meet Leontichus and to see ailing Eucrates (6). He neither explains, nor emphasizes his need to meet Leontichus. When he finally decides to leave the house of Eucrates, Tychiades tells the company that he needs, again, to find Leontichus and talk to him about something (δέομαι γάρ τι αὐτῷ συγγενέσθαι, 39). The vocabulary is strikingly similar to the previous passage (συγγενέσθαι δεόμενος, 6). The use here of the indefinite pronoun τι makes the reason even vaguer, hinting that it may be just a pretext.

Moreover, meeting Leontichus is just the reason invoked by Tychiades before Eucrates’ company. In the frame dialogue, Tychiades offers different reasons for his leaving, having nothing to do with Leontichus. He tells Philocles that he had to leave because the farfetched and exaggerated oracular stories would go on too long (οὗ μικρᾶς...), because he did not think it fit to confute all of them alone (οὗ δοκιμάσας μόνος ἀντιλέγειν ἄπασιν), and because he understood that his presence and criticism of the lies were obviously vexing the company (ὅτι μοι ἄχθοντει παρόντι καθάπερ ἀντισωφιστῇ τῶν ψευσμάτων). The passage offers a final clue that finding
Leontichus was a pretext which Tychiades uses to save himself from an inconvenient situation: he mentions to Philocles that, having left the house of Eucrates, he feels drunk, has a swollen stomach, and needs an emetic (ἐμέτου δεόμενος, 39). The choice of expression also emphasizes that, in the end, Tychiades’ real need (δεόμενος) was not actually to find Leontichus (cf. Λεοντίχως συγγενέσθαι δεόμενος in 6 and δεόμαι γάρ τι αὐτῷ συγγενέσθαι in 39), but rather to escape bad company and its contagious noxious influence.

Yet the most helpful clue is given far earlier than any of these passages. Before even starting the report on his visit to the house of Eucrates, Tychiades says that he left it (ἀπικών ωχόμην) because he was unable to endure the exaggerations that were told there (ού φέρων τοῦ πράγματος τὴν ύπερβολήν), and that the company, likened to the Erinyes, drove him out with outrageously strange stories (πολλά τεράστια καὶ ἀλόκοτα, 5). He therefore escaped an allegedly unbearable and dangerous situation by using a pretext: the need to talk to Leontichus. Tychiades uses therefore a lie, granted carefully concealed, to escape the house of Eucrates, a house of lies. He implies that his deceit is necessary. Therefore, it is – according to his opinion on lies and their reasons – pardonable. Yet to keep with the light tone of the work, his necessity is not compelling, but ironically kept light-hearted through the comparison with intoxicated people who drank sweet must (ὡσπερ οἱ τοῦ γυρεύκους πίοντες, 39). This lie is subtly concealed by Lucian, who makes it Philocles’ task and, through him, the external audience’s task to perceive the real truth-value of Tychiades’ statement.

This lie plays a double role in the economy of the text. It first confers consistency on the internal argument of Tychiades that lies are condemnable and should only be used to surmount a crisis. Such a lie, unlike those heard by him in Eucrates’ house, should be within reasonable
limits, within the limits of credibility, not outrageous and easily recognizable exaggerations.\textsuperscript{307} This seems to be the point of Tychiades’ efforts to conceal his so carefully. His own lie becomes therefore the paradigm of pardonable and reasonable falsehood in real life, just as \textit{True Stories} are a paradigm of pardonable falsehood in literature, with the author renouncing any claim to truthfulness straight from the prologue.

On the other hand, Lucian enjoys in \textit{Lovers of Lies} the same freedom to lie that his main character – Tychiades – grants to poets who need falsehood to embellish their work and thus seduce their audience.\textsuperscript{308} Yet Lucian takes double the distance from these lies: they are neither claimed as experienced, nor narrated by the author himself, but put in the mouths of others and recounted by a character through a thick lens of censure. The author, therefore, takes double measures to avoid any accusation of falsehood. His main character, however, although persistently projecting a self-righteous image, eventually adopts the recourse to falsehood in what is barely, according to his own argument, a pardonable lie. For his situation, however serious he tries to make it, is far from life threatening. By this lie, therefore, Lucian ironically undermines the authority of his main character and makes this text a light-toned one, not so much a mordant satire, but rather an entertaining mockery.

Just as in \textit{True Stories}, here too we are warned right from the start that none of these stories are true, yet the author excels in fabricating fabulous accounts, one more amazing than the other, until the text reaches a certain saturation and the reader is on the verge of becoming confused and bewildered (or even nauseous, like Tychiades), in a challenging attempt to manage being further and further distanced from truth and reality. At that moment, the narration ends abruptly in a lie: in \textit{True Stories} a deceivingly promised sequel, in \textit{Lovers of Lies} a pretext for

\textsuperscript{307} Cf. Luc. \textit{VH} 1.3-4.
\textsuperscript{308} Luc. \textit{Philops.} 4.
leaving. With the problem of the truth-value of these stories settled early on, the reader again
does not need to exercise any critical judgment; at any rate, we might reasonably nod in assent to
Tychiades’ judgments. Thus, the reader is generously given the opportunity to enjoy the stories
as such and explore the limits of human susceptibility to seducing falsehood.

Tychiades’ lie is ironically, yet indirectly, reflected in the history of the textual
transmission of the title. The manuscripts read *The Lover of Lies or the Incredulous* (φιλωψευδής
η ἀπιστῶν), with both alternative titles in singular. Rothstein corrected the first one to plural,
*The Lovers of Lies* (φιλωψευδεῖς), a conjecture generally accepted. The textual error, probably
due to the later similar pronunciation of both singular and plural forms, or to the parallel with the
second title in singular, or with numerous other Lucianic titles in singular,309 paradoxically
catches not just the author’s indulgence in admittedly untrue stories, but also Tychiades’ ultimate
recourse to lie, as the other title points to his incredulous nature.

A pseudo-Symposium

In the most recent study on *Lovers of Lies*, M. Ebner argues for the text’s
“Platonreminiszenen und -parodie” at the level of setting, dramatic devices, and other details, in
connection with the *Symposium* and mostly the *Phaedo*, including the mention of this latter
Platonic dialogue in Eucrates’ story on the ghost of his wife.310 Without disagreeing with Ebner’s
view, I would like to further emphasize the connections between Lucian’s text and Plato’s
*Symposium*, besides the parallel in the sequence of speeches and the belated arrival of a

“spectacular” guest, Alcibiades and Arignotus respectively, and thus to justify my terming the conversation in the house of Eucrates a pseudo-symposium.

Although it has a much simpler frame, closer to that of the *Phaedo*, Lucian’s text develops, as Ebner observes, in a sequence of speeches, like the *Symposium*, on a topic whose limits grow ever wider to support the company’s irrationality. Starting from ridiculous methods of curing the ailment that is afflicting Eucrates, the conversation progresses into a series of stories on wondrous occurrences. The internal dialogue of Plato’s *Symposium* also begins with a debate partly concerned with medical topics, specifically how the symposiasts should drink properly without affecting their health (176). The physician Eryximachus has a decisive intervention on the matter, while Antigonus, who seems to be his counterpart in Lucian’ text, fails in his intervention and ends up by just tacitly approving Tychiades’ disagreement with irrational treatments proposed by two other companions (8).

In the *Symposium* the inner dialogue consists of a crescendo of speeches in which the symposiasts compete in praising Eros. Lucian turns his inner dialogue into a competition for telling a ‘better’ lie, i.e. a more astounding, marvelous, exaggerated, therefore actually a worse lie in Tychiades’ judgment. Each subtopic is gradually developed to a climax and then used to introduce a new one, connected with it and fitting under the wider topic of wonders. Yet ἔρως (love, passion) is not absent from the pseudo-symposium hosted by Eucrates. ἔρως is an underlying condition, the source of all the stories, except it takes a different form, that of love for lies, an inborn passion for falsehood (ἐμφυτός ὁ ἔρως οὐτός ἐστι πρὸς τὸ ψεῦδος, 2).312

Lucian’s language may be reminiscent, to paraphrase Ebner, of Aristophanes’ speech in the *Symposium*, the story of the once round human beings split in half by Zeus as punishment for

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311 Ebner, in Ebner et al. 2001, 57.
312 Cf. the two types of Erotes in Pausanias’ and Eryximachus’ speeches (Pl. *Symp.*180c 1-185c 3, 185e 6-188e 5).
their arrogance and left to ever desire and search for their ‘other half’.\footnote{Pl. Symp. 189c 2-193e 2.} This yearning for one another is implanted, built in the human nature (ὁ ἔρως ἐμφυτός ἀλλήλων, 191d 1). In like manner, the love for wondrous, irrational, fictitious stories is, in Tychiades’ words, deeply rooted in the human nature. What strikes him as absurd and condemnable is the fact that people supposedly professing to be the keepers of reason, philosophers and scientists alike, embody in the basest form this love for irrational to the extent that – if we can stretch the allusion to Aristophanes’ speech – they cannot feel complete and whole unless they are overwhelmed in the enticing embrace of marvel and falsehood.\footnote{Cf. Pl. Symp. 192b 5-c 2: “therefore whenever every lover of boys and any other lover meets with his own other half, then the two are amazingly overwhelmed (θαυμαστά ἐκπλήττονται) with friendship, intimacy, and love, not being willing, as one might say, to separate from one another even for an instant”. As a coincidence, Plato’s language in this passage might recall to a modern reader the topic of paradoxa (θαυμαστά) and their psychological effect (ἐκπλήττονται).} Lucian chooses to connect a key phrase of his text (ἔμφυτος ὁ ἔρως ... πρὸς τὸ ψεῦδος, 2) to the speech of Aristophanes, one of his favorite comedy writers along with Eupolis,\footnote{Cf. Luc. VH 1.29.28; Pisc. 25.26; Bis. acc. 33.24; Ind. 27.8.} not just to metaphorically emphasize the extent of some allegedly educated men’s indulgence in lies. Aristophanes’ speech itself consists of a story, a narrative with etiological underpinnings, therefore susceptible of some mythological, thus irrational, marvelous layers. The marvelous stories narrated by Lucian’s lovers of lies (φιλοψευδείς) echo the surprising narrative of Aristophanes and thus are subject to ridicule, through a comic lens provided by the association with comic poet.

Moreover, Aristophanes precedes his speech, already postponed because of his hiccups, with buffoonery: he caricatures Eryximachus’ medical theories and advice for curing his hiccups. The physician therefore warns the comic poet not to play the fool (γελωτοποιεῖς) and to be careful not to say something funny (γελοῖον), perhaps again at his expense. Aristophanes, laughing (γελάσαστα), answers that he is not so much afraid that he might say something funny
(γελοῖα), which would fit his profession (τῆς ἡμετέρας μούσης ἐπιχώριον) and would benefit the company (κέρδος εἶναι), but rather that he might say something completely ridiculous and thus provoke laughter at his own expense (καταγέλαστα).\(^{316}\) On the other hand, Tychiades also is warned by the Platonist Ion not to play the fool (γελοῖα ποιεῖν, a paraphrase of γελωτοποιεῖν) when he ironically rationalizes the Hyperborean’s magic spell (15.21). The marvelous mythological stories purported by cities and communities to be true are branded as completely ridiculous (καταγέλαστα, 3.10) and the practice itself as ludicrous (γελοῖον, 3.3). Eucrates, the host who enjoys and condones falsehood, is either out of his mind or a charlatan (γόης), a ridiculous monkey (γελοῖον τίνα πιθηκον) under a lion’s skin, therefore a false philosopher (5). Tychiades derides the company’s lies (19.10, 24.39), but ironically he is also derided for this attitude, for his disbelief in such false stories (8.4). Finally, those who enjoy lying without a mitigating reason are all utterly ridiculous and absurd (παγγελοῖοι, 4), especially Eucrates and his guests, whose claim to wisdom is thus undercut.

Lucian, therefore, uses language that is to a certain extent reminiscent of characters, situations, and attitudes in Plato’s *Symposium* to construct his text. Lucian molds the character of Tychiades somewhat in the image of Aristophanes, although – ironically – the comic poet is the only one who tells a story, a mythos, in the *Symposium*. They both play the buffoons, the former complying with his own muse and allegedly benefiting his entire company, the latter complying with the common sense and benefitting rather his external audience at the expense of his direct company in the internal dialogue, a company that seems incorrigible and hopelessly ridiculous.

Two of Plato’s symposiasts, Pausanias and Eryximachus, argue for two Erotes, two different types of love. Pausanias distinguishes between a superior Eros connected with

Aphrodite Ourania, the Heavenly one, a good, noble form of love that is desire beyond physical gratification, and an inferior Eros connected with Aphrodite Pandemos, the Popular one, a bad, lower form of love that is exclusively physical. Eryximachus picks up this distinction and applies it to a medical theory, arguing for a good, healthy Eros and a bad, unhealthy Eros. In Lucian’s text the love for lies is obviously the bad, promiscuous, unhealthy kind. The host is himself sick and enjoys, together with his guests, telling lies. As a general definition, Tychiades initially describes this practice as the result of a longing after falsehood (ἐπιθυμίαν τοῦ μηδὲν ψεύδους). It consists in taking pleasure while saying nothing healthy (μηδὲν ψεύδους) and listening with special attention to those narrating such things (αὐτοῦς τε χαίρειν μηδὲν ψεύδεις λέγοντας καὶ τοῖς τὰ τοιαύτα διεξιούσιν μάλιστα προσέχειν τὸν νόην, 1).

The late entrance of Alcibiades in the Symposium is matched by that of the Pythagorean Arignotus in Lucian’s Lovers of Lies. Alcibiades is drunk (σφόδρα μεθύοντος, 212d 4; μεθύοντα ἄνδρα πάνυ σφόδρα, 212e 3). His tardy arrival produces great disturbance, mostly revelling noise (πολὺν ψόφον...ὡς κομιστῶν, 212c 7), including the presence of a flute-girl, while the symposiasts have dismissed theirs early on (176e 5-9). The disorder is marked also by Alcibiades’ intoxication as opposed to the moderation agreed upon by the symposiasts, his self-appointment as the master of the drinking party (ἀρχοντα οὖν αἱροῦμαι τῆς πόσεως, 213e 9), and the topic of his speech: instead of Eros, he praises Socrates. Arignotus’ late arrival, on the other hand, is hailed by Tychiades, in the hope that the revered philosopher would, in his wisdom, reinstate order and common sense (29). Unlike Alcibiades, Arignotus does not produce disorder at an orderly party, but rather, contrary to Tychiades’ expectation and to his utter dismay, confirms the disorderly state of the matters. He even rebukes Tychiades for his disbelief

(30) and contributes furthermore to his perplexity and to the general disorder by telling a ghost story based on his own experience (31).

Arignotus inspires reverence through his wisdom and mostly through his appearance. The physical appearance has relevant connotation here. Arignotus’ long hair is a mark of his reverence and his allegiance. In Lives for Sale the Pythagorean school (ὁ Πυθαγορικός) opens the auction and is represented as a man with long hair (κομήτην) and, therefore, a reverent appearance (σεμνός). Hermes, the auctioneer, ironically presents him as incarnating the best and most venerable philosophical school (τὸν ἄριστον βίον πωλῶν, τὸν σεμνότατον).

Hermes mentions as the Pythagorean’s skills, in an interesting sequence, arithmetic, astronomy, talking marvels (τερατείαν), geometry, music, magic (γοητείαν), and sums them up by calling him the best of prophets (μάντιν ἄκρον). Notably the list of Pythagorean skills is built in a double triad, each capped by evident non-virtues, respectively the propensity for marvels and magic, exactly the same vices that cause Tychiades’ disapproval of the Pythagorean Arignotus who claims to have used magic to appease a ghost.

Arignotus’ long hair (ὁ κομήτης, ὁ σεμνός ἀπὸ τοῦ προσώπου, 29.2) is reminiscent of Alcibiades’ headgear in the Symposium (his countless ribbons), while the admiration he inspires is set against the erotic tension that Alcibiades creates with his entrance and his general popularity. Tychiades expects Arignotus to put an end to lies, yet he is utterly disappointed. Alcibiades, on the other hand, adamantly claims truthfulness (τἀληθῆ ἔρως, 214e 6). He is and even invites the audience to interrupt and bring to his attention any unintentional falsehood that

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318 Luc. Vit. auct. 2. Cf. Iambl. Pyth. 2.11.5; 6.30.24.
319 The apparition is, coincidentally(?), described by Arignotus as longhaired (κομήτης, 31.18).
320 Pl. Symp. 212e 1-2.
321 Pl. Symp. 213b 7-d 6; 216b 5: ἡ τυπμένῳ τῆς τιμῆς τῆς ὑπὸ τῶν πολλῶν.
322 Cf. Pl. Symp 212e 9-213a 1: “Although you may laugh, I however know that I am telling the truth” (ἐγὼ δέ, κἂν ὡμέις γελάτε, ἡμῶς εὖ οἶδε ὅτι ἀληθῆ λέγω); cf. 215a 6.
might come up in his speech. Although both Arignotus and Alcibiades claim to tell the truth, Alcibiades, although heavily intoxicated, seems more reasonable in accepting that he might, inadvertently, lie and gives a critical audience the opportunity to censure him. Arignotus, on the contrary, vehemently chastises Tychiades’ disbelief. He claims that his report of his own experience and the reports of others on the matter of ghosts should be enough evidence to persuade anyone. Lucian shapes, therefore, the image of Arignotus, against that of Alcibiades, a comparison that obliterates the philosopher’s authority.

In Plato’s *Symposium*, the drinking party in the house of Agathon comes to a disorderly end due to the entrance of a band of revellers, which repeats at a much higher level the commotion caused by the arrival of Alcibiades and his revelry companions. This time, unlike earlier, when Alcibiades’ proposition to drink more heavily failed, the newcomers not only provoke a general turmoil (καὶ θορύβου μεστὰ πάντα εἶναι), but also force everyone to drink without order and limit (καὶ οὐκέτι ἐν κόσμῳ οὐδενὶ ἀναγκάζοι θαι πίνειν πάμπολυν οἶνον). The only one not affected by the excessive drinking seems to be Socrates. In Lucian’s *Lovers of Lies* Tychiades finally leaves in the middle of Eucrates’ stories on oracular experiences, when it is obvious to him that the conversation would only get worse, without remedy. He allows the company, therefore, to enjoy the freedom to lie without being censured anymore (ἀσμενοι ἐλευθερίας λαβόμενοι), thus to feast on (εἰστίων...αὕτοις) and to fill themselves with lies.

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323 Pl. *Symp.* 214e 10-215a 1: If I ever say anything untrue, interrupt me, if you please, and say that I am lying; for I shall not lie intentionally (ἐὰν τι μὴ ἀληθὲς λέγω, μεταξὺ ἐπιλαβοῦ, ἃν βούλῃ, καὶ εἰπὲ ὅτι τούτο ψεύθωμαι· ἐκὼν γὰρ εἶναι οὐδὲν ψεύσομαι); cf. Pl. *Symp.* 215b 5-7; 216a 2.
324 Socrates even claims that Alcibiades seems to be sober (νήπειν μοι δοκεῖς) since the young man’s speech was actually concealing a definite agenda, explicitly to cause a rift between Socrates and Agathon (Pl. *Symp.* 222c 3-d 6).
325 Pl. *Symp.* 223b 5-6.
326 Socrates keeps conversing with Aristophanes and Agathon until dawn, when the two get drowsy and fall asleep just as the rest of the company. Then Socrates leaves, followed by Aristodemus who is just waking up (223b 6-d 12).
(ἐνεφοροῦντο τῶν ψευσμάτων, 39). After he reports the whole conversation to Philocles, Tychiades confesses to feel drunk and sick:

Having heard, my dear Philocles, such stories in Eucrates’ house, I wander about, frankly, just like men who have drunk must; my belly is swollen and I desperately need to vomit. I would gladly buy anywhere, at any price, some drug that would help me forget what I heard, lest my memory do me some harm and stay with me. I really think that I see monsters, and spirits, and Hecates (39).327

As Philocles admits, ironically, that he feels the same pleasure having listened to the report (τοιοοῦτον τι ἀπέλαυσα τῆς διηγήσεως), he compares Tychiades’ experience with that of men bitten by rabid dogs, who end up themselves biting and producing the same effect on their victims.328 Philocles feels contaminated by Tychiades; his soul is full of spirits (δαμόνων) too. The effect of such mendacious stories is metaphorically expressed through heavy drinking, thus equaled to irrationality and to lack of common sense, order, and decency. This is why Tychiades sees his and Philocles’ remedy (ἀλεξιφάρμακον) for the confusion caused by empty and vain lies (τῶν κενῶν καὶ ματαίων τούτων ψευσμάτων) in a good dose of truth (τήν ἀλήθειαν), on the one hand, and sound reason (τὸν ἑπὶ πάσι λόγον ὀρθόν), on the other (40).

The terms used by Tychiades to describe the gathering and the conversation he witnessed turn them into a pseudo-symposium, with those present feasting on lies (εἰστίων...ἀυτοῦς καὶ ἐνεφοροῦντο τῶν ψευσμάτων, 39). In his own Symposium or Lapithae, a pastiche of Plato’s and other literary symposia, Lucian uses similar language. There Philon asks Lycinus to give him the full account of another pseudo-symposium turned disorderly, and thus to generously feast him on a very pleasant spread (ὡσεὶ οὕκ ἄν φθάνοις ἐστιῶν ἡμᾶς ἡδίστην ταύτην ἐστίασιν).

This, he adds, would be quite enjoyable, given the fact that they, unlike the original, real symposiasts of the account, are sober (νήφοντες), and thus are able to keep peace (ἐν εἰρήνῃ) and avoid violence (ἄναιμωτί).

A generation later, Origen uses a similar language in an analogous context. In the prologue to his commentary on the Song of Songs, he refers to Greek literary symposia that use the banquet as a conventional frame for philosophical dialogue on the subject of love, so probably to Plato’s own Symposium, as “a feast of words, not of food” (non ciborum, sed verborum convivium, in Rufinus’ Latin rendition).

Plato uses the banquet as a literary device, a conventional frame for authentic philosophical dialogue, thus creating a “feast of words” (verborum convivium). Lucian, on the other hand, uses this device in a very much looser manner, although Tychiades’ metaphorical drunkenness stretches the literary convention to the absurd. The gathering in Eucrates’ house is not a banquet proper, yet the participants still enjoy a “feast of words”, although theirs are false words (ἐνεφοροῦντο τῶν ψευσμάτων, 39). Consequently, they are not philosophers proper, as neither is Antigonus a physician proper. Moreover, the pretext for this pseudo-symposium is not a celebration of talent, as of Agathon’s victory in Plato, but a courtesy visit to the sick bed of Eucrates. Thus, the symposiastic literary allusion is not just loose, but quite distorted in Lucian who twists his gathering into a sick party, with a sick host, and a sickening meal: lies that are not healthy (μηδὲν ψυγιές, 1). Unlike Plato’s symposiasts, Eucrates’ party insatiably feasts on lies without moderation. Yet, just like Socrates’ unique sobriety, these people do not feel the effect of their exaggerated consumption of lies, whereas Tychiades leaves the party drunk, thus unpleasantly intoxicated with lies and in desperate need to forget them and to restore truth and reason in order to feel healthy again.

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329 Luc. Conv. 2.
Socrates is able to stay sober and go about his normal life after a whole night of revelry. Just as he appears as an insatiable sponge for wine, Lucian’s pseudo-symposiasts are insatiable sponges for lies. While the former’s sobriety speaks for his mastering the realm of reason, the pseudo-sobriety of the latter speaks for their mastering the realm of irrationality and lies. Lucian’s pseudo-symposiasts do not speak of love; yet love, in a shameful, base form, that of lies, is their reason to speak. Thus, Lovers of Lies is shaped as a peculiar Lucanian form of literary symposium with significant alterations that underline the impropriety of the characters, their false pretence to truth and reason, their philo-pseudia (φιλοψευδία) rather than philo-sophia, and the impropriety of lies in general.

**Lies: opheleia and psychagogia**

In Lucian’s text lies are not healthy; therefore, philo-pseudia is a harmful inclination of an unhealthy mind. However, the two characters in the frame dialogue seem to agree that lies are permissible and therefore useful in art, exemplified by poetry, to delight the audience, and in real life, either to overcome a critical situation, or, in a mythological form, to glorify a city’s history in the eyes of tourists. We need not take these opinions too seriously and attribute them entirely to the author himself, although Tychiades seems to share some of the author’s ideas. We have seen that poets, Homer in particular, are censured in True Stories for the same use of lies in the forms of marvelous stories. Lucian illustrates the necessity of lies in a crisis with the story of Odysseus, a fictitious character, blamed in True Stories for having invented the very practice of telling marvels and lies. Tychiades solves his own ‘crisis’, his inability to tolerate more lies,

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331 Pl. Symp. 223d 9-12.  
333 Luc. VH 2.  
334 Luc. VH 3.
with yet another lie. He first blames the cities for their lies, yet later allows Philocles to persuade him that, since tourists do not care too much for the truth, the guides need to lie to ensure their livelihood. Thus all the admittedly reasonable needs to deploy deceit are ironically undermined.

Yet we must admit that Lucian grants some license to lie, particularly in fictional literature, since he himself uses it so brilliantly, albeit carefully disguised as criticism. He further emphasizes his distance from the pseudo logoi through the dialogical setting of the text. In True Stories, Lucian dissociates marvelous stories as the expression of falsehood from true discourse, particularly historiography and travel narrative, which is meant to convey knowledge, therefore to educate. In Lovers of Lies, the targets are philosophers, or rather improper philosophers, who not only indulge in lies in the form of marvelous stories, i.e. irrational tales, but also do it in spite of their expected role as keepers of sound reason. While they claim to educate, therefore, their instruments are quite inadequate to their purpose. Lucian’s presentation of the problem of marvelous tales and their contribution, or lack thereof, to education echoes, in language and situations, an earlier text that deals with the same topic, yet in a different manner, Strabo’s passage on the usefulness of myths as an incentive for instruction and means to deter from bad behavior.

Strabo, defending Homer against Eratosthenes’ criticism, admits that the poet made use of mythic tales (μυθολογεῖται), yet his are not all marvels (οὐ πάντα τερατευόμενος). Homer, with a view to knowledge, study, ultimately education (πρὸς ἐπιστήμην), allegorizes (ἀλληγορῶν), carefully elaborates his mythoi (διασκευάζων), and is also attempting to please

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335 Luc. Philops. 3; 4-5.  
336 See Johnson 1998 on the frame dialogue as a form of distancing the report from ‘truth’ in Plato.  
337 Strab. 1.2.7-9.
and to win the favor of his audience (δημαγωγών). Strabo then widens his apologetic discussion and, stating that, before poets, cities and lawgivers endorsed such tales in view of their usefulness (τοῦ χρησίμου χάριν), launches into a digression on human psychology:

For human beings are found of learning (φιλειδήμων); and the prelude (προοίμων) of this is their love for tales (τὸ φιλόμυθον). Hence, therefore, children begin to pay attention and to participate in stories (κοινωνεῖν λόγων) more and more. The reason for this is the fact that a story (ὁ μύθος) is some sort of novelty-telling (καινολογία), which speaks not of things that are (τὰ καθεστηκότα), but of other different things (ἕτερα παρὰ ταῦτα). For what is novel (τὸ καὶνόν), what one did not know before, is pleasing (ηδύ) and it is this very thing that makes humans fond of learning. Yet, whenever the marvelous (τὸ θαυμαστός) and the extraordinary (τὸ τερατώδες) are added as well, they increase the pleasure (τὴν ηδονήν), which is a charm that promotes learning (τοῦ μαθήματιν φιλτρον).

Stories need, therefore, to be used as baits (δελέασι χρῆσαι) to incite children to learn; yet as the child grows and his mind matures, he needs to be led to the knowledge of things that are, of real things (τὴν τῶν ὀντῶν μάθησιν). Yet the childish disposition and the fondness for tales are retained by adults who are either uneducated (ὁ ἱδιώτης...καὶ ἀπαιδευτος) or poorly, therefore inadequately educated (ὁ πεπαιδευμένος μετρίως).

Strabo distinguishes between two types of the marvelous (τὸ τερατώδες), a pleasant (ηδύ) versus a frightening one (φοβερόν), therefore between two types of mythoi based on the same distinction as their subject matter. Pleasant tales should be used on children and uneducated men as an incitement (εἰς προτροπὴν), as exhortation to emulate mythical good behavior in the hope of divine rewards, whereas scary tales, among which those on Lamia and Mormolyce,
should be used as dissuasion (ἐίς ἀποτροπήν) from imitating bad mythical behavior for fear of similar divine punishment.\textsuperscript{341}

The man of education and learning (φιλοσόφω), in Strabo’s opinion, cannot deal with uneducated people based on reason (λόγῳ), but only based on religious fear and superstition (διὰ δεισιδαιμονίας) which involves tale making and marvel talking (μυθοποιίας καὶ τερατείας). This was the very reason why state founders made use of tales of monsters (μορμολύκας τινάς) to appeal to simple-minded people (πρός τοὺς νηπιόφρονας).\textsuperscript{342} Mythic tales had, therefore, an important socio-cultural role, and poetry, as a vehicle for such tales, was considered suitably useful for the education of children. Later on, historiography and philosophy became prominent. Yet, while philosophy only addresses the elite (πρός ὀλίγος), poetry, especially Homer’s, is still more accessible to the many and more popular (ἡ δὲ ποιητικὴ δημωφελεστέρα).\textsuperscript{343}

Rounding up the digression, Strabo comes back to Homer’s use of marvelous tales for the purpose of instruction (τὸ παιδευτικὸν εἶδος), arguing that the poet was considerably preoccupied with the truth, yet that he also mixed in some falsehood (ψεύδος) by which he would please and control the masses (δημαγωγῶν καὶ στρατηγῶν τὰ πλήθη). Homer may have mixed truth with myth (μῦθον), therefore falsehood, thus sweetening and adorning his style (ἡδύνων καὶ κοσμῶν τὴν φράσιν), yet – says Strabo – his purpose is the same as that of a historiographer or of any other person who tells the truth (τὸῦ τὰ Ὀντα λέγοντος).\textsuperscript{344}

Lucian does not seem to target directly this particular passage in Strabo as the object of parody, yet in various passages in his Lovers of Lies striking similarities speak to the fact that he

\textsuperscript{341} Strab. 1.2.8.22-39.
\textsuperscript{342} Strab. 1.2.8.39-49.
\textsuperscript{343} Strab. 1.2.8.49-59.
\textsuperscript{344} Strab. 1.2.9.1-8.
must have had this text fresh in mind while composing his work. Both texts maintain that poets, Homer in Strabo, may mix truth with falsehood to flavor their work and please the audience. Yet the instructional value of poetry is nowhere acknowledged in *Lovers of Lies*, unless we are to take the example of Odysseus’ acceptable lies to save his life as instructive (1). Even this example, however, is undermined by the circumstances of Tychiades’ own lie to save himself from Eucrates’ house, which obviously point to a stretching of the paradigm invoked. Strabo compares Homer with historiographers in the attention he paid to the truth for the purpose of education. Lucian, on the other hand, places Homer in the company of Herodotus and Ctesias, historiographers that are to him paradigms of falsehood, and blames all of them for creating and entertaining a tradition of lies (2). Both texts advocate recourse to lies in necessity and thus for a useful purpose. While in Strabo the use of lies caters to the human fondness for learning, Lucian’s philosophers are not φιλεδήμονες, but rather φιλοψευδεῖς, who yet indeed enjoy great pleasure in false tales.

Strabo champions the idea that children and uneducated men (ἰδιωτης, ἀπαΐδευτος) who still have a childish mind are the best receptors of tales. In Lucian’s text, on the contrary, philosophers, who themselves assume the role of educators, behave like children (2, 23) and are seduced by tales even more than children (23). Yet ironically, they are the ones who call Tychiades an ἰδιωτης when he manifests no pleasure in marvelous tales and considers them fallacious (9.1). He is also labeled as uneducated (οὐκ ἐμέλησε σοι ἐκμαθεῖν, 9), foolish (ἀνόητος) and sacrilegious (ἀσεβῆς, 3) for his disbelief, while he himself seems to agree with Strabo that only foolish men can enjoy falsehood (ἀνοιαν, 2). The accusation of impiety echoes

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345 Luc. *Philops.*: ἀναγκάζει, εἰς τὸ χρησίμου, τῆς χρείας ἐνεκα, as opposed to ἀνευ τῆς χρείας, ἔπειτα οὐδεμιά ἀναγκαία (1), μηδεμιάς ἐνεκα αὐτίας (4); Strab.: τοῦ χρησιμοῦ χάριν (1.2.8.3-4), ἀνάγκη (1.2.8.15), χρεία (1.2.8.24).
Strabo’s idea that wise men can deal with uneducated crowds only by appealing to their religious fear (διὰ δεισιδαιμονίας). The term δεισιδαιμονία appears twice in Lucian’s text, once in the good sense of religious feeling and one in the pejorative sense of superstition. When Tychiades accuses Eucrates of filling his boys’ mind with fears and superstitions (ποικίλης τῆς δεισιδαιμονίας) through stories on magic, Eucrates catches the term, yet not the veiled irony, and is happy to introduce a new topic, related with religion, that of prophecies (38).

There is no clear distinction in Lucian between pleasant and frightening stories from the perspective of our lovers of lies; they seem to enjoy them equally. Tychiades ends his long list of terrifying myths (πάνυ ἀλλόκοτα καὶ τεράστια μυθίδια) with – among others – the Gorgons, Lamia, and Mormo, monsters mentioned also by Strabo. Tychiades claims that these tales generally charm the souls of children (παιδῶν ψυχὰς κηλεῖν δυνάμενα), who still fear such goblins (δειιότων), and yet mature people enjoy them too (2). Many of the stories told in Eucrates’ house are frightening,348 and yet they do not seem to delight the company any less, just as children who fear monsters still enjoy stories about them. It is the magic of the otherness, of things different, extraordinary, that pleases, just as Strabo had stated before making the distinction between pleasing and terrifying tales.349 Yet in one occasion Tychiades is preoccupied with the effect of frightening stories on Eucrates’ children and chastises the company for telling marvelous (τερατολογούντες), yet frightening stories (τὰς παραδόξους ταύτας καὶ φοβερὰς διηγήσεις). These would only fill the young boys’ mind with fears and superstitions (ἐμπληθέντες δειμάτων καὶ ἀλλοκότων μυθολογεμάτων, ποικίλης τῆς δεισιδαιμονίας, 37) and, in the long term, would become a terrible annoyance (ἐνοχλήσει) and make them frightened

348 Luc. Philops. 22; 31; 37.
349 Cf. Strab. 1.2.8.8-14 on the pleasantness of novelty mixed with marvelous; 1.2.17.11 on pleasant and enthralling effect of mythoi (ἦδονήν καὶ ἐκπληξίαν); Arist. Rh. 1412a 26-28: Theodorus of Byzantium explains τὸ κανὰ λέγειν (speaking novelties) as μὴ πρὸς τὴν ἐμπροσθεν δόξαν (opposed to the previous expectation).
at every noise, exaggeratedly timid (ψοφοδεεῖς). In this situation, Tychiades speaks obviously against the educational values of such stories. His point is exactly the opposite: frightening tales may actually be counterproductive for children’s education, leading to superstitions, absurd fears, inhibition, and irrational behavior in general.

Finally, for Strabo deisidaimonia is the instrument used by men of wisdom (τῶ φιλοσόφω) to deal with the uneducated mob. Consequently, they would use reason (λόγω) to deal with one another. In Lucian, however, men of wisdom and virtue (πανοφους και πανορέτους, 6) relate to each other through superstitions, marvels, and lies. These have a terrible effect on Tychiades and Philocles who both end up seeing monsters and spirits (39-40), an ironically similar effect to that foreseen for Eucrates’ boys. Thus, an encounter with such pseudo-philosophers is counterproductive for instruction in general, both for children and adults.

The nature of Lucian’s reaction to Strabo in this text is not directly parodic, nor strongly, if at all, critical. Lucian uses Strabo as a general background on which he drops his pseudo-Symposium only to make it bounce more vividly in the mind of his audience like a reverberation, more emphatic than the original sound. The only serious idea that can be retained from the text is the Lucianic leitmotif of the plea for truth and common sense.

Conclusion

Jennifer Hall, attempting to moderate a long and heated scholarly debate on the nature of Lucian’s relationship with philosophy, ranging from arguments on a veritable philosophical conversion to the radical accusation of superficiality, concludes that Lucian, in the works where his satire targets philosophers, does merely what he claims in Prometheus es: he offers his
audience just enjoyment and amusement (τέρψις ἄλλως καὶ παιδία τὸ πραγμα). Appealing not to a thorough, but rather general, acquaintance with philosophy on the part of his audience, Lucian uses as the objects of his play these incongruent characters who are the reflection of “the pullulation of would-be philosophers, not all of whom lived up to their pretentions, and the religious and superstitious tendencies of some of the sects.” Hall argues that “the ἀλαζων φιλόσοφος is almost Lucian’s favourite theme”, i.e. the philosopher who, in the scholar’s lively description “lives on intimate terms with all the Seven Deadly Sins and has added an eighth to their number in the form of Hypocrisy,” ἀλαζονεία. Nesselrath also observes that Lucian appreciates the philosopher for whom there is no discrepancy between how he lives and what he professes, a stage of philosophy that can be attained by some philosophical schools. There are numerous examples of imposturous and unruly philosophers in Lucian, and very few of admirable ones. In fact, Lucian proclaims himself a hater of impostors, charlatans, liars, and the vain (μισαλαζών εἰμι καὶ μισογόης καὶ μισοψευδής καὶ μισότυφος).

Yet these philopseudeis are somewhat different. Although they are accused of imposture and charlatanry (γόης, ἀλαζονείαν, 5), they are of a somewhat different stock. They may deceive the expectation that one may have of them, as Arignotus and his fellows disappoint Tychiades, and yet they actually seem to practice what they profess. Their intellectual label seems rather misplaced, but they themselves are not deceptive within their own absurd universe. As it seems, they are embraced by many – if we consider at least the fame of Arignotus – as the keepers of reason (λόγος); yet they themselves are only the keepers of tales (μῦθοι). They seem

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354 Luc. Pisc., Vit. auct., Conv., Ic.; Dem.
355 Luc. Pisc. 20.
to preach what they believe and practice themselves: the strong belief in marvels. Their stories may very well be lies (ψεύδοματα) or unbelievable tales (τὰ ἄπιστα καὶ τὰ μυθώδη), but only from the perspective of an outsider, of an ἄπιστῶν Tychiades. They tell their tales, as it seems, sincerely believing or making themselves believe in them, whereas Tychiades, the external reporter, repeats their tales without giving them any credit. This difference in the attitude of the narrator towards his story translates into the different effect his story has upon him. The philopseudeis do not seem changed or affected in any way by their stories, whereas Tychiades, after finishing his report to Philocles, feels sick. He is unwell as the result of a bad metaphorical drunkenness, not just as listener, like Philocles. His own position as narrator contributes to this condition to which he confesses only at the end of his narration. Tychiades claims that the longer his memory of these tales stays with him, the longer his affliction would be (39). Yet, by repeating the tales to Philocles, he only prolongs his memory of them. His affliction is rather the result of the narrator’s rational detachment from the subject of his narration, his constant and painful awareness of its incongruity. Tychiades experiences the exhausting distortion of truth and he transmits his distaste/sickness to Philocles, his ‘audience’.

Tychiades’ recollection of the tales is the author’s pretext/literary device to compose his text. Thus, at the expense of his character, the author reaches his audience. The charm of the paradoxographical tales performs a harmful effect on Tychiades, unlike in Strabo, who claims that tales can be used as good charms on children to incite them to learning (τοῦ μανθάνειν φίλτρον).³⁵⁶ Yet the author intends a paradoxically different effect of these tales on his audience. While making the point for the necessity of truth in an avowed true discourse, in texts that appeal to reason and aim at instruction, he targets mostly his audience’s pleasure sensors through his tales on paradoxa. Thus, Lucian and his audience are too, in a different way, philopseudeis.

³⁵⁶ Strab. 1.2.8.22.
Unlike Tychiades, the audience keeps its distance and understands the falsehood of the tales, without fighting it. The author is careful to warn us, through the words of his character, that these tales are lies. Therefore, he takes away from us that tension that Tychiades experiences in the house of Eucretes, and thus leaves us only with the enjoyment.

Many tales in Lovers of Lies are related to magic (γοητεία) and incantations (ἐπῳδαί), and the host himself is pejoratively called a γόης (sorcerer, hence charlatan). This type of wording is reminiscent of the Encomium of Helen, where Gorgias defends Helen for being persuaded by the charming power of words, because “inspired incantations (ἐνθεοὶ ἐπῳδαί), by means of words (διὰ λόγων), bring pleasure (ἐπαγωγοὶ ἡδονῆς).” Lucian introduces a character named Gorgias in his Dialogues of the Courtesans, where a young man is unintentionally deceived by the words of the courtesan Chrysis and made extremely jealous and, thus, violent. Chrysis complains about the jealousy and violent behavior of Gorgias, her lover. Ampelis, an older courtesan, advises her to keep making him jealous, because jealousy is the real sign of a burning love, and it works like a charm on lovers (ζηλοτυπία τὸ φάρμακον). Lucian comically alludes here to Gorgias the sophist, as Gorgias the lover is led by deceiving words used as a charm into a form of hopeless love, just like the former’s Helen. The sophist of Leontini states that those who compose a false discourse (ψευδὴ λόγον πλάσαντες) are able to persuade others of anything because their audience is not omniscient. Yet Lucian makes his audience omniscient by making us aware of the fallacious nature of his tales. Thus, he escapes the accusation of a liar, just as in True Stories, and – to paraphrase Gorgias, he creates, both in

357 Cf. Luc. VH. 1.4.
358 Gorg. Hel. 10.
359 Luc. D. mer. 8.
360 Gorg. Hel. 11.
True Stories and in Lovers of Lies an encomium of the truth and an amusement (παιγνιον) for himself and his audience. 361

Chapter 2

Self Presentation and the Aesthetics of Paradox in Lucian’s Prolaliai

ἀλλὰ τί πρὸς τὸν Διόνυσον ὁ Διόνυσος οὗτος;
But what has this Dionysus to do with Dionysus? (Lucian, Bacchus, 5.1)

2.1. Prolaliai

Lucian’s rhetorical introductions show a completely different metaliterary approach to paradoxography, an evidence of the author’s multifaceted literary skills. In these small pieces, Lucian does not critically address the truth-value of paradoxographical material, but instead exploits its aesthetic and rhetorical functions. He uses paradoxa as paradigms for his exoticism in terms of cultural identity and the exoticism of his work in terms of its generic identity.

The term prolalia (προλαλία) does not appear in any extant Greek manuscript before the tenth century. Therefore Stock, the author of the first modern study on this (sub-)genre, which was not accidentally focused mostly on Lucian, argues that this is not an ancient term.362 The Lucianic manuscripts, the earliest of which date from the tenth century (Γ from the 10th c., Β and Ω from the 10th-11th c.), preserve the subtitle prolalia for two of Lucian’s introductions,

Dionysus and Heracles. Stock points out that Menander Rhetor (3rd-4th c.) does not use the term prolalia, but lalia to name the eidos of introductory speeches.\(^{363}\)

There is, however, another mention, also from the tenth century, generally overlooked by scholars, which would hypothetically place the use of this term in a much earlier literary context: the *Suda* mentions a study on prolaliai and prologues (Περὶ προλαλιῶν καὶ προοιμίων) by Tiberius, a philosopher and sophist of the third century.\(^{364}\) Another late mention appears in *Ecloga vocum Atticarum* (Ἐκλογὴ ὀνομάτων καὶ ῥημάτων Ἀττικῶν) of Thomas Magister (13th-14th c.), who says that the terms λαλία (chat, speech), προσλαλία (address), and προλαλία (introduction, preamble) are acceptable (δοκιμά) as sanctioned by the ancient use, whereas καταλαλία was not used by the ancients, who preferred the term κατηγορία for a speech of accusation (καταλαλία δὲ οὐδεὶς εἶπε τῶν ἀρχαίων, ἀλλ' ἀντὶ τούτου κατηγορία).\(^{365}\) It is perhaps debatable to what extent the use of the term “ancient” would have stretched for Thomas Magister and it is hard to establish with certainty when the term prolalia was affixed to Lucian’s introductions, but it is possible that this happened much earlier than the tenth century.

Introductions to a rhetorical *epideixis* are a common practice in the Second Sophistic, and – although only those of Lucian, Dio Chrysostom, and, fragmentarily, some of Apuleius are preserved – there are many references to such speeches in Philostratus’ account of the *Lives of the Sophists*.\(^{366}\) Although with some inconsistency, Philostratus generally uses the noun διάλεξις (discourse) and the corresponding verb διάλέγεσθαι (to lecture, to discourse) for an introductory

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\(^{363}\) Stock 1911, 8; Men. Rhet. 388.16-394.31; cf. Men. Rhet. 434.1-4. It needs to be pointed out that Menander, however, uses the term lalia very generally and not specifically for the rhetorical introduction.

\(^{364}\) *Suda* s.v. Τιβέριος, τ 550; for Tiberius’ dates see *RE* S.2, Vol. 11, Bd. VI A 1, pp. 804-806.

\(^{365}\) Thomas Magister, *Ecloga vocum Atticarum* 225, Ritschl.

\(^{366}\) We have also the introduction of later authors, such as the dialexis of Choricius of Gaza (VI c.).
speech.\textsuperscript{367} These same terms, διάλεξις and διάλέγεσθαι, are used also for a sophistic lecture distinct from μελέτη (declamation, or rhetorical exercise) and the verb μελετάω (to declaim).\textsuperscript{368} In Philostratus, a prolalia usually takes the form of an encomium – either of the host city or of the audience – or some form of self-reference. However, there are also examples of what he points out to be unorthodox introductions: while in Athens, Polemo refused either to praise the celebrated city or to commend his own talent and fame (535.11-21); Philagrus used to give distasteful introductory speeches that were novel (νεαροήχης), incongruous, and even childish as, for instance, when he mixed the encomium of the Athenians with a lamentation (θρήνος) for his deceased wife (579.15-19); Adrian of Tyre was so arrogant that, when appointed to the chair of rhetoric in Athens, he praised not the wisdom of the Athenians, but his own (586.30-587.5).

The earliest, though summary, theoretic approach to the rhetorical genre of what we now conventionally call prolaliai is found in Menander Rhetor, late third-early fourth century.\textsuperscript{369} In his treatment of the informal epideictic speech used by sophists, lalia (λαλιά, talk), Menander discusses not only the features, but also the functions of such speech that can either – if longer – represent the whole epideixis, or – if shorter – supply its introduction,\textsuperscript{370} thus being a proper pro-lalia. The topics of a lalia, according to Menander, can be praise or blame, advice to the

\textsuperscript{367} Occasionally Philostratus uses the term προοίμιον (579.9; 586.31; 587.3). For the use of διάλεξις and διάλέγεσθαι, see Kayser’s notes 42-44, page vii of the preface to vol. 2 of his edition of Philostratus (Leipzig, 1870-1871). Some of these passages are, however, debatable: in 40.22 (= 528.14), 75.19 (= 568.29), 96.18 (= 592.27), and arguably in 85.27 (= 580.15) διάλεξις is set in parallelism with μελέτη, therefore the reference does not seem to point to an introductory speech, but rather to a sophistic lecture; the same seems to be the case in 91.13 (= 587.1), yet in this particular context προοίμιον seems to designate an introductory speech instead (586.31 and 587.3); 80.29 (= 574.20) also appears unlikely to refer to prolaliai (in spite of the topics of the following samples from διάλεξις, seemingly suited rather for an introduction: myth, ekphrasis, self-reference), because the quotations are presented as belonging to a sequence of samples from Alexander Peloplatō’s μελέται/ὑποθέσεις, starting with his declamation on a Scythian topic (572.8-573.11) and ending with samples from declamation on historical topics (575.1-576.4); yet the quotation from Antiochus of Aegae, a critical reaction to Alexander’s excessive use of rhythm (574.42-43) seems to belong to a short form of polemical prolalia.

\textsuperscript{368} The term μελέτη is interchangeable with υποθέσεις, because such declamations would focus on a subject matter (υποθέσεις) selected by the audience from a set common stock.


\textsuperscript{370} Men. Rhet. 393.24-26.
audience in the form of exhortation or dissuasion, the appeal to the audience in order to secure their favorable disposition towards the *epideixis* to follow—especially when used as an introduction, or the expression of the orator’s personal feelings such as anger, pain, or pleasure.\(^{371}\) All these topics, except for the last one, are in agreement with Aristotle’s view on epideictic *prooimia*, which – quite relevant for their later development into *prolaliai*, introductions separated from the speech per se – can be either linked or not with the topic of the epideictic speech as a whole.\(^{372}\) Moreover, the epideictic *prooimion*, just like the musical prelude in pipe playing (προαύλιον), Aristotle says, and unlike deliberative or judicial *prooimia*, should be also self-epideictic, the utmost expression of the speaker’s best talents, and hence their permissible loose connection with the topic of the speech.\(^{373}\) It appears, therefore, that what we conventionally call *prolalia* developed from the epideictic *prooimion* and became more and more the expression of the rhetor’s personality, the means by which he would best sell himself and his following *epideixis*.

Menander prescribes a loose, irregular composition of the *lalia*, with no canonic pattern to follow – since the best arrangement, in this case, is the total lack of arrangement, yet observing the principles of *kairos*, the timely exploitation of each compositional element, and *symmetria*, harmony, due proportion, as well as avoiding the accumulation of narrative or paradigmatic elements.\(^{374}\) The style should be simple, without artifice or elaboration, following the model of Xenophon and sophists like Nicostratus, Dio Chrysostom, and Philostratus.\(^{375}\) Among his recommendations, Menander supplies a long list of suitable compositional

\(^{371}\) **Men. Rhet.** 388.21-389.1; 390.14-21; 390.31-391.18; 393.17-20.

\(^{372}\) **Arist. Rhet.** 1414 b 30-1415a 7; 1415 a 7-8.

\(^{373}\) **Arist. Rhet.** 1414 b 21-26.

\(^{374}\) **Men. Rhet.** 391.19-29; 392.11-14; 393.23-24; 393.27-30.

\(^{375}\) **Men. Rhet.** 389.30-390.4; 393.22.
ingredients that, through novelty (ἀπὸ τῆς ξένης ἀκοῆς), charm (ἁβρότης), and sweetness (γλυκύτης), can produce pleasure (ηδονή) to the audience: the use of mythological or historical narratives, of fictional stories, including fictitious dreams and reports, of anecdotes, apophthegms, and proverbs, using literary sources such as Herodotus or Plutarch; the mention of famous artists, including poets like Homer and Hesiod, of renowned geographical topoi, like celebrated mountains and rivers, or Athens and its cultural landmarks, of metamorphoses of plants and animals, inspired from the poet Nestor of Laranda and the sophists of his time; copious references to Dionysus and his thiasos. Leave-taking and homecoming are among the most suitable occasions for a laulia, usually associated with city encomia and the expression of personal feelings on the occasion. Moreover, the personal reference can be veiled under mythological stories and, in an introductory laulia (a prolalia), it could suitably amount to the acknowledgment of a critical, i.e. educated, audience, or to the expression of the orator’s modesty while appealing for forgiveness of the quality of the epideixis to follow, either on account of extemporization, or of the lack of rhetorical experience of a debutant.

There has been debate about which of Lucian’s texts are rhetorical introductions. Max Rothstein classified as prolaliai eight of Lucian’ texts: Herodotus or Aëtio, Harmonides, The Scythian, The Dipsades, Amber or Swans, Zeuxis or Antiochus, Heracles, and Dionysus. Scholars have successively subtracted from this list or added at least three other texts: A Literary

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376 Men. Rhet. 389.29.
378 Men. Rhet. 389.13-14, 27; 392.18; 393.15.
379 Men. Rhet. 389.12, 28; 392.24; 393.1, 16.
381 Men. Rhet. 393.31-394.30.
383 Men. Rhet. 390.31-391.5.
385 Rothstein 1888, 116-123.
I will limit my study to the eight texts established by Rothstein, given their consistency in scholarly classifications. The purpose of my study is not to establish taxonomy based on genre purity, a paradoxical attempt for an author who revels with impunity in generic ‘impurity’. I will only investigate Lucian’s modes of self-presentation filtered through the culture of *paradoxa* in texts that are self-referential and indisputably introductory.

The problem of composition and structure in Lucian’s *prolaliai* has also given rise to debate. While in the case of Dio and Apuleius the attempt to identify and establish structural patterns proved fruitless, in Lucian’s case scholars have found more consistent material that seems to lend itself to more precise dissection. Opinions fluctuate from a bipartite or a tripartite structure to a perfectly loose composition. Recent studies reach a compromise between these extremes, by rightfully rejecting an overly mechanistic analysis and acknowledging the author’s elaborate design. They propose a more flexible formula with a loose bipartite structure. The structural elements, reflecting the common rhetorical apparatus – μῦθος, διήγημα, ἐκφρασις, ἔκφρασις, ψόγος, etc. – are, each time, arranged and blended in a unique fashion. The difference from one text to another, which lies in the assorted blending, serves the authorial design to emphasize his cultural status and to address the problem of reception. These rhetorical elements culminate in an *applicatio*, the explicit self-referential, usually final, passage.

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387 Nesselrath 1990, 113-114.

388 Mras 1949a; Bompaire 1958, 287, who, in an attempt to fit earlier practice into the later theory, saw in them a perfectly loose composition, just as Menander would later prescribe.

389 Cf. Men. Rhet. 391.19-24; 392.9-14; Reardon, 1971, 165. Cf. Croiset 1882, 75-76, and Nesselrath 1990, 114, for the argument, based on the elaborate design, that Lucian may have used a *prolalia* on more than one occasion.

of the prolalia, that draws on the syncri
draws on the syncri
sis between the author and his cultural circumstances, on
the one hand, and the mythological, historical, artistic instances used as relevant illustrations, on
the other hand.\footnote{Anderson 1977; Nesselrath 1990. Anderson couples ten texts presumed to be prolaliai (including A Literary Prometheus and The Dream or Lucian’s Life) into five pairs, based on similar thematic and structural patterns: diptychs of rhetorical elements within each piece and a captatio benevolentiae. In fact, as Anderson himself observes, such diptychs are featured also in other Lucianic texts, generically different, such as the pseudo-
philosophical and rather satirical dialogue Nigrinus, or the essay on How to Write History. Diptychs are a common
literary practice of the Second Sophistic in general, in no way exclusively confined to the genre of prolaliai.
(Pseudo-)historical or paradoxographical anecdotes, mythological stories, geographic or artistic ekphrases are all, in
fact, part of the common repertoire not only of the sophists, but equally of other types of cultural manifestations of the intellectual élite of the time.}

The assessment of the importance of the prolaliai for the ensemble of Lucian’s literary and rhetorical activity, as well as for the broader cultural ambience of the ‘Second Sophistic’ needs, therefore, to rely on the close examination of these applicationes.\footnote{Anderson 1977, 313, considers them “among the slightest trifles among the vast amount of ephemera produced by the Second Sophistic”; cf. Anderson 1993, 258 n. 40. Branham 1989 (first published in Branham 1985) and Nesselrath 1990 (especially 140 and n. 54) react to Anderson’s construal of the genre by attempting to redeem the former their “rhetorical and literary functions” (Branham 1989, 38), the latter their cultural fabric.} While the illustrative material gives the measure of Lucian’s rhetorical skills and cultural expertise, the raison d’être of such texts lies in the applicatio. Based on the self-referential statements of the applicatio, Lucian’s prolaliai can be divided into three thematic groups, not completely separate, but in a rather fluid continuity and cross-referential correspondence: a first group in which Lucian is concerned with establishing an audience and blending in with the Greek culture (Harmonides, Herodotus, The Scythian, The Dipsades), a second with establishing a degree of difference in the reception of his work not as mere novelty, but also as exquisite artistry (Amber or Swans and Zeuxis or Antiochus), and a third with reestablishing himself after an alleged absence from the rhetorical arena (Hercules, Dionysus). Nesselrath 1990 attempts an approximate chronology based on the gradual change in Lucian’s attitude towards his audience and the development of his compositional skills: Herodotus or Aëtion, Harmonides, The Scythian, The Dipsades, Amber or Swans, Zeuxis or Antiochus, Hercules, and Dionysus. While acknowledging that committing
to even a loose chronology could prove risky, I will discuss Lucian’s *prolaliai* in approximately the same order, yet not necessarily a strictly chronological one, and at the same time analyze the development of the paradoxographical material on a more or less ascendant scale.\footnote{Nesselrath 1990.}

The general content of Lucian’s *prolaliai* is quite typical for the cultural context of the time, as indisputably reflected later in Menander’s rhetorical prescriptions. However, the paradoxographical material at the core of most of these texts deserves a more systematic examination within the broader cultural and literary context.\footnote{Anderson 1977 points, in a summary observation, to the presence of paradoxographical material in Lucian’s *prolaliai*, while Branham 1989, Camerotto 1998, and Brandão 2002 briefly discuss it.} This rich and diverse paradoxographical material does more than just present the author as exotic; and the exotic still sells in the ‘Second Sophistic’.\footnote{Cf. Branham 1989, 183-184; Anderson 1993, 55, 171-199; Whitmarsh 2005, 35-37; Gleason 1995 passim on Favorinus and his three paradoxes (Phil. *VS* 489) and 39-40 on the possible use of *paradoxa* in Polemo’s introductions.} It amounts obviously, in Lucian’s case, to more than just a conventional rhetorical repertoire. It goes beyond equaling the generic novelty of the comic dialogue, or the *mixis* of genres in it, of prose and verse, of serious and comic, to a *paradoxon*. Lucian constantly focuses on earning *doxa* through *paradoxa* from an audience of *pepaideumenoi* who are expected to sublimate the experience of *ekplexis* from bewilderment to aesthetic pleasure. His use of paradoxographical material is part of a more sophisticated strategy. Through *paradoxa*, often through an oblique rhetoric, Lucian defines his poetics and reflects the multilayered cultural climate of the era, in which he attempts to establish himself as a paradoxically distinct and orthodox identity. His *prolaliai* are very condensed pieces with a deliberately complex referential system that still awaits proper examination.
2.2. Timid Beginnings: Harmonides and Herodotus or Aëtion

*Harmonides* has earned only very short treatments, at most a few lines. Not only is its artistic value obviously inferior in comparison with the rest of Lucian’s *prolalai*, but it also proves hard to fit into any compositional pattern. Harmonides, a hopeful young pipe player (αὐλητής), asks Timotheus, who has already taught him perfectly the art (τέχνη) of pipe playing, to teach him also how to acquire general fame (ἡ δόξα ἤ παρὰ τῶν πολλῶν), for him the final purpose of art. Harmonides wants to be distinguished (ἐπίσημον) among men like his teacher, whom people used to admire just as birds regard a night owl (ὣσπερ ἐπὶ τὴν γλαύκα τὰ ὄρνεα, 1). Timotheus teaches his disciple that the shortest path to glory is not to seek the admiration of the crowds, but of the knowledgeable élite (τοὺς ἀρίστους καὶ ὀλίγους). They, as leaders of opinion, are able to influence the masses, people of bad taste who are unable to appreciate value (ἀγνοοῦσι τὰ βελτίω, βάναυσοι ὄντες, 2). In his very first and last attempt to acquire glory in a competition, at a festival of Dionysus, Harmonides blows too ambitiously (φιλοτιμότερον) and breathes out his life into his pipe, thus dying uncrowned (ἀστεφάνωτος, 3). In a disproportionately long *syncrisis* Lucian claims to apply Timotheus’ principles to

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396 Cf. Anderson 1977, 314-315; Nesselrath 1990, 121; Anderson pairs it with *Somm.* and distinguishes three common thematic elements: “the would-be artist prefers fame to a life of obscurity”, “his first youthful essay is his last”, and “a trial scene”.

397 There is no other extant source for this anecdote. Timotheus is a famous fourth century Boeotian pipe player (Diphil. fr. 78 Kassel-Austin; Dio Chrys. *Or.* 1. 1-3; Athen. *Deipn.* 12.54.34; Phot. 243.372a 37-40; cf. *Suda* τ 620, the second part of the entry, which is erroneously linked with information on Timotheus of Miletus). His musical performance produced a strong impression on Alexander the Great (Dio Chrys. *Or.* 1. 1-3; cf. the second part of *Suda* τ 620; cf. *Suda* α 1122, o 573; Anna Comm. 4.1.16-21; Eust. *Comm. ad Il.* 3.137.12-13; the story is celebrated by Dryden and adapted by Hamilton to a libretto for Handel’s *Alexander’s Feast*). This Timotheus needs to be distinguished from the 5-4 c. musician and citharod Timotheus of Miletus (Luc. *Harm.* 1. 24; cf. Arist. *Metaph.* 993 b15; Diod. 14.46.6.5; Plut. *De Alex. fort.* 334 b; Steph. Byz. 452.16-453.4; Phot. *Bibl.* 239. 320 b 10-11; see West 1992, 361-364; Campbell’s *Greek Lyric*, vol. 5, 1993, 70-121; Hordern 2002). On Timotheus of Thebes/Miletus see Bélis, 1998 and 2002.

398 Lucian uses here elements of the common stock sophistic material that ends up in Menander’s later theoretical treatment of introductory speeches. For example, Menander talks about mentioning famous citharodes and pipe players (Men. *Rhet.* 392.19-20), and Lucian speaks here of the two Timotheuses, of Marsyas, the legendary
himself and his *epideixis* on a short road to fame. He launches into excessive and rather clumsy flattery, by Lucian’s own standards, of an unnamed patron, whose opinion exceeds everyone (ἀντὶ πάντων ἀρκέσειν ἄν) as the sum of all excellence (τὸ κεφάλαιον ἀρετῆς ἀπάσης), an expert (ὁ γνώμων), and the most appropriate critic (ὁ ὀρθὸς κανὼν, 3-4).

The *sýncrisis* between Harmonides and Lucian is uneven, since their situations do not perfectly overlap: the zealous pipe player dies during his first *epideixis*. Lucian seems more like Timotheus, who knows the short way to glory and lives to become famous. The argument of the anecdote is built on the notion of fame (δόξα) and on an intricate lexical weaving of evocative names. Harmonides, *the son of harmony*, masters the *techne* of musical harmonies (ἀρμόσασθαι, τῆς ἀρμονίας ἐκάστης, 1), while his teacher Timotheus, as his name suggests, acquired good fame and admiration (τιμή). Harmonides’ struggle is all too familiar to Lucian and his contemporaries, since *philotimia* (“ambition, desire for honors”) is a defining concept in imperial Greece, in both the socio-political and cultural context.\(^{399}\) For Lucian *doxa* is the ultimate purpose of *techne*, which has no value without glory.\(^{400}\) *Philotimia* drives an artist so much that no effort is spared, leading in Harmonides’ case to death and in Lucian’s to blatant flattery.

The utmost expression of *doxa* is articulated through a *paradoxon*. The élite’s admiration of the artist is illustrated by a paradoxical event – the wonder felt by birds at the daylight appearance of an owl (ὡσπερ ἐπὶ τὴν γυλαύκα τὰ ὀρνεά, 1).\(^{401}\) The artist’s ultimate goal is to be

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\(^{400}\) Luc. *Harm.* 1: “for, as they say, music/musical skill kept hidden and secret is of no use”; cf. Suet. *Nero* 21.1: *Graecum proverbium... occultae musicae nullum esse respectum*.

\(^{401}\) Cf. Arist. *Hist. anim.* 609 α: “τῆς δ’ ἡμέρας καὶ τὰ ἄλλα ὀρνίθια τὴν γυλαύκα περιπέτεια, ο δ καλείται θαυμάζειν.” Here θαυμάζειν has an ironic use, since in fact the little birds pluck the feathers of a confused owl.
regarded as a marvel, as a surprising, astonishing, exotic entity. Lucian uses *paradoxa*, here and in other *prolaliai*, both for their value per se, to shock and please, as useful tricks from the sophist’s rich bag, but also for their parallel to the artist’s exotic *epideixis*. Through paradoxographical imagery, the audience’s admiration for his *techne* is elevated to wonder and awe. The effect of the *epideixis* on the audience amounts to more than a cerebral reaction. It produces also a strong emotional response.

*Herodotus or Aëtion* is a diptych *prolalia*, in which Lucian uses two parallel stories to illustrate his own situation: one of Herodotus, the famous historian, and the other of the painter Aëtion, both of whom gained universal recognition by displaying their respective talents at Olympia. Herodotus travels from Caria to mainland Greece in order to gain quick and easy fame (*τάχιστα καὶ ἀπραγμονέστατα*). Yet traveling from city to city does not appeal to him, since it seems to be tedious and time-consuming (*ἐργῶδες καὶ μακρόν*), thus not very efficient. Therefore, he allegedly decides to perform at Olympia, during the games, in what proves to be a successful attempt to gain the admiration of all the Greeks through one single performance (*ἀθρόους ποι λαβεῖν τοὺς Ἔλληνας ἀπαντας*), before an élite audience representing the entire Greek nation (*ἀπανταχόθεν ἡδή τῶν ἀρίστων συνειλεγμένων*).  

Herodotus prefaces his display by affirming his status as a performer competing for recognition, not a passive spectator (*οὐ θεάτην, ἀλλ’ ἀγωνιστὴν Ὀλυμπίων, 1*). His statement serves as a prologue to his
performance, through which he obliquely aims at the audience’s attention and their favorable judgment, a metaliterary paradigm for Lucian’s own prolalia and its function.\(^{403}\)

Herodotus’ performance is described in terms typical for a poetic display (ἐξοδών τὰς ἱστορίας καὶ κηλῶν τοὺς παρόντας), which allows Lucian to justify, anachronistically, the tradition of entitling the nine Herodotean history books after the names of the nine Muses. Allegedly, Herodotus paves the way – or rather the shortcut (ἐπίτομον τινα ταύτην ὄδὸν ἐς γνῶσιν) – to glory, for future performers, mostly sophists, among whom – suggestively – is a local native, Hippias of Elis (1-3).\(^{404}\)

Through an awkwardly abrupt transition, Lucian introduces the story of the painter Aëtio, who exhibits, also at Olympia, his representation of the wedding of Alexander the Great and Roxana.\(^{405}\) This similar approach to achieving fame gives Lucian the occasion to display his own skills at “painting with words” in the ekphrasis of Aëtio’s work, which he claims to have seen in Italy.\(^{406}\) Aëtio’s artistic effort is rewarded by Proxenides, one of the judges, who is so pleased by such a display of talent (ἡσθεντας τῇ τέχνη), that he offers his daughter in marriage to the painter (4-6).\(^{407}\)

Then Lucian, again abruptly, returns to the story of Herodotus and its applicatio (τούτῳ γε ὀμοίου παθεῖν φημι αὐτῷ, 7-8). His own Olympia is Macedonia, his occasion is a gathering of the local élite (τὸ κεφάλαιον ἀπάντων Μακεδόνων), the Macedonian acme (ὀφελος).

\(^{403}\) Cf. Dio Chrys. Or. 8.11 on Diogenes’ similar attitude.

\(^{404}\) The others are Prodicus of Ceos, Polus of Acragas, and a puzzling Anaximenes of Chios (see Nesselrath1990, 118 n. 13 on the history of conjectures for this passage).

\(^{405}\) Nesselrath 1990, 119-120. For Aëtio, cf. Luc. Merc. cond. 42.2, Imag. 7.16, 7.26-8.1; Pl. NH 35.78, 34.50.


\(^{407}\) See Nesselrath 1990, 119-120 for the various interpretations of the problematic phrase τὰ τελευταία ταύτα and the chronology of Aëtio. As a different possible solution, I would advance the idea that the unfortunate use of this phrase might have been determined by the fact that Lucian had recently seen the painting in Italy, with which occasion he might have learned or refreshed his memory of the anecdote he is about to narrate here (see n. 64 below).
While his work may be inferior to that of Herodotus, his chosen venue for displaying it, the best city of Macedonia (πόλις ἣ ἄριστη), is better than that of the Olympic gatherings, a small, stifling, primitive place with tents and huts (τὴν στενοχωρίαν καὶ σκηνὰς καὶ κολύβας καὶ πτὲρυγος). His audience is a cultural élite (ῥητόρων τε καὶ συγγραφέων καὶ σοφιστῶν οἱ δοκιμώτατοι), far superior to the promiscuous Olympic crowd (οἱ πολλοί, συρφετώδης ὀχλος), who – Lucian inconsistently now claims – judged the historian’s display as secondary (ἐν παρέργῳ) to the athletic spectacle. Consequently, Lucian asks his audience not to compare him to famous athletes (Polydamas, Glaucus, or Milo), but to ‘strip’ him (ἀποδύσαντες) and judge him independently (ἐπ’ ἐμαυτοῦ μόνου, 8), in comparison with his own kind – the literary guild. The verb ἀποδύω refers to the athletes’ nakedness in performance, which reflects their physical strength. It suggests that, in a metaphorical stripping, the audience might appreciate Lucian’s own rhetorical muscle. On the other hand, since Lucian has already established that his audience is superior to the Olympic crowd, he is unlikely to imply that they might make the same mistake and judge a rhetorical performance in comparison with physical might. In this case, the names of famous athletes could stand, in a loose metaphor, for literary luminaries, with whom Lucian cannot claim comparison without seeming presumptuous (θρασύς). The stripping metaphor would then refer to a close examination by the audience who should strip him of false appearances (such as presumptuousness). His final hope is that, given the greatness of the venue (ἐν γε τηλικούτῳ σταδίῳ) – which reflects that of the audience – he would at least be considered unworthy of the whip (τάχ’ ἄν οὐ πάνυ μαστιγώσιμος ύμιν δόξαμι, 8).

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408 Cf. Nesselrath 1990, 118.
In Lucian’s story, Herodotus enchants his audience with the recitation of his *Histories* (ᾆδων τὰς ἱστορίας καὶ κηλῶν τοὺς παρόντας, 1). His performance is presented in terms of a musical or poetic display (ᾆδων) and his effect on the audience is a magic spell (κηλῶν), typical for that of a bewitching musician like Orpheus. The artist is here a charmer who bewitches his listeners through the power of words. The magical aspect of the performance makes it extraordinary, thus equivalent to a marvel, *paradoxon*. Magic charming (κηλέω) is associated not only with pleasure, but also with deceit. Herodotus built a reputation not only as the “father of history”, but also as the “father of lies”, of many unbelievable *paradoxa* (θώματα). The charm of *paradoxa* is transferred, in Herodotus’ case, to his performance of a literary text whose fabric is dappled with marvels. In Lucian’s case, on the other hand, the expression of *doxa* lies in the beholding of a charming performance perceived as an aesthetic *paradoxon*. Paradoxically, in *Harmonides* and *Herodotus*, Lucian represents the élite’s ideal reception as a reaction characteristic of the masses: shocked and curious little birds flocking around an owl in the middle of the day, or crowds bewitched by the marvellous stories of a mendacious charmer. The paradoxographical imagery evokes strong irrational emotions, attributed by Lucian to an

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409 Cf. Luc. *Ind.* 12, especially 12.2-4 and 12.21-23.
410 Heraclitus, the improper ‘paradoxographer’, in his work dedicated to explaining myths (*On Unbelievable Things/Stories*), consistently rationalizes the magical power of incantations through prostitution (2, 14, 16), just as Lucian also does (*Philops*. 14-15). On the other hand, Heraclitus allegorizes Orpheus’ charms, in which he sees the power of persuasion in bringing mankind from a state of bestiality into that of religious piety (23, cf. Stern 2003, 83; cf. Hor. *Ars. P.* 391-393). In his criticism of an ignorant book collector Lucian colorfully emphasizes that the power of charm lies not in the artist’s instrument, i.e. Orpheus’ lyre, but in the artist himself (*Ind.* 12.21-23). The same text, *Adversus indoctum*, contains a couple of other elements that echo Herodotus: one is the story of a bad artist, in a splendid attire, whipped by judges after a disappointing performance (9), and the other is the effort of incorporating Syria, which stands for Lucian’s barbarian ethnicity, into cultural Greece. This effort lies in the undertones of Lucian’s hurt Syrian pride in his censure of another Syrian, an ignorant person who sets a bad example of cultural adjustment and integration, and who is perceived to undermine the success of other barbarian/Syrian born persons and to threaten their chance of being accepted by a culturally Greek élite.
untrained audience. However, in his case, it vividly translates the intensity of aesthetic emotions.

These two prolalai share striking similarities in terms of theme and motifs. They are both articulated on the idea of fame, (τιμή, δόξα), particularly on the artist’s shortcut (ἱ ἐπίτομος) to universal renown. The utmost expression of fame is vividly expressed through the idea of universal name recognition and the image of finger pointing. The shortcut to fame is facilitated by pepaideumenoi, the élite audience whose paideia makes them not only appropriate judges, but also leaders of opinion and, thus, the quickest vehicle to fame. Their power to shape the artistic and cultural judgments of the non-élite is illustrated by the motif of the voting pebble (ψήφος), with their few positive votes/opinon being able to overcome and convert the votes/opinion of the ignorant crowd.

In Harmonides, Lucian claims to have enjoyed already some fame as a public performer (πολλοὶ ἑθαύμασαν, ἐνδόξος ἡδὴ ἐγώ, ἐπαινοῦνται πρὸς τῶν ἄκουσάντων οἱ λόγοι, 4). Yet, he completely minimizes the importance of the πολλοὶ, just as Timotheus that of performing in theaters to gain the attention of crowds. Therefore, Lucian singles out his patron as the only audience member who matters, as the supreme embodiment of paideia and cultural leadership (μόνος αὐτός ἀμείνων). His prevalence dissipates the nervousness of the performer

413 Cf. Luc. Zeux., Prom. es.
414 Cf. Harmonides’ idea of fame for himself: δείκνυσθαι τῷ δακτύλῳ, καὶ ἢν ποὺ φανῷ, εὐθὺς ἐπιστρέφεσθαι πάντας εἰς ἐμὲ καὶ λέγειν τοῦνομα, οὕτος Ἀρμονίδης ἐκεῖνος ἐστιν ὁ ἀριστος αὐλητής (being pointed out with the finger and, wherever I make an appearance, everyone turning towards me straightway and uttering my name: “this is that famous Harmonides, the most excellent pipe player”, Harm. 1. 17-20); Harmonides’ perception of Timotheus’ fame: οὔδεὶς ἢν δὲ ἤγνοι τοῦνομα. Τιμόθεου ὥς Θηρίων, ἄλλ᾽ εὐθὰ ἢν καὶ νῦν φανῆ, συνθέσεως ἐπὶ σὲ πάντες ὁσπερ ἐπὶ τὴν γλαύκα τὰ ὀρνέα (there was nobody who did not know your name, that of Timotheus of Thebes; and even nowadays, whenever you make an appearance, they all flock around you, just like little birds around an owl,” Harm. 1.24-27); Herodotus’ fame: καὶ οὐκ ἤστιν ὅστις ἄνδρος ἢ τοῦ Ἡροδότου ὄνοματος... καὶ εἰ ποὺ γε φανεῖ μόνον, ἐδείκνυτο ἢν τῷ δακτύλῳ, οὕτος ἐκεῖνος Ἡροδότος ἐστιν... (and there was no one who had not heard of Herodotus’ name; and if he only appeared somewhere, he was pointed out with the finger: “this is that famous Herodotus...”, Herod. 2.2-7).
415 Cf. Luc. Rh. pr. 3.11, where Lucian satirizes the shortcut to rhetorical fame facilitated not by paideia, but by simulation of paideia.
416 Luc. Harm.2.13; Herod.3.1.
engaging in the daring act of an *epideixis* (θαρρεῖν μὲ ἐν τῷ παρόντι ποιεῖ διὰ γε τὸ μέγεθος τοῦ τολμήματος καὶ πάνυ δικαίως ἐν φοβηθέντα, 3). His approval equals the Olympic prizes (4.13-14), thus ominously anticipating the Olympic displays of *Herodotus or Aëtion*.\(^{417}\) Moreover, this patron has proved himself by his beneficence (εὖ ἐποίησας) to Lucian’s native city, both individually (ἰδίᾳ), and as part of the entire nation (κοινῇ μετὰ παντὸς τοῦ ἔθνους, 3). The term ἔθνος, ambiguous here, may be an ethnico-geographic reference, suggesting that either this patron, whose generosity allegedly benefits not only Samosata, but all Commagene or even all Asia Minor, is of Micro-Asiatic origin or dwells somewhere in Asia Minor.\(^{418}\) The latter possibility would place Lucian in the same geographical context at the time of this *epideixis*. Whichever the case, it is noticeable that, at this stage, Lucian does not identify himself as a barbarian and does not build his exoticism on his ethnicity. His native city and ethnical identity are not presented as peripheral to the Greek world and culture. Only later, as we will see, Lucian expresses his self-consciousness as a barbarian, his awareness of his own ethnico-cultural marginality in the perception of the audience. Here, if speaking somewhere in Asia, marginality would be superfluous. If, however, speaking in a place whose Greekness is more established, he might still perceive his peripheral status as a possible obstacle in his quest for cultural recognition. At this stage he needs yet to be embraced, assimilated. The exoticism of his ethnical identity could play a role in marking a degree of difference, in establishing uniqueness only after such assimilation is acquired.

In *Herodotus or Aëtion*, on the other hand, Lucian seems to be one step further on his cultural homecoming journey. Following on Herodotus’ steps, Lucian crosses the sea from the east to his own Olympia, this time Macedonia, a region that had long been culturally

\(^{417}\) Villani 2000, 230 n. 52 interprets literally the last sentence and draws the conclusion that with *Harmonides* Lucian is, in fact, performing at Olympia, competing in the *agones*.

\(^{418}\) Most probably, he had Roman citizenship (Jones 1986, 88).
Herodotus comes from an outer, marginal area, therefore he is perceived as foreign to mainland Greece and mainstream Hellenism. However, not only is he able to enchant the Greek élite, but he also sets the foundations of a new Greek cultural pattern, thus paving the way for other artists. The list of Herodotus’ followers on this shortcut to fame opens, suggestively, with the name of Hippias of Elis. In virtue of the Eleans’ control of the Olympic Games, Hippias appears as a native of the sacred ground that stands for Greekness as the cement of a nation. Thus he epitomizes the very core of the Greek élite. By making Hippias a follower of Herodotus, Lucian affirms the ability of an Asian to bring innovation to all Greece and become a model for all Greeks. Not only does an outsider conquer Greece, but he also teaches Greeks a cultural lesson, thus incorporating fringe elements previously perceived as foreign and marginal.

In his praise of the Macedonian host city Lucian changes course and, in zealous flattery, he now disparages Olympia and its spectators in favor of the present location and audience. Thus, sacred old symbols of Greekness are reduced to primitivism and lack of paideia. It is time for new symbols and new canons, the inclusion of the marginal areas of the Greek world. In changing the center from Olympia to Macedonia, Lucian points to a pattern for other fringe territories that can be incorporated and usurp the old center’s birthright. On the other hand, Herodotus’ path is a paradigm for Lucian’s own path from the margin to the center, for his cultural homecoming. Thus, Lucian changes the function of this form of λόγος ἐπιβατήριος from a visitor’s speech to a homecoming speech to highlight his attempt to change his cultural status from that of a ‘visitor’ to that of a ‘native’ of the Greek letters.

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419 The performance is placed in either Thessalonica (Gallavotti 1932, 6) or Beroea (Jones 1986, 11 n. 25).

420 In Menander’s taxonomy, this introductory speech, if taken individually, would fit well into the category of λόγοι ἐπιβατήριοι, in this case a speech occasioned by the rhetor’s visit to a city other than his native one. As such,
Lucian does not explain the relevance of the story of Aëtion, sandwiched between the story of Herodotus and its *applicatio*. However, besides its long ekphrastic discourse, the effect of painter’s display is significant for Lucian’s situation. Aëtion’s painting skills make possible the transfer of art that imitates reality (the wedding of Alexander and Roxana) to a new reality that involves the artist himself (i.e. his own wedding). This anecdote becomes paradigmatic of Lucian’s hope to emulate the painter. As an artist, Lucian represents in his *logos* Aëtion’s reality: both the physicality of the painter’s art object, in the ekphrasis, and his ability to make art real, in the short narrative of the painter’s own wedding. Thus, Lucian expresses obliquely the hope that he too may have the rhetorical skills to transform art into reality, to transfer fame from *logos* to actuality. The Aëtion anecdote implicitly invests ποίησις, the art of words, with the power of ποίησις, creation of reality.\footnote{The Olympian judge who marries his daughter to the stranger Aëtion (οὐκ ἐπιχωρίῳ), is Προξενίδης, whose name means the son of a πρόξενος (a host/friend/protector of foreigners, a patron).\footnote{Therefore, his inclusion of Aëtion into the family expresses Lucian’s expectation to be embraced, as a ξένος, by his influential audience/hosts/patrons/friends into the ‘family’ of Greekness.}}\footnote{Cf. Luc. Hes.; Cont. 4.} The Olympian judge who marries his daughter to the stranger Aëtion (οὐκ ἐπιχωρίῳ), is Προξενίδης, whose name means the son of a πρόξενος (a host/friend/protector of foreigners, a patron).\footnote{LSJ s.v. πρόξενος; cf. the verb προξένηω, to be one’s patron, also to introduce, recommend someone; προξένησις, public reception; etc.} Therefore, his inclusion of Aëtion into the family expresses Lucian’s expectation to be embraced, as a ξένος, by his influential audience/hosts/patrons/friends into the ‘family’ of Greekness.\footnote{It is also significant that Lucian invokes, at one time, Zeus Φιλίος, the god of friendship (Luc. Herod. 7).}

There are many other signs that point to a chronological progression from *Harmonides* to *Herodotus or Aëtion*, one in which Lucian is still figuring out his rhetorical instruments and strategy, still trying to find out his way through all this more or less standard material. Whereas in *Harmonides* the young artist asks his master how to gain fame, Herodotus is an accomplished artist who finds the solution by himself and transmits it, through the power of example, to later...
artists. While in Harmonides Lucian’s notion of the élite in restricted to the one person he flatters, in Herodotus the élite is represented as a group. Although the relevance of the Harmonides story seems obvious, Lucian explains painstakingly and at length how the story applies to him, meticulously unveiling not quite veiled self-references. Yet the long, repetitive flattery of his patron, exploiting the whole the rhetorical apparatus (rhetorical questions, wishes, similes, etc.), displays the most obvious signs of clumsiness. Therefore, Harmonides is likely one of Lucian’s first prolalìa, as is generally agreed, if not – as I would argue – the very first one extant. Its occasion could have been either a performance in Asia, more probably, or one of the first performances across the Mediterranean, in Greece or Macedonia. In Herodotus, on the other hand, the applicatio is expressed in a more subtle manner, leaving some space for the audience to exercise their own hermeneutic abilities. It too is likely among Lucian’s first prolalìa, later than Harmonides, I would argue, and close in date with The Scythian, if not earlier. This other Macedonian prolalia displays a rich paradoxographical hypotext and elaborates on the barbarian identity and the notion of proxenia, only lightly touched in Herodotus or Aëtion.

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424 This prolalia has rather the tone of a personal letter, or the introduction to a private performance. Yet Lucian makes a clear reference to a more extended audience. When he confesses his nervousness before the epideixis, he claims to be only encouraged by the fact that his patron’s vote in the matters of paideia can now (ἐν τῷ παράντι, καὶ νῦν) overturn all other possibly negative votes. Consequently, this is, in fact, a public performance, yet marked by an incredible lack of tact and subtlety, characteristic only for one who is still in the very process of surpassing his debutant status.


426 Whether his claim to have seen Aëtion’s painting in Italy is deceitful it is not at all relevant; the reference to a previous journey to Italy, however, seems less likely to be false. Another indicator of its early date is the slim presence of paradoxographical material, as well as in Harm., yet increasingly pervasive in the other prolalìa. For an early dating see Jones 1986, 168-169; Nesselrath 1990, 117-122; cf. Hall 1981, 34-35, who inclines to date both Herod. and Scyth. somewhat around 165-166, based on her thesis that Lucian visited Macedonia about that time, after he returned from Asia and attended the Olympic Games of 165 (the venue of Peregrinus Proteus’ self-immolation). Hall does, however, acknowledge that there are no strong arguments against Gallavotti’s dating of Lucian’s visit to Macedonia, thus of the two prolalìa, much earlier, just after his return from his travels to Italy and Gaul (Gallavotti 1932, 6). The early dating would fit better the rest of her chronological attempt in which she attributes texts dealing with Lucian’s literary innovation, including the prolalia Zeux., to approximately the same
2.3. Mastering Paradoxography: *The Scythian or the Proxenos*

In this *prolalia*, Lucian develops further the concept of *proxenia*. He compares the cultural relationship between himself and his *proxenoi* (patrons) to the relationship between the Scythian Anacharsis and his *proxenoi*, Toxaris and Solon, one a former compatriot now completely Hellenized, the other a genuine Athenian epitomizing the best of Greece. Lucian works here with two different forms of *paradoxa*: exotic and aesthetic. The exoticism is illustrated by the contact between Greek and barbarian cultures, while the aesthetic marvel is represented by Greek *paideia*, especially in the form of rhetorical display.

The Scythian Anacharsis comes to Athens in his desire for the Greek culture (παιδείας ἐπιθυμία τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς), reenacting the journey of Toxaris. As a foreigner, a barbarian in fact (ξένος καὶ βάρβαρος), Anacharsis is perplexed and frightened (τεταραγμένος, ψοφοδεής) at the encounter with a new culture (πάντα ἄγνωστον). The locals make fun of his barbarian appearance (καταγελώμενος ύπο τῶν ὀρέων ἐπὶ τῇ σκευῇ) and he is not able to communicate verbally with anyone (ὁμόγλωσσον οὐδὲνα εὐρίσκει). Therefore, he decides to cut his visit short. At this point Anacharsis providentially meets Toxaris, who recognizes him by his attire as a fellow Scythian (ἡ στολή ... πατρίωτις οὖσα). Anacharsis himself, however, cannot recognize in Toxaris anything that might hint at their shared ethnicity, neither appearance (garments, accessories, body care), nor language (1-3). Toxaris then addresses Anacharsis by...
name in both their native tongue and the latter is struck with joy (ἐδάκρυσεν ὑφ’ ἡδονῆς, *he wept tears of joy*). Anacharsis recognizes Toxaris as the life embodiment of a legendary figure at home, whose disciple and follower in longing for Greece he professes to be (μαθητήν... καὶ ζηλωτήν τοῦ ἔρωτος ὑπ’ ἡράσθης, ἰδεῖν τὴν Ἑλλάδα) and whose path he replicates. Anacharsis asks Toxaris to be his guide and to show him the best of both Athens and the rest of Greece (ξενάγησον καὶ δείξου τὰ κάλλιστα, 4).

Toxaris promises that Athens, a city that charms foreigners (οὕς οὐτῶς ὄλιγα τὰ θέλγητρα ἔχει πρὸς τοὺς ξένους), will utterly seduce Anacharsis too (μάλα ἐπιλήψεται σου). He offers to introduce (συστήσας) the newcomer to Solon, a local wise man (σοφὸς ἀνήρ, ἐπιχώριος), who had himself traveled to foreign lands (ἅποδημῆσας) and had associated with the best of men (τοῖς ἀριστοῖς τῶν ἀνθρώπων συγγενομένος). Since Solon is the epitome of the virtues of all Greece, Anacharsis, by becoming acquainted with him and making him his friend (φίλον), will find the quickest way (τάχιστα) to discover the best of Greece itself (πᾶσαν νόμιζε τὴν Ἑλλάδα ἐν αὐτῷ ἔχειν καὶ τὸ κεφάλαιον ἡδὴ ἂν εἰδέναι τῶν τῆδε ἄγαθῶν, 5). Coincidentally they meet Solon himself, a devotee of Zeus Ζένιος (protector of strangers), and Toxaris introduces Anacharsis as a stranger in need of friendship (ξένον ἀνδρὰ φιλίας δεόμενον), a great gift (δῶρον μέγιστον), and an occasion for the wise Athenian to practice his kindness towards strangers (ἀφορμήν... τῆς ἐς ξένον ἀνδρὰ εὔποιας). Acting as Anacharsis’ proxenos (προξενήσεις), Solon – Toxaris argues – will be the newcomer’s shortcut (ἐπίτομον) to becoming both knowledgeable about and well known by the best of Greece (αὐτὸς μάθαι πάντα καὶ γνώριμος γένοιτο τοῖς ἀριστοῖς). Thus through Solon, a cultural canon and archetype (κανών, δείγμα, πάντα ἐξώρακας ἡδὴ Σόλωνα ἰδὼν), Anacharsis will

cease to be a stranger and will become a genuine citizen of Greece, renowned and loved by all (πολίτην γνήσιον... τῆς Ἑλλάδος, οὐκέτι ξένος, πάντες σε ἱσσαί, πάντες σε φιλοῦσι 6-7).

Solon does indeed teach Anacharsis and socially introduces him to the best of Greece (παιδεύων καὶ διδάσκων τὰ κάλλιστα, φίλον ἀπασὶ ποιῶν τὸν Ἀνάχαρσιν καὶ προσάγων τοῖς Ἐλλήνων καλοῖς). Through Solon, the quintessence of Greece, Anacharsis changes very quickly (ἐν ἀκαρεί) from an ignorant stranger (πάντα ἄγνωστον, 3), to someone familiar with Greece and familiar to Greeks (ἀπαντα ἐγνὼ, πᾶσιν ἦν γνώριμος). What is more, he obtains fame (ἐτιμάτο, 8).

In the applicatio, the whole purpose of the prolalia, Lucian compares his arrival in the Macedonian city with that of Anacharsis in Athens. Toxaris’ report on Solon is a parallel for the unanimous opinion that the city holds about Lucian’s patrons. They are associated with Solon, although Lucian throws in some other famous Athenian figures, such as Pericles, Aristides, or Alcibiades. Lucian’s patrons are father and son, worthy of the canonical classical rhetoricians (παιδείας δὲ καὶ λόγων δυνάμει τῇ Ἀττικῇ δεκάδι παραβάλλοις ἂν) and kind to strangers (τὴν πρὸς τοὺς ξένους φιλανθρωπίαν). Lucian focuses almost exclusively on the latter, whose physical beauty is matched by a seductive rhetoric. Just as in the story of Anacharsis, Lucian too could, by befriending (φίλου) the two, befriend and conquer the entire city (πᾶσαν ἥξεις τὴν πόλιν, 9-11).

The theme here is obviously the same as in the prolaliai discussed previously, i.e. finding the perfect shortcut to literary fame. Yet the focus subtly shifts from the idea of fame itself to that of proxenia, from achieving literary glory to achieving a more inclusive cultural embracing not just as a literally skilled person, but – more importantly – as a philhellene who absorbs

429 Luc. Scyth. 9.1-2: βουλεσθε οὖν ἐπαγάγω ήδη τῷ μύθῳ τὸ τέλος, ὡς μή ἀκέφαλος περινοστοίη;
Greekness and becomes culturally Greek. The analogy drawn between Lucian and Anacharsis is not difficult to grasp and, besides, the author himself makes it obvious. He likens himself to Anacharsis in terms of their status in Greece: both are perceived as barbarians. The first of the spurious letters attributed to Anacharsis, written in a Cynic spirit sometime before the second century B.C., makes a strong case that language, thus ethnicity, should not be the criterion for judging one’s value. The anonymous author emphasizes the clear distinction between essence and biased perception, here based on linguistic and ethnic differences. One’s intrinsic value, the thought behind the speech, should not be spoiled by the outer projection, the speech itself. The message and its proper reception count, not the code in which the message is delivered. Moreover, for Pseudo-Anacharsis linguistic/ethnic bias in reception works both ways. Anyone, including an Athenian speaking the most pure Attic – the very Greek canon of linguistic propriety, is liable to it whenever displaced in a foreign environment. Such biased perception is “characteristic of those who lack education and are ignorant of what is beautiful” (ἀπαιδεύτων ταύτα ἐστι καὶ ἀπειροκάλως).

432 Probably with this passage in mind, Fronto, Lucian’s contemporary and himself a native of Cirta in Numidia, writing mostly in Latin, exercises self-irony and compares himself with Anacharsis when it comes to others’ perception of him as linguistically non-Greek because of his barbarized Attic.

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430 Hdt. 4.76.
431 Ps.-Anacharsis Ep. 1.1-5: “You make fun of my speech (γελάτε ἐμὴν φωνὴν) because I do not pronounce the Greek sounds clearly. For the Athenians, Anacharsis speaks broken Attic, but so do the Athenians speak broken Scythian for the Scythians (Ἀνάχαρσις παρ’ Ἀθηναίος σολοκίζει, Ἀθηναίοι δὲ παρὰ Σκυθαίς). When it comes to worthiness, however, men differ from one another not in speech, but in thought (οὐ φωναῖς διήνεγκαν ἄνθρωποι ἄνθρωποι εἰς τὸ εἶναι ἄξιολογοι, ἀλλὰ γνώμαις), just as Greeks differ from Greeks.” Cf. Ps.-Anacharsis Ep. 2. For the letters attributed to Anacharsis see Reuters 1957; Malherbe 1977; Cremonini 1991; Martin 1996; Costa 2001.
432 Ps.-Anacharsis Ep. 1.34.
433 Fronto Ep. Graec. 1.5: “I shall compare myself to Anacharsis not, by Zeus!, in terms of wisdom, but on account of both being barbarians (κατὰ τὸ βάρβαρος ὁμοίως εἶναι). For just as he was a Scythian from among the nomad Scythians, I am a Libyan from among the nomad Libyans. Grazing (τὸ νέμεσθαι, here shifting ironically from transitive to intransitive use, from a characteristic of people as nomads to their cattle) is a feature that we both share [i.e. as nomad barbarians]; therefore, ‘bleating’, however one might bleat, will also be a shared feature for those
The idea of displacement is pervasive in Lucian’s text. Anacharsis and Toxaris are away from their own country; Solon has also experienced travel and displacement; Lucian too comes, by analogy with Anacharsis, to a foreign place. For the others, Lucian stresses the idea of dislocation, by using compounds with ἀπο- (ἀποδημήσας 4.17, ἀποδημία 7.16, for Anacharsis; ἀποδημήσας 5.11, for Solon). In his own case, however, he uses an ἐπι- compound (ἐπεδήμησα 9.13), thus emphasizing not the idea of dislocation, but rather that, which comes as its possible consequence, of re-location, of putting down roots in a new place. One could even stretch the use of the verb ἐπιδημέω here to deliberately imply the idea of (cultural) homecoming.\footnote{LSJ s.v. ἐπιδημέω: A. to be at home, live at home; II. come home; III. of foreigners, come to stay in a city, reside in a place.}

Travel and displacement lead to the experience of the otherness, to the shock of novelty, which the writers of paraphrase who claim autopsy confess to have undergone themselves and to which they attempt to expose their readership. The paradoxographical overtone is hard to miss here. Anacharsis is displaced too (ἀποδημήσας, ἀποδημία) when he comes to Athens urged by his longing for Greek \textit{paideia} (1.2).\footnote{Solon becomes the source of his \textit{paideia} (παιδεύων καὶ διδάσκων, 8.3); cf. Luc. \textit{VH} 1.5, where one of the reasons for the travel (τῆς ἀποδημίας) that leads to the experience of many \textit{paradoxa} is the desire to learn (τὸ βούλεσθαι μαθεῖν).} The Scythian perceives the city as unfamiliar and strange (ξένα καὶ ἄγνωστα πάντα, 4.21), as a marvel, and feels bewildered, perplexed, and frightened (τεταραγμένος τὴν γνώμην, πάντα ἄγνωστον, ψοφοδεῖς, 3. 4-5; ἐτεταράγμην, 4.20).

Anacharsis’ experience is similar to that of many Greeks traveling to foreign lands and recording in writing the \textit{paradoxa} that they encounter.\footnote{Cf. Luc. \textit{Anach.} 6 where the Greek athletics are ξένα for Anacharsis, while elements of the Scythian educational system might seem ἀλλόκοτα to Greeks.} At the same time, by traveling to Athens he causes the amazement of the Greeks by bringing the foreign, the \textit{paradoxon}, into their own land,
without them undergoing travel and painful displacement. Not only does Anacharsis experience
the exotic, he is also aware (συνίει) of his own exoticism among the Athenians
(καταγηλώμενος ύπο τῶν ὄρωντων, 3.6-7). His self-consciousness as foreigner, with all the
consequences of such a cultural status, corresponds to the self-consciousness to which both
Lucian and Fronto obliquely confess, and which Pseudo-Anacharsis tries to dissimulate in the
letter discussed above.437

Anacharsis’ journey is not just physical, but also cultural. He is engaged in θεωρία, in
seeing the world, a world that is here reduced to Greece.438 He wants to see (ἰδεῖν) and to get to
know the features of the Greek culture, foreign to him: laws, customs, way of life, etc. (νόμων
tε τοὺς ἀρίστους καὶ ἀνδρῶν τοὺς βελτίστους καὶ ἥθη καὶ πανηγύρεις καὶ βίων αὐτῶν καὶ
πολιτείαν, 4.25-27).439 Anacharsis’ interests echo those of a paradoxographer. Other accounts of
his life also stress his interest in foreign customs in general. Herodotus, for example, offers two
different stories. In the first one, Anacharsis, although coming from the Scythian
culture that is extremely exclusive of others (ξενικοῖς δὲ νομαίοις... φεύγουσι αἰνώς χράσθαι), nevertheless
imports foreign religious customs. This causes his unpopularity, violent death by the hand of the
Scythian king, and damnatio memoriae (οὐ φασί μιν Σκύθαι γινώσκειν, 4.76). Ironically, while
the Greeks embrace him in his exoticism, the Scythians, in Herodotus’ account, do not recognize
a Hellenized Anacharsis as one of them anymore and excise him from their cultural memory. He
becomes so Greek, that he can no longer be Scythian/barbarian. Likewise, in Lucian’s version,

437 Cf. Luc. Prom. es 4 where derision (ἐγέλων) is part of the Egyptians’ reaction to a human freak.
438 Cf. Luc. VH 1.2.4; cf. Hdt. 1.30 on Solon’s journey and θεωρία (τῆς θεωρίας ἐκδημήσας ὁ Σόλων εἶνεκεν,
1.30.1; γὰς πολλὴν θεωρίης εἶνεκεν ἐπελήλυθα, 1.30.2); Arist. Ath. pol. 11.1 (ἀποδημῶν ἐποίησατο κατ’
ἐμπορίαν ἀμα καὶ θεωρίαν); see Baslez 1984, 164-165, on “tourisme intellectuel”.
439 Cf. Ps.-Anacharsis Ep. 10.1-3 (ἀφίγμα εἰς τὴν τῶν Ἑλλήνων διδαχθησόμενος ἥθη τὰ τούτων καὶ
ἐπιτηδεύματα); Nic. Dam. FGriH 90 F104.9.11 (Ἀνάχαρσι δει τῶν ἐπτὰ σοφῶν νομισθεῖς ὡς ἤλθεν εἰς τὴν
Ἑλλάδα ἵνα ἱστορήσῃ τὰ τῶν Ἑλλήνων νόμιμα); Dio Chrys. Or. 32.44 (ἤκε δὲ εἰς τὴν Ἑλλάδα θεασόμενος
οὐμαί τὰ τε ἥθη καὶ τοὺς ἀνθρώπους).
Toxaris predicts that Anacharsis, once Hellenized, will forget entirely his Scythian culture (άπάντων ἐπιλήσῃ τῶν ἐν Σκυθίᾳ, 7). This seems to be the counterpart of Herodotus’ story. The expression of the Scythians’ forgetfulness is, in Lucian, Anacharsis’ inability to recognize Toxaris underneath his Hellenized appearance. The anagnorisis occurs, however, when Toxaris speaks Scythian. Language is for them the expression of their ethnic bond and, though Hellenized, Toxaris still preserves it. Against his words, he is not completely forgetful of his Scythian identity. This might reflect on Lucian’s own feeling that his barbarian identity still follows him. While now it compels him to still seek proxenia from members of a culturally Greek élite, later his barbarian identity would become a distinctive mark of his individuality, once himself a member of this élite.

In the alternative Herodotean story, Anacharsis is sent to Greece by the king himself in order to learn foreign customs (τῆς Ἑλλάδος μαθῆς, 4.77). Diogenes Laertius, who uses earlier sources, says that Anacharsis recorded not only the Greek, but also the Scythian customs, yet more with a moral-philosophical propensity, to inspire people to live a simple life (ἐποίησε τῶν... νομίμων... εἰς εὐτέλειαν βίου, 1.101.3-5). Although Lucian emphasizes the emotional effect of paradoxa on Anacharsis (τεταραγμένος, ψωφοδεής, 3. 4-5; ἐτεταράγμην, 4.20), he also refers to them in terms of their intellectual aspect (πάντα ἀγνωστα 3.4, ἀγνωστα 4.21), making Anacharsis’ effort distinctive from that of the paradoxographer proper. The paradoxographer records a marvel aiming at creating shock, not understanding. His readership enjoys the pleasure of the emotional effect and escapes the rationalizing effort. For Anacharsis,
however, *paradoxa*, to which he is keen to be exposed, represent a novel world that fascinates him, but at the same time tempts him to conquer it through understanding. The result of such an effort is, therefore, knowledge (ἅπαντα ἔγνω, 8.10-11). His bewilderment at this type of novelty is epitomized in his enthrallment with Solon’s wisdom (τεθηπώς τὴν σοφίαν αὐτοῦ, 8.7-8). The Athenian imparts knowledge and the Scythian absorbs it (ἅπαντα ἔγνω). Instead of being fond of marvels per se, Anacharsis is represented rather in the spirit of the Peripatetic tradition, dealing with strange information not just through emotions, but also through the filter of reason, almost with a scholarly propensity and more in sync with the later tradition on his character.444

Lucian, who identifies with Anacharsis, confesses to have had an identical emotional experience when he first came (ἐπεδήμησα) to the Macedonian city where he is performing:

I was immediately so astonished when I saw the greatness and beauty [of your city], its huge population, all its might and splendor, that I was in amazement for quite a long time and my marveling could not match the marvel itself.

ἐξεπλάγην μὲν εὐθὺς ἴδὼν τὸ μέγεθος καὶ τὸ κάλλος καὶ τῶν ἐμπολιτευομένων τὸ πλῆθος καὶ τὴν ἄλλην δύναμιν καὶ λαμπρότητα πάσαν ὡστε ἐπὶ πολὺ ἔτεθημεν πρὸς ταῦτα καὶ οὐκ ἔξηρκον τὸν θαύματι (9.13-17).445

He insists on his amazement by invoking yet another figure, that of Telemachus struck with awe at the wealth and splendor of the palace of Menelaus.446 While Telemachus is no foreigner in

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444 See Kindstrand 1981, 33-73, on the tradition of Anacharsis as a philosopher, moralist, and inventor; on the influence of the Peripatetic school on paradoxography see introduction to the previous chapter. Aristotle himself wrote a treatise on foreign customs (νόμιμα βαρβαρικά); cf. *Apol.* *Hist. mirab.* 11.; Varro *Ling. Lat.* 7.70; Athen. epit. 1 p. 23d.
445 Cf. Lucian’ anticipated amazement at getting to know his patrons (μᾶλλον θαυμάσῃ,11.1).
446 *Hom.* *Od.* 4.71-75.
Sparta, he nevertheless comes from the fringe of the Greek world, from an island (νησιώτης, 9.18-19), and his youth is a suitable match for Anacharsis’ initial ignorance of Greece.

The object of Lucian’s bewilderment is an aesthetic paradoxon (τῶ θαύματι): the beauty (τὸ κάλλος) and the sublimity (τὸ μέγεθος) of the Macedonian city. Indeed, beauty as an essential feature of Athens and Greece— to which I shall return – is the defining quest of both Toxaris (φιλόκαλος ἀνήρ) and his follower. Anacharsis, whose bewilderment comes from his unfamiliarity with Athens, and whose quest results in knowledge, is astounded by a paradoxon that is of the exotic, with epistemic roots, type in Giannini’s classification. Likewise, the Athenians are amazed at the unknown, at his exotic appearance. By becoming knowledgeable of Greece and known to Greece, his journey solves the paradoxon both ways and exoticism is resolved into familiarity. For Lucian, on the other hand, the host city remains merely an aesthetic paradoxon, since he is not unfamiliar with it in its cultural dimension. He does not project himself as an absolute outsider. Greek culture is not an unknown to him. He is only apprehensive that he himself might seem an unknown to Greek culture. Lucian’s performance is, after all, his means of displaying his own Greekness. It is an attempt to transfer his perception of himself as culturally Greek to the audience and, therefore, to be acknowledged for his “knowledge” (pre-knowledge in comparison with Anacharsis). His, however, is not merely informational, as in the

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447 For the ancient rhetoricians μέγεθος is sublimity of style: Dion. Hal. Comp. 17; Dem. Eloc. 5; Hermog. Id. 1.5; Ps.-Long. 4.1. In his taxonomy of marvels, Giannini 1963, 249-251, recognizes under the category of aesthetic θαύματα the extraordinariness of beauty or greatness (θαύμα = περικαλλές vel παμμέγεθες), found either in a work of art (τέχνη) or in a person (ἰθώς) that can thus be described as θαύμα ἰδέοτι. Cf. Luc. Herod., where a Macedonian city compared with a famous place of Greece, Olympia, is in the end deemed even superior to it; here the greatness of the Macedonian city, indirectly compared with Athens, is not emphasized by contrast, but only by positive association, by building up upon the greatness of Athens.

448 Luc. Scyth.: τὰ κάλλιστα τῶν Ἀθηνῶν, 4.24; τὰ Ἑλλήνων καλά, 5.9-10; τὰ κάλλιστα τῆς Ἑλλάδος, 7.3-4; τοῖς ᾿Ελλήνων καλοῖς, 8.5; cf. τὰ κάλλιστα, 8.3-4; the young patron also is described as both great and beautiful (μέγας ἐστι καὶ καλός, 11.5).

449 Giannini 1963, 249: “meraviglioso esotico: nel νόμος”.
case of Anacharsis, but acquires an aesthetic dimension, consisting in good literary/rhetorical skills.

This familiarity prompts also a strong association between Lucian and Toxaris.\footnote{Dubel 1994, 24; Braund 2004a, 19; Visa-Ondarçuhu 2008, 178, who also sees in the Toxaris-Anacharsis duality the reflection of the ambiguity of the Anacharsis tradition; cf. Kindstrand 1981.} In fact, it might explain the somewhat disproportionate treatment of the Hellenized Scythian in this\footnote{Braund 2004a, 17-18.} prolalia, despite Lucian’s explicit association between himself and Anacharsis. Lucian starts with a clever shift of emphasis from Anacharsis to Toxaris and the latter’s precedence in longing for Greece and coming to Athens (οὐ πρῶτος Ἀνάχαρσις ... ἀλλὰ καὶ Τόξαρις πρὸ αὐτοῦ). He then launches into a long prefatory digression on Toxaris, who – allegedly – came to receive a heroic cult in Athens, after his death, as The Foreign Healer. Obviously, in this digression Lucian does not miss the generous opportunity to display some humorous pseudo-paradoxographical spirit in ’recording’ various peculiar Scythian customs.

In the applicatio, Lucian uses Toxaris’ image as an imperfect illustration of the inhabitants of the Macedonian city where he is performing: they are the ones who guide him to his patrons, just as Toxaris guided Anacharsis to Solon. Yet, as Lucian points out, his guides are not barbarian and are many, although expressing variously one and the same opinion (τὰ αὐτὰ μόνον οὐ ταῖς αὐταῖς συλλαβαῖς ἔλεγον, 10). For such a long introduction of Toxaris, his role is addressed very summarily here, and yet the introduction contains details relevant for Lucian’s situation. Toxaris’ cultural hybridism is obvious: he is and, at the same time, is not a barbarian. His physical appearance is Greek (Ἐλληνιστὶ ἐσταλμένον), in total absence of visible Scythian attributes such as beard, belt (Ἄζωστον), or sword (Ἄσίδηρον). His pure Attic speech, marked by fluency and suaveness, makes him autochthonous (Ἠδὴ στωμύλον, αὐτῶν τῶν Ἀττικῶν ἐνα τῶν αὐτοχθόνων, 3). Time has changed him (μετεπεποίητο ύπὸ τοῦ χρόνου) and made
him unrecognizable to a fellow compatriot. Toxaris is now completely Hellenized, yet not exclusively Greek. Reaching back to his barbarian roots and ethnic memory, Toxaris recognizes Anacharsis and addresses him in their native Scythian (Σκυθιστὶ προσείπων αὐτῶν). He switches quickly from the language of his new identity to that of his old barbarian one. The tension between ethnical and cultural identity is expressed here in terms of language, native (where ὁμο-εθνής and ὁμο-φωνὸς are synonymous) or acquired through education. Lucian often uses manners of discourse – such as freedom of speech, sweet fluency, irony, amusement, and jest (παρρησία, στωμυλία, εἰρόνεια, παιδιά, σκόμμα) – to identify his model of Athenian cultural identity. Toxaris is buried in Athens’ Cerameicus and worshiped as a hero by the Athenians. He is, thus, embraced in death as one who belongs to the city. Yet his title – another speech act – preserves the memory of his foreignness (Ξένῳ ἱατρῷ, 1). It is particularly this cultural hybridism that gives him the ability to mediate between Anacharsis and Solon, between barbarian and Greek. The (hi)story of Toxaris mirrors that of Macedonia, a territory Hellenized and culturally integrated into Greece long before Lucian’s time. Macedonia used to be the land between Greek and barbarian and the ambiguous origin of the Macedonians is reflected in the ambiguity of Toxaris’ identity. The fringe position of Macedonia is traditionally one of mediation, a function that reaches its height after Alexander’s conquests, when Macedonians along with Greeks, as vehicles of Greekness, carried it to barbarian lands. Just as Toxaris feels at home in Athens, Macedonians have long been comfortable as Greeks. Their Hellenization started with their philhellenic élite, and Lucian’s Macedonian patrons are described by their

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452 Luc. Scyth. 3-4. Cf. Diog. Laert. 1.101.2 on Anacharsis’ ethnical hybridism (his mother was allegedly Greek).
453 Oudot-Lutz 1994, 145-147. Cf. Visa-Ondarçuhu 2008 who identifies in Lucian’s barbarians in various stages of Hellenization the expression of the development of Lucian’s own relationship with Greek language. However, she does not prove that the two Anacharsis or the two Toxaris, in different works, are in Lucian’s design one and the same character presented in evolution; moreover her theory, although agreeable in its general aspects, fails to explain the presence of both Anacharsis and Toxaris, the illustration of two different stages of relationship between a barbarian and Greek, in the same text.
fellow citizens as the city’s supreme élite (δῦο δὲ μάλιστά ἐστον ἣμῖν ἄνδρε ἄριστω, 10). Although allegedly from a humble social background back in Scythia, Toxaris ends up as a healing hero in Athens. As he intercedes for Anacharsis’ advancement into Greekness, he also anticipates it through his own Hellenization and cultural ascendance. While Lucian proclaims his resemblance to Anacharsis qua barbarian, he tacitly extends the similarity to the Scythian’s development as culturally Greek, which Toxaris prefigures through his own evolution. Thus, both Scythians are illustrative of Lucian at different levels, Toxaris through his already Greek cultural identity, Anacharsis through his path to glory within the Greek culture, launched now through Solon’s proxenia.

The last element of association in this prolalia is that between Solon and Lucian’s patrons. As Solon accomplishes Anacharsis’ adjustment to Greekness, the Macedonian father and son are sought to facilitate Lucian’s access to the literary élite. They, like Solon, are culturally élite and kind towards foreigners. In Solon’s case the emphasis is on his wisdom and philosophical propensity. These virtues are converted into excellent rhetorical skills in the case of the Macedonian patrons, not surprisingly in the context of a rhetorical performance for which Lucian seeks the élite’s approval. Solon, as the embodiment of the Greek cultural model (ὁ Ἑλληνικὸς καυχόων, 7.17) represents, after Toxaris, the next and final step in Anacharsis’ Greek acculturation. His kindness towards strangers is obviously related to his journeys to foreign lands, in which he associates with the best of men (ἄριστοις, 5.13). Thus, this type of journey in search of otherness, mirrored by the similar travels of both Toxaris and Anacharsis, is not a

455 Braund 2004, 19.
457 πρὸς τὸν Σέινον ᾗ αἰώδω καὶ ἥ ἀλλή ἐπιείκεια καὶ χρηστότητις, 6.7-8; τὴν πρὸς τοὺς ξένους φιλανθρωπίαν, 10.20-21.
458 σοφὸς ἀνὴρ, 5.10; διὰ τὴν σοφίαν, 5.15-16; δείγμα τῆς φιλοσοφίας τῆς Αττικῆς, 7.18; τεθηπώς τὴν σοφίαν αὐτοῦ, 8.7-8.
459 λόγων δυνάμει τῇ Ἀττικῇ δεκάδι παραβάλλοις ἂν, 10.16-17; cf. 11.6-10 on the younger patron’s eloquence.
cultural divide between Greek and barbarian, as neither is wisdom that characterizes both Toxaris (σοφός, 1.3) and Solon (σοφός ἀνήρ, 5.10-11). Journey makes it possible to establish friendships (φιλία, προξενία) based on hospitality (ξενία). The appreciation for the otherness is associated with love for beauty (φιλοκαλία), since Toxaris, enamored with the Greek – i.e. a foreign – culture, is a φιλόκαλος ἀνήρ (1.3-4) who wishes to learn the best (τῶν ἀρίστων) ways of living, here inevitably Greek. Thus φιλοκαλία and fondness for learning are also features not reserved just for Greeks.

In fact, beauty and excellence, sometimes interchangeable (cf. the comprehensive coinage καλοκαγαθία) are here the generic definitions of Athens and of Greece. Beauty characterizes elements of culture: τὰ κάλλιστα τῶν Ἀθηναίων (4.24); τὰ Ἑλλήνων καλά (5.9-10); τὰ κάλλιστα τῆς Ἑλλάδος (7.3-4); τὰ κάλλιστα (8.3-4). It can also refer to people, being interchangeable with excellence: τοῖς Ἑλλήνων καλοῖς (8.5). These features are transferred also in the applicatio: the Macedonian city is characterized by μέγας καὶ καλός (9.14) and the young patron too is μέγας καὶ καλός (11.5). The adjective ἀγαθός, often in superlative, is mostly reserved for people, designating here the élite, both Athenian and, in the applicatio, Macedonian: τῶν τῆς ἀγαθῶν (5.21-22); ἄνδρας ἀγαθοῦς (10.13); ὑπὸ τῶν ἀρίστων (4.12); τοῖς ἀρίστοις (7.6); ἀρίστους ἄνδρας (8.15); ἄνδρε ἀρίστω (10.14); τοῖς ἀρίστοις τῶν ἀνθρώπων (5.12-13, here foreign élite that Solon met in his travels). However, elements of culture are also characterized by excellence: ἐπιτηδευμάτων φιλομαθῆς τῶν ἀρίστων (1.4).

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460 Cf. Ps.-Anacharsis Ep. 2; Diog. Laert. 1.101.7-102.6.
461 Cf. Ps.-Anacharsis Ep. 1.5, where disregard for foreigners who speak bad Attic is typical for the uneducated (ἀπαιδευτῶν) and the ignorant of beauty (ἀπειροκάλων).
462 Cf. the quotation from an anonymous poet in 9.22.
Yet the expression of a slightly different type of καλοκαγαθία we find in the description of the young Macedonian patron: his physical, manly beauty (ἀρρενωπήν τινα τὴν εὐμορφίαν, 11.5-6) is matched by the beauty of his speech:

If he only opens his mouth, he will leave you enchained by your ears, so much of Aphrodite the young man has in his tongue.

ei δὲ καὶ φθέγξαιτο μόνον, οἰχήσεται σε ἀπὸ τῶν ὀτῶν ἀναδησάμενος, τοσαύτην Ἀφροδίτην ἐπὶ τῇ γλώττῃ ὁ νεανίσκος ἔχει, 11.6-8. 463

While the older patron’s rhetoric is essentially civic, through the comparison with statesmen like Solon, Pericles, or Aristides, the son’s is from a different stock. It is closer to the type of rhetoric of the Second Sophistic and imperial period in general, that of display. Its aim is no longer persuasion, but enthralment and entertainment. Thus, father and son represent symbolically two different generations of Greek rhetoric and of Greek paideia in general. Lucian focuses attention almost exclusively on the son, thus on the newer breed of rhetoric, which he himself aims to represent.

The charm of the young man’s speech produces not only fascination – with the entire city gaping in awe (ἡ πόλις ἀπασσα κεχινότες αὐτοῦ ἄκουσε, 11.9), but also love (φιλεῖ), mostly of the passionate kind that the Athenians felt for the exciting figure of Alcibiades (τοῦ ἔρωτος ὃν ἡράσθησαν τοῦ Ἀλκιβιάδου, 11.13-14). The name of Aphrodite stands here for a seductive rhetoric, artistic beauty, paideia that inspires love. There are, in this proalalia, several illustrations of passion inspired by paideia. Toxaris comes to Athens because of his passion for Greek culture (παιδείας ἐπιθυμίᾳ τῆς Ἑλληνικῆς, 1.2). It leads him to leave not only his country, but also his wife and young children (ἔρωτι τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἀπολιπóων καὶ γυναῖκα ἐν Σκυθίᾳ καὶ παιδία νεογνά, 4.10-11). Then Anacharsis follows in his steps (ξηλωτήν τοῦ

463 Cf. Luc. Herc. 3.
ερωτος δον ηρασθης, ιδειν την Ελλαδα, 4.15-16). When the two meet and Anacharsis confesses that, in his perplexity, he thought about returning home without having seen Athens properly, Toxaris compares him with a disheartened lover:464

Coming to the very doors and then just going away? This is not the way love speaks.

tούτο μὲν, ἐφι Τόξαρις, ἥκιστα ἐρωτικὸν εἰρήκας, ἐπὶ τὰς θύρας αὐτὰς ἑλθόντα οἴχεσθαι ἀπιόντα (5.1-2).

The grasp that Athens, as the prototype of Greece, has on the stranger, therefore on Anacharsis too, is similar to that of an enchanting, seductive lover:

The city will not let you go that easily; for she has quite a few charms to enchant the stranger and she will seize you so tightly that you will forget about your wife and children, if you have any.

όυδεν ἀν ἀφείη σε ραδίως ή πολίς· σωχ οὕτως ὀλιγα τα θέλγητα ἔχει πρὸς τοὺς ξένους, ἀλλά μάλα ἐπιλήψεται σου, ὡς μήτε γυναικὸς ἐτι μήτε παίδων, εἴσοι Ἥδη εἰσί, μεμνῆσθαι (5.4-7).

Toxaris describes the passion for Greek paideia in terms of love again when he predicts that Anacharsis will become well known (ἰσασι) and dear (φιλοῦσι,7.13) to the Athenians and that he too will forget about his home (ἐπιλήσῃ τῶν ἐν Σκυθία, 7.15):

There you will have the prize for your journey abroad, the fulfillment of your desire.

ἔχεις τῆς ἀποδημίας τὰ ἄθλα, τοῦ ἐρωτος τὸ τέλος (7.16-17)

In the applicatio, the relationship between the Macedonian city and Lucian’s patrons, the object of a passionate worship due to their exquisite paideia, is describes as similar to a love affair:

The city is madly in love with them and their wish is her command; for they wish whatever is best for the city.

ἡ δὲ παρὰ τοῦ δήμου εὔνωια πάνυ ἐρωτικὴ πρὸς αὐτοὺς, καὶ τούτι γίγνεται, ὃ τι ἂν οὕτοι ἐθέλωσιν. ἐθέλουσι γὰρ ὃ τι ἂν ἀριστον ἢ τῇ πόλει (10.17-20).

Therefore, the passion that particularly the young patron inspires through his speech – the fruit of his *paideia* – is not singular.

For the two Scythians, Greek culture in general is an instance of otherness, a *paradoxon*, only in development. We have the pattern of the first encounter with it as such in Anacharsis’ bewilderment at Athens. As shown above, he reacts to its otherness as exotic. Yet, once having become familiar with it, he experiences another type of wonder. The *paradoxon*, now otherness as extraordinary beauty, is specifically Greek *paideia*. Anacharsis is astonished by the wisdom (τεθηπώς τὴν σοφίαν, 8.7) of Solon, i.e. by the *paideia* of his teacher (παιδεύων καὶ διδάσκων, 8.3), the measure of Greekness (ὁ Ἑλληνικὸς κανών, 7.17).

We have seen that Toxaris’ passion for Greek *paideia* makes him a lover of beauty (φιλόκαλος ἄνηρ, 1.3-4). Gradually, therefore, the bewilderment produced by the otherness takes, once acculturation occurs, the form of enthrallment with its extraordinary beauty. The *paradoxon* changes its essence from exotic to aesthetic. The shock of novelty gives place to amazement and, what is more, to love for beauty, specifically for Greekness as embodiment of beauty. While changing its nature, the *paradoxon* produces still the same strong response: *ekplexis*. Astonishment takes the form either of consternation and frightened confusion – as reaction to novelty, or of overwhelming amazement – as reaction to extraordinariness, the only form of *ekplexis* to which Lucian confesses. Anacharsis’ experience of Greekness starts from ignorance and evolves to complete familiarity. For Lucian, on the other hand, Greekness – here represented by the Macedonian city and his Macedonian patrons – is a *paradoxon* only in terms of beauty, not of novelty. He feels already Greek; he only needs to be acknowledged as such.

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*Luc. Scyth. 3.4 (τεταραγμένος); 3.5 (ψοφοδεής); 4.20 (ἐτεταράγμην); 8.7 (τεθηπώς); 9.13 (ἐξεπλάγην); 9.16 (ἐτεθέπειν).*
His situation is rather similar to that of Toxaris, here already Hellenized, and of his patrons, Macedonians who are already Greek. To complicate even more the self-referential system in this *prolalia*, Lucian insists on the rhetorical skills of his young patron. Indeed, who would be his best advocate if not a great, seductive orator? The young man may very well be here another mirror image of Lucian himself and of his own novel, seductive rhetoric. Lucian’s relationship with both father and son, illustrated by that between Anacharsis and Solon, is one of cultural patronage.\(^{466}\) It takes expression in a mixture of *proxenia* and *philia*, both inner- and inter-cultural friendship. Thus, Lucian claims to be, at the same time, a foreigner and a citizen of Greece as a cultural paradigm.\(^{467}\) As we have seen the slight discrepancy of the parallelism Lucian-Anacharsis, we have to acknowledge also the incongruity between Solon and the Macedonian patrons. While Solon teaches too, Lucian’s patrons only use the influence of their cultural authority to help the spread of his literary fame, thus speed up the acknowledgment of his Greekness. They are equal to Solon only in terms of *paideia*, not of ethnicity. Yet they are paradigmatic of Greekness, as well as of a foreigner’s access to the privilege of Greek *paideia*.

This is still a *prolalia* focused on the shortcut to fame made possible by the cultural authority of the élite.\(^{468}\) However, fame is here not just a form of recognition of the artist’s skills, but specifically acknowledgment of the Greekness displayed in the artist’s skills. While in *Herodotus* (7.10-12) the object of Lucian’s love (ἔρως) is widespread fame among the Macedonians, in *The Scythian* love is elevated to the barbarian’s desire for *paideia* as beauty and, in Lucian’s particular case, to his wish to be acknowledged for his own *paideia*. Lucian attempts to channel his perception of his own cultural identity into the way his audience should

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\(^{466}\) Father and son are referred as προστάται (*patrons*) and συναγωνισταί (*fellow-combatants*) in Luc. Scyth. 10.7; cf. Luc. *Herod.* 1.28-29 where Herodotus proclaims his status as ἀγωνιστής (*a contender for the prize*), not a spectator; cf. Luc. Scyth. 7.16, where the familiarization with the Greek culture is seen as a contest prize (τὰ ἄθλα).

\(^{467}\) See Herman 1987, 10-13, 130-142 on the distinction between *xenia* and *philia*.

\(^{468}\) Luc. Scyth. 8.12-15; cf. Harm. 3.27-35; *Herod.* 7.12-16.
perceive him. Yet, while he feels Greek and is perceived as such by the élite – just as Anacharsis will cease to be a xenos (οὐκέτι ξένος, 7.12) – he maintains also the value of his exoticism, the peculiarities of his diversity. For Solon, Anacharsis is a gift (δῶρον, 6.11; 8.2) of novelty and diversity. Solon is, therefore, a paradigm for the capacity of Greek culture to incorporate the new and refresh itself, to preserve both its unity and the uniqueness of its parts. Lucian aspires to be acknowledged not just as a skilled artist, but also as someone who displays Greekness that inspires love and astonishment through its beauty (φιλοκαλία and ἔκπληξις).

While the composition still suffers from some incongruity, greatly due to the rather disproportionate digression on Toxaris, this prolalia shows significant improvement and sophistication in the treatment of familiar themes and motifs, as well as in the ability to incorporate literary references and quotations. Flattery is still conspicuous, yet better disguised. The patrons are not praised directly, but through the mouth of their fellow citizens and only shortly reinforced by Lucian himself (11.20-23) with more subtle language.

The progression of the notion of paradoxon is obvious in this prolalia. If in Harmonides and Herodotus the artist and his techne, the expression of his paideia, are vaguely presented as an enthralling marvel, here the idea of marvel is more persistent and the language more relevant. The paradoxon develops from the exotic to the aesthetic, to astonishing beauty epitomized by Greek paideia, with particular emphasis on one of its elements, the art of rhetoric. Greek paideia inspires ekplexis, as the typical response to marvels, as well as love, here a higher form of ekplexis. At the same time, paradoxon comes to include also the audience and their cultural

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469 He admits to being barbarian, a Syrian by nothing inferior to a Scythian (Luc. Scyth. 9.9-10).
470 See the use of litotes, for instance, to express the weight of Solon’s opinion (οὐ μικρόν, 8.12), as opposed to strong affirmation in Harm. 3.27-35.
environment, as Lucian experiences *ekplexis* (ἐξεπλάγην, 9.13) while beholding their city as a *thauma* (οὐκ ἐξήρκον τῷ θαύματι, 9.17).
2.4. An African Paradoxon: The Dipsades

While in The Scythian Lucian uses the imagery of marvels for paideia and its form of rhetorical performance, in The Dipsades he describes the relationship between the performer and his audience as a paradoxon. We find in this proalalia maybe the last bit of unbridled flattery of the audience, not the least obvious, but better expressed artistically. This introduction has a much simpler referential system: a single idea formulated in a metaphor and articulated on a pseudo-paradoxographical discourse. Lucian invites the audience to explore the North African desert with its oddities and to walk a fine line between fact and fiction. This blending epitomizes the essence of the rhetorical art, the skill of incorporating subjective reality into the objective.

Lucian transports his audience straight into the parched (γῆ διακεκαμένη, ξερά, πολλῷ τῷ αὐχμῷ πιέζομένη), barren (ἄκαρπος, ἄφορος), desolate (ἐρημος), wild (ἀνήμερος) Libyan desert (1). The geographic ekphrasis turns into an ethnographic discourse on the Garamantes and their hunting expeditions into this desert in the rainy season (2). A lengthy enumeration of the exotic creeping creatures of the desert (ἐρπετὰ ποικίλα, 3) follows, ending with the pseudo-paradoxographical report on its most terrible crawler (τὸ πάντων ἐρπετῶν δεινότατον): the dipsas (ἡ δυσάς, the thirst-snake). Its poisonous bite burns terribly and causes an unquenchable thirst (ἐκκαίει τε γὰρ καὶ σήπει καὶ πιμπράσθαι ποιεῖ), to the extent of a paradoxical effect: the more the victims drink, the more they thirst (ὁσωπερ ἀν πίνωσι, τοσοῦτῳ μᾶλλον ὀρέγονται τοῦ ποτοῦ· καὶ ἡ ἐπιθυμία πολὺ πλέον ἐπιτείνεται αὐτοῖς, 4-5).472 After giving this account, Lucian surprisingly distances himself from it. He claims to have heard it from a friend who

472 Cf. Hdt. 2.32 and 4.181-199 for the description of North Africa; on the dipsas, Nic. Ther. 124-127 and 334-342; Ps.-Diosk. Ther. 13 (ed. Sprengel, in Künn, Medici Graeci, vol. 26); Philum. Ven. 20.1-3; Aret. CD 2.2.5; Ael. NA 6..51; Alex. Aphr. Pr. 1.152; Afric. Cest. 3.30; cf. Dio Chrys. Or. 5 on the myth of a monstrous Libyan creature, half woman-half snake (cf. Or. 4.73); for a comparison between Luc. Dips. and Dio Chrys. Or. 5 see Nesselrath 1990, 122 n. 19; cf Arist. Hist. an. 606b 9-14 on monstrous snakes of Libya.
reported to have seen, during a visit to North Africa, a tomb with a stele. The monument had engraved a mixed mythical scene and an epitaph, which Lucian now claims to remember only partially. Both portrayed the victim as ever-thirsting Tantalus – represented metaphorically as the leaking vessel of the Danaids – and described his unquenchable thirst inflicted by a *dipsas* bite (6).

After a few more ethnographic details (the many uses of the ostrich eggs which men hunt, thus incurring the risk of becoming victims of the *dipsas*, 7-8), Lucian formulates the *applicatio*: he feels towards his audience the same unquenchable thirst (τὸ δίψος ἀσχέτον ὑπεκκαίεται μοι) of such a hopelessly thirsty victim. The *prolalia* ends with a flattering image of the audience as a spring of clear, pure water (διειδεῖ τε καὶ καθαρῷ ὕδατι, 9.14-15) and with a gnome, in fact a Platonic misquotation: “what is good is never too much, as the wise Plato says” (κατὰ γὰρ τὸν σοφὸν Πλατόνα, κόρος οὐδεὶς τῶν καλῶν, 9).473

Lucian gradually builds up *paradoxa*, constantly revisiting them with even more details. They are both natural, of φύσις (the incredible aridity of the desert, its strange creatures, and the unusual effect of the bite of the *dipsas*), and exotic, of νόμος (the Garamantes’ way of living, their seasonal hunting expeditions in search of some traditionally strange beasts, such as ostriches and elephants, their strategy of fighting the adverse nature of the desert, and their search and use for ostrich eggs).474 Moreover, the natural *paradoxa* are described not only in terms of their strangeness (τὰς μορφὰς ἀλλόκοτα, “strange in shape”), but also in quantitative terms, which in *The Scythian* refer to aesthetic *paradoxa*: “gigantic in size and extremely

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474 Cf. Giannini 1963, 249. Herodotus makes it clear that the ostriches are typical in the Libyan desert (4.192); for the Ptolemaic hunting expeditions in search of elephants and other unfamiliar creatures see Agatharch. F 1 Burstein = Phot. *Bibl.* 250. 441b, F 80 Burstein = Diod. Sic. 3.36-37, Str. 17.1-5.
numerous” (μεγέθει τε μέγιστα και πλήθει πάμπολλα, 3).\textsuperscript{475} While the adjective παράδοξος is reserved for the key element of the report, the unquenchable thirst of the victim (τὸ παραδοξότατον, 4.9), the beast is described, in anticipation, as τὸ δεινότατον (4.1), \textit{the most terrible}, as well as \textit{the strangest} of all the beasts of the Libyan desert.\textsuperscript{476} Fear (δεδιότες, 2.14) and, by consequence, shunning of \textit{paradoxa} are recurrent motifs in Lucian. \textit{Paradoxa} of different sorts either inspire awe or are awe-inspiring.\textsuperscript{477}

The story of \textit{The Dipsades} lies on the fringe between paradoxographical and scientific/didactic discourse, with its description of the Libyan desert – a traditional standard of remote and unexplored lands – and of its monstrous creatures. Its factuality is challenged by the comparison with other well-known texts that claim not only more reliable sources, but also the absolute status of true discourse. Nesselrath makes a commendable effort to explain the incongruence of Lucian’s account on the North African desert with that of Herodotus and Pliny the Elder. He attributes it to an inconsistent mixture of the sources, some of which give conflicting information themselves.\textsuperscript{478} Yet this approach tends to read too much into Lucian’s account and to attribute to him serious intentions regarding the factuality of his report. On the contrary, Lucian repeatedly makes the effort to separate himself from this information and to undermine its reality. The paradoxographer proper does not rely on autopsy, as paradoxography offers only “a tour effectuated within the walls of a great library”, thus just an inquiry (ιστορία) into written sources.\textsuperscript{479} He, nevertheless, emphasizes the documentation of his accounts by producing plausible sources and/or by critically evaluating them. The paradoxographer proper

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\item \textsuperscript{475} Cf. Luc. \textit{Scyth}. 9.14-15, where μέγεθος functions as an aesthetic category.
\item \textsuperscript{476} Cf. LSJ s.v. δεινός, A and II.
\item \textsuperscript{477} Luc. \textit{Prom}.\textit{es} 4; \textit{Scyth}. 3-4. Cf. the same ambivalence of the verb ἐκπλήσσω ἐκπληξίς and the noun, which best describe the reaction to \textit{paradoxa}.
\item \textsuperscript{479} G. Schepens 1996, 388.
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acknowledges his focus mostly on reporting information based on inquiry into sources (ιστορία), rather than on attempting a reasonable explanation (ἐξήγησις). Lucian too confesses lack of autopsy and, even more, in an ironical turn, the absolute lack of desire for autopsy: “I have seen nobody (ἐγὼ μὲν οὐν οὐδένα ... εἶδον) suffering this [torture] and, oh gods, may I never see (μηδέ, θεοί, ἔδωμι) a man punished in this way; but then, fortunately for me, I have never set foot in Libya” (οὐδὲ ἔπεβην τῆς Λιβύης, 6.1-4). Yet, on the other hand, Lucian is deliberately far more evasive and less credible when it comes to his sources: he heard the report from a friend, who had seen a funerary monument and its inscription, which both represented, in an artistic form, the story of a victim of the dipsas (6). Thus the reality itself, in this case the paradoxon of the terrible suffering, is apparently twice filtered before reaching Lucian, who himself gives now his own artistic version of it. The process of his inquiry is, therefore, severely – yet deliberately – compromised.

While his documentation is, therefore, poorer than that of the paradoxographer proper, Lucian still squeezes in, however under the guise of ιστορία, some sort of scientific explanation (ἐξήγησις). This, because attributed to the doctors (λέγουσι ιατρῶν παίδες ἐκείνην τὴν αἰτίαν εἶναι..., 5), may present the appearance of authenticity. Although not the result of the author’s own rationalizing attempt, it may falsely give the impression of such design on his part. Thus, Lucian skillfully plays on the edge between paradoxography, on the one hand, and paradoxographical discourse incorporated into other genres, where the historiographer who makes use of paradoxa, for instance, besides often backing up inquiry with autopsy, addresses at least sometimes and even if poorly the question of causality. Lucian even flirts, again within the realm of ιστορία, with the idea of autopsy, unlike the paradoxographer proper. Yet this is

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480 G. Schepens 1996, 382-390, especially 390 with the discussion of Antig. 60.
481 See p. 71-72 above on Herodotus’ attempts at exegesis.
one step removed, because it is not he, but his source, an alleged friend, who was an eyewitness. Moreover, even the eyewitness saw not the reality of a victim of the *dipsas*, but a stone relief and an epigram, both art objects testifying to it, as Lucian identifies ironically here autopsy with reading (ἦλεγεν αὐτὸς ἐπὶ στήλης ἄναγνωκέναι). This, combined with indeterminacy coming from anonymity (τῶν ἔταρχον τις, 6.4-5), undermines the authority of his alleged eyewitness source.

Furthermore, in this playful rope-walking between fiction and the appearance of truthfulness, Lucian claims he only remembers the lines of the sepulchral epigram that are strictly related to the *paradoxon* in question, specifically the first four lines that describe in mythological similes the terrible suffering of the victim. He declares that he has forgotten (οὐκέτι μέμνημαι) the last four lines, which he, nevertheless, summarizes in prose, describing – *hysteron proteron* – the victim’s hunting for ostrich eggs and the occurrence of the *dipsas* bite (6). Thus, his evidence is not only weak, limited to reproducing a friend’s ekphrastic report of a funerary relief and his recollection of its epigram – both art objects already one step removed from the *paradoxon* itself. It also becomes altogether questionable when Lucian acknowledges a poor memory of his source. Yet the final blow to any deceiving illusion that he might claim factuality for his report is the strong statement through which Lucian separates himself and his design from scientific/didactic discourse (9.1-6).

Besides emphasizing the story of the *dipsades* with a double mythological *paradoxon* – the water-related punishment of Tantalus and the Danaides – Lucian articulates it also as a logical *paradoxon* that leads to *aporia* (perplexity, puzzlement, impossibility):482

482 Cf. Giannini 1963, 250 and n. 12 on mythological marvels (“meraviglioso fiabesco: nella μυθολογία θαῦμα ≠ ἀλήθεια”).
And what is strangest/most paradoxical, the more [the victims] drink, the more they yearn for water and their craving increases terribly. You could never quench their thirst, not even if you give them the Nile itself or the entire Ister to drink dry, but instead you would only grow the burning by watering the disease.

καὶ τὸ παραδοξότατον, ὅσωπερ ἂν πίνωσι, τοσοῦτοι μᾶλλον ὀρέγονται τοῦ ποτοῦ· καὶ ἢ ἐπιθυμία πολὺ ἐπιτείνεται αὐτοῖς. οὐδ’ ἂν σβέσεις ποτε τὸ δίψος, οὐδ’ ἢν τὸν Νεῖλον αὐτὸν ἢ τὸν Ἰστρον ὅλου ἐκπείνει παράσχης, ἀλλὰ προσεκκαύσεις ἐπάρδων τὴν νόσον (4.9-14).

The paradoxon is expressed in hyperbolic images and uses geographical references familiar to the literature of marvels. Both the Nile and the Ister border exotic, unexplored lands. Here τὸ παραδοξότατον denotes not just the marvel, but also a paradox stricto sensu, which is built on a previous one, the paradoxical statement that water causes fire:

There is no escape [from the desert] if the sun boils over, drawing out the moisture and quickly parching the land, casting stronger rays, as if sharpened by humidity; for moisture fuels the fire.

ἄφυκτα γὰρ ἐστιν ἢν ὁ ἥλιος ἀνασπάσας τὴν ἰκμάδα καὶ τάχιστα ξηράνας τὴν χώραν ὑπερζέσθην, ἀκμαιοτέραν τὴν ἀκτίνα προσβαλῶν ἀτε πρὸς τὴν νοτίδα παρατεθηγμένην-τροφὴ γὰρ αὐτὴ τῷ πυρί (2.17-21).

This paradox, which attempts to explain the unbearable heat of the desert, is translated into the paradox of water fueling thirst in the case of a dipsas bite. Features of the landscape are sublimated into the characteristics of a beast whose name, ἡ διψάς, reflects the essence of the desert: thirst, a pervasive motif here (τὸ δίψας; cf. the verb διψάω, and the adjective διψαλέος). The dipsas fits, therefore, well in its environment by replicating its essential characteristic.

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483 For the Ister, Mir. ausc. 105, 168. For the Nile, Antig. 162; Mir. ausc. 166; cf. Hdt. 2.33-34; Arist. Hist. an. 7.4.584b; Plin. HN 1.33,39,272; Gellius NA 10.2. Cf. Beagon 2005, 150-151, 164-166; 185; see Fraser 1970, 1.176-177 on the Ptolemaic expeditions in exploration of the Nile.
qualifies as a *paradoxon*, a mysterious creature that belongs to a liminal species, as snakes are usually seen as fringe creatures and often the subject of paradoxographical reports.\(^{484}\)

On this series of *paradoxa* Lucian projects his own, even more sublimated. For his bite is not physical, but spiritual (τὴν ψυχὴν), not poisonous and sickening, but sweet and healthy (ἡδίστω τοῦτο καὶ ύγιεινοτάτω τῷ δήγματι, 9.16-17).\(^{485}\) The pure water fueling his unquenchable spiritual thirst is his élite audience. It is, more precisely, his coming before them in a rhetorical performance (παρίω ἡ τοῦ ἀκροάσεως, 9.19) are the metaphorical image of an audience flocking to hear him perform and eagerly listening to his speech (τὴν σπουδὴν τῆς ἀκροάσεως, 9.20). The image of a ‘bitten’ Lucian drinking eagerly (ἐμφοροῦμαι χανδόν) by dipping his head into the stream of his audience (ὑποθεὶς τῷ κροὺς τῇ κεφαλῆς, 9.17-18) echoes the final image of *Amber or Swans* (6.14-21). There, as we will see, the audience’s perception of Lucian is altered by false reports that, just like water, a deforming medium, distort the image. Here, therefore, the image of head dipping represents not only Lucian’s eagerness to experience his audience – i.e. to perform in their presence, but also his direct contact with their reality, contrasting with the multiple intermediaries between him and the reality of the dipsas *paradoxon*.

While the performer always keeps his identity slightly concealed and preserves a certain impenetrable mystery about himself, he needs to have a clear contact with the audience. His artistic persona remains an ineffable mystery, as is his artistic creation. Yet the élite audience is the source for socio-cultural status. He can only attain it through real intercourse with his

\(^{484}\) See Arist. *Hist. an.* 607a 13-30 on the relationship geographical regions and different effect of local beast bites; for snake *paradoxa* and other creeping creatures see Archel. F 5 Giannini, Antig. 11, 35, 72, 89, 136.2; Apollon. 12, 39; *Mir. ausc.* 23, 115.2, 142, 149-151, 164; *Par. Pal.* 19.2; *Par. Var.* 7; cf. Arist. *Hist. an.* 488a 23-24, 505b 5-12, 599a 33-b 2; see Beagon 2007, 28 on Plin. *NH* 29.71.

\(^{485}\) Cf. the bite in disease in Luc. *Nigr* 38 and *Philops*. 40.
audience, a communication that is so vividly expressed here. Thus, Lucian’s own paradoxon, his thirst for an élite audience, is loosely fit to the dipsas story (ὁμοίων τι). The author affirms clearly that he is the victim and the audience is the ever desired water that causes both relief and longing, sick desire and health. Yet the dipsas is absent from the equation of the applicatio. The sweet poisonous snake is arguably the unresolved metaphor for literary fame. Just as the dipsas bites its victim inflicting thirst for water, the desire for fame drives Lucian to perform before the élite again and again. His thirst for rhetorical performance implies positive reception that builds fame. While the doctors, in Lucian’s account, explain the paradoxon of the unquenchable thirst, Lucian makes no attempt to explain his own aporia, to rationalize his paradoxon that remains therefore pure, untouched by reason.486

Thus, although obliquely criticizing the literature of paradoxa as avowed true discourse, Lucian uses paradoxa himself here at two separate levels. He exploits them, just like a paradoxographer, to please the audience with strange stories. What better captatio in an introduction? However, without making any strong statement on the truth-value of paradoxa, he gives the appearance of factuality only to undercut it through subtle inconsistencies with the paradoxographer’s methods. On the other hand, he exploits a different, sublimated value of paradoxa, of stylistic order, when he applies them as sophisticated self-referential similes and metaphors.

486 Cf. Schepens 1996, 391: “θαυμα is no match for explanation; the sense of the marvelous cannot survive on a rational basis.” This evokes for me the gentle lines of the Romanian poet and philosopher Lucian Blaga: I do not crush the corolla of wonders of the world / and I do not kill / with my mind the mysteries I encounter / on my path / in flowers, in eyes, on lips or tombs […] for I love flowers, and eyes, and lips, and tombs (“Eu nu strivesc corola de minuni a lumii / și nu ucid / cu mintea tainele, ce le-ntâlnesc / în calea mea / în ochi, în flori, pe buze ori morminte [...] căci eu iubesc / și flori și ochi și buze și morminte”, the opening poem of the debut volume Poems of Light, Cartea Românească, Bucharest, 1919).
2.5. Enchantment and Disenchantment or the Paradox of Self-Presentation:

*Amber or Swans*

The same evasiveness of the artistic persona can be observed in *Amber or Swans*, where Lucian plays again on a slim edge between factuality and fiction and projects a deceiving self-image. While in *The Dipsades* he leaves classical Greece, the ambiance of the presumably earlier *prolaiai*, for an exotic Libya with anachronistic Hellenistic savor, here Lucian engages the audience in his alleged travel to northern Italy, mixing up mythological time and space with his present reality. Although repeatedly claiming a naïve credulity with respect to mythological stories, Lucian ironically hints at their ludicrousness.\(^{487}\) The illustrative story contains mythological *paradoxa* focused on metamorphoses from human shape into a river (Phaëthon), poplars dropping amber tears (the Heliades), and sweet singing swans (Cycni instead of Cynus), all concentrated around the mythical river Eridanus.\(^{488}\) Thus mythological marvels are built on natural and aesthetic *paradoxa* (miraculous physical changes and the sweet song of the swans – τὸ λιγυρὸν ἐκείνο).

Lucian tells the story of his travel up on the river Eridanus. He expected, under the influence of ‘wretched tales of poets’, to find amber dropping like tears from the poplars into which the sisters of Phaëthon had been transformed, or the beautifully singing swans into which the companions of Apollo had been metamorphosed. Instead, he was laughed at by the locals who assured him that all these stories about their land, in which he believed, were lies and

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nonsense (1-5). Lucian proceeds to compare his disappointment then with the one his audience might experience now after his performance. Many have come to listen to him for the first time, with great false expectations, attracted by a deceitful fame (6).

The key-terms in *Amber or Swans* are credulity, expectation, and finally disappointment. Lucian tells here a story of enchantment and disenchantment. Under the spell of poetic μῦθος he goes in search for amber and swans (1). His disenchantment is presented in terms of a strong contrast between expectation and reality, between naivety and cruel facts of life. His childish credulity and the propensity to transfer mythical marvels into reality and historical time are in discrepancy with the poverty and toil of the people living in a land allegedly rich in amber. The contrast is expressed through the exaggerated lack of musicality of the swans on the Eridanus and by the constant ironical laughter of the locals. They shake off the spell of *paradoxa* for the naïve traveler. For the readers of *paradoxa*, marvels are their only measure of a remote reality which they cannot check, because they do not travel to exotic lands unless through books. Lucian attempts the impossible journey to the reality of μῦθοι, to experience in real life the wonder he felt as a credulous reader. The reality check however is disappointing, since the literary space filled with *paradoxa* is identified with a desolate real space.

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489 Eur. *HF* 1346: ἄοιδζων οἶδε δύστηνοι λόγοι. On amber, swans, and their connection with Apollo, poetry, and philosophy see Ahl 1982. 490 πέπεικεν, 1: πιστεύασα, 3: πιστεύοντας, 6: ἡλπίζου, 1: ἐλπίδος οὐ μικρᾶς, 4: ἐλπίσαντες, ἐλπίσας, τῆς ἐλπίδος, 6: ἀπατεών, πευδολόγος, πευδομένων, 3: ἐγευμένος, 4: καταγευμένου, 5: ἐξαπατηθηκαί, τοῖς πρὸς τὸ μείζον ἔκαστα ἐξεγομένους, 6: οὐ μετρίως μου καθίκετο, 3: ἤμιώμην, 4: ἀνιώνται, 6. 491 “If there were such a thing [i.e. amber], do you think that, for two obols, we would row or pull our boats upstream, if we were able to get rich by picking up the tears of the poplars?”, 3; cf. Lucian’s reaction: “it was truly childish (παιδιοῦ τινὸς ἀληθῶς ἐργον) to have believed the poets who falsely speak about unbelievable things (ἀπίθαναι οὕτως πευδομέναι)”, 3. 492 ἐγέλον, 2; σὺν γέλοιοι, 5; “[the swans] cry like crows, wholly unmusically and weekly (κραζούσαιν οὐτοί πάνα ἀμῶσον καὶ ἄσθενες), so that crows or daws are Sirens compared to them”, 5; cf. Lucian’s expectation: “but at what time do the swans sing to us that famous melodious tune (τὸ λυγρον ἐκεῖνο)?”,” 4.
The text opens itself to two levels of reading, one based on what it says, another on what it conceals or rather subtly pours into the ears of the audience. At one level it deals with the expectations of a new audience and serves what Brandão calls “uma retórica da diferença”. Lucian clearly separates himself from other authors, the poets who tell lies and the sophists of his time whom he ironically praises in terms of gold. He also separates himself from his own fame created by others and thus, by destroying an existing false expectation, he creates a new one, an expectation of the difference. Lucian addresses here mainly a new audience. They are, however, already under the spell of a false doxa, here both opinion and fame. His attempt to educate a new public, therefore, turns into an act of disenchantment and re-education.

His own experience of brutal change from enchantment to disenchantment is transferred by Lucian from his own story to his audience: “therefore I too am now afraid on my account that you, who have just arrived and are about to hear me now for the first time, expecting to find in me some amber and swans (ηλεκτρά τινα καί κύκνους ἐλπίσαντες εὑρήσειν παρ’ ἡμῖν ), may later leave laughing at those who promised that many such treasures (τοιαύτα πολλὰ κεμῆλια) were in my speeches” (6). An important element is present in both cases: there is always a third, a mediator between the perceiver and that which is perceived, the authors who lie in μῦθοι, on the one hand, and the people who wrongly exaggerate Lucian’s qualities, on the other. Thus Lucian and his rhetoric become the μῦθοι. The text ends with yet another illustration of false
perception due to a third. Objects seen under water are distortedly enlarged. One needs to remove the distorting lens to see their real dimension. Lucian stresses therefore the importance of autopsia and of the use of one’s own critical judgment in forming doxa.  

In an alleged demystification of his doxa, Lucian describes his art as simple (ἅπλοϊκόν), without mythic tales (ἀμυθόν) and without song (οὐδὲ τις ὑδη πρόσεστιν). Yet he emphasizes that these qualities must have already been noticed by his audience during the current performance (ὁρᾶτε ἤδη). He presents them, therefore, as the result of the direct experience of the audience. On the other hand, he is cryptic about the false fame that might have created false expectations. He does not explicitly say what amber, swans and “such treasures” (τοιαύτα κειμήλια) would mean in respect to his rhetoric. Both the context (the lies of the poets, the connection of the swans with Apollo, etc.) and the lexical choices (privative α- and negation – οὐδὲ used with terms that define poetry, like μῦθος and ωδή) would point towards a clear separation of Lucian’s rhetoric from poetic style. This would make of Amber just another text that pleads for stylistic and topical differentiation between prose and poetry. Villani sees in ἅπλοϊκόν the positive quality of dry prose lacking seductive ornaments or of a person incapable of deceit, in ἀμυθόν a categorical statement of truthfulness, and in the lack of song a reiteration of ἅπλοϊκόν, of lack of melodiousness and seductiveness.  

Her conclusion is that Lucian gives here the definition of a certain behavior of the rhetor: “un modo di parlare di sé semplice e che non ingana il publico.” Yet Lucian does not define here the manner in which he talks about himself, but rather the manner in which his art presents itself and talks about its author. After

497 Lucian himself incurs the risk of being a third when he narrates the mythological stories to the locals who, however, have the advantage of autopsia and do not fall victim to his enchantment, but on the contrary disenchant him.

498 Villani 2000, 228: “una prosa asciutta, priva di qualunque ornamento che possa sedurre l’ascoltatore”; cf. Luc. Iupp. trag. 6; Alex. 4; Dial. D. 4.3; Pisc. 12; Tim. 56; Tox. 14.

499 Villani 2000, 228.
criticizing the reception of his rhetorical performance, he epitomizes in this tripartite ‘definition’ what he hopes to have conveyed already (ὁρᾷτε ἡδη) during the first few minutes of the current performance. Nevertheless the problem of the distinction between poetry and prose, falsity and truth, rumor and reality, can still be retained as the theme of Amber, at one level of reading.

A second level of interpretation is implied also by the use of these terms, ἀπλοῖκόν, ἀμυθον, οὐδὲ τις ὑδη, especially the last two. They constitute the link between the two parts of the prolalia and are the bearers of meaning for the applicatio. Yet they are not necessarily or exclusively used in their semantic function, but rather for their symbolic value in order to keep the elements of the story in place and to link them with their corresponding elements in the applicatio. Often in his prolaliai Lucian does not break the spell of the metaphor when he transfers such terms and applies them directly to himself or his work, as he does in Amber too: “expecting to find in me some amber and swans” (6).500 Also, there is nothing simple in the composition of Amber, at the level of either its macro- or microstructure. On the one hand, the metaphors bridge intricate correspondences. On the other, periodical structures inserted within a text that claims to be a rationalizing one elevate the style throughout, contrary to the author’s claim to plainness.

A quick look at the rhythm and construction of the first period proves enlightening:

Ἑλέκτρου πέρι καὶ ύμας δηλαδή ὁ μῦθος πέπεικεν, αἰγείρους ἐπὶ τῷ Ὑριδανῷ ποταμῷ δακρύειν αὐτὸ θρηνοῦσα τὸν Φαέθοντα, καὶ ἀδελφᾶς γε εἶναι τὰς αἰγείρους ἐκείνας τοῦ Φαέθοντος, εἶτα ὀδυρομένας τὸ μειράκιον ἀλλαγῆναι ὡς τὰ δένδρα, καὶ ἀποσταζεῖν ἐτι αὐτῶν δάκρυον δῆθεν τὸ ἥλεκτρον.

500 Cf.: “I am afraid that my work too may be a camel in Egypt and that people may still admire its bridle and its sea-purple” (Prom. es. 5). On metaphor see Arist. Poet. 1457b 6-33; Rh. 1405a 3-b 34; 1410b 13-1411b 22. ‘Longinus’ considers that figurative style has grandeur (μεγάλαι τε φύσιν εἰσίν αἱ τροπικαί), that metaphors create the sublime (ὑψηλοποιῶν) (32.6), and also that illustration and imagery (αἱ παραβολαί καὶ εἰκόνες) are close to metaphors (37). For Demetrius metaphors are a necessary element of the elevated style as long as they are not crowded together or far-fetched (Eloc. 78).
About amber, you too, certainly, believe the story that poplars on the banks of the river Eridanus shed it in their tears, lamenting Phaëthon, and that those poplars are the very sisters of Phaëthon, and that, while mourning their young brother, they were turned into trees, and that the amber, clearly their tears, still drips. (1)

The sentence has a ring composition, starting with (at the expense of an inversion) and ending in the same word (ἡλέκτρου / ἡλεκτρον) with equal metrical value, a sequence of three long syllables (the last syllable in ἡλεκτρον is long by necessity because the next period starts with a consonant). There are also other repetitions of the same metrical value, like σίγείρους / σίγείρους, δακρύειν / δάκρυον (followed by consonant), and τὸν Φαέθοντα / τοῦ Φαέθοντος, the last one equaling in both cases the end of a dactylic hexameter. The rhythm gains elevation through the careful use of other prosodic bits, like the sequence of four trochees in ἀλλαγήναι ἐς τὰ δένδρα. Homoioteleuton also confers musicality to the text: τῷ Ἡριδανῷ ποταμῷ. The passage immediately following offers an even better example: τοιαύτα γὰρ ἀμέλει καὶ αὐτὸς ἀκούων τῶν ποιητῶν ἀδόντων ἡλπίζων. Obviously, even from the beginning, the text proves not to lack melodiousness.

As for the myths, they are the very foundation of the text. Of course, they are not used in the manner of the lying poets and they are repeatedly demystified by the locals. Yet Lucian takes great stylistic care in narrating them. The mere use of myths for illustration still confers poikilia to the text. It thus produces pleasure to the audience and undermines Lucian’s claim to ἄμυθον.

Deceit, as we have seen, is a key-word in Amber, as it also is in A Literary Prometheus (the final acknowledgment of having deceived the expectation of the audience as Prometheus that of Zeus). The use of ἀπλοίκον is therefore deceiving, and there are plenty of myths and song (ὠδη) in Lucian’s texts, as this prolalia in fact shows. While, at the semantic level, Lucian disenchants his audience, who came with an expectation of myth and song, he subtly re-enchants...
them through the hidden qualities of his text. *Amber* illustrates, thus, the author’s choice for an upside-down *captatio benevolentiae* and for a paradoxical self-presentation.

Lucian makes Eridanus, as the setting of deceiving *paradoxa* tales, the paradigm for authors who claim the reality of the marvels they write, a guild from which he clearly separates himself.\(^{501}\) In his use of *paradoxa* stories, he does not exploit their alleged factuality, but their obvious lack of reality. He claims that his search for mythological marvels was not the purpose itself of his voyage, but only a marginal diversion from it, an accessory of his main rhetorical journey. He, thus, reduces his marvel stories to their traditional role of mere entertaining digression in more noble literary genres. Yet, this is an inverted manner of *paradoxo-graphia*, in which the astonishment effect is undermined by revealing the falseness of *paradoxa*. *Ekplexis*, however, as aesthetic emotion, is transferred from these pseudo-*paradoxa* to the author himself, in a paradoxical self-introduction. The author becomes the *paradoxon* here, defying the *doxa* that his audience has of him.

In *Amber or Swans* we have an incipient Lucianic trend of correcting widespread false *doxa* formed around him. He evades the literary categorization to which his familiar audience has subjected him and, while indirectly reorienting this reception too, he specifically guides his new audience by performing a subtle correction. Yet, within this orientation process, he cunningly works with the paradoxographer’s deceiving pen. He defines himself through what he is not – an artist inventively lying, and his work through what it is not – mere lies. However, his stories here seem to contradict this assertive discourse of difference. By deceitfully ignoring the threshold between denotative and connotative, Lucian creates a sophisticated discourse in which *paradoxa*, obvious lies that others pass around as truth, are used for what they really are: exposed lies no longer masquerading as true stories. While they acquire a new value, almost

inconceivable in a culture where value and truth are inseparable, the author himself appears as a paradoxon, one who condemns lying while, at the same time, enjoyably working and entertaining with naked lies. He still addresses, in a tacit conspiracy between storyteller and listener, the audience’s concealed desire for pleasant lies. Instead of their searching far and wide for marvelous treasures and artistic pleasures, Lucian offers himself to the audience as an aesthetic paradoxon, unwrapped from the deceiving package of altering doxa, yet wrapped in his own mystery as artist, resisting an easy perception while all the while cunningly claiming it.

This prolalia marks a turning point in Lucian’s performing career. Instead of trying to establish an audience through flattery, Lucian is confident enough to attempt to correct their opinion of him. For the first time, doxa precedes him through the mouths of his already established audience. Lucian now becomes a character in his own story, abandoning the indefinite identity of a friend, used in The Dipsades, for a more self-assured artistic self as the nucleus of the paradoxographical discourse.502 While Lucian obviously uses here the motif of his western journey and his passage through Italy en route to Gaul, where he enjoys some significant popularity, there are however no strong arguments for dating this introduction so early.503 It is obviously a more elaborate and concise two-story text than Herodotus and it lacks the flattery of the other prolaliai discussed above. We have here an established Lucian who no longer looks for the approval of his audience, but for establishing a degree of difference in his reception. As seen also in The Dipsades, Lucian has overcome the complex of the fringe, of the barbarian not yet completely integrated into the core of Greekness. In Amber, Lucian is the Greek traveler in a remote, barbarian land. The locals laugh at him, just as the Athenians laughed at Anacharsis the barbarian – an illustration for Lucian the barbarian, a sign that otherness is equally perceived as

502 Nesselrath 1990, 125-126.
503 Hall 1981, 18 suggests it might have been delivered in Gaul.
paradoxon by both sides, no matter the degree of cultural progress. In Amber, unlike The Scythian, the perspective of the wondrous, the exotic, the paradoxon, is no longer that of a barbarian. It is Lucian’s own perspective as culturally Greek, nourished by Greek myths. Lucian’s eye for the paradoxon is here that of a Greek, reflecting the Greeks’ perception of paradoxa, just as in The Dipsades. Thus, Lucian seems to feel already embraced now into Greekness as its entitled citizen.
In *Zeuxis or Antiochus* Lucian addresses the problem of the reception of his work as a *paradoxon*. While part of his audience is in awe of its novelty, Lucian aims to correct this perception and to be admired not just for his literary exoticism, but also for his artistry, for creating an aesthetic marvel. The rhetoric of difference is here much stronger and is illustrated by two independent stories, a return to an old pattern seen in *Herodotus or Aëtion*.

The first anecdote gives Lucian another occasion to display his “painting with words” as he practices his ekphrastic technique in describing a celebrated painting by Zeuxis. The famous painter, as an innovator in art, is the perfect example for Lucian’s breaking with the literary generic tradition. Zeuxis’ art is paradigmatic for its audacious novelty (τὰ κοινὰ... οὐκ ἔγραφεν, καὶ νοστιμίην, ἀλλὰ ἐξών, τολμήματα) and a particular example of it is the innovative representation of a family of centaurs, a copy of which Lucian claims to have seen in Athens (3). In his detailed description of the painting, in spite of false-modestly insisting on his unfamiliarity with this art (οὐ... γραφικὸς τὶς ὄν, 3.18-19; τοῖς ἰδιώταις ἡμῖν, 5.2), Lucian pays a keen eye to the painter’s skills (τέχνη), specifically to the precision of line (τὸ ἀποτείναι τὰς γραμμὰς ἐς τὸ εὐθύτατον), the suitable blending of colors and perfect brushwork (τῶν χρωμάτων ἀκριβῆ τὴν κράσιν καὶ εὐκαίριον τὴν ἐπιβολὴν ποιήσασθαι), the masterful use of the effects of shadow (σκιάσαι ἐς δὲν), the perspective, proportion, and harmony of the parts (τὸ ἰσαμένος τῶν λόγων καὶ τὴν τῶν μερῶν πρὸς τὸ ὀλὸν ἰσότητα καὶ ἀρμονίαν, 5). However, while these are more or less general features of the art of painting, Lucian particularly notices and admires Zeuxis’ variety and skillful combination. On the one hand, he is in awe

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(θαυμαστόν, 6.12) of the manifold genius of the painter’s art (ποικίλως τὸ περιττὸν ἐπεδείξατο τῆς τέχνης, 5.11), illustrated by the diverse attitudes and emotions of the characters in the painting, from tenderness to wildness, especially in the image of the baby centaurs:

as for the young ones, in their gentle infancy there was nevertheless something wild and in their tenderness something frightening

τῶν νεογνῶν δὲ τὸ ἐν τῷ νηπίῳ ὀμοίως ἁγριοῦ καὶ ἐν τῷ ἀπαλῶ ἡδὴ φοβερῶν, (6.10-11).

On the other hand, he praises the subtle (λαυθάνει τὴν ὅψιν) technique of contrasts and transitions, of the chiaroscuro, perfectly exemplified by the beautiful image of the female centaur, in which the harmonious blending and joining of human and animal shapes (ἡ μίξις δὲ καὶ ἡ ἀρμογή) is extremely smooth and gentle (ἡρέμα καὶ οὕκ ἀθρόως μεταβάινουσα, 6.9)\(^{505}\)

Zeuxis expected to astonish his public with this display of his art (ὤμετο ἐκπλήξειν τοὺς ὀρώντας ἐπὶ τῇ τέχνῃ, 7.2). However, although indeed his admirers were in awe, their response was due exclusively to the strangeness of idea, the inventiveness of the art object (τῆς ἐπινοίας τὸ ξένου καὶ τῆς γνώμης τῆς γραφῆς ὡς νέαι καὶ τοῖς ἐμπροσθεν ἀγνώστα οὔσαι, 7.5-7). Therefore, seeing that the novelty of the subject matter (ἡ ὑπόθεσις καινὴ οὔσα, 7.8, ἡ τῆς υποθέσεως καινοτομία, 7.16) overshadowed, in an improper act of reception, his exquisite technique and detailed accuracy (ἀπάγει τῆς τέχνης, ὡς ἐν παρέργῳ τίθεσθαι τὴν ἄκριβειαν τῶν πραγμάτων, 7.8-10), Zeuxis decided, in a somewhat irritated state (ὅρυγιλώτερον, 8.1), to have the picture covered and taken back to his atelier. He protests with symbolic withdrawal, concealing art meant for display, thus de-creating an art creation and abandoning the creation process.

The Zeuxis story answers the prologue of this proalalia, in which Lucian complains that he has received the same improper evaluation of his art from part of his audience (1-2).

\(^{505}\) Rouveret 1989, 158-159.
second story changes the ambience from classical Greece to the Hellenistic period and from the realm of art to that of a battle scene – another type of ekphrasis. It involves intercultural encounters and its *applicatio* is the conclusion of the *prolalia*. Antiochus I Soter, whose rather small and improperly prepared army was not fit to defeat the Galatians, nevertheless won a spectacular victory following the strategic advice of an otherwise unknown Theodotas of Rhodes, who suggested the use of elephants, which were unfamiliar to the enemy.  

Thus, the unexpected sight of the strange beasts brought both the Galatians and their horses into a state of extreme shock and confusion (πρὸς τὸ παράδοξον τῆς δυσεως ἐταράχθησαν, 10.3) and forced them to flee in complete disorder (οὐδεὶς κόσμῳ ἔφευγον, 10.9, ἐν ταράξῳ, 10.20). To the astonishment produced by the novel subject in the Zeuxis story, the centaurs, corresponds here astonishment from another novel sight, that of the unfamiliar elephants (τὸ καινὸν τοῦ θεάματος ἔξεπληξε, 11.9-10).  

Lucian divides explicit self-referential statements between prologue and epilogue. In the prologue, he dares to complain, in terms echoed later by the illustrative Zeuxis anecdote, that some in his now familiar audience were, after one of his rhetorical performances, in awe exclusively of his novelty (τὴν γνώμην τῶν συγγραμμάτων ἣν οὕσαν καὶ πολλάν ἐν αὐτῇ τῶν νεωτερισμῶν, 1.10-12) and unconventionality (μὴ συνήθη μηδὲ κατὰ τὸ κοινὸν βαδίζει τοῖς ἄλλοις, 2.4-5). They expressed their excitement exclaiming:

Oh, what novelty! By Heracles, what strange stories! What an inventive artist! No one could be more ingenious!

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ω τῆς καινότητος. Ἡράκλεις τῆς παραδοξολογίας, εὐμήχανος ἀνθρώπος, οὐδὲν ἀν τις ἐίποι τῆς ἐπινοίας νεαρώτερον (1.13-16).

However, thus overwhelmed by the novelty and strangeness of his style (τὸ καὶνὸν τῆς προσαιρέσεως καὶ ξενίζου), to which they reduced Lucian’s charm (χάριν), they completely ignored his artistic skills: the beautiful vocabulary and the composition sanctioned by the classical canons (ὄνομάτων... καλῶν... καὶ πρὸς τὸν ἀρχαῖον κανόνα συγκειμένων), the sharpness of thought and the insightfulness (νοῦ ὄξεος ἡ περινοίας τινός), the Attic grace (χάριτος Ἀττικῆς), the harmony and the artistry (ἀρμονίας ἡ τέχνης, 2.5-11). The epilogue draws on the Antiochus anecdote and compares the perception of Lucian’s display with an inadequate army (οὐκ ἄξιον μάχης, 12.2), saved only by elephants, or other strange monsters (ξένα μορμολύκεια, 12.3), or by the use of marvels (θαυματοποιία, 12.4), all epitomizing novelty and strangeness (καὶνὸν καὶ τεράστιον, 12.8).

Although rather vague in specifically defining Lucian’s novelty, this proalalia echoes another text, most probably close in date, A Literary Prometheus, where Lucian talks in similar terms about his generic innovation, the mixis of dialogue and comedy.509 There too Lucian uses paradoxa imagery and vocabulary to define his novel art object, which is associated with monstrosities of nature, suggestively hybrid creatures such as hippo-centaurs (in reference to their representation in paintings, although not specifically to Zeuxis’ painting), hippo-fish (ἵπποκαμποί), and goat-stags (τραγέλαφοι).510 Yet, in A Literary Prometheus, Lucian expresses his apprehension that his hybrid novelty might not be well received just as the blending of its conflicting parts might not be perceived as skillfully natural, but as an inconsistent mixture of genres, of familiar and unfamiliar, tradition and novelty. There, novelty as the result of literary

509 Hall 1981, 29.
510 Luc. Prom. es 5, 7.
hybridism still needs the author’s advocacy and its salvation lies in the art of blending. In *Zeuxis*, on the other hand, the author expresses strong confidence that he has already resolved the conflict of the elements combined in his literary melting pot, that he has already tamed his monster and attenuated its wild demeanor. In fact, his art of mixing, illustrated by Zeuxis’ mastery of the palette, so competent that it creates the impression of the natural, is now accomplished. On it Lucian wishes to direct the focus of the audience’s critical evaluation and enjoyment.\(^{511}\) Once innovation is acknowledged as the essential and distinguishing feature of his art, it is *techne* – the ever-proper aesthetic criterion – that measures the value of the art object. At this level of judgment, novelty becomes only circumstantial (ὡσπερ ἐν προσθήκης μοίρᾳ, 2.17).

The distinction between (subject) matter and artistic ability is indeed the pivot that sustains both texts. In *A Literary Prometheus*, Lucian ironically claims that the comparison between himself and the inventive son of Iapetus may only be valid at the level of material, symbolically clay (πῆλος), not artistry, which he cleverly reduces to ingeniousness (εὐμηχανία). Thus, inventiveness is null artistically if not given life, like Prometheus’ human *plasmata*, by *techne*. Only the mastery of artistic skills makes it legitimate, thus namable and alive.\(^{512}\) In *Zeuxis*, he complains, as did the painter, that both their audiences admired only the clay (τὸν πῆλον τῆς τέχνης ἑπανοοῦσι, 7.12-13), the novelty (εὐμηχανὸς ἀνθρώπος, 1.14-15), and not the artistry. The essential dimension of the art object is improperly neglected in the act of reception.

*Zeuxis* is likely close in date not only to *A Literary Prometheus*, which is probably earlier, but also to other texts that discuss more specifically Lucian’s literary innovation.\(^{513}\) Lucian, here from an established position, addresses his audience in terms that denote familiarity

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\(^{511}\) Branham 1989, 39-40.

\(^{512}\) Luc. Prom. es 1-3; cf. Prom. 2.12-13, where the creative act of Prometheus is εὐμηχανὸς πλαστική.

(πρὸς φίλους ἠδη ὄντας ύμᾶς λέγειν, 1.3-4) and insists on being given the proper attention and judgment. With his identity as ingenious author well recognized, he strives for recognition of his artistic value as well, the unique criterion that makes him known in the vast and ever shifting cultural atmosphere of the ‘Second Sophistic’. While novelty insures his distinctive identity, techne validates his claim to aesthetic worth. Moreover, the tone of insecurity gives way to that of strong self-confidence. The timid, cracking voice of the barbarian has matured to the strong, limpid voice of the Greek, even as Lucian, in a playful gesture of false modesty and quasi-irritated protest, refuses the praise of his unique position within Greekness (ἕνα καὶ μόνον ἐν τοῖς Ἑλλησίων ἐνναί, 2.21-22). The audience needs to overcome the stage of perceiving his work as a generic paradoxon, a match for natural marvels, and to acknowledge it as an aesthetic paradoxon, a marvel of techne. The artist himself shares the fortune of his art object that is the expression of self. Therefore, just as his art object shifts its paradoxical nature from novel and strange to an artistic marvel, the author too develops his cultural identity from non-Greek to Greek, from a paradoxon as a barbarian inventor to a paradoxon as an extraordinarily skillful artist working with the consecrated Greek canons.

The reaction to mere novelty is purely emotional, while the reaction to an aesthetic marvel, equally strong emotionally, is filtered through paideia, through a sanctioned system of cultural values. The former is illustrated by the reaction of the ignorant, culturally limited barbarian Galatians to the elephants – the secret cultural weapon of the sophisticated Greek, as well as by the impetuous reaction of both Lucian’s and Zeuxis’ public to their artistic innovation. It echoes the impulsive response of the Egyptian mob to Ptolemy’s freaks, natural paradoxa.\footnote{Luc. Prom. es 4.} Irrational repugnance or derision of marvels separates the crude barbarians, whether Egyptians or
Galatians, stubborn in the preservation of the traditional, from the foolishly curious and cultured Greek with a penchant for paradoxa, like the audience that Lucian reproves in Zeuxis.

Within the Greek culture, therefore, it is paideia that makes the difference between instinctive emotion and aesthetic emotion, the expression of an educated judgment. Lucian’s ideal audience is one of pepaideumoni, who are able to filter the emotion of novelty through that of beauty and deliver a proper response to the performer’s display. He addresses his present audience as γραφικοί (12.10), connoisseurs in matters of the art of the painter (γραφεύς) and of art in general, who are able to judge with techne (μετὰ τέχνης ἐκαστὰ ὁρᾶτε, 12.11). They exercise, therefore, aesthetic judgment through an educated system of aesthetic values and filter emotion through skillful evaluation. Moreover, a typically Greek educational system allows the pepaideumenos to respond in a highly informed manner to all forms of art, just as Lucian himself, although pretentiously claiming ignorance of painting (οὐ… γραφικὸς τις ὄν, 3.18-19), nevertheless displays copiously his own word-painting of a painting, his ekphrastic skills. In fact, Lucian maintains the metaphor of sight throughout the text:

Would that [the artistic qualities of my display] be worthy to be shown in the theater!

εἴη μόνον ἄξια τοῦ θεάτρου δεικνύειν (12.11-12).

Here θέατρον (theater) stands for both θέαμα (show, display) and θεαταί (spectators, audience)515 to refer to the spectacle of the uttered word and its listeners, as well as to the more complete and complex spectacle of the sophist in performance (ἐπίδειξις) and his sophisticated audience.

Indeed, complexity as the result of variety and skillful combination is what Lucian admires in the artistic display of Zeuxis (ποικίλως τὸ περιττὸν ἐπέδειξατο τῆς τέχνης, 5.11)

515 LSJ s.v. θεατρον 2-3; cf. Luc. Prom. es 4, where Ptolemy Philadelphus displayed his paradoxical θέαματα in the theater to astonish the spectators (ὁμα τὸ ἕκπληξειν, the same phrase as in Zeux. 7.2).
and what he strives to replicate in his own rhetorical display. Aesthetic enthrallment (ἐκπληξία) is the reaction he expects from his audience, not just the shock of novelty as the result of random mixis (τούτο μόνον ἐκπλήττονται καὶ, ὡσπερ ἐστί, καὶνὸν καὶ τεράστιον δοκεῖ αὐτοῖς, 12.8). This sort of ekplexis has its sources in paideia, specifically in an active form of paideia that sets free from the girth of tradition not only the performer, but also his audience, and thus makes possible the cultural refreshment and continuity. While a passive paideia remains within the beaten path of fixed canons, which it approvingly sustains in an act of obedient mimesis, Lucian enacts here, for his audience, an active form of paideia as creative response to tradition, as an artistic form of reflection on the familiar through the lens of otherness.⁵¹⁶

In the *prolalia Heracles*, Lucian presents himself as an old man returning to public rhetorical performance (7). The basis of the text is again an ekphrasis, yet again with a different treatment than previous ekphraseis used as support for self-presentation in other introductions. The paradoxographical tone is pervasive, yet more subtle and stylized, with *paradoxa* reworked to support the backbone metaphor of the text. Lucian uses strange features of a foreign culture to illustrate the paradox of the old rhetor unexpectedly returning to performance more vigorous than ever. At the same time, he redefines for a puzzled audience his literary *paradoxa* as not mere rhetorical adornments, but the sophisticated expression of thought, an enthralling aesthetic marvel.

Lucian invokes once more the motif of his own journeys, this time to Gaul.\(^{517}\) The ekphrasis starts *ex abrupto* with no specific information on the art object – the painting – described, which is reduced to an anonymous pictorial object that mirrors the mental representation attributed to an entire cultural community (*γράφουσι*, 1.3). The subject matter is Heracles, called Ogmios by the Celts, and his completely unorthodox and strange representation (*τὸ δὲ εἴδος τοῦ θεοῦ πάνυ ἀλλόκοτον γράφουσι*, 1.2-3), which Lucian claims to have seen somewhere in Gaul.\(^{518}\) We have, already in the first sentence, two paradoxographical elements of the exotic (ethnographic/cultural) type: the Celtic name of Greek Heracles and the information on the Celts’ strange representation of the familiar Greek hero. The first *paradoxon* of this depiction is Heracles’ old age which Lucian represents as extreme, capping the sentence with a simile, in a studied stylistic simplicity:

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\(^{517}\) *Luc. Apol. 15, Bis acc. 27.*
\(^{518}\) For an outline of the scholarly debate on the reality of such a painting and on the significance of the Celtic name see Nesselrath 1990, especially 133-134.
[Heracles] is for them extremely old, forehead-bald and with the rest of the hair completely white, with wrinkled skin, and tanned as dark can be, like old seamen.

The author builds the paradoxon through lexical variation, a sign of maturity of language. He organizes the ekphrastic discourse around a set of three lexical pairs that constantly define the marvelous. In the first pair of lexical markers, Heracles’ image is identified as conceptual (εἶδος, 1.2) and qualified as completely strange (πάνυ ἀλλόκοτον, 1.3). The next key lexical pair (γραφή – ὑβρὶς) refers more specifically to the representation as a painting (τῇ γραφῇ, 2.4), as distinct from sculpture or mythology for instance. Its strangeness is translated as offense towards the Greek divinity (ἐφ’ ὑβρεὶ τῶν Ἑλληνίων θεῶν, 2.1-2), just as paradoxon in general are a hybris towards doxa, the general opinion. Heracles’ physical paradoxon is his strange shape (ἐς τὴν μορφήν τὴν Ἡρακλέους, 2.3), an insult to the appearance sanctioned by the Greek tradition. Elsewhere, Lucian’s literary novelty of generic mixis is hybristic with respect to the literary tradition, just as natural paradoxon resulting from physical mixis are hybristic with respect to the norm. In spite of his old age, the Celtic Heracles still bears the insignia typical to the Greek figure: the lion skin as clothing, the club, the bow, and the quiver (1).

The third key lexical pair (εἰκών – παραδοξοστατον) gradually works the paradoxon up the scale of unorthodoxy, through the superlative form, and pulls down the concreteness of the image, from clear graphic representation (γραφή) to mental representation. Although his ekphrastic discourse reaches only now the details, Lucian prompts his audience, through this

520 Cf. Luc. Prom. es.
lexical choice (εἰκῶν) to focus not on the art object per se, but at the concept behind it (2). The chief paradoxon of the conceptual representation graphically depicted here occupies the core of Lucian’s ekphrastic display: the old Heracles drags after him a crowd bound by their ears (ἐκ τῶν ὠτῶν... δεσμεύουσι) with delicate cords (σειραὶ λεπταὶ) of amber and gold. Without resistance and although (ὁμως) bound by only delicate, weak chains (ὑφ’ οὕτως ἀθενῶν ἀγόμενοι), they do not wish to become free (οὔτε δρασμῶν βουλεύουσι). They follow their enslaver cheerfully and joyfully, praising him (φαίδροι ἐπονταῖ καὶ γεγιθότες καὶ τὸν ἀγοντα ἔπαιρούντες). Moreover, they are even eager to overtake him by loosening the chains (ἐπειγόμενοι ἀπαντεῖ καὶ τῷ φθάνειν ἐθέλειν τὸν δεσμὸν ἐπιχαλῶντες) and would seem vexed (ἐοικότες ἀχθεσθησομένοις) to be freed from their enjoyable slavery (3).521

The last lexical pair is incompletely expressed. Lucian qualifies the painter’s artistic device as a climactic paradoxon (πάντων ἀτοπώτατον), thus indirectly referring to the representation as a concrete art object.522 He skillfully guides his audience into the painter’s workshop. He takes them through the creative process, although not without a certain deceitful trick to which I shall return. Since both Heracles’ hands were occupied in the picture with his traditional Greek attributes, the club and the bow, the painter supposedly ran into aporia as to how to attach the novel attribute, the chains, to the character. His ingenious solution (πάντων ἀτοπώτατον), the deus ex machina of his artistic craft and the key point of the story, was to attach the chains to the pierced tongue of Heracles. Yet the whole aporia is here just the perception of someone unfamiliar with the allegedly Gallic conceptual representation of Heracles. What seems to the stranger an ingenious solution to a perplexity, is for the artist a deliberate choice of artistic expression, in accordance with his own cultural milieu. Lastly, as a

final delicate touch to the climactic *paradoxon*, Heracles is turned towards his followers smiling, sealing with serene contentment the unconceivable, joyful association and conferring the *paradoxon* the status of pleasant norm (3).

Lucian the traveler confesses to a complex reaction to this novelty: wonder mixed with puzzlement (θαυμάζων καὶ ἄπορών) and confusion (ταραττομένω εἶοικάς), the typical response to a *paradoxon*. He also feels a strong vexation (ἀγανακτῶν) that, in contrast with Heracles’ peaceful smile, expresses his sense of *hybris*. Just as the Celtic Heracles smiles calmly enjoying his natural milieu, a vexed Lucian, coming from the culture of the Greek tradition, claims to feel his familiar world threatened (4). Finally, a local old man – a reiteration of the old age motive – interprets the painting in order to solve his *aporía*. Suggestively, the old Celt is himself the result of a cultural *mixis*, being very knowledgeable about his own culture and also well educated in Greek culture, for which mastery of Greek language is both the key and the measure (οὐκ ἀπαιδευτὸς τὰ ἡμέτερα, ὡς ἔδειξεν ἀκριβῶς Ἑλλάδα φωνήν ἁριείς, φιλόσοφος... τὰ ἐπιχώρια). Thus, he is a suitable interpreter between the two cultural worlds, and symbolically, between two different artistic media. After Heracles, he is the second illustration for Lucian, who now claims to be old himself, and who, having experienced otherness, interprets for his Greek audience an aspect of an alien culture. Moreover, coming himself, as a Syrian, from a foreign world and thus having a more acute feeling of strangeness, Lucian is capable of helping his Greek audience understand otherness. Lucian introduces the old Celt as not *uneducated* (οὐκ ἀπαιδευτὸς) in Greek culture and a *philosopher* (φιλόσοφος) in his own tradition, making a clear distinction between education in a foreign culture and in one’s


524 Amato 2004 proposes the identification of the old Celt with Favorinus and suggests that the art object may be a literary text, Favorinus’ *De senect.* (9-17 Barigazzi).

own. He seems to equal the former with nurture and the latter with nature, seeing one as acculturation and the other as an inherent disposition towards (φιλό-σοφός) profound knowledge of one’s own culture, in spite of both being the result of paideia. The surprising perception of the old Celt by Lucian as φιλόσοφος is based on the local’s representing a culture enthralled by the charm of a σοφός Heracles (6.3) and his offer to solve for the stranger the riddle of the allegorical painting, thus also the riddle of Lucian’s ekphrastic discourse: ἐγώ σοι, ἔφη, ὦ ξένε, λύσω τῆς γραφῆς τὸ αἰνίγμα (4.5-6).\(^{526}\)

The explanation of the painting leads to another paradoxon for a Greek, another incongruity between the two cultures, a different emphasis on values (ἡμεῖς οἱ Κέλτοι οὐχ ὡσπερ ύμεῖς οἱ Ἑλληνες): the Celts associate discourse and persuasion (λόγος) with Heracles, not with Hermes, because of Heracles’ (physical) strength. As to his old age, the explanation lies in the fact that only logos attains perfection in old age after a long process of maturation (μόνος γὰρ ὁ λόγος ἐν γήρα φιλεῖ ἐντελῇ ἐπιδεικνυόμαι τῇν ἀκμήν, 4.11-12). Thus, when delivering this explanation, the old Celt offers the rationalization of what was perceived as a paradoxon, undoing it and solving the stranger’s aporia (λύσω ... τὸ αἰνίγμα, 4.5-6, μὴ θαυμάσῃς, 4.11, μηδὲ τούτο θαυμάσῃς εἰδώς, 5.3, οὐδ’ ὑβρίς, 5.4). The Celt’s Greek paideia lies not only in the perfect Greek he speaks, or in his understanding of a Greek’s perplexity when confronted with otherness, but also in his ability to quote from Greek literature in order to support the arguments of the barbarian perspective on the matter of logos and to facilitate the Greek’s understanding of

\(^{526}\) On allegorical painting see Rouveret 1989, 346-354; cf. Tabula Cebetis in which the painting represents a philosophical allegory and its explanation is associated with the enigma of the Sphinx: ἔστι γὰρ ἡ ἐξήγησις ἔσωσα τῷ τῆς Σφιγγῆς αἰνίγματι (3.2); see Fitzgerald and White 1983 on the problem of the association between Cebes of Thebes, the Socratic apprentice (Pl. Phaed.) and the Tabula. Cf. Max. Tyr. Or. 4.3-5 on the development of forms of expression from art, specifically poetry, to philosophy, from allegorical to straightforward discourse. Cf. Porph. Antr. 3-4 on fiction (πλάσμα) using αἰνίγματα (αἰνιγματα) not for mere entertainment (εἰς ψυχάγωγιαν), but as a form of argumentation for both philosophers and ordinary people (οὐ τοῖς σοφοῖς μόνον, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἴδιωταῖς); cf. Luc. VH 1.1.
What seems to the stranger an expedient is revealed as the painter’s intention, a deliberate artistic choice that requires a hermeneutical exercise. It becomes the essence of the artistic creative process and serves as a skillful allusion to the problems of interpretation of Lucian’s own work. Thus, Lucian hints to his audience not to dismiss his own rhetorical/literary paradoxa as crafty expedients, but to exercise paideia and to try to understand them as valid and deliberate artistic means and also to understand the subtleness behind them.\footnote{In Luc. Herc. 4-6 there are various references to Homer’s recurrent “winged words” and quotations from Hom. II.3.108, II.1.249, II.3.152; Eur. Phoen. 530; and an anonymous comic poet (fr. com. adesp. 457 Kassel-Austin).} 

The old Heracles, a wise man (σοφὸν γενόμενον), is therefore a metaphor for maturation of logos through paideia. Heracles’ age is the only novel element in his appearance, except for the details related to his acolytes, and is illustrative of the change in Lucian’s own situation – his return to rhetorical performance as an old man. On the other hand, the orthodox attributes of Heracles, usually associated with youth, stand for the power and effect of this ripe logos: his physical strength represents the strength of persuasive, forceful logos (πειθοὶ τὰ πλεῖστα βιάσσωσθαι), while his arrows – a metaphor worthy of barbarian nations, usually perceived as warlike – are the efficient words themselves, sharp, quick, and well aimed, thus able to “wound”, to enthral the souls (ὀξεῖς καὶ εὐστοχοὶ καὶ ταχεῖς καὶ τὰς ψυχὰς τιτρώσκοντες, 6).\footnote{Brandão 2001, 137.} 

Lucian confesses to a certain apprehension about returning to rhetorical epideixis, submitting himself again (ἀὖθις) to the judgment of a large educated audience (ὑπὲρ ἐμαυτοῦ ψῆφου διδόναι τοσοῦτοι δικασταῖς, 7).\footnote{Cf. Gorg. Hel. 12 and passim on the power of persuasion, especially the vocabulary referring to violent force.} He anticipates that some of them, especially the young, might object to his daring (τολμῶν), to his paradox of an old man acting in the spirit of the youth, in spite of his ripe age (παρ᾿ ἥλικίαν νεανιεύσθαι). Their objections, expressed,
typically for *pepaideumenoi*, in literary quotations, contradict the argument built by the old Celt, and are then contradicted by Lucian himself in a classic sophistic exercise of *dissoi logoi* (7-8). He supports his decision to start performing again – it is not clear after how long a hiatus – with the argument of the old persuasive Heracles. In a vivid image, the flower of youth is spent in a long effort towards *paideia* and distilled in the blooming flowers of *logos*. In a grand rhetorical manner, Lucian says farewell to youth and its advantages – strength, swiftness, beauty, physical excellence in general (ισχύς μέν καὶ τάχος καὶ κάλλος καὶ ὡσα σώματος ἀγαθὰ χαῖρετω). He even says his farewell to love (ὁ Ἕρως σὸς, ὁ Τήμη ροιητὰ... παραπετέσθω), with a reference to Anacreon and in a much more robust spirit than that of delicate disheartened Mimnermus. It is time now for the seasonably late, and thus splendid, bloom of eloquence nourished by the dying flower of youth (ἀνθέειν καὶ ἀνθέειν καὶ ἀκμάξειν). It is time to enthrall the audience in the manner of the Celtic Heracles (ἐλκεῖν τῶν ὦτων... καὶ τοξεύειν).

Rhetorical persuasion in the realm of ideas, already undermined by the first sophists’ skillful play with opposite arguments, has long lost its prominence through changes in the socio-political circumstances. Rhetorical display, *epideixis*, targets now a different sensibility in the audience, the need for entertainment through *paideia*. Persuasion is often reduced to convincing the audience of the rhetor’s skills. Lucian sees persuasion, now aesthetic in nature, as a type of rapture with words, similar to the forceful magic power of poetry and fiction/fictitious discourse in general, such as Gorgias discusses in his defense of Helen. Many of Lucian’s works are like old poetry in artistic purpose and kindred to the new fictional prose of the time. By conducting a subtly concealed thread of argument, puzzling to many and elucidating to few, they cater to

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532 Anacr. *PMG* 379; cf. Mimn. 1, 2, 5.
different tastes on a minutely graded scale of *paideia* and definitely serve the purpose of enthrallement, of a sort of aesthetic rapture. Even his *prolaliai*, although written in the spirit of the old prologue and often mixing *captatio* with polemics, cannot be reduced to typical persuasion. Through their complex artistic fabric Lucian aims to produce an aesthetic rapture in his audience.

Lucian puts a final touch on the *prolalia* through a rhetorical prayer built on the metaphor of sailing and sustained by Homeric quotations. This prayer provides an excellent final example of deceitful appearance, illustrated through Odysseus’ disguise as an old beggar. He astonishes the suitors (ὑπερφυιάλως ἀγάσαντο) when his might is unveiled from under the rags. Just like Homer’s Odysseus, Lucian, in his – probably exaggerated – old age, is πολύτροπος, much travelled on the seas of rhetoric, having acquired the multifaceted, versatile artistic skills that he admires in Zeuxis (ποικίλος τὸ περίττον ἐπεδείξατο), and master of a crafty, deceitful discourse. While Odysseus reveals his still youthful physical strength and beauty hidden under the appearance of a helpless, consumed old man (φαῖνε δὲ μεροὺς καλούς τε μεγάλους, etc.), Lucian tops the Homeric image with a more distilled, metaphorical one. Unlike Odysseus, Heracles’ old age is real, although belonging to a different cultural dimension as a barbarian representation. His strength consists not, therefore, in concealed physical nature. It is of an interior, spiritual sort, and finds its expression in the act of educated, artistic speech. Heracles’ strength is not hidden, like that of Odysseus. Lucian expresses it through powerful visual images: the bow, the quiver, and the chains. However, their allegorical nature and meaning are invisible to the unformed cultural eye.

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535 Lucian quotes Hom. *Od.* 18.74; for the whole passage see 18.66-74.
After an alleged hiatus, Lucian returns to the rhetorical performance to re-establish himself by displaying and reaffirming his *paideia* before this audience of *pepaideumenoi* who, although silent, unequivocally testify, through their presence, to their long approval of his paradoxical stance and artistic worth. Willingly and cheerfully, they have long let themselves be enslaved to this barbarian Heracles who smiles peacefully while dragging them by the ears through an enthralling adventure of amber and gold, beauty and *paideia*, the voyage of his toiling Greek *logos*. 
2.8. The Old Charmer Revisited: Dionysus

In *Dionysus*, a *prolalia* that has particularly attracted the attention of scholars in recent times, Lucian revisits the problem of his modes of expression and their reception. He goes back to the diptych format, this time with two Dionysiac *mythoi* having pronounced paradoxographical dimensions. The first *mythos* narrates the Indian perception of the Dionysiac *thiasus* as a complex of *paradoxa*. While Dionysus and his troops approach their territory, the Indians send scouts to inspect the invaders. Lucian offers his audience a detailed description through their eyes, culturally unaccustomed to such a vision. They see the god as a strangely hybrid creature with animal features mixed with human, an oddly beardless, effeminate (ἀγένειον ἀκριβῶς), horned (κερασφόρον) commander, whose chariot is carried by leopards (παρδαλίς, considered, etymologically speaking, a *mixis* between panther, πάρδος, and lion, λέων, 2.1-5). His troops are made of Maenads and Satyrs. The women are described as crazy and frantic (ἐκφρούει καὶ μεμηνῦσι), carrying drums – objects allegedly unknown to the Indians who interpret them as some sort of small, light shields that make a booming noise (πελτάρια κούφα, βομβοῦντα) – and minute, headless spears (δοράτα μικρὰ ἔχουσαι ἁσίδηρα) covered in ivy. The Satyrs are rustic (ἀγροίκους) young men with animal features – tails and horns (οὐρὰς ἔχοντας, κεράςτας, 1.10-17). The picture is completed by Silenus and Pan, one a shaky, old, fat, long-eared fellow riding an ass and effeminately dressed in saffron, the other a mixture of human and beast, with horns and shaggy legs (περάστιον ἄνθρωπον, τράγῳ τὰ νέρβεν ἐοικότα, κομήτην τὰ σκέλη, κέραςτα ἔχοντα). In fact, the scouts perceive Pan as terrifying and

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538 See Branham 1989, 44-45 who applies the formalist concept of *estrangement* to this devise.
interpret the Maenads’ typical cry (ἐὔοι) as an expression of fright (2.5-18). The whole apparition is capped by the image of tearing animals while still alive, as the invaders are strange eaters of raw flesh (ὡμοφάγους, 2.18-21).

Learning of such a ridiculous army, the Indians do not find it a match for their military prowess. They condescendingly avoid confrontation with such an effeminate and unfit enemy, against which they decide, at most, to dispatch their women, as more worthy of such a battle. However, when they learn that Dionysus’ troops have set fire to their country, they hastily set out for battle, but encounter terrible surprises, paradoxa. The frenzied, disarrayed thiasus becomes suddenly a well-organized army, while their strategy still bears the marks of the boisterous Dionysiac revel:

their battle cry is “evoe!”; suddenly they bang the tambourines, and the cymbals give the signal for battle, and one of the Satyrs sounds with his horn the shrilling song for charge, and the ass of Silenus brays a martial heehaw, and the serpent girded Maenads, baring the steel on the top of their thyrsi, jump upon the enemy with a loud shriek.

καὶ τὸ μὲν σύνθημα ἦν ἀπασι τὸ εὔοι. εὐθὺς δὲ τὰ τύμπανα ἔπαταγεῖτο καὶ τὰ κύμβαλα τὸ πολεμικὸν ἐσῆμαινε καὶ τῶν Σατύρων τις λαβὼν τὸ κέρας ἐπηύλει τὸ ὀρθίον καὶ ὁ τοῦ Σιληνοῦ ὄνος ἐνυάλιον τι ὑγκῆσατο καὶ αἱ Μαινάδες σὺν ὀλολυγῇ ἐνεπήδησαν αὐτῶς δράκοντας ὑπεξωσμέναι κάκ τῶν θύρων ἀκρων ἀπογυμνοῦσαι τὸν αἰθηρὸν (4.7-14).

While the Indians react to the description of the strange Dionysiac thiasus (ἀλλόκοτα) with laughter, derision, and even sympathetic condescension (καταφρονήσας, καταγηλάν, ἐλεεῖν, 1.1-9; ἐγέλων, ὡς τὸ ἐικός, 3.1-2), when they confront this bizarre enemy on the battleground their immediate reaction, as well as that of their elephants, consists in fright and disarrayed flight (αὐτίκα ἐγκλίναντες σὺν οὐδενὶ κόσμῳ ἔφευγον, 4.115-17).

539 For variations of the myth see Diod. Sic. 2.38.6; 3.63.1-2; 3.64.6; 3.65.5; 4.3.1-2; 4.2.6; 4.3.1-4.4.2; Polyaen. 1.1.3.
The Indians’ reactions are paradigmatic of the different human response to different types of \textit{paradoxa}. Laughter mixed with condescendence is the typical response to human freaks, perceived always through the comparison not only with normality, but especially with one’s own sense of self-normality.\footnote{Pliny says that nature created strange creatures of the human race as a jest, amusement for herself and novel marvels for us (\textit{haec atque talia ex hominum genere ludibria sibi, nobis miracula ingeniosa fecit natura}, HN 7.2.32).} At the direct contact with the Donysiac \textit{paradoxa}, the Indians become terrified and run away in an irrational fashion, as humans usually do when encountering animal monsters.\footnote{In Luc. \textit{Prom. es} 4, the Egyptians manifest derision and repulsion towards a human freak (ὅι μὲν πολλοὶ ἐγέλαον, οἱ δὲ τινὲς ὡς ἐπὶ τέρατι ἐμυσάττοντο), while they are frightened and shun an unusual black camel (ἔφοβήθησαν καὶ ὀλίγου δεῖν ἑφύγου ἀναθορύντες).} This difference is caused by the expectation of the receptor: the Indians, expecting their invaders to be humans, laugh at their strange habits and at their animal alterations. However, meeting them face to face, the Indians are frightened not only at their unexpected military fitness (ordered battle lines and steelheads hidden underneath ivy garlands), but mostly at the expression of their non-human side. They react chiefly to non-human noises, made either by tambourines and cymbals, or by animal-related sounds (the horn, the bray of he ass), or by the weird shrills of the Maenads (an acoustic image associated with the visual image of the serpents that girdle the women). In one case, the imperfect human side is the focus, in the other the scary non-human side makes itself prominently manifest. The Indians’ different reactions are also illustrative of human response to the degree of their contact with \textit{paradoxa}, whether real and vivid, perceived visually, in person, as is the case of Ptolemy’s subjects and of the Indians and Galatians in battle, or through an intermediary (the report of the scouts in the case of the Indians).\footnote{Luc. \textit{Prom es}; Zeux.} The distinction between reality and report (\textit{logos}) makes \textit{paradoxa} entertaining, as in the case of paradoxography. Unlike in nature, in art in general, including the visual arts, \textit{paradoxa} filtered through the creative genius of the artist become enjoyable and produce
laughter. Yet this laughter is of a different sort, not derision but the laughter of pleasure given by the experience of logos and paideia.

After a detailed applicatio (5), Lucian tells another mythos related to Dionysus and India (ἐπειδήπερ ἦτο ἐν Ἰνδοῖς ἑσμέν [...] οὐκ ἀπροσδιόνυσον οὐδ' αὐτό), abounding in playful geographic and ethnographic details, the latter essentially paradoxographical. The Μαχλαῖοι, an Indian tribe not mentioned in any other extant records, celebrate every year the festival of Dionysus in a fair grove shadowed by ivy and vines, attributes of the god. The grove is watered by three springs from which their men drink according to their age: boys from the spring of the Satyrs, men from that of Pan, and elders – with whom Lucian associates himself (κατ' ἐμέ) – from that of Silenus. Lucian openly omits to mention the effect of the spring water on the first two age categories, but considers it quite relevant for his situation (οὐκ ἀλλότριον), i.e. his age and his present performance, to report what happens to the old men. When they paradoxically get drunk with spring water consecrated to the rites of Dionysus (μεθυσθῶσιν ὑπὸ τοῦ ὕδατος), they become mute like a drowsy drunk (ἀφωνὸς ἐστὶ καὶ καρηβαροῦντι καὶ βεβαπτισμένω ἔοικεν). Then, they start speaking with a limpid voice, a clear utterance, and a sweet modulation (φωνὴ τῆς λαμπρᾶ καὶ φθέγμα τορὸν καὶ πνεύμα λιγυρὸν), in a sensible and well-ordered speech (συνετὰ πάντα καὶ κόσμια). They discourse incessantly (συνεχῆ λαλεῖν καὶ ρήσεις μακρὰς συνείρειν), not like the usually silent swans that sing, although beautifully, only when approaching death, but rather like cicadas that prolong their unbroken lively song until late in the night (τεττιγώδες τι πυκνὸν καὶ ἐπίτροχον συνάπτουσιν). If an old man does not finish his story before sunset, the next year, after becoming intoxicated again with the divine water, he

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543 See Nesselrath 1990, 138-139 for the discussion of the authenticity of this tribe; cf. Dionys. Per. 1143-1145 for the Γαργαρίδαι, another Indian tribe, who worship Dionysus (Διωνύσου θεράποντες).

544 Cf. Luc. VH 1.7.
picks up the thread from where he left it. This is the climax of Lucian’s self-referential paradoxical mythos (τὸ παραδοξότατον, 7).

The applicatio of the first story reveals a Lucian still struggling, although in absolute confidence (θαρρῶν, 5.16), with the problem of reception. This is, then, at odds with Heracles, the other prolalia composed in old age, in which he claims to have just come back to rhetorical performances and been already embraced with all his oddities by his audience. Nesselrath argues that Dionysus is Lucian’s last extant prolalia. Indeed the reference to a recent comeback in Heracles may support the conclusion that Dionysus is at least later. The return to the problem of reception may then be prompted by different élite audiences in one city rather than another city. Lucian knows exactly how to respond to different crowds. The audience before whom he prefaces his core performance with this prolalia seems to be a mixture of two groups characterized by different reactions to his previous displays. The moral of the first story is clearly drawn by the author himself: the Indians’ predicament, when they are overcome and captured by a scorned enemy, should serve as lesson to those who, led by false appearances or reports (ἀπὸ τῆς πρώτης ἄκοιης), despise strange armies (καταφρονεῖν ξένων στρατοπέδων, 4.19-20). This reaction is illustrative of a big part of the audience (οἱ πολλοὶ) who may be tempted to snub his novel performance (τοὺς καίνους τῶν λόγων) – as the Indians snub Dionysus – having formed a wrong doxa based on its comic appearance (οὐδὲ τὴν ἀρχὴν ἀφικνοῦνται ὡς οὐδὲν δέον παρέχειν τά ὦτα κόμωις γυναικείοις καὶ σκιρτήμασι σατυρικοῖς καταβάντας ἀπὸ τῶν ἔλεφαντων). Others, on the other hand, may come to enjoy exclusively the comic aspect of the performance. Bewildered by the paradoxon of the author’s subtly veiled serious

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545 On Silenus cf. Hdt. 8.138; Arist. fr. 44 Rose; Theop. FGrH 115 F 75 (=Ael. VH 3.18); Verg. Ecl. 6.
stance (τῷ παραδόξῳ τοῦ πράγματος τεθορυβημένοι), they do not even dare to praise his display.

Lucian, therefore, deals here with two different levels of audience and paideia: many (οἱ πολλοὶ) may reject his performance as not serious, while others are specifically seduced by its comic play (5). Paradoxically, here Lucian calls the élite οἱ πολλοὶ as the majority of his established audience, those many who, having forgotten the sacred communion they shared with him long ago as παλαιοὶ συμπόται, need to be re-educated. He invites them to rekindle their communion, as once upon a time (ὡς πρότερον), and reminds them of the values of his strange ways to comically alter the serious, probably another reference to his generic mixis. These are the usually serious audience, the pepaidemenoi earnest about paideia. The πρώτη ἀκοή is, in their case, the first level of listening, the first perception of his utterance that can induce a false δόξα. Those who come only for the comic appearance, for the obvious ivy, are instead biased either by a false report, or again by a mistaken interpretation. They, however, are not serious with respect to paideia and thus represent the non-élite. These need to be educated through the prolalia. Their bewilderment (τεθορυβημένοι) and thus hesitation to praise Lucian’s display (οὐδ’ οὖτως ἐπαινεῖν τολμῶσι) is the expression of their lack of paideia. All, however, will end up – Lucian confidently professes (θαρρὼν ἐπαγγέλλωμαι, 5.14-16) – like the Indians of the story, captured by the mixed, paradoxical spears of his logos.

547 Santini 2001, 76-81, assumes that both groups represent the non-élite (οἱ πολλοί), since the pepaidemenoi are clearly free from misconceptions. She argues that the pepaidemenoi are only the target of the second mythos, deliberately left without an applicatio, because the élite would not need an explanation (on the lack of expressed applicatio for the second mythos see also Villani 2000, 222). Yet Lucian usually explains the relevance of the illustrative stories in his prolalai. Santini misses the point that Lucian’s invitation to be rejoined in the sacred rites of Dionysus by his old “revel companions” addresses the groups that she interprets as non-élite (ἀλλὰ θαρρὼν ἐπαγγέλλωμαι οὕτως, 5). However, she later identifies the συμπόται as pepaidemenoi.

548 Cf. Luc. VH 1.


Both the élite and the non-élite have incomplete, although different, responses to Lucian’s *spoudogeloion*, with some looking exclusively for the serious, others for the comic elements. A comprehensive reaction to *spoudogeloion* is attainable by an ideal élite, the *pepaideumenoi*, which Lucian does not always feel fortunate enough to have as audience. Yet he never stops, not even in his old age, encouraging *pepaideumenoi* to perfect themselves and to attain the level of subtlety and *paideia* that would allow them to grasp all the facets of his display.

The second *mythos* is left without a clear *applicatio*, in the spirit of the sacred and unutterable rites of Dionysus, yet understood by his audience as his fellow initiates and συμπόται. Lucian associates himself with Silenus, thus with the Dionysiac mysteries, as well as with the *logos* of Socrates, whom Alcibiades likens, in a sympotic context, to the old companion of the god. The effects of the sacred, intoxicating water of Silenus, the sequence of silence and eloquence, are illustrative, as Villani notes, of Lucian’s break followed by the comeback to rhetorical performance. But there is also a reference to his consistency, in spite of the hiatus, in practicing in old age the same type of rhetoric he professed when younger. *Dionysus* carries another common motif with *Heracles*, that of the old man who, here drinking from the spring of Silenus, says farewell to love and dedicates himself to *poiesis* (ἄδειοι γέροντες ποιοῦσιν), *logos*, and *paideia*, while the youth, on the other hand, drinking from the spring of Pan, engage characteristically in bold lewdness (οἴκα οἱ ἄνδρες τολμῶσι, 7).

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553 Villani 2000, 221. On water, wine and/or madness see *Luc. VH* 1.5-7; *Antig.* 145, 149, 164; *Par. Flor.* 1, 12, 13, 14, 18, 20, 24; *Par. Pal.* 5; *Par. Vat.* 12, 22.
554 See Nesselrath 1990, 139 on the interpretation of the name Μαχλαῖοι as possibly derived from μάχλας, *lewd, lustful*. On water and love see Apollon. 14; *Par. Vat.* 37; cf. *Luc. VH* 2.45. The beautiful and clear water of the
This *prolalia*, whether or not Lucian’s last, bears testimony to his continuous struggle to validate his generic *mixis*, including the serio-comic, and the *mixis* of enthralment and thoughtful *logos*. He invites the συμπόται to drink their fill of his κρατήρ (πίωσι δὲ ἐς κόρον τοῦ κρατήρος τοῦτον, 5.21-22), to have their fill of his literary mixing bowl. The long speech of the intoxicated old men may be an ironical anticipation of a long performance to follow.555 Self-irony is, obviously, the final note of the *prolalia* (κατὰ τὸν Μῶμον εἰς ἐμαυτὸν ἀπεσκώφθω, 8.1). Lucian claims the merit for a good performance, under the veil of divine inspiration, and fends the responsibility for a disappointment by invoking the inevitable garrulity typical of old age, illustrated by the intoxicated drowsiness of the old Μαχλαῖοι (καρηβαροῦντι καὶ βεβαττισιμένῳ ἐοικεν, 7.7-8).556


555 See Georgiadou & Larmour 1995 and 1998, 51-52 for this text as a possible *prolalia* for VH.

556 Cf. Nesselrath 1990, 139.
Conclusion

So what has this Dionysus to do with Dionysus, what has this Lucian, with his ever changing faces, from the young inexperienced Harmonides to the old, seducing Heracles or Silenus, to do with Lucian? The prolaliai offer a glimpse at different stages of his rhetorical career, from the hesitant young barbarian looking for the proxenia and philia of the Greek élite, to the accomplished Greek looking for approval for his harmoniously blended hybrids, and from the bewildered stranger to the bewilderment of the Greeks. If paradoxa are equally a favorite delight and an instrument of seduction, Lucian uniquely makes them his own.

In these little pieces that serve as “hors-d’œuvre au repas verbal,” Lucian uses the paradoxon and its effect (ἐκπληξις) as a paradigm for his work and its reception. He constantly addresses the pepaideumenoi from whom he expects a reaction different from that of the non-élite whom he usually sets in parallel with barbarians (Egyptians, Galatians, Indians). His intended effect upon the audience is a more complex form of ekplexis coming both from novelty and from techne. This different type of reception is illustrated by another sort of barbarian, presented not as an ethnic group, but individualized and named, reacting this time to Greek culture (Anacharsis, Toxaris). He elevates the pleasure produced by paradoxa from the level of a (pseudo-)cognitive emotion to an aesthetic one. Ekphrastic discourse, a rhetorical exercise practiced by Lucian too, praises other (art) objects for their beauty, their marvelous eidos.

557 Luc. Bacch. 5.1-2.
558 Lucian’s paradoxa are more prominent and more sophisticated than the famous triple paradox of Favorinus; Philostr. VS 489. 11-16; Gleason 1995.
559 Reardon 1971, 165.
Lucian, in turn, elevates discourse itself to a *paradoxon* as aesthetic marvel, both as paradoxical genre (*eidos*) and *techne*.\(^{560}\)

\(^{560}\) Giannini 1963, 249-250.
Chapter 3

Paradoxology and the Discourse of Identity. An Invitation to Hermeneutics

In the previous chapter, we have seen how texts that are generically self-referential introductions of the performer and his rhetorical display use *paradoxa* as Lucian’s favorite means of addressing the issue of identity, both his own – as a hybrid product of Syrian ethnicity and Greek *paideia*, and that of his work – as a hybrid genre between traditional canon and novel alteration. Lucian treats paradoxography as a discourse paradigmatic of the tensions between Greek and barbarian and between old and new.

I will now turn to his use of paradoxology in texts concerned with identity, an important topic in Lucian and Imperial literature in general, and examine the role of *paradoxa* in constructing cultural identity as an issue of tension between Greek and barbarian and between birthright and paideutic conquest. I will use the term ‘paradoxology’ for a discursive mode based on rhetorical and philosophical *paradoxa*. The rhetorical paradox usually involves the idea of unorthodoxy and – consequently – surprise, since anything contrary to the general opinion is also contrary to expectation. Paradoxical encomium and the sophists’ endeavor to make the weaker argument the stronger are emblematic for this type of discourse. Paradox is effected by novelty of thought that translates into opposition to the general opinion, by claiming to disprove the obvious/common sense and prove the opposite, by novelty of expression, by deceiving the

561 The terms παραδοξολογέω and παραδοξολογία are also used in Antiquity in reference to paradoxography (see LSJ), a term coined much later (see Ziegler 1949); Tzetzes uses the term παραδοξογράφος (*H.* 2.151). I will, however, use ‘paradoxology’ here exclusively for a discourse based on rhetorical and dialectic paradoxa, different from paradoxography – the discourse of marvels.
expectations that the same discourse creates, by the listener’s surprise at discovering the hidden meaning of the discourse, or the like. As a mark of clever, sophisticated discourse, paradox often produces ambiguity and renders the text more convoluted, thus more resistant to interpretation. \(^{562}\)

The philosophical paradox is often a form of paradoxical rhetoric, a startling, unexpected formulation of an inconceivable dogma that contradicts the opinion of the many. \(^{563}\) In dialogic philosophy, particularly in refutations, paradox, which causes *aporia*, is the result of a cunning mode of interrogation, of exploiting the incongruities between one’s hidden thoughts and public statements, between nature/truth and norm/general opinion (τὰ τοῖς πολλοῖς), between the opinion of the wise/philosophers and the opinion of the many (δόξα τῶν πολλῶν). \(^{564}\)

Paradoxology is particularly relevant to Lucianic first-personal discourse that addresses the issue of identity, as I will show with *The Rhetorician*, *The Ignorant Book Collector*, and *The Dream or Lucian’s Life*. Each of these texts represents an attempt to define identity in terms of *paideia* as a negotiation of various related polarities: *paideia-apaideusia*, Greek-barbarian, masculine-feminine. A startling cultural statement curls itself up into its opposite, whipped into a paradox; an assertion of orthodoxy becomes a strong declaration of heterodoxy. Lucian’s way of reasoning is often insidious and deceitful, building an argument that he constantly undermines.

In texts constructed as first-personal discourse the biography of the author insinuates itself into the biography of the speaker. The deliberate confusion between author and voice complicates the interpretation of the cultural statements made in such texts. Through paradoxology, Lucian constructs two overlapping identities of the same text, with the macro-text,
the external discourse of the author, challenging the micro-text, the internal discourse of the speaker. Thus, the text becomes also its opposite and its reading becomes an aporetic experience.

We come here full circle to the Proteus image discussed in the Introduction, a paradigm of Lucian’s paradoxical discursive strategy, with opposites being struck together in an unconceivable union like that of water and fire (ὄ αὐτὸς πῦρ καὶ ὕδωρ).²⁶⁵ Proteus’ paradox (τὸ δὲ σὸν πολλῷ παραδοξότερον, ὦ Προτέυ, τὸ πρᾶγμα τεράστιον) becomes Lucian’s own, as paradoxical enunciations serve, in his texts, an ever-elusive discursive voice. Menelaus, who cuts a sad figure of a hero, manifests incredulity in spite of autopsy and declines, in fear, further investigation through touch – a sign of his lack of hermeneutic desire. While his final pose is that of an aporetic figure, defeated by the experience of paradox, Lucian challenges his authentic élite audience to an exercise of paradoxical faith, to convert the experience of aporia into poly-poria through a hermeneutic exercise, thus to ‘touch’ his paradox, even with the risk of ‘getting burnt’.

3.1. The Rhetorician

A despondent rhetorician, the speaker in this text, offers guidance to a young disciple who wishes to become an accomplished rhetor. What starts as an orthodox statement that becoming a good rhetor is a major endeavor (θήραμα οὐ σμικρόν), which requires serious engagement (οὐδὲ ὀλίγης τῆς σπουδῆς δεόμενον), toil (πονῆσαι πολλά), sleepless nights (ἄγρυπνήσαι), and patience (ὑπομεῖναι, 2), quickly ends up in the paradoxical promise and recommendation of a short and easy way to accomplish it. His discourse is marked by paradoxology and built on two levels: one that supports his paideutic authority and the other that undermines it.

Once he identifies the task as challenging and daunting, the despondent rhetorician promises to teach his disciple how to avoid a laborious path by showing him a very short (ἐπιτομωτάτην), chariot-wide (ἵππηλατον), extremely pleasant (ἡδίστην), downhill (κατάντη), joyous and luxurious road (σὺν πολλῇ τῇ θυμηδίᾳ καὶ τρυφῇ), running through flowery meadows and perfect shade (διὰ τῶν λειμώνων εὐανθῶν καὶ σκιᾶς ἀκριβούς), that would allow one to reach the summit of rhetoric (ἐπιστήσῃ τῇ ἀκρᾳ) at a leisurely pace (σχολῆ καὶ βάδην) and without sweating (ἀνιδρωτί, 3). He claims to cure the disciple’s incredulity with a Hellenistic parable: a Sidonian merchant promises to show Alexander the Great a mysterious road from Persia to Egypt that would make the travel by far shorter than the commonly known road; while Alexander is skeptical (οὐκ ἐπίστευσεν) and does not heed the incredible story (τὸ παράδεξον) of the man whom he considers a charlatan (γόητα ἔστο ἐϊναι), the despondent rhetorician makes it a point to emphasize the real existence of the paradoxical promised path (καὶ εἶχεν οὕτω, 5).
Invoking the cultural model of Cebe’s hermeneutic approach of an allegorical painting, the despondent rhetorician launches into a long ekphrastic discourse. He represents Rhetoric as a seducing maiden, associated with various social privileges, such as wealth, fame, and power (πλούτος, δόξα, ισχύς), waiting on a summit (ἐφ’ ὑψηλοῦ) for her enamored suitors (ὁ ἔραστής... ὡς γαμήσειάς τε αὐτήν, 6). There are two paths that lead to Rhetoric and the advantages of her dowry: one long and difficult, the other short and easy. The rugged (τραχεῖα), narrow (στενή), thorny (ἀκανθώδης) path, involving thirst and sweat (πολὺ τὸ δίψος ἐμφάνισε τοὺς ἱδρώτα), displays only a few tracks, and even those are old (πάνυ παλαιά). The despondent rhetorician confesses that, as a naïve young man, he himself was unfortunate enough (ἄθλιος) to have chosen it. He trusted the poet saying that good things come from hard work (ἐκ τῶν πόνων φύεσθαι τὰ ἀγαθά), yet he discovered that it was not true – οὐκ ἔχειν οὐτως (7-8). His disillusion is set in strong contrast with the alleged truthfulness of the Sidonian’s path – καὶ εἶχεν οὕτω (5.22). The guide of the difficult path is a Heraclean, sturdy, rough, primitive, manly figure who shows his followers the huge footprints of Demosthenes, Plato, and their likes, advises them to imitate such antiquated examples, and exacts a high fee for leading them through hardship (9-10).

The easy path, on the other hand, has many guides. Yet one especially catches the attention, a strange apparition (ξένον φάσμα), whose delicate, elegant demeanor is emphatically marked as effeminate:

He is handsome, has a mincing gait, the neck delicately bent to the side, a womanish look in his eyes, and a honey-sweet voice; he exhales perfume, scratches his head elegantly with the top of

his stretched finger, and he arranges his, already few, locks in curly hyacinthine clusters; he is a very delicate Sardanapalus, or a Cinyras, or Agathon himself, that lovely writer of tragedies.

Πάγκαλον ἄνδρα, διασεσαλευμένον τὸ βάδισμα, ἐπικεκλασμένον τὸν αὐχένα, γυναικεῖον τὸ βλέμμα, μελιξρόν τὸ φώνημα, μύρων ἀποπνέοντα, τῷ δακτύλῳ ἀκρῷ τὴν κεφαλὴν κυώμενον, ὀλίγας μὲν ἐτι, οὐλὰς δὲ καὶ ύσκινθίας τὰς τρίχας εὐθετίζουσα, πάναβρον τινα Σαρδανάπαλλον ἢ Κυιύραν ἢ αὐτὸν Ἄγαθονα, τὸν τῆς τραγωδίας ἐπέραστον ἐκεῖνον ποιητήν. (11.3-10).

This effeminate rhetor, the guide of the short and easy path, denies the need of any preliminary education (προπαιδεία) for becoming a rhetor (14) and advises the disciple that his essential equipment should consist of ignorance, audacity, recklessness, and insolence (ἀμαθία, θράσος, τόλμα, ἀναισχυντία, 15). He recommends dressing in bright and see-through garments, wearing feminine shoes, having a big company of acolytes, and always carrying a book (15). The disciple should ignore the classic masters of rhetoric. Instead, he should have always ready a very short list of pure Attic words, another of rare, paradoxical terms (ἀπόρρητα καὶ ξένα ρήματα), and yet another of his own strange coinage (σὺτὸς ποιεῖ καίνα καὶ ἀλλόκοτα ὀνόματα), with which to sprinkle an otherwise insolently disjointed and negligent speech (16-17). This handy stock of words should be accompanied by the recurrent abuse of rhetorical worn common-places, recourse to pathos, and the manipulation of the audience through voice and gestures (18-20). An aspirant rhetor following the short and easy path should bring into the audience people who would work the crowd on his behalf (21) and, while he is himself in the audience, he should unfairly and rudely undermine his competition (22).569 He needs to create a self-image as a paradigm of debauchery (23).570 The effeminate guide praises the socio-financial advantages of Rhetoric. He acknowledges having been born of a low status – his father was a

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569 Cf. Plut. Mor. 44-45 for the opposite advice on behaving at public lectures.
freedman and his mother a seamstress. To his social inferiority Lucian suggestively adds a foreign ethnicity: he is Egyptian (ὑπὲρ Ζώιν καὶ Ὀμοῦν). He ingratiated himself with a rich old man, then a rich old woman, before finally reaching financial stability through rhetoric (24). He claims to pass as a rhetor (ῥήτωρ δοκῶ), yet he admits he is rarely successful in court (ἡττῶμαι τὰ πλεῖστα) because he betrays his clients to the other side (προδιδοὺς τὰ πολλὰ) and exacts money from them on the pretext of bribing the judges (τοὺς δικαστὰς τοῖς ἀνοήτοις καθυποσχυόμενος). Finally, the effeminate guide takes pride in being hateful for his wickedness and terrible rhetorical abilities (ἐπὶ τῇ μοχθηρίᾳ τοῦ τρόπου καὶ πολὺ πρότερον τῶν λόγων) and recognized as a champion of evil (τὸν ἀκρότατον ἐν πάσῃ κακίᾳ, 25).

In the end, the despondent rhetorician makes obvious his contempt for the short and easy path. If the disciple chooses it, he might already be a rhetor by having simply listened to the speech of the effeminate guide. And he does seem to assume that the disciple has already chosen the easy way. In a resigned coda, accepting defeat, he claims to give up rhetorical activities (παύσομαι τῇ Ῥητορικῇ ἐπιπολάζων, […] μᾶλλον δὲ ἡδὴ πέπαυμαι). He categorically distinguishes himself – as the follower of the old, commonly accepted (συνήθη, 3.7), authentic rhetorical school – from the exponents of the opposite, meritless school, among whom he suggests his addressee might soon be (μὴ τῷ τάχει ἡμῶν κεκρατήκατε ὥκυτεροι φανέντες, ἀλλὰ τῷ ῥάστην καὶ πρανῆ τραπέσθαι τὴν ὀδόν, 26).

The despondent rhetorician’s discourse is marked by paradoxology: when he promises an easy access to paideia and its social rewards, the speaker contradicts the general doxa and his own intimate beliefs on the matter. Yet he advocates the easy way to rhetoric only to deliberately undermine his own argument, thus only pretending to make the weaker argument the stronger.

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571 Cf. Luc. Bis acc. 27-29.
572 Luc. Rhet. praec. 7.15-8.1.
His purpose in simulating these contradictions is to expose the easy way as – although alluring – wrong: it leads to pseudo-*paideia*, its advocates and followers are pseudo-*pepaideumenoi*, and their social rewards are general contempt and the worthless awe of a few foolish admirers.

The speaker articulates his discourse by means of other paradoxes, the most important of which is the physical impossibility of the easy road. Rhetoric is constantly represented as standing on high, thus requiring an upward effort to reach it.\(^573\) The difficult path is always presented as going uphill (ἀνάντη, 3.8; ἀνάντης, 8.3). The easy road, however, is paradoxically characterized as either level and straight (ὅμαλή οὐσα καὶ ἀγκύλων οὐδὲν ἔχουσα, 8.6-7), or going downwards (κατάντη, 3.12; πρανῆ, 26.18), therefore unable to ever reach a summit. Moreover, the idea of height ironically receives a negative connotation in context. The effeminate guide of the easy way, an illustration of the inappropriate rhetor, advises his disciple to fabricate an highly authoritative language master (τὴν φωνὴν εἰς τὸ ἀκρότατον ἀπηκριβωμένος, 17.18-19) to support his exposed solecisms. He also describes himself as the supreme height of impropriety (τὸ ἀκρότατον ἐν πάση κακίᾳ, 25.12). The paradox of the downhill-uphill road exposes, therefore, the perverted notion of height/value from the perspective of pseudo-*paideia*, in discrepancy with the general opinion.

There are also numerous inconsistencies concerning the framed speech, in which the effeminate guide of the short and easy path lays down his advice for the aspirant rhetor. His self-presentation is ironically introduced by the despondent rhetorician, the main speaker, as modest (μετριάζων ύπέρ ἐαυτοῦ). Yet the effeminate rhetor presents himself as a marvelous rhetorician (διαιμόνιον ἄνδρα), a *paradoxon* whose fame (κλέος) is spread by his astonished, enthralled audience (ὕπερεκπεπληγμένων τὰ ἡμετέρα καὶ ύμνούντων καὶ τεθηπότων καί

\(^573\) τῇ ἀκρα, 3.15; τῆς ἀκρας, 6.24; ἐπὶ τὸ ἀκρότατον ἀναβήσῃ, 8.16-17; τῷ ἀκρῷ, 24.14; ἀνίων, 3.14; ἀναβαίνειν, 10.18; ἀνάγειν, 10.19; τῷ ὃρει, 7.2; τοῦ ὑψηλοῦ, 3.17; ἐφ’ ὑψηλοῦ, 6.9.
ὑπεπτηχότων). He emphasizes the marvelous dimension of his rhetoric through the comparison with gigantic monsters – themselves examples of mythological paradoxa – to which he is still superior (άλλ' εἰ τις ἤ Τιτυὸς ἢ Ὡτος ἢ Ἐφιάλτης, ύπέρ ἕκεινους πολὺ τὸ πράγμα ύπερφυές καὶ τεράστιον, 13). This obvious inconsistency between the two levels of discourse – the frame and the framed – unveils the irony of the main speaker whose paradox of recommending the short and easy way to paideia is thus deliberately self-undermining.

The effeminate guide’s prescriptions are all in shocking contradiction to the general doxa and its expression in a long literary tradition: rhetoric/paideia can be attained without great effort and in no time; it does not require thorough education and study of the past and the established canons; its essential forms of expression are effeminacy, debauchery, ignorance, insolence, and pretense. This accumulation of ridiculous paradoxes exposes the effeminate guide’s false claim to paideia, even more so when he describes his paideutic journey and its social rewards. They strongly contradict the common doxa expressed by the despondent rhetorician.

Rhetoric is a high and rewarding achievement, represented as a beautiful bride with a seducing dowry (6). The effeminate rhetor, on the other hand, starts his social ascent through a relationship with an old erastes that barely ensures his survival. He soon discovers the easy path to rhetoric and then takes a rich septuagenarian woman as his lover (24). His association with rhetoric, therefore, begins not as the celebrated longed union with a lovely bride, but coincides with a sordid affair with an old woman, under the false pretence of love (ἔρην προσποιούμενος). Both the affair and his hopes for the woman’s inheritance end when a slave discovers his plot to poison her (24-25), a bleak alternative to the generous dowry of the beautiful Rhetoric-bride, that by law belongs to the rhetor-groom (νόμῳ γὰρ ἄπαντα γίγνεται τοῦ γεγαμηκότος, 6.26-7.1).
The implications of his ascent are, however, more complex. The social rewards of rhetoric and *paideia* are fame, wealth, and social status: σκόπει γοῦν ὑπόσοι τέως μηδὲν ὄντες ἐνδοξοὶ καὶ πλούσιοι καὶ νῆ Δία εὐγενέστατοι ἐδοξαν ἀπὸ τῶν λόγων (2.4-3.1). The effeminate rhetor apparently enjoys all of them. However, his reputation turns out to be that of a vicious person. He acquires wealth not by acting as a rhetor, but by refusing to act as one, betraying his clients. His social advance essentially translates a different form of ignobility: he renounces his old name Ποθεινός (*the desired, the lover*, 24) – an allusion to his *eromenos* status as a boy and to his physical attractiveness – and the practice of selling his body only to sell his words and become the object of general contempt and hatred (25). Moreover, the effeminate rhetor does not owe the little social success he claims in the end to *paideia*, as he does not prevail in court through dicanic speeches. His audience is allegedly enthralled with him as with a *paradoxon* (13). Yet he later portrays his clients – his few admirers in judicial context – as ἁνόητοι (*foolish people*), not *pepaideumenoi* (25.5). We have already seen, in the previous chapter, how Lucian distinguishes between the reception of *paradoxa* by élite and non-élite. The *pepaideumenoi* exercise an educated judgment and experience an aesthetic emotion in their reception of extraordinary *paideia*. The non-élite not only lack the tools for a proper assessment of *paideia*, but also, in their superficial and distorted judgment, display exaggerated emotions. Thus, the effeminate rhetor exposes himself through self-contradictions as a pseudo-*pepaideumenos* rewarded by a pseudo-élite. His social rewards for pseudo-*paideia*, hatred and scorn, represent in fact a social defeat. However, he paradoxically celebrates them as “a great

574 His new name involves the association with the divine; he also calls himself δαμόνιος (13.9). The allusion to the Dioscuri (τοῖς Δίος καὶ Λήδας παιοῖν ὀμώνυμος γεγένησα, 24.18) and his Egyptian ethnicity have been considered clues that in this rhetor Lucian satirizes Iulius Pollux of Naucratis, appointed to the chair of rhetoric in Athens by the emperor Commodus; cf. Philostr. *VS* 592.12-593.35; 594.28. See Hall 1981, 273-278 on the issue of the rhetor’s identity. Cf. Gleason 1995, 129-130 for the character’s resemblance to Favorinus.

accomplishment”. His words (the litotes οὐ μικρόν, 25.13) echo the despondent rhetorician’s representation of the goal of becoming an accomplished rhetor (οὐ σμικρόν, 2.1). The paradox of extolling one’s own infamy and equating it with the sacred dignity of the authentic rhetor (τὸ σεμινότατον τοῦτο καὶ πάντιμον ὄνομα, 1.2) emphasizes the incongruity between two different conceptions of paideia and its pursuit.

The motif of the shortcut to fame recurs in Lucian’s early prolalii. Yet here it receives a completely different treatment, thus deceiving the expectation of a familiar audience. The speaker advocates it while, at the same time, he exposes its failure. The easy path is the shortcut to an appearance of paideia that cuts off the entire process of learning and acquiring techne.

Those who engage in this practice earn fame and money not through their rhetorical skills, but through faking them, i.e. choosing the short and easy path. Thus, bypassing the masses to ingratiate oneself with the élite – a strategy to which Lucian confesses in the prolalii – turns here into bypassing the strenuous paideutic effort and ingratiating oneself with the uneducated masses – a strategy that the despondent rhetorician claims to advocate, yet challenges through paradoxology.

The story of the Sidonian is paradigmatic of the despondent rhetorician’s paradoxological discourse. He claims the reality of a paradoxon (τὸ παράδοξον, καὶ εἶχεν οὕτω, 5), yet vehemently refutes the common doxa that toils are the vehicle to paideia, denying therefore an

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576 The form σμικρός, which MacLeod (Luciani Opera, Oxford 1972) prints in 2.1, in the speech of the despondent rhetor, is more dignified, being preferred to μικρός in Herodotus, tragedy, and Plato (LSJ sv μικρός). Older editions, including Iacobitz (Lucianus, ex recensione Caroli Iacobitz, Lipsiae, 1836-1841), following A and B, print μικρός also in 2.1.
577 Luc. Harm., Herod., Scyth.
578 Cf. ῥήτωρ δοκῶ (Luc. Rhet. praec. 25).
580 Luc. Rhet. praec. 25.
axiomatic truth and its long literary tradition (οὐκ ἐξεν οὖτως, 8). This is a form of the sophist’s paradox; in fact, the first term used for ‘rhetor’ in this text is σοφιστής, not ῥήτωρ (1.3). In his promise of an easy and quick acquisition of paideia the despondent rhetorician pretends to make the weaker argument the stronger. Yet in the process he only exposes its weaknesses by emphasizing its paradoxical nature (illustrated through the Sidonian’s paradoxon) and by distancing himself from it. He describes the short path not in his own words, but through the framed speech of the effeminate rhetor, which he deliberately sets in a paradoxological context and destines for persuasive failure.

Lucian uses the motif of the shortcut to fame in the discourse of the despondent rhetorician to create expectations that are soon betrayed, to build an argument through its opposite. The speaker – this time in accordance with the orthodox opinion – promises that his disciple will become a good rhetor as quickly as possible (ὡς τάχιστα), if only the young man observes his advice with great effort and devotion (ἡν τὸ μετὰ τοῦτο ἐθελήσῃ αὐτὸς ἐμένειν οἷς ἀν ἀκουσίς παρ’ ἡμῶν καὶ φιλοπόνοις αὐτὰ μελετῶν καὶ προθύμως ἀνύειν τὴν ὁδόν, 1.16-19). The adverbial phrase ὡς τάχιστα has here a qualified meaning, as soon as possible (understood given the difficulty of the task). Elsewhere in the text, however, superlative forms of ταχύς are associated with the idea of shortcut. Thus, the use of ὡς τάχιστα at the beginning (2.1) is misleading. It only taps into the audience’s familiarity with the recurrence of the shortcut motif in Lucian’s earlier work and into its further development in this text (i.e. the discourse of the effeminate guide of the easy path) to build false expectations both for the external and the internal audience (i.e. the silent disciple). This use falsely intimates that the

581 On the possibility of a shorter yet not necessarily quicker road from Syria to Egypt see Harmon’s footnote in the Loeb edition, vol. 4, 140-141; cf. Plin. HN 6.144.
582 τὸ μὲν οὖν θῆραμα οὐ σιμφόρων, 2.1.
583 τάχιστα, 8.16, 10.14; ὡς τάχιστα, 15.3; τὴν ταχίστην ὁδόν, 4.9; cf. ἐπιτομωτάτην ὁδόν, 3.11.
micro-text truly recommends the shortcut to (pseudo-)paideia and, at the same time, deceptively promises an easy acquisition to the meaning of both micro- and macro-text.

From the very beginning, the speaker/despondent rhetorician hints at the intricacy of his discourse. He defines for his disciple a good rhetor as a man marvelously capable of understanding what needs to be said and of expressing it appropriately (δείνως ἀνήρ ἔσῃ γνώναι τε τὰ δέοντα καὶ ἑρμηνεύσαι αὑτά, 1.15-16). The verb ἑρμηνεύω, however, does not refer just to the rhetor’s ability.⁵⁸⁴ It also invites the disciple to a hermeneutic exercise in understanding what is needed (γνώναι τὰ δέοντα), to an interpretation (ἑρμηνεύσαι) that unveils the text beneath the text.⁵⁸⁵ The invitation to hermeneutics extends not just to the micro-text, i.e. the discourse of the despondent rhetorician, but also to the macro-text, i.e. Lucian’s discourse. Through paradoxology, the author sustains and at the same time undermines his speaker’s discourse, creating two different lines of thought, two different levels of the text.

The speaker puts distance between himself and his own argument, put in the mouth of the effeminate rhetor. He undercuts this inserted speech and thus challenges his own fake argument in an attempt to prove the opposite (i.e. there is no easy way to paideia and its rewards). The micro-text supports, therefore, the opposite of its message. Lucian, likewise, distances himself from the micro-text by creating the speaking persona of the despondent rhetorician. At the level of the micro-text, he supports his speaker’s discourse against counterfeit paideia and thus confirms the general doxa. Yet, at the same time, in the macro-text, he undercuts the same discourse through contextual insinuation and subversive paradoxology. The author manipulates and challenges the despondent rhetorician’s discourse to convey another message. The latent authorial biography undermines the authority of the speaker, the voice of the micro-text. The

⁵⁸⁴ Cf. Luc. Rhet. praec. 17.12; LSJ s.v. ἑρμηνεύω II.2.
⁵⁸⁵ LSJ s.v. ἑρμηνεύω Α.
despondent rhetorician refutes the claim to *paideia* made by the effeminate and foreign (Egyptian) rhetor. Lucian introduces this particular detail and insinuates his own foreign (Syrian) ethnicity into the text to now dispute another common *doxa* represented by the speaker: the artificial claim to *paideia* and its rewards by virtue of Greek ethnicity.

The subversive argument of the author in the macro-text stems from the paradox of the authority of the framed speech attributed to the effeminate/foreign rhetor (13-25). The despondent rhetorician claims, with a twisted touch of Socratic irony, that he is unable to play well the role of the effeminate Egyptian rhetor, the guide of the easy path (φαύλον ὑποκριτήν, 12.3). Therefore – “lest I trip and hurt the hero whose role I play” (μὴ καὶ συντρίψω που πεσών τόν ἥρωα δν υποκρίνομαι, 12.4-5) – he pretends to allow the foreign rhetor to speak for himself, as if he were physically present (μᾶλλον δὲ αὐτὸς εἰπάτω πρὸς σέ, 12.1). However, he carelessly introduces this framed speech as probable, thus fictitious (φαίη ἀν, 12.6). The framed speech is, therefore, just a prolongation of the frame speech and the despondent rhetorician is, in fact, the author and performer of both. The term ὑποκριτής refers here both to the rhetorical performer and the stage performer wearing a mask.\(^{586}\) The despondent rhetorician plays the role of the defender of traditional *paideia* and speaks on its behalf in a paradoxical way. His performance is, however, flawed by other paradoxes. His discourse becomes – beyond his control, by the agency of the author – a defense of self-complacent Greeks and their ethnically biased misconstruction of *paideia*. His deceitful claim to have true authority to deliver accurately the speech attributed to the foreign rhetor reveals his entire discourse as a possible misrepresentation of the foreigner’s position and thus vulnerable to refutation.

\(^{586}\) See LSJ s.v. ὑποκριτής.
The despondent rhetorician equates *paideia* with social rewards: rhetoric makes its practitioners ἔνδοξοι, πλούσιοι, εὐγενέστατοι (2.5). He claims to be a true *pepaideumenos* as the follower of the difficult and authentic educational system that leads to *paideia*, while the Egyptian rhetor is a pseudo-*pepaideumenos* who chose the easy way and simulates *paideia*. However, these premises lead to a paradoxical conclusion: the foreigner’s *apaideusia* appears to have granted him and other pseudo-*pepaideumenoi* walking the easy path underserved social rewards (8.11-13), while the despondent rhetorician’s *paideia* renders him ἀγεννης καὶ δειλὸς, both adjectives implying low social status (26.12).\(^{587}\) Acknowledging social failure, the despondent rhetorician claims to renounce rhetoric (ἐγὼ δὲ – ἀγεννης γὰρ καὶ δειλὸς εἰμι – ἐκστῆσομαι τῆς οδοῦ ύμῖν καὶ παύσομαι τῇ Ῥητορικῇ ἐπιπολάζων, 26.11-13). On the other hand, he inconsistently presents the foreign rhetor’s success as both social failure and great accomplishment. He paradoxically equates, therefore, the acquisition of *paideia* with social condemnation (οὐ σμικρόν, 2.1; οὐ μικρόν, 25.13). This paradox exposes his manipulation of the foreign rhetor’s fictitious speech, now revealed as a bitter mockery, a mean distortion of a foreigner’s cultural position by a socially unsuccessful and presumably native rhetor. The Egyptian rhetor’s paradoxical encomium of the hatred he has caused is inconsistent with a rhetor’s aspirations for social prominence. It is also set in utter contradiction to the despondent rhetorician’s disappointment for not receiving similar, allegedly more deserved, social reward. Matching his own ideal accomplishment with that of the foreign rhetor, the despondent rhetorician’s slip of the tongue (οὐ σμικρόν – οὐ μικρόν) exposes his ridicule of the foreigner’s paideutic and social behavior as the expression of a sour rivalry. On these paradoxes Lucian

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articulates in the macro-text a refutation of the despondent rhetorician’s ethnic prejudice in judging *paideia*.

The macro-text exploits the speaker’s manipulation of the polarity *paideia-apaideusia* as the expression of the polarity Greek-foreigner/barbarian, a *doxa* that Lucian the Syrian challenges in the macro-text. The Egyptian rhetor’s career reenacts, in a reverse order, that of the Syrian rhetor – whose image summons a conspicuous resemblance to Lucian himself – in *The Double Indictment* (25-35). There, Rhetoric appears as a mature woman who finds the young Syrian, having still a foreign accent (βάρβαρον ἔτι τὴν φωνήν) and an attire that distinguishes his ethnicity, struggling in Ionia. She educates him (ἐπαιδεύσα), marries him, makes him a fellow citizen, and helps him become famous and rich (*Bis acc. 27*). The Syrian, bestowed with her generous dowry of marvelous speeches (πολλοὺς καὶ θαυμασίους λόγους), abandons her for an old *erastes*, *Philosophical Dialogue* (*Bis acc. 27-28*), whom he, in turn, models into comic dialogue and rejuvenates (*Bis acc. 34*). Both Rhetoric and Dialogue take legal action against the Syrian for mistreatment; however, the judges absolve him of any wrongdoing. In *The Double Indictment*, *paideia* represents grounds for a Greek cultural identity, in spite of a foreign ethnicity. However, Greek traditional *paideia* (represented by rhetoric and philosophical dialogue) is outraged at the Syrian’s attempt to remodel it and innovate. While his Greek status, once established, cannot be revoked, as the jury’s verdict shows, the stigma of his ethnicity still endures, expressed in the charge of novelty and betrayal.

In *The Rhetorician*, on the other hand, the Egyptian rhetor’s paideutic/amorous career follows a more regular path, from the boy’s homosexual relationship to the young man’s affair with a more mature woman. Spiritual nourishment is sarcastically reduced to mere physical nourishment (ἐπὶ ψιλῶ τῶ τρέφεσθαι, 24.11; ἐγαστριζόμην, 24.20; ὁ λιμός, 24.25). While the

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Syrian renounces Rhetoric on account of her debauchery (*Bis acc.* 31), the Egyptian is thrown out, accused of attempting to poison his mistress (*Rhet. praec.* 25). Yet he does not lose his already achieved status either, although it is disparagingly reduced to a form of material subsistence (ὁμως οὐδὲ τότε ἤπόρησα τῶν ἀναγκαίων, ἀλλὰ καὶ ρήτωρ δωκὼ..., 25.2-3). In the end, the despondent rhetorician contemptuously fakes the Egyptian rhetor’s speech and then claims to renounce Rhetoric for cultivating such men, i.e. foreigners. However, his separation from Rhetoric is not similar to that of the Syrian rhetor/Lucian in *The Double Indictment*. His matches rather that of the rhetors/suitors who are there offended because Rhetoric overlooks them, in spite of their wealth and good ancestry (πλούσιοι καὶ καλοὶ καὶ λαμπροὶ τὰ προγονικά), and cultivates instead her relationship with a poor and obscure barbarian (πένητι καὶ ἀφανεῖ, *Bis acc.* 27). The despondent rhetorician, therefore, renounces Rhetoric because, in his view, her association with foreigners – here an Egyptian (*Rhet. praec.* 24.8) – corrupts her, a decadence that he vividly expresses in most sordid terms. His abandonment of Rhetoric translates his own cultural failure in accepting the foreign element and the novelty it brings. This renunciation is a form of *aporia* and is articulated on the paradox of the representation of Rhetoric.

The Egyptian rhetor, unlike the Syrian in *The Double Indictment*, is here deliberately and paradoxically set in a context of absolute failure. Rhetoric is not his lawful wife, but his mistress, not a charming maiden, but a repulsive septuagenarian “out of a comedy” (γραύν τινα τῶν κωμικῶν, 26), and her gifts to the foreign rhetor are reduced from fame and wealth to mere victuals. However, the despondent rhetorician describes Rhetoric, earlier in the text, as a lovely maiden waiting for her suitors on a summit (6). He then foresees for his silent disciple, who – he seems to assume – will choose the easy path, if he had not chosen it already, a rhetorical career
crowned by authentic social rewards, in strong contrast with the vilified Egyptian rhetor, the
guide of the path himself. The aspirant rhetor choosing the easy way will thus be successful in
court (ἐν τε τοῖς δικαστηρίοις κρατεῖν), loved and admired by all (ἐν τοῖς πλῆθεσιν εὐδοκιμεῖν
καὶ ἐπέραστον εἶναι), and will lawfully marry most lovely Rhetoric (γαμεῖν οὐ γραῦν τινα
τῶν κωμικῶν, καθάπερ ὁ νομοθέτης καὶ διδάσκαλος, ἀλλὰ καλλίστην γυναῖκα τὴν
Ῥητορικήν, 26).\textsuperscript{589} This paradox highlights the distorting perspective of the despondent
rhetorician that degrades the foreign rhetor’s relationship with \textit{paideia} and the audience. It
originates in the speaker’s self-contradiction and it undermines his misrepresentation of the
foreign rhetor’s paideutic and social failure. The Egyptian rhetor, unlike the Syrian in \textit{The
Double Indictment}, is never given the right to speak for himself. His is not an apologetic speech,
but the accusation itself, twisted by his rival into a paradoxical encomium of \textit{apaideusia}.

The polarity Greek-barbarian translated as \textit{paideia-apaideusia} is articulated on other
derivative polarities: manly-effeminate, past-present, and \textit{nomos-anomia}. The equation of the
tension between Greek and barbarian and these polarities is the target of the author’s refutation
in the macro-text. The guide of the rough path is a sturdy, manly figure, replicating the features
of the road itself and suited for the toil of walking to the summit of \textit{paideia}.\textsuperscript{590} The guide of the
easy path is effeminate and delicate, not suited for a toilsome uphill journey and choosing an
effortless path that leads downwards to \textit{apaideusia}, the opposite of \textit{paideia}. While the manly
guide teaches his followers the veneration of the tradition, thus of the past, the effeminate rhetor
recommends the ignorance of the past. Thus, the distinction between manly and effeminate is

\textsuperscript{589} Cf. Luc. \textit{Rhet. praec.} 8.16-18.
\textsuperscript{590} Gleason 1995, 127.
subsumed into the tension between past and present which Lucian manipulates into a refutation of the speaker, the despondent rhetorician, and his cultural values.\textsuperscript{591}

The strong, Heraclean guide of the difficult path shows his followers the faint footprints of great rhetors of old. This reminiscence of a Herodotean \textit{paradoxon}, the marvelous footprint of Heracles, derides the anachronic exhilaration over old rhetorical marvels, now expired \textit{paradoxa} that should have lost their astonishing effect.\textsuperscript{592} The exaggerated stress on the mimesis of such old models renders rhetoric, in the macro-text, obsolete and irrelevant.\textsuperscript{593} Past and present, tradition and innovation, old and new social practices and cultural trends are different expressions of the polarity Greek/\textit{paideia} – barbarian/\textit{apaideusia}. For the despondent rhetorician, \textit{paideia} seems now to lose social ground in a culture that rewards pseudo-\textit{paideia}, which he associates with foreign ethnicity. The rhetoric of Demosthenes and Aeschines was useful in the past, when Hellenism was threatened by the intrusion of the foreign (represented by Macedonia, 10.6-9). It carried great social rewards and the gratitude of a nation. In the present time, however, this old, venerable rhetoric is obsolete and its imitation irrelevant, since the historical circumstances are different. Foreign intrusion is no longer a threat, but already a fact. It carries with it – the despondent rhetorician seems to suggest – the decline of the Greek society and its grasp on \textit{paideia}. Greeks lose not only their privileged rights to \textit{paideia}, ultimately based on ethnicity, but also the social privileges associated with it. Through the pattern of contrasting past and present, therefore, Lucian addresses the issue of ethnicity and \textit{paideia}, criticizing exaggerated archaistic tendencies, as well as the exclusivist propensity of self-complacent Hellenism in its denial of the foreigner’s access to Greek \textit{paideia}. Both Demosthenes and

\begin{footnotes}
\item[591] Cf. Gleason 1995, 128-129.
\item[592] Hdt. 4.82. Cf. \textit{Mir.ausc.} 97.2.
\item[593] Bompaire 1958, 135.
\end{footnotes}
Aeschines overcame a low social status through *paideia* (9-10).\textsuperscript{594} An inherited low social status can be overcome through authentic or even pseudo-*paideia*, as the two classical examples and the case of the Egyptian rhetor show. Ethnicity, however, in the discourse of the despondent rhetorician, carries the stigma of pseudo-*paideia* and converts the Egyptian’s social rewards into social rejection. This argument can only be refuted by a Syrian from Samosata in Commagene, exposing the despondent rhetorician’s paradox of culturally dwelling in the past while refusing to negotiate the present in which he physically lives.

Finally, Lucian challenges his speaker’s ethnically biased discourse by exposing the paradox of its argument from *nomos*. The proper relationship between rhetor and rhetoric is sanctioned by νόμος (*custom, law, norm*), a concept imported to the argument through the allegory of γάμος (*wedding, marriage*).\textsuperscript{595} Rhetoric is represented as a bride and her suitors as hopeful grooms, whether they come to the union by walking the difficult or the easy path (6-8, 26). Yet, paradoxically, the relationship between Rhetoric and the Egyptian rhetor, the effeminate guide of the easy path, does not consist in a *gamos* and is not, therefore, sanctioned by *nomos*. Rhetorical practices are constantly referred as *nomoi* (*rules, authoritative usages*) endorsed by the authority of a master (νομοθέτης, νομοθέτεω).\textsuperscript{596} Traditional *paideia* and its transgression by the Syrian rhetor are also expressed in terms of *nomos* in *The Double Indictment*.\textsuperscript{597} In his fictitious speech, claiming rhetorical authority, the Egyptian rhetor invokes the concept of *nomos* (16) and the despondent rhetorician ironically calls him a rhetorical νομοθέτης (26).

\textsuperscript{594} Cf. Luc. Somn. 12.
\textsuperscript{595} Luc. Rhet. praec. 6.24-7.1, 8.17, 9.10, 9.15, 26.6.
\textsuperscript{596} Luc. Rhet. praec. 14.4, 16.2, 17.11, 26.4, 26.7; all instances refer to the Egyptian rhetor and the rhetorical practices he professes and prescribes to his followers.
\textsuperscript{597} Luc. Bis acc.: Rhetoric requires that the Syrian be punished according to the laws for her ill-treatment (ἐνοχος τοις της κακωσεως νομοις), 29.2; Dialogue conducts his accusation not through a dialogue, but through a speech, according to the customs (ως νομος εν τοις δικαστηριοις, ουτο τοις νομοσομαι την κατηγοριαν), 33.7; the Syrian denies his transgression (παρανομοιω) against the Greekness of Dialogue, 34.38.
However, the despondent rhetorician contradicts himself, paradoxically invalidating the Egyptian rhetor’s share in *nomos*, although he grants it to other alleged followers of the easy path. He thus suggests that the Egyptian rhetor, who does not become Rhetoric’s bridegroom and who plans the ultimate transgression against her (φάρμακον, 25), does not engage Rhetoric and *paideia* in a legitimate, traditional manner. He is not her lawful bridegroom, but her paideutic adulterer. His transgression of *nomos*, of tradition, is tied to his foreign ethnicity, as in the case of the Syrian rhetor in *The Double Indictment*. While the Syrian successfully fights the accusation, connected to his barbarian ethnicity, of having de-Hellenized Dialogue (*Bis acc.* 34), the Egyptian rhetor remains, in as much as he is mute (his is a fictitious speech), undefended of the charge of adulterating Greek traditional *paideia* with the magical *pharmakon* of his Egyptian pseudo-*paideia*.

The despondent rhetorician seems to have become one of the bridegrooms whom, however noble, Rhetoric rejects in *The Double Indictment* – the expression of a new cultural trend. He invokes, therefore, the concept of *nomos* in an attempt to restore the monopoly of *paideia* on behalf of the Greeks, the rights of those suitors who arrive too late, not because they walk the difficult path, but because they walk slowly with an eye to the past and, considering *paideia* their birthright, sense no competition, thus no rush towards the *gamos*. Perceiving the foreigner’s ascent to usurp the privileges of the Greeks, the despondent rhetorician translates foreign ethnicity as *apaideusia* and its novelty as a defeat of tradition. Acknowledging thus his own defeat he claims an aporetic renunciation of rhetoric, a paideutic regress and, therefore, a regress from Hellenism. Through this abandonment, he paradoxically exposes himself to another failure, to the risk of becoming less Greek than a *pepaideumenos* of foreign ethnicity.

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598 Luc. *Bis acc.* 27.
His biased misrepresentation of the foreigner as a pseudo-\textit{pepaideumenos} translates an ethnical distinction that Lucian exposes as the expression of the self-complacent Greek’s reliance on ethnicity to arrogate \textit{paideia}.\footnote{Cf. Favorin. \textit{Corinth}. 95.27 Barigazzi (= Ps.-Dio Chrys. \textit{Or.} 37.27) for an open claim that \textit{paideia} has equal claim to Greekness as birth; Bowie 1991, 202-203; Saïd 2001, 288-294; Whitmarsh 2001, 129-130; Goldhill 2002, 77-78.}

Thus, Lucian uses paradoxological discourse to underline the cultural tension between Greek and barbarian, between birthright as a form of \textit{nomos} and paideutic conquest perceived as a form of usurpation. In his paradoxological construction of identity, he attempts to negotiate this tension, on the one hand by confirming the common \textit{doxa} regarding the high requirements of \textit{paideia}, on the other hand by rejecting the common \textit{doxa} concerning the paideutic monopoly of the Greeks by virtue of ethnicity. He paradoxically builds one argument, that of the micro-text, on its opposite: the despondent rhetorician advocates the difficult path and authentic \textit{paideia} by advocating the easy path and pseudo-\textit{paideia} and then by undermining this advocacy, exposing and exploiting its own paradoxes. The argument of the macro-text is based on twisting the argument of the micro-text into an unexpected one: the advocacy of the Greeks’ monopoly of \textit{paideia} against the foreigner’s misappropriation of Hellenism. Lucian similarly challenges his speaker’s argument by exposing and exploiting his paradoxes and admission to \textit{aporia}. While identity, as an extremely complex notion, remains unresolved and elusive, Lucian attempts to outline its complexity by contrasting various perspectives and creating a text that is what is and, at the same time, paradoxically, what is not.
3.2. The Ignorant Book Collector

The Ignorant Book Collector opens with an ominous statement: “what you are doing is really the opposite of what you mean to do” (καὶ μὴν ἐναντίον οὖ ἐθέλεις ὁ νῦν ποιεῖς, 1.1). This paradoxical enunciation highlights the discrepancy between expectation and surprise, intimate thought and public act, essence and appearance. The paradox of this initial statement hints at the duplicity of the text itself, which is both what is and what is not. This paradox is paradigmatic for the pseudo-pepaideumenos in defining his relationship with paideia and for the discursive modes of both the speaker in the micro-text and the author in the macro-text. First, it exposes the book-collector’s misconstruction of paideia that sets him in a cultural position opposite to his own intention. Second, it illustrates the paradoxological discourse of the micro-text, through which the speaker conducts a deceitful elenchus to bemuse the book-collector, his silent interlocutor. Third, it intimates the author’s subtle insinuation within the text to expose the speaker’s own, ethnically biased, misconstruction of paideia and thus to construct the text as both what is and what is not.

The speaker lampoons a rich and depraved Syrian who collects books as his own way of performing paideia. The collector wishes to be counted among cultural élite (οἴει μὲν γὰρ ἐν παιδείᾳ αὐτὸς εἶναι τις δόξειν) and seeks to accomplish this goal by eagerly buying books (σπουδὴ συνωστούμενος τὰ κάλλιστα τῶν βιβλίων). His primary paradox stems from his failure to recognize the distinction between essence and appearance, specifically between intellectual acquisition and physical ownership, between possession of books and possession of paideia. This confusion of values, of essence and appearance, finds expression not only in his acquisition of books as surrogate for paideia, but also in his propensity for purchasing physically

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splendid tomes, not splendid critical editions (1-2). It is illustrated by the absurdity (γελοῖον) of the amputee who buys fine and fashionable footwear for his wooden feet (6). This paradox leads to another since, consequently, the result of the book-collector’s effort is the opposite of his own expectations (ἐναντίον οὗ ἔθελεῖς): instead of *pepaideumenos* he is proved *apaideutos* (ἔλεγχος γίγνεται τῆς ἀπαίδευσίας πῶς τούτο, 1). In his erroneous pursuit of *paideia* through possession of books, the book-collector cannot rely on his own knowledge, but on that – still counterfeit – of untrustworthy advisors. Thus, he is unable to perform authentic *paideia*, an inadequacy that results in his indiscriminate acquisition of books and in his failure to derive any usefulness from his possessions, as an authentic *pepaideumenos* should (2, 28). This failure represents his third paradox, stemming from the confusion between possession and use/usefulness.

When confronted with his paradoxes – particularly the identification of *paideia* with books – the bibliomaniac becomes an aporetic figure. If someone should engage him in a conversation on the book he always carries around, he would be perplexed (ἀποροΐης) and ashamed for having nothing to say (μηδὲν ἔχουσι εἰπεῖν), besides the name of the author (18). Since he is not competent to perform *paideia*, the Syrian book-collector cannot interact with the élite. Hence, he paradoxically replaces socio-cultural connections with inanimate books (3-4). Moreover, his only entourage consists of people of low status, whom he also substitutes for the *pepaideumenoi*: parasites who simulate not only *paideia*, but also admiration for his pseudo-*paideia* (1, 20, 25), and slaves whom he purchases with a fervor that matches his sick passion (νόσος) for books (25).

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602 Cf. Luc. Adv. ind. 6, 8-17.
These paradoxes that characterize his inadequacies expose the Syrian bibliomaniac as a rather sad figure, a credulous and confounded fellow, victim of flattery and of his own ignorance, thus a subject of ridicule and, conceivably, of pity. However, towards the end of the text, the speaker becomes more aggressive and exposes the bibliomaniac as a veritable fraud, who deliberately attempts to deceive. The aporetic sad figure turns into a shrewd pretender, who clearly acknowledges his ignorance, yet consciously seeks to palliate and conceal it by dazzling with the large number of his books (σὺ δὲ οἷς θεραπεύσειν τὴν ἀπαίδευσίαν καὶ ἑπικαλύψειν τῇ δόξῃ ταύτη καὶ ἐκπλήξειν τῷ πλήθει τῶν βιβλίων, 29). His intentional deceit translates another paradox stemming from the incongruity between his intimate thoughts and his public actions. His ill intention becomes malice as he refuses to lend his books to the intellectual élite. The pepaideumenoi, although without financial resources to procure expensive tomes, would have the intellectual resources to ensure their proper cultural function (30). Therefore, the bibliomaniac cannot interact through paideia either with the élite or with the books, which he strips of their usefulness. He transfers his paradox to his books, whose existence becomes meaningless, since they miss the chance to perform their destined cultural function. Losing their essence as means of paideia, they become mere props in staging élite status.

The Syrian book-collector identifies possession of books with possession of paideia, a paradox that engenders others. His experience of paradox is defined in terms of aporia and unfulfilled expectations. Yet he also uses his paradox to perform a fallacy, to intentionally deceive and induce a false perception of his paideutic experience. The speaker exposes the book-collector’s misconstruction and misappropriation of paideia as well as the paradoxical validation.

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604 Luc. Adv. ind.: ἀποροίης, 18.8; ἐλπίζεις, 4.2; ἐλπίδος, 9.9; ἐλπίζοντα, 12.13; ἐλπίδα, 16.1; ἐλπίδας, 22.11, 24.2.
of his cultural misbehavior. Moreover, the speaker uses paradox himself as a discursive strategy to highlight the paradoxical condition of the pseudo-\textit{pepaideumenos}.

The speaker uses in his argumentation \textit{reductio ad absurdum} to prove the paradox of the bibliomaniac’s reasoning and cultural performance. Although the collector buys expensive books based solely on their appearance, the speaker paradoxically grants him the supposition that he may indeed acquire exquisite editions (ἵνα δὲ σοι δῷ αὐτὰ ἐκεῖνα κεκρικέναι, ὡσα ὁ Καλλίνος εἰς κάλλος, ἢ ὁ ἀοίδιμος Ἀττικός σὺν ἐπιμελείᾳ τῇ πάσῃ ἔγραψαν). This would imply that the book-collector both employs \textit{paideia} in his acquisitions and derives \textit{paideia} from them. Yet the reality is that he still cannot enjoy the internal beauty of his books more than a blind man the beauty of his darlings (2). This proves paradoxical the supposition that the Syrian is a \textit{pepaideumenos} improving himself through books. The lampooner pretends to follow further the paradoxical logic of the book-collector only to expose it and prove its failure. Thus, assuming, again, that collecting books can substitute for real association with the élite, he encourages the bibliomaniac to keep buying great books of old, particularly precious manuscripts by the hand of Demosthenes himself or the tomes that once belonged to Aristotle.\footnote{Cf. Plut. \textit{Sull.} 26.} His relationship – however strangely intimate (he could sleep on them or wear them as garment) – with such exquisite tomes still cannot achieve anything in terms of \textit{paideia} (τί ἄν πλέον ἐκ τούτου εἰς παideίαν κτείσαι);). Unless, based on the same false premise, the thesis that bookshelves are educated by their mere touching of tomes is admissible too – a paradox stemming from the contradiction of the obvious. Therefore, the book-collector’s expectation (ἐλπίζεις) is abruptly undercut even within his own argumentative discourse (4).
The paradoxology of the speaker’s discourse is predicated also on his double deliberate self-contradiction. He has just claimed that the book-collector, in his ignorance, does not buy such exquisite exemplars (1) and later will strongly advise him to stop buying books and focus on slaves (25). Then he contradicts himself once more, confounding even further his interlocutor, whom he encourages yet again to continue acquiring books (ὡνοὺ μὲν βιβλία), but to keep them locked at home (οἴκοι κατακλείσας ἔχε, 28). Thus, while criticizing the bibliomaniac’s manipulation of books contrary to their cultural function (30), he paradoxically urges him to do the same thing, playing with arguments and converting them into counter-arguments to construct a paradoxical argumentation that leads not the discursive voice but the interlocutor to aporia and exposes him to ridicule.

The paradoxology goes even further. Repeating the advice to stop purchasing books (τὸ μὴκέτι ὤνεῖσθαι βιβλία), the speaker candidly exposes his own discursive strategy to mock the book-collector:

You are adequately learned; you have plenty of erudition; you have all the old masterworks almost on the tip of your tongue. You master all history, all the skills of discourse, as well as its stylistic virtues and vices, and the proper use of Attic vocabulary. By possessing so many books, you have become exceptionally wise, a great pepaideumenos. See? Why should I not deceive you too, since you enjoy so much the deceit of your flatterers?

ικανῶς πεπαιδευσαί, ἀλίς σοι τῆς σοφίας, μόνον οὐκ ἐπ’ ἄκρον τοῦ χείλους ἔχεις τὰ παλαιὰ πάντα. πᾶσαν μὲν ἱστορίαν οἶθα, πᾶσας δὲ λόγων τέχνας καὶ κάλλη αὐτῶν καὶ κακίας καὶ όνομάτων χρήσιν τῶν Ἀττικῶν: πάνωσοφὸν τι χρῆμα καὶ ἄκρον ἐν παιδείᾳ γεγένησαι διὰ τὸ πλῆθος τῶν βιβλίων. κωλύει γὰρ οὐδὲν κάμε σοι ἐνδιατρίβειν, ἑπειδὴ χαίρεις ἔξασπατώμενος (26.2-10).
Thus, the speaker paradoxically reveals his intentional manipulation of discourse and deceitful discursive techniques to expose the collector’s mishandling of books and misconstruction of *paideia*. This final bluntness, opposed to the flatterers’ pretense and even to the collector’s presumably deliberate concealment of *apaideusia* through books (29), is, however, not the expression of the speaker’s good intent, which would set him in contrast with the others’ ill intention. Claiming honesty in affirming intentional dishonesty – a variant of the liar’s paradox – is only part of the disconcerting discourse based on recurring self-contradiction and paradoxical statements, an expression of the speaker’s strategy to enhance the paradoxical stance and aporetic experience of the ignorant book-collector.

Moreover, the speaker’s deceitful claim to engage the book-collector in dialogic argumentation is another form of paradoxology. The speaker stages a paradoxical elenchus in which he reduces his interlocutor to absolute silence, both physical and mental. He demands the bibliomaniac to answer his questions not by uttering words, but only by nodding either agreement or disagreement (ἐπίνευσον γοῦν ἢ ἀνάνευσον πρὸς τὰ ἔρωτώμενα). Yet later he induces him to exclusively nod assent (πείθου δὴ καὶ τοῦτο μοι ἐπίνευσον, τί ὁκνεῖς καὶ τούτο ἐπινεῦσιν;), thus denying him any freedom of dialectical interaction. The speaker is once again deceitful as he encourages the book-collector to trust him, although the purpose of his discourse is not to help, but only to betray absurd expectations and claims and to deride them. Furthermore, the speaker manipulates the elenchus by arrogating the authority to translate in words the silence of his pseudo-interlocutor (ἐὖ γε ἀνένευσας, ἀνένευσας καὶ τούτο, 5).

Lucian the author subtly distances himself here from the persona of the speaker, whose manipulation of the dialogue into a false elenchus, in fact a self-assertive monologue, he

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606 Johnson forthcoming, 201: “mock-elenchus”.

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The speaker presents himself as a deceiver; therefore, his strategy for refuting the book-collector’s claim to paideia becomes also a form of self-refutation through self-undermining. The author’s message in the macro-text is more subtle than the obvious and redundant rebuttal in the micro-text of the idea that possession of books equals possession of paideia. Lucian exposes in the macro-text the inadequacy of the self-complacent Greeks’ arrogation of paideia as a birthright, by virtue of ethnicity, and their denial of the Hellenized foreigners’ paideutic conquest. He dismantles the speaker’s argument of translating the polarity Greek-barbarian as paideia-apaideusia by exposing the fallacy of the other polarities on which this is based: physis-nomos, purity-pollution, logos-silence.

The lampoon of the book-collector’s ignorance is recurrently predicated on arguments from physis. The speaker compares him with animals – monkey (4), donkey (4), dog (5, 30), fish (16) –, with physically disabled – blind (2, 19), bald (19), deaf-mute (19), an amputee (6), a eunuch (19) –, with ugly or deformed men – Pyrrhus (21-22) and Thersites (7), set in opposition with handsome and vigorous Alexander and Achilles –, and generally with people who attempt to perform a certain techne without matheia, without having tamed nature with nurture (5-6, 8-19). In this cultural context, physis stands not only for a crude, uncultured nature, but also for barbarian ethnicity in the dichotomy between the primitive barbarian and the sophisticated Greek. Yet, while physis, as the expression of lack of paideutic experience, can be tamed into a form of nomos through paideia, ethnicity however – the speaker implies – cannot overcome its paideutic inferiority – an inconsistency highlighted in the macro-text.608

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607 Richter defines the text as “a parody of a diatribe whose object is the Greek, cultural chauvinism of the speaker” (Daniel Richter, Lucian’s Learned Barbaros: Parodying Diatribe in the Adversus Indoctum, 1999 APA Annual Meeting, Dallas, TX; see abstract at http://www.apaclassics.org/AnnualMeeting/99mtg/abstracts/RICHTER.html). Johnson forthcoming, 196-209 (esp.196-199, 204, 209) develops this idea even further, interpreting the representation of the speaking persona as a subtle mockery of “scholarly self-aggrandizement” (199). Cf. Hall 1981, 38 and Anderson 1982, 86, for the identification of the speaker with Lucian.

608 Cf. Luc. Rhet. praec. and the above discussion of this text.
Furthermore, the speaker claims that the Muses, who once appeared to Hesiod, a simple shepherd, would rather scourge the book-collector and forbid him to drink from the springs of Helicon, reserved to flocks and pure mouths of shepherds (ποιμένων στόμασι καθαροῖς πότιμα, 3). Just as in *The Rhetorician* (9-10), here too Lucian has his speaker claim that *paideia* can overcome low social status, yet not foreign ethnicity – even in spite of a high social status. The idea of pollution has usually moral implications, as the speaker defines *paideia* derived from books as “the ability to speak and act appropriately, by emulating the best examples and avoiding the worse” (λέγειν τε δύνασθαι καὶ πράττειν τὰ δέοντα ξῆλω τῶν ἀρίστων καὶ φυγῇ τῶν χειρόνων, 17.2-4). Yet, pollution has also a broader cultural implication, being here associated with ethnicity. The speaker invokes a Syrian deity to set the book-collector in contrast with pure Hesiod and his interaction with the Muses – the very source of Greek *paideia* (3). Yet, he repeatedly avoids an explicit discourse on the Syrian’s morality, both in this passage (ἔφες ἐν τῷ παρόντι τὸ μὴ σύμπαντα σαφῶς εἶπεῖν) and in the end (περὶ δὲ τῶν ἄλλων ὃσα κατάπτυστα καὶ ἐπονείδιστα ποιεῖς, αὖθις ἀκούσῃ πολλάκις, 30.8-10). Pollution, therefore, becomes here the strong expression for the foreign alteration of Greek *paideia*, of which the self-complacent Greek complains and which he perceives as hybristic. While he grants the possession of *paideia* to pure Greeks, he denies it to the book-collector, claiming that the Syrian cannot make any good use of his books, thus of *paideia* encapsulated in them. Thus, the Syrian can never overcome the stain of his ethnicity and become a *pepaideumenos*, i.e. a Greek, through culture/nurture/*paideia*.

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609 Hes. *Theog.* 22-34.
611 Probably Aphrodite-Astarte whose infamous cults on Mount Lebanon, at Aphaca and Baalbek-Heliopolis, are described in Euseb. *Const.* 3.55 and 3.58.
613 Cf. Luc. Rhet. praec. 25 and the discussion above; Bis acc. 34.
The silence imposed upon the Syrian is paradoxical in a cultural dialogue. The speaker uses it to rush freely and easily through his argumentation, in an improper pseudo-dialogic refutation of a mute interlocutor. Moreover, this silent partner, who is overtly denied any ability or authority to attain paideia, should consequently be unable to derive usefulness from this paradoxical elenchus, thus making it pointless. Lucian devises this silence as the ultimate refutation of the speaker himself, exposing the fallacy of his discourse and dialogic intention. Silence is a sign of apaideusia, as the book-collector is not able to engage a pepaideumenos in conversation (ἀποροίης καὶ μηδὲν ἔχοις εἰπεῖν, 18.8) and is branded as dumber than a fish (τῶν ἰχθύων ἄφωνότερος, 16.7-8)⁶¹⁴ Yet the Syrian’s compulsory muteness has also an ethnic connotation. The speaker claims that the book-collector has a barbarian accent (βαρβαρίζων, 7.26). Therefore, he imposes the barbarian’s silence, perceived by the self-complacent Greek as better than the corruption/pollution of the pure Attic diction.⁶¹⁵

As a culture of logos, paideia is the culture of Greek logos. Since the ethnic Syrian cannot shake off his barbarian accent, he is compelled to remain silent in this culture of logos, among the Greeks, in a society defined primarily by language as the emblem of ethnicity and cultural preeminence. Lucian suggests that he himself might have been censured, at least a couple of times, for some language blunders.⁶¹⁶ Thus, the Syrian is here not just the obvious illustration, in the micro-text, of an ignorant collector of books – who might have very well been Greek, yet is suggestively labeled as foreigner, particularly Syrian – who refuses to rise above his physical possessions and convert them into cultural possessions. He becomes also, in the

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⁶¹⁵ Cf. Luc. Adv. ind. 4.25-26 (βαρβάρους μὲν τὴν φωνὴν ὡσπερ σῶ). In The Dream, Sculpture, embodying barbarian paideia, speaks in the same manner (βαρβαρίζοσα) and is eventually reduced to a mute stone (Luc. Somn. 8.12, 14).⁶¹⁵
⁶¹⁶ Luc. Laps. and Pseudol.
macro-text, the image of the barbarian – perhaps Lucian himself? – who is denied the ability to rise above ethnic otherness and become (culturally) Greek.

The barbarian’s inability to become truly Greek is supported through a racially/ethnically charged *adynaton*: “I know that in vain I am telling you these things and, as the proverb says, I am trying to wash an Ethiopian white” (Ἀἰθίωσις σμήχειν ἐπιχειρῶ, 28.14). This vivid illustration not only implies the *adynaton* of culturally overcoming race/ethnicity, but also associates – through the use of the verb σμήχειν – ethnic/racial otherness with pollution and, consequently, with inferiority. It expresses, therefore, the resistance of the Greek to the resourceful barbarian, perceived as adulterator and usurper who buys his way into Hellenism and *paideia*.

The speaker, who avoids being too specific about the moral depravity of the Syrian, promises at the end of his tirade to develop his argument from morality in the future (30.9-10) – an obvious lie that undermines, retrospectively, the authority of his entire discourse. Since he makes morality an intrinsic component of *paideia* (17) and refutes the Syrian’s claim to *paideia* by virtue of his depravity, the argument from morality should have been fully developed here. Lucian devises this vain promise, similar to that in the end of *True Stories*, to intimate that the audience should exercise caution with respect to the text, as he composes it to be, at the same time, the opposite of what it is (1.1). This otherwise superfluous pledge, without which the micro-text could do perfectly well, becomes meaningful for the macro-text. It represents the author’s subversive insinuation into the text to undermine the authority of the internal speaker and to expose his mechanistic misconstruction of *paideia* in terms of an unresolved polarity Greek-barbarian.

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617 Plut. Ἐκλογή περὶ τῶν ἄδυνάτων, 7; Diogenian. *Paroem.* 1.19, 1.45; Zenob. *paroem.* 1.46.
618 Cf. Luc. *VH* 2.47.
Thus, the beginning of the text (καὶ μὴν ἐναντίον σοὶ ἔθελες δὲ νῦν ποιεῖς, 1.1) warns about a paradox hidden between the lines, implying that nothing is quite what seems to be. Then, the text leads a perplexed lector/auditor through a vigorous tirade, rich in paremiologic and anecdotic illustrations and in literary allusions. In the end, the lector/auditor faces a vain promise, his false expectation concerning the text, and the author’s complicit smile. The text starts with a warning against a straightforward reading and ends with a lie that reflects backwards, imposing the differentiation between speaker and author, between micro- and macro-text.

Somewhat in the middle of the text, long after the object of the lampoon is surprisingly revealed as a Syrian (3), Lucian plants the now equally startling claim that the speaker too is a Syrian mocking a fellow countryman (19). The latent biography of the author projects itself over the identity of both the speaker and the book-collector. For the micro-text this detail polarizes two different approaches to paideia – exemplified through non-Greeks, although the same difference could apply also among Greeks – with the foreign pseudo-pepaideumenos undermining the earnest effort of the foreign authentic pepaideumenos. The Syrian ethnicity of the speaker, which in the micro-text borrows the author’s identity to make the lampoon more poignant, has, however, more complex implications in the macro-text. In the micro-text, Lucian – through the voice of a Hellenized Syrian – ridicules the false claim to paideia based on possession of books. In the macro-text, Lucian – the Hellenized Syrian – ridicules the pepaideumenoi, now his peers, for their self-complacency and resistance to his own, justified, claim to paideia. By lending his speaker his Syrian ethnicity, Lucian exposes himself, or rather the guild of pepaideumenoi that he now represents, to the ridicule of self-complacency and cultural misconstructions. He deliberately puts his own image at risk by associating it with the
paradoxology of the speaker. The puppeteer reveals himself to be mocked as his own puppet, in an attempt to give his marionette more life and make it more laughable.619

The macro-text, therefore, sets in conflict two mirrored images of Lucian, that of the rejected Syrian versus that of the assimilated Syrian, who should now play his cultural role by the rules of the Greeks and indulge in their sense of paideutic entitlement. However, this doubled image, which exposes the badly performed dialogue as a monologue, does not neutralize the message of the micro-text. The internal discourse remains valid in its main point, that buying books does not buy paideia. The external discourse performs a sort of parasitism on the former, with the author lending the speaker a substantiating argument only to twist it and exploit its ambiguity against him, thus converting his discourse into paradoxology.

3.3. The Dream

*The Dream/Lucian’s Life* is another text that borrows, like *The Rhetorician*, Prodicus’ pattern of the Heraclean choice and discusses the issue of ethnicity and *paideia*. It appears as a speech delivered by Lucian in his hometown of Samosata. The speaker claims to be of humble birth, thus compelled early to contribute to his family’s livelihood by taking on a craft. He is entrusted to his maternal uncle as a sculptor’s apprentice. Yet his first sculpting lesson is a failure, as he breaks a stone and is consequently beaten by his uncle/master (1-4). The following night, the young boy, still under the impression of the failure and punishment, has a life-changing dream. Two women approach and entice him. One is Sculpture (Ἐρμογλυφική τέχνη), sometimes referred only as Craft (Τέχνη), of masculine and hardworking appearance (_ANDROIDΙΚΗ, ἐΡΓΑΤΙΚΗ), strikingly resembling his sculptor uncle (οἶος ἦν ο θεῖος). The other is Culture (Παϊδεία), very beautiful, distinguished, and nicely dressed (μάλα εὐπρόσωπος καὶ τὸ σχῆμα εὐπρεπής καὶ κόσμιος τὴν ἀναβολὴν, 6). Sculpture, in a stumbling and barbarian-like speech (διαπταίουσα καὶ βαρβαρίζουσα πάμπολλα), introduces herself as the boy’s relative (οἰκεία τέ σοι καὶ συγγενῆς οἴκοθεν). She promises that, if becoming a sculptor, he will be well fed and strong (θρέψη γεννικῶς καὶ τοὺς ὄμους ἔξεις καρτεροῦς), will avoid envy (φθόνου δὲ παντὸς ἀλλότριος ἔση), and will never go abroad leaving his fatherland and family (οὔποτε ἀπει ἐπὶ τὴν ἀλλοδαπὴν, τὴν πατρίδα καὶ τοὺς οἰκείους καταλιπών, 7). As a great sculptor like Phidias, Polycleitus, Myron, or Praxiteles, he will be universally famous and make his father and country celebrated (πῶς μὲν οὐ κλεινὸς αὐτὸς παρὰ πᾶσιν ἀνθρώπωις ἔση, ζηλωτὸν δὲ τὸν πατέρα ἀποδείξεις, περίβλεπτον δὲ ἀποφανεῖς τὴν πατρίδα, 8.7-10). Culture, on the

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other hand, introduces herself as the boy’s acquaintance (ἡ δὲ συνήθης σοι καὶ γνωρίμη, 9.1-2) and, while belittling the advantages from Sculpture, promises him initiation in the classical Greek culture and virtues, universal fame, great social rewards, and immortality (9-13):

You, now the poor son of a nobody, having just deliberated over such an ignoble art [i.e. sculpture], will soon be considered fortunate and enviable by all, will be honored, praised, esteemed for your greatest achievements, and admired by those prominent in birth and wealth; you will be dressed in such attire – and she points to her own splendid dress – and deemed worthy of power and precedence.

καὶ ὃν πένης ὁ τοῦ δεῖνος, ὁ βουλευσάμενος τι περὶ ἄγεννοὺς οὕτω τέχνης, μετ’ ὀλίγου ἀπαισὶ ζηλωτὸς καὶ ἐπιφθονος ἔση, τιμώμενος καὶ ἑπαίνομενος καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς ἀρίστοις εὐδόκιμων καὶ ὑπὸ τῶν γένει καὶ πλούτω προοχόντων ἀποβλεπόμενος, ἐσθήτα μὲν τοιαύτην ἀμπεχόμενος – δείξασα τὴν ἐαυτῆς πάνυ δὲ λαμπρὰν ἔφορει – ἀρχὴς δὲ καὶ προεδρίας ἄξιομενος (11.1-8).

When the young boy makes a predictable choice for Paideia, offended Sculpture suffers a strange metamorphosis into stone (παράδοξα ἔπαθε, 14). Paideia, then, carries the boy throughout the world in a chariot drawn by winged horses. While he sows a mysterious seed from above, people below praise and bless him (15). He returns home in new, splendid attire (16). At the end of the dream report, the speaker has someone in the audience expressing frustration with the long story and its meaning. This detail seems to frame this actual speech as partially a re-performance (17). The speaker confers a protreptic function on his report of the allegorical dream, i.e. to encourage young boys to surpass socio-financial difficulties by
embracing paideia. In the end, he claims to have come back [home?] now at least as famous as – ironically – any sculptor (οὐδενὸς γοῦν τῶν λιθογλύφων ἄδοξότερος, 18).623

Lucian, who manifests a predilection for convoluted texts, challenges – yet again – his audience to hermeneutics, to an elaborate exercise of interpretation. In a passage that can be taken as a metatext on reception, he has a member of the audience exclaim: “He does not take us as interpreters of dreams, does he?” (μὴ ὄνειρων τινὰς ὑποκριτὰς ἡμᾶς ὑπειλήφεν.;) 624 As the dream stands here for the text itself – which is the report of an alleged dream, the pseudo-pepaideumenos in the audience exposes himself, just like Menelaus, as reluctant to exercise any interpretative effort, especially since this entails exercising paideia as well.625

The text lacks any concrete reference (names, toponyms, etc.) that could make it a reliable autobiographical account.626 Besides, it consists of a dense amalgam of literary topoi and rhetorical devices that make a Life – i.e. create a literary, not historical bios, embellished to satisfy the author’s agenda.627 It is hardly conceivable that a real life, even that of an interesting Lucian, lends itself to so many paradigmatic allusions, which are destined to challenge and please an educated audience.628 The obstinate avoidance of concrete references makes this text, therefore, not a bios of Lucian, but rather a paradigmatic bios of the Hellenized barbarian.629 The ‘dream’ does not concern a mere choice between a handicraft and intellectual education. It has been argued that Lucian adapts here Heracles’ moral choice to either an aesthetic choice,
between the rigidity of tradition and the freedom of innovation (Romm), or a socio-economic choice (Swain). It seems, however, to be a more comprehensive cultural choice, which defines the barbarian’s search for self-identity. This cultural choice subsumes, obviously, social and economic aspects and entails a distinctive aesthetic stance, but it ultimately translates the complicated issue of cultural identity.

I will argue that Sculpture and Paideia stand here for barbarian and Greek paideia and the dream enacts the inevitable choice that the barbarian faces in a predominantly Greek culture: whether to remain locally relevant or become universally relevant, whether to address a provincial cultural minority, now more obsolete than ever, or the dominant cultural majority. The choice for the latter inevitably alters one’s cultural identity. It can also alter – as in Lucian’s case – the embraced dominant culture. This, however, depends on the degree to which the barbarian is willing to submit to self-alteration, as the choice of Greek paideia entails also a choice between subdued mimeticism or, in Lucian’s case, the incorporation of his foreignness into Greekness, translated into literary novelty. The physical fight between Sculpture and Paideia over the young boy, almost tearing him asunder (μικροῦ γοῦν με διεσπάσαντο πρὸς ἀλλήλας φιλοτιμώμεναι, 6.3-4), and presumably Sculpture’s argument that Paideia lays claim to what is not hers (τῶν ἀλλοτρίων ἀντιποιοῖτο, 6.8-9) reflect the barbarian’s own anxiety concerning his choice of Greek paideia that is foreign to him.

Sculpture is the speaker’s ethnic paideia: it is his kin (οἰκεία, συγγενής, 7.2), it is of the same genos. Although it too requires a learning process, as no one is born educated, this learning

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631 Cf. Mosch. Eur. 1-27. Europa dreams that two continents fight over her. Asia, appearing as a native woman, claims to have born and raised her, while Europe, appearing as a foreign woman, seizes the maiden who follows willingly (οὐκ ἄκουσαν, 14).
is based on a natural predisposition (φύσεως γε... ἔχει δεξιώσ, 2.12-13). While practicing it, one can always ‘be at home’ (οὕτωτε ἀπεὶ ἐτη τήν ἄλλοδαπτήν, 7.11), be himself – i.e. the barbarian that he is, develop and manifest his inherited cultural identity. The utopian promise of universal recognition translates a paradox, since for a litteratus a provincial language can so rarely be the vehicle of paideia and fame. The image of this foreign paideia takes on the clichés of the Greek representation of the barbarian: coarse, unrefined, dirty, rigid, physically rather than intellectually robust, bent towards manual rather than mental application, and obviously capable of speaking only bad Greek. Its social advantages are slim, symbolically reduced to physical nourishment (θρέψι γεννικῶς, 7.8-9). Its cultural disadvantage is expressed in terms of low social status (ἀγεννής τέχνη, 11.2).

While the foreigner’s relationship with his own ethnic paideia is defined by genos, his association with Greek paideia is defined by ethos. A barbarian becomes accustomed with it in various degrees (ἡδὴ συνῆθης σοι καὶ γνωρίμη), as our young boy has yet to explore it in depth (μηδέπω εἰς τέλος μου πεπείρασαι, 9.1-3). The adjective γνωρίμη qualifies Greek paideia as both familiar, the result of a learning process, and noble, distinguished, the expression of its socio-cultural precedence. Adoption of Greek paideia takes the foreigner abroad, out of his ‘country’, out of his native language and paideia (11, 15). The social rewards associated with it amount to acquiring élite status, as fame is acutely defined in a Greek élite context (ὑπὸ τῶν γένει καὶ πλοῦτῳ προὐχόντων ἀποβλεπόμενος, 11.6-8). While Greek paideia can even grant immortality (12), it strips one of his ‘fatherland’, as he cannot boast his foreign ethnicity. Sculpture includes in the fame equation the boy, his father, and their country (8.7-10); Paideia,

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633 Cf. the discussion of the old Celt (Luc. Herc. 4) in the previous chapter.
634 LSJ s.v. γνώριμος.
however, conspicuously excludes the last element, the expression of non-Greek ethnicity (11-12).\footnote{\textit{Pace} Gera 1995, 248.}

The polarity Greek-barbarian is translated here as the distinction between \textit{paideia} and \textit{apaideusia}, between intellectual and physical performance (\textit{paideia} vs. \textit{techne}). This dichotomy is articulated on other polarized pairs: high vs. low social status (\textit{γνωρὶς} - \textit{ἄγεννης}), wealth vs. poverty, \textit{apodemia} vs. \textit{epidemia}, and especially \textit{physis/genos} vs. \textit{nomos/ethos}, manliness vs. effeminacy, \textit{phthonos} vs. lack of \textit{phthonos}. As Sculpture is in the boy’s nature (\textit{φύσεως γε… ἔχει δεξιῶς}, 2.12-13), the distinction between barbarian and Greek \textit{paideia} is primarily set as a distinction between nature (\textit{φύσις, γένος}) and culture, norm (usually \textit{νόμος}, here \textit{ἠθος}, \textit{customs} that ultimately amount to norm). The term \textit{ἠθος} refers here also to a complex set of practices and virtues that build a character. \textit{Paideia} speaks like a veritable orator, deploying an \textit{ethos} strategy, extolling her character and disparaging that of Sculpture (13) – with both their characters reflected in their effect upon the boy’s life. At the same time, she promises to build the boy’s character by adorning his soul with virtues (while Sculpture promises only physical virtues, 7.9): temperance, justice, piety, gentleness, fairness, understanding, determination, love of beauty, and desire for greatness (\textit{σωφροσύνη}, \textit{δικαιοσύνη}, \textit{εὐσεβεία}, \textit{πραότητι}, \textit{ἐπιεικεία}, \textit{συνέσει}, \textit{καρτερία}, τῷ τῶν καλῶν ἔρωτι, τῇ πρὸς τὰ σεμνότατα ὀρμῆ, 10.6-9). All these moral, social, political, and intellectual virtues are cardinal elements of the \textit{ἠθος Ἑλληνικὸν}. \textit{Paideia}, speaking like a veritable Greek and reactivating the commonplace distinction between Greek and barbarian, claims to make a Greek out of the young [Syrian?] boy.\footnote{Cf. Luc. \textit{Bis acc. 27.} On the polarity Greek - barbarian based on cardinal virtues see E. Hall 1989, 121-133; J. M. Hall 2002, 176-178.}

The \textit{ethos} strategy makes the discourse of \textit{Paideia} contentious and her argumentation becomes – by the agency of the author – liable to paradoxology. Lucian follows here the same
pattern as in *The Rhetorician*, where the teacher is contentious regarding the easy path to rhetoric and exposes himself to a paradoxological argumentation. The gender imagery in *The Dream* also echoes that of *The Rhetorician*, yet it is fundamentally different.\(^{637}\) There, masculinity, strength, and roughness represent traditional and authentic Greek *paideia*, while effeminacy and physical elegance are the expression of pseudo-*paideia* and foreign alteration of the tradition. Sculpture’s pronounced masculine features stand also in *The Dream* for a traditional, yet this time the boy’s, i.e. barbarian *paideia*. In *The Rhetorician* this imagery becomes also the expression of inflexibility, of the inadaptability of the old to the new and the refusal of the self-complacent Greek (pseudo-)*pepaideumenos* to incorporate the foreign. In *The Dream* too, while the perspective is still fundamentally Greek through the voice of *Paideia*, the polarity Greek-barbarian expressed in terms of gender is suggestive of the inadaptability and refusal, here of barbarian *paideia*, to be incorporated into the dominant culture.\(^{638}\) Although Craft (Τέχνη)/Sculpture (Ἐρμογλυφική) appears as a woman, consistent with the grammatical gender, she has almost no feminine features (ἀνδρική, 6.10; ἀνδρώδης, 6.17).\(^{639}\) *Paideia*, on the other hand, has emphatically delicate feminine features (μάλα εὑρόσωπος καὶ τὸ σχῆμα εὑρητὴς καὶ κόσμιος τὴν ἀναβολήν, 6.13-14).

The gender imagery is, however, reversed at the internal, intellectual level. The Greek voice discoursing as *Paideia*, the only one to engage in criticism of the other side, warns the boy

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\(^{637}\) See Gera 1995, 240-244, 246-247 for the difference between the representations of Virtue and Vice in Prodicus and in later developments of his choice motif and Lucian. For similarities between the imagery in Luc. *Somn.* and *Rhet. praec*. See Jones 1986,106 ; Gera 1995, 244-248.

\(^{638}\) Gera interprets the similarity between *Paideia* here and the effeminate guide in *Rhet. praec.* through the comparison with yet another text, *Bis acc.*, where Lucian, through the voice of the Syrian rhetor allegedly abandons *Rhetoric/paideia* because of her decadence. She argues, therefore, that already in *The Dream*, a presumably earlier text, “one can, perhaps, sense underneath the surface the disillusion or disappointment Lucian feels with the path he has chosen” (1995, 250). On the attempt to date Luc. *Somn. vs. Bis acc.* see Hall 1981, 13-16, 20, 448-449 n. 31.

\(^{639}\) The double female representation is here also closer to that of Prodicus and Moschus. However, the feminine representation of *Paideia* (*Somn.*) and Rhetoric (Bis acc., *Rhet. praec.*), as well as the masculine representation of Dialogue (Bis. acc.), are also conventions under the constraint of the grammatical gender.
that with Sculpture he will never conceive manly and free thoughts (οὐδὲ ἀνδρῶδες οὐδὲ ἑλεύθερον οὐδὲν ἐπινοῶν, 13.12-12). Yet through Paideia he will be acquainted with wonderful words and deeds of great men of old (ἐπιδειξὼς παλαιῶν ἀνδρῶν ἑργα καὶ πράξεις θαυμαστὰς καὶ λόγους αὐτῶν ἀπαγγελῶ, 10.2-3; ἀνδρας καὶ πράξεις λαμπρὰς καὶ λόγους σεμνοὺς, 13.2). Thus, in this reversal of gender roles, manliness is restored as the typical feature of Greek paideia and becomes the expression of intellectual freedom, while barbarian paideia in its feminine character is reduced to slavery, to a provincial culture overcome, politically and intellectually, by Hellenism.

Relevant in terms of gender is also the relationship between craft and paideia, on the one hand, and their practitioners, on the other. In The Rhetorician the pattern of the bride-groom pair preserves a separation between paideia (Rhetoric/bride) and (pseudo-)pepaideumenos. Rhetoric/bride has a feminine appearance, but the rhetor/groom takes on the features of the path he chooses in order to conquer her: either tough and masculine, or soft and feminine. In The Dream, both couples, paideia-pepaideumenos and techne-technites cross the gender and identity boundaries. Sculpture, although represented as female, has pronounced masculine features, resembling the boy’s sculptor uncle (6.12). Thus, techne and technites share external gender features. Paideia, on the other hand, is elegantly dressed and promises the boy similar attire: “you will wear clothes like these – and she shows her own” (ἐσθήτα μὲν τοιαύτην ἀμπεχόμενον - δείξαις τὴν ἑαυτῆς, 11.6-7). While her words, not to be taken literally, merely suggest that he too will be dressed elegantly, the gesture is more relevant. Lucian uses its concreteness to make a subtle, ironic suggestion that the boy will wear feminine clothes, at odds with the enhanced masculine appearance of the pepaideumenos in The Rhetorician, where even
the effeminate rhetor insists on the necessity to create a strongly masculine self-image.\textsuperscript{640} Thus, \textit{paideia} and \textit{pepaideumenos} too share some external gender characteristics.

The construction of cultural identity in terms of gender is, therefore, paradoxical. Sculpture and \textit{Paideia} – appearing in the dream in the guise of women – are, at the same time, represented as both male and female. Moreover, their practitioners, although generically represented as men, replicated the same gender ambiguity of their professions. The barbarian ‘ sculptor’ is physically masculine, yet intellectually soft and subdued, while the Hellenized \textit{pepaideumenos} becomes physically effeminate, yet intellectually strong and dominant. This paradox of gender \textit{mixis} for both Sculpture and \textit{Paideia} and their practitioners sets a fundamental difference between external femininity and masculinity as the emblems of refined Greek versus primitive barbarian material culture, and between spiritual manliness and dominance of Greek versus effeminacy and submission of barbarian \textit{paideia}. This paradoxology belongs entirely to the discourse of the Greek voice of \textit{Paideia}. It shows that in her self-complacency and attempt to affirm her superiority she relies on paradox and self-contradiction. Her paradoxological discourse undermines the core of her own argument and expresses Lucian’s ironical attitude towards such a mechanistic, clear-cut construction of cultural identity and cultural hierarchism.

While \textit{Paideia} is fundamentally contentious, Sculpture is represented as entirely defensive, merely protecting what she considers hers (6.8-9). She never refers negatively to her rival and her only antagonistic moment seems to be her irritation caused by the boy’s choice of \textit{Paideia}. Then, she turns into a stone, in an act of absolute despondency (14.7-11) that echoes the abandonment of rhetoric by the follower of the difficult path.\textsuperscript{641} Provincial \textit{paideia} seems, thus, condemned to stagnation, since its products abandon it and go in search for the advantages of

\textsuperscript{640} Luc. \textit{Rhet. praec.} 23.  
\textsuperscript{641} Luc. \textit{Rhet. praec.} 26.
culturally dominant Greek *paideia*. On the contrary, *Paideia* is represented as an extremely confrontational character. She constantly ridicules her rival and even her final self-recommendations are set in contrast with *Sculpture*. She takes the boy on a glorious aerial journey to show him, specifically, not what she could offer, but what he would have missed, had he decided not to follow her, but her rival (ὅπως εἰδής οία καὶ ήλίκα μὴ ἀκολουθήσας ἐμοὶ ἀγνωσίειν ἐμέλλε, 15.6-7). Bringing the boy back home, again she cannot restrain her contentiousness: on the one hand, she shows the father his son’s new splendid attire; on the other, she reminds him of the family’s initial plan to entrust the boy to her rival (ὑπέμνησεν οία μικρῶ δεῖν περὶ ἐμοῦ ἐβουλεύσαντο, 16.7-8).

The contentiousness of Greek *paideia* is expressed in terms of φθόνος (*envy, jealousy*). While *Sculpture* promises a life without *phthonos*, *Paideia* guarantees both fame and *phthonos* (φθόνου δὲ παντὸς ἀλλότριος ἔση, 7.9-10; ἐπίφθονος ἔση, 11.3). When the boy, crying his eyes out, accuses his uncle of beating him because of *phthonos*, fearing competition in *techne*, we sense the author’s gentle irony (προσθεὶς ὧτι ὑπὸ φθόνου ταῦτα ἔδρασε, μὴ αὐτὸν ὑπερβάλωμαι κατὰ τήν τέχνην, 4.5-6). The competitiveness of *Paideia* and the idea of *phthonos* translate the agonistic character of the Greek culture, particularly the struggle in the competition for status through *paideia*. Lucian probably hints here at his own agonistic struggle for *doxa* among the Greeks. He contrasts it, rather idealistically, with the lack of competition within his provincial *paideia*.

Often in Lucian dress is a cultural-identity indicator.\(^\text{642}\) In the boy’s dream, he comes back home in a different, splendid attire (16.1-4). *Paideia* presents him to his father and, significantly, points to his new dress (ἐδείκυσεν αὐτῷ ἐκείνη τήν ἐσθήτα, 16.6), thus emphatically indicating

\(^{642}\) Luc. Scyth. 3.7, 8.9-11; Bis acc. 27.3-4.
his changed, now Greek cultural identity. However, both in the dream and through the text itself – allegedly performed before his countrymen – the speaker returns home. We have seen Paideia’s paradoxological discourse in constructing identity through the concept of gender, her inconsistency in argumentation ending in paradox, due to the author’s agency. The discourse of the speaker himself ends in a paradox: he is now Greek, yet comes back home, he is a pepaideumenos, yet compares himself to a sculptor (18.12). Is there an intimation that Paideia’s promise in the dream has not been entirely accomplished in reality, that among Greeks he is still considered a barbarian? Or is there an expression of irony at his new status, implying that he chose, as a naïve child, to become Greek for the promised splendid rewards, yet he holds on to his roots? Is the dream just a convoluted protreptic discourse, encouraging the youth of his country to dedicate themselves to Greek paideia? It hardly seems so for a text that claims the need of a hermeneutic exercise of the pepaideumenos to unlock its meaning beyond the alleged transparency of the speaker.

I propose that this text represents a different sort of cultural homecoming than the one we have seen in Lucian’s early prolaliai, this time a symbolical return to the roots of his barbarian paideia. While the boy renounces the masculine hardiness of the barbarian, the returning adult determines to lend a masculine vibe to the effeminate Greek paideia, whose characteristic manliness is perverted by the excessive desire to please. Chronologically, The Dream seems to precede Lucian’s anti-rhetoric discourse and his innovative texts, as Paideia takes on a rhetor persona here and there is no indication of tensions concerning reception. The dense literary allusions, as well as the framing of the performance as a re-performance (17.1-9), make it clear that only a naïve perception can absolutely identify the speaker with Lucian. However, the

644 Hall 1981, 20 places it in 164.
former’s career is obviously paradigmatic of the author’s, although not his real bios. Thus, this text marks Lucian’s transition from literary orthodoxy to novelty. As he sows throughout the world, he nevertheless, through this text, comes back home to harvest, to symbolically reclaim his Syrian identity and be at least as famous as any sculptor/barbarian. Although he chooses Paideia, he paradoxically boasts here his barbarian ethnicity and culture. Abroad he insists on being perceived as a Greek, although he acknowledges his Syrian ethnicity either because its shadow still looms or, later, as an expression of literary otherness. Yet in this performance set before his countrymen, although acknowledging his cultural choice that made him famous, he conveniently reaffirms mainly his Syrian identity. The paradox of his cultural hybridism is now on display and henceforth he can translate it into literary hybridism.

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Lucian strives to become and be a Greek through paideia. Yet, as we often see in his texts, and as we can grasp from Philostratus’ Lives of Sophists, the pepaideumenoi are not a compact, indiscriminate class. Individuals clash, personal weaknesses insinuate themselves into the public performance of paideia, and holding the title does not always rise to its ideal conception. In order to separate himself from these vulnerable imperfections, Lucian – in his Greekness – invokes his otherness and extracts himself from the background of the ‘Second Sophistic’. From an established position, he recuperates his ‘Syrianness’ and engages in self-censure as a cultural individual and class. The paradox of this doubling is translated into the paradox of the discourse, with different masks of the same performer arguing dissoi logoi to represent both the insider and the outsider Lucian who ‘en-stranges’ himself to contemplate self, both as individual and as class.645

Post Scriptum

I have been tempted to postpone this conclusion. It would not have been a vain promise, like the description of the antiperas, but rather a reasonable inclination, since there are so many more marvels to explore, whose impressions I have yet to retrace in words. Therefore, this would be far from a proper conclusion of my marvelous journey on this sea, and heaven, and whale-belly of logoi. Yet, as I suspect, Lucian’s antiperas is, in fact, the homeland itself, to which he invites us to return and which we need to re-consider with our mental eye refreshed by the contemplation of otherness. Then, since a short break is more than welcome now, it is perhaps time to bring my ship home and reflect on my journey before embarking on its next leg.

We have explored Lucian’s paradoxa as discursive modes of otherness and self, and of self as otherness. Paradoxa are a paradigmatic axis for a cultural dialogue that the Lucianic corpus enacts between past and present, known and unknown, indigenous and foreign, warm habit and the cold shower of novelty. In this heated conversation, Lucian plays the role of both sides. He comes from everywhere: from the past, in his admiration for the consecrated canons, and from the present, in his recasting of the venerated models; from outside, as the adopted Syrian who – still apprehensive at first and, sometimes, even later – constantly tries to integrate, and from inside, opening the tradition of Hellenism to otherness; and yet again he claims to come from outside, to recuperate his now celebrated otherness.

At first, Lucian’s ethnic otherness, an exotic marvel, is mirrored by the exoticism of his work, which generic hybridism renders strange, foreign to Greek literary tradition. Once

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646 Luc. VH 2.47.
embraced by the Greek élite, he projects himself as a different sort of marvel, an artist of wondrous skills who charms with his *logoi*. They too become aesthetic *paradoxa*, art objects of wondrous beauty and seduction.

At the same time, from within the Greek framework, having assumed a Greek cultural identity, the performer claims back his exoticism. He expresses himself through symbols of strangeness, no longer the young barbarian eager to embrace and be embraced by Greekness, but outstanding Greek figures who travel to the ends of the world and conquer barbarian realms: Heracles and Dionysus. Moreover, they are hybrid creatures too, as their nature is a mixture of human and divine; yet they attain immortality, when their divine portion takes over. Likewise, Lucian labors to become established as a Greek through *paideia*, as a representative of the dominant cultural class. *Heracles* and *Dionysus*, among his last *prolalai*, address the issue of cultural tensions through the model of mutual perception between Greek and barbarian. A Greek *pepaideumenos* visits the west and is shocked to discover a Gallic Heracles who transgresses Greek tradition. Nevertheless, the traveler embraces this novel interpretation of Heracles as the lord of speech, a charmer with *logoi*. His acceptance of the foreign cultural voice is prompted by the educated speech of a local. Dionysus and his acolytes, agents of Greekness, however strange, meet with the resistance of the Indians to engage in a cultural clash that eventually proves hopeless for the barbarians. These two paradigms of cultural encounters illustrate, on the one hand, the resistance of the barbarians to engage in a power-unbalanced cultural dialogue and surrender to Hellenism and, on the other, their acute ability to integrate into a Hellenic dominant culture while still keeping an exotic, personal voice. This integration, based on mutual acceptance, is conditioned by the barbarians’ possession of *paideia*, specifically Greek *paideia*,

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647 Luc. *Herc.*  
648 Luc. *Bacch.*
for which, however, a barbarian paideia is indispensable as the source of the openness to the foreign. Yet Greek language is always the vehicle of cultural translation.649

On a different, somewhat subversive, interpretive level, these two cultural encounters are paradigmatic of the Greeks’ response to cultural otherness. On the one hand – since Dionysus is also somewhat atypical and foreign to Greece – the Indians’ motionless and contemptuous response is typical of Greeks posing as pepaideumenoi, who only claim paideia by virtue of their birth and refuse to engage with strange agents of an exotic culture. The authentic Greek pepaideumenos, on the other hand, expresses his openness to the foreign through travel, i.e. motion – symbol of initiative. While the encounter with otherness still causes him shock and puzzlement, he is nevertheless able to absorb it through a cultural dialogue mediated by a barbarian pepaideumenos. While the Greek pseudo-pepaideumenos is the paradigm of stagnant self-complacency and exclusiveness, the authentic one, either Greek by birth or not, is always in progressive motion, inclusive of otherness, be it from the outside – a foreign culture, or from the inside – innovation within the tradition.

This acceptance of other, the expression of an active form of genuine paideia, makes possible the experience of paradoxa, either of oddities encountered on a physical journey for theoria of unexplored lands, or of strange art objects resulting from the journey through and theoria of the tradition – marvelous texts that seductively combine rebellious novelty with reverential celebration of canonic Attic grace. Lucian enacts for us this personal journey for theoria of the Greek literary tradition, changing his face in an ever Proteus-like metamorphosis, to make us experience the πράγμα τεράστιου650 of logos in its ever-changing forms.

649 Luc. Herc. 4.3-5: οὐκ ἀπαίδευτος τὰ ἡμέτερα, ὡς ἐδειξεν ἀκριβῶς Ἑλλάδα φωνήν ἀφείς, φιλόσοφος, οἴμαι, τὰ ἐπιχώρια.
650 Luc. Dial. mar. 4.2-3
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