Edinburgh Research Explorer

Truth, narration, and interpretation in Lucian's Verae Historiae

Truth, Narration, and Interpretation in Lucian's *Verae Historiae*

Abstract:

This article examines the representation of truth and interpretation in Lucian's *True Stories*. The discussion is comprised of two parts: the first half brings under examination the rhetorical and philosophical significance of the preface's key terms, and in particular the use of the term *psychagōgia* and its heritage. I point to certain Platonic and Aristophanic intertexts, through this term, which adumbrate exactly why Lucian forsakes truth for lies in his narrative. The second part of this article localizes in the famous meeting of Homer in the Isles of the Blessed the negation of truth as the essential aspect of rhetoric already set forward in the preface. Lucian's text complicates interpretation through narratorial voices characterized as slippery because of their intertextual representations; this is seen not only in the unsatisfactory answers of Homer about his own poetry, but also through the new Homeric hexameter pastiches in book 2, which underline, through Homeric intertext, the inevitable epigonality of all texts and the unreliable nature of "true", authorial pronouncements.

Lucian's fictional fantasy adventure the *True Stories* both encourages and problematizes interpretation.[1] Its two-fold format of preface and main text sets a template for reading: the 'authorial' introduction lays strictures on the ways in which to interpret the main narrative, and attempts to control any meaning which readers will derive from this narrative. There is inevitably a continual backward glance to the

prefatory text, but it is not entirely clear what this manifesto for reading actually is. The preface is just as allusive as the narrative promises to be, but is illusive in the sense that Lucian does not explicitly tell the whole story: he leaves that for those who can fathom its hidden meaning.[2] In what follows, I shall unpack some of the many layers which the preface contains, and assess the traditional rivalries, in particular those between rhetoric and philosophy,[3] and truth and fiction,[4] which Lucian raises through allusion to those debates in earlier key texts.[5] I will then further explore the narratological tensions which the preface and main narrative create because of their apparently seamless apposition: the two narrative voices of these two *types* of text are ostensibly one voice, as the declared synonymy between the Lucian of the main text and the "Lucian" of the adventure story reveals. Through exploration of this narrative tension, and in particular the meeting of "Lucian" and Homer in the Isles of the Blessed towards the end of the narrative, I will argue that the very control over reading which the voice of the preface explicitly attempts,[6] but which, on second reading, opposes, is replayed by the lack of control over the interpretation of his works which Homer has in the Netherworld. A number of studies have established, decisively, the anti-positivist nature of the *True Stories*:[7] in this article I build on the collapse of authority in authorial pronouncements by exploring Lucian's representation of truth through the narrator's (and, by intertext, narrators') philosophical and epic guises in the preface and main narrative.

Psychagōgia

        The preface is comprised of three sections: the style of the work is elaborated, as is its usefulness both as relief from serious books and as a form of entertainment

and intellectual stimulation (1.1-1.2); second, the targets of its allusions are highlighted, and the tradition of falsehood in a range of genres is discussed, including epic poetry (1.2-1.3); third, we are told why Lucian is writing, how he differs from those writers of falsehood, and emphatic advice is given on how the reader must treat his narrative (1.3-1.4). All that follows, he declares, is false, and must not on any account be believed: he alone differs from his literary predecessors, in that he declares from the beginning that all that he writes is false (κἂν ἓν γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο ἀληθεύσω λέγων ὅτι ψεύδομαι, *VH* 1.4).[8]

Elaborating his initial athletic comparison (1.1),[9] where relaxation is shown as just as important as physical training for athletes, Lucian emphasizes the pleasurable aspects of his own text, for readers who are used to reading more serious works (1.2):

γένοιτο δ' ἂν ἐμμελὴς ἡ ἀνάπαυσις αὐτοῖς, εἰ τοῖς τοιούτοις τῶν ἀναγνωσμάτων ὁμιλοῖεν, ἃ μὴ μόνον ἐκ τοῦ ἀστείου τε καὶ χαρίεντος ψιλὴν παρέξει τὴν ψυχαγωγίαν, ἀλλά τινα καὶ θεωρίαν οὐκ ἄμουσον ἐπιδείξεται, οἷόν τι καὶ περὶ τῶνδε τῶν συγγραμμάτων φρονήσειν ὑπολαμβάνω· οὐ γὰρ μόνον τὸ ξένον τῆς ὑποθέσεως οὐδὲ τὸ χαρίεν τῆς προαιρέσεως ἐπαγωγὸν ἔσται αὐτοῖς οὐδ' ὅτι ψεύσματα ποικίλα πιθανῶς τε καὶ ἐναλήθως ἐξενηνόχαμεν.

It would be a harmonious repose for them, if they were to associate themselves with those types of books, which not only will provide sheer entertainment because of their refinement and cleverness,[10] but will even show forth a spectacle not altogether without learning, and it is of this type which I believe they will consider the following writings of mine. For not only will the outlandishness of the subject nor the cleverness of its scope be enticing to

them but because I have told all sorts of lies in a persuasive and truth-resembling manner.

The designation *psychagōgia* as the intended effect of his work for his readers as they take pause from their more serious literary pursuits at first seems uncomplicated: as a result of the artful and pleasing nature of the narrative, the readers will have bare (*psilos*), that is, unadulterated,[11] entertainment, *psychagōgia* which is not to be *discovered* but is a primary intended result of the style of literary composition.[12] This entertainment is only half of the promise, as Lucian places emphasis in his first sentence on the *but also* clause: there will also be a display of the visual (*theōria*), but it is the first clause containing *psychagōgia* on which Lucian then playfully enlarges. What this *psych-agōgia* consists of is elaborated with *ep-agōgia* (here in its adjectival form ἐπαγωγόν predicated on *to xenon* and *to charien*, both of which, too, pick up on the previous sentence where it is stated that *psychagōgia* results from *to asteion* and *to charien*).[13] The exoticness of the subject matter and the cleverness of the *proairēsis* are specifically the refined and clever things which will bring about *psychagōgia*.[14]

Lucian, however, is contradicting himself. In his ecphrastic *Zeuxis*, the narrator at the beginning of the work bemoans the fact that his lecture received praise not for the beauty of its style but rather for its exotic and novel subject matter. He then proceeds to show that the Centaur-picture by Zeuxis has a similar effect on viewers: all praise the ingenuity in subject-matter, but pass over the minute points of style which are responsible for the picture's beauty; similarly with the battle-tactics of Antiochus – the sight of elephants charging the enemy are what in the end are remembered from his victory, rather than any military strategy of his own. Lucian plays at being just such a reader as he promotes his own narrative undertaking in the

True Stories, employing the vocabulary of *Zeuxis* 2: παρέντες αὐτὰ ἐκεῖνα ἐπήνουν μόνον τὸ καινὸν <u>τῆς προαιρέσεως καὶ ξενίζον</u>.[15] The novelty and foreignness have become the *point*, but rhetoric will lead the reader there.[16] The foreignness epitomized in the centaur-picture, and now promised by Lucian in his relation of the outlandish adventures of his narrative, mimic the interpretation of similarly exotic matter in Homer. The bT scholion on *Iliad* 3.6, for example, explicates the Pygmy reference by resorting to the term *psychagōgia* because of the foreignness of the allusion: the reader is transported by the otherness.[17] Just so does Lucian promise a similar type of drawing away from the ordinary to the extraordinary. It is not the artful composition that is to advertise itself, this time, according to Lucian's methodology stated elsewhere,[18] but rather has become a means to an end, a type of drawing of the soul towards something else. Lucian's readership are alerted to another Lucianic voice, one which here contradicts, and therefore cautions against taking the narrator's voice in *this* preface at face value in terms of its advocation of pleasure and novelty for their own sake.[19]

The placement of *psychagōgia* within prefatory material is not unique: the term by Lucian's time has become almost commonplace as a signifier for the opposite of didacticism.[20] A noteworthy example is Strabo's realignment (1.1.8), contra the Hellenistic geographer Eratosthenes, of poetry as didactic, instead of merely as entertaining (οὐδὲ γὰρ ἀληθές ἐστιν, ὅ φησιν Ἐρατοσθένης, ὅτι ποιητὴς πᾶς στοχάζεται ψυχαγωγίας, οὐ διδασκαλίας).[21] At 2.2.3 he even goes so far as to state that poetry in early education is not for mere (*psilos*) entertainment, but for the sake of moral discipline. Yet it seems that Lucian is indeed setting up his own work as intended for bare entertainment, as a break from the more serious literary tasks his readers may be engaged in; these same readers may still gain something worthwhile

from his work, as he will also "display a cultured contemplation (*theoria*)".[22] Similarly, Dionysius of Halicarnassus, in the preface of his *Roman Antiquities* (1.8.3), had already appealed to the varying types of reader who might take up his work: not only those interested in philosophical speculation (*philosophos… theoria*, 1.8.3) but also those who wish to read history for its sheer entertainment value (*diagōgē*).[23]

If, indeed, Lucian's statement on the purpose of his work is to be taken at face-value, that his work is truly a rest for those who engage in serious reading, then the reader need delve no further for secondary import for the terms applied in the preface. The term *psychagōgia*,[24] however, alerts the reader to the possibility of further rhetorical sub-text, or meta-commentary on the function of rhetoric; its use here in a passage which puts forward a theory and methodology of literary composition is bound to be intertextually significant. The preface is essentially metaleptic as a whole of the narrative which it frames. Within this setting, this is an intertext which directs the reader to previous philosophical debates, debates which are most likely to be foregrounded in this preface given that this very preface is a discussion of the history of writing and of the representation of truth through those writings.[25] Lucian uses the term elsewhere, either as substantive or in its verbal form, five times, two of which concern the primary meaning of *leading souls*, literally (*Dial. D*. 4.1 and 11.4). Its other occurrences relate to entertainment, and especially the provocation of laughter (*Nigrinus* 18.8 and 21.2, and *Bis Acc*. 10.18). *Nigrinus* 18.8 is especially significant, as the narrator describes himself as like a spectator in a theatre, as he gains entertainment by viewing the masses of humanity through the lens of philosophy and truth, his companions.[26] Within a setting of discourse on authors who have told lies, and on his own text which will differ as truthful, *psychagōgia*, because of its philosophical and rhetorical pedigree, is worth a second look. The

preface is framed by two Platonic intertexts:[27] the first, the athletic comparison derived from Plato's *Laws*,[28] has been shown to underline the necessary *paideia* which the preface elicits on the part of its readers; this is a text for the elite.[29] The second Platonic intertext is the template in which Lucian formulates his key pronouncement at the end of the preface:

VH 1.4: κἂν ἓν γὰρ δὴ τοῦτο ἀληθεύσω λέγων ὅτι ψεύδομαι. οὕτω δ' ἄν μοι δοκῶ καὶ τὴν παρὰ τῶν ἄλλων κατηγορίαν ἐκφυγεῖν αὐτὸς ὁμολογῶν μηδὲν ἀληθὲς λέγειν.

For in this one thing I will tell the truth, in saying that I lie. In this way I think I will escape the censure from others, in confessing that nothing I say is true.

Plato *Apology* 21d:

ἀλλ' οὗτος μὲν οἴεταί τι εἰδέναι οὐκ εἰδώς, ἐγὼ δέ, ὥσπερ οὖν οὐκ οἶδα, οὐδὲ οἴομαι· ἔοικα γοῦν τούτου γε σμικρῷ τινι αὐτῷ τούτῳ σοφώτερος εἶναι, ὅτι ἃ μὴ οἶδα οὐδὲ οἴομαι εἰδέναι.

But this man thinks that he knows something even though he does not know something, but I, as I then do not know something, do not think that I know something. It is likely, therefore, that I am in this small respect wiser than that man, in that I neither know nor think I know those things.

The *Apology* intertext holds the key to understanding how to interpret the preface, and especially as regards the representation of truth. Lucian has chosen to formulate his most truthful statement with which he claims he differs from all his predecessors, in one of the most equivocal and ironical assertions of Socrates.[30] The

Apology as a defence by Socrates of himself, based on allegations made against him, starts off by discoursing on who speaks the truth, and who in actual fact is a clever speaker, and therefore a manipulator of hearers and of the truth.[31] Socrates retorts that he is not a clever *rhētōr*, and on this basis, as someone without the skills to deceive, is a man of truth (17b6-8).[32] Socrates is speaking to defend himself against charges of speaking falsely, of making the weaker argument the stronger through clever speaking and of corrupting the young.[33] Lucian, ironically, and Socratically, defends any possible charge that he is just as bad as those who lie in their narratives, as unlike them, he does not conceal the fact or pretend that he is telling the truth. Socrates, in the *Apology*, goes on to discuss the enjoyment he could have in the afterlife, where he could meet the famous characters of history and folklore, and with whom he could converse. This is the very scenario which Lucian constructs in book 2 of his own narrative, in the Isles of the Blessed, where the actor-narrator 'Lucian' gets to do just that, as a *Socrates*-type figure.[34] The setting of Lucian's proclamation of truth as Socratic, and in particular set within a dialogue with the *Apology*, inevitably works in both directions: Socrates' statement adumbrates the meaning in Lucian, and Lucian's statement reflects back on Socrates' words. Both narrators are represented as concerned with truth and its representation:[35] both protest that they openly, and without guile, speak the truth, but both have these protestations undercut by the very manner in which their defences are made. Lucian promises *psychagōgia*, to delight the readers in their exploration of the lies set forth, while Socrates' own *Apology* is constructed in the manner of a law-court defence speech, one which requires the *art of speaking*.[36]

Lucian's narrator, then, has been set up as a Socratic voice. This template from the *Apology* raises typically Platonic/Socratic questions which are hinted at

already in the first half of the preface: what is fiction for, and how are we to receive Lucian's pronouncements? Lucian's main narrative, according to this model, consists of *mythoi* or *pseusmata* which have this distinct (Socratic) usefulness,[37] and one which Lucian advertises, namely of elucidating questions raised at the beginning: not only do they lead the reader back to decipher the preface itself, but they also contain these enigmatical allusions to certain of the poets, philosophers and historians who told lies.[38] Fiction, therefore, can teach the reader about the function of *to pseudos*, within those three genres, within literary tradition. To work out Lucian's *aenigmata* is to learn about the history of Greek literature, as received by *pepaideumenoi* in Lucian's post-Socratic cultural milieu.[39]

The Socratic Lucian has twisted the famous axiom, and rephrased Socrates' account of himself as not only the only person who knew the difference between truth and lies, but who also spoke lies. The irony of Socrates' statement is that he does in fact know something, even if that is only the knowledge of ignorance.[40] Lucian balances this irony by pointing his own true statement in the direction of lies: there is no truth, only lies, and therein lies his truth. Lucian interprets the Socratic dictum by subverting it: in that Socrates' knowledge amounts only to ignorance, so too does the narrator's confession amount to lies. The truth as it stands according to Lucian is that there is none, and this conclusion extends to Lucian's own interpretation of Plato's Socrates – the philosopher's actual, un-ironical, ignorance is laid bare.[41] All trust in Lucian's narrator, and in the narrative he prefaces, is therefore disavowed, as he charges the reader with the parting advice to believe nothing that follows (1.4).[42]

Lucian promises to allude to, or parody, a number of philosophers, poets and historians in a manner not without its comedic aspects, ἀκωμῳδήτως (1.2). This adverb, invented here by Lucian, signifies in particular that Lucian will parody these

writers in a way done already in Old Comedy.[43] Aristophanes' parody is famous in his *Clouds*, in particular, but the chorus in the *Birds* (1555) designates Socrates as a leader, or beguiler of souls, in terminology evoked by Lucian's preface.

> Πρὸς δὲ τοῖς Σκιάποσιν λί-
> μνη τις ἔστ᾽, ἄλουτος οὗ
> ψυχαγωγεῖ Σωκράτης.
>
> By the Shadow-feet there is a marsh,[44] where unwashed Socrates conjures souls (*Birds* 1553-5).

The primary reference behind this passage is the necromantic scene in *Odyssey* 11,[45] which fits the primary meaning of the verb here, of leading souls.[46] There can be little doubt too, that Aristophanes plays with the secondary meaning of the verb, of charming, or beguiling souls, a meaning seen too in *Phaedrus* 261a, discussed below.[47] Lucian brings out a number of interpretations of the Socratic voice by which, because of the Platonic intertexts in the preface, his narrator is essentially characterized. The idea of entertainment, *psychagōgia*, contains too this additional, root-meaning of drawing souls, of beguilement. Lucian, like Socrates, is drawing readers. This narrator's insistence on his veracity is undercut not only by the Apologian statement that he will lie, but by the manifold guises that Socrates himself can be received by readers, through the lens of Aristophanes as well as Plato himself. Lucian's Socratic *persona* is certainly the Socrates of the *Apology*, but variegated according to the type represented in Aristophanes.[48] Plato, in the guise of his Socrates, propagates a *persona* behind which he himself can hide: Socrates may represent his own philosophical thinking, but this slippery narrative-duality essentially protects the

author – these utterances of Socrates are just that, utterances of Socrates, as far as his own literary, dialogical form go. So, too, Lucian appropriates a Socratic image for his own preface, but by implication, there is a "Plato" behind his "Socrates".[49] As much as Socrates represents himself in the *Apology* as lacking the cleverness to deceive his speakers, Lucian's narrator sets himself up as someone who will tell lies, and therefore *deceive*, and the clearest statement of this deception is set in the clearest Socratic setting of the *Apology*, at the end of the preface (1.4). The specific Aristophanic contamination of the picture of Socrates set up especially in the *Clouds* is seen in the setting and function of the Socratic intertexts in Lucian. In the *Clouds*, Socrates is represented as encouraging his young followers to use rhetoric for less noble means,[50] and it is "Wrong" (ὁ κρείττων λόγος) who represents the embodiment of Socrates's teaching (*Clouds* 889). There are two representations of Socrates to choose from, and Lucian seems to appropriate an Aristophanic reception.[51] In re-establishing Aristophanes' critique of the slippery speaker Socrates, Lucian denies the very defence of Socrates against that caricature at *Apology* 198d-20c3.[52]

Socrates on Rhetoric

In addition to my initial reading thus far of *psychagōgia* as a non-didactic type of pleasurable entertainment lurks a more complicated sense, one which re-enacts the fundamental debate on the function of rhetoric and its relation to truth. Socrates in the *Apology* used rhetoric to prove that he was being wrongly charged, but this very rhetorical guise is represented by Aristophanes as part of Socrates' untrustworthy, beguiling, characteristics. Through these receptions and embedding of the Socratic *persona* in the preface lies another point of reference for *psychagōgia*: Plato's

Phaedrus. The term's first occurrence in Plato is in the *Phaedrus*, and only in *that* dialogue does Plato use its substantival form (at 261a8 and 271c10).

261a8-b2: ΣΩ. Ἆρ' οὖν οὐ τὸ μὲν ὅλον ἡ ῥητορικὴ ἂν εἴη τέχνη <u>ψυχαγωγία</u> τις διὰ λόγων, οὐ μόνον ἐν δικαστηρίοις καὶ ὅσοι ἄλλοι δημόσιοι σύλλογοι, ἀλλὰ καὶ ἐν ἰδίοις, ἡ αὐτὴ σμικρῶν τε καὶ μεγάλων πέρι, καὶ οὐδὲν ἐντιμότερον τό γε ὀρθὸν περὶ σπουδαῖα ἢ περὶ φαῦλα γιγνόμενον; ἢ πῶς σὺ ταῦτ' ἀκήκοας;

Then surely as a whole rhetorical *technē* would be a *psychagōgia* through words, not only in the law-courts and as many other public gatherings as pertain, but also in private places too, the same art about both small and great issues, nothing considered more important in its application, whether about serious matters or trivial matters? What report have you heard about these things?

271c10-d2: ΣΩ. Ἐπειδὴ λόγου δύναμις τυγχάνει <u>ψυχαγωγία</u> οὖσα, τὸν μέλλοντα ῥητορικὸν ἔσεσθαι ἀνάγκη εἰδέναι ψυχὴ ὅσα εἴδη ἔχει.

Since the function of speech happens to be *psychagōgia*, it is necessary that the person intent on using rhetoric know the soul in all its forms.

Both instances in the *Phaedrus* define rhetorical skill as a type of *psychagōgia*. Contrary to his earlier stance in the *Gorgias*,[53] in the *Phaedrus* Plato allows Socrates to accommodate the usefulness of rhetoric, even to the extent that Socrates now admits that rhetoric is a *technē* of sorts, an art of anti-logic, which concerns both public and private affairs, whereby a speaker can make one thing seem like its opposite.[54] He finds for genuine rhetoric a nobler purpose this time, namely a

chief function in the search for the truth (257b-279c), a purpose based on the definitions connected to *psychagōgia*. Socrates applies the root meaning of the term 'leading the soul' to convey the nature of true rhetoric, namely, to lead the soul to the truth, by means of words. As a result, the speaker of the rhetorical art must first know the truth, that is the true definition of a concept, before attempting to persuade someone about that concept, even if that persuasion leads to the opposite of that truth (deception):[55] one cannot know the *anti-logos* without knowing first the true *logos*. Rhetoric requires knowledge of the truth.[56]

That Lucian is appropriating the Phaedran use of the term as a background to his own careful dialectic on truth and fiction becomes all the more likely given his explicit use of the dialogue in his *De Domo* (4).[57] In his discussion of the effect of visual beauty and the inevitable response in words, the narrator discusses the beauty of Socrates' setting in the *Phaedrus* which results in his discourse about rhetoric and the Muses. The terms used to describe Socrates' setting seem to be played with here, too, in the preface. Socrates is led astray to an exotic location,[58] where he and Phaedrus will discuss the purpose of rhetoric. The *katagōgē* is beautiful (230b2): everything is in full bloom (ὡς ἀκμήν, 230b4);[59] a most pleasing stream (πηγὴ χαριεστάτη, 230b6) flows by; Phaedrus has most excellently led him astray (ἄριστά σοι ἐξενάγηται, 230c5); and Socrates is like someone on foreign soil, someone who never strays beyond the city (ξεναγουμένῳ τινί... οὕτως ἐκ τοῦ ἄστεος, 230c7-d1). The setting in the *Phaedrus* for their new discourse mimics the very act of *psychagōgia*: Socrates, in reality, in his search for self-knowledge (229e) has led Phaedrus to this unfamiliar setting, which is separated by a river which marks a sacred border (like the Stygian waters which separate the living from the dead), to a holy place, admittance to which may be gained through ritual expiation and prayer (242b-c

and 279b-c).[60] Lucian, too, promises separation from the everyday, and in fact, at the beginning of the main narrative (1.5), the narrator sets out at the traditional outer-edge of the known world, by embarking *from* the pillars of Heracles.[61] Lucian's narrative *journey* mimics the exotic setting of the *Phaedrus*, but it is Lucian's language and discourse which provide the advertised *psychagōgia*, and in this he figuratively plays on the topographical novelty of the *Phaedrus*: his style will provide *psychagōgia* because of its pleasantness (χαρίεντος, 1.2), as will the subject matter (τὸ χαρίεν τῆς προαιρέσεως, 1.2). Just as Socrates (230c7) is like a *xenos* led away (*agoumenos*), so too will the *xenon* of the *hypothesis* of Lucian's tale lead the reader away (τὸ ξένον τῆς ὑποθέσεως… ἐπαγωγὸν ἔσται, 1.2), as part of the *psychagōgia*. Just as Plato plays with the *–agō* compounds (*katagōgē – exenagētai – xenagoumenōi*),[62] so too does Lucian with *pysch-* and *ep- agōgia*.[63] Lucian even seems to pun on the Phaedran statement that Socrates has been led out of his accustomed habitat, ἐκ τοῦ ἄστεος (230d1), with ἐκ τοῦ ἀστείου... παρέξει τὴν ψυχαγωγίαν (1.2), the latter adjective derived from the noun ἄστυ.[64] What Socrates says is the *pharmakon* that has led him out of the way is speeches in books (230d6-9).[65] So too does Lucian entice his readers with his own *syngrammata* (1.2).

The question therefore arises: why does Lucian seem to appropriate the *Phaedrus* here, especially in its definition of *psychagōgia*?[66] The Phaedran template which neatly fits the programme put forward in Lucian's preface is its insistence that the practitioner of rhetoric must know the truth of a subject that he is about to speak or write about (*Phaedrus* 277b5-6).[67] At first, Lucian seems to contradict this *dictum*: his *psychagōgia* will consist not only in the novelty of his subject matter and style but because he tells lies in the most convincing way: he uses rhetoric to lead the reader astray, or literally, to entice the soul – and this purpose is undisguised (*psilos*, 1.2).

But the reader is to be under no illusion that in what follows Lucian is trying to deceive: they are warned at the end of the preface that all that follows is falsehood, and that they are to believe none of it (1.4).[68] Therefore Lucian does indeed, at face value at least, follow the strictures set down by Socrates: as a writer of a narrative which promises all sorts of lies, set forth with rhetorical skill, Lucian premises his story with the truth: namely, that there is no truth in what follows, only lies. Yet, it follows that to write *lies* is to pre-suppose knowledge of the opposite, something the foregrounding of the *Phaedrus* in the preface cements into interpretation. In addition, to write lies is to lead one away from the truth. This is something Lucian makes clear elsewhere, for example in *Calumniae non temere credendum* 11: slander (which by rights is based on falsehood) is stronger than truth because of its seductive and plausible aspects, among many other things (both of those adjectives, *epagōgon* and *pithanon*, are used too at 1.2 in the preface of the *VH*).[69]

Wariness of rhetoric and its ability to tell lies 'truthfully', based on warnings throughout Lucian's *oeuvre*,[70] is further heightened by the very vocabulary Lucian employs here to describe his lying output which will follow. Neither of the adverbs Lucian posits with the verb ἐξενηνόχαμεν (1.2) is without wider implication.[71] Lucian has juxtaposed with *pseusmata* the seemingly antithetical adverbs which point to persuasion and truth. Both of the adverbs *pithanōs* and *enalēthōs* – the latter is a coinage by Lucian – have specific connotations of rhetorical display.[72] In its adjectival form,[73] the latter is used by ps.-Longinus (15.8) to express the ideal effect of exaggeration in rhetoric, namely one of reality and truth. The fairest aspect of *rhetorical phantasy* is always practical and truth-like (τῆς δὲ ῥητορικῆς φαντασίας κάλλιστον ἀεὶ τὸ ἔμπρακτον καὶ ἐνάληθες).[74] Lucian's use of rhetoric will also be *truth-like*, but only to make the lies he will tell more believable and (therefore)

pleasurable, *because* they are truth-like. *Pithanōs* too signifies rhetorical theory.[75] At the beginning of Plato's *Apology*, Socrates describes his accusers as those who are accustomed to speaking πιθανῶς, that is, he makes an allusion to the style of Gorgianic oratory which is based principally upon the aim of persuasion, *Peithō*, a word, with its verbal counterpart, which is used repeatedly in Plato's *Gorgias* to underscore the nature of that rhetoric.[76] Lucian is carefully positing words which activate key rhetorical historical functions: beside the Phaedran debate on rhetoric lurks Gorgias' more utilitarian and deceptive application, something the *Phaedrus* sets out to improve upon. The reader must decide which function Lucian himself appropriates here, as the narrator subtly overlaps and entwines vocabulary of truthfulness with lies in the preface, pointing, implicitly, to their indivisible relationship through the very language he employs.

The function of *to pseudos* is closely connected to rhetoric. Lucian's tales will be *theoria* not *amousos* (a spectacle not without art) (1.2), in the same way that writers such as Iambulus wrote many *paradoxa*, employing believable fiction, but with a *hypothesis* that was not *aterpnon* (without pleasure) (1.3). *Mythos*, or *to pseudos*, can have a utilitarian purpose, as Socrates demonstrates not only in the *Phaedrus*, in his manifold use of mythological analogy.[77] Lucian excuses the poets for this in the *Philopseudes*, since (4) the delight which poetry affords is necessary for the readers' enjoyment: Lucian re-employs the vocabulary of pleasure at *Philopseudes* 4 (τὸ ἐκ τοῦ μύθου τερπνὸν ἐπαγωγότατον ὄν) in *VH* 1.3 and 1.4. Lucian is now like one of those poets he excused. For Lucian, *mythos* signals lies, especially through the vehicle of rhetoric, but such telling of myths, the shaping of falsehood in a way believable to all provides, by implication, a *hypothesis* that brings *to terpnon* (1.3).[78] Only those who delight in lies *for their own sake* may be thought utterly ridiculous

(*pangeloioi*, *Philopseudes* 4). *Mythos* is made synonymous with *pseusmata*. Socrates uses *mythos* to clarify philosophical definitions, and rhetoric is useful and necessary too, so long as there is a greater goal in mind. By activating these terms, especially *psychogōgia*, *to pseudos* and *to terpnon*, charged as they are with literary pedigree, Lucian has opened up a space for re-negotiation of their function.

If *mythos* is the same as lying, as the Lucianic parallels and the approximation in the *VH* preface show, and if Lucian's mythologizing in his narrative here is premised on the fact that it is all false, then Socrates' own mythologizing, by extension, is an act of lying, according to Lucian's own representation of how he understands *mythos*' function. Yet Plato uses myth in the mouth of Socrates to lead the reader, symbolized in Socrates' interlocutor, to a certain truth. This is seen especially in the *Phaedrus*: Phaedrus asks Socrates if he believes that the myth about Boreas to be true (229c5: σὺ τοῦτο τὸ μυθολόγημα πείθῃ ἀληθὲς εἶναι;). Socrates' answer is far from clear: he does not dismiss the value of myths, especially if as analogy they may tell one about oneself, and this is what he himself needs above all, as he does not yet know himself (229c6-230a6). For Plato myth has a function, like the *psychagōgia* of rhetoric, namely to lead the soul to the truth (about itself).[79] If we take the analogy from the *Phaedrus*, then Lucian's *True Stories* and the lies told in them can draw the reader to a truth too, namely, in a circular motion back to the preface and its statement at the end that all that follows is false, and that there *is* no truth to be found therein.

Lucian's collapse of the Socratic paradigm set forth in the *Phaedrus*, and then re-voiced in the *Apology*, can be demonstrated in figure.

→ 1. TRUTH → 2. RHETORIC → 3. DECEPTION/LIES
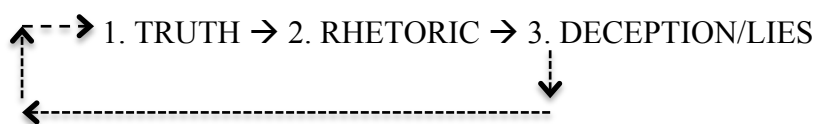
Lucian's paradigm of truth and the function of rhetoric is to remove truth *per se*: if Lucian's truth is lies, then one extremity of the Socratic spectrum, deception, is the same as the other extremity of the spectrum, namely, truth.[80] The apparent security of the *Verae Historiae* is the preface, but Lucian carefully and subtly rules out real truth through the Platonic overtures which Lucian includes within the preface, and thus creates a circularity of argumentation. Following the Phaedran analogy, a baseline of truth upon which the lies of the main narrative can be set does not necessarily pertain, and thus Lucian, in the preface, manages to subvert the very use that Plato has his Socrates allot to rhetoric: a leading to the truth.[81] As Lucian imparts no real truth, his *psychagōgia* is ψιλήν (1.2), and interpretation lies, fundamentally, open. Lucian appropriates the *Phaedrus* and *Apology* to prove that language can be deployed to lead the readers in a direction, but the destination is never reached, as it is unattainable if sought.[82]

Homer's Narrators and Interpreters in the Netherworld

I would like to prove the argument I have set out for the preface, namely that of the removal of truth from Lucian's "true" preface, by referring to a key episode in book 2 of the *True Stories*. I will examine Lucian's representation of narration, authorship and identity in the interview with Homer at 2.20, and in particular the revelation of the narrator's name, for the first time in the main narrative, in Homer's epigram at 2.28. I will examine the correlation implied by Odysseus as storyteller outside the

control of his creator, Homer, and Lucian the actor-narrator of the main narrative, and highlight the disconnection between author and narrator.

At 2.20, after a few days sojourn in the Isles of the Blessed, the narrator finally plucks up the courage to speak with Homer.[83] It is almost as though he has been patiently fulfilling a Phaeacian-like wait of *xenia* before asking the poetic archetype of his origins (he waits two or three days). This "where are you from" question which acts as a polite introductory disguises the profound importance and symbolism of the question, since it is one of *the* most vexed of the Homeric questions of antiquity. Lucian manipulates tradition by claiming Homer for himself, as a Babylonian birth-location (Homer's answer) puts Homer firmly in his part of the world.[84] In this fantasy *locus*, in which the narrator has the burden of Homeric scholarship to reckon with in his privileged meeting with Homer, the questions are the obvious: did Homer write the *Iliad* after the *Odyssey*,[85] and did he write the lines which Zenodotus and Aristarchus claimed should be excluded.[86] Lucian's Homer fails to live up to the constructions of Alexandria, but it is interesting to note that the narrator fails to question Homer about the poem itself, except for the question about the first word of the poem, *mēnis*.[87] Homer states that the idea came to him haphazardly, unintentionally: οὕτως ἐπελθεῖν αὐτῷ μηδὲν ἐπιτηδεύσαντι (2.20, "It just came to me, although I had not purposefully thought it up"). The overriding theme of the *Iliad* was an accident. By highlighting the essential thematic aspects of the *Iliad* only to remove authorial control and impetus, Lucian undermines the dominance of Homer behind the system of interpretation, just as Lucian's narrator broached the famed questions of antiquity only to show how pointless these questions were.[88] Similarly, the raising and then undermining of the truth in the preface reflects the recusal of Lucian from responsibility over his narrative (and preface).[89]

       Where, then, does control in interpretation lie? Is the author really sidelined? There is a traditional answer. Even in his post-mortem existence in the Isles of the Blessed, Homer still relies on the Muses for his craft. After the Homeric heroes (along with Socrates) defeat those who had broken out of the Isles of the Damned, Homer composes a poem celebrating the battle, which begins (2.24): νῦν δέ μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, μάχην νεκύων ἡρώων ("Tell me now, Muse, of the battle of the heroes who are corpses"). Authority still, it seems, comes from the Muses. Despite Homer's confession of his *modus operandi*, namely that things just come to him, he still invokes the Muse to help him describe the battle of those in the Isles of the Blessed. There are at least two ways of interpreting this invocation. His opening is carefully constructed against the epic tradition he himself created, and within which he, too, is now caught. ἔννεπε points to the first line of the *Odyssey*, while the heroes as corpses recalls lines 3-4 of the *Iliad*'s proem (ἡρώων too used at the beginning of *Iliad* 1.4). The Iliadic allusion to the many souls of the heroes which the wrath of Achilles sent down to Hades, becomes concretely reality as Homer now sings of their exploits there. These heroes are in the Netherworld, in a sense, because Homer put them there: now he may continue the story, but against set epic-parameters. There is, after Homer, no such thing as separation from tradition, or pure originality,[90] as Lucian's preface itself shows: the inevitable literary inheritance of Lucian's post-Classical stance catches this *Kaizerzeitlicher* Homer too. Homer is responding to Homer, and can only thus write.[91] The Muse is, therefore, a signifier of creativity, but only through literary tradition, as Homer's new epic line proves: from his original epic creations onwards, Muse-invocation is first and foremost an invocation of Homer and his Muse-inspirations. The Muse has become little more than a metaphor of tradition.[92]

The Muse invocation also points to a hierarchy of authority. In conjunction with the openings of the first Homeric poems, the Muses stand too as metaphors for the creative process, for "it just came to me" of Homer in Lucian. Thus there is always a disavowal of responsibility to a higher authority. But Lucian, in the preface, shows that the natural readerly reaction to look for meanings and solutions in an original authoritative setting, as his actor-narrator persona here attempts to do, is an erroneous interpretative choice. In the same way, were we to look beyond Lucian's lies in his main narrative for truth, including his claims to truth in the preface, we would be disappointed. All the reader has to work with, in the end, are the texts themselves, with the umbilical cord to authors, or a sense of real, retrievable truth, cut. Even a fantasy meeting with Homer is of no use. Lucian, by means of this Homeric episode, can silence the pointless questions of antiquity and point to the inherent, reader-situated interpretations that matter – interpretations for which the author, Homer, can be of no help.[93] We are to interpret texts as we will, including, in the case of the *True Stories*, the interpretative preface.

Lucian, "Lucian" and Odysseus

Lucian, especially in the *Verae Historiae*, situates a great deal of creative responsibility at the door of the *narrator*, as opposed to *author*.[94] The narrator is an easy target for lies, and traditionally was seen as separate from the author. For example, the scholia on the Ares and Aphrodite episode in *Odyssey* 8 differentiated between Homer and Demodocus, and excused the bard for the *aprepon* nature of the story as he himself was not responsible for the words of Demodocus.[95] Just so does Lucian posit Odysseus the narrator as Odysseus the inventor of lies in his narration in

Odyssey 9-12. Building within a tradition, post-Alexandria, of rescuing Homer from any censure for the representations in his poetry, Lucian calls Odysseus the leader and teacher of lies.

> ἀρχηγὸς δὲ αὐτοῖς καὶ διδάσκαλος τῆς τοιαύτης βωμολοχίας ὁ τοῦ Ὁμήρου Ὀδυσσεύς, τοῖς περὶ τὸν Ἀλκίνουν διηγούμενος ἀνέμων τε δουλείαν καὶ μονοφθάλμους καὶ ὠμοφάγους καὶ ἀγρίους τινὰς ἀνθρώπους, ἔτι δὲ πολυκέφαλα ζῷα καὶ τὰς ὑπὸ φαρμάκων τῶν ἑταίρων μεταβολάς, οἷς πολλὰ ἐκεῖνος πρὸς ἰδιώτας ἀνθρώπους τοὺς Φαίακας ἐτερατεύσατο.
>
> Their leader and teacher in this tomfoolery is Homer's Odysseus, who narrates to Alcinous and his court the tales of captive winds and one-eyed men and flesh-eating men, and wild men, and still yet many headed beings and the transformations of his companions by drugs – so much did he beguile those simple-minded Phaeacians with those tall tales.

Lucian makes a clear demarcation between Homer and Odysseus.[96] Odysseus is Homer's but Odysseus is the *archēgos* and *didaskalos* himself of the *bōmolochia*.[97] Some commentators have seen this author-narrator and actor-narrator distinction mimicked in the *Verae Historiae*,[98] and it is a model I have followed loosely in this article in terms of distinguishing between the two shades of Lucians, that of the preface, and that of the main narrative.[99] There is no doubt that the voice of the narrator in the preface differs from that of the narrator in the main narrative, in terms of discourse. Yet I would prefer to identify the levels of responsibility in the two versions of the narrator as belonging to the same *persona*, not as an extradiegetic author in the preface preparing the way for the main narrative with its intradiegetic

narrator, but rather as two registers of the one and the same homodiegetic narrator in both preface and main narrative.[100] As a number of studies have shown, until the Isles of the Blessed episode the narrator of the main narrative is never named, and this anonymity seems to create a distance between the seemingly truthful narrator of the preface and the unceasingly lying counterpart of the main tale.[101] There are two indications which suggest a more nuanced interpretation of the two narrators is needed. There is, first, a strong link between both narratives at the very beginning of the main section of the *Verae Historiae* (1.5):

ὁρμηθεὶς γάρ ποτε ἀπὸ Ἡρακλείων στηλῶν καὶ ἀφεὶς εἰς τὸν ἑσπέριον ὠκεανὸν οὐρίῳ ἀνέμῳ τὸν πλοῦν ἐποιούμην. αἰτία δέ μοι τῆς ἀποδημίας καὶ ὑπόθεσις ἡ τῆς διανοίας περιεργία καὶ πραγμάτων καινῶν ἐπιθυμία.

For starting out from the pillars of Heracles and pushing out to the western ocean with a following wind, I made my voyage. The cause and purpose of my excursion abroad was curiosity of thought and a desire for new things.

The "ego" of the main narrative is inextricably linked with the preface by *gar*. The beginnings of this voyage are set in discourse with the preface, and answer the implied *why* set forth in the preface.[102] The vocabulary for the reason for setting out on this voyage mimics the details of the preface, too. *Hypothesis*, *dianoia* and *kainōn* are all found in the preface.[103] Novelty and curiosity of mind match the novelty of subject matter and the entertainment of the mind promised in the preface, and although the register of the narration has altered from discursive to pragmatic, the links and seams are clear. The "I" transgresses both narrative elements, yet the same "I" competes within those elements, as the first explicitly states that all that follows is

false, while the second points to the veracity of all of his lies.[104] There is thus a tension between the two registers of the same *persona*, as both invite interpretation and exert control over the act of reading.[105]

The identity of the narrator of the main narrative is revealed, at 2.28, as Lucian, the author.[106] When it comes to the point that the narrator must leave the Isles of the Blessed, Homer writes an epigram for him (2.28):[107]

τὸ δὲ ἐπίγραμμα ἦν τοιόνδε:

Λουκιανὸς τάδε πάντα φίλος μακάρεσσι θεοῖσιν

εἶδέ τε καὶ πάλιν ἦλθε φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν.

And the epigram was as follows:

Lucian, dear to the blessed gods, saw all of the things and made it back to his beloved homeland.

Finally, the identity of the narrator is revealed, and given the signs in the preface about what would follow, it comes as no surprise. The naming of the narrator brings Lucian into the fictional arena which he has created.[108] He too now lives in this fantasy-discourse, and, therefore, any interpretative or literary discussion is brought back to the outer most level of the narrative structure: what guise does Lucian assume in the preface? This epigram holds the answer. Lucian, because of this epigram, is now the creation of Homer. Homer assumes control of the plot from this point onwards, as he foregrounds a happy end to the adventure. He creates a *nostos* for this new Odyssean Lucian, in the narrative compressed into the two lines of the epigram. In the declaration that Lucian returned (past tense: πάλιν ἦλθε) to his native land, control over his own narrative has been wrested from Lucian the narrator, and a

delimitation has been set on the story, with the number of potential outcomes and false foreshadowings diminished.[109] We are led to expect an Odyssean continuation of the story, a prolepsis of an ultimately happy and safe return home. Lucian is now inscribed in hexameters, and the Odyssean adventure, the key influence on the text and one repeatedly and explicitly pointed to, is finally given a true Homeric authority.[110]

Lucian's transference of responsibility to Homer can be re-read into the preface. Lucian promotes Odysseus as the leader of lies in his narration to the *Phaeacians*. At the end of *Odyssey* 8 Alcinous asks Odysseus to name himself, and to tell of his adventures. Odysseus, at the beginning of book 9, prefaces his narration by first emphasising the delight he takes in symposiastic occasions (9.2-11), in the possibility to hear a bard (9.3-4, 7-8), but then foregrounds his own tale which he will narrate by hinting at the sufferings he has undergone (9.12-18), and by his revealing his identity (9.19-36), all in a manner which mimics the very information given in the *Odyssey*'s proem.[111] He then begins his tale by describing how he set out from Troy, a wind driving him to Ismaros (9.39-40). This is just how the opening of the main narration of Lucian's tale begins, with a description of the favourable wind as they left the pillars of Heracles. Odysseus' preface and his narration of his travels, of his reflections on song and his own troubles, before embarking on his *own* song, is a model for Lucian's preface on the nature of truth and lies in narration, and the main narrative which then follows it. This idea is cemented in this epigram, as the Lucianic identity of the narrator is merged with that of Homer's own Odysseus. This is one and the same Lucian as the narrator, speaking to a readership which mimics the Phaeacians, but with one key difference: we are to be less gullible, as Lucian has forewarned us.[112]

This persona, creation of Homer, is used too by Socrates in *Republic* book 10 and the myth of Er. At *Resp.* 614af Socrates states that he will tell of Er, a story not like that told to Alcinous (by Odysseus). The scholia to Lucian see in 1.4, where Lucian states that even philosophers told lies, a connection with Socrates' statement in the *Republic*.[113] As Ní Mheallaigh has proven, the advertisement of unlikeness encourages the reader, nevertheless, to compare Socrates' version with that of Odysseus, and therefore advertises the underlying fictionality of Socrates' tale.[114] Lucian has gone one step further and has appropriated both a Socratic voice, as I discussed above, and an Odyssean voice, and by so doing has responded to Socrates' distancing from Odysseus, by synonymising their accounts. On a yet further level of reading, Lucian's statement of truth, that he will tell no truth, is set within a framework of two voices whose narrations famously beggar belief. Lucian's insistence that only he is truthful is undermined by the very voices he chooses to project this statement. Thus, Lucian the author inscribes a version of himself in both the preface and main narrative, an identity which resembles but masks the author lying behind – no different from Plato's use of Socrates – or Odysseus, a bard-figure who sings his tales, within <u>Homer</u>'s *Odyssey*.

The veracity of Lucian's account is given Homeric authority as a result of this epigram. It declares that Lucian saw all of these things we learn from his narration, that is, the journey, the meeting with all of the characters and the meeting with Homer himself. By allowing Homer to ascribe truth-value to the completely untrue, Lucian bestows upon his text the ultimate seal of validation, given that, in antiquity, Homer was largely beyond reproach.[115] He also, however, challenges the very reverence with which the Homeric texts are received, given the emphasis Lucian places on his untruthfulness. Lucian has become a creation of Homer, and in this guise as an

Odyssean teller of tales who cannot be trusted, he calls into question his creator and the control he can exert over any text, even this epigram. The lack of ending to the *Verae Historiae*, and the denial of a narration of a successful *nostos*, further undermines the plot which Homer now ascribes to Lucian's journey. Once again, no plot, even Homer's, is unbreakable.[116]

Homer's Netherworld poetic constructions are once again created with the original Homeric epics as *hypotexts*. His epigram contains a Homeric intertext from *Odyssey* 1, where Odysseus' *nostos* is the subject of Athena's speech. She states, at *Odyssey* 1.82-3:

εἰ μὲν δὴ νῦν τοῦτο φίλον μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι,

νοστῆσαι Ὀδυσῆα πολύφρονα ὅνδε δόμονδε.

If now this is dear to the gods, that shrewd Odysseus return to his home.

Line 82 is especially noteworthy: φίλον μακάρεσσι θεοῖσι occurs only here in the Homeric corpus, but recurs in Homer's new work, his epigram for Lucian. Athena argues that Odysseus should get a *nostos*, and that Hermes should be dispatched to prise him out of the hands of Calypso. The original Odysseus gets his *nostos*, and Homer's new Odysseus, Lucian, will get his too, if we are to go on this intertext. Through this literary *a fortiori* example, we are inclined to trust him. Homer cements the notion that this Lucian is an Odysseus figure; by extension the readers of Lucian's work, as fore-warned Phaeacians, have been subjected to Lucian's hyper-*Odyssey*, with tales in their nature beyond anything found in the original *Odyssey* account of Odysseus. The circumstances, however, between the two Odysseus-es, Lucian the new Odysseus and actual Odysseus, are opposite: death has changed perspectives. In

the *Odyssey*, Odysseus was to travel *away* from Ogygia. Now Lucian is to travel *to* Ogygia (2.27). Odysseus chose Penelope over immortal life. Now in the Netherworld Odysseus changes his mind, in realization of his mistake (2.35-6). His replacement, Lucian as the new Odysseus the text promotes, is to deliver news of this change of mind by handing over a letter to Calypso, without the knowledge of Penelope (or Homer) (2.29). Odysseus can create and manipulate literary history, and he can do so without the author knowing. Homeric tradition is thus re-written, and Lucian's role in this reversal is key. Homeric authority and tradition are subverted by one of Homer's own characters, and tradition, as such, is shown as unstable. Homer's proleptic narrative about Lucian inscribed in the epigram becomes, therefore, all the more unstable, and the promise of a happy ending for this new Odysseus is put in doubt.

Homer undone

By putting Homer, and Homeric criticism, within the Isles of the Blessed, Lucian, as Kim has shown, presents Homeric poetry as occupying a space cut off from the world.[117] Lucian's literary, post-Classical world appropriates the past in person, and interrogates him. Lykinus, at the beginning of Lucian's *Hesiod*, points out to his interlocutor Hesiod that he, Hesiod, is indeed the best poet as his own poems prove this. He adds (1): "And we believe these things are so."[118] The narrator then goes on to undermine this trust in Hesiod by displaying the shortcomings of his work. In that dialogue the implicit reliance upon the author is raised right from the beginning, and Lykinus as a sort of ideal reader wants answers: why does Hesiod not fulfill his promises in his poetry. In the *Verae Historiae*, the situation is similar but much more complex. Lucian on one level glorifies Homer and satirizes the scholars of Homeric

poetry. Their reading was wrong, but the common-sense answers, the ones we really want, are the ones Homer gives. In that sense the historical identity of Homer rescues a non-scholastic approach to poetry. But on another level Homeric authority itself is undermined. He came up with the key theme of the *Iliad* unintentionally; the athetized lines are all his – including lines that really do not make sense in their contexts; his own Odysseus answers the calls of the Homeric critics by choosing eternal life over Penelope after all, and so overcomes the original Homeric plot that was laid upon him.[119] Moreover, Homer validates the narration of this Lucian, whom we know to be telling lies. He attempts to guarantee Lucian's *nostos*, basing his construction on the *nostos* of Odysseus which he wrote, but which is now un-written by Odysseus.

Homer is caught within a web of creations which construct Lucian's work, and Lucian himself. It is not just the case that Lucian's narrators (and by analogy Socrates and Odysseus) present slippery narrations, straining to receive the belief of their narratees despite the warnings of the preface; the historical authors too (Homer, Plato, Lucian) cannot be trusted, and in fact they have no idea what they are creating. In the hierarchy of belief, the author comes at the bottom, like the truth promoted implicitly in the Phaedran and Apologian intertexts of the preface, and the separated narrators, the constructed Odysseus-es have a degree of control and authorship, of manipulation, that the author par excellence, Homer and the philosopher par excellence raised in the preface, Socrates, do not have. This freedom to revert tradition, to destabilize authority, is inscribed already in Lucian's preface. He leaves the reader, specifically those *falling in with* the narrative (ἐντυχάνοντας), with the paratextual advice in the last sentence of his preface, to believe nothing that follows (1.4). We, the readers hailed in the opening of the preface, in our very participation, must decide whether the factors truth, and in that relation, trust, so advertised by Lucian in his authorial,

prefatory voice, actually mask the real task of the text's recipients: to challenge and to rewrite the very narrative Lucian presents. Lucian the actor-narrator meets Homer to receive answers: his Homer is a construction of traditions, one who could have come from Smyrna or Chios as well as Babylon, one who could have verified the critique of those Alexandrian scholars, simply because he is constructed, nothing more than a symbol of a never-ending search for identity and solutions. Lucian constructs his very own narrative-identity in similar fashion. We never come to any demonstrably verifiable solution to the conundrums Lucian's own *True Stories* fabricate. Thus, the fluidity of identity is symbolized too in the un-ended state of the narrative: the search has no *telos*,[120] and Lucian's open-ended journey through ever-increasingly surreal locations is mimicked by the ideal type of reading which Lucian's narrative elicits, one which is anti-teleological.

In the complex circularity of narration in the *True Stories*, Lucian, eventually named by Homer in the epigram, is both the historical author of the work, and synonymous with the narrator of the preface and main narrative. He is a Homer undermined by his narrators, in the guise at once of Socrates discoursing on truth and rhetoric, and then the ever-fluctuating persona of Odysseus. Lucian cannot control how we read his text, but he can try to manipulate our reading if we take the preface at face value. Rightly read, this text reneges upon responsibility. As Ní Mheallaigh has shown,[121] the abrupt ending to the narrative, when put into contact with the closural *prolepsis* which Homer gives the tale, in a sense makes the text fragmentary itself, an artifact which awaits discovery and analysis, having the more authentic status of a pseudo-document. It is almost as though, one day, Lucian himself will be asked: why did you end where you did? And he will answer just as his Homer did. But such a question would miss the underlying potential of the text.

Word-count: 13,137 (including endnotes).

Bibliography

Asmis, E. (1986) "*Psychagōgia* in Plato's *Phaedrus*", *ICS* 11, 153-72.

Bal, M. (1997) *Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of Narrative*, Toronto.

Barthes, R. (1977) *Image, Music, Text.* Translated by Stephen Heath, London.

Baumbach, M. (2013) "False Closure, True Lies and a Never Ending Story: Romantic Aesthetics, Lucian's *Verae Historiae* and a Fragmentary Ending", in Grewing, F.F., Acosta-Hughes, B. and Kirichenko, A. (eds) *The Door Ajar: False Closure in Greek and Roman Literature and Art*, Heidelberg, 263-76.

Beck, D. (2005) "Odysseus: Narrator, Storyteller, Poet?", *CPh* 100.3, 213-27.

Branham, R.B. (1989) *Unruly Eloquence: Lucian and the Comedy of Traditions*, Cambridge MA.

Brickhouse, T.C. and Smith, N.D. (1986) "Socrates' First Remarks to the Jury in Plato's *Apology of Socrates*", *CJ* 81, 289-98.

Burkert, W. (1960) "Das Lied von Ares und Aphrodite", *RhM* 103, 130–44.

Cairns, D.L. (2013) "The Imagery of *Erôs* in Plato's *Phaedrus*', in Sanders, E., Thumiger, C., Carey, C. and Lowe, N. (eds.), *Erôs in Ancient Greece*, Oxford, 233-50.

de Jong, I.J.F. (2009) "Metalepsis in Ancient Greek literature", in Grethlein, J. and Rengakos, A. (eds) *Narratology and interpretation: the content of narrative form in ancient literature*, Berlin, 87-115.

Dover, K.J. (1968) *Aristophanes Clouds*, Oxford.

Dunbar, N. (1998) *Aristophanes Birds*, Oxford.

Fields, D. (2013) 'The Reflections of Satire', *TAPA* 143, 213-45.

Fredericks, S.C. (1976) "Lucian's *True History* as Science Fiction", *Science Fiction Studies* 3, 49-60.

Genette, G. (1980) *Narrative Discourse: An Essay in Method*, Translated by Jane E. Lewin, Ithaca.

---- (1997) *Paratexts: Thresholds of Interpretation*, Cambridge.

Georgiadou, A. and Larmour, D.H.J. (1998) *Lucian's Science Fiction Novel, True Histories*, Leiden, Boston.

Goldhill, S. (1995) *Foucault's Virginity: Ancient Erotic Fiction and the History of Sexuality*, Cambridge.

---- (2002) *Who Needs Greek?: Contests in the Cultural History of Hellenism*, Cambridge.

González, J.M (2006) 'The Meaning and Function of *Phantasia* in Aristotle's *Rhetoric* III.1', *TAPA* 136, 99-131.

Heath, M. (2004) *Menander: a Rhetor in context*, Oxford.

Hillgruber, M. (1994) *Die pseudoplutarchische Schrift De Homero*, Stuttgart.

Kim, L. (2010) *Homer between History and Fiction in Imperial Greek Literature*, Cambridge.

Laird, A. (1993) "Fiction, Bewitchment and Story Worlds: The Implications of Claims to Truth in Apuleius", in Gill, C. and Wiseman, T.P. (eds) *Lies and Fiction in the Ancient World*, Exeter, 147-74.

---- (2003) "Fiction as a Discourse of Philosophy in Lucian's *Verae Historiae*", in Panayotakis, S. and Zimmerman, M. (eds) *The Ancient Novel and Beyond*, Leiden, Boston, 115-28.

Macleod, M.D. (1972) *Luciani Opera,* Tomus I, Oxford.

McCoy, M. (2007) *Plato on the Rhetoric of Philosophers and Sophists*, Cambridge.

Metcalf, R. (2004) "The Philosophical Rhetoric of Socrates' Mission", *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 37, 143-66.

Morrison, A. (2007) *The Narrator in Archaic Greek and Hellenistic Poetry*, Cambridge.

Ní Mheallaigh, K. (2005a) *Lucian's Self-Conscious Fiction: Theory in Practice.* Unpublished Thesis, Trinity College Dublin.

---- (2005b) ""Plato Alone was not There": Platonic Presences in Lucian", *Hermathena* 179, 89-103.

---- (2007) "Philosophical framing: the Phaedran setting of *Leucippe and Clitophon*", in Morgan, J.R. and Jones, M. (eds) *Philosophical Presences in the Ancient Novel*, *Ancient Narrative Supplementum* 10, Groningen, 231-44.

---- (2008) "Pseudo-documentarism and the limits of ancient fiction", *AJPh* 129, 403-31.

---- (2009) "Monumental fallacy: the teleology of origins in Lucian's *Verae Historiae*", in Bartley, A. (ed.) *A Lucian for our Times*, Newcastle upon Tyne, 11-28.

Nünlist, R. (2009) *The Ancient Critic at Work: Terms and Concepts of Literary Criticism in Greek Scholia*, Cambridge.

Reeve, C.D.C. (1989) *Socrates in the Apology: An Essay on Plato's Apology of Socrates*, Indianapolis.

Rose, M.A. (1993) *Parody: Ancient, Modern, and Post-Modern*, Cambridge.

Saïd, S. (1993) "Le *Je* de Lucien", in Baslez, M.-F., Hoffmann, P., Pernot, L. (eds) *L'invention de l'autobiographie d'Hésiode à saint Augustin*, Paris, 253-70.

Schlapbach, K. (2010) "The *logoi* of philosophers in Lucian of Samosata", *CA* 29.2, 250-77.

Schulz, A.-M. (2013) *Plato's Socrates as Narrator*, Lanham MD.

Slings, S.R. (1994) *Plato's Apology of Socrates: A Literary and Philosophical Study with a Running Commentary*, edited and compiled from the papers of the late E. de Strycker, S.J. Brill: Leiden, Boston.

Stalley, R.F. (1983) *An Introduction to Plato's Laws*, Oxford: Blackwell.

Trapp, M.B. (1990) "Plato's *Phaedrus* in Second-Century Greek Literature", in Russell, D.A. (ed.) *Antonine Literature*, Oxford, 141-73.

Vlastos, G. (1985) 'Socrates' Disavowal of Knowledge', *Philosophical Quarterly*, 35 (138), 1-31.

von Möllendorff, P. (2000) *Auf der Suche nach der verlogenen Wahrheit. Lukians Wahre Geschichten*, Tübingen.

---- (2006) "Camels, Celts and Centaurs. Lucian's Aesthetic Concept – The *Charis* of the Hybrid", in Nauta, R. R. (ed.) *Desultoria scientia. Genre in Apuleius' Metamorphoses and related texts*, Leuven, 63-86.

---- (2013) ""Sie hielt ein aufgerolltes Buch in den Händen. . ." – Metalepse als mediales Phänomen in der Literatur der Kaizerzeit", in Eisen, U.E. and von Möllendorff, P. (eds) *Über die Grenze: Metalepse in Text- und Bildmedien des Altertums*, Berlin.

---- (2014) "Mimet(h)ic paideia in Lucian's *True History*", in Cueva, E. and Byrne, S. (eds) *A Companion to the Ancient Novel*, Chichester, 522-34.

Werner, D.S. (2012) *Myth and Philosophy in Plato's Phaedrus*, Cambridge.

West, T.G. (1979) *Plato's Apology of Socrates: An Interpretation, with a new Translation*. Cornell: Ithaca and London.

Whitmarsh, T. (2001) *Greek Literature and The Roman Empire: The Politics of Imitation*, Oxford.

---- (2006) "*True Histories*: Lucian, Bakhtin, and the Pragmatics of Reception", in Martinadale, C. and Thomas, R.F. (eds) *Classics and the Uses of Reception*, Oxford: Blackwell, 104-15.

---- (2013) *Beyond the Second Sophistic: Adventures in Post-Classicism*, Berkeley.

Zeitlin, F. (2001) "Visions and Revisions of Homer in the Second Sophistic", in Goldhill, S. (ed.) *Greek Identity in the Second Sophistic*, 195-266.

---

[1] I use *story* as a translation of the Greek title διηγημάτων. The term signifies simply "fictional narrative", rather than historical account as such. See Georgiadou and Larmour (1998), 1 n. 1 and Kim (2010), 141 n. 6. I will not discuss the historiographical nature of the preface. See, instead, Georgiadou and Larmour (1998), 28-40, 58, and throughout their commentary. All translation in this article is my own, unless otherwise stated.

[2] Excellent discussion of the preface can be found in von Möllendorff (2000), 30-61, as well as Georgiadou and Larmour (1998) 51-9 and in their introduction, among other studies (see the bibliography in Ní Mheallaigh (2005a) as well as her own discussion of the preface in Ní Mheallaigh (2005a) and Ní Mheallaigh (2009)).

[3] For which see McCoy (2007), 2-7 for the seeming polarity in Plato and its significances.

[4] On which, see above all von Möllendorff (2000), 525-34, and also the bibliography and discussion at von Möllendorff (2014), 529.

[5] The preface is not the only *locus* for these debates: Lucian's *Cloud Cuckoo-Land* at 1.29 and the stop-off at Ogygia (2.35-6) re-open these issues, given the charged meta-poetical content of those episodes, because of the original texts which they allude to and manipulate (Aristophanes' *Clouds* and Homer's *Odyssey* book 5 respectively). See von Möllendorff (2000), 452-3, in particular.

[6] On the preface as an instrument of authorial control, see Genette (1997), 222.

[7] Above all Ní Mheallaigh (2009).

[8] The Greek text (throughout) is taken from the edition of Macleod (1972). This latter statement is closely modeled on Socrates' own in the *Apology* (21d). For the parallel, see Georgiadou and Larmour (1998), 1-2, and Ní Mheallaigh (2005a), 116-50, in addition to my discussion below.

[9] On which see von Möllendorff (2000), 17-18.

[10] Following the definition of LSJ s.v. χαρίεις II 2.

[11] On the adjective *psilos*, Lucian's *Peregrinus* 39.14 is of particular note: there it is stated that a man of taste (that is, properly educated) gets facts *without* embellishment (*psilos*), but to those βλᾶκας (uneducated) one must thicken the plot (ἐτραγῴδουν). Lucian's *VH* is for the educated.

[12] Cf. Nünlist (2009), 144, on the term in the Homeric scholia, where it is used principally as a synonym for *hēdonē*. Cf. too Hillgruber (1994), 93. The verbal form is found twice in Aristotle *Poetics* (1450a33-35 and 1450b16-20): the first reference refers to the emotional effects of tragic performance, and the latter to spectacle in tragedy – the *psychagōgia* has nothing to do with the poetry, but rather all to do with the costumes. Lucian, in the preface, emphasizes the effect of the language *and* content of his work to transport readers.

[13] On the parallelism, see von Möllendorff (2000), 37.

[14] At Achilles Tatius 2.35 the narrator Cleitophon embarks on something very similar: his sea-companions are undergoing grief at recent events, and so he decides to tell a *logos* which has erotic *psychagōgia*. This para-narrative (which includes the interlocutions of Clitophon's companion, Menelaus) is both a formal *synkrisis*, a display of rhetoric and *paideia* on a common novelistic theme, *eros*, but one which behaves as *mise-en-abîme* of the narrative action and themes which surround it (and so behaves not dissimilarly to Lucian's preface). Clitophon's retort to Menelaus at 2.37 clearly points back to the Europa ecphrasis of Ach.Tat. 1.1, and acts, therefore, as an exposition. Cf. the incisive discussion of Goldhill (1995), 81-94, and esp. 81-2. Importantly for my discussion, the narrative of both speakers at 2.35-7 mimic the discussions on *Eros* in both Plato's *Symposium* and *Phaedrus*, the latter especially so, given the use at the beginning of *psychagōgia*.

[15] Cf. *VH* 1.2, discussed above: τὸ ξένον τῆς ὑποθέσεως οὐδὲ τὸ χαρίεν τῆς προαιρέσεως.

[16] At *Zeuxis* 5, it is the multifaceted manner in which Zeuxis has produced his work, rather than the subject itself or its novelty, that is praiseworthy. Lucian uses the same word for variety in composition at *VH* 1.2: the lies are *poikila*, just as Zeuxis has displayed his skill *poikilōs*. On the adverb at *Zeuxis* 5 and its significance, see von Möllendorff (2006), 76-7.

[17] Σ bT, on ἀνδράσι Πυγμαίοισι, *Il*. 3.6: καὶ τῷ ξένῳ τῆς ἱστορίας ψυχαγωγεῖ καὶ τὸν θροῦν αὔξει.

[18] See especially *Dionysus* 5 and 8 (on literary novelty and reader's expectations), *Bis Accusatus* 33 (Lucian's work as a mix of old comedy, invective and cynicism) and *Prometheus Es* 5 (Lucian's originality consists in his blending of Socratic dialogue

form and comedy, but the seams of each genre should show). On Lucian's aesthetic self-representation, see, above all, von Möllendorff (2006), esp. 65-7 and 79-83.

[19] On the reliability of the preface's narrator, see, further, my discussion at pp. 21-3. See too Whitmarsh (2013), 63-74 for a more nuanced (anti-narratological) approach.

[20] See, above all, Dio Chrys. 32.5 (he associates the term with theatre, and as the opposite of *spoudaios*), and Strabo 1.1.10, 1.2.3.36 and 1.2.3.38, with the discussion of von Möllendorff (2000), 43-5, Kim (2010), 62-3 and especially Ní Mheallaigh (2005a), 139-153. Ní Mheallaigh in particular shows how the Strabean intertexts add to Lucian's meta-commentary of the value of fiction versus truth.

[21] "Nor is it true what Eratosthenes says, that every poet aims at entertainment, not instruction."

[22] Kim (2010), 149 n. 35, whose translation I borrow.

[23] In the second sentence of the 2nd century (C.E.) treatise on rhetoric *Ars Rhetorica* by ps.-Dionysius we find a similar formulation that *psychagōgia* is a constituent part of festivals put on by cities to help facilitate relaxation from life's labours. For the date of the treatise, see Heath (2004), 129-30.

[24] Laird (2003), 18 points out the neglect this term here in the *VH* has suffered in scholarship, but omits further discussion himself. See the brief excursus in von Möllendorff (2000), 39-42.

[25] For further discussion and definition of *metalepsis*, see, principally, de Jong (2009), esp. 89-90, and for this section of the *VH* preface as metaleptic, see, most recently, von Möllendorff (2013), 368-9. I use *meta*-commentary here simply for the reason that it is one remove away from the *explicit* debate here in the preface – the discussion of truth and lies belongs to a tradition of previous debates on the topic, and therefore the reader is bound to posit this debate within the history of such debates.

[26] For the idea of high vantage point and the world as a spectacle, or hotchpotch, see *Icaromenippus* 16 and Pan's amusement from his vantage point at *Bis Accusatus* 10.18. Cf. the discussion of Whitmarsh (2001), 257-65.

[27] On the importance of philosophy for the preface and the *VH* as a whole, see Georgiadou and Larmour (1998), esp. 13-22 and 40-4. See also Laird (2003), von Möllendorff (2000), 544-62 and above all Ni Mheallaigh (2005a), 118-53 and (2005b), 96-9, among others. Laird (2003) and Ni Mheallaigh (2005b) concentrate, in particular, on the representation of philosophy and philosophers in the Isles of the Blessed. On Lucian and Plato generally, see Branham (1989), 67-123.

[28] *Laws* 727a7-b3, following von Möllendorff (2000), 36-8.

[29] On the readership, see Whitmarsh (2006), 112. On the athletic comparison, see, above all, von Möllendorff (2000), 36-8, and cf. Georgiadou and Larmour (1998), 52 for a list of authors who use an athletic analogy to illustrate a conceptual point.

[30] Whitmarsh (2001), 247-93 with reference in particular to *Nigrinus*, *Philopseudes* and the *Piscator* shows the danger of seeking "true utterances" in Lucian's works, as the multiple *personae* purportedly representative of Lucian the author elude approximation. On the reader's cooperation in activating historical philosophical debate, see Schlapbach (2010), and esp. 251-2: "By emphasizing the recipient's active involvement in the creation of sense, Lucian points to the limitations of established types of philosophical discourse."

[31] On the background to these statements, see Reeve (1989), 10-14 and 28-32; see, too, the discussion of Slings (1994), 27-8.

[32] See Reeve (1989), 5-6 on this statement. Cf. Ní Mhellaigh (2005a), 120: "By presenting himself subsequently as a guileless, plain-speaking man who knows nothing, Socrates, by this logic, implies that he is truthful."

---

[33] Ní Mhellaigh (2005a), 120-1.

[34] Ní Mhellaigh (2005a), 121, on *VH* 2.17-20 and *Ap*. 41a-c.

[35] Most strongly put in the *Apology* at 17b7-8: only Socrates tells the truth, not his detractors.

[36] As Reeve (1989), 5 states, Socrates is clearly a clever speaker, but of a type (according to Reeve) somewhat different to the sophists who spin rhetoric to deceive.

[37] Cf. von Möllendorff (2000), 555 (with Ní Mheallaigh (2005a), 127-8) on the *lebenswert* value of lies in the *VH*, as a parallel to the *Phaedo* (esp. 114d6).

[38] *VH* 1.2.

[39] It is beyond the scope of this article to discuss the many facets of ἤνικται (1.2). The best discussion is still Georgiadou and Larmour (1998), 5-6 and 22-44. They state (23) that its conjunction with Lucian's coinage ἀκωμῳδήτως implies that *parody* is the verb's key signification. See, too, von Möllendorff (2000), 44-5, 48-56 and 567-8. On parody as a form of meta-fiction, and for a history of its development, see, above all, Rose (1993), 1-39.

[40] For bibliography on the *Apology*, and especially its opening (pseudo-) *prooemium* as a parody of the rhetoric he so condemned, see Brickhouse and Smith (1986), 289-98. On Socrates' philosophical rhetoric and the significance of the oracle and his mission, see Metcalf (2004). On Socrates' irony in this connection, cf. Vlastos (1985), 3-9.

[41] In the *Apology*, Socrates promises "that he will subordinate a rhetoric of nonrational persuasion to a rhetoric of truth-telling" (so Reeve (1989), 6), which is essentially too what Lucian argues as to how he differs from the "others".

[42] At a yet further remove, Socrates is expressing his ignorance in response to the original oracle which proclaimed his wisdom: through this statement, Socrates

implicitly points to the invalidity of the oracle as a higher truth; Lucian, in turn, is answering Socrates, but the reader in each case is to doubt the validity of *ex cathedra* pronouncements. On the Socratic distancing from the oracle, see West (1979) 106-7.

[43] That this adverb signifies the stage of Old Comedy has been demonstrated beyond doubt by von Möllendorff (2000), 49-50, following Fredericks (1976), 56-7. The latter is correct to see in the explicit praise of Aristophanes by the narrator of the main narrative (1.29) a hint that it is Aristophanes whom we should principally have in mind with this adverb in the preface. The metaphor of the stage makes even more sense when one takes into account Aelius Aristides' treatise *Concerning the Prohibition of Comedy* 29.21 (Behr). A teacher ought not to go to the theatre as it is dedicated to *hēdonē* and *psychagōgia*.

[44] Schol. Ar. *Av.* 1553f. rightly see in the place name an allusion to philosophers who walk in shadow.

[45] Dunbar (1998), 485-6 sees too a possible allusion to Aeschylus' play *Psychagōgoi*.

[46] Cf. Schol. Ar. *Av.* 1555b, who define the verb as referring to Socrates' teaching of souls, or his leading them.

[47] See Dunbar (1998), 486 for further discussion.

[48] The best discussion of Socrates in Aristophanes is still Dover (1968), xxxii-lvii.

[49] In my discussion of Odysseus, below, I connect all three narratorial frames, Lucian and "Lucian", Plato and Socrates, and Homer and Odysseus. On the famous problem of Socrates as representative or non-representative of the historical Plato's philosophy, see, most recently, Schulz (2013), 4-7 (and 1-16 on Plato's methods of embedding or hiding his own philosophical conceptions through or behind the Socratic voice).

[50] Cf. Dover (1968), xlv.

[51] On Lucian's use of Aristophanes generally, especially in the *VH*, see von Möllendorff (2000), 193-205.

[52] On which, see Reeve (1989), 10. I am not suggesting that Plato's Socrates is uni-faceted or non-slippery; the Aristophanic intertext makes explicit that it is the *slippery* persona of Socrates that Lucian promotes.

[53] *Gorgias* 452e, where rhetoric is a means towards *public* persusasion: cf. Asmis (1986), 154.

[54] *Phaedrus* 261d10-e2. See the discussion of Asmis (1986), 154-5.

[55] Cf. Asmis (1986), 155: 'Consequently, Socrates argues, since rhetoric is the practice of deception, and since deception cannot be successful unless the deceiver knows the truth, the rhetorician must have knowledge.' Cf. McCoy (2007) 174-5 for a succinct but clear summary of Socrates' exposition of the true usefulness of rhetoric.

[56] Cf. Asmis (1986), 157 on *Phaedrus* 271. Cf. Plutarch *Pericles* 15.2 for an emphasis on the power of rhetoric to lead souls to the desired point – Plutarch there cites this very Phaedran passage to illustrate the *technē* of rhetoric.

[57] For the importance of the *Phaedrus* in prose texts of the early imperial period, see Trapp (1990), and esp. the appendix at 170-3, and Ní Mheallaigh (2007). For a recent, careful, discussion of the myths used in the *Phaedrus* itself, see Cairns (2013).

[58] To an Athenian audience, of course, this location would not be exotic, but to both Socrates himself, and through literary tradition to Lucian and his readers, the location takes on a special, extra-ordinary significance.

[59] So too will a relaxation of the mind from more serious reading provide preparation for labour all the more intense (lit. *thought more fully blooming*, fit for labour), *VH* 1.1: ἀκμαιοτέραν. LSJ s.v. ἀκμαῖος I 2 define the adjective as belonging to the "culmination of oratory", citing Hermog. *Id.* 1.7 and *Inv.* 4.4, which makes the

Phaedran intertext all the more appropriate, that dialogue relating as it does the art of, chiefly, *spoken* rhetoric.

[60] I am following here the discussion of Asmis (1986), 159, where she states: "Acting as a "psychagogue", [Socrates] associates Phaedrus with himself in a search for self-knowledge, by guiding him to a holy place where Phaedrus may be healed of his evil [rhetorical] enchantment."

[61] On the pillars of Heracles as the outer-limits of the world, see Strabo 3.5.5.

[62] Plato here is probably alluding to (and punning on) the famous *dictum* of Gorgias about the effect of language on the soul (*Helen* 10): αἱ γὰρ ἔνθεοι διὰ λόγων ἐπῳδαὶ ἐπαγωγοὶ ἡδονῆς, ἀπαγωγοὶ λύπης γίνονται (for the songs inspired through *logoi* are enticers of pleasure, dispellers of pain). On the parallels between this passage and Ach. Tat. 2.35 and Lucian *VH* 1.2, see Goldhill (1995), 82 (and 82 n. 69).

[63] On the symbolism of the language for journeys, paths, and guidance at the beginning of the *Phaedrus*, see Werner (2012), 20.

[64] The expression ἐκ τοῦ ἀστείου occurs only here. In the *De Domo*, Lucian also seems to enlarge as metaphors of style the physical features of the Phaedran setting, esp. at *De Domo* 4 and 5, and the close relation between the beautiful setting and the production of *logos*, in the sense that the former generates the latter, and is its original author.

[65] Similarly, Socrates states that rhetorical *technē* is *psychagōgia* through *logoi* (261a8, quoted above).

[66] On later uses of *psychagōgia* and its application as a term implying bewitchment, see Laird (1993), 170-1. Cf. too Apuleius *Met.* 1.1 on the bewitching effect on the ears promised by the narrative, in a preface which similarly insists on its novelty as well as truth-value.

[67] Πρὶν ἄν τις τό τε ἀληθὲς ἑκάστων εἰδῇ πέρι ὧν λέγει ἢ γράφει.

[68] Διὸ δεῖ τοὺς ἐντυγχάνοντας μηδαμῶς πιστεύειν αὐτοῖς.

[69] *Cal.* 11: οὐδ' ἂν κατίσχυε τὴν πάντων ἰσχυροτέραν ἀλήθειαν, εἰ μὴ πολὺ τὸ ἐπαγωγὸν καὶ πιθανὸν καὶ μυρία ἄλλα παρεσκεύαστο κατὰ τῶν ἀκουόντων.

[70] See, especially, the *Philopseudes* and *Vitarum auctio* (passim.).

[71] The idea of bringing something forth (*ekpherō*) has a wide range of meanings, and is often used of bringing something out of darkness into the light, including the act of childbirth. Cf. esp. Plato *Resp.* 461c and *Laws* 788c. In the sense used by Lucian (and it is used in this form only here by him) it most likely signifies publication (of written work), similar to the sense used by Dion. Hal. at the beginning of his work on literary composition (*Comp.* 1). It is strategically placed to balance the verb of the next clause, ἤνικται, the antithesis emphasized by the balancing ὅτι... ἀλλ᾽ ὅτι introductions.

[72] Cf. von Möllendorff (2000), 46.

[73] It is found elsewhere, before Lucian, only in [Longinus] *Subl.* 15.8 and Dion. Hal. *De Im.* fr. 31.5.1.

[74] Aristotle uses the term *phantasia* at *Rhetoric* 1404a11 to define *lexis*. Its definition there has been subject to varying interpretations, from "ostentation", "mere show" to something pertaining closer to psychological function. For recent discussion, see González (2006).

[75] Strabo uses the term to describe the style of historians such as Herodotus and Ctesias who aim at a pleasing reception (Strabo 11.6.3): see Kim (2010), 148-9 for discussion, and on Lucian's *VH* and Strabo, as well as the traditions of historiography, see Kim (2010), 144-50.

[76] See the discussion of Slings (1994), 28, on *Apology* 19.

---

[77] Not that Socrates' use of myth should be understood simply as a vehicle for philosophical thought (even that is argued against): see, principally, the discussion, with references, of Werner (2012), 9-15.

[78] The same emphasis is placed on *to terpnon* in *De Domo* 2 on the joy of beholding beauty, but only as a contrast to those who can respond to beauty with words. Longus famously sets up his work in opposition to Thucydides, by alluding to the latter's *ktēma es aiei* (1.22) because it is *aterpnoteron*, with his own *ktēma de terpnon* for all (*preface*, 3). Goldhill (1995), 6-7 rightly sees Longus marking a 'rhetorical self-positioning with regard to what is a "focal point for historiographical dispute throughout the Hellenistic period" – the theoretical opposition between the "pleasurable" (and the "mythic") on the one hand, and the "useful" (and the researched) on the other'. Goldhill (1995), 7 recalls too Gorgias' rhetoric and its *terpsis*, which is surely central to Lucian's *presentation* of his plausible lies.

[79] Cf. Werner (2012), 14: "Platonic myth serves as a means of capturing the attention of the appropriately disposed nonphilosophical reader (or listener), so as to draw him or her into the philosophical life. Such a use of myth is rooted in Plato's view of the soul, and is closely related to his notion of ψυχαγωγία."

[80] Cf. Ní Mheallaigh (2009), 12: "Lucian's preface, therefore, playfully highlights the fallacy of the notion that the author's intentions are reliably recoverable through the text."

[81] Plato's redeployment of argumentation about rhetoric in the mouth of Socrates is not entirely static, of course. Socrates' new appropriation of rhetoric as a *technē* is only one facet of the many arguments on rhetoric and truth in the *Phaedrus*.

[82] The fact that Lucian's Odyssey-like adventure is open-ended reflects the proposition of the preface. On the meta-literary implications of the non-ending of the *VH*, see Baumbach (2013), passim.

[83] On this episode, see von Möllendorff (2000), 367-73, and most recently Kim (2010), 162-8, whose discussion I follow, in part, in this section. See, too, the succinct but lucid discussion of Ní Mheallaigh (2009), 23-7.

[84] On this, see Ní Mheallaigh (2009), 25-6 and Kim (2010), 164-5.

[85] *VH* 2.20 (cf. von Möllendorff (2000), 370-1).

[86] *VH* 2.20.

[87] 2.20: on this question, see Kim (2010), 163.

[88] As pointed out already by Ní Mheallaigh (2009), 11: 'The *VH* exposes the fallacy of the very idea of origins, and explores the dangers inherent in the cultural privileging of origins through intentionalist readings.'

[89] Cf. Kim (2010), 164 on the pointlessness of investigating Homer's poetic decisions. Lucian sometimes brings to light the inconsistencies in Homer's texts: cf., e.g., *Iuppiter Confutatus* 1 and 2 on the inconsistencies in Homer's portrayal of Zeus and Fate.

[90] Lucian's *Piscator* shows most clearly the inevitability of imitation by setting much of that dialogue in Homeric cento. Cf., too, *Prometheus Es* 3 for the necessity of epigonality.

[91] Of course, this post-Homeric Homer writes, rather than sings or composes.

[92] The traditional interpretation of the Muses as figures to whom responsibility for composition and therefore quality and content can be shifted by the poet, is reflected too in Lucian's short dialogue *Hesiodus*. In it, Lykinus challenges Hesiod about his unfulfilled claims to speak of the future (1-3). Hesiod deflects Lykinos' criticisms to

the Muses (4; cf. 9), and the historical author is spared the charges of inaccuracy of falsehood which so obviously pertain to him. On the relationship between Muse and narrator, and the disavowal of responsibility, see Morrison (2007), 73-4.

[93] Cf. Ní Mheallaigh (2009), 25 on the Aristarchan fallacy (for Lucian) of elucidating Homer from Homer.

[94] On the instability of Lucian naming himself, see Goldhill (2002), 64-5.

[95] See schol. on *Od*. 8.267, with the discussion of Burkert (1960), 143 who himself compares the I-narration of Odysseus in books 9-12.

[96] In this fictional Netherworld the fictional characters overwhelm and control outcomes and even their creators, as Odysseus' successful defence of Homer against Thersites proves (2.20). Cf. Ní Mheallaigh (2005a), 166 and (2009), 21.

[97] Cf. Kim (2010), 142-3.

[98] Above all Georgiadou and Larmour (1998), 59. On I-narrators in Lucian and the distinction of actor-narrator categories, see above all Saïd (1993), esp. 263-6.

[99] On the complexity and interaction of author- and actor- discourse, see Bal (1997), 50-6.

[100] For these narratological labels, I follow Genette (1980) (see esp. 128).

[101] See the recent study of Kim (2010), 172-3 and above all Goldhill (2002), 65. Fields (2013), 214 n. 4, on Lucian as narrator *and* author of the text, notes that Lucianic texts 'simultaneously [make] any conclusive identification impossible' between author and narrator of the same name.

[102] On the function of *gar* here, see, above all, von Möllendorff (2000), 62

[103] Listed and discussed by von Möllendorff (2000), 64-5.

---

[104] See, above all, the narrators insistence at 1.26 that the mirror on the moon really is there, and that the readers can check the veracity of this statement by visiting the moon themselves.

[105] A more complicated (modern) example for the synonymy of narrators is _Operation Shylock_ by Philip Roth. Roth the narrator encounters another Philip Roth in the course of his journey, a persona which matches the historical information the real Philip Roth gives of his life, outside of the book. The competing figures of one and the same person bring into question the dichotomy of fiction and history, and underline the dangers of historicism.

[106] Whitmarsh (2013), 67 has argued, in recent discussion of the I-narrator in Achilles Tatius, that an ancient readership would automatically associate the anonymous I of a narrative with the identity of the actual, historical author. Lucian goes one step further and explicitly points to his identity, thus removing all doubt.

[107] On the fact that this is an epitaph on a gravestone, see Georgiadou and Larmour (1998), 212 and von Möllendorff (2000), 421-5.

[108] Cf. Ní Mheallaigh (2009), 23.

[109] As Kim (2010), 173 states: "In this sense his departure from the island and his journey home have already been narrated by Homer, and Lucian has been enclosed in the poet's literary universe."

[110] Cf. Zeitlin (2001), 247.

[111] On the overlap and mirroring of Odysseus' narration with the primary narrative of the _Odyssey_, see, above all, Beck (2005).

[112] Cf. Kim (2010), 154.

[113] Ní Mheallaigh (2005a), 128.

---

[114] Ní Mheallaigh (2005a), 128: The advertisement "injects a subversive element of doubt into the text. By knowingly constructing a polarity with Odysseus' tales, which is ostensibly calculated to confirm the veracity of his tale, but paradoxically gives the game (it is a *Fiktionalitätssignal*), Socrates advertises the fictionality of the *mythos*".

[115] This is only broadly true, of course: one need only read Dio's *Trojan Oration* for a different view of Homer, for which see Kim (2010), 85-139.

[116] On this, see Baumbach (2013).

[117] Kim (2010), 168.

[118] καὶ ἡμεῖς πιστεύομεν οὕτως ἔχειν.

[119] This tendency for subversive creativity on Odysseus' part is reflected in his defence of Homer against Thersites: he reads and controls interpretation of what Homer originally created.

[120] Baumbach (2013), 272, discussing in particular the *Nachleben* of the *VH*, argues that the lack of ending is successful, as the text's reception proves, in inviting the reader "to work out the closure for him/herself"; he lists a number works, from Cervantes to Jules Verne, which all added new adventures to Lucian's *True Stories*.

[121] (2008), 421-2.