

Advertising One's Own Story.
Text and Speech in Achilles Tatius'
Leucippe and Clitophon

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It is perhaps worth clarifying at the outset what this essay is not about. It is not a discussion of oral vs. written forms of communication. I am going to argue that *Leucippe and Clitophon* playfully explores the Platonic dichotomy between living speech and written word, but that it does so quite independently of the medium involved (voice, book, computer screen etc.). Of course, we are not dealing with an 'oral' text and not even with a hybrid between oral and written forms of communication; hybridity, in this case, refers only to the presentation of discourse. Within this framework, 'speech' is intended to mean 'mimetic fiction of speech'. I am particularly concerned with the creation of the narrator-character in a fictional autobiography, or, to be more precise, with the creation of a fictional narrative *voice* of a narrator-character in a 'material' *text* attributable to a real author.

Leucippe and Clitophon is unique among the extant ancient Greek erotic novels in being voiced by the hero of the story. Of the two main narratological approaches to the first-person narrative, the one offered by F. K. Stanzel is centred on the grammatical person; it posits a 'first-person' narrative situation as the main alternative to the 'authorial' narrative situation, and assumes a 'figural' narrative situation (*personale Erzählsituation*, vaguely corresponding to the Jamesian character-bound focalisation) as a distinctive third type.¹ This classification has been rightly criticised for its rigid grammatical formalism. G. Genette, on the other hand, relativised the importance of

¹ Stanzel 1984 [1979].

grammatical person and drew a clear distinction between narrative voice (*who speaks?*) and narrative mood (*who sees?*),² thus creating a new territory for the study of story presentation, while at the same time reducing the problem of voice to a purely formal aspect of the primary relationship between story and narrative ('who', 'when', and 'from where').³ For obvious reasons, there is virtually no room in structuralist narratology for cognitive and pragmatic aspects of narrative voice and narrative act.⁴ What I intend to discuss in this paper does not strictly belong to the domain of narratology, however.⁵ I am going to look at the illusionary effects of the fictive narrator's presence in a written text, not as a possible theoretical approach but as an aspect implicitly thematised in the novel.

Admittedly, the mimetic 'presence' of a narrator is a very slippery concept. Every text supposes an enunciator whose presence can be felt or imagined in the writing. From a modern perspective, the Homeric bard is certainly present in the text of the *Iliad* as a palpable character in spite of the fact that the dative *moi* in the first line of the *Odyssey* is the only grammatical appearance of the Homeric 'narrator' as an 'I'. But this is an obvious nonsense; what the modern reader imagines behind the written text is the (real) performative situation that is perhaps *described* in two scenes of the *Odyssey*, but it is not really *inscribed* in the text; the figure of the 'bard' derives from the reader's extratextual historical knowledge. As for *Leucippe and Clitophon*, it is an ego-narrative presented in 'direct speech', but this in itself does not make it imitative of speech. In spite of the first person, it is not a typical example of what Émile Benveniste defined as discourse (*discours*) in opposition to history (*histoire*):⁶ a subjective discourse marked by the use of the first person and the present or present perfect tense, involving a speaker who seeks to establish a direct contact with the addressee. The first person is there, and the narrative is framed as a conversation with a stranger,

² Genette 1980 [1972].

³ The category of 'audibility' introduced by Chatman 1978, 196 is still centred on the subject of enunciation in relation to the story and to the discourse; Chatman insists on 'explicit self-mention' by the narrator as the main criterion of audibility.

⁴ For recent discussions of the 'narrator' constructed by the receiver as a speaker see Coste 1990, 167; Fludernik 1996, 31–35; Aczel 1998; 2001; Jahn 2001.

⁵ For an interpretation of *Leucippe and Clitophon* in strictly narratological terms see Morgan 2004.

⁶ Benveniste 1966, 237 ff.; cf. Genette 1988, 98–9, Calame 2005, 17.

but one does not feel the presence of either the narrator or the audience at the time of the narration; the narrative is formally a speech, but it is (on the surface, at least) not a speech act. It is not overtly 'discursive' and could just as well be seen as a detached and objective *histoire* formally cast in the first person. If, however, one considers the novel in its broader cultural context, the form of the narrative as a first-person *speech* can be taken as a signal of sophistic display, an aspect that links Clitophon's 'autobiographical' novel to the Second Sophistic;⁷ this considered, the narcissistic figure of the sophistic orator suddenly emerges as a tangible figure through the descriptions of works of art and through the pseudo-philosophical *sententiae*. The presence of the speaker is and is not inscribed in the text; the fiction of performance was perhaps obvious to the original readership, but it has been widely denied or ignored by modern scholars. Once it is acknowledged, however, it seems a natural progression to link the intentionality of the narrative to the speaking character and to consider the creation of this character in terms of rhetorical self-fashioning.

There are two interlinked prerequisites for interpreting Clitophon's ego-narrative as a consistent fiction of spoken discourse: we must 1) take into account more fully the cultural context of the novel, and, 2) abandon the pseudo-Platonic 'ontology' of fiction in favour of a more pragmatic view of the narrative act,⁸ one that transcends the dilemma between mimetic and diegetic, oral and written, performance and textuality.⁹ The fact that we live in a 'post-literate' audiovisual era might make both of these steps easier. What the Second Sophistic puts on display through the spectacle of speech is a heritage of books. By a happy coincidence, we necessarily read rhetorical products of that era (and multimedia narratives of our own time) with the experience of written culture heavily inscribed in our consciousness.

⁷ Cf. Goldhill 1995, 73: 'the moral self-positioning of characters in the novel through the rhetoric of the philosophy schools ... is a fertile source of irony and humour. Central to this irony ... is the strategy of first-person narration.'

⁸ For pragmatist criticism of (post-)structuralist narratology see Herrnstein Smith 1981, 227–8; Laird 1999, 44–63.

⁹ See Kahane 2001 on the false distinction between 'oral' and 'written' as two distinctive kinds of discourse.

1. A speech on love

*Leucippe and Clitophon*¹⁰ is almost entirely narrated by an autodiegetic first-person narrator, Clitophon, the protagonist of the story.¹¹ 'Almost entirely' is a crucial qualifier: Clitophon's narrative is a long first-person narrative, but it is framed as a report of an anonymous ego-narrator who claims to have suffered a shipwreck near the Phoenician coast and to have met Clitophon in front of a votive picture of Europa somewhere in Sidon. It is obviously this 'author' who wrote the book, he is the primary narrating 'I'. However, since the narrative does not return to the opening frame at the end, it can be argued that the scope of the initial scene is limited to the function of launching the novel.¹² From the moment a living example of the novelistic hero enters the stage to share with us his authentic experience, there is no need for a second appearance of the special reporter from Sidon.

There are two further points that are worth making:

1. The initial scene places no particular emphasis on the genesis and material existence of the novel as a written text. The contrast with Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* is highly instructive in this regard.¹³ Longus' prologue is intended to explain his (i.e. the narrator's) motives for writing the very text we have in front of us, and the book is described as 'an offering to Love, the Nymphs and Pan, a possession to delight all mankind' (ἀνάθημα μὲν Ἐρωτι καὶ Νύμφαις καὶ Πανί, κτήμα δὲ τερπνὸν πᾶσιν ἀνθρώποις, *Prooem.* 3). The allusion to Thucydides' programmatic statement (κτῆμα ... ἐς αἰεὶ μᾶλλον ἢ ἀγώνισμα ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα, 1,22,4), albeit provocative in its emphasis on the consumer's pleasure, nevertheless boasts an educational component (προπαιδεύσει, *Prooem.* 3)¹⁴ and calls attention to the written text.¹⁵ As a votive object, the book forms a direct counterpart to the painting that inspired the author. Achilles Tatius, on the other hand, uses the frame only as a *mise en scène* of Clitophon's first-person narration, that is, of Clitophon's *speech*.

¹⁰ All translations of *Leucippe and Clitophon* are from Whitmarsh 2002.

¹¹ For 'autodiegetic narrator' (narrator-hero) as a subtype of 'homodiegetic narrator' (narrator-character) see Genette 1980, 245.

¹² Hägg 1971, 125–6.

¹³ On Longus' prologue see esp. Hunter 1983, 38–52; Morgan 2003, 17–20, 145–148.

¹⁴ *ibid.* 1983, 50.

¹⁵ Contrast Th. 1,22,4: καὶ ἐς μὲν ἀκρόασιν ἴσως τὸ μὴ μυθῶδες αὐτῶν ἀτερπέστερον φανεῖται ... ἐς τὸ παραχρῆμα ἀκούειν.

2. The initial situation is not used for the purpose of authentication.¹⁶ The fact that the ‘writer’ does not name himself in the text (contrast Chariton and Heliodorus!) gives a certain autonomy to the narration; this is also true of Longus’ proem, which, nevertheless, insists very strongly on the narrator’s role as a writer and on the material existence of a pictorial source which is explained by a local interpreter. The primary narrator of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, on the contrary, does not authenticate his story by referring to, e.g., a transcription of Clitophon’s *res gestae* deposited in a temple; he only reports meeting Clitophon and *listening* to his talk.

Moreover, the reader is implicitly invited to question the reliability of the first narrator. Was he really able to reproduce faithfully the long speech of the Phoenician stranger? Such concern with credibility may at first seem trivial: every reader knows that *Leucippe and Clitophon* is a purely fictional text. But the doubt is further compounded by the main subtext of the opening scene, Plato’s *Phaedrus*.¹⁷ The *locus amoenus* which is presented as an ideal place for talking about love (1,2,3: ἡδὺς καὶ μύθων ἄξιος ἐρωτικῶν) is evidently based on the initial scene of the *Phaedrus* (228E–230E). In his dialogue, Plato shows Phaedrus *reading* to Socrates Lysias’ speech on love which he was unable to memorise, as an illustration of the limits of human memory and of the disadvantages of fixed text in comparison to living dialogue. The dilemma between living speech and written word is only implicit in Achilles Tatius:¹⁸ with a little imagination, one might take the Platonic intertext to suggest that what we have in front of us is the exact opposite of a written speech read by a performer with a short memory, but the contrast receives no particular emphasis. However, the contrast between ‘written word’ (fiction) and ‘real life’ seems to lurk in the memorable scene of Clitophon using a book as a camouflage while he secretly feasts his eyes on Leucippe (1,6,6).

Plato’s *Phaedrus* was one of the most popular classical texts in the second century AD.¹⁹ It was a natural point of reference for the genre of ‘literature on love’ cultivated in that century, in particular for the pseudo-Lucianic

¹⁶ On authentication see Hansen 2003.

¹⁷ *ibid.* 1990, 155. On Platonic influences on *Leucippe and Clitophon* see Laplace 1988; Morales 2004, 50–60. Even the theories of vision exposed by Clitophon and other characters are a blend of the Platonic theory of vision (*Phdr.* 255c1–3) with the stoic *phantasia* and atomistic optical theories.

¹⁸ See Maeder 1991, 13–14.

¹⁹ Trapp 1990.

Amores and for Plutarch's *Amatorius*²⁰ which, each in their own way, recreate the Phaedran *locus amoenus*.²¹ *Leucippe and Clitophon* seems to ally itself with the genre²² through the discussion on the respective merits of homosexual and heterosexual love at the end of Book 2, and there is some ground for considering Clitophon's speech a paraphilosophical 'Platonic' speech on love building upon the erotic speech of Lysias and the speech of Aristophanes in the *Symposium*. The association with the latter is signalled by Clitophon's dream in which he and a girl, whose bodies were grown together, are cut apart by the sickle of a dreadful woman resembling a Fury (1,3,4–5); the dream is the very first event of Clitophon's narration, and it seems to anticipate, among other things, the separation of the lovers.²³ But the structural link with the speech of Lysias is perhaps even more significant: as a seductive 'exhibition' speech, Clitophon's narration is a perfected, unabashedly 'sophistic' specimen of the kind of rhetoric rejected by Plato in the *Phaedrus*. It has been noted that at least three characters in *Leucippe and Clitophon* are named after protagonists of Plato's dialogues: Clitophon, Gorgias (!), and Charmides; Leucippe recalls the white horse of the chariot of the soul in the *Phaedrus*,²⁴ and Clitophon, who is sentenced to death and almost offered hemlock (8,8,5–6), can perhaps be regarded as a Socrates figure.²⁵ In view of the irreverent use of the word 'philosophy' in *Leucippe and Clitophon*,²⁶ it can hardly be a coincidence that the Platonic *Clitophon* is an exhortation to philosophy (and that Plato's Charmides, much unlike Achilles' lustful general, is the most temperate of human beings). Accordingly, Clitophon can be seen as an eroticised²⁷ and rhetoricised *alter ego* of Socrates.²⁸

²⁰ *ibid.* 1990, 155–161; on the *Amores* cf. Anderson 1993, 161.

²¹ Ps.-Luc. *Am.* 31; Plut. *Amat.* 749a; Trapp 1990, 156–9. Cf. Hunter 1997, on Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* and Plato, esp. p. 24 for the Phaedran *locus amoenus* as a metonym for Longus' novel as a whole.

²² Trapp 1990, 171.

²³ Bartsch 1989, 87.

²⁴ There may be a double-entendre in her name, as 'white horse' also suggests a 'phallic woman', a dominatrix; cf. Ar. *Lys.* 191–3; Morales 2004, 66–7.

²⁵ Morales 2004, 56–57.

²⁶ *ibid.* 57–60.

²⁷ Cf. Anderson 1982, 25: Clitophon as *Plato eroticus*, Books 1 and 2 of *Leucippe and Clitophon* as an anti-*Phaedrus*.

²⁸ Cf. now Keulen 2003 on Socrates in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* as a key for reading Lucius in terms of satirical self-exposure.

But the parallels with the *Phaedrus* do not end here. Both texts begin with an account of a ‘rape of a maiden by a god’; both discussions imply a concern with the credibility of myths.²⁹ The dialogue between Socrates and Phaedrus takes place outside the walls of Athens on the riverbank of Ilissus near the spot where, according to Athenian mythology, the wind-god Boreas is said to have abducted a young maiden Orithyia. Phaedrus asks with apparent disbelief whether Socrates really believes such stories; Socrates first replies by ironically recasting the story in more rational terms, but he then declares that he has no time for these nice allegories. In a similar fashion, Clitophon finds the stimulus for his narration in the picture of Europa on the bull, and he introduces the story of his life as a Platonic myth, apparently apologising for its similarity to myths (Σμῆνος ἀνεγείρεις, εἶπε, λόγων τὰ γὰρ ἐμὰ μύθοις ἔοικε, 1,2,2; cf. *Gorgias* 523a; the ‘swarm of narratives’ recalls Plato *Resp.* 5, 450b: οὐκ ἴστε ὅσον ἔσμὸν λόγων ἐπεγείρετε). What is the meaning of this? Perhaps Clitophon wants to say that his story is purely (and overtly) fictional.³⁰ But perhaps he is authenticating a novel (λόγοι/μῦθοι, ‘stories similar to myths’) as an ‘autobiographical’ (τὰ ἐμὰ) first-person speech (λόγοσι!), which is ‘provoked’ (ἀνεγείρεις) by a pictorial representation of a myth. The image of ‘stirring a swarm of stories’ (cf. Hld. 2,21,5: ‘swarm of calamities’) clearly associates epic (oral) narratives of woe (Hom. *Od.* 9,1 ff.: the hero contrasts his own past suffering with the present pleasures of the banquet; Verg. *A.* 2,3 ff.).

Achilles Tatius is obviously not concerned to provide his narrative with quasi-factual authentication: he does not expect his reader to believe that ‘Leucippe and Clitophon’ ever happened. In truth, the narrator who suffered a shipwreck near the Phoenician coast and offered a sacrifice to Astarte (Narrator 1) is not to be trusted any more than Clitophon (Narrator 2) himself. He is a typical inhabitant of the same fictional world, perhaps even more typical than his hero. In addition, since both ego-narrators are worshippers of Eros (ὄν ἐρωτικός, 1,2,1) and since Narrator 1 seems to be keen on stories ‘resembling myths’ (ταύτη μᾶλλον ..., εἰ καὶ μύθοις ἔοικε, 1,2,2), they presumably share the same view of the story. There is no room for an external narrator; since we are given no details about the primary ego-narrator, there is no basis for defining his particular point of view; he can be suspected of intruding into Clitophon’s speech only insofar as he is identical with the

²⁹ Morales 2004, 53.

³⁰ Maeder 1991, 15–16; Morales 2004, 56 (cf. 2,15,4; 3,15,6; 1,8,4); cf. Hunter 1983, 47.

author; but since he is not, there is no reason why he should be credited with any hidden intentions. The function of the primary narrator may be to fictionalise or to eliminate any external narrative authority, to transform the text into a fictional stage with Clitophon as the only relevant 'author'. In his privileged role as the reporter of Clitophon's speech, the shipwrecked devotee of Astarte and Eros grants credibility not for what is being said but for the fact that it is being told: he transforms the first-person narration into a palpable mimetic fiction of speech. What Achilles Tatius is striving to authenticate is not the facts of the story but the discourse itself.

So far, the function of the opening scene is similar to the *basic* pragmatic function of narrative frames introducing some of the Platonic dialogues. The only thing that can be said for certain about those frames is that they are not intended to call attention to the written materiality of the dialogue; quite on the contrary, they create a distance from the material book, an illusionary stage for a living conversation, which could otherwise give the impression of a transcription or, even worse, of a 'script' for future performances of the *same* text. The abrupt beginnings of those dialogues which start 'in the middle of the conversation' (*Philebus*, *Hippias minor*, *Cratylus*, *Symposium*) produce a very similar effect. Apuleius perhaps followed this pattern at the beginning of his *Metamorphoses*: he created a pseudo-dialogue involving the voice of the narrator and the reader, as if both of them were present before the start of the actual reading (*At ego tibi ...*).³¹

Achilles Tatius uses a simple form of framing, with a primary narrator who fashions himself as a passionate audience of an 'autobiographical' love-story rather than an author of erotic fiction. Aristides of Miletus perhaps assumed a similar role in his *Milesian stories*: he was presumably present in the text as a rapt audience of other people's narratives.³² Achilles Tatius' primary narrator is (among other things) a projection of the ideal reader: one ready to enjoy the mimetic illusion of real speech.

But as vivid as Clitophon's presence might be, *Leucippe and Clitophon* is not a first-person novel. Moreover, as Andrew Laird has argued, Apuleius was the first ancient author to present a *continuous* fictional narrative through the first-person form; the extent of his originality can be inferred – and this is a crucial point – from the *uneasiness* he felt with the fusion of

³¹ De Jong 2001.

³² This can be inferred from the beginning of the pseudo-Lucianic *Amores*. Cf. Bitel 2001, 141–2.

discursive (first-person, ‘autobiographical’) and non-discursive (narrative, ‘fictional’) genres.³³ In ancient first-person narratives, there is always a disjunction between the narrator and the actor; even in the *Metamorphoses*, Apuleius’ narrator seeks to apply persuasion to his audience by his continuous *presence* as narrator, but he carefully avoids revealing his *present state* (which would eliminate the suspense); the narrator of St Augustine’s *Confessions*, on the other hand, refuses to identify with his past self – presumably because he believes this would impair his didactic design,³⁴ but this is not necessarily the main reason. According to Laird, the intimate fusion of the voices of narrator and character exemplified in Defoe’s *Moll Flanders* is ‘beyond Apuleius or indeed any of our antique authors’;³⁵ Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* is as close as it gets.

In fact, the presence of Achilles’ primary narrator is not felt throughout the narrative, but it is still strong enough to prevent Clitophon from breaking the illusion and addressing the external public (i.e. the readership of the primary narrator). This is probably why Clitophon’s narration lacks some of the ‘discursive’ qualities of Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* (e.g. immediate contact with the reader). Except for the first person, Clitophon seems to behave as a detached omniscient narrator;³⁶ he does ‘relive’ some of the past events, but he does so from a distanced point of view, as if he were impersonating his former self (e.g. when ‘reperforming’ a melodramatic aria over Leucippe’s dead body 5,7,8–9).

But it should be remembered that the objectives underlying this particular ego-narrative are altogether different. First, Clitophon’s speech purports to be a live performance, not a book of memoirs. Even the slightest sign of the presence of a reader would destroy the fiction of performance by attracting attention to the materiality of the book as a written text.³⁷ There is no place for a *lector curiosus*; there is only a listener eager to hear Clitophon’s discourse.

³³ Laird 1990; 2001, 268.

³⁴ Winkler 1985, 140–2.

³⁵ Laird 1990, 154.

³⁶ On the first person in *Leucippe and Clitophon* see Hägg 1971, 124–37. 318–322; Fusillo 1989, 158–170.

³⁷ Discursiveness in the sense adopted by Laird is a phenomenon of written texts. Only a writer figure is in a position to communicate intimately with an abstract audience.

Secondly, the figure of Clitophon is, among other things, an ironic representation of sophistic display.³⁸ Clitophon's rhetorical purpose may be that of fashioning himself as a perfect *magister amoris*, a self-conscious initiate of the Mysteries of Eros who *refuses* to identify with the helpless lover he once was. As such, his narrative provides an example of the hypothetical case mentioned by Laird: 'a fictional work could just as well have the same kind of format as the *Confessions*'.³⁹ Although Clitophon refuses to identify with the former self, his presence as narrator is strong, particularly in the *sententiae*.⁴⁰

Still, the *Metamorphoses* remains an exception in that the opening and closing of the first-person account is congruent with the opening and closing of the text as a whole.⁴¹ There are many cases of fictional first-person narrators in ancient literature, but all of them are framed within the narration of an authorial voice in the form of either direct speech or pseudo-documentary material. Even parodies and pastiches of historical first-person narratives are either entirely narrated by the author wearing the *persona* of a Münchhausen (Lucian's *True Histories*) or framed by a letter or some kind of editorial preface (Antonius Diogenes' *Wonders beyond Thule*, *The Diary of the Trojan War* of Dictys of Crete). The only exception seems to be the pseudo-Lucianic *Onos*, which, however, in spite of being a first-person narrative, shows no discursive elements: It could be recast in the third person 'without any undue loss or change to what is presented.'⁴²

The fact that first-person fictional narrators are so thoroughly banned from openings (and closings) leads us to an important point. In the framework of oral reception, where the 'narrator' is interchangeable, if not identical with

³⁸ See Goldhill 1995, 74: 'the heightened awareness of the legacy of the past that characterizes the Second Sophistic ... becomes here not merely a way of linking Clitophon's erotic feelings to the traditions of erotic narrative, but also an ironic image of the manipulation of the lover's self in and against such a tradition. Clitophon's first-person account thus stages "the cultivation of the self", ... , but stages it as a cultivated irony about self-representation.'

³⁹ Laird 1990, 152.

⁴⁰ Maeder 1991, 10: 'l'activité créatrice est encore mise en évidence par la longueur même de la description qui s'érige come une coupure verticale aux dépens du cours de l'action: l'histoire narrée s'arrête pour céder le premier plan à l'instance racontante (ou descriptive).'

⁴¹ Laird 1990, 142.

⁴² *ibid.* 143. A further exception are the fictional letters of Aelian and Alciphron, and novelistic letter collections (Chion, Themistocles etc.).

the actual performer, there is not much room for either a historically identifiable or a fictional narrator: unless we are dealing with a straightforwardly mimetic (i.e. dramatic) text, ‘fictional’ first-person discourses are always contained within the discourse of the performer, who impersonates individual protagonists through direct discourse. The fact that texts intended for written as well as aural reception tend to demarcate the margins of an ego-narrative with the presence of an author-figure is at least partly due to the trivial fact that a written document (unlike an oral text) is a material trace of an individual author.⁴³ The uneasiness we are supposed to feel when reading Apuleius’ prologue is at least in part attributable to the fact that an unknown *fictional voice* has occupied the physical edges of the real text.⁴⁴ In fact, Apuleius seems to be playfully bringing into prominence the problem of the speaker’s identity (*Quis ille: Who is speaking?*), while at the same time bringing into evidence the problem of written text vs. speech: the reader is supposed to be aware of the strange fact that a voice is heard from a written text (*Who is speaking?*). According to Don Fowler, the *Metamorphoses* is a ‘disjunctive work’ which aspires to ‘presence’ (in the sense of *assumed orality*, ‘fingierte Mündlichkeit’), but simultaneously signals an awareness of its impossibility within the frame of written reception.⁴⁵ However, it is possible that the *primary* concern of the prologue is of a more pragmatic kind⁴⁶ and not altogether too different from the function of Achilles’ opening scene: that of establishing a characteristic ‘tone of voice’.⁴⁷ After all, Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* is *not* a consistent first-person narration; it is introduced by a prologue which is *per-*

⁴³ Cf. Coste 1990, 164 on the narrative voice as ‘the product of the reader’s quest for the origin of the text’, and Lanser 1981, 108–148 on the ‘historical’ creator of a text as an authoritative ‘extrafictional voice’ that is constructed from the paratextual information given in a published work (e.g. the name of the author, the authority of the publishing house etc.).

⁴⁴ There is no such uneasiness about fictional letters attributed to historical figures (see above, n. 42).

⁴⁵ Fowler 2001; Bitel 2001 associates ‘written’/‘fiction’ with Apuleius the author, and ‘oral’/‘history’ with the ego-narrator.

⁴⁶ Kahane 1996 offers a speech act analysis of the prologue, interpreting ‘*Quis ille*’ as a command imposed upon the reader by a powerful ‘unknown’ speaker; the reader not ready to acknowledge his power is comparable to the mistrustful sisters who ask the same question *quis ille* at 5,16.

⁴⁷ Cf. Morgan 2001, 161: ‘We are plunged into the position of overhearing part of a larger narrative exchange already in progress.’ Morgan adduces the beginning of the Lucianic *Erotes* and Aristides’ *Milesian tales* as further examples (Aristides as a participant, listener as well as teller).

haps spoken by Lucius, but it is impossible to be certain. Nevertheless, a distance is created between the written materiality of the book and the (imaginary) voice of the (fictional) narrator, and it is this distance that creates a voice for Lucius. It is hard not to succumb to the impression that the book itself is speaking.⁴⁸ If this is correct, the speaking book would present a materialised (or should we say spiritualised?) version of the authorial prologue, but even if it is not, the very confusion regarding the identity of the speaker⁴⁹ performs the function of creating an individual voice for a fictional speaker (who *speaks* from his book even *qua* writer: cf. 11,23: *Quaeras forsitan satis anxie, studiose lector, quid deinde dictum, quid factum; dicerem, si dicere liceret, cognosceres, si liceret audire*).

Again, the comparison with Longus is suggestive. Clitophon introduces his speech as an illustrative interpretation of the picture representing Europa on the bull led by Eros. The close similarity between this scene and the prologue of *Daphnis and Chloe* has always intrigued interpreters of both novels.⁵⁰ Both narratives, that of Longus' authorial narrator and that of Clitophon are provoked by a painting: Longus' rival depicted a story similar to *Daphnis and Chloe* in the grove of the Nymphs, and Clitophon suggests that his own story is similar to the myth of Europa. The most salient difference is that Longus' narrator enters the competition as a (future) author of a written text. As Richard Hunter has demonstrated, the prologue to *Daphnis and Chloe* seems to 'activate' the paradox of Plato's *Phaedrus*, which consists in the fact that as a written text, the *Phaedrus* is condemned, *teste Socrate*, to silence like all *graphie*, all writing and painting (*Phdr.* 275d–e). Similarly, Longus' novel is 'written to speak for, defend and explain a painting – it, however, has no one to speak for it.'⁵¹ But there is an

⁴⁸ Harrison 1990.

⁴⁹ E.T.A. Hoffmann uses similar manipulations as the 'editor' of *Lebensansichten des Katers Murr*; the 'editorial' foreword is followed by two consecutive forewords by 'Murr, Étudiant en belles lettres', and 'Murr, Homme de lettres très renommé'; but there is a final note written by the editor: 'Hoffmann bemerkt dazu: N. S. Das ist zu arg! – Auch das Vorwort des Autors, welches unterdrückt werden sollte, ist abgedruckt! – Es bleibt nichts übrig, als den günstigen Leser zu bitten, daß er dem schriftstellerischen Kater den etwas stolzen Ton dieses Vorworts nicht zu hoch anrechnen ...' (cf. Apul. *Met.* Praef.: *En ecce praefamur veniam, siquid exotici ac forensis sermonis rudis locutor offendero*).

⁵⁰ *Leucippe and Clitophon* is probably earlier than *Daphnis and Chloe*; according to Holzberg 1995, 93–94, Longus is trying to outdo his predecessor.

⁵¹ Hunter 1997, 28.

alternative possibility: that Longus is actually trying to protect his text against the negative effects of the Platonic paradox by representing the *graphe* not as a static result but as a dynamic activity.⁵² he dramatises the act of *writing* as an *activity* which competes with that of the painter (the aorist ἀντιγράφαι indicates the starting point of the process as well as its result).

On the most basic level, the common function of Achilles' introductory scene and of Apuleius' prologue⁵³ is that of performing the transition from the material reality of the text to the fictional reality of the *voice*. Perhaps it is not that the ancient author is *uneasy* about giving the first word to a fictional character, *reserving* the margin for himself, but that he wants to *free* the protagonist-narrator from disturbing contact with the 'historical' author, from the static text and, perhaps, from the medium of the written book. If Steve Nimis is correct in supposing that the density of closural gestures in a novel such as Xenophon's *Ephesian Tale* reveals the author's anxiety about the ending in a non-performative context,⁵⁴ the same argument may be reversed to account for the 'abrupt' ending of *Leucippe and Clitophon*: an authorial closure such as 'And I never met him again' would destroy the illusion of real performance that the author was so anxious to create at the beginning.⁵⁵

Plato's *Symposium* is the closest example of this kind of 'defective' narrative frame: the text starts in the middle of a conversation (περὶ ὧν πυνθάνεσθε), which is only a narrative reproduction of a *dialogue* consisting of a series of erotic *speeches* (τῶν ἐρωτικῶν λόγων, 172B), one of them being Aristophanes' speech on the androgyne which served as a direct model for Clitophon's narration. The *Symposium* ends without returning to the opening frame; the presence of the unnamed companion who is the audience of Apollodorus' report is limited to the beginning, but even so, the initial dialogue performs efficiently the task of releasing Apollodorus' narration from the fixity of the written medium. Apollodorus reports to his companion the conversation he has had with Glaucon; as a result, the erotic speeches

⁵² Maeder 1991, 19.

⁵³ Cf. also the pseudo-documentary forewords introducing Defoe's *Moll Flanders*, Hoffmann's *Kater Murr*, Constant's *Adolphe* etc.

⁵⁴ Nimis 1999.

⁵⁵ Cf. also Jensson 2004, 29-32 on the phenomenon of utterance within utterance. While modern narratology treats the second discourse as a 'quotation' of a pre-existing text, ancient rhetorical theory explained this phenomenon strictly in terms of mimetic change in the identity of the speaker (*persona*).

contained within his report stand at a third remove from the physical book. The conversation is not transcribed but reported in front of an audience, and it is reported not as a historical event but as an event which is *real* in the memory of the speaker as well as in the mind of his (primary and secondary) audience(s). We are witnessing the same paradox in *Leucippe and Clitophon*: a narrative frame creates an illusion of real performance by sparing the speech and the speaker any contact with that part of the book where the materiality of the writing is at its densest. The primary narrator, the 'writer', cannot return to life at the end because he has been sacrificed to the interests of the performance at the very opening.

2. Speech, vision, and self-fashioning

Leucippe and Clitophon is one of the most literarily self-conscious of the ancient novels. From the modern perspective, literary sophistication is commonly regarded as something inherently related to written text. This is the view taken by many modern interpreters of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, most eminently by Shadi Bartsch (1989). According to Bartsch, the sophisticated writer Achilles Tatius has created for the reader a textual, hermeneutical game whose deeper significance is almost entirely foreign to the intentions, and indeed external to the awareness, of its narrator. To be sure, *Leucippe and Clitophon* is a written text intended for reading. However, it is written in the form of speech, and this cannot be easily dismissed as accidental. The *mise en scène* of Achilles' 'Prologue' is an exemplary case of 'the Hellenistic sophos dramatising himself in front of a work of art'.⁵⁶ Consequently, it is only logical to consider the pseudo-performative form of Clitophon's narrative as a central aspect of its literary sophistication.

The most natural assumption about a speech is that the speaker is fully in possession of the text, as the only relevant 'author', the only identifiable focal point of the text's intentionality, and the only beneficiary of its rhetorical strategies. Yet most modern interpreters only reluctantly accept Clitophon's narration as a consistent first-person narrative; they either suspect Narrator 1 of intruding into Clitophon's narration – as if the primary narrator were somehow identical with the author, Achilles Tatius –, or else they re-

⁵⁶ See Goldhill 2001, 161; cf. Martin 2002 on the Europa painting as 'blending' into Clitophon's seductive speech (1,16,1–1,18,5) and into his narrative as a whole.

gard the primary narrator as a mere vehicle of authentication, thus creating space for a hidden author sneering at Clitophon. On both views, the fiction of first-person narration is not fully consistent; Clitophon is perhaps not to be credited with all he says; we are dealing either with a negligent author who occasionally gives up the first person fiction⁵⁷ or with a malicious author/narrator who deliberately distorts Clitophon's version of his own story.

In fact, there is at least one case that can be taken as revealing the presence of a malevolent focaliser. When Clitophon says 'It seems that with barbarians one wife will not satisfy Aphrodite's needs' (5,5,2), this can easily be taken as an ironic jibe at the speaker's hypocrisy⁵⁸ (although Clitophon has *not yet* committed adultery with Melite, the wife of the 'barbarian' Thersander). But since the *sententia* in question is not the only case of Clitophon's hypocrisy, it would perhaps be easier to see this as an inherent quality of his narrative voice. In Greek fiction, first-person narrators are often explicitly characterised as unreliable witnesses.⁵⁹ The use of the first person in narratives such as Lucian's *True Histories* can be partly explained as a parodic response to the historians' false claim to autopsy exemplified in Ctesias' *Indica*.⁶⁰ The first known representative of parodic pseudo-history, Antonius Diogenes, adduced Antiphanes of Berge, a notorious liar, as his source.⁶¹ Dictys, the supposed author of the *Diary of the Trojan War*, was a Cretan who originally wrote his text in Phoenician letters; both the Cretans and the Phoenicians had the reputation of being liars.⁶² As a Phoenician, Clitophon is potentially unreliable,⁶³ and the declaration that his story 'is close to myths'⁶⁴ recalls similar confessions made by Antonius Diogenes in

⁵⁷ Bartsch 1989, 50: 'the author seems to have forgotten that we are listening to a first-person account'.

⁵⁸ Morales 2004, 116.

⁵⁹ On first-person narrative in general, see Maeder 1991, 23–31.

⁶⁰ See Nenci 1953 on autopsy and Merkle 1989, 56–62 on pseudo-history.

⁶¹ Lucian's *True Histories* is not to be regarded as a parody of the *Wonders beyond Thule*; Antonius Diogenes' work belonged to the same type of comic pseudo-history. See Morgan 1985, 482–3; Maeder 1991, 31–32.

⁶² Briquel-Chattonet 1992. The work was allegedly discovered in the grave of Dictys on Crete; this is perhaps an allusion to the invention of the grave of Zeus (an immortal god?) by the lying Cretans; cf. Call. *Jov.* 8–9.

⁶³ Morales 2004, 54–56, esp. 48–50.

⁶⁴ *ibid.* 54: 'Clitophon's qualification that his *logoi* are like *mythoi* can be understood as a realistic detail which acknowledges the far-fetched character of his tale, and so fashions Clitophon as a trustworthy narrator.'

his *Wonders Beyond Thule* (Phot. Bibl. cod. 166, 111A,34–36) and by Lucian in his *True Story* (1,4).

One of the main attractions of first-person narrative, it can be argued, lies in its partiality: any autobiographical narrator would fudge the memory of his experiences in order to make a self-serving case, and the reader is challenged to position himself in relation to the narrator's subjective point of view, to ask himself about his sources of information and about his motives for narrating.⁶⁵ But this is not always a very productive way of reading (real or fictional) autobiography (except perhaps political memoirs with no literary value). First-person narrative is a characteristic form not only of Greco-Roman comic-satirical novels but also of the picaresque novels from *Lazarillo de Tormes* to *Gil Blas*. In these cases, the only natural and reasonable approach is to accept the first-person narrative on its own terms, as a rhetorical creation of a speaking character.⁶⁶ Of course the character is lying, but so what? There is no other version of the story; he is his own story.

There is, however, a way of reading Clitophon as an object of biased focalisation. A possible disjunction exists between the 'later' Clitophon, the self-confident erotosophistes, and the hero of his narrative. Tim Whitmarsh has suggested that Clitophon, 'experiencing life in a novel from the perspective of an inept, does not realise the most fundamental law of the genre: that the loving couple are always reunited at the end';⁶⁷ he commits a generic misinterpretation and erroneously takes the novel for a tragedy, thus becoming a comic character.⁶⁸ Even so, the real 'author' of this biased interpretation cannot be anyone else but the later Clitophon, the veteran of love (and of erotic fiction) who is the author of his own novelistic vita: 'a sophisticated narrator (re)creating a naive persona'.⁶⁹

Massimo Fusillo has suggested a connection between the choice of first-person narrative and the character of *Leucippe and Clitophon* as a pastiche of

⁶⁵ Fusillo 1989, 159–60.

⁶⁶ Dunn 1982, 110.

⁶⁷ Whitmarsh 2003, 197.

⁶⁸ *ibid.* 198. Cf. Morgan 1997, 185 on Clitophon as a man who tries to write his life as a novel and fails to learn the lessons of his experience.

⁶⁹ Whitmarsh 2003, 200: 'the construction of the *naïf* is always circumscribed by (and hence enfolded into) the knowing artifice of the mature initiate'; 204: Clitophon's naïveté is exploited for comic effect, and exposed as a rhetorical construct on the part of the 'initiated' narrator.

the erotic novel,⁷⁰ but Danielle Maeder is to my knowledge the only author who puts this aspect in more concrete terms:

Pourrait-on voir dans dans l'emploi du 'je' – du point de vue, donc, de l'énonciation et non plus seulement de l'énoncé – une manière de persifler l'aspect souvent incroyable et parfois absurde des romans d'amour et d'aventures?⁷¹

The most spectacular among the effects of the first-person narration is definitely the overthrow of the sexual symmetry dominating the rest of the preserved erotic novels. According to Fusillo,

la soluzione peculiare di Achille Tazio, far narrare l'intera storia erotica dal suo protagonista maschile, produce ... la rottura del parallelismo fra i due amanti e quindi una minore accentuazione dell'ideale della coppia.⁷²

It has been mentioned that as a 'Phoenician tale', Clitophon's narrative is potentially unreliable. There is another stereotype about the Phoenicians that seems to be colouring the initial scene as well as the whole novel: the presence of Astarte, the whore-goddess, in the opening scene can be read as a 'programme for ostentatious salaciousness'.⁷³ Lollianus' *Phoenicica*, an 'idealistic novel' which was more than tainted with sex and violence, was perhaps narrated in the first person.⁷⁴

David Konstan has described the point of view of Clitophon as that of a voyeur: it is the voyeuristic gaze of the hero that subverts the usual structure of the amatory relationship in the Greek novel.⁷⁵ The hero of the novel is obsessed with viewing and vision.⁷⁶ The scene of Leucippe's first *Scheintod*

⁷⁰ Fusillo 1989, 108–109.

⁷¹ Maeder 1991, 12.

⁷² Fusillo 1989, 193.

⁷³ Morales 2004, 50.

⁷⁴ See Stephens and Winkler 1995, 314–357. However, it is precisely this work that, along with Iamblichus' *Babyloniaca*, presents a serious challenge to the unity of the 'ideal' novel as a recognisable type of erotic fiction (see Holzberg 1995, 86–87), so it is difficult to approach the problem of narrative voice strictly in terms of genre.

⁷⁵ Konstan 1994, 60–73, esp. 64.

⁷⁶ Clitophon and his *preaeceptor amoris* Clinias provide several theoretical accounts of love as a phenomenon ultimately traceable to the effects of gaze; see Morales 2004, *passim*.

at 3,15 is perhaps the most blatant case: Clitophon is forced to watch helplessly as Leucippe is (apparently) disembowelled by some Egyptian bandits, who afterwards cook and eat her entrails before his very eyes; only later does he learn that Menelaus and Satyrus simulated the propitiary sacrifice in order to impress the bandits; they faked the whole event using a sword with a retractable blade and a sheep-skin filled with blood.

Clitophon, in this scene, is the same 'optical orgiast' who had been devouring Leucippe with his eyes at the banquet in Tyre (1,6,1–2).⁷⁷ To be more precise, it is the later, narrating Clitophon who, as a voyeuristic consumer of his own past experiences, reproduces the scene to cater to the bizarre tastes of his (internal and external) audience. The most significant structural detail about this and similar scenes is that Clitophon is given the opportunity of seeing what an average novelistic hero normally does not see because he is separated from his beloved. Clitophon *is* separated from Leucippe at the time of the event, but it is only a trench that divides them (similarly, in 5,7, he observes the faked beheading of Leucippe from an adjacent ship). It is only by virtue of this 'staged' separation that he can re-create a *staged* horror scene which, as a protagonist of a 'standard' novel, Clitophon would probably have missed. Is it going too far to insinuate that he would perhaps (subconsciously?) regret having missed the programme – at least from the perspective of the happy (or should we say bored?) husband?

The scene is notoriously one of the rare cases of restricted perspective:⁷⁸ Clitophon the *actor* is unaware of the fact that he is involved in a black comedy. The essential function of the device is incontestably that of creating suspense,⁷⁹ but as Bryan Reardon rightly observes, there was no need whatever to invent so grotesque an episode; as in the case of Lollianus' *Phoenicica* and Iamblichus' *Babyloniaca*, the reader is actually expected to 'enjoy the kitsch'.⁸⁰ There is not much suspense about the outcome of an erotic novel, and even the most innocent reader would not fall for the *Scheintod* trick twice, as Clitophon does. The most plausible explanation is that the two virtues of *credulitas* and *curiositas* that distinguish Apuleius' Lucius are schematically distributed between Clitophon the immature novelistic hero

⁷⁷ *ibid.* 166.

⁷⁸ Effe 1975, 149–154 argues that Heliodorus' technique of *personale Erzählung* is a development from Achilles Tatius' use of restricted perspective.

⁷⁹ Hägg 1971, 321–2; Bartsch 1989, 59: 'Achilles Tatius fools (ostensibly) his characters and (really) his readers'.

⁸⁰ Reardon 1994, 85.

and Clitophon the initiated ‘author’: it is the later Clitophon, the skilled sophist-novelist, who adopts the technique of limited perspective in order to entertain the audience at the expense of his pitiful former self.

There is no comprehensible motive for attributing the authorial intentions of Clitophon’s speech to anyone else but the speaker. It is tempting, of course, to see the descriptions of works of art as an element more particularly related to the written text and extraneous to Clitophon’s rhetorical intentions, but this is clearly a *lectio difficilior* in view of the fact that the speaker introduces his novelistic autobiography as an extended interpretation of a picture. Moreover, there is an obvious connection between the presentation of Clitophon as a sophist in front of a work of art, the form of the narrative as a first-person speech, and the unusually high frequency of descriptions of works of art in the narrative itself. These are the three elements that make *Leucippe and Clitophon* the most ‘sophistic’ of the preserved Greek novels. If it is true that the sophistic describer of works of art is ordinarily more concerned with his own image as a verbal virtuoso than with the picture he is describing, this is only more true of the orator who interprets a picture by his own story, which in turn resembles a gallery of art. Vision and speech, art and novelistic narrative are ultimately part of the same strategy of self-promotion.

In her fundamental study on the subject, Shadi Bartsch interpreted most descriptions of works of art in *Leucippe and Clitophon* in terms of foreshadowing, as ‘proleptic similes’ anticipating future events.⁸¹ In treating the technique of prophetic description, Bartsch takes most of the corroborative evidence from the Greek literature of the imperial period, but there are clear signs that the technique as such originated in the epic genre; Apollonius Rhodius’ *Argonautica* and Hellenistic and Roman epyllia offer some very close parallels.⁸²

It should be stressed right away that Bartsch’s view of the text as a hermeneutic labyrinth which Clitophon is not in a position to decode is fully

⁸¹ Bartsch 1989; cf. Bettini 1992, 191–210. Clitophon’s companion Menelaus shows a clear awareness of the proleptic meaning conveyed by works of art (5,4,1): ‘Interpreters of signs say that if we encounter paintings we are set off to do something, we should ponder the myths narrated there, and conclude that the outcome for us will be comparable to the story they tell.’

⁸² For a recent study of the proleptic ekphrasis in ancient epic and drama see Harrison 2001. On Homer and Apollonius Rhodius cf. Duckworth 1933; on Apollonius Fusillo 1985 *passim*; on the epyllia Friedländer 1912, 49–50 and Perutelli 1979.

compatible with the interpretation presented here, provided that one sets the novelistic character apart from the self-conscious sophistic orator. It can be shown that prophetic descriptions perform a function analogous to that of restricted perspective, as interpretive screens used by the omniscient narrator⁸³ for opening more detachedly aesthetic and sometimes bizarrely voyeuristic perspectives on the story.

Let us consider the description that can be taken to 'foreshadow' the scene of propitiatory sacrifice discussed above. At the beginning of Book three (3,7), Leucippe and Clitophon see a picture at the temple of Zeus Kasios. It shows Andromeda (~Leucippe) bound in a rocky hollow, 'done up as if she were a bride for Hades', with 'comely fear' in her cheeks and beauty in her eyes. The monster (~the brigands) is just rising from the sea, but Perseus (~Clitophon) still hovers between it and Andromeda.⁸⁴ This is high-gloss sadistic pornography⁸⁵ attributable to no one but the narrator, the detached voyeur who uses the description not only as a foreshadowing of an event to be narrated soon afterwards but as a possible interpretive key for the reader as a viewer: it gives the reader the possibility of viewing a scene of violence (the sacrifice of Leucippe) in erotic terms, a possibility that cannot be offered directly in the presentation of the scene.

Book three closes with a description of the phoenix (3,25), the miraculous bird 'second only to the peacock' (3,25,1, perhaps alluding to the peacock used by Clitophon as a exhibit at 1,16), which shows the intimate parts of its body in order to prove its identity (τὰ ἀπόρρητα φαίνει τοῦ σώματος, 3,25,7); there is a possible parallel in the scene where Leucippe, who has been administered an overdose of aphrodisiac, unwittingly shows 'the parts that a woman would not wish to be seen' (4,9,2).⁸⁶ Of course, the phoenix might also suggest Leucippe's resurrection from apparent death,⁸⁷ but the point is probably that the account of the phoenix, contrary to the current

⁸³ On 'focalised' ecphrasis see Fowler 1990; cf. Harrison 2001, 70–71, on the 'gap of knowledge' between the non-omniscient character and the omniscient character/narrator/reader, as a source of dramatic irony and pathos.

⁸⁴ Bartsch 1989, 55–61.

⁸⁵ Anderson 1982, 32: 'visual art is at the service of sadistic sex'. For further cases of aestheticised violence see Morales 2004, 176.

⁸⁶ Morales 2004, 196: 'The reader's voyeuristic desire to see this happen – to see Leucippe exposed and scrutinised – is deferred and mapped onto the figure of the phoenix.'

⁸⁷ Morales 2004, 190–197.

version,⁸⁸ concentrates on more gloomy aspects (the phoenix as a ‘graveside sophist’, ἐπιτάφιος σοφιστής, 3,25,7), thus reflecting the ‘mature’ Clitophon’s predilection for the macabre.

Clitophon’s gaze is, of course, a screen for the reader’s voyeurism, but it should not be forgotten that Clitophon is also an actor on the stage who re-creates his adventures through speech. The aggressively voyeuristic male gaze evidently belongs to Clitophon the narrator, not to Clitophon the hero. Clitophon the hero is a construction of Clitophon the narrator, a privileged object of his verbal voyeurism and one of the main victims of his unscrupulous strategies of self-promotion.

This does not amount to saying that Clitophon has usurped the panoramic, ‘epic’ narratorial position of a novelistic author-writer à la Xenophon of Ephesus. The irony of the first-person narration lies precisely in the fact that Clitophon’s superiority over his former self is only relative. The contemptuous pity Clitophon shows towards the romantic lover he once was is a powerful alibi, but any reader is in a position to look down upon the narcissistic voyeur, the self-fashioned *magister amoris* Clitophon. However, this position is not *inscribed* in the text in terms of focalisation; it can be attributed neither to the ‘writer’ (Narrator 1) nor to any other character of the novel; even Clinias’ superiority to Clitophon as a lover is counterbalanced by the tragic outcome of his own (homo)erotic affair. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to imagine the implicit presence of a (malevolent) focaliser in a speech addressed to a specific audience with the specific objective of self-promotion. It is much easier to feel such a presence in a written fictional autobiography like *Moll Flanders*. This is perhaps because a fictional *writer* is far more overtly conventional: the reader is fully aware of the fact that the actual writer has only lent pen and readers to the character, and there is a kind of mutual agreement between the author/writer and the reader that the voice of the author/writer may be heard in the background. Direct discourses, on the other hand, are fictional creations on the part of the writer through an expressive medium different from his own,⁸⁹ as such, they leave

⁸⁸ Hdt. 2,73; Philostr. *VA* 3,49.

⁸⁹ The same goes for fictional letters which are only a subform of direct communication within the fictional world of a novel; hence the effect of authenticity in epistolary novels. But see Rousseau’s editorial preface to *Julie ou La nouvelle Héloïse*: ‘Quoique je ne porte ici que le titre d’éditeur, j’ai travaillé moi-même à ce livre, et je ne m’en cache pas. Ai-je fait le tout, et la correspondance entière est-elle une fiction? Gens du monde, que vous importe? C’est sûrement une fiction pour vous.’

little room for focalisation on the part of the author/writer. This is even more true for *Leucippe and Clitophon*, where the writer (Narrator I) presents himself as an uncritically admiring faithful reporter, thus eliminating the possibility of a more reserved 'hidden author'.⁹⁰ However, the attraction of Clitophon's personal account of his story consists precisely in its unabashed, asymmetric, narcissistic subjectivity, which is ideally conveyed via the most 'authentic' medium of expression, that of speech. This entails an important consequence: as a mimetic fiction of (sophistic) speech, the text of Clitophon's narrative is freed from any superordinate textual authority and exempted from any authorial responsibility.

3. Rhetoric of seduction: Clitophon as *cultus adulter*

The point of view dominating *Leucippe and Clitophon* as a whole, it has been argued, is that of a sexually aggressive male.⁹¹ Achilles Tatius constantly questions Leucippe's virginity (and the very concept of virginity) by making it the subject of verbal and physical challenge and defence.⁹² On first reading at least, the image representing the violent rape of Philomela by Tereus (5,3,4–5,5,9) seems to belong to the same category of aggressive voyeurism. Moreover, the rape and silencing of Philomela by Tereus is a further case of foreshadowing: the image can be taken to portend Thersander's attempted assault on Leucippe's virginity at the end of Book 6 (Thersander is a Thracian like Tereus).⁹³

Philomela cannot communicate to her sister the outrage perpetrated against her because Tereus has cut out her tongue; she is depicted showing Procne a tapestry with the scene of the rape on it. Here, the reader might feel reminded of the earlier scene in which Leucippe, who had her head shaven and was put into chains by Melite's bailiff Sosthenes as a punishment be-

⁹⁰ A similar case is the Marquis de Renoncourt as the 'audience' of Des Grieux in Abbé Prevost's *l'Histoire du Chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut* (and of other internal narrators he introduces in his *Mémoires d'un homme de qualité qui s'est retiré du monde*).

⁹¹ Konstan 1994, 66; Bartsch 1989, 177.

⁹² Goldhill 1995, 115–122; Morales 2004, 199–220.

⁹³ Bartsch 1989, 65–76, esp. 69: 'the depiction of a man wronging his wife with another woman is proleptic of Clitophon wronging Leucippe with Melite, and then of Thersander wronging Melite with Leucippe'.

cause she would not give in to him, secretly delivers a *letter* to Clitophon to tell him she is still alive and still a virgin (5,18).

The contrast between the silenced female 'writer' who uses writing as a last resort and the verbose orator Clitophon could not be put in more explicit terms. The opposition seems to mirror almost ideally the metaphysical opposition between speech and writing famously attacked by Derrida as one of the dualist structures that dominated Western thought since Plato: good vs. evil, presence vs. absence, man vs. woman, soul vs. body, life vs. death, speech vs. writing etc.⁹⁴ This is particularly striking since the novel allusively refers to Plato's discussion of the problem of speech and writing in the *Phaedrus*.

There is, however, a serious complication to this binary scheme. Clitophon the authoritative orator belongs to a much later time. He is in serious trouble after receiving the letter from Leucippe; he replies with a letter (5,20) and hides the news from his new consort until Leucippe's message incidentally comes into Melite's hands (5,24).⁹⁵ He has been unfaithful to both women, and he is exposed as an adulterer by Melite's lawful husband Thersander. At the time of Leucippe's struggle with Sosthenes (the event foreshadowed by the Philomela picture), he is a prisoner.

In fact, David Konstan has argued for a more precise correspondence between the characters in the picture and those of the novel, contending that as injured parties, Philomela and her sister Procne come to stand for Leucippe and Clitophon:⁹⁶

Despite the centrality of Clitophon as narrator, however, and certain gestures, largely ironic, toward a more active or aggressive part for him as lover of Leucippe on the transitive model, the relationship between Clitophon and Leucippe conforms in principle to the parity of hero and heroine that is characteristic of the Greek novel.⁹⁷

A further argument in favour of the identification of Clitophon with Procne is that Leucippe, who is kept by Sosthenes in his cottage, cannot tell Clito-

⁹⁴ Derrida 1981 [1972], x; 1976 [1967].

⁹⁵ See Robiano, in this volume, on the (sometimes compromising) intimacy of epistolary 'absent presence'.

⁹⁶ Konstan 1994, 69.

⁹⁷ *ibid.* 70.

phon, who is in prison at the time (Book 6, beginning of book 7), that she bravely resisted Thersander's advances (end of book 6) and that she is alive. Clitophon naively believed the story of Leucippe's murder told by a fellow-prisoner who had been sent by Thersander, and the next day the repentant adulterer decides to punish himself by confessing to murder in court.⁹⁸ At least from Clitophon's perspective, Leucippe is dead during that time. It is significant that the first instance of Leucippe's false death had been foreshadowed by a picture; the disappearance of Leucippe in book 6 is the third and the final instance of the same kind of event. On the occasion of Leucippe's first *Scheintod*, only a trench divided the lovers; Clitophon was present as a viewer, and his role as an onlooker was reflected in the picture foreshadowing this scene (Clitophon ~ Perseus); in Book 5, the lovers were separated, but Leucippe eventually broke the barrier by sending Clitophon a letter. This time, the two are separated, but there is no possibility of either visual contact or written communication; there is nothing to break the barrier of silence and ignorance. And, for the first time, Clitophon is deprived of his freedom. Later he narrates the event as an omniscient narrator, thus depriving his audience of suspense; also, since he had no opportunity to witness Leucippe's struggle with Thersander, we are deprived of the voyeuristic spectacle *in vivo*: the scene is there, as it has been *reconstructed* by Clitophon, but there is no viewer.

According to Konstan, 'the symmetrical passion of the primary couple ... is ... visible ... through the screen of the first-person narrative in the masculine voice, by which C. is cast as the subject of the story and thus as the principal locus of desire.'⁹⁹ But I would argue that the symmetry put at risk by Clitophon's usurpatory ego-narrative is not to be seen as a self-evident objectivity imposed by the genre and preserved from the effects of Clitophon's distorting narratorial lens (preserved by whom? Achilles Tatius?). If the fiction of first-person 'exhibition' speech is consistent (there is no reason to doubt this), Narrator I being only the announcer of the show, it must be Clitophon who is striving to restore the symmetry he had sacrificed on the altar of his voyeuristic appetites, as part of his strategy of self-promotion. It is certainly true that Clitophon makes Leucippe an object of verbal and voyeuristic abuse within his male discourse, but my point is that he is actually trying to counterbalance his aggressive narratorial position

⁹⁸ For an analysis of the trial scene see Schwartz 2000–2001.

⁹⁹ *ibid.* 68.

(with not too much success, one would have to add) by making a joke of his own former self. What should we say of the ‘paratragic’ laments Clitophon performs after each of the three instances of Leucippe’s false death (3,16; 5,6–8; 7,5)? The narrator is evidently only ‘citing’ or ‘re-performing’ the character, just as he is only ‘reporting’ the apparent deaths of Leucippe and the assaults on her virginity; but at the same time he is verbally exposing his pusillanimous former self to the laughter of the audience, just as he makes a visual spectacle of Leucippe. It is perhaps significant that both the theme of violated virginity and lament were prominent in the genre of *declamatio*.¹⁰⁰

While it has been seen that Clitophon is represented as cowardly and effeminate¹⁰¹, as a parody of the novelistic hero¹⁰² or even an anti-hero,¹⁰³ this has commonly been downplayed as an element unrelated to the intentions and rhetorical strategies of the ego-narrator.¹⁰⁴ The scandalous scene in which Clitophon surrenders to the seduction of sweet-speaking Melite *after* having been informed that Leucippe is still alive was notoriously excused by Michel Foucault as an ‘honourable, minor lapse’.¹⁰⁵ In fact, this particular *corpus delicti* is only a small, if central, element within the dramaturgical structure of a larger section. The whole section following the return of Thersander is styled as an adultery mime,¹⁰⁶ thus forming a symmetric counterpart to the scene of Leucippe’s first *Scheintod*, which is a mimic-pantomimic version of Euripides’ *Iphigenia among the Taurians*.¹⁰⁷ As for Clitophon himself, he is explicitly called *moichos* by Thersander (5,23,5, 6,20,2), Melite calls him a eunuch and a hermaphrodite (5,25,8), and he is exposed as an adulterer in court (8,10,9–10); he does not defend himself when Thersander starts beating him and resists ‘philosophically’ (5,23,5–7); on another occasion, his nose starts to bleed and he avenges himself by biting Thersander’s

¹⁰⁰ Cf. the theme of violated virginity in the *Controversiae* of Seneca the Elder; Anderson 1982, 26; on lament in the novel see Birchall 1996.

¹⁰¹ Morales 2004, 76: the subject position offered to the reader is that of the ‘effeminate male’.

¹⁰² Durham 1938.

¹⁰³ Anderson 1982, 30–32; Fusillo 1989, 102; Brethes 2001.

¹⁰⁴ Morales 2004, 116: ‘the characterisation of Clitophon as cowardly, effeminate and self-serving make the conflation (sc. to read C. as a cypher for a novelist) even less credible’...‘Clitophon is revealed as an unreliable judge and the didactics of his sententiousness exposed to ridicule as absurdly pompous.’

¹⁰⁵ Foucault 1986, 231. On the Melite episode see Robiano 2002.

¹⁰⁶ Mignogna 1996, 239.

¹⁰⁷ Mignogna 1997.

fingers (8,1,3–4). He escapes from prison dressed in Melite's clothes (6,1), and is compared by her to the Scyrian Achilles she once saw in a picture (6,1,3).

It is not easy to see why Clitophon should expose himself as an effeminate adulterer in front of a stranger (who is, incidentally, a writer), but in that case one should rather ask why he exposes his hypocrisy by *admitting* that he suppressed the mention of the event in front of Leucippe's father:

When I came to the part about Melite, I omitted my performance of the act, reshaping the story as one of chaste self-control, although I told no actual lies.

...

Our peregrination bespoke philosophical moderation (ἐφιλοσοφήσαμεν ... τὴν ἀποδημίαν). Eros was in pursuit: we escaped a smitten man and a smitten woman (ἦν ἐραστοῦ καὶ ἐρωμένης φυγή). During our travels, we became like brother and sister. If there be such a thing as virginity in a man, I have retained it up to the present day, as far as Leucippe is concerned.

Simon Goldhill gives a precise definition of Clitophon's 'sincerity':

The case of Clitophon also significantly links the worry of knowing to the manipulation of self-representation in a (male) first person narrative, his and our complicity in recounting Melite's story.¹⁰⁸

It is tempting, however, to take this a step further and link the manipulation specifically to the rhetorical strategies of the ego-narrator. If Clitophon makes himself, his 1) adulterousness and his 2) sordid hypocrisy an object of display, this might be because he wants to compensate for the 1) corporeal display and 2) verbal abuse of Leucippe.

The ambiguity of Clitophon *qua* character corresponds to and is part of his manipulative strategies *qua* narrator. Self-exposure, in this case, is a form of *captatio benevolentiae*: but unlike Caesar in his memoirs,¹⁰⁹ Clitophon is not trying to convince us that he is a good character and a reliable witness:

¹⁰⁸ Goldhill 1995, 122.

¹⁰⁹ For an example of strategic self-exposure see *Gal.* 2,28,3: *quos Caesar, ut in miseros ac supplices usus misericordia videretur, diligentissime conservavit.*

he is an erotic picaro striving to convince us of his presence as a speaking character. The seduction of Leucippe is (not only, but also) a metaphor for the seduction performed upon the reader. In the conversation with the stranger at the beginning of the novel, Clitophon compares his impending narrative to a myth (μύθοις ἕοικε, 1,2,2); on the meadow in Tyre, Satyrus provides him with a pretext for speaking by feigning surprise over the power of Eros (Ἦ γὰρ ὁ Ἔρως, ἔφη, τοσαύτην ἔχει τὴν ἰσχὺν ..., 1,17,1); at the end of Clitophon's seduction speech (end of Book 2), they congratulate themselves, Clitophon on the mythology (τῆς μυθολογίας) and Satyrus on the pretexts (1,19,3). On a later occasion, Clitophon comments on Leucippe's curiosity concerning the image of Philomela, Procne and Tereus by stating that 'the female species is rather fond of myths (φιλόμυθον)' (5,5,1). The whole narrative can be taken as an exemplary seduction speech performed by a male speaker before a submissive audience, exemplified by Narrator 1.

Seductive power is commonly gendered as female in Greek literature from Homer onwards, starting with the Homeric Sirens and Calypso, the Hesiodic Charites (*Th.* 907–11), and Peitho, the goddess of persuasion, seduction and sexual allure.¹¹⁰ Female characters in the Greek novels regularly seduce by gaze,¹¹¹ but they are very rarely accorded an active role as seductresses; the two *femmes fatales*, Melite and Heliodorus' Arsace, are exceptional cases that seem to reassert the norm: significantly, they are both antagonists, not protagonists, and their seductive activities are described by metaphors typically reserved for men (e.g. the consumptive gaze).¹¹² On the other hand, Clitophon is the only real seducer among the male protagonists. He uses artificial strategies of seduction in his speech in the Tyrian garden (1,16–18), and he enthralls Narrator 1 with the very announcement of a semi-mythic novelistic autobiography. In achieving dominance as a lover and as a speaker, however, he uses strategies that stereotypically belong to the female realm. The 'swarm of words' (1,2,2) suggests honey-sweet words and sirenic seduction (for the Sirens as honey-sweet see Hom. *Od.* 12,187).

There are several examples of 'effeminate rhetoric' as a recognisable style in the sphere of pure oratory. One such example, much more pro-

¹¹⁰ Buxton 1982, 31 ff. See also König and Brethes, in this volume, on the power of (female) speech in Xenophon of Ephesus and Heliodorus.

¹¹¹ Morales 2005, 12–13.

¹¹² *ibid.* 11–12.

nounced than Clitophon, is Favorinus, the 2nd century Greek-speaking Gallic orator who was allegedly born an eunuch and who made a career out of his effeminate looks and voice, but who was also persecuted for adultery.¹¹³ In a society which equated (acquisition and display of) *paideia* with (acquisition and display of) virility,¹¹⁴ the proper gender role to be assumed by an orator was that of a hyper-virile male.¹¹⁵ The androgynous orator Favorinus and many other orators who adopted the effeminate style could appeal to the audience with a pronouncedly 'effeminate' rhetoric, not as a product of their biological predispositions but as a strategy of self-fashioning.¹¹⁶ Interestingly, the first-person speaker of Apuleius' Prologue seems to adopt a 'feminine' persona in relation to style: the singsong rhetoric of seduction seems to evoke the 'Greekish' effeminate oratorical style condemned by Quintilian.¹¹⁷

As a narrator, Clitophon does not use an effeminate style, but he does more than that: he styles himself (i.e. the novelistic hero Clitophon) as a morally and sexually ambiguous character, as an erotic *picaro*. More particularly, Clitophon can be seen as a spectacular representative of the species *cultus adulter*, the virile adulterer who uses woman's clothes or effeminate appearance only as a camouflage.¹¹⁸ Clitophon's self-representation as an 'effeminate' adulterer and unreliable narrator is an excellent alibi for occupying the speaker's podium and breaking up the sexual symmetry of the erotic novel, but it is also an end in itself: it enhances his attractiveness as an authentic speaker. Self-exposure is only a camouflaged strategy of (male) persuasion. To quote Melite: Clitophon is 'much more handsome' in the costume of the Scyrian Achilles.

It is widely acknowledged that *Leucippe and Clitophon* deviates significantly from the ideology of love espoused by the rest of the preserved Greek erotic novels. *Achilles Tatius'* novel has been defined in intertextual terms as a 'pastiche of the erotic novel'. The main weakness of this approach is that it

¹¹³ Cf. Philostr. *VS* 489.

¹¹⁴ Cf. Whitmarsh 2001, 113–116.

¹¹⁵ Gunderson 2003, 40–41.

¹¹⁶ Gleason 1995; cf. Whitmarsh 2001, 116.

¹¹⁷ Graverini 2005, 179–181. Also see Keulen in this volume.

¹¹⁸ *Ov. Tr.* 2,499; cf. Clodius at the mysteries of Bona Dea, *Cic. Att.* 1,12,3 (the episode of Clitophon's cross-dressing takes place during a festival dedicated to Artemis!); *Apul. Met.* 9,27; *Iuv.* 6.Ox21–25; Edwards (1993) 81 ff. Cf. also Seneca's *controversia* dealing with the rape of a young man who dressed himself as a woman (*Con.* 5,6).

treats intertextuality as an objective textual phenomenon unrelated not only to the intentions of the author but also to the dynamics of reception. From a more pragmatic point of view, the necessary prerequisite for the reader to *see* intertexts is to construct the ‘primary’ text as a discourse produced by a real or fictional enunciator; it is this cognitive procedure that makes it possible to realise (or imagine) embedded ‘foreign voices’ in a text.¹¹⁹ *Leucippe and Clitophon* is a helpful example because its narrative is explicitly presented as a speech. To be sure, it is impossible to know whether Achilles Tatius actually intended to write a pastiche. But there is no reason whatsoever not to credit a *fictional* character with the intentions of his own autobiographical discourse. The effects of pastiche are attributable to the fact that a narcissistic rhetorician ironically depicts his own past life as a sentimental erotic novel: he describes, cites and reperforms his past experiences and his past words from a distanced, ironic point of view, thus gaining authority and credibility as a sophistic speaker. In purely textual terms, the novel is a pastiche of the erotic novel; in terms of discourse presentation, it could well be labelled an ‘erotic picaresque’. Through the first-person speech it ironises both the massive sentimentality of the erotic novel and the narcissistic pose of the sophistic novelist too overly concerned with his own image.¹²⁰

Clitophon’s comically haughty attitude towards his novelistic past can be read as a powerful metaphor. The Greek erotic novel is characterised by written form, sexual symmetry and pseudo-epic narrative objectivity. *Leucippe and Clitophon* destabilises these formal and ideological conventions by assimilating a novelistic narrative to the pseudo-oral dynamics of sophistic self-promotion. In other words, by letting the male protagonist speak, it sacrifices the ideal symmetry of a ‘written’ genre to the seductive ambiguities of rhetorical display.¹²¹

¹¹⁹ According to a radical theory, intertextuality is to be understood as an aspect of speech presentation, a phenomenon comparable with direct discourse; see Laird 40–43.

¹²⁰ See above, n. 38.

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