

# Introduction

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In classical literature purists hold that there are eight canonical novels, five Greek and three Latin, more than twenty fragments of other novels, many so-called fringe-novels (whole or fragmentary), and finally scores of narratives beyond-the-fringe. Extended prose narratives of all kinds are the subject of this volume.

Diskin Clay†, ‘Lucian’s Philosophical Island’, opens this volume with an analysis of Lucian *VH* 2.4-28, the first-person narrative of seven months of adventures on the Island of the Blest (Elysian Fields). But his real interest lies in a discussion of the ancient philosophers – beings who do not always fare well at the hands of Lucian –, and the theme of the paper is Lucian’s fantastic voyage and search for island utopias. Clay establishes a long tradition for Lucian’s philosophic island with a reference to Voltaire’s 1765 dialogue among Lucian, Erasmus, and Rabelais, ‘great mockers of philosophers’.

In ‘The Genre Understanding of the Utopian Novel’, Heinrich Kuch argues that utopian narratives can quite legitimately be termed novels – if Chariton can be said to represent the adventure and love romance and Petronius the realistic. Kuch looks carefully at the episodes/structure of what we have in Diodorus Siculus of Euhemerus’ *Sacred Scriptures* and of Iambulus. The novelistic narratives recount events taking place on islands, and while Lucian stays on his island utopia for seven months, Iambulus stays with his islanders for seven years. By comparing motifs, structures, and episodes Kuch concludes that ancient utopian narratives belong to the genre of the novel.

Benjamin Haller, ‘Homeric Parody, the Isle of the Blessed, and the Nature of *Paideia* in Lucian’s *Verae Historiae*’, continues the work of the preceding two papers in the area of utopian novels, but is most interested in studying identity and ethnicity among non-Greek Easterners. Lucian’s Syrian background is the starting point: how does Lucian the traveling rhetorician establish his place among Greeks in a Roman world? Hellenic *paideia* in the Second Sophistic

defines what Lucian has become – his dialogues thus are quasi-biographical. Haller concludes: ‘*Paideia* is an equal-opportunity mistress, available to any of Lucian’s kin ...’.

Writing about ‘Lucian’s *True Stories*: Paradoxography and False Discourse’, Valentina Popescu contends that in the *True Stories* Lucian creates a new type of narrative, one that privileges the marvelous combined with the instructive: base entertainment coexisting with aesthetic enthrallment. Lucian’s famous admission that it is true, he is a liar, and that what he writes is a lie, can be useful to the reader in his consideration of the value of the tradition of historians and paradoxographers who all write “false” discourses.

Roger Beck reaches into the realm of astrology in his paper ‘The Adventures of Six Men in a Boat: the Astral Development of a Maritime Narrative in the *Anthologies* of Vettius Valens’. [See Jerome K. Jerome’s *Three Men in a Boat*] The narrative (*Anthologies* 275, 19-24) in six lines of Teubner Greek text speaks of six men on a voyage, storm at sea, partial shipwreck, pirates, fear of drowning. Because of certain prior configurations in the heavens, there is a known outcome in the world of humans. We can know how the narrative will develop, since we know the horoscope of these six men. In a real sense this constitutes a kind of pattern called genre: we know what an ancient novel is because it looks like other ancient novels, or because it is predetermined from another source.

In ‘Facts or Fiction? The Fruitful Relationship between Ancient Novel and Literary Miscellany’, Hendrik Müller-Reineke shows how works like the *Noctes Atticae* of Aulus Gellius can be mined by novelists for all sorts of incidents, and yet in themselves appeal to the literary tastes of readers of the early centuries AD. He posits the ancient literary miscellany as proper genre, and notes that ancient literary criticism seems not to touch upon either the novel or the miscellany. Müller-Reineke makes the statement: ‘If we accept that literary miscellanies originated from the same intellectual and cultural flow that produced the ancient novel as a mode of entertainment, a relation between both genres is very likely ...’. Scholars of Apuleius will find rich material here.

Grammatiki Karla, ‘Isis-Epiphany in the *Life of Aesop*: a Structural Analytic Approach’, states: ‘I argue that the introductory narrative of the *Life* is structured around the goddess Isis ...’. Aesop gets his voice 4-8, a miracle which is framed by 1-3 and 9. Her thoughtful approach assumes and then shows that the *Life* is a unified work of art. For scholars of Isis, epiphanies, and Apuleius this article on a fringe-novel provides much food for thought.

In ‘Medicine and the Novel: Apuleius’ Bonding with the Educated Reader’, though primarily concerned with medicine in Apuleius, Regine May pauses for a moment over Petronius and nicely illustrates that in both the *Satyrica* and the

*Metamorphoses* the anti-heroes show a surprising lack of knowledge about medicine: Encolpius cannot distinguish medicine from charlatanry, and Lucius' ignorance of medicine is set off against the readers' superior knowledge. In the Greek novels the protagonists' superiority over their antagonists is illustrated by their knowledge of medicine. After a review of selected passages in the Greek novels, May focuses on Apuleius: *Apology* 40; 69; *Metamorphoses* 10.2, 9; 5.10; 9.3.

In a joint paper 'Pirates in the Library', Nicolas Boulic and Françoise Letoublon show how the ancient Greek novelists have appropriated the motif of pirates/piracy and transformed it into an erotic metaphor for the rapture of love (lovers as pirates, sex as rape). The motif appears earlier in Menander and in the *Greek Anthology*, and it is clear that their readers or audiences, like those of the ancient Greek novels, enjoyed variations on the use of the motif of pirates/lovers.

Angelo Casanova, 'Tombs and Stables, Roofs and Brothels, Dens and Raids in Lollianos' Fragments', presents a careful analysis of the five scenes in Lollianos, stressing precise and exact places and settings in which actions of the narrative take place. In this elegant and very close reading of the fragments Casanova makes sense of events where before there were only guesses. He has done much for our understanding of the little we have of Lollianos, and shown that the marvelous/erotic/violent combination can support a good story.

In 'Erotic Fiction and Christian Sexual Ethics in Nonnus' Episode of Morrheus and Chalcomede', Fontini Hadjittofi examines books 33-35 of Nonnus' *Dionysiaca*, which contain the narrative about Morrheus and Chalcomede, and, which Hadjittofi demonstrates, imitates the canonical Greek novels. The narrative in books 33-35 could in fact almost stand by itself as a fifth century AD Greek novel. Scene after scene from Nonnus is adduced and shown to have strong resemblances to one or another Greek novel. The presence of the Christian view of chastity (i.e., the greatest of virtues) is introduced and shown to color the earlier classical approaches to sexuality.

In 'Hagiographical Romance: Novelistic Narrative Strategy in Jerome's Lives of Hermits', Jiří Šubrt analyzes the narrative techniques in Jerome's *Life of Malchus the Captive Monk*. This is the first-person narrative of a young ascetic who leaves home to avoid marriage (e.g., to preserve his chastity). As he tries to return home, he is captured by bandits and enslaved, then married off to another slave who, as luck would have it, turns out to be a Christian. In this unconsummated marriage each preserves her chastity (the best thing), and their physical life (a better thing) is first saved by a lioness and then by the Roman military

(a good thing). Throughout the narrative Jerome employs the rhetorical devices of the novelists in order to tell a compelling story.

Loreto Núñez contributes the final paper to this volume: ‘Liminal Games: Fluidity of the *Sphragis* of a Novelist’. The focus of Núñez’ article is the beginnings and endings of novels, how they are used, how they differ from each other, and how the audiences might react to them. The first novel examined is, to no one’s surprise, the *Metamorphoses* and its prologue plus the Madauros reference at the conclusion, then the opening words of *Callirhoe* and the closing words of the *Aethiopica*, and then the prologues of *Daphnis and Chloe* and *Leucippe and Clitophon*.