

Philosophical Presences in the Ancient Novel

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Philosophical Presences
in the Ancient Novel

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Introduction

J.R. MORGAN
MERIEL JONES
www.kyknos.org.uk

Most of the papers in this volume derive from a panel organised by the KYKNOS Research Centre for Ancient Narrative Literature for the fourth Celtic Conference in Classics, held at the University of Wales, Lampeter, in the summer of 2006. Even at the earliest stages of planning, when we decided upon the theme of philosophy in ancient fiction, it was clear that with the shared interests of existing members of the group and some judiciously and temptingly worded invitations to other colleagues there was the potential for an exciting and tightly focused three days of discussion. Reality exceeded expectation. In our experience, the spirit of constructive collaboration that pervaded the three days of the conference has rarely been surpassed. Excellent papers were followed by exceptionally generous periods of animated discussion, in which ideas were shared and explored. Largely due to the structure of the Celtic Conference, with panels on different topics running in parallel over the duration of the conference, the personnel at each of our sessions remained pretty well constant, so that in effect the panel became a three-day seminar. John Morgan and Merial Jones, who had been responsible for organising the panel, undertook to bring its papers – with a couple of additions – together into this present volume. Our thanks are due to all the contributors, and in particular to Anton Powell, the organiser of the whole conference, and to Stephen Harrison, who, although not a speaker in this panel, was a constant contributor to our discussions and later gave freely of his encouragement in the preparation of this book.

Next we must say something about KYKNOS, based in the Universities of Swansea, Lampeter, and Exeter. Even before the formal constitution of the group, we were aware that there was a unique regional concentration of research expertise on narrative, both among established academic staff

and among research students of high promise. Since the days of Bryan Reardon's *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, there has been a strong historical connection between Wales and the study of the ancient novel. In fact, four of the contributors to Reardon's volume were or had been members of what was still the federal University of Wales (Reardon himself, Gill, Dowden, and Morgan). Later staff movements took some of the original personnel to other universities, but in recent years a series of strategic appointments has been made in Wales to consolidate the research strength. Other members of staff, whose main focus of research may lie in other areas, are able to contribute additional dimensions to the collaborative work on narrative. Various conferences and seminars have been organised under the aegis of KYKNOS, including one on 'Lies and Metafiction', whose papers, edited by John Morgan and Ian Repath, will appear as another *Ancient Narrative Supplementum*. Exchanges with staff and students of other universities are envisaged – indeed researchers from Belgium and Switzerland have already spent some time working with the group – and the intention is to build a network of contacts and associations with researchers in the field of ancient narrative literature. Your ideas for possible collaborations will be warmly welcomed.

Our aim in this present volume is to open up an aspect of ancient fiction which is widely acknowledged, but still lacks a thorough-going investigation. Under the rubric of 'Philosophical Presences' we envisage a cluster of complementary and overlapping approaches to the wider issues. Writers of the Second Sophistic in general were steeped in the literature of the classical period, including the classic texts of philosophical writers, especially, of course, Plato. Intertextuality is equally a feature, to varying degrees, of all the ancient novels, but scholarship has tended to concentrate on the novelists' exploitation of intertexts from epic, tragedy, New Comedy, historiography, and (in the case of Longus) bucolic. The question of how to interpret allusion to an intertext becomes particularly acute when the intertext is a philosophical one. How far can we press the philosophical implications of any given allusion? Are the novelists simply decorating their works with Platonic tags and images, or are they seriously articulating and engaging with the Platonic ideas to which those tags and images are attached, as Karen Ní Mheallaigh argues in the case of Achilles Tatius' use of the *Phaedrus* to foreground issues of textuality and orality, and hence the nature of fiction itself? Larger scale patterns of allegory must also come

into play. Latin novelists, notably Apuleius, recognisably build their plots as allegorical embodiments – or perhaps problematisations – of philosophical doctrines, as Ahuvia Kahane reads the scene of the Judgement of Paris as an icon of Neoplatonic debates on meaning and truth. May we legitimately read the Greek novels too as works of coded philosophy? ‘Yes, in some sense’ would appear to be the answer, if the suggestive papers of, for example, Ken Dowden and Fritz-Gregor Herrmann are to be believed.

However, philosophical presences in the novels can be located at a number of different levels. Even where no specific intertext is involved, it is more or less inevitable that the novels – or any other form of discourse for that matter – should reflect concerns that were also being addressed in systematic philosophy. At the very least, any educated person of the period of the novels’ composition would have had as part of his mental furniture philosophical ideas that had entered the cultural mainstream. Representations of moral qualities in fiction, for example, must be contextualised within the philosophical discourses of antiquity, which in their turn will shed light on and help to explain the novelists’ tacit assumptions. This approach is exemplified in this volume by Meriel Jones’s discussion of *andreaia*, Ian Repath’s analysis of the novelists’ appropriation of Platonic psychology, Koen De Temmerman’s treatment of character types described by Aristotle and Theophrastus, and Konstantin Doulamis’ demonstration of the presence of Stoic ideas and recognisably Stoic stylistic tropes in the too often unregarded novel of Xenophon of Ephesus. At another level again, philosophers may be directly depicted as members of the cast-lists of fictional texts: in this volume, Daniel Ogden examines Lucian’s treatment of stock figures representative of the various philosophical schools in his dialogue *The Lover of Lies*, while John Morgan’s survey of philosophers in Greek novels identifies a persistent ambivalence in these texts’ handling of philosophers as individuals, an ambivalence which is also identified in Michael Trapp’s introductory, contextualising paper as characteristic of the position of philosophy within the society and culture of the early Imperial period.

This collection of papers makes no claim to be any more than a beginning, and it is our hope that before long KYKNOS will return to the question of philosophy in fiction. Ian Repath’s forthcoming monograph on Achilles Tatius’ exploitation of Plato will throw down a gauntlet for readers of the other novels;¹ Heliodorus in particular is a potentially rich seam for

¹ Repath (forthcoming).

mining significant Platonic allusion. The claim has often been made that the *Ethiopian Story* is characteristically Neoplatonic in its orientation, and that its plot embodies serious philosophical intentions.² Philosophically didactic readings of this and other novels need to be teased out in detail, and readers of ancient fiction must at some stage begin to get their heads round difficult and abstruse texts of Middle and Neo-Platonism. We also need to pay attention to other philosophical schools, perhaps less rich in their literary heritage. Konstantin Doulamis' paper is a salutary reminder of the centrality of Stoicism in what we might call the 'middle-brow' culture of the early Imperial period. Traces of this and other philosophical contexts need to be run to ground and correlated in order to locate the novels accurately in the moral and intellectual landscape of the period; Meriel Jones's dissertation on the representation of masculinities in the novels has begun the process for the so-called male virtues, but there is still much work to be done.³ Even at a philological level, the vocabulary of the novels needs to be scrutinised for philosophical resonances: a more or less random check of the TLG, for example, turned up an apparent echo of early Christian dialectic in Heliodorus, as noted in John Morgan's paper. Strategies of reading philosophy in the novels, of reading the novels as philosophy, and of reading them through philosophy are already exemplified in this collection of papers, and have the potential, if not exactly to transform, at least to enhance significantly our understanding and estimation of these works. If the papers in this volume are anything to go by, philosophical presences paradoxically simultaneously draw attention to the ontological status of fictional texts, promoting metaliterary readings, and offer the possibility of didactic instruction about the 'real' world and human life. As they say, watch this space.

Finally, in addition to the thanks already expressed, we are grateful to Roelf Barkhuis and the editorial team at *Ancient Narrative*, who have been enthusiastic and encouraging about this project from the beginning.

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² Rohde 1914, 462 ff., Geffcken 1929, 88 (1978, 84); Dowden 1996.

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Abstracts

What is this *Philosophia* Anyway?

MICHAEL TRAPP

This chapter explores contemporary understandings of philosophy in the Hellenistic and Roman periods, as both a repository of final truth and a practical, life-changing discipline, demanding life-long commitment to a project of self-formation. Drawing attention to the curious position of philosophy as both an insider and a self-conscious outsider to conventional educated culture (*paideia*), it suggests that greater unease and greater potential for anxiety attended *philosophia* and *philosophoi* in the world of the novel than is often acknowledged.

Michael Trapp is Professor of Greek Literature and Thought at King's College London. He is the author of *Philosophy in the Roman Empire: Ethics, Politics and Society*, and the editor of *Socrates from Antiquity to the Enlightenment* and *Socrates in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (all Ashgate, 2007).

The Representation of Philosophers in Greek Fiction

J.R. MORGAN

This paper reviews the depiction of philosophers in five works of Greek fiction: Chariton's *Callirhoe*, the fragmentary *Metiochus and Parthenope*, Antonius Diogenes' *Wonders beyond Thule*, Heliodorus' *Ethiopian Story*, and the *Life of Aesop*. Although there is naturally some divergence in these texts, there is in general little sign of engagement with philosophical thought through the personage of the philosopher, and in no case is the philosopher employed as an authorially validated vehicle of ideas or the text's final message. It is striking that in each case, the philosopher is constructed as an ambiguous and complex figure, embodying the ambivalence of contemporary culture towards philosophy.

John Morgan is Professor of Classics at Swansea University and Leader of the KYKNOS Research Centre. He is the author of a number of articles on the Greek novels, and his commentary on *Daphnis and Chloe* was published in 2004. He is currently working on books on Heliodorus and Longus.

Emotional Conflict and Platonic Psychology in the Greek Novel

IAN REPATH

Internal emotional conflict is a staple of erotic fiction, and one way of conveying it available to an ancient author was Platonic psychology. Plato, an immensely popular author in the Second Sophistic, divided the soul into parts to account for conflicting desires: this idea and the terminology involved is repeatedly discussed by Plutarch and can be seen deployed in the works of the Greek novelists, especially Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus, although its beginnings are present in Chariton. A ready and adaptable means of describing psychological turmoil and the feelings inspired by desire, the use of Platonic psychology shows the authors under consideration to be philosophically literate and writing for a readership which shared that knowledge and appreciated its meaning.

Ian Repath is Lecturer in Classics at Swansea University. He works and has published on Second Sophistic prose fiction, especially the Greek novel, names and allusions in fiction, the Roman novel, literary aspects of Plato, and ancient physiognomy. He is a founding member of KYKNOS.

Where Philosophy and Rhetoric Meet: Character Typification in the Greek Novel

KOEN DE TEMMERMAN

Typification plays a major role in characterisation in ancient literature. This paper focuses on the eight character types that the Greek novelistic corpus has in common with Aristotle's ethical philosophical works on virtue and vice (*Nicomachean Ethics*, *Eudemian Ethics*, and *Magna Moralia*) and Theophrastus' *Characters*: the coward (*deilos*), the flatterer (*kolax*), the obsequious man (*areskos*), the hypocrite (*eirōn*), the boaster (*alazōn*), the insensitive man (*anaisthētos*), the rustic (*agroikos*), and the shameless man (*anaischyntos*). I set out to answer three questions: (1) Can we discern The-

ophrastan and/or Aristotelian echoes in the novelists' engagement with these character types, and if so: (2) Do they allow us to postulate any direct influence? I will try to answer both questions by adding a third question: (3) In which thematic areas do these eight character types appear? I argue that, despite its heterogeneity, the novelists' engagement with character typification tends to cluster around three specific semantic areas. In military, erotic, and social contexts, echoes of Aristotelian and/or Theophrastan ideas connected with the various character types appear frequently, and their original meaning is often adapted or displaced. Rather than postulating any direct influence, however, I argue that the character types, along with some intrinsically connected concepts, had become part of general rhetorical education by the first centuries B.C. In my view, the novelists' use of these character types is an aspect of their engagement with the literary toolkit developed in rhetorical education.

Koen De Temmerman received his Ph.D. from Ghent University (Belgium) in 2006 with a dissertation on characterisation in the ancient Greek novel. He currently holds Postdoctoral Fellowships at Stanford University and Ghent University. His postdoctoral research project deals with the construction of character in the biographies of Greek sophists.

Andreia and Gender in the Greek Novels
MERIEL JONES

Towards the end of their novels, both Chariton and Heliodorus engage their heroes in remarkable feats of bravery in military and athletic contexts. Focusing on these two authors, this paper analyses the Greek novels' conception of the cardinal philosophical virtue of *andreia*. It begins by identifying the prototypical spheres of *andreia* in both philosophical and more general cultural contexts, and examining the role played by gender stereotypes in the formation of ancient thought on *andreia*. It then explores the extent to which the novels advance a philosophy of *andreia*, borrowing and manipulating classical philosophical doctrine to create a complex virtue which reflects the novels' classical dramatic settings, as well as more contemporary concerns.

Meriel Jones is Lecturer in Classics at the University of Wales, Lampeter. She has published articles on magic in the *Aethiopica* and the meanings of Heliodorus' character names, and has recently completed her doctoral thesis,

Playing the Man: Performing Masculinities in the Greek Novel (Swansea). She acts as Secretary for KYKNOS.

Novel Ways of Being Philosophical
Or A Tale of Two Dogs and a Phoenix
KEN DOWDEN

Are the Greek novels philosophical? This contribution looks at three test cases. Dictys of Crete's *Diary* is not philosophical – indeed it is not a novel and it shows by contrast that even the meanest Greek novel may be viewed as philosophical. Xenophon's *Ephesiaca* can be seen from the episode of Anthia's 'punishment' in the pit with two dogs to have something significant to say about the life we should pursue. Finally, Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* is argued to be more philosophical again on the basis of the opening events of Book 6, particularly the encounter with a man carrying a flamingo.

Ken Dowden is Professor of Classics and Director of the Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity at the University of Birmingham. He writes on Greek mythology (*Uses of Greek Mythology*, Routledge, 1992), religion (*European Paganism*, Routledge, 2000; *Zeus*, Routledge, 2006), on historians (especially fictional ones) for the *Brill New Jacoby*, and on various aspects of the Latin and Greek novels, especially Apuleius and Heliodoros, particularly their message and statistical issues.

Stoic Echoes and Style in Xenophon of Ephesus
KONSTANTIN DOULAMIS

This article examines the relationship between Stoic echoes and style in Xenophon's *Ephesiaca*. The focus is on passages evoking Stoic ideas, which are correlated to the teaching of Stoic philosophers, particularly Epictetus. A close study of the structure and style of sections with a Stoic colour from the *Ephesiaca* brings out their subtle rhetorical character and shows a relatively high degree of artistic self-consciousness. Taking into account that Stoic philosophers advocate stylistic simplicity, this article suggests that there might be a link between the style and content of 'Stoic' passages in the

Ephesiaca, and concludes by considering the implications that such a link might have for our understanding of Xenophon's literary persona and work.

Konstantin Doulamis is a Lecturer in Classics at University College Cork, Ireland. His research focuses on the Greek novels and his publications include 'Rhetoric and Irony in Chariton: a Case Study from Callirhoe', *Ancient Narrative* 1 (2001), 55–72, and 'Lost in Translation? George Moore's *The Pastoral Loves of Daphnis and Chloe* and rewriting Longus' in M. Pierson (ed.) (2006), *George Moore: Artistic Visions and Literary Worlds* (Cambridge Scholars Press), 86–101. He is currently developing his doctoral thesis into a monograph on rhetoric, style, and implied readership in Chariton and Xenophon of Ephesus.

The Love of Wisdom and the Love of Lies:
The Philosophers and Philosophical Voices of Lucian's *Philopseudes*
DANIEL OGDEN

The various characters of Tychiades' monologue in Lucian's *Philopseudes* are contextualised against the stock character-types Lucian constructs across his wider oeuvre. The philosophers are specifically characterised for their schools in line with their projection in the rest of the Lucianic corpus. The tales they are given to tell are all in some way linked with their school or their character-type. An appreciation of the broader Lucianic types to which the characters conform will give us access to some intriguing back-stories to the tales they tell. Conspicuous by their absence from the symposium are representatives of Lucian's two favourite philosophical schools, the Cynics and the Epicureans. However, it will be found that Tychiades himself exhibits some signature Epicurean tendencies, in Lucianic terms, whilst a disembodied Cynic voice speaks intermittently through distinctive imagery and language in the dialogue's various tales. For the most part this voice speaks in concert with Tychiades, without being identifiable as his own voice.

Daniel Ogden is Professor of Ancient History at Exeter. His books include *Greek Bastardy* (Oxford, 1996), *Polygamy, Prostitutes and Death* (London, 1999), *Greek and Roman Necromancy* (Princeton, 2001) and *Aristomenes of Messene* (Swansea, 2004), (ed.) *A Companion to Greek Religion* (Oxford, 2007) and *In Search of the Sorcerer's Apprentice* (Swansea, 2007).

Longus' Imitation: *Mimēsis* in the Education of Daphnis and Chloe
FRITZ-GREGOR HERRMANN

Longus' pastoral novel *Daphnis and Chloe* is a story about the erotic education of two innocent adolescents in the countryside. It has long been recognised that, on one level, the author intended his novel to be read in an allegorical fashion. This essay attempts to demonstrate in what respects and to what extent Longus consciously adopts and adapts ancient theories of art, many of which were, or were part of, theories of education, *paideia*: the prevalent view of art as 'representation', *mimēsis*, also constituted the starting point for Longus' exploration of this theme. An awareness of this will shape our reading of the novel.

Fritz-Gregor Herrmann is Senior Lecturer in Classics and Ancient History at Swansea University. He has published articles on Plato's ontology and theology; he is the author of *Words and Ideas. The Roots of Plato's Philosophy* (Swansea 2007), editor of *New Essays on Plato* (Swansea 2006) and co-editor, with Douglas Cairns and Terry Penner, of *Pursuing the Good. Ethics and Metaphysics in Plato's Republic* (Edinburgh 2007).

Philosophical Framing:
The Phaedran Setting of *Leucippe and Cleitophon*
KAREN NÍ MHEALLAIGH

This paper explores Plato's *Phaedrus* as a literary and philosophical intertext in the preamble of Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Cleitophon*. The novel's Phaedran frame playfully but programmatically foregrounds the tension between the fictive orality and textuality in this disjunctive work, and stimulates the reader's reflection on metaliterary issues, such as how to read fiction. The Phaedran play with the presence of writing, the absence of an authorial figure, and the question of how to read fiction, mark the novel's affinity with the modern category of Metafiction, and find parallels in contemporary fiction, such as the works of Lucian and Apuleius.

Karen Ní Mheallaigh is Lecturer in Classics at the University of Exeter. Her research focuses on ancient fiction, especially the works of Lucian, and the novel. She has published on Lucian and on pseudo-documentary fiction in

antiquity, and is currently working on a monograph on Lucian and Metafiction, which is based on her doctoral research.

Disjoining Meaning and Truth: History, Representation,
Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and Neoplatonist Aesthetics

AHUVIA KAHANE

Reading through the relationship between meaning and truth in Neoplatonic philosophy, especially Plotinus, Porphyry, and Proclus, and discussing the work of philosopher Jacques Rancière, this paper attempts to confront anew the problem of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* and the relation of its representations to truth and history. The paper considers especially questions of meaning and truth embodied in the scene of the re-enactment of the Judgement of Paris in Book X of the *Metamorphoses* and the paradoxes of "mute" speakers. Looking at Erich Auerbach's analysis of the "dispossession" of illegitimate speakers in Tacitus' *Annales* I (specifically of the seditious Percennius) and at Rancière's response to and rejection of Auerbach's arguments, this essay attempts to re-introduce the notion of truth into our understanding of Apuleius. That truth is, the essay argues, very close to Neoplatonic conceptions which are, of course, deeply embedded in the Apuleian text.

Ahuvia Kahane is Professor of Greek and Director of the Humanities and Arts Research Centre at Royal Holloway, University of London, and Associate Director of the University of London Institute in Paris. He is currently completing a book about genre and the progress of historical time in antiquity (forthcoming, Duckworth) and a book on the relationship between monumentality and the illegible in the ancient world and in the classical tradition.

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