

## THE STRANGER'S STRATAGEM: SELF-DISCLOSURE AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN GREEK CULTURE

Albrecht Dihle zum 65. Geburtstag

### I. A PROBLEM IN ACHILLES TATIUS

THE literary stock of Achilles Tatius has been increasing steadily in value since 1964, when an article about his romance *Leucippe and Cleitophon* in an encyclopedia of world literature began, 'Das Werk weist alle Mängel seines Genres samt einigen zusätzlichen eigenen auf.'<sup>1</sup> To be sure, *Leucippe and Cleitophon* remains among the last and probably least read of the Greek romances; yet in the last decades critics have begun to draw attention to original and effective aspects of its composition.<sup>2</sup> As is usually the case, this revaluation has been accompanied not so much by the discovery of new virtues which had previously been neglected, but rather by the redescription as virtues of what had always counted as vices. Thus Cleitophon's lack of heroism can now be welcomed as comic realism, the implausibly melodramatic twists of the plot praised as self-consciously theatrical ironies, and the baroque frigidity of the style counted as loony metaphysical wit or as Brechtian *Entfremdungseffekt*.

But one notorious weakness has so far resisted redescription: the awkward discrepancy between the romance's beginning and its ending. The story opens at Sidon in Phoenicia, where the anonymous narrator visits a temple of Astarte and admires a painting of Europa and the bull. While he is standing in front of the painting and exclaiming about the power of love represented in it, a stranger (who will go on to introduce himself as Cleitophon) remarks that he too knows all too well the power of love:

Ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα μὲν ἐπήνουν τῆς γραφῆς, ἅτε δὲ ὦν ἐρωτικός περιεργότερον ἔβλεπον τὸν ἄγοντα τὸν βοῦν Ἐρωτᾶ καὶ, "Οἶον," εἶπον, "ἄρχει βρέφος οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης." ταῦτά μου λέγοντος νεανίσκος καὶ αὐτὸς παρεστῶς, "'Εγὼ ταῦτα ἂν εἶδειην," ἔφη, "τοσαύτας ὕβρεις ἐξ ἔρωτος παθῶν." "Καὶ τί πέπονθας," εἶπον, "ὦ ἀγαθέ; καὶ γὰρ ὄρω σου τὴν ὄψιν οὐ μακρὰν τῆς τοῦ θεοῦ τελετῆς." "Σμῆνος ἀνεγείρεις," εἶπε, "λόγων τὰ γὰρ ἐμὰ μύθοις ἔοικε." "Μὴ κατοκνήσης, ὦ βέλτιστε," ἔφη, "πρὸς τοῦ Διὸς καὶ τοῦ Ἐρωτος αὐτοῦ, ταύτη μᾶλλον ἦσιν, εἰ καὶ μύθοις ἔοικε."<sup>3</sup>

I praised the rest of the painting, but, being a lover myself, I was looking with greater care at Eros leading the bull; and I said, 'Look how a baby rules over heaven and earth and sea!' While I said this, a young man who was standing there too said, 'I ought to know that well myself: so many have been the

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<sup>1</sup> E. Schmalzriedt, in *Kindlers Literatur Lexikon* iv (Zürich 1964) 372 s.v. 'Ta kata Leukippên kai Kleitophônta.'

<sup>2</sup> So for example B. P. Reardon, *Courants littéraires grecs des II<sup>e</sup> et III<sup>e</sup> siècles après J.-C.* (Paris 1971) 359–66; A. Heiserman, *The novel before the novel* (Chicago and

London 1977) 118–30; G. Anderson, *Eros sophistes: ancient novelists at play* (Chico, CA 1982) 23–32; T. Hägg, *The novel in antiquity* (Oxford 1983) 41–54; E. L. Bowie, in *The Cambridge history of classical literature. i: Greek literature*, ed. P. E. Easterling and B. M. W. Knox (Cambridge 1985) 692–4; N. Holzberg, *Der antike Roman* (Munich and Zürich 1986) 103–9. Among the few earlier examples of relatively positive judgments, cf. D. B. Durham, 'Parody in Achilles Tatius', *CPh* xxxiii (1938) 1–19, and D. Sedelmeier, 'Studien zu Achilleus Tatiος', *WS* lxxii (1959) 113–43. The conventional criticisms are memorably expressed in E. Rohde, *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer* (Leipzig 1876) 470–85.

<sup>3</sup> E. Vilborg, *Achilles Tatiος Leucippe et Clitophon* (Stockholm 1955) i 2.1–2; henceforth all citations from this text are from this edition. For an astonishingly close Latin parallel to this scene which proves its conventionality, cf. Petron. *Sat.* 83.4–8.

outrages I have suffered from love.' 'And what happened to you, my good man?' I asked. 'For I see from your appearance that you were initiated into the god's mysteries not long ago.' 'You are arousing a swarm of stories,' he said, 'for my experiences resemble fiction.' 'Don't hesitate, my dear fellow,' I said, 'in the name of Zeus and of Eros himself, to recount them, even if they resemble fiction.'

Cleitophon yields to the anonymous narrator's incautious request that he tell his own story, and the result is a first-person account that fills eight books and closes with the final fulfillment of his desire in his marriage to Leucippe at Byzantium and a trip together with her to Tyre; in the romance's last sentence, Cleitophon tells of their decision to spend the winter in Tyre and then to go on to Byzantium:

δύο δὲ ὕστερον ἡμερῶν τοῦ Καλλισθέου ἐλθόντες εὗρομεν τὸν πατέρα μέλλοντα θύειν τοὺς γάμους τῆς ἀδελφῆς εἰς τὴν ὕστεραίαν. παρῆμεν οὖν ὡς καὶ συνθύσσαντες αὐτῷ καὶ εὐξόμενοι τοῖς θεοῖς τοὺς τε ἑμοὺς καὶ τοὺς ἐκείνου γάμους σὺν ἀγαθαῖς φυλαχθῆναι τύχαις. καὶ διεγνώκαμεν ἐν τῇ Τύρῳ παραχειμάσαντες διελθεῖν εἰς τὸ Βυζάντιον. (viii 19.3)

We arrived two days later than Callisthenes and found my father preparing to sacrifice for my sister's marriage on the next day. So we were present to join in the sacrifice with him and to pray to the gods that both my marriage and his be protected with the best of fortune. And we decided to spend the winter in Tyre and then to go on to Byzantium.

What has become of the anonymous narrator who opened the frame for Cleitophon's story but does not return at the end to close it off? Surely he has not wandered off in boredom and left us to listen to the end by ourselves. To formulate the problem pointedly: the romance's very first word is Σιδῶν and its very last word is Βυζάντιον: how has Cleitophon gotten from Tyre, where we leave him planning to go to Byzantium, to Sidon, where we meet him at the temple of Astarte? As Gaselee complains in his note to the Loeb edition,

Our author seems to have forgotten that the story began by being Cleitophon's narrative to himself. The narration took place at Sidon, and there should have been a few words to round up the book to explain how it came about that Cleitophon found himself at Sidon, and for the author to thank him for his interesting narration.<sup>4</sup>

How are we to deal with this perplexity? Gaselee's note outlines one possible line of argument: the appeal to authorial incompetence.<sup>5</sup> After all, if Homer can nod, Achilles Tatius has been thought by some never to have woken up at all. This may at first seem to be a plausible suggestion: minor slips are likely to occur in any extended narrative, and *Leucippe and Cleitophon* is no more free of them than any other long text.<sup>6</sup> Does not Pylaemenes receive a mortal wound from Menelaus (*Il.* v 579), only to return later to mourn his son (xiii 658 f.)?<sup>7</sup> But a carelessness of the sort that Gaselee hypothesizes would be of a different order altogether: it would affect not only a minor detail, but the narrative situation of the romance as a whole. Can we believe that Achilles Tatius might have been guilty of so gross an incompetence?

Two considerations militate strongly against such a suggestion. The first is that the author goes to considerable trouble to retain throughout his romance the limited first-person narrative

<sup>4</sup> S. Gaselee, *Achilles Tatius with an English translation* (London–Cambridge, MA 1969) 455 n. 1.

<sup>5</sup> So too Bowie (n. 2) 694, and similarly E. Vilborg, *Achilles Tatius, Leucippe and Clitophon. A commentary* (Göteborg 1962) 10.

<sup>6</sup> T. Hägg, *Narrative technique in ancient greek romances: studies of Chariton, Xenophon Ephesius and Achilles Tatius* (Stockholm 1971), notes various minor lapses in *Leucippe and Cleitophon* at 67 n. 1, 77 n. 4, 203 ff., 282 n. 4. The apparent discrepancy in the romance between vii 14 and ii 14, noted by Gaselee (n.

4) 383 n. 2 and Vilborg (n. 5) 123, is mitigated but not resolved by Hägg 203 f.

<sup>7</sup> O. Tsagarakis, 'Pylaimenes' Tod und Auferstehung: ein Widerspruch in der *Ilias*?', *Hermes* civ (1976) 1–12, argues that Pylaimenes has only been wounded, not killed, in the earlier passage: nevertheless the wound is described as being sufficiently grave that, if his interpretation were correct, we should expect a reference in the latter passage to Pylaimenes' either having been cured in the meantime or still being wounded.

perspective which his choice of an initial dramatic situation imposed upon him at its beginning.<sup>8</sup> Rather than forgetting that he has adopted the fiction that the story is being recounted by Cleitophon and lapsing instead into the easier option of omniscient narration, Achilles Tatius frequently inserts small details or turns of phrase into his text to remind us that it is Cleitophon who is telling his story.<sup>9</sup> So too, the narrator frequently remarks that he mentioned some event at an earlier point, thereby reminding us of the situation of oral story-telling at Sidon with which he began.<sup>10</sup> It might be objected that small touches like these are no proof of consistency in narrative strategy, and that Achilles Tatius might have forgotten in the last book of his romance to retain the perspective he had imposed upon himself in the first seven; but here the second consideration enters into play. For it is a remarkable and not adequately appreciated aspect of Achilles Tatius' narrative technique that, near the very end of *Leucippe and Cleitophon*, he takes great care to provide an explanation for the way in which his narrator had been able much earlier to report certain events which we know to have happened outside his direct cognizance:

At ii 13, Cleitophon begins to recount the story of what happened to Callisthenes, a young man of Byzantium, without providing any clue as to how he had learned the story himself. We might take this to be a breach of the first-person perspective; yet at viii 17, only a few pages before the end of the novel, Cleitophon reports that Sostratus asks him to listen to a story: ἄρχεται δὴ λέγειν ἃ φθάνω προειρηκῶς ἅπαντα, τὸν Καλλισθένην, τὸν χρησμόν, τὴν θεωρίαν, τὸν λέμβον, τὴν ἀρπαγὴν.<sup>11</sup>

So too, in Book vi Cleitophon reports a series of conversations at which he was not present, between Sosthenes and Thersander (vi 3) and between Thersander and Leucippe (vi 6). But here too, a few pages before the end of the novel, Cleitophon reports an interrogation of Sosthenes in which ὁ δὲ ἐπὶ βασιάνους ἑαυτὸν ἀγόμενον ἰδὼν πάντα σαφῶς λέγει, ὅσα τε ἐτόλμησεν ὁ Θέρσανδρος καὶ ὅσα αὐτὸς ὑπηρέτησεν· οὐ παρέλιπε δὲ οὐδὲ ὅσα ἰδίᾳ πρὸ τῶν τῆς Λευκίππης θυρῶν διελέχθησαν πρὸς ἀλλήλους περὶ αὐτῆς (viii 15).

So far from having forgotten towards the end of his romance the limited first-person viewpoint with which he began, Achilles Tatius painstakingly, even legalistically provides narrative justifications for apparent breaches of the perspective from which the story has been told. His scrupulous care in explaining how Cleitophon came by the knowledge of what he had reported as many as six books earlier is practically unparalleled in ancient fiction;<sup>12</sup> it testifies to a degree of sophisticated reflection about the exigencies of first-person narrative we are more familiar with from modern novels.<sup>13</sup> No doubt there are many literary texts, from Plato's *Republic* through *The Taming of the Shrew* and beyond, which open with a framing device which is never resumed at the end; but in none of them does the framed portion either allude so frequently to the framing situation or recall earlier sections so punctiliously at its end: it would be mistaken to attempt to dismiss this anomaly in *Leucippe and Cleitophon* by trying to establish a parallel with such other works. In this regard, at least, Achilles Tatius would seem to have been wide awake: we can hardly explain the romance's ending by supposing he had simply forgotten its beginning.

<sup>8</sup> Cf. Hägg (n. 6) 124–36, 318–22 and (n. 2) 42; K. Plepeltis, *Achilleus Tatios. Leucippe und Kleitophon* (Stuttgart 1980) 27 f.

<sup>9</sup> E.g. ἐν τούτῳ πόρρωθεν ἰδόντες προσιοῦσαν τὴν θεράπαιναν διελύθημεν, ἐγὼ μὲν ἄκων καὶ λυπούμενος, ἡ δὲ οὐκ οἶδ' ὅπως εἶχεν (ii 8); οὕτω μὲν δὴ τῶν δεσμῶν ἀπολύομαι καὶ ἐπὶ τὸ ἱερὸν ταχὺ μάλα ἠπειγόμεν· καὶ ὁ Σώστρατος κατὰ πόδας, οὐκ οἶδα εἰ τὰ ὅμοια ἐμοὶ χαίρων (vii 16); for other passages cf. J. N. O'Sullivan, *A Lexicon to Achilles Tatius* (Berlin and New York 1980) 291 f. s.v. 'οἶδα' (6). Cf. in general Hägg (n. 6) 130 f.

<sup>10</sup> Cf. Hägg (n. 6) 277–85 with 278 n. 1 ff.

<sup>11</sup> Hägg (n. 6) 131 complains rightly of the abrupt break in the earlier passage and wishes the narrator would excuse his apparent omniscience by adding

parenthetically words to the effect 'as I got to know later'; but he misses the really significant point that the later passage is clearly intended to repair just this anomaly.

<sup>12</sup> Significantly, the only obvious parallel comes from the *Odyssey*, where Odysseus explains to the Phaeacians the apparent lapse into omniscience in his own first-person narrative: ταῦτα δ' ἐγὼν ἤκουσα Καλυπσοῦς ἠὲ κόμοιο·/ἡ δ' ἔφη 'Ἐρμείαο διακτόρου αὐτῆ ἀκοῦσαι (xii 389–90). But Achilles Tatius' technique is far more elaborate and sophisticated.

<sup>13</sup> For the theory of modern first-person narrative, cf. especially D. Cohn, *Transparent minds: narrative modes for presenting consciousness in fiction* (Princeton 1978) 143–265.

The obvious alternative would be to suppose that the original ending has been lost in the course of the transmission of the romance.<sup>14</sup> Beginnings and endings of codices are notoriously liable to damage—in fact, one manuscript of this romance contains only the last four books.<sup>15</sup> Might the few words Gaselee felt were missing from the romance's ending in fact really be missing, might they have actually been written by Achilles Tatius but lost at some point before our earliest manuscripts? This would be a second approach to this problematic discrepancy, one that would resolve it by appeal not to authorial incompetence but to the accidents of textual transmission. This might at first seem a more plausible line of argument; but a closer examination of the nature of the discrepancy excludes it as well. For the problem is not simply that the novel begins in Sidon and ends in Tyre and Byzantium, nor simply that the anonymous narrator of its beginning fails to return at its conclusion. Rather, there is a far more fundamental contradiction, apparently not noticed before, between Cleitophon's character and situation at the beginning and at the end of the romance. When the story ends, he has won his Leucippe and is happily married to her. But when we first see him at the beginning, he is standing alone in the temple of Astarte and presents himself as someone who has by no means gained happiness in love, but instead has suffered outrages at the hand of love. His very first words in the romance are Ἐγὼ ταῦτα ἄν εἶδειν τοσαύτας ὑβρεῖς ἐξ ἔρωτος παθῶν, 'I ought to know that well myself: so many have been the outrages I have suffered from love' (i 2.1). ὕβρις and πάσχω are strong words in Achilles Tatius' usage:<sup>16</sup> we would expect them to be spoken not by a victor who has gained his love, but by a victim who has lost it, not by a happily married husband, but by a man bitter and alone. Where is Leucippe when Cleitophon meets the anonymous narrator in the temple at Sidon? Has Cleitophon lost her yet again?<sup>17</sup> If so, why does he not say so? If he still has her, what is he doing alone at the temple and why does he spend eight long books talking about her to a stranger? Why is he not at home reading Greek romances in bed with her? At the limit, the reader might be prepared to tolerate Achilles Tatius' forgetting the anonymous narrator; but for Leucippe herself to have slipped his mind would be unforgivable.

More is at stake here than the difference between Sidon and Tyre: it is hard to imagine any ending, lost in transmission, that could have provided a coherent connection between the triumphant victor Cleitophon of the novel's narrated conclusion and the isolated victim Cleitophon of its narrating beginning.<sup>18</sup> But the very seriousness of this discrepancy may point the way to its solution. For within the terms of the *narrative* of a Greek erotic romance, the happy ending is of course obligatory: every such text begins by identifying its hero and heroine, then poses a series of obstacles, internal and/or external, to the legitimate fulfillment of their love, and

<sup>14</sup> So F. Jacobs, *Achillis Tatii Aleandrini de Leucippes et Clitophonitis amoribus libri octo* (Leipzig 1821) 999–1,000. The suggestions by Vilborg (n. 5) 140 that 'the author may have found that it would disturb the narrative to take up the frame story again . . . the ordinary reader hardly feels that something is amiss here' and Hägg (n. 6) 125–6 that Achilles Tatius 'never had a real "frame-story" in mind at all. He has made use of an epic situation only to get the story going . . . Having served this purpose, it is simply dropped, and it is questionable whether the ordinary reader ever misses its resumption after 175 pages of first-person narrative' are useless as explanations of this discrepancy, as they do not address the issue of why the novel ends at Tyre and Byzantium, not at Sidon (this difficulty is acknowledged by Vilborg, *loc. cit.*).

<sup>15</sup> Sinaiticus Gr. 1197 (xvi); *cf.* D. Hagedorn and L. Koenen, 'Eine Handschrift des Achilleus Tatios', *MH* 27 (1970) 49–57.

<sup>16</sup> *Cf.* especially τὴν πέπονθα ὑβριστικὸν vi 16.2; ὕβρις refers to chains at vi 5.4, to pirates at vi 16.5, and

to physical violence at vii 14.3, viii 1.4, 3.2, 5.5 *Cf.* O'Sullivan (n. 9), s. vv.

<sup>17</sup> This is of course hardly likely: but note that it is not in the least excluded by the language of i 3.2.

<sup>18</sup> Quite a different case is provided by the Homeric epics, in which the proems seem more applicable to the first part of the work than to the work as a whole or to its ending: the opening of the *Iliad* (i 1–5) announces that Achilles' wrath caused pains for the Greeks and killed many heroes, but does not explicitly assert that that wrath came also to be directed against the Trojans and finally to be laid aside; the opening of the *Odyssey* (i 1–9) tells us that Odysseus suffered much and failed to save his comrades, but does not let us know that he himself survived and returned to establish himself in triumph. But the heroes of these works, and how their stories ended, were certainly better known to their audiences than Achilles Tatius' were to his; and the exigencies of large-scale organization of epics composed within an oral tradition are different from those of a carefully planned (*cf.* Sedelmeier [n. 2]) written work.

concludes with the couple's marrying and presumably living happily ever after.<sup>19</sup> A Greek erotic romance without a happy ending is not a Greek erotic romance: Achilles Tatius had no choice but to provide a happy Cleitophon for the *narrative's* conclusion. Why then did he supply an unhappy Cleitophon for its *narration's* beginning? The most natural hypothesis is that this might have something to do with this particular romance's mode of narration. For *Leucippe and Cleitophon* is unique among the Greek erotic romances in being narrated in its entirety in the first person: all the others adopt a more or less omniscient third person point of view.<sup>20</sup> Could Achilles Tatius' choice of a first person narration in some way have constrained him to introduce his narrator as unhappy and isolated?

*Leucippe and Cleitophon* is the only Greek erotic romance narrated as a whole in the first person, but there are many other examples in this genre of smaller first-person narratives embedded within a larger third-person context; and these other passages contribute decisively towards answering this question. For in virtually every such case,<sup>21</sup> the first-person narrative is a lament for the misfortunes the narrator has suffered in the past and is still suffering at the time of his narration, and the audience's response is to weep.

In Xenophon of Ephesus, Habrocomes is provoked to ask for Hippothoos' story by the latter's sighing and weeping, and the story itself begins, *μεγάλα τάμα διηγήματα καὶ πολλὴν ἔχοντα τραγωδίαν* (iii 1.4); Habrocomes reciprocates with his own tale of love and loss, and the two weep together (iii 3.1–3).

In Chariton, Polycharmus gives Mithridates an account of his and Chaereas' pitiable misadventures only after the latter have been condemned to death for an abortive escape attempt and just before the sentence has been carried out. At the end, *δάκρυα καὶ στεναγμὸς ἐπηκολούθησε τῷ διηγήματι* (iv 3.5).

In Heliodorus, Theagenes asks Cnemon to tell the story of his life, and the latter responds, *παῦε· τί ταῦτα κινεῖς κἀναμοχλεύεις; τοῦτο δὴ τὸ τῶν τραγωδῶν. οὐκ ἐν καιρῷ γένοιτ' ἂν ἐπεισόδιον ὑμῖν τῶν ὑμετέρων τάμα ἐπιφέρειν κακὰ* (i 8.41–3). And when Cnemon has finished, *καὶ ἅμα ἐδάκρυνεν. ἐδάκρυνον δὲ καὶ οἱ ξένοι, τὰ μὲν ἐκείνου πρόφασιν, μνήμη δὲ τῶν ἰδίων ἕκαστος. καὶ οὐδ' ἂν ἔληξαν θρηνοῦντες ὑφ' ἡδονῆς τῶν γόων εἰ μὴ τις ὕπνος ἐπιπτὰς ἔπαυσε τῶν δακρύων* (i 18.4–7). Later in the same novel, Calasiris explains his Greek clothing by a cryptic reference to his misfortunes, and responds to Cnemon's invitation to tell of his life with the words, *Ἰλιόθεν με φέρεις, καὶ σμήνος κακῶν καὶ τὸν ἐκ τούτων βόμβρον ἄπειρον ἐπὶ σεαυτὸν κινεῖς* (ii 21.22–4). His series of sad stories lasts until the end of Book Five, and when it ends, *ἐπὶ τούτοις ἐδάκρυνε μὲν αὐτός, ἐδάκρυνον δὲ οἱ παρόντες, καὶ εἰς θρήνον ἡδονῆ τινι σύγκρατον μετεβέβλητο τὸ συμπόσιον (ἐπίφορον γάρ τι πρὸς δάκρυνον οἶνος)* (v 33.26–9).

And within Achilles Tatius' own romance, Menelaus begins his first-person story addressed to Cleitophon and Clinias by saying, *τὸ μὲν κεφάλαιον τῆς ἡμῆς ἀποδημίας ἔρωσ βάσκανος καὶ θήρα δυστυχῆς* (ii 34.1), and the result of his tale is a whole series of sob-stories: *ἐπεδάκρυσεν ὁ Κλεινίας αὐτοῦ λέγοντος Πάτροκλον πρόφασιν, ἀναμνησθεὶς Χαρικλέους. καὶ ὁ Μενέλαος, "Τάμα δακρύεις," ἔφη, "ἢ καὶ σέ τι τοιοῦτον ἐξήγαγε;" στενάξας οὖν ὁ Κλεινίας καταλέγει τὸν Χαρικλέα καὶ τὸν ἵππον, κάγω τάμαυτοῦ. Ὁρῶν οὖν ἐγὼ τὸν Μενέλαον κατηγῆ πάνυ τῶν ἑαυτοῦ μεμνημένον, τὸν δὲ Κλεινίαν ὑποδακρύνοντα μνήμη Χαρικλέους, βουλόμενος αὐτοὺς τῆς λύπης ἀπαγάγειν, ἐμβάλλω λόγον ἔρωτικῆς ἐχόμενον ψυχαγωγίας* (ii 34.7–35.1). Even the prisoner who is put into Cleitophon's cell in Book Seven to mislead him about Leucippe's whereabouts knows that he need only sigh and groan, and curse his fate, to provoke his cell-mates into asking him to recount his misfortunes, his *λόγος τῶν ἀτυχημάτων*, his *μῦθος τῶν κακῶν* (vii 3.1, 4.1).

One of the constituent features of first-person narratives (and one which distinguishes them essentially from the third-person variety) is that only in them is the concluding episode organically linked to (and usually identical with) the situation in which the narrator recounts his

<sup>19</sup> There are examples transmitted of other kinds of ancient romances which do not follow these rules, e.g. Pseudo-Lucian's *Metamorphosis* (on which see the next note and section II below) and Philostratus' *Life of Apollonius of Tyana*; the sub-genres of such texts can be thereby easily differentiated from the kind of erotic romances to which *Leucippe and Cleitophon* clearly belongs.

<sup>20</sup> Vilborg (n. 5) 10. Pseudo-Lucian's *Metamorphosis* is narrated in the first person: but it is not an erotic romance in the sense meant here.

<sup>21</sup> The sole exception, Xen. Eph. v 1.2–3, is discussed below.

story. But if such a connection with the narrative situation is ineluctable, the particular nature of that situation is entirely contingent: hence it is highly significant that, however different from one another the various vicissitudes retold in the course of these many stories may be, they all adhere strictly to the pattern of ending in misfortune, the very same misfortune in which the narrator happens currently to find himself. The remarkable consistency of this pattern suggests the likelihood that there is a generic tendency within Greek erotic romances for first-person narratives to be tales of woe; and if so, then we may be in a better position to understand the oddities of *Leucippe and Cleitophon* with which we began. For the discrepancy which is expressed superficially by the contrast between beginning at Sidon and ending at Tyre seems in fact to be only the epiphenomenon of a far more fundamental submerged tension: between the *content* of a *narrative* which can only turn out well (an erotic romance) and the *mode* of a *narration* which seems to presuppose that events have turned out badly (a first-person story in an erotic romance). In other words, the discrepancy between the beginning and the ending of *Leucippe and Cleitophon* was apparently due not to authorial carelessness nor to faulty transmission, but rather was entailed by the very project of writing a first-person erotic romance. Such a project was unparalleled—now perhaps we see why—and, caught within its conflicting demands, Achilles Tatius may even have been trying to conceal the contradiction by precisely *not* returning to the framing situation of the temple of Astarte at Sidon with which he had begun: for closing the frame might well have made the contradiction between Cleitophon as victorious subject of the narrative and Cleitophon as victimized subject of the narration flagrantly obvious. Of course, if this was his goal, he cannot be said to have fully succeeded: the very care he devoted to tying up loose narrative threads elsewhere towards the end of the romance must inevitably work against any such attempt to suppress the evidence there. But, even if his strategy (if this was it) has failed, the insight into this narrative difficulty which seems to have governed it remains impressively astute. Viewed in this light, indeed, Achilles Tatius' decision to end the novel in the way he did, so far from being a sign of incompetence, may even be taken to indicate his literary sophistication, and our sense of his originality may be enhanced by recognizing the insuperable challenge he had the wit both to invent—and to circumvent.

But has our initial problem thereby been solved, or has it not rather been displaced on to a larger domain? In order to resolve a minor difficulty in a single rather marginal text, we seem to have been obliged to invoke the hypothesis of what might seem a rather peculiar constraint upon the way in which an entire literary genre organized its fictional narratives. Is so ambitious an explanatory model really necessary? What if anything is it about the Greek erotic romance in particular that seems to exclude first-person narratives that are not tales of woe?

It was pointed out above that *virtually* every first-person narrative in Greek erotic romance is a tale of misfortune; and in fact the single apparent clear exception to this rule<sup>22</sup> throws an unexpected light upon the question of how far beyond Achilles Tatius this rule is to be pressed. That exception occurs in the fifth book of Xenophon of Ephesus' *Ephesian Tale*, in a conversation between the hero Habrocomes and his host, the old fisherman Aegialeus. The latter's story of his life is the single exception, for it has a relatively happy ending. True, Thelxinoe, the love of his life, has died; but Aegialeus has had her body embalmed, and he continues to live with her in a felicity which, though certainly slightly mad,<sup>23</sup> is blessed in compensation by being uniquely exempted from the ravages of time.<sup>24</sup> But the old man's

<sup>22</sup> Longus ii 3.1 ff., in which Philetas addresses Daphnis and Chloe, is only apparently an exception: he already knows who they are, for Eros has told him of his care for them (ii 6.4).

<sup>23</sup> 'ταύτη οὖν' ἔφη 'ὦ τέκνον Ἀβροκόμη, αἰεὶ τε ὡς ζώσῃ λάλω καὶ συγκατάκειμαι καὶ συννεωχοῦμαι· κἀν ἔλθω ποτὲ ἐκ τῆς ἀλγείας κεκημηκώς, αὐτῆ με παραμυθεῖται βλεπομένη· οὐ γὰρ οἷα νῦν ὁρᾶται σοι τοιαύτη φαίνεται μοι· ἀλλὰ ἐννοῶ, τέκνον, οἷα μὲν ἦν ἐν Λακεδαι-

μονι, οἷα δὲ ἐν τῇ φυγῇ· τὰς παννυχίδας ἐννοῶ, τὰς συνθήκας ἐννοῶ' (v 1.11).

<sup>24</sup> These are the terms in which Habrocomes praises it: Αἰγιαλεῖ μὲν γὰρ τοῦ βίου μεγάλη παραμυθία τὸ σῶμα τὸ Θελξινόης, καὶ νῦν ἀληθῶς μεμάθηκα ὅτι ἔρωσ ἀληθινὸς ὄρον ἡλικίας οὐκ ἔχει (v 1.12). Even allowing for his youthfulness and despair, there is no evidence Xenophon intends us to judge differently.

relative happiness is only one of the two aspects that distinguish his story from the others considered so far. The other is that this is the only story which is told, not between total strangers, but between people already linked by a bond of intimacy. As Xenophon puts it, the fisher

ὑπεδέξατο δὲ τὸν Ἀβροκόμην ἄσμενον καὶ παῖδα ἐνόμιζεν αὐτοῦ καὶ ἡγάπα διαφερόντως. καὶ ἤδη ποτὲ ἐκ πολλῆς τῆς πρὸς ἀλλήλους συνηθείας ὁ μὲν Ἀβροκόμης αὐτῷ διηγήσατο τὰ καθ' αὐτόν, καὶ τὴν Ἀνθίαν εἰρήκει καὶ τὸν ἔρωτα καὶ τὴν πλάνην, ὁ δὲ Αἰγιαλεὺς ἀρχεται τῶν αὐτοῦ διηγημάτων. (v 1.2–3)

He welcomed Habrocomes into his house gladly and considered him as his own son and treated him with great affection. And soon *because of their great intimacy with one another* Habrocomes recounted to him what had happened to him, and told of Anthia and his love and his wandering, and in turn Aigialeus began his own narrative.

All things considered, the old man's decision not to confide the intimate details of his unusual conjugal behavior to strangers may well be judged prudent: yet what is striking in the context of the stories examined so far is that the only one which is not a tale ending in complete misfortune is also the only one which is not told to a total stranger. In what way could the degree of familiarity between speaker and audience be a relevant consideration in determining what kind of first-person narratives can or cannot be told?

## II. TALES OF WOE

So far we have been examining the rules that govern the production of a certain kind of discourse, first-person narratives addressed to strangers, within a single literary genre, the Greek erotic romance. But is there something about this genre itself that entails such rules? Perhaps, in order to understand the former, we should try to generalize beyond the latter. Let us consider not only the fictional first-person narratives addressed to strangers in Greek romances, but also the ones in other genres—for example, the opening monologues of Greek plays. Here the stage characters speak not to one another but to the breezes and to us: the conceptual barrier between their fiction and our reality ensures that their monologues, insofar as they are addressed to us, will be addressed to us as strangers.<sup>25</sup> Strikingly, almost all of these first speeches are lamentations. The watchman's complaint in the *Agamemnon* and Deianeira's lament in the beginning of the *Trachiniae* are only two famous examples. In Euripides' tragedies in particular the plaintive opening monologue virtually becomes a *topos* involving not only heroines (the Taurian Iphigenia, Helen, Andromache in their homonymous plays; Electra in the *Orestes*, Jocasta in the *Phoenissae*, the nurse in the *Medea*) and heroes (Iolaus in the *Heraclidae*, Amphitryon in the *Hercules*), but even gods (Poseidon in the *Troades*, Dionysus in the *Bacchae*, Aphrodite in the *Hippolytus*), ghosts (Polydorus in the *Hecuba*), and Silenus (the *Cyclops*). In all the surviving Greek tragedies, only Aeschylus' *Eumenides* (the Pythia) and Euripides' *Alcestis* (Apollo), *Electra* (the farmer), and *Ion* (Hermes) open with a simple expository monologue not couched in the tones of strong grief—yet the Pythia's speech in the first is a prayer, not a genuine monologue, while the speeches of Apollo and the farmer are not at all entirely free of laments.<sup>26</sup> It might at

<sup>25</sup> Obviously, this issue involves far more complications than can be addressed, or are relevant, here. For some of them cf. W. Schadewaldt, *Monolog und Selbstgespräch* (Berlin 1926). The oddity of this stage technique in the eyes of at least some fifth-century Athenians is suggested by the famous exchange between the tutor and the nurse at Eur. *Med.* 49–58.

<sup>26</sup> Apollo complains of having been compelled to work as a slave in a mortal's house (*Alc.* 1–2: ἔτλην 1), of

Zeus' having killed his son (3–4), of Zeus' punishing him for killing the Cyclops (6–7), and of Alcestis' unavoidable death as substitute for the pious Admetus (10–21); he is preparing to forsake this μῖσος (22–3). The farmer complains of the calamities of the house of Agamemnon (*El.* 8–35), of his own poverty despite his noble birth (37–8), of the fate of Orestes (στένω 47); he speaks of his wretched marriage (49) with a woman he has still not touched (43–6).

first be thought natural for a tragedy to begin with a lamentation: but is it in fact? After all, if a tragedy can move ἐξ εὐτυχίας εἰς δυστυχίαν (from good fortune to bad fortune)—this is only one of the kinds into which Aristotle classifies tragic plots,<sup>27</sup> but it is obviously the one likely to strike an audience as being most typically tragic—why should a tragedy not begin with joyous celebration so as to make the contrast to the pitiable outcome all the more moving?<sup>28</sup> And if this is how the openings of tragedies are explained, what explanation will be available for the openings of Greek comedies, which, if monologic, show exactly the same tendency to begin in lamentation? Of Aristophanes' eleven transmitted comedies, six (*Knights*, *Wasps*, *Peace*, *Birds*, *Frogs*, *Thesmophoriazusae*) begin with dialogues. Of the remaining five, Dicaeopolis opens the earliest, the *Acharnians*, by complaining about being the only citizen to perform his duties (1–3, 17 ff.); in the *Clouds*, Strepsiades inveighs against his son's extravagance (12 ff.); Lysistrata complains that none of the women has obeyed her summons (*Lys.* 1 ff.); and in the latest, the *Ploutos*, Carion laments his misfortune in being a slave to a lunatic master (1–2). Only in the *Ecclesiazusae*, in Praxagora's address to her lamp, is the opening speech quite free of bitter reproaches—and Praxagora's lamp in fact functions, not as a stranger, but as her intimate confidante (7–18). Menander follows the same practice: in the opening of the *Aspis*, Daos mourns his dead master (1–18); in the *Misoumenos*, Thrasonides complains of his unhappiness in love (A4–5); and in the *Samia*, Moschion is introduced suffering pains because of an error he has committed (2–3) and calling himself wretched (12).<sup>29</sup> Even in Aristophanes' parabases, in which, it might be thought, if anywhere in Classical Greek literature, triumphantly self-laudatory autobiographical statements might be found, the accents of lament are far from lacking: in the *Acharnians*, the chorus declare that the only reason they have come forth to praise the poet is that he has been slandered and must defend himself against the accusation that he has been mocking Athens (628–33); in the *Clouds* (551–60) Aristophanes complains that other poets steal from him, and in that play (520–6) and in the *Wasps* (1043–7) he reproaches the audience bitterly for his having been defeated with the first version of the *Clouds*; and the *Peace* admits explicitly that self-praise was normally unpopular:

χρῆν μὲν τύπτειν τοὺς ῥαβδούχους, εἴ τις κωμωδοποιητῆς  
αὐτὸν ἐπήνει πρὸς τὸ θέατρον παραβὰς ἐν τοῖς ἀναπαίστοις·  
εἰ δ' οὖν<sup>30</sup> εἰκὸς τινα τιμῆσαι, θύγατερ Διός, ὅστις ἄριστος  
κωμωδοδιδάσκαλος ἀνθρώπων καὶ κλεινότατος γεγένηται,  
ἄξιός ἐίναι φησ' εὐλογίας μεγάλης ὁ διδάσκαλος ἡμῶν. (734–38)

Of course it would be proper for the ushers to beat any comic poet who, stepping forward to address the spectators in anapests, praised himself. But if it were ever right, Daughter of Zeus, to honor the best and most famous comic playwright alive, then I say that our playwright is worthy of great praise.

Only in the *Knights* is the parabasis free from lament.<sup>31</sup>

Clearly, this phenomenon is not limited to the single genre of Greek romance. What reason is there to think that it is limited to fictional representations either? Suppose we generalize further and consider first-person narratives addressed to strangers, whether they are represented

<sup>27</sup> *Poet.* 13.1452b30 ff.

<sup>28</sup> So begin for example Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and *Coriolanus* (and, with variations, *Romeo and Juliet* and *King Lear*), and the first play of Schiller's *Wallenstein* trilogy, *Wallensteins Lager*.

<sup>29</sup> The *Dyscolus* begins with a simple expository monologue by Pan; but its first soliloquy by a character who believes he is alone on stage is Cnemon's bitter lament about the crowded world in which he lives (153 ff.)

<sup>30</sup> The train of thought is clarified by J. D.

Denniston's discussion of this group of particles, which is used 'when a speaker hypothetically grants a supposition which he denies, doubts, or reprobates' (*Greek particles*<sup>2</sup> [Oxford 1953] 465).

<sup>31</sup> Yet even here the chorus complain about the capriciousness of the Athenian audience, whose failure consistently to show favor to aging comedians poses dangers to any aspiring writer and led Aristophanes to hesitate before presenting comedies in his own name (518–44).



within fictions or are represented as non-fictional, wherever they occur in Classical Greek culture. If we do, we find that what we have been examining so far has in fact been in general terms the mode of production of autobiographical discourse. For there is no better definition of autobiography than 'an extended first-person narrative told to strangers': what distinguishes autobiography from all other kinds of first-person narrative is that it alone is addressed on principle to people the speaker has never met, and hence must bear the burden neither only of recounting a temporal sequence of events (all narrative does this), nor only of binding the content of the narrative with the situation of narration by identifying the subject of the former with the subject of the latter (all first-person narrative does this), but also of introducing that personage, whose continuing self-identity supplies the narrative with at least a minimal coherence, for the very first time to an audience which in part at least cannot be expected to have any other source of information concerning his background, character and attributes.<sup>32</sup>

Hence the fictional autobiographies we have been considering so far may turn out to cast light upon a notorious feature of Greek literary history, the scarcity of non-fictional autobiographies in the pre-Hellenistic period. Scholars have frequently pointed out that one of the few literary genres the Greeks seem to have left comparatively undeveloped was that of autobiography<sup>33</sup>—even the word 'autobiography,' though ancient in appearance, is not attested in any language before the end of the Eighteenth Century.<sup>34</sup> Thus Georg Misch—who, although he devoted a series of eight weighty tomes to the history of the genre, was not able to fill more than half of a comparatively slender first volume with examples from Archaic and Classical Greece—was firmly convinced of the anthropological universality of the autobiographical impulse; yet he succeeded in detecting traces of only a handful of Greek autobiographies before the age of Augustus, and was compelled to admit that 'in dieser griechischen Kultur, die den Menschen entdeckt und befreit hat und so viele Formen, ihn darzustellen, fand, hat die Autobiographie nur einen beschränkten Raum, sie erscheint als eine literarische Spezialität von sekundärer Art . . . Daß hier eine Schranke des griechischen Geistes vorliegt, muß anerkannt werden'.<sup>35</sup>

This scholarly consensus identifies a state of affairs that can hardly be denied. But not only are genuine pre-Hellenistic Greek autobiographies in fact very rare; what is more, they are almost always tales of misfortune, told in a situation in which those misfortunes seem to have reached a climax. This will be seen more clearly if we set aside three groups of apparent exceptions:

1. Misch and others have emphasized the personal elements in early Greek lyric poetry and have

<sup>32</sup> If I tell a stranger on a train what has happened to me today, that is autobiography; if I tell my wife, it is not, but is instead a first-person narrative which fits into the much larger discursive context of our marriage. The fact that an autobiography must bear the burden of presenting its subject to audiences who thereby learn of him for the first time is the reason why an attempt is often made to cover his life from birth to the time of narration: but the emphasis is almost always upon adult actions and experiences, and the earlier material, whose purpose can sometimes be simply to establish his identity, is often reduced to the minimum (e.g., father's name, family background, city: so Odysseus' tales). On the other hand, some autobiographical texts are officially addressed to non-strangers, e.g. the author's children (so Montaigne): but then the author's focus upon events or thoughts these could not possibly have experienced directly turns them into a figure for the unknown readers to whom, through the children, the text is ultimately directed.

<sup>33</sup> So especially G. Misch, *Geschichte der Autobiogra-*

*phie* i<sup>3</sup> (Frankfurt a.M. 1949). Cf. U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff's review of Misch: *Internationale Wochenschrift für Wissenschaft, Kunst und Technik* i (1907) 1105–14 = *Kleine Schriften* vi (Berlin and Amsterdam 1972) 120–7; and, more recently, M. Detienne, 'Ébauche de la personne dans la Grèce archaïque', in I. Meyerson, ed., *Problèmes de la personne* (Paris and The Hague 1973) 45–52 (here 47); K. J. Weintraub, *The value of the individual: self and circumstance in autobiography* (Chicago and London 1978) 1 ff., 13; A. Momigliano, 'Marcel Mauss and the quest for the person in Greek biography and autobiography', in M. Carrithers, S. Collins, S. Lukes, ed., *The category of the person: anthropology, philosophy, history* (Cambridge 1985) 83–92.

<sup>34</sup> Noted by A. Momigliano, *The development of Greek biography* (Cambridge, MA 1971), 14. The earliest source listed in the *Oxford English dictionary* i (Oxford 1933) s.v. 'autobiography' 573 is 1809 (T. Southey in *Q. Rev.* i 283).

<sup>35</sup> Misch (n. 33) 66–7.

located in the first-person statements of such poets as Archilochus and Sappho one of the important precursors of modern autobiography.<sup>36</sup> But while it is true that early Greek lyric is filled with first-person statements, and that by no means all of these are plaintive, to see in this fact a phenomenon closely related to the autobiographical mode is fundamentally to misconceive the social nature of early Greek monody.<sup>37</sup> For, as far as we can tell, the early Greek monodists seem to have composed in the first instance not at all for strangers, but for small groups of closely connected friends, *thiasoi* or *hetairiai* bound together by ties of personal intimacy and socioeconomic interest, and consolidating and celebrating both their shared closeness and their difference from other such groups within their city by the institution of informal gatherings such as banquets and symposia. Eventually, of course, lyric poems must have found their way out of the group for whom they were originally destined and into the hands of people unknown to the poets—obviously, for otherwise they would never have reached us—but, until Pindar, that ultimate outcome seems not to have weighed very heavily on the poets' minds when they composed their poems. Hence these texts are not addressed to strangers and are not autobiographical in the sense indicated above.

2. A number of ancient Greek texts include sections written in the first person (or at least identifying the subject of the narrative with the subject of the narration) but neither celebrate nor lament the vicissitudes of the author's life: they claim simply to be reporting facts whose veracity is purported to be guaranteed by the personal experience of the narrator reporting them. Such texts may be written in the first person and be addressed to strangers, but they are clearly not really autobiographies, for their unity as a whole is not derived from that of an extended first-person narrator. They emphasize not the life of the author but rather the content of what he is reporting: the first person is introduced strategically and punctually in order to bolster some aspect of a larger text, narrative or cognitive in structure; hence these first-person passages, by not fulfilling the condition of being extended, are not strictly speaking autobiographical. When Herodotus writes of historical events or ethnographic peculiarities he has witnessed, his claim to have seen himself what he reports is designed to buttress the (*prima facie* slight) credibility of what he is saying by means of the authority of his own experience: we may also, if we wish, make inferences about his character and vicissitudes, but that is at least not his primary intent in writing. Thucydides tells something of his personal experiences when they are relevant to the subject he is discussing, but he does not provide a sustained narrative of his role in the Peloponnesian War, let alone of the rest of his life.<sup>38</sup> Who read Ion of Chios' *Epidemiai* or Xenophon's *Memorabilia* in order to find out more about second-rate Ion or Xenophon, rather than to learn more about the first-rate celebrities with whom they had had the good fortune to come into contact?<sup>39</sup> Xenophon also wrote an *Anabasis*: but the distance between such a text and authentic autobiography is measured not only by his having written it in the third person, but above all by his having published it pseudonymously.<sup>40</sup> The same applies to the first-person passages found in didactic poetry from Hesiod on, in such Pre-Socratics as Empedocles and Heraclitus, and in the Hippocratic writings. Such texts tend in fact to try to suppress the empirical idiosyncrasy and individuality of their author, abstracting him instead into a figure of textual reliability and impersonal authority: their modern descendant is not the autobiography, but the footnote.

3. Not until the Hellenistic period does Greek autobiography begin to develop; only under the Roman Empire does it grow somewhat more vigorously. The earliest quasi-autobiographical discourses are the memoirs of Hellenistic military and political figures such as Demetrius of Phalerum and Ptolemy

<sup>36</sup> Misch (n. 33) 80 ff.; Weintraub (n. 33) 14; cf. also e.g. L. Niedermeyer, *Untersuchungen über die antike poetische Autobiographie* (Munich 1918-19); B. Snell, 'Das Erwachen der Persönlichkeit in der frühgriechischen Lyrik', in *Die Entdeckung des Geistes*<sup>4</sup> (Göttingen 1975) 56-81; H. Fraenkel, *Dichtung und Philosophie des frühen Griechentums*<sup>3</sup> (Munich 1969) 168 f.; O. Gigon, *Lexikon der Alten Welt* (Zürich-Stuttgart 1965) s.v. 'Autobiographie. A: Griechische A.' 414.

<sup>37</sup> On the melic poets, cf. my 'Greek lyric poets,' in T. J. Luce, ed., *Ancient writers: Greece and Rome* i (New York 1982) 75-98 and e.g. W. Rösler, *Dichter und Gruppe. Eine Untersuchung zu den Bedingungen und zur historischen Funktion früher griechischer Lyrik am Beispiel Alkaios* (Munich 1980). On the elegiac poets, cf. now

especially E. L. Bowie, 'Early Greek elegy, symposium, and public festival', *JHS* cvii (1986) 13-35.

<sup>38</sup> Interestingly, he uses the first person in methodological sections (i 1.2, 20-2, v 26.5) and when discussing the plague (ii 48: this too is methodological, for his explanation is designed to show why he knows what he is talking about); but when he refers to his activities as a general, he uses the third person (iv 104 ff., v 26).

<sup>39</sup> On the links between these two works, cf. K. J. Dover, 'Ion of Chios: his place in the history of Greek literature', in J. Boardman and C. E. Vaphopoulou-Richardson, ed., *Chios: a conference at the Homereion in Chios 1984* (Oxford 1986) 32-35.

<sup>40</sup> Xen. *Hell.* iii 1.2; Plut. *De glor. Ath.* 345E.

I.<sup>41</sup> But these first-person narratives of state belong to a different class from the autobiographical discourses discussed so far. For here the world the historian describes is one that he has helped to make the way it is: the readers to whom he addresses himself are citizens of that world, and, long before they have begun to read him, their own lives have been profoundly affected by the episodes he narrates. Thus, even if the emphasis may have been no less upon the character of the ruler than upon his exploits, no less upon the revelation of personality than upon the victories of force and diplomacy, the object of these texts is not a self which must be presented here for the first time to strangers, but instead large-scale historical events in which, even if only marginally and passively, the reader too is involved. The origin of these political autobiographies is obscure: if they are indeed an indigenous product of Greek culture, their roots are probably to be sought in third-person history or in military dispatches by commanders in the field;<sup>42</sup> but perhaps it is not after all accidental that they begin so late, for their ultimate source may instead be the victory inscriptions of Assyrian kings and Egyptian pharaohs. In any case, their descendant is not the modern autobiography, but the press conference.

Of course, once the kings had paved the way, the intellectuals and millionaires could follow: the literary, religious, and philosophical autobiographies that begin to flourish in the Second Sophistic are accompanied by increasingly lengthy, detailed, and self-congratulatory autobiographical public inscriptions, particularly in Asia Minor.<sup>43</sup> Yet even here, the break is not complete: most inscriptions are still formulated in the third person, and practically all mention conspicuously the decree of the city authorizing the monument—the individual is reminded, at the moment of his greatest glory, of his fellow-citizens' power to permit, or forbid, any such display of success.<sup>44</sup> The guiltless self-confidence with which Lucian proposes himself as a model to be followed in his autobiographical *Somnium* may seem to us to strike a new note—yet it is exactly contemporary with Aelius Aristides' *Sacred Discourses*, which contain some of the most detailed and pathetic autobiographical laments that Greek literature has to offer. In the world of the Second Century AD, lament may no longer have been the only form of first-person discourse permitted among strangers: but it seems still to have enjoyed a certain popularity.

When these three groups of texts are set aside, all the few genuine autobiographies that remain in pre-Hellenistic Greek literature are found to conform to the pattern of the fictional autobiographies in Greek romances: all include complaints about misfortune or mistreatment (however much self-praise they may also contain), all are produced in a situation of need organically linked with that misfortune or mistreatment. Almost invariably, these texts take the form of self-defences against legal attacks.<sup>45</sup> Andocides' *On the Mysteries* and Demosthenes' *On the Crown* are but two of the most celebrated examples of the tendency to use the situation of self-defence in the law courts as an opportunity to present a rationale and a narrative of the conduct of one's life; the same tendency informs Plato's *Apology* as well.<sup>46</sup> In the text that is often identified as the first autobiography in the modern sense, Isocrates' *Antidosis*, the legal case which Isocrates uses to justify his autobiographic mode is in fact entirely fictitious: while Isocrates had apparently indeed been condemned to perform a trierarchy, he pretends for the purposes of this speech that matters are far graver, that an informer named Lysimachus has brought a capital charge against him and that he must defend himself, his principles, and his

<sup>41</sup> *FGrHist* II C Jacoby.

<sup>42</sup> It is perhaps significant that the only extant Athenian general's letter, Nicias' in Thucydides vii 8, 11–15, is a lamentation.

<sup>43</sup> For examples of the praise of private virtues (good mother, housewife, wife; mutual affection between parents and children; moderation, gentleness, generosity) in public monuments in Asia Minor, cf. L. Robert, *Hellenica* xiii (1965) 34–42, 217–28; our knowledge of the cultural context will be increased greatly by the publication of Riet van Bremen's forthcoming study of such inscriptions. The differences with respect to an archaic honorific monument, such as Damonon's fifth-century Spartan athletic victory inscription (E. Schwyzer, *Dialektorum Graecorum exempla epigraphica potiora* [Leipzig 1923=Hildesheim 1960] 4–5), could

not be more striking: the contents of the latter are exclusively his publicly witnessed accomplishments, its form is third-person.

<sup>44</sup> Cf. P. Brown, *The making of late antiquity* (Cambridge, MA 1978) 31 ff.

<sup>45</sup> Noted by Momigliano (n. 34) 57ff. and (n. 33) 90. For an analysis of the ways in which one modern autobiography, Rousseau's *Confessions*, is constituted by the mode of excuse and for important remarks on the relationship between autobiography and excuse in general, cf. P. de Man, *Allegories of Reading: Figural Language in Rousseau, Nietzsche, Rilke, and Proust* (New Haven and London 1979) 278–301.

<sup>46</sup> Whether or not the text transmitted as Plato's *Seventh Letter* is genuine, its self-defensive character (cf. especially 352a) fits the general claims made here.

behavior, if he is to save his life. In words that, for once, could scarcely be more candid, Isocrates describes accurately the dilemma facing someone desiring to praise himself in public:

Εἰ μὲν οὖν ἐπαινεῖν ἑμαυτὸν ἐπιχειροῖην, ἐώρων οὔτε περιλαβεῖν ἅπαντα περὶ ὧν διελθεῖν προηρούμην οἷός τε γενησόμενος, οὔτ' ἐπιχαρίτως οὔδ' ἀνεπιφθόνως εἰπεῖν περὶ αὐτῶν δυνησόμενος· εἰ δ' ὑποθείμην ἀγῶνα μὲν καὶ κίνδυνόν τινα περὶ ἐμὲ γιγνόμενον . . . οὕτως ἂν ἐκγενέσθαι μοι μάλιστα διαλεχθῆναι περὶ ἁπάντων ὧν τυγχάνω βουλόμενος. (*Antidosis* 8)

I recognized that, if I were to attempt to praise myself, I would not be able to include all the topics I intended to go through, nor would I succeed in speaking about them in such a way as to provide pleasure without provoking envy. But if I suggested that a trial and a suit had been brought against me . . . in this way I would be allowed to discuss in the best way all the topics I want to.

Like Plato, Isocrates does not overstate his complaints: even if the situation is critical, the speaker can demonstrate his nobility of character by refraining from womanish laments and self-absorbed obsession with the trivial details of the case and can instead direct his, and our, attention to more permanent and philosophical concerns. But, whatever the specific tone and strategy adopted, it is apparently only a situation of drastic need such as a capital trial, real or feigned, presents, which can justify the recourse to autobiography.

It must be emphasized that this constraint was not at all typical of all ancient Mediterranean cultures; only the Greeks, as far as we can tell, seem to have felt it. Ancient Near Eastern autobiographies, for example, seem to be neither rare nor restricted to lamentation.<sup>47</sup> The story of Sinuhe, a very popular Egyptian autobiographical verse narrative written about 2000 BC,<sup>48</sup> begins like one of the accounts of catastrophe in the Greek romances: removed from high office and exiled from his country by a new pharaoh, Sinuhe wanders through the desert and joins a nomadic band living outside of society. Had the story ended here, it could have been told by any number of figures in Greek literature.<sup>49</sup> But instead it goes on to end with a turn for the better quite unparalleled in Greek autobiographical narratives: when Sinuhe becomes old, he begins to worry about being buried abroad and accepts a new pharaoh's invitation to return to Egypt, where he is pardoned and all his honors and riches are restored to him. Again, explicit and detailed autobiography without defensiveness or complaint is thoroughly at home in Latin literature—one thinks at once of the satires of Lucilius or Horace, of the end of Cicero's *Brutus* or of his poem on his consulship. Tacitus, indeed, refers to the narration of one's own deeds as a tradition of Republican Rome: *ac plerique suam ipsi uitam narrare fiduciam potius morum quam adrogantiam arbitrati sunt, nec id Rutilio et Scauro citra fidem aut obtrectationi fuit* (*Agricola* 1.3). When, starting about the time of Augustus' reign, non-political Greek autobiographies begin to appear, they are usually produced by writers who have been influenced by Roman culture and have lived for some time in Rome itself—so for example Nicolaus of Damascus, Josephus, and Galen.<sup>50</sup> Apuleius' *Golden Ass* is perhaps the most striking example of the difference between Greek and Roman autobiographic discourse. For between Apuleius' version of the story of Lucius and the Greek epitome transmitted among the works of Lucian, there is a highly significant difference in the tale's ending. In the Greek, the hero's return to his human shape is only the pretext for an obscene joke at his expense: the woman who was fascinated by the proverbial dimensions of an ass' penis has nothing but contempt for Lucius when he regains his human attributes; he ends up disappointed of his amorous expectations and thrown out into the

<sup>47</sup> Misch (n. 33) 22; Wilamowitz (n. 33) 1106, 1109=121, 123 f. discusses the possible evidence for Carthaginian autobiographies.

<sup>48</sup> Cf. Misch (n. 33) 50.

<sup>49</sup> Thyamis' story (Heliodorus i 19.4), for example, is remarkably similar.

<sup>50</sup> Cf. in general G. W. Bowersock, *Greek sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1969). Of these three writers, Josephus was probably the least imbued with Roman

culture, despite his Roman citizenship, close collaboration with Roman emperors, decades of life in Rome, and honors there after his death (Euseb. *Hist. eccl.* iii 9.2); it may be significant that, of these three, apparently only his *Vita* was written in self-defence, against the accusations levelled against him by the historian Justus of Tiberias (336 ff.). It may also be significant that all three of these authors came from Asia Minor or the Middle East.

street, naked except for his garlands and unguents.<sup>51</sup> But in the Latin, Lucius' salvation is interpreted, at least by him, as the mark of his having been rescued by Isis, and he becomes an initiate of her holy mysteries, correcting his errors, redeeming his sins, and achieving a joyous conclusion after his many tribulations.<sup>52</sup> Thus the Greek story remains to the end a tale of (often humorous) misfortunes, while the Latin one becomes a story of eventual success in which calamities are finally redeemed by triumph.

Clearly, we are touching here upon an important, wide-spread, and rather perplexing feature of Greek culture. For some reason, which is not immediately apparent, a constraint seems to have tended to limit the production of autobiographical discourses in Classical Greece and to confine them to laments about misfortune or self-defences under attack. Most scholars seem to have noticed only the former aspect, and their explanations have been far from satisfying. Some have suggested that the Greek love of democracy would have been opposed to any emphatic portrayal of exceptional individuals;<sup>53</sup> yet biographies of exceptional individuals form an important genre in Greek literature.<sup>54</sup> Others have argued that only when Christianity introduced religious self-examination and an emphasis upon interiority could autobiography become a popular mode;<sup>55</sup> yet self-examination is emphasized at least from Heraclitus and Socrates on,<sup>56</sup> and continues to be central to most of the pagan philosophies of the Hellenistic period—Misch's notion that the pagan had no inner life is clearly untenable. Still others have pointed to the influence of kinship in Greek life<sup>57</sup> (yet for the Romans, among whom autobiography flourished, kinship was even more important) or to the Greek tendency towards idealization, generalization, and rationalization<sup>58</sup> (but why should Plato and Aristotle be considered more typically Greek than Archilochus and Aristophanes?). Beyond their individual defects, all these lines of argument seem to miss the central point that in fact there *is* autobiographical discourse in Classical Greece, but that it generally takes the form of lamentation. So far, most scholars have focused their attention exclusively upon the relation between autobiography and the self it reveals—only thereby could they have considered autobiography as simply a sub-genre of biography, for while, from the point of view of subject matter (*βίος*), it doubtless is, from the point of view of the discursive situation, the difference between a first-person addressing a second-person concerning an absent third-person and a first-person addressing a second-person concerning the first-person himself is considerable, for example putting quite different pressures upon the listener. By failing to consider such pressures, these scholars have tended to neglect autobiography as a particular mode of discourse produced under specific social conditions. If, instead, we bear in mind that in any society autobiographies must always compete with other kinds of texts to be produced and received, and that therefore a discursive economy must regulate their creation and distribution, perhaps we shall be able to clear the way towards a more satisfactory solution.

Of course, we may also try to dismiss the problem as nugatory and claim simply that people who talked too much about how well their lives were going for them violated the Greeks' sense of tact (as perhaps they violate ours too). On this view, we are dealing merely with a question of etiquette. Thus, for example, we could try to solve our initial problem in Achilles Tatius by a mere reference to the third of Theophrastus' characters, the chatterbox, whose very first symptom is that he sits down next to people he has never met and delivers a panegyric on his

<sup>51</sup> Λούκιος ἡ ὄνος 56. Cf. G. Anderson, *Studies in Lucian's comic fiction* (Leiden 1976) 34–67.

<sup>52</sup> *Apul. Met.* xi. Whether Apuleius himself is being somewhat ironic at Lucius' expense and implying a degree of skepticism about Lucius' salvation, as J. J. Winkler, *Auctor and actor* (Berkeley, CA 1986) argues, is irrelevant to the present argument.

<sup>53</sup> So Gigon (n. 36) 414–15.

<sup>54</sup> Cf. especially A. Dihle, *Studien zur griechischen*

*Biographie*<sup>2</sup> (Göttingen 1970) and Momigliano (n. 34).

<sup>55</sup> So especially Misch (n. 33); cf. also V. Pöschl, *Lexikon der Alten Welt* (Zürich-Stuttgart 1965) s.v. 'Autobiographie. B: Römische A.' 417.

<sup>56</sup> Heraclitus 22 B 101 D-K; *Xen. Mem.* iii 7.9, iv 2.24 ff.

<sup>57</sup> Weintraub (n. 33) 2 ff.

<sup>58</sup> Wilamowitz (n. 33) 1107 = 122; Weintraub, *loc. cit.*

wife.<sup>59</sup> There is certainly something to be said for such an approach; but it falls short of providing an explanatory model that does more than rephrase the problem: it begs the question of *why* the Greek feeling for tact seems to have been so much more sensitive to *this* kind of violation than to so many other kinds (such as, for example, slavery or torture). Tact, after all, is merely the play of light on the surface of a culture's submerged ideology: even the most superficial appearances depend ultimately upon profound structural tensions. We need a deeper explanation after all.

### III. SELF-DISCLOSURE AND SELF-SUFFICIENCY

Classical Greek autobiographical narrative is born out of a situation of actual or imminent need: the speaker's confession is wrung from his lips by a moment of overwhelming compulsion, of a radical defectiveness in the trajectory his action takes within his world. The Classical Greeks seem to feel that there is something wrong with the autobiographical mode of discourse: only drastic need can redeem it. This implies a tension between this mode and the audience's desires (the audience would reject it as an unwarranted intrusion, were the speaker's situation not desperate), but also between this mode and the speaker's own desires (the speaker would not have had recourse to it were his situation not desperate). Self-congratulatory first-person narrative would seem to have been considered a violation of both speaker and audience. Why? And if so, what was the exact mechanism by which a situation of need could redeem it?

So far, we have been considering autobiography from its formal side. But to answer these questions, we must go further and examine its content, the speaker's self. The self was a matter of no less intense interest to the Greeks than to us: but whereas we are concerned above all to plumb its depths, the Greeks were preoccupied especially with preserving its integrity. That is why our most typical cautionary tales, from *Hamlet* through *Faust*, warn us that the desire to penetrate at all costs the opacity of the self to its own reflection can purchase wisdom, if at all, only at the cost of the self's very survival, while those of the Greeks, from the *Odyssey* through *Leucippe and Cleitophon*, encouraged them to believe that, so long as the true character of the self was maintained, it could hope to overcome any external threat.<sup>60</sup>

Autarky and autarchy are the two inter-related aspects of this obsession with self-sufficiency for which the Greeks used the single word αὐτάρκεια: independence of external needs and freedom from external compulsion. Characteristically, the Greeks slide constantly between the one and the other—understandably, since the negation is in both cases the same, subjection to the constraints imposed by others. It has often been pointed out that self-sufficiency was a widely sought goal in ancient Greece<sup>61</sup>—that this ideal of autonomy should have dominated so thoroughly a society based upon a slave economy is perhaps the profoundest paradox of Greek culture. Yet the extraordinary degree to which this basic ideal underlies so many aspects of ancient Greek life and thought has still not perhaps been adequately recognized. But within recent years a number of independent lines of research on different areas of Greek culture have been converging on this central issue:

1. Within the *economic* sphere, the Greeks seem from early times to have identified the ideal situation as one in which the economic unit in question did not need to depend upon outside sources for the

<sup>59</sup> Ἀδολεσχία: διήγησις λόγων μακρῶν καὶ ἀπροβουλεύτων· ὁ δὲ ἀδολεσχῆς τοιοῦτός τις, οἶος, ὃν μὴ γινώσκει, τούτῳ παρακαθεζόμενος πλησίον πρῶτον μὲν τῆς αὐτοῦ γυναικὸς εἰπεῖν ἐγκώμιον (Theophr. *Char.* 3). For Aristotle, the μεγαλοψύχος man talks neither about himself nor about others (*EN* iv 8.1125a5–6).

<sup>60</sup> Sophoclean tragedy, in which the individual's refusal to abandon the integrity of his self leads to his death, presents the converse of this lesson, but restricts

its scope to the heroic figure for whom there is no place in the *polis*: the chorus urges moderation, flexibility, and survival.

<sup>61</sup> E.g., P. Wilpert, *RAC* i (Stuttgart 1950) s.v. 'Autarkie' 1039–50; A.-J. Festugière, *Liberté et civilisation chez les Grecs* (Paris 1947) 109–26; E. Schwartz, *Ethik der Griechen*, ed. W. Richter (Stuttgart 1951) 140 ff.; P. Veyne, 'Mythe et réalité de l'autarcie à Rome', *RÉA* lxxxii (1979) 261–80, here 268 f.

satisfaction of its needs but could provide for itself entirely by its own capacities.<sup>62</sup> Of course, in an uncertain world, the attractiveness of such an ideal is understandable; yet its persistence still remains remarkable. A line of continuity stretches from the autarkic *oikos* of the ideal society portrayed in the Homeric poems<sup>63</sup> and Hesiod's agrarian paradigm of sturdy (if not to say obsessive) self-sufficiency,<sup>64</sup> through Xenophon's investigation in the *Poroi* εἴ πη δύναιντ' ἄν οἱ πολῖται διατρέφεσθαι ἐκ τῆς ἑαυτῶν<sup>65</sup> and Aristotle's definition of the *polis* as ἡ ἐκ πλείονων κωμῶν κοινωνία τέλειος, ἥδη πάσης ἔχουσα πέρας τῆς αὐτάρκειας ὡς ἔπος εἶπειν<sup>66</sup> and his determination of the ideal size of a city-state's population as ἡ μεγίστη τοῦ πλήθους ὑπερβολή πρὸς αὐτάρκειαν ζωῆς εὐσύνοπτος.<sup>67</sup> Of course, Aristotle is convinced that humans, unlike animals and gods, are not self-sufficient on their own;<sup>68</sup> but that is just why he postulates the *polis* as an ideal of self-sufficiency on a higher level which compensates for the fact that as individuals humans have needs for the satisfaction of which they must inevitably depend upon others.<sup>69</sup>

2. Greek *anthropology* posits individual self-sufficiency as an ethical ideal, as the goal to be sought by all humans despite its unattainability. This is already made clear by the frequency with which Greek theologians, at least from Plato through the Epicureans and Stoics, define the divine as that which stands in need of nothing outside itself:<sup>70</sup> for the attributes men give their gods in any culture are an index of the ideal state they wish they themselves could reach. Of course, according to philosophers at least, the philosopher approximates to this divine state more than anyone else: so it is not surprising that self-sufficiency comes to be one of the characteristics most frequently attributed to the man of wisdom and virtue.<sup>71</sup> *Autarkeia* in the pragmatic sense of being able to satisfy oneself with the minimum of external goods is one of the leitmotifs of Xenophon's portrayal of Socrates in his *Memorabilia*,<sup>72</sup> and remains one of the fundamental tenets of the Cynics.<sup>73</sup> In the Hellenistic period, both Epicurean *ataraxia* and the Stoic doctrine of the sage's independence of the vicissitudes of fortune<sup>74</sup> can be interpreted as idealizations of this more pragmatic doctrine of moderation. And, in the period between, Aristotle posited a high degree of self-sufficiency as one of the most important conditions of happiness and moral virtue,<sup>75</sup> despite his own repeated insistence upon the social character of man and the value for happiness of friendship and political relations.<sup>76</sup>

3. A number of recent studies of ancient views of *sexuality* have emphasized the degree to which the Greeks tended to regard *eros* (and particularly *eros* involving women) as a threat to the integrity of the self, as a sickness or frailty to be avoided when possible and to be minimized when unavoidable.<sup>77</sup>

<sup>62</sup> A. Aymard, 'Hiérarchie du travail et autarcie individuelle dans la Grèce archaïque', *Revue d'Histoire de la Philosophie et d'Histoire Générale de la Civilisation* xi (1943) 124-46; W. K. Lacey, *The family in classical Greece* (London 1968) 15-24; S. C. Humphreys, *Anthropology and the Greeks* (London 1978) 143 f., 162, and 'Oikos and polis', in *The family, women and death: comparative studies* (London 1983) 1-21, here 10 ff.

<sup>63</sup> M. I. Finley, *The world of Odysseus*<sup>2</sup> (New York 1965) 57 ff.; J. M. Redfield, 'The economic man', in C. A. Rubino and C. W. Shelmerdine, ed., *Approaches to Homer* (Austin, TX 1983) 218-47, here 230 ff.

<sup>64</sup> *W&D* 361-9.

<sup>65</sup> *Xen. Poroi* 1.1.

<sup>66</sup> *Pol.* i 1.1252b27-9.

<sup>67</sup> *Pol.* vii 4.1326b23-4. In this connection, Aristotle calls τὴν αὐτάρκεστᾶτην country the one which is παντοφόρον: τὸ γὰρ πάντα ὑπάρχειν καὶ δεῖσθαι μηθένος αὐτάρκης (vii 5.1326b26-30).

<sup>68</sup> *Pol.* i 2.1253a26-9.

<sup>69</sup> So too, in Aristotle's biology, the next higher level of organization, in this case the species, compensates by its eternity for the mortality of the individual: *GA* ii 1.

<sup>70</sup> Plato *Euthyphro* 14e f., *Rep.* ii 380e ff., *Tim.* 68e; Epicurus 5.1, 134.15 f. Arrighetti; *SVF* ii 186.4 f.

<sup>71</sup> Cf. H. Gomperz, *Die Lebensauffassung der griechischen Philosophen und das Ideal der inneren Freiheit*<sup>3</sup> (Jena

1927) and O. Gigon, 'Der Autarkiebegriff in der griechischen Philosophie', *Ajatus* xxviii (1966) 39-59.

<sup>72</sup> *Xen. Mem.* i 2.1, 4, 3.5 ff., 5.1 ff., etc.

<sup>73</sup> So already Antisthenes in *Xen. Symp.* 4.37 ff. Cf. in general D. R. Dudley, *A history of Cynicism from Diogenes to the 6th century A.D.* (London 1937).

<sup>74</sup> Epicurus 2.82, 4.128 Arrighetti; *SVF* iii 150.1 ff.

<sup>75</sup> On the relationship between εὐδαιμονία and αὐτάρκεια, cf. *EN* i 5.1097b6-21; at *EN* x 7.1177a27-b1, one of the reasons Aristotle offers for the superiority of the type of happiness provided by the philosophical life is its higher degree of self-sufficiency.

<sup>76</sup> At *EN* i 9.1099a31-b8 Aristotle discusses the extent to which happiness as he defines it depends upon external goods such as friends (he may be criticizing the Platonic view that the virtuous man least needs external things to achieve happiness, cf. *Rep.* iii 387d). Thereby a puzzle is created that Aristotle himself addresses at *EN* ix 9 f. and that recently has provoked a number of discussions, including J. Annas, 'Plato and Aristotle on friendship and altruism', *Mind* lxxxvi (1977) 532-54; J. M. Cooper, 'Friendship and the good in Aristotle', *PhR* lxxxvi (1977) 290-315 and 'Aristotle on the forms of friendship', *RMeta* xxx (1977) 619-48; and M. C. Nussbaum, *The fragility of goodness* (Cambridge 1986) esp. 318-73.

<sup>77</sup> E.g., F. I. Zeitlin, 'The dynamics of misogyny: myth and mythmaking in the *Oresteia*', *Arethusa* xi

Foucault in particular has shown how a view of the self which emphasizes autonomy and self-sufficiency is threatened by the erotic impulse, and how this threat leads to strategies of self-control and techniques of hygienic training designed to contain the damage.<sup>78</sup> One form this tendency takes with particular frequency in early Greek thought is the blame attached to women for their necessary role in reproduction;<sup>79</sup> another are the claims for the self-sufficiency and superiority of the male, and the lack of *autarkeia* and inferiority of the female, found in such writings as Aristotle's biology and Hippocratic gynecology.<sup>80</sup>

At first glance, there might seem to be a contradiction between the hopeless but stubborn refusal to abandon the goal of perfect *autarkeia* that seems to characterize such domains of Greek culture as these three, and the well-known Greek emphasis upon the ontological instability of human beings. As Fränkel has shown, for example, the archaic Greek ethos stresses man's ephemeral character, the fact that his fortune can transform him within the space of a single day from a person of one kind to a completely different one.<sup>81</sup> But in fact, the only kind of dependence which the Greeks seem to have been willing to accept was that which bound them as inferiors to the gods: here human vulnerability was accepted as the norm, and it was expected that any attempt to become self-sufficient would be punished immediately as *hybris*. On the other hand, the relations of man to man tended to be thought of as being founded upon a high degree of equality and upon mutual recognition of each other's self-sufficiency: vulnerability here would have meant a man's loss of status, his degradation to the rank of a woman or a slave. In view of the many kinds of dependence which in fact organize the relations of men to one another, this Greek restriction of man's ephemerality to his dependence upon the gods should be seen as a strategy of suppression and projection which functions precisely to protect the goal of *autarkeia* against empirical falsification: unwilling to admit that men can change their character within a single day because of what other *men* do to them, the Greeks prefer to lay the full responsibility upon the gods. Viewed in this light, the ideology of the doctrine of human ephemerality is radically egalitarian: no man is more or less ephemeral than any other; before the gods, all men are equal, all have an equal chance to gain self-sufficiency—and an equal certainty of losing it.

It is this traditional ideal of self-sufficiency that provides the best context for understanding the discursive constraints associated with Greek autobiography. Within its terms, we can see how the speaker's desire to be independent of external forces must be radically contradicted by an unmanageable crisis before he can be permitted, by others and by himself, to enter into the autobiographical mode; and, conversely, how this mode would contradict the listeners' normal desire to be similarly free of external constraint if it were not disarmed by taking the form of lamentation rather than of celebration. In short, the peculiarities we have been discussing in Greek autobiographies are best seen as an expression of a fundamental tension within Greek culture between self-sufficiency and self-disclosure.

This tension will have had two basic aspects. The first regards the *speaker* of autobiographical discourse. Assigning to the gods the source of human instability not only prevents the social domain from limiting in any determinate way individual self-sufficiency: it also provides a religious sanction for appeals to moderation and for skepticism about the likelihood of

(1978) 149–84; Humphreys, 'Women in antiquity' in *The family, women and death* (n. 55) 33–51; R. Padel, 'Women, model for possession by Greek daemons', in A. Cameron and A. Kuhrt, ed., *Images of women in antiquity* (London 1983) 3–19; P. Walcot, 'Greek attitudes towards women. The mythological evidence', *G&R* xxxi (1984) 37–47; and the essays collected in D. Halperin, J. Winkler, and F. I. Zeitlin, ed., *Before sexuality: the construction of erotic experience in the ancient Greek world* (Princeton forthcoming).

<sup>78</sup> M. Foucault, *Histoire de la sexualité*. ii: *L'usage des plaisirs*. iii: *Le souci de soi* (Paris 1984).

<sup>79</sup> E.g., Hesiod, *Theog.* 590–612, *W&D* 57–8, 373–5; Eur. *Med.* 573–5, *Hipp.* 617 ff.

<sup>80</sup> Cf. A. E. Hanson, 'Hippocrates: *Diseases of women* i', *Signs* i (1975) 567–84; H. King, 'Bound to bleed: Artemis and Greek women', in Cameron and Kuhrt (n. 77) 109–27; G. E. R. Lloyd, *Science, folklore and ideology* (Cambridge 1983) 58–111, 168–82.

<sup>81</sup> H. Fränkel, 'ΕΦΗΜΕΡΟΣ als Kennwort für die menschliche Natur', in *Wege und Formen frühgriechischen Denkens*<sup>2</sup>, ed. F. Tietze (Munich 1960) 23–39.



continuing success. In the Archaic and Classical periods, this attitude takes the form of the well-known notion of divine vengeance for human arrogance, of *tisis* for *hybris*.<sup>82</sup> According to this view, nothing can more swiftly bring a change for the worse than to celebrate success: if only for this reason, no man should be praised as happy so long as he is alive and can still die miserably. The injunction to call no man happy before he is dead was not incompatible with a variety of modes of biographical discourse: but it is obvious that it could not have been a strong inducement to autobiography in the panegyric mode. For the biographer can wait until his subject has died to find out if he was really happy; the autobiographer, alas, cannot. Hence the religious response to man's ontological lack of *autarkeia* will have acted as a powerful deterrent against any tendency to boast of one's successes in encomiastic autobiography. It was not until Christianity developed a radically different view of the relation between divine grace, human failure, and human success, that autobiographical discourses of the type of Augustine's *Confessions* could become popular. Augustine's confession, like those of Greek romance, tells of misfortunes and wanderings, of love and separation; but unlike them, and like Apuleius' Romanized novel, it ends happily, with divine illumination, conversion, and the sense of a meaning to life.<sup>83</sup>

The second consideration regards the *audience* of autobiographical discourse. Living in a culture that encouraged them to seek to attain what was in fact an unreachable degree of self-sufficiency (and that, far from resting content with the possibilities for triumph and disaster provided by normal life, went so far as to construct numerous occasions of competition which necessarily resulted in victory for one and defeat for many others), the Greeks were unlikely to have responded with full and generous benevolence to evidence of their fellows' success. If they themselves turned out after all to be dependent upon others, then how galling it must have been to have to witness another's success—let alone to have that success flaunted at them by the victor himself! Greek literature, from Homer, Hesiod, and Pindar through the Imperial period, is filled with references to and examples of envy.<sup>84</sup> Resentment was certainly a far more potent force in Greek society than some sentimental modern scholars seem to wish to believe: the *phthonos* of the gods may have been delayed or uncertain, but nothing could have been swifter or surer than the *phthonos* of the Greeks. So strong must the pressures of resentment have been that, in order to permit them to blow off harmlessly, the Archaic and Classical Greeks had to elaborate a number of carefully regulated social mechanisms—iamb, comedy, lawsuits<sup>85</sup>—in which extraordinarily vicious invective against living fellow-citizens was not only sanctioned, but even savored; conversely, such professional praisers as epinician poets faced the difficult task of devising complex rhetorical strategies that would enable them to celebrate successful patrons without exposing them to an unnecessary degree of hostility on the part of their fellow-citizens.<sup>86</sup>

In later Greek rhetorical theory, praising oneself received its own *terminus technicus*,

<sup>82</sup> This notion is most familiar from Aeschylus and Herodotus; but it recurs throughout an author as evidently opposed to superstition as Thucydides. At i 132, Pausanias' boastful inscription directly causes his fall; Pericles' boastful funeral oration (ii 35–46) is followed immediately by the plague (47–54), in which the hollowness of many of his claims for the virtues of Athenian society is revealed; the magnificence of the departure of the Athenian expeditionary force for Sicily (vi 30–2) is matched by the fullness of the disaster they suffer there (vii 87.5–6). Cf. C. Macleod, 'Thucydides and tragedy', in *Collected essays*, ed. O. Taplin (Oxford 1983) 140–58.

<sup>83</sup> The relation between the two authors may well be even closer. Augustine refers to Apuleius' romance explicitly at *de civ. dei* xviii 18.1 and to Apuleius himself at e.g. *epist.* 102.32, 137.13, 138.18f. On their similari-

ties, cf. P. Courcelle, *Les Confessions de Saint Augustin dans la tradition littéraire. Antécédents et postérité* (Paris 1963) 101–9, H. Hagendahl, *Augustine and the Latin classics* ii (Göteborg 1967) 680 ff.

<sup>84</sup> J. Burckhardt, *Griechische Kulturgeschichte*, ed. J. Oeri, ii (Berlin-Stuttgart 1898–1902) 365 f.; S. Eitrem, 'The Pindaric *phthonos*', in G. E. Mylonas and D. Raymond, ed., *Studies presented to D. M. Robinson* (St Louis 1951) ii 531–6; E. Milobenski, *Der Neid in der griechischen Philosophie* (Wiesbaden 1964); P. Walcot, *Greek peasants, ancient and modern: a comparison of social and moral values* (Manchester 1970) 77–93, and *Envy and the Greeks: a study of human behaviour* (Warminster 1978).

<sup>85</sup> Burckhardt (n. 84) 354 ff.

<sup>86</sup> Most (n. 37).

περιαιτολογία,<sup>87</sup> and was subjected to a scrupulous examination in an essay by Plutarch, *περὶ τοῦ ἑαυτὸν ἐπαινεῖν ἀνεπιφθόνως*, 'On Praising Oneself Without Provoking Envy' (*Mor.* 539 a ff.),<sup>88</sup> that confirms the analysis of autobiography outlined above. Of the nine ways Plutarch lists in which one can avoid censure when praising oneself, the first three are particularly relevant: self-praise is tolerable (1) if one is defending one's reputation or answering an accusation (4.540c), (2) if one has been unfortunate (5.541a), or (3) if one has been wrongfully treated or insulted (6.541c). Otherwise it is best to disguise one's praise for oneself, ἐπεὶ δὲ τῶ μὲν ἑαυτὸν ἐπαινοῦντι πολεμοῦσιν οἱ πολλοὶ σφόδρα καὶ ἄχθονται, 'since most men quarrel strongly and feel annoyed with someone who praises himself' (542c). In Plutarch's world, envy was simply taken for granted: τοῖς ἰδίους ἐπαίνοις ἀλλότριος ἔπεται ψόγος αἰεὶ καὶ γίνεται τέλος ἀδοξία τῆς κενοδοξίας ταύτης, καὶ τὸ λυπεῖν τοὺς ἀκούοντας, ὡς ὁ Δημοσθένης φησὶν, περίεστιν, οὐ τὸ δοκεῖν εἶναι τοιοῦτους, 'praise of oneself is always accompanied by censure from someone else, and the result of this vain praising is the absence of praise, and the consequence is that the listeners are irritated, as Demosthenes says, not that they believe that the self-praisers are the sort of men they say they are' (547e–f). It is easy to see why, in this world, not only praising oneself, but even talking about oneself in ways that did not take adequate account of one's listener's exigencies (for example, too lengthily) could be considered an imposition. Evidently, the only kind of autobiographical discourse likely to win approval was one which lamented the speaker's misfortune: for, depending upon the listener's circumstances, it could either console him for his own distresses by presenting him with a similar case, or it could provide him the heady pleasure of seeing someone else suffer pains that he himself had been spared. Some listeners, indeed, might even have responded with pity.<sup>89</sup>

Both speaker and listener knew, of course, that to put anyone into the position of listener was to some extent to exercise power over him, to constrain his activities in terms of one's own behaviour—the Greeks' obsession with the theory and practice of rhetoric will have sensitized them to this. Thus both persons became partners in a tense and complex discursive power struggle: if the speaker praised himself, he aggravated his imposition upon the listener; the former's lament could make the latter feel stronger and thus restore a fragile balance. The suffering speaker was attempting to transform his practical failure into a discursive success: adapting his story to his listener's conscious and unconscious exigencies, he tried to give him what he wanted without letting him realize he knew that he was doing so. If he was successful, and persuaded his audience, he achieved a compensatory victory in the rhetorical arena, manifesting an adaptability and resilience in story-telling he had failed to put to his advantage in practice in the episodes he was recounting; and this rhetorical victory might well have brought with it not only the intangible compensation of pity and tears but also the more concrete rewards of help and gifts. As for the listener, he permitted the story-teller's misfortune to redeem his violation of the taboo against excessive self-disclosure, but was wary against being imposed upon—though he was always free to prefer entertainment to verisimilitude: as Aristotle pointed out, a believable impossibility was likelier to be successful than an unbelievable possibility.<sup>90</sup> This means that the listener's attitude to the autobiographer's performance was essentially aesthetic—hence for example the literary stylization of the autobiographies in the Greek romances, the inevitable references to tragedy, to Plato, and to Homer.<sup>91</sup>

In the Homeric epics themselves, this discursive structure is already firmly established, and it is well illustrated by the extraordinary set of tales recounted by Odysseus in the last twelve books

<sup>87</sup> Plut. *Mor.* 539e, Alexander iii 4.9–14 Spengel; the term seems to derive from Demosth. *De corona* 4, 321. The topic is frequently discussed by ancient rhetoricians; cf. e.g. Quintilian xi 1.15–26, Hermogenes *περὶ μεθόδου δεινότητος* 25 (441.15–442.21 Rabe).

<sup>88</sup> Cf. L. Radermacher, 'Studien zur Geschichte der griechischen Rhetorik. II: Plutarchs Schrift de se ipso citra invidiam laudando', *RhM* lii (1897) 419–24.

<sup>89</sup> On the relation between ἐλεεῖν and νευεσθᾶν, cf. Arist. *Rhet.* ii 9.1386b8 ff.

<sup>90</sup> *Poet.* 25.1461b11–12.

<sup>91</sup> Tragedy: Xen. *Eph.* iii 1.4; Hel. i 8.42. Achilles Tatius' *σμήνος λόγων* (i 2.2) and Heliodorus' *σμήνος κακῶν* (ii 21.23) refer back to Plato's *ἔσμὸν λόγων* (*Rep.* v 450b). 'Weeping for Patroclus' (Ach. Tat. ii 34.7; Hel. i 18.5) alludes to *Il.* xix 302.

of the *Odyssey*.<sup>92</sup> First: with the partial exception of Odysseus' final lie to Laertes (xxiv 302–14),<sup>93</sup> these are all tales of woe—as well they might be, considering Odysseus' situation. In this regard, they are similar to such other first-person tales addressed to strangers in the *Odyssey* as the stories that Telemachus and Theoclymenus exchange (xv 266 f., 272 f.) and Eumaeus' tale for Odysseus (xv 390 ff.). Odysseus, to be sure, does tell some autobiographical stories that end happily; but he does so only to people he knows and whose trustworthiness he has determined by testing: Telemachus (xvi 226 ff.), a pair of slaves (xxi 207 ff.), Penelope (xxiii 306 ff.), Laertes (xxiv 321 ff.). Second: all of Odysseus' lies are directed to the securing of practical ends—information from Eumaeus in Book xiv and from Penelope in Book xix, a warm cloak from Eumaeus in the second *ainos* in Book xiv, a gift from Antinous in Book xvii. Even when the practical purpose is not immediately apparent, only a little digging is needed to unearth it. Thus in Odysseus' very first, paradigmatic lie in the second half of the *Odyssey*, the tale he tells the disguised Athena just after he has landed upon Ithaca.<sup>94</sup> His story of how Orsilochus had tried to steal his booty and how he himself had lain in ambush for him and slain him with guile may seem gratuitous: but it should not be forgotten that he is standing defenceless with the gifts of the Phaeacians before what he takes to be a young man armed with a spear. His story is a tactful warning to the stranger that he knows how to defend his life and property, whether he is well armed or not; indeed, even his choice of the name Orsilochus, 'Ambush-rouser', for the enemy he killed in an ambush in Crete, serves among other things to suggest that even a very tricky opponent would be no match for him. Third: speaking to a young shepherd and desiring to impress him, Odysseus adopts the persona of a father with children of his own (xiii 258), an exceptional military man (266); and it is remarkable with what ingenuity and what exquisite tact Odysseus each time takes on the role most likely to conciliate his listener—the son of a slave for Eumaeus (xiv 202 f.), a rich man fallen on hard times for Antinous (xvii 419 f.), a prince of Crete and grandson of Minos for Penelope (xix 178 f.). All of these lying tales can be described in the terms Erbse applies to the first one: each is a 'meisterhafte Interpretation einer verfahrenen Lage'.<sup>95</sup> No wonder Odysseus became the paradigmatic rhetorician for later Greeks; and no wonder his immediate audiences always greet his tales appreciatively, whether they believe them or not. Athena smiles and caresses him, even though she is not fooled (xiii 287 ff.); Eumaeus gives him shelter even though he does not believe the report about Odysseus (xiv 363 ff.), and later praises Odysseus' *ainos* about the cloak in terms that make explicit the link between the listener's judgment of the aesthetic quality of the discourse and his decision to reward it:

ὦ γέρον, αἴνος μὲν τοι ἀμύμων, ὃν κατέλεξας,  
οὐδέ τί πω παρὰ μοῖραν ἔπος νηκερδὲς ἔειπες.  
τῷ οὔτ' ἔσθῃτος δευήσεται οὔδε τευ ἄλλου. . . (xiv 508–10)<sup>96</sup>

Old man, the story you have told is a good one, and so far you have said nothing amiss or unprofitable. Therefore you will not lack either clothes or anything else . . .

<sup>92</sup> Cf. G. Bluemlein, *Die Trugreden des Odysseus* (Diss. Frankfurt a.M. 1971); C. R. Trahman, 'Odysseus' Lies (*Odyssey*, Books 13–19)', *Phoenix* vi (1952) 31–43, here 34–42; P. Walcot, 'Odysseus and the art of lying', *Ancient Society* viii (1977) 1–19. On the stories Odysseus tells in Books ix–xii, cf. my, 'The structure and function of Odysseus' *apologoi*', *TAPhA* forthcoming.

<sup>93</sup> Even here, Odysseus complains about bad winds (307). The speech is analysed by B. Fenik, *Studies in the Odyssey* (Wiebaden 1974) 47–53 and A. Heubeck, 'Zwei homerische πείραι', *Ziva Antika* xxxi (1981) 73–83, here 74–9.

<sup>94</sup> The speech is analysed by H. Erbse, *Beiträge zum*

*Verständnis der Odyssee* (Berlin 1972) 154–5 and D. M. Maronitis, 'Die erste Trugrede des Odysseus in der Odyssee: Vorbild und Variationen', in G. Kurz, D. Müller, and W. Nicolai, ed., *Gnomosyne. Festschrift für W. Marg* (Munich 1981) 117–34.

<sup>95</sup> Erbse (n. 94) 155. According to Aristotle, δεδίδαχεν δὲ μάλιστα Ὀμηρος καὶ τοὺς ἄλλους ψευδῆ λέγειν ὡς δεῖ (*Poet.* 24.1460a18–19).

<sup>96</sup> The only listener who refuses Odysseus' request is the suitor Antinous (xvii 445 ff.), and he condemns only himself by doing so: Antinous will be the very first suitor Odysseus kills (xxii 8 ff.).

A tell-tale sign of the underlying strain within this discursive situation is the deployment, already in Homer, of a rigorous set of social rules designed to control and disarm it. One example is the iron-clad law of Homeric etiquette, that strangers be fed before they are questioned about their background;<sup>97</sup> for one result is that thereby they have become less fully strangers before they begin their autobiographical discourse. They are, to be sure, not yet intimates: but they have already been constrained by hunger, the host's generosity or insistence, or their own tact, to share his board: as his debtors, they may be thought less likely unscrupulously to exploit the discursive game they are about to embark upon together with him. Another example is the institution of the suppliant, a familiar figure in Greek society as early as Homer.<sup>98</sup> One effect of the religious sanctions that protected him against violence was to secure him an audience for his plea: an appeal for help could be coupled with a circumstantial autobiographical account, complaining of misfortunes suffered, which might otherwise have provoked impatience or ire, but was thereby guaranteed by Zeus ἱκετήσιος himself, if not a reward, at least a hearing.

These, then, were the constraints within which Achilles Tatius was operating: and we may see one measure of just how strong they were in the fact that, despite his evident originality and sophistication, he was in the end unable to escape them.<sup>99</sup> Speaking before friends and relatives, Cleitophon would likely have praised himself or recounted his good fortune, without doing more than boring or irritating those nearest and dearest to him.<sup>100</sup> But speaking before others, he adopted *the stranger's stratagem*: the transformation of a situation of need into a narrative of loss adapted rhetorically to a specific audience and designed to gain power, discursive and/or real, over that audience. In his deployment of that stratagem in conversation with a stranger at the temple of Astarte at Sidon, he demonstrates himself to be, in his own smaller way, as accomplished a rhetorician as Odysseus. For the anonymous narrator in Achilles Tatius' romance (who is, of course, a stand-in for the reader) is a pure cipher, a figure devoid of any specific characteristics whatsoever—with one fateful exception. The only thing we ever learn about him is that he, like the reader (who otherwise would not be reading this kind of text), is ἔρωτικός (i 2.1): and this is the strait gate through which Cleitophon will be able to drive the whole σμῆνος λόγων of his erotic adventures.

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<sup>97</sup> E.g., *Od.* iii 67–71. So too, at Ach. Tat. viii 4.2, it is only at dinner, and after a considerable amount of wine has been drunk, that the bishop can ask Sostratus to tell him the story of his life. The reversal of this rule in *Iliad* xxiv, where Priam and Achilles first speak and eat only afterwards, is striking precisely against this background: the violation is motivated by the urgency and the anomaly of Priam's appeal, signalled by the extraordinary simile at 480 ff.

<sup>98</sup> J. P. Gould, 'Hiketeia', *JHS* xciii (1973) 74–103;

V. Pedrick, 'Supplication in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*', *TAPhA* cxii (1982) 125–40.

<sup>99</sup> It is interesting to note that the Greek romances, which arise in the Hellenistic age and flourish under the Empire, continue to retain these Archaic and Classical limitations on autobiographical discourse at a time when they seem somewhat less coercive in reality. This is evidently a generic, and presumably an archaizing, feature of these romances.

<sup>100</sup> Examples in Plut. *de garrulitate* 22.513d ff.