

The pseudo-Lucianic *Erôtes*, dated as late as the early 4th century CE, presents a lively philosophical pastiche of the well-rehearsed debate between the exclusive pederast and the (deviantly) exclusive heterosexual. Set at the sanctuary of Aphrodite on Knidos, it is the bivalent erotic stimulus of the goddess' statuesque body – depending on whether she is viewed from the front or the back – that engenders the debate: What is the correct focus for male sexual desire? The avenues (ὁδοὺς) to erotic satisfaction offered by the bodies of boys or of women?

Despite recent recuperation of second sophistic texts in classical scholarship, most notices of the *Erôtes* are limited to its vivid description of the temple of Aphrodite on Knidos and Praxiteles' sculptural masterpiece (§11-17). Whereas epigrams from the Greek Anthology (16.160, 169) and Pliny the Elder's description of the sanctuary (*HN* 36.20-1) emphasize the ability to view the statue from all angles, the author of the *Erôtes* depicts a *naos* with only two doors communicating into the sacred space. In order to view the goddess from the back, you must be admitted by a temple guard through a door added at the rear for just that purpose. This description of restricted access to the temple is found only in the *Erôtes*. In modern scholarship, this unique spatial description is overlooked, forgiven or elided in favor of a reconstructing a more mobile and accessible viewing experience.¹ This paper attempts to demonstrate how the seemingly incongruous or wrong description of space in this text is a conscious literary strategy aimed at presenting an architectural map for its dialogue on the eroticized body.

I contend that the directed viewing the Pseudo-Lucianic text describes is intended to project the body, gendered alternatively female and male, onto the experience of the architectural space. The goddess' body, appreciated as both female and male by the viewers, can only be accessed through the perforations of the temple wall. In sexing the temple space itself as male and female through the access offered to the interior, and writing this duality onto the body of the goddess at the center, the author cleverly underscores his send-up of the serious philosopher's position on the homoerotic ideal. In conclusion, I hope with this paper to offer a new reading of this text that honors its complex literary approach to architecture, sexuality and their intersection.

¹ See the descriptions of R. Osborne "Looking on – Greek Style, Does the sculpted girl speak to women too?" in I. Morris (ed.) *Classical Greece: Ancient Histories and Modern Archaeologies* (Cambridge, 1994) and of A. Stewart *Art, Desire, and the Body in Ancient Greece* (Cambridge, 1997).