



*This letter explains More's estimation of Lucian and some of the reasons he was attracted to the three dialogues he chose for translation.*

- 20/5 Praises Lucian for fulfilling "the Horatian maxim" of combining instruction and delight
- 20/9 Distinguishes Lucian from philosophers and poets
- 20/13ff Praises Lucian's wit as honest, entertaining, clever, effective, and "first-rate"
- 20/18ff Explains More's rationale for choosing these three dialogues, which seem "best" to him
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- 20/31-51 Introduces *Cynicus*; explains St. John Chrysostom's approval; identifies the subject as the "severe life" of Cynics as opposed to "soft, enervating luxury"; suggests a connection to Christianity
- 20/52-57 Introduces *Necromantia*; praises its witty "rebuke" of magicians, poets, and philosophers
- 20/58-85 Introduces *Philopseudes*; notes its "measure of Socratic irony"; identifies the subject as "the inordinate passion for lying"; addresses Lucian's "doubt" about the immortality of the soul and juxtaposes it to the articles of Christian faith; suggests that the text teaches a "lesson" against credulity and superstition "under the guise of religion," as well as a lesson about anxiety, fear, and gloom; shares a story about St. Augustine's "yarn"; describes Augustine as "a man of complete sobriety and a zealous enemy of lies"
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- 20/86-97 Addresses the human tendency to "feign" stories about saints and Hell, to insert "some falsehoods" into martyrs' lives, to embellish the truth "with lies," and to defile with "tales that religion which Truth itself established and which it intended to consist of truth unadorned"
- 21/100-103 Argues that these "fables" do "deadly harm"
- 21/103 Invokes "father Augustine" again, especially his lament that such "falsehood" diminishes "the authority of truth"
- 21/106 Suspects that such "fables" are the work of "crafty" and badly motivated heresy
- 21/110 Suggests that the simple-minded are the victims of this lying, "rather than the wise"
- 21/115 Advises the reader to trust in the "stories" of divine Scripture, but urges them otherwise to test carefully and deliberately all other tales "by the teaching of Christ" (likened to applying the rule of Critolaus)
- 21/121 Suggests that the goal of such testing is to free ourselves from "foolish confidence" and "superstitious dread"
- 21/123 Breaks off with a question, "But where am I headed?"
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- 21/125-28 Praises Ruthall without "flattery"
- 21/129ff Praises Ruthall's tried and tested virtues, including his learning, his "unsurpassed wisdom in practical affairs," and his "trustworthiness and dignity"
- 21/136 Praises King Henry as a "sagacious prince" (*prudentissimus princeps*)
- 21/142 Calls his Lucian translations "the first fruits of my Greek studies," and an expression of his "affection" and "duty" to Ruthall
- 21/145 Submits his work to an admired friend's "keen" judgment and "kind" nature