

# The chronology of the earlier Greek novels since B.E. Perry: revisions and precisions

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This paper first revisits the problem of the chronology of the early Greek novels. The texts at issue are the *Ninus* romance, the *Chaereas and Callirhoe* of Chariton, the *Ephesiaca* of Xenophon, and the *Metiochus and Parthenope* romance. I then add some observations on the dates of Antonius Diogenes and Achilles Tatius, and on the geographical location of the genesis of the Greek novels.<sup>1</sup>

## I

For Chariton<sup>2</sup> and for *Metiochus and Parthenope* we are given a firm *terminus ante quem* by papyri, in each case of ca. A.D. 150: these are the dates of the Michaelides papyrus of Chariton and of the Berlin fragments (P. Berol. 7927+9588+21179) of *Metiochus and Parthenope*. The *terminus ante quem* given by the principal *Ninus* papyrus (P. Berol. 6926, with fragments A and B) is half a century earlier: unless its writer broke the regular habit of first using a roll of papyrus on the side on which the fibres ran horizontally, the *recto*, somewhat easing the movement of writing, and instead chose to use the *verso* (where the fibres ran vertically) the Chariton text on the *recto* of P. Berol. 6296 is earlier than the tax documents written on its *verso*; and these

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<sup>1</sup> Versions of this paper were given at the École Normale Supérieure, rue d'Ulm, Paris and at Melbourne and Göteborg Universities, and a penultimate version was pre-circulated and discussed at the novel panel during the New Orleans meeting of the APA in January 2003. I benefited greatly from discussions on these occasions, and particularly from the critique offered by Antonio Stramaglia at the APA panel.

<sup>2</sup> For recent and authoritative discussions of the date of Chariton see Reardon, 1996, 309–335; Ruiz Montero, 1993, 1008–1012.

documents are of the year A.D. 100/101 (fragment A) and A.D. 101/102 (fragment B). The hand is comparable to others dated to A.D. 60–90,<sup>3</sup> and is assigned by Susan Stephens to ca. A.D. 75.<sup>4</sup> *Ninus* cannot possibly have been composed later than A.D. 100, and was most probably composed earlier than ca. A.D. 75. This chronology also follows from the other known papyrus of the *Ninus*, fragment C, from Oxyrhynchus (*PSI* 1305), described by Stephens as ‘assignable also to the last half of the first century B.C.’<sup>5</sup>

How much earlier? Here we run out of evidence, and have to start guessing. Most scholars guess ‘early’, and in any case earlier than Chariton’s work. I quote Gerald Sandy, in the Anglophone bible of the Greek novels, Bryan Reardon’s *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*:

On the basis of this terminus ante quem, as well as on the basis of palaeography and the author’s literary style, papyrologists have established that fragments A and B were written down sometime between 100 B.C. and A.D. 100. This chronology annihilated the then prevailing view of Rohde that the Greek romances were a product of the Second Sophistic, the period of renewed Greek literary activity during the second and early third centuries A.D.<sup>6</sup>

This statement seems to elide the views of literary historians and papyrologists. Now, at any rate, papyrologists are saying ca. A.D. 75: as far as I know no papyrologist would support an early 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. date for our papyrus text, far less the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. And of course if *Ninus* were composed around A.D. 60–75, it would fall *within* the second sophistic as defined by Philostratus (who, after all, invented it!), since Philostratus’ first imperial sophist is Nicetes, already prominent in Smyrna when Nero referred his dispute with a λογιστής (finance commissioner) (Verginius?) Rufus to the court of Rufus himself, by then (A.D. 67–8) on an imperial appointment in Gaul (Philostratus, *VS* 1.19.512). Nicetes was heard ca. A.D. 79 by Pliny (*epist.* 6.6.3) in Rome, whither his reputation in Asia for flowery rhetoric had already permeated by the dramatic date of Tacitus’ *dialogus* 15.3, i.e. ca. A.D. 75.

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<sup>3</sup> Roberts, 1956, plates 11a and 11b.

<sup>4</sup> Stephens and Winkler 1995, 31.

<sup>5</sup> Stephen and Winkler 1995, 63.

<sup>6</sup> Sandy 1989, 803.

So the case for a significantly earlier date for the composition of *Ninus* must rest on what Sandy called ‘the author’s literary style’. That had already been stressed by Lesky:<sup>7</sup>

The affinity with historiography, and linguistic details, such as the pronounced dread of hiatus, recommend an early date, probably the second century B.C.

There is consensus here, and authority: Bryan Reardon’s view in 1991<sup>8</sup> endorsed that of Gerald Sandy.

What are the props of this inclination to set the composition of the *Ninus* a century or more before the papyrus? ‘The affinity with historiography’ can count for little: the ‘historiographical manner’ is equally strong in Chariton, and a version of it is vigorous in Heliodorus, as was well analysed by John Morgan in 1982.<sup>9</sup> The simplicity of the style may be one feature implied by Sandy to be significant: it cannot be denied – though it should not be exaggerated – but it would not suffice to detach the date of *Ninus* from that of Chariton, for whom an early dating in the sequence of novels was first proposed precisely on stylistic grounds. If we try to appeal to more precise or objective stylistic criteria, the case of Chariton should give us pause. On the basis of his linguistic analysis of Chariton Papanikolaou concluded, and persuaded Albrecht Dihle – or did Dihle persuade Papanikolaou? – that Chariton’s relative immunity to Atticism required a dating as early as the first century B.C. But a wider examination of Chariton’s language, by Ruiz Montero and Hernandez Lara, has shown how much he shares with first century A.D. writers – Philo, Josephus and Plutarch.<sup>10</sup>

The fragments of *Ninus* are not extensive enough for a telling analysis such as has been done for Chariton. But for what it is worth, *Ninus* does indeed avoid *hiatus*,<sup>11</sup> as Reeve noted in 1971, though from this Reeve drew the opposite conclusion to Lesky. It also seems to seek out favoured clausulae and Attic vocabulary, with some exceptions.<sup>12</sup> These exceptions had been

<sup>7</sup> Lesky 1966, 861.

<sup>8</sup> ‘The romance itself probably goes back at least to the 1st century B.C.’: Reardon 1991, 10 n.14

<sup>9</sup> Morgan 1982.

<sup>10</sup> Ruiz Montero 1991; Hernandez Lara 1994.

<sup>11</sup> Reeve 1971, 536–538.

<sup>12</sup> Stephens and Winkler 1995, 31.

adduced by Dihle in 1978 in his discussion of the *Metiochus and Parthenope* fragment<sup>13</sup> – non-Atticist features that he argued to put *Ninus* in the same pre-Atticising world as the one in which he wished to locate Chariton and the *Metiochus and Parthenope* romance. They are not wholly convincing, as the following discussion attempts to show:

ναυτιλία A.III 20–21. But ναυτιλία is used twice in this sense ‘sea journey’ in Heliodorus (6.6.3, 7.14.8) and at another place in the sense ‘sailing’ (5.27.3). Its use in the novelists, not admittedly an Attic use, is likely to be drawn from Herodotus (cf. Hdt 1.1.1, 1.163.1).

ἥμην A.III 38 for Attic ἦν. Again the *Ninus* does not stand alone. Xenophon of Ephesus, not surprisingly, has συνήμην 3.2.9, ἥμην 5.1.6. Neither Chariton nor Heliodorus has ἥμην, but Achilles Tatius has it three times (3.22.3, 4.1.2, 5.1.4). Longus has it at 4.28.3, and it is offered by V at 2.7.4 where F has ἦν; παρήμην is in both F and V at 2.5.3.

κόρη A.IV 20. Again this is indeed a non-Attic word, but it is one that is repeatedly used by most novelists to describe their heroine – Xenophon, Achilles Tatius, Longus and Heliodorus. Chariton is unusual in using it only twice (1.3.1, of Callirhoe shortly after her marriage, 3.8.3 of her beauty before she gave birth to her child οὐκέτι κόρης ἀλλὰ γυναικός ἀκμὴν προσλαβοῦσα), but this is chiefly because his Callirhoe is not a κόρη for most of his story.

ἐντός with genitive A IV 23:

ἢ γὰρ παρθέν[ος ἐντός τ]ῆς γυναικωνίτιδ [ος ζῶσα ο]ὐκ εὐ-

This is not, as Dihle suggested, a simple equivalent for ἐν with the dative. ἐντός here and in general means “inside” not “in”, as it does in the one place where Longus uses it at 2.25.2 ἄκρας ... ἐπεκτεινομένης μνηοειδῶς, ἥς ἐντός ἢ θάλασσα γαληνότερον τῶν λιμένων ὄρμον εἰργάζετο.

ἐρυθθαίνω not ἐρυθραίνω, A IV 35. Like ἐντός, this is a supplement, but a fairly secure one: there seems to be no room for a ρ. The form without a ρ is indeed poetic and not Attic, and favoured, for example, by Apollonius Rhodius (also Leonidas Tar., *AP* 9.322). Neither form appears in the other novelists, who use ἐρυθριάω. But the poetic form ἐρυθθαίνω did creep into at least one second-century writer who was careful: Arrian in one of his mete-

<sup>13</sup> Dihle 1978, 55 n.

orological fragments uses ἐρυθθαίνεται;<sup>14</sup> and it is also offered as a way of describing cheeks by Pollux 2.87.

θήρειος and not Attic θερινός is used at B.II 13. However Longus used both θέρειος (at 3.24.1 καινὰ τέρψεις καὶ θέρειοι) and Attic θερινός, if we accept Courier's reading at 1.17.4 of χλωρότερον τὸ πρόσωπον ἦν πόας θερινῆς, based on the superscript θε above the καί of καιρινῆς in F. The form that the author of *Ninus* needs for his purpose and uses is a comparative: πολὺν θερειότερος τῆς ὥρας ἐπιπεσὼν νότος. Even if he had remembered, unlike Longus, that θερινός is not Attic, he might have been deterred from using θερινός by discovering that this form had no attested comparative.

πλὴν ἀλλά, cited by Dihle, is not read in modern editions of the papyrus.

θηρίον for a war-elephant, B.III 18, 24, cf. Polyb. 11.1.2. But it is not clear that at B.III 18 and 24 the term is meant to be technical (as it appears to be in Polybius): the beasts have already been referred to as ἐλέφαντες at B.III 11.

What we are finding in *Ninus*, I think, is careful writing that shares some features with other genres that are more single-minded in their Atticising, but writing that looks to a wider range of models that not surprisingly includes the godfather of novel-writing, Herodotus. These features allow a date for the composition of the novel much nearer to that of the papyrus: although I see no particular reason to put it as late as, say, ca. A.D. 90, I think that the widespread inclination to date it substantially earlier has little objective basis, and I do not see how we can exclude a date as late as the 60s A.D. It has been suggested that the lapse of some twenty years between postulated composition of *Ninus* in the 60s and apparent copying of our papyrus no later than ca. A.D. 90 is too short a span for a text composed (most probably, see below) in Aphrodisias to reach the place it was copied (?Karanis). We do not even begin to have data which would allow us to estimate the average time for a text composed in Rome or Asia Minor to reach cities in Egypt, and no doubt there was considerable variation between one case and another. At one extreme we can note the elegiacs by Gallus from Qasr Ibrîm, composed probably in the 50s or 40s B.C. and discovered in a context that belongs

<sup>14</sup> Stobaeus I 31.8 = *Scripta minora* ed. A.G. Roos p.191.27.

most probably to the late 20s B.C.<sup>15</sup> It is, of course, a special case: but it suffices to demonstrate that it would be unwise to insist on a lapse of (e.g.) four or more decades before a text composed elsewhere might be found on an Egyptian papyrus.

Another point that does not bear on dating may nevertheless be worth noticing. The author of *Ninus* has hit on a key term which appears in two other novels, those of Chariton and Heliodorus, ἀστάθμητος. It is combined with ἀτέκμαρτος at A III 28–9. The author of *Ninus* may have found these two words within 4 lines of each other in a speech of Hermocrates in Thucydides: 4.62.4 τὸ ... ἀστάθμητον τοῦ μέλλοντος; 4.63.1 διὰ τὸ ἀτέκμαρτον δέος. They well bring out a generic feature of the novelistic world – neither characters nor readers can be sure what the couple’s fate will be. Chariton uses it once;<sup>16</sup> Heliodorus uses it three times.<sup>17</sup>

I react similarly to Dihle’s linguistic arguments for the date of the *Metiochus and Parthenope*, though I do so more selectively.

Dihle noted σήμερον not Attic τήμερον at I.31. Chariton has σήμερον five times; Achilles Tatius σήμερον once and τήμερον once; Longus has only τήμερον, once; Heliodorus has σήμερον twice and τήμερον fifteen times. If one supposes that the sophistic novelists were consistent then we should blame the copyists for the occasional appearance in them of σήμερον and we should suppose that Longus and Heliodorus, at least, and perhaps Achilles Tatius, wrote τήμερον. Equally it seems probable that Chariton wrote σήμερον; perhaps so too did the author of *Ninus*, but a single case has to be treated with caution.<sup>18</sup>

I.25 τὸ εὐθαρσές: as Dihle noted, the form is used by Xenophon – whom Dihle then dismisses as a forerunner of the *koine*. Xenophon was also, however, an important model for several types of writing in the second century – Arrian had a go at almost all of them – and Heliodorus has εὐθαρσέστερον at 10.18.2. The use of τὸ εὐθαρσές by the author of *Metiochus and Parthenope* does not help the case for the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. date.

<sup>15</sup> Anderson, Parsons and Nisbet 1979, esp. 128: ‘If we accept (1), we shall date the Gallus-papyrus c. 50 B.C. – c. 20 B.C. If we accept (2), we shall date it c. 50 B.C. – A.D. 25. The balance of evidence favours (1)’...

<sup>16</sup> 6.4.5: στήθος ἀστάθμητον or στήθος ἀσταθμήτου πλήρης (the text is uncertain).

<sup>17</sup> 5.4.7 ἐπεὶ δὲ ἀστάθμητόν τι τὸ ἀνθρώπειον; 6.7.3 ἀσταθμητότατον τύχης ἀνθρωπίνης κίνημα, 6.9.3 οὐκ ἐννοήσεις ἄνθρωπος οὐσα, πρᾶγμα ἀστάθμητον.

<sup>18</sup> For the problem of σήμερον and τήμερον in Comedy see Arnott 2002, 209–210.

Nor does his use of βρέφος at I.48. True, βρέφος never appears in Attic prose. But the novelists use the word frequently, usually of young babies but once, as here, of Eros: the use of βρέφος to designate Eros is found in Achilles Tatius at 1.2.1; the others are Chariton – five times, twice (2.11.4, 3.2.13) of the child the pregnant Callirhoe is carrying and thrice of the same child after his birth (3.8.6, 7; 5.10.8); Achilles Tatius 1.10.1; Longus 1.2.1, 3.1, 6.1 (of the exposed babies); Heliodorus 9.11.5–6. I find it hard to see βρέφος as contributing to the case for an early date.

Then consider παντελῶς qualifying an adjective at I.53. Not Attic, notes Dihle, but he admits a few exceptions in Plato and Xenophon, e.g. *Republic* 502D7 παντελῶς ἀληθής. This shows that the author has a broad conception of Attic models, not that he antedates Atticism.

Finally at II.43 παρηρητημένον. This verb is not, indeed, attested in classical Attic. But its use by Plutarch (*Ant.* 4.3, *Mor.* 844E), by Lucian (*Peregr.* 15), and by the arch-Atticiser Aelian (NA 1.2, 5.3) surely exculpates our author from careless slumming.

Again, as with the *Ninus*, I think Dihle has overestimated the factors that might count against locating the writer in a period when Atticism was gaining strength, and I suggest that the novelists' awareness of their literary ancestry and their consequent readiness to draw on Plato, Xenophon and even Herodotus need to be thrown into the scales.

A further piece of evidence might help us in dating *Metiochus and Parthenope*. A short text on an ostrakon in the collection of the Bodleian Library, Oxford, O.Bodl. II 2175, was argued by Gronewald to be a part of the novel: he suggested that the words 'Parthenope, are you forgetful even of your Metiochus?' (lines 2–4) might be a letter.<sup>19</sup> Stephens and Winkler note that it could as well be a soliloquy, but that 'since the characters from the novel were popular subjects for theatrical performance, the ostrakon is just as likely to be a derivative composition, perhaps related to rhetorical exercise, or a quotation of a famous line from a stage performance'.<sup>20</sup> On any interpretation the ostrakon seems to imply the existence of a *Metiochus and Parthenope* narrative. It was perhaps because they rated the chance of this being from the actual text of the novel as low that Stephens and Winkler did not discuss the date of the ostrakon, saying no more than that it was 'from

<sup>19</sup> Gronewald 1977.

<sup>20</sup> Stephens and Winkler 1995, 93. For a full discussion of the literary kind and context to which the ostrakon might be assigned see Stramaglia 1994, 120–127.

the Roman period'.<sup>21</sup> But as Stephens and Winkler were going to press Stramaglia suggested that the ostrakon was written in the first decades of the first century A.D., citing the support of Cavallo.<sup>22</sup> However Cavallo had also said that he could see parallels to the hand in which the ostrakon was written over a period running from the first century B.C. to as late as A.D. 66.<sup>23</sup> Dirk Obbink has very kindly examined the ostrakon and has stressed that this sort of hand is extremely difficult to date: he has suggested that it could well have been written as late as the second half of the first century A.D. It is perhaps unfortunate that the phrase 'i primi decenni' has attracted more attention than his other suggested *termini* of 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C.– A.D. 66. Even supposing that this text *is* from the novel, it seems clear that a date in the 60s A.D. would do no violence to the evidence, such as it is. But the ostrakon offers no significant support for a date in the first century B.C.

Where, then, do I put *Metiochus and Parthenope*? Close to Chariton, probably but not certainly. Where then Chariton? I am not persuaded by the case put by Marie-Françoise Baslez for a Flavian or Hadrianic date, which is partly based on the perception of the Euphrates as a frontier between Rome and Parthia, i.e. within the novel the Greek world and the Persian, and partly on the Armenian route taken by Mithridates at 5.2.1.<sup>24</sup> Nor am I persuaded by that of Christopher Jones for the same date on the grounds of the similarity between Chariton's Dionysius of Miletus and the sophist of that name known from epigraphy, Cassius Dio and Philostratus' *Lives*<sup>25</sup> – a similarity that I concede, but that I take to be clear evidence that Chariton's character must antedate a distinguished Milesian of the same name unless he were prepared to cause great offence to a man with some power in *provincia Asia*. I tentatively accept the reference of Persius *Satire* 1.134 *post prandia Callirhoe* do to our author's *Callirhoe*, and hence the hypothesis of the work's publication by the early 60s A.D.

Another detail might offer a little support. Chariton gives the name Chaereas to his hero who sets the disasters of the novel in train by an act of

<sup>21</sup> Stephens and Winkler 1995, 93.

<sup>22</sup> Stramaglia 1994, 123 referring to Cavallo ('*per verba*') as dating it 'ai primi decenni del I d. C.'

<sup>23</sup> Stramaglia 1994, 123, n.129: 'Cavallo *per verba*, adducendo riscontri (specialmente per il *my*) che si collocano in un arco cronologico compreso fra PBerol inv. 13045 (Pack<sup>2</sup> 2102) = PGP 2.2, 15 (I a.C.); e POxy 246 = GLH 10c (66 d.C.)'.

<sup>24</sup> Baslez 1992.

<sup>25</sup> Jones 1992.



violence and to some extent redeems himself by gathering Greek mercenaries to fight heroically against the Persian king. Why? It is not a very common name, though it is borne by an Athenian in Thucydides (8.74.1, 3; 86.3). In the 40s A.D., however, it was in the headlines: it was the name of the man who as a centurion in A.D. 14 had been an *adulescens animi ferox* (Tacitus *Annales* 1.32) and who 27 years later, now a tribune of the *cohors praetoria*, had been so persistently insulted by the emperor Gaius that he assassinated him on 24 January A.D. 41: Cassius Chaerea – in Greek Κάσσιος Χαίρεας. The act was remembered in the Greek world as it was in the Roman:<sup>26</sup> *adulescens animi ferox* well describes Chariton's young Chaereas. This is not to say that the use of the name Chaereas in New Comedy (e.g. by Menander in *Dyskolos*, *Aspis*, *Koneazomenai* and at least one other play) plays no part in Chariton's choice of name. But although Chaereas is an *adulescens* in love, there are more strands to his character than are intimated by these ancestors in New Comedy, and those of propensity to violent actions and readiness to seek a military career are better explained by the mid-first century historical figure Cassius Chaerea.

That events at Rome and affecting the empire should be known to an author from Aphrodisias is no surprise. In the Julio-Claudian period Aphrodisias and its élite were strengthening their links with the ruling family in Rome.<sup>27</sup> Aphrodisias could also be the πατρίς of the author of *Ninus*, an idea that has occurred independently, I think, to me and to Stephens and Winkler. I think it is unlikely that the author is Chariton himself: the papyrus text of *Ninus* twice has ὄισθας (e.g. A II.22) whereas Chariton's manuscript always has ὄισθα;<sup>28</sup> as we saw, *Ninus* has ἤμην at A.III 38 for Attic ἦν, Chariton does not; and Chariton's very selective use of κόρη does not quite match the case in *Ninus*. So perhaps we should imagine two Julio-Claudian novel writers in Aphrodisias, not one. Of these Chariton, on the above, admittedly very precarious argument, should be writing between A.D. 41 and A.D. 61.

Is *Ninus* before or after Chariton? The more confident claim I make is that we have no good ground for putting him before, certainly no good sty-

<sup>26</sup> Plutarch, *de superstitione* 170E, Josephus, *AJ* 18.32–114, Pausanias 9.27.4 (though omitting the name), Dio exc. 59.29.

<sup>27</sup> Cf. the presence of the obscure Ti. Claudius Drusus in the Sebasteion reliefs from Aphrodisias as noted by Smith 1987, 95, or his hypothesis that one or more of the commissioners of the North Portico, Menander, Eusebes and Attalis Apphion, had seen the Augustan series of reliefs in the *Porticus ad nationes*, Smith 1988, 75.

<sup>28</sup> For ὄισθας and ὄισθα in Comedy see Arnott 2002, 203–204.

listic ground. Less confidently, I hazard a possible reason for putting *Ninus* later. The king's expedition into the wintry wilds of Armenia constitutes a colourfully handled section of our fragments. Chariton too had taken his satrap Mithridates through Armenia to get to Babylon,<sup>29</sup> but without dwelling on the problems of this route (5.2.1). But since Chariton had written, if we place him before A.D. 61, campaigning in Armenia had been in the news. Early in Nero's reign war between Rome and Parthia had again broken out, with control of Armenia the chief objective, and the campaigns of Corbulo in A.D. 58 and subsequent years figure prominently in Tacitus' and Cassius Dio's account of that period (Tacitus *annales* Books 12–15, Cassius Dio Books 60–63). Armenia is the principal battle-ground. Of course Armenia had been a similar *casus belli* in the late republic, involving campaigns by Lucullus and Pompeius, and in the Augustan period. But if we put Chariton in the 40s or 50s A.D, and if we suppose that the author of *Ninus* is not far removed in time or place from Chariton, then the years from A.D. 58 to 63 offer themselves as a time when Armenian campaigns might be an especially attractive subject for prose fiction rooted in recognisable historical landscapes. That is speculation enough. But let me be even bolder (and hence more vulnerable). It is often thought that the account of the campaigns in Tacitus and Dio goes back to the memoirs of Corbulo himself: these can hardly antedate A.D. 63, nor can they have been written after his death in A.D. 66. If it were precisely the publication of these memoirs that suggested campaigning in Armenia to the author of *Ninus* (but of course that may not have been what triggered the fiction) then a date after A.D. 63 would follow. We would then have a chronology that put Chariton's publication of his novel some years before the composition of the *Ninus*. Rome's claimed successes in Armenia were certainly known in Aphrodisias around A.D. 60, as is clear from the Sebasteion relief which shows Nero supporting an Armenia who is slumping and eroticised,<sup>30</sup> a feature that might be thought interesting for an exploration of the genesis of the erotic novel.

I say rather less about our other early novelist, Xenophon of Ephesus. Like almost all scholars before the recent book by James O'Sullivan,<sup>31</sup> and like several since, I adhere to the view that Xenophon draws on Chariton, and not Chariton on Xenophon. But without papyri Xenophon is even more

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<sup>29</sup> Cf. Baslez 1992.

<sup>30</sup> Smith 1987, 117–120 with Plates xvi and xvii.

<sup>31</sup> O'Sullivan 1995, cf. Schmeling 1996b, Morgan 1996.

difficult to date. One detail, however, is often adduced: the mention of an officer in Cilicia ‘in charge of peace’, ὁ τῆς εἰρήνης τῆς ἐν Κιλικίας προεστώς (2.13.3, cf. 3.9.5). This office held by the character Perilaos has been seen to be the same as that of εἰρηνάρχης or εἰρήναρχος, occasionally attested in the epigraphy of Roman Asia Minor.<sup>32</sup> The earliest such attestation is currently from the reign of Trajan. That does not, however, compel a dating of Xenophon after A.D. 98. We have no right to suppose that our earliest epigraphic testimony is exactly contemporary with the first institution of such an office, and in any case none of these inscriptions is from Cilicia, whose mountainous regions were much more fertile ground for brigandage than the environs of Smyrna, Miletus or even Ancyra. Xenophon could well be writing some time earlier than A.D. 98.<sup>33</sup>

One detail remains to be exploited. When Habrocomes lodges near Syracuse with an old fisherman, Aegialeus, he discovers that the fisherman had eloped from Sparta as a youth with his beloved Thelxinoe, and that his love for her had been so constant that recently, on her death, he had not buried her but kept her body in a back room of his small house (5.1.4–9). Aegialeus takes Habrocomes to show him the body, which has been given ‘Egyptian burial’ (τὸ δὲ σῶμα αὐτῆς ἐτέθαπτο ταφῇ Αἰγυπτία). It is worth asking whether this burial of Thelxinoe, apparently embalming, takes its inspiration from the embalming of Poppaea by Nero, reported by Tacitus, *annales* 16.6, an event of the year A.D. 65: *corpus non igni abolitum, ut Romanus mos, sed regum externorum consuetudine differtum odoribus conditur tumuloque Iuliorum infertur*.

What has emerged from this discussion of the early novels? They all seem likely to have been composed within a few decades: Chariton between A.D. 41 and 62, *Ninus* between A.D. 63 and ca. 75, Xenophon after A.D. 65, *Metiochus and Parthenope* less firmly dated, but pulled by its stylistic similarity to Chariton into the same ambience. That ambience may also be geographically circumscribed: Chariton and the author of *Ninus* both working in Aphrodisias, Xenophon (if indeed he is from Ephesus) some 90 miles away

<sup>32</sup> εἰρηνάρχης, *IGR* 4.203 (Ancyra), *OGI* 550 (Phrygia), *Codex Justinianus* 10.77; or εἰρήναρχος: *IGR* 4.1543 (Erythrae), *Milet* I (7) 263, *Codex Justinianus* 10.1.9. Note too the adjective εἰρηναρχικός *BCH* 9, 347 (Caria), and the verb εἰρηναρχεῖν *IGR* 4.1437, 1438 (Smyrna); 3.208 (Ancyra, Hadrianic).

<sup>33</sup> See now Rife 2002, Appendix A.

in a city that had links of various sorts with Aphrodisias. It may therefore be no accident that the setting of some important scenes in *Metiochus and Parthenope* was Samos, the closest of the major Aegean islands to Ephesus and Aphrodisias. Persius shows that Chariton was soon known in Rome, the papyri and perhaps the ostrakon that it did not take more than a generation for all but Xenophon to become known to Greek readers in Egypt, presumably *via* Alexandria (a city that had connections of many sorts with Ephesus).

## II

It should not, then, be very surprising that the two writers who constitute what seems to us to be the next generation of novelists should also be linked respectively to Aphrodisias (Antonius Diogenes) and to Alexandria and Ephesus (Achilles Tatius).

Antonius Diogenes' work, τὰ ὑπὲρ Θούλην ἄπιστα, is a quirky variant on the story of boy-girl love presented by the texts already mentioned, not a straightforward example of it. However the case for his place of origin being Aphrodisias is a strong one: Bowersock<sup>34</sup> pointed out that only in the epigraphy of Aphrodisias do we have so far an example of the conjunction of the Roman *nomen* Antonius with the Greek name Diogenes. One case is L. Antonius Claudius Dometinus Diogenes, whose impressive statue from the Odeon at Aphrodisias is well known.<sup>35</sup> This prominent figure in early third-century Aphrodisias cannot himself be the novelist, two of whose papyri are dated ca. A.D. 200 while a third (though this is not certainly attributed to Antonius Diogenes) is dated ca. 150.<sup>36</sup> But the man whose statue we have could well have had our novelist as father or grandfather, and as Bowersock pointed out, a more recently discovered text, an inscription on a sarcophagus, attests a Flavius Antonius Diogenes, demonstrating that at least one member of the family acquired Roman citizenship in the Flavian period.<sup>37</sup> If we take A.D. 200 as a certain *terminus ante quem*, and A.D. 150 as a possible *terminus ante quem*, have we any clues to how much earlier Antonius Diogenes actually wrote? Photius believed his work to be one of the sources of Lucian's *Verae Historiae*, and although John Morgan brought strong argu-

<sup>34</sup> Bowersock 1994, 38–40.

<sup>35</sup> *PIR* C 853: for the statue see Inan and Alföldi-Rosenbaum 1979, Zanker 1995, 245 pl. 135.

<sup>36</sup> P. Michigan inv. 5, cf. Stephens and Winkler 1995, 173–178.

<sup>37</sup> The sarcophagus was published by Jones and Smith 1994, cf. *SEG* 44 (1994) 866.

ments against that view almost two decades ago,<sup>38</sup> I don't think he showed that it must be wrong. If Photius was right, then Antonius' work was in circulation by no later than ca. A.D. 160.

But he could well be writing much earlier. Again geographical focus might be relevant. Thule, flaunted in Antonius Diogenes' title and important in his plot, had been brought to the Greek world's attention by Pytheas of Massalia, whence come several of the fifteen or so mentions in Strabo, as does at least one of those in the elder Pliny.<sup>39</sup> Then Thule seems to disappear from Greek literary consciousness: it figures in the technical work of Geminus, *Introduction to astronomy*, ca. A.D. 50, but is not mentioned in substantial *corpora* of the later first century A.D., those of Philo, Josephus or Plutarch, despite Plutarch's introduction in a Delphic dialogue of a fellow philosopher who had been to Britain and made dedication to the Ocean, Demetrius of Tarsus.<sup>40</sup> The second century is different: Thule is mentioned by Dionysius of Alexandria, the *Periegete*, writing between A.D. 130 and 138;<sup>41</sup> by Vettius Valens,<sup>42</sup> writing between A.D. 152 and 162; by Ptolemy in his *Geography*<sup>43</sup> writing ca. A.D. 160 and by Aelius Herodianus,<sup>44</sup> writing between A.D. 161 and 180. A nexus of events may have played a part. First, the Roman expedition while Agricola was governor of Britain that reached and reported back on Thule: that took place in one of the years A.D. 80–83. Second, early in A.D. 98, the publication by Tacitus of his *Agricola*, mentioning that achievement (*Agricola* 10). Third, I suggest, the exploitation of Thule by Antonius Diogenes in τὰ ὑπὲρ Θούλην ἄπιστα. I conjecture – but it can only be speculation – that Antonius Diogenes' attention was drawn to Thule by the expedition and the publicity given to it by Tacitus, and that in turn he is responsible for Thule's seven lines in the *Periegesis* of Dionysius, a popularising, not a scientific work. Again all very precarious: but if correct, a date between A.D. 98 and A.D. 130 would follow.

That date is in turn supported by Bowersock's proposal that the Faustinus to whom Antonius dedicated his work is the same as the patron of Martial and dedicatee of the third and fourth books of his epigrams. That

<sup>38</sup> Morgan 1985.

<sup>39</sup> *HN* 2.187 cf. 4.104.

<sup>40</sup> Plu. *de defectu oraculorum* 410A.

<sup>41</sup> Lines 580–86. For the date cf. Bowie 1990, 77, Counillon 1981.

<sup>42</sup> 9 p.9.11.

<sup>43</sup> 2.3.14, 2.6.22, 8.3.3.

<sup>44</sup> *de pros. cath.* 3.1 p.319.9.

suggested to him that Antonius' work belonged 'in the time of Domitian or a little later'.<sup>45</sup> Taking this together with the argument from the attention given to Thule we might tentatively put it in the decade following A.D. 98.

The next in sequence is most probably Achilles Tatius. Two of the six papyri are dated by Stephens and Winkler around A.D. 150: *P. Oxyrhynchus* 3836<sup>46</sup> and *P. Mediolanus* 124.<sup>47</sup> The Milan papyrus is dated more cautiously to the end of the second century by Vogliano and Conca. For *P. Oxyrhynchus* 3836 Parsons allowed a mid- to late 2<sup>nd</sup> century date. Stephens' date of around A.D. 150 is of course not precise, and she is choosing between rough dates of A.D. 175 and A.D. 150. But even a date a few years before A.D. 175 would make it unlikely that we should see the βουκόλοι of Achilles Tatius as a reflection of historical trouble with the βουκόλοι recorded by Cassius Dio 72.4.1 for A.D. 172.<sup>48</sup> Although that is the earliest appearance of βουκόλοι in Roman imperial historiography, it is clear that they had been a thorn in the flesh of urban authorities since the Ptolemaic period.

When Achilles Tatius uses the name Pantheia for Sostratus' wife, the mother of Leucippe (1.3.6, 2.28.1 etc.) he will have done so partly because of its lineage in erotic fiction. Xenophon's *Cyropaideia* had told the story of Araspas' lust for Pantheia and of Pantheia's faithfulness to her absent husband (5.1–17, 6.1.31–47) and her eventual suicide upon his corpse when he was killed in battle (7.3.2–15). This seminal tale of love had been reworked in the 120s, 130s or perhaps 140s in a piece variously ascribed to the sophist Dionysius of Miletus and to his younger contemporary, the writer of rhetorical *technai* and *ab epistulis graecis*, Caninius Celer (Philostratus *VS* 1.22.524). Celer was mentioned as *ab epistulis graecis* by Aelius Aristides (*Or.* 50.57) in an incident of January A.D. 148, but the date of his *Araspas the lover of Pantheia* cannot be fixed. However unless it was dangerously satirical, it was surely written before the eastern provinces were titillated by reports of an affair between the emperor Lucius Verus and a *hetaera* from Smyrna also called Pantheia. I am inclined to draw the same conclusion for Achilles Tatius, which would allow us to import more precision than the

<sup>45</sup> Bowersock 1994, 37–38, followed by Stramaglia 1999, 97–100 and 2000, 15. For Martial's Faustinus cf. *PIR* F 127. The dedication by Antonius Diogenes is attested by Photius *Biblioth. Cod.* 166, 111a, p.147.22–32 Henry γράφει Φαουστίνῳ ὅτι τε συντάττει περὶ τῶν ὑπὲρ Θεούλην ἀπίστον . . .

<sup>46</sup> Parsons 1989.

<sup>47</sup> Edited by Vogliano 1938, cf. Conca 1969.

<sup>48</sup> As suggested by Schwartz 1967.

papyrus data allow and set *Leucippe and Cleitophon* before A.D. 164. When Achilles Tatius chose the name Pantheia for the conventionally moral mother of Leucippe, it was a name that connoted marital fidelity. By the time Apuleius wrote his *Metamorphoses*, almost certainly well after A.D. 164, the name's associations had broadened, and to its tang of erotic fiction had been added a whiff of Roman imperial misdemeanour – just as a name that might have evoked Augustinian saintliness in a work of fiction composed a decade ago, Monica, will for a while continue to have added piquancy in a fictional text. Thus the name chosen by Apuleius for one of his lustful witches, Pantheia, resonates on the level both of ideal and of satirical erotic fiction.

Another detail might support a pre-160 date suggested by the papyrus. The Alexandrian coinage in the reign of Pius breaks with earlier practice by representing a number of mythological subjects. Among these is the scene of Andromeda being liberated by Perseus.<sup>49</sup> This is one of two scenes which were apparently represented in a pair of paintings at the temple of Zeus Casius at Pelusium viewed and interpreted by the characters of Achilles Tatius (3.6–8). That this painting was among the famous sights for tourists in Alexandria is of course sufficient to explain its appearance in both Achilles Tatius and on coins. But if other indications point to a date some time before A.D. 160 for the novel, its appearance on coins of the years 160/161 (year 24 of the reign of Pius) is perhaps not mere coincidence. Did the novelist react to the coins? Did the mint-master react to the novel?

### III

What follows from these proposals for our understanding of the genre as a whole? It may be significant not simply that the context of the novel's birth becomes not the late hellenistic Greek world but the Roman empire, but that it becomes the earlier decades of the cultural renaissance that begins at the same time as, and is strongly influenced by, Philostratus' Second Sophistic. The background to the writers' own lives is not one of political chaos and uncertainty, one in which the reversals of fortune might be fancied once

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<sup>49</sup> My attention was drawn to the coins and to their possible link with the paintings in Achilles Tatius by Angelo Geissen in a paper delivered to a colloquium on 'Coinage and identity in the Roman provinces' held in Oxford in September 2002. Milne 1933, 57 nos 2421 and 2422 records drachmae in the Ashmolean collection with Perseus and Andromeda which he assigns to A.D. 160/161 (year 24).

more to make Greek political units (of whatever size) the controlling powers of the eastern Mediterranean, but one in which it has become progressively clearer in the three or four generations since Actium that Roman dominance was there to stay. That the novels, like declamations and much historiography, took readers and audiences out of this world has invited various historical explanations which I do not wish to debate again here. That the universe into which the novels took readers was one of strong personal emotions was of course not new in Greek literature (and attention to the self has contemporary parallels in the philosophical writing of Plutarch and then Arrian). But that the principal emotion in this genre was ἔρωϛ, and persistent and idealistic ἔρωϛ at that, cannot be fully (or even partly?) explained by changing social or political contexts. Perhaps the Tuesday afternoon in July was right after all. But not any July. A July in a decade when Greek rhetorical activity and Greek literary compositions of related sorts were attracting more and more writers and readers, speakers and audiences, and when the imperative to display *paideia* was becoming ever stronger. And a hot July in the booming city of Aphrodisias, presided over by its great cult of Aphrodite. The writer or writers of Aphrodisias hit on a winning formula. But if they had been playing with a literary experiment in a more remote city, Perinthus or Oenoanda or Tyana, would it ever have spread? Or would our 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century houses, bookshops and libraries be dominated by a quite different literary invention?

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