

# The Coming of Age and Political Accommodation in the Greco-Roman Novels

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The narratives of most extant ancient Greco-Roman novels conform to initiation/quest mythic paradigms<sup>1</sup> which present the difficulties inherent in a youth's entry into adult status, and these texts can be seen as a type of coming-of-age story wherein the male protagonist, after extensive trials and wanderings, gains his mate and assumes a significant position in the socio-political hierarchy. The coming-of-age process for any youth logically requires negotiation with the surrounding socio-political order. Here I survey how three Greco-Roman novels depict the protagonists coming to terms with a dominant political order and how this accommodation is depicted as motivated and rationalized. I shall consider (1) elements of the socio-political world as the text/narrator shows it; (2) how protagonists experience those elements; and (3) how the protagonists accommodate themselves to that world – or do not. My focus will be on the novels of Apuleius, Longus and Chariton.

Literary works possess what Fredric Jameson terms the 'political unconscious', those elements which describe realities, attitudes and tensions the author may not be aware of and may even wish to repress,<sup>2</sup> such as issues touching on political status, identity and accommodation. For example, within the Eastern cities of the Roman Empire social conflict could be sharp, as the writings of Plutarch and Dio of Prusa demonstrate. Further, many non-Roman authors viewed themselves as subjects of an alien, and often unwelcome, empire, although many were formally Roman citizens, such as Lu-

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<sup>1</sup> On these and other paradigms, see Sowa 1984; the elements of the hero's career are found in Northrop Frye's *mythos of romance*; see Frye 1957, 186–206; Frye 1976, 65–63.

<sup>2</sup> Jameson 1981.

cian, Apuleius and most probably Longus. Many authors were also part of the Roman power structure and even took pride in their positions,<sup>3</sup> yet maintained quite conflicted views about their relationship to Rome. Many such authors were not ethnically Greek or Roman and lived in an era wherein ideologically freighted notions of Greekness and Romanness were being hotly contested.<sup>4</sup> All these points, reflected in our texts, are important for evaluating the creation, reception and interpretation of our novels.

First I discuss Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, a novel in many aspects concretely grounded in the realities of his era.<sup>5</sup> Issues of metamorphosis blend with those of ethnic and social identity, prurient pleasure with profound revelation. Consider the significance of a North African-Roman Hellenophile of part Punic-speaking stock creating a representation of a Greek called Lucius from a Romanized Corinth for a Latin-reading audience. The prologue highlights the problem of identity, both ethnic and political. It offers, in a sense, a coming-of-age story of the constructed prologue-speaker (*prologus*)<sup>6</sup> one which resembles Lucius' own. The *prologus* boasts roots in Athens, Corinth and Sparta, a *vetus prosapia* ('ancient stock') representing the finest Greek literary lineages, and claims to have acquired skill in fashionable Attic. Yet this *vetus prosapia* was apparently insufficient, so he relocated to the *urbs Latia* ('city of the Latins') and mastered the *Quiritium indigenam sermonem* ('the citizens' native speech'), acts recalling the labors Greeks undertook to join the Roman administration. And still he fears mistakes in using a language that is for him *exoticus*. He remains an outsider whose linguistic uncertainty can be tied to social and political insecurities.<sup>7</sup> This obsequious Greek's willingness to assimilate and share his knowledge seems to glorify Roman culture, but it also fits the Roman image of the ever-adaptable Greek seducer, the educated, devious *Graeculus*, who invites the reader to a performance which undermines Roman values as well as philoso-

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<sup>3</sup> See Edwards 1996, 120; Swain 1996, 68–9.

<sup>4</sup> See particularly Whitmarsh 2001; Swain 1996; Gleason 1995.

<sup>5</sup> See Millar 1981; Mason 1983.

<sup>6</sup> I accept that only at 1.2.1 (*Thessaliam... petebam*) do we know securely Lucius the character is speaking. I conceive the *prologus* as Apuleius' construct of an ideal Greek sophist entertainer for a Latin audience, a superior version of Loukios, the protagonist of the Pseudo-Lucianic *Onos* (generally considered the epitome of a longer, lost Greek work *Metamorphóseis*, which is assumed to have been the original model for Apuleius' novel). This Loukios was a 'writer of stories and other things' (*Onos* 55). For the prologue's complexities, see the essays in Kahane and Laird 2001.

<sup>7</sup> Dio (60, 17, 4) records how Claudius revoked a man's grant of citizenship because of his poor Latin; see MacMullen 1976, 31.

phic ones.<sup>8</sup> The prologue sketches how the *prologus* has come to terms with his position as a non-Roman in Rome. The statement that ‘this very change of voice corresponds well to the matter of the horse-jumping science which we have entered upon,’ links a change of language mastery to themes of alternation and thus to metamorphosis, exemplified in Lucius’ transformation into a Roman careerist.

The *Onos*’ Loukios and Apuleius’ Lucius embody the problematical relationship between Greeks (and other non-Romans) and the dominant Roman culture. Just as Loukios’ hometown was the Romanized Greek town of Patras, Lucius was from Corinth, which the Romans had refounded as a *colonia*, the Greekness of whose citizens was suspect.<sup>9</sup> Lucius’ family represents a Greek ideal, claiming an illustrious Greek lineage, possessing the proper background in Greek *paideia* and enjoying strong connections to Roman power. Lucius is related to Plutarch and the Platonic philosopher Sextus (Apul. *Met.* 1,2,1; 2,3,3) on his mother’s side and perhaps through her to Romans, since *Salvia* also is a securely Roman name. While Lucius’ father holds the paradigmatic Hellenic name *Theseus*, his family has significant links to Roman imperial administration. The Hypatan magistrates’ willingness to dedicate a statue to him as their benefactor (Apul. *Met.* 3,11), indicates the lofty status of Lucius’ family.<sup>10</sup> When Milo first meets Lucius, he wants to know about *eius* (i.e. Corinth’s) *primoribus ac denique de ipso praeside* (its leading citizens, and finally even the governor himself), implying Lucius’ connections to the ruling power (Apul. *Met.* 1,26,5).

The *Metamorphoses* narrates the adventures Lucius suffers and the choices he makes to achieve an adult position. Lucius resembles in many details Achilles Tatius’ Clitophon and Petronius’ Encolpius; Lucius is a *pepaideumenos* educated at Athens (1,24) and Fotis comments on his education (3,14) and multiple initiations (3,15). Lucius shows considerable oratorical skills<sup>11</sup> and can practice law at Rome. But Lucius’ *paideia* seems to have done him little good, as the priest Mithras stresses (11,15,1). Lucius is often swept up in his own idealizations and delusions, such as his idealization of witchcraft, sexual love, Isis-worship, and Roman power.

As Apuleius’ own trial illustrates, there was widespread belief in the power of magic, which may have been even particularly intense in Apuleius’

<sup>8</sup> Trapp 2001, 39–46.

<sup>9</sup> Favorinus celebrates Corinth as a completely Hellenized Roman colony, but also mentions the ‘Roman mob’ who mistake statues of mere Arcadians for Nestor and Priam. On Favorinus’ *Corinthian Oration*, see Whitmarsh 2001, 294–296; Gleason 1995, 8–20.

<sup>10</sup> Harrison 2000, 216 and note 14.

<sup>11</sup> Harrison (2000, 220) notes the superficial nature of Lucius’ displays of learning.

North African homeland.<sup>12</sup> Lucius considers magic to be ‘the perfect example of knowledge, ... the culmination of human wisdom and intellectual capacity’<sup>13</sup> and his accounts of the powers of witches resemble aretalogies of divine beings. Thus the pursuit of magic seems a good career move to Lucius. As he failed to see until too late, Lucius was terribly wrong about witchcraft. Yet in joining the Isis-cult Lucius tries to make a similar move to the world’s center of spiritual power. His transition to Rome is a career move as well.

Edith Hall has detailed the subversive dimensions of the Greek *Metamorphoseis* / *Onos*,<sup>14</sup> many elements of which appear in the *Metamorphoses*.<sup>15</sup> The *Onos* / *Metamorphoseis* presented a Romanized Greek aristocrat turned into an ass, who is frequently humiliated and made to look foolish. Apuleius’ point may be even sharper, for his Lucius is ruined when he moves to be closer to his loves, Isis and Rome. There he is more permanently degraded, because, unlike Loukios in the *Onos*, he does not seem to know it.<sup>16</sup>

The *Metamorphoses* offers vivid, comic and disturbing examples of Greek political and social life under Rome. Hall notes how Lucius the ass possesses ‘double vision’; first because an ass is, to adapt Aristotle’s term, the poor man’s slave, Lucius observes acutely (being perpetually curious) and personally experiences the brutalities of slavery and life on society’s bottom strata, as do several other protagonists of the ideal Greek novel. But because he retains the mind of Lucius the aristocrat, his attitudes stubbornly continue to reflect the accommodating mindset of his social class.

Lucius relates some other negative examples of Greek life during Roman rule. Socrates is robbed on his way to attend a *spectaculum* at Larissa (Apul. *Met.* 1,6); at Plataea Demochares presents Roman-style games which included gladiators, criminals and beasts (Apul. *Met.* 4,13) whose diseased bodies the starving poor eat; Thiasus provides lavish and grotesque games at

<sup>12</sup> See Pharr 1932, 269–295; Bradley 1997, 209; Phillips 1991, 260–276; MacMullen 1966, 100–108.

<sup>13</sup> Wlosok 1999, 145.

<sup>14</sup> Hall 1995, 47–59. See also Finkelppearl’s essay in this volume; I thank Ellen Finkelppearl for making me aware of Hall’s article.

<sup>15</sup> I assume that all the episodes found in the *Onos* were basically in the Greek *Metamorphoseis*; see Harrison 2000, 218; for a summary of the scholarship, see Mason 1994, 1665–1681.

<sup>16</sup> The final imperfect verb (*obibam*) suggests the story is incomplete; which could recall the ending of *Acts*, and perhaps implies Lucius’ continuing life as Isis devotee, or that something unfortunate has occurred to him, or that even Lucius is dead; see Trapp 2001; Laird 2001.

Corinth (Apul. *Met.* 10,18; 10,29 ff.). A rich landowner, extending his properties by force, terribly abuses a poor landowner and shows contempt for the rule of law (Apul. *Met.* 9,35).<sup>17</sup> The Roman soldier, commandeering the poor farmer's ass, pointedly speaks Latin to the farmer, which he cannot understand (Apul. *Met.* 9,39). This Roman soldier displays his gleaming armor and weapons to instill fear as he travels (Apul. *Met.* 10,1), and still later, sells the ass for which he paid nothing and pockets his profits (Apul. *Met.* 10,13) – right before he leaves to deliver letters to the *magnus princeps* at Rome. In Tlepolemus' story, Plotina's husband was exiled due to intrigues at the imperial court (Apul. *Met.* 7,6). Amid all this Lucius betrays attitudes typical of those of his class and status, accepting slavery, class prejudice, and, of course, Rome's imperial rule.

Various passages suggest an idealization of Roman power, especially by Lucius. Traveling through a town, the ass-Lucius tries to invoke the *nomen augustum Caesaris* ('the holy name of the Emperor', Apul. *Met.* 3,29,2).<sup>18</sup> This episode, adapted from *Onos* 16, perhaps reproduces the attitudes of the Romanized citizens of Corinth, who would have the right to call upon Caesar.<sup>19</sup> In Tlepolemus' story Haemus claims that after Plotina had persuaded the emperor to avenge her husband (Apul. *Met.* 7,7), "He [Caesar] did not wish the gang of the bandit Haemus to exist, and immediately it perished; so great indeed is the will of the great *princeps*" (*tantum potest nutus etiam magni principis*). This *nutus* recalls Zeus' nod, often mentioned in the Second Sophistic in regard to Pheidias' famous statue.<sup>20</sup> Later other Roman soldiers insist that the fugitives they seek are in a certain house, *fidemque Caesaris identidem implorantium* ('swearing repeatedly in the name of the Emperor', Apul. *Met.* 9,42). Later, Lucius, describing his arrival at Rome, calls it *sacrosanctam istam civitatem*. And note that the prayers of the Isis festival begin with a request for the good fortune of 'the great Princeps, the Senate, the equites, and all the Roman people...' (Apul. *Met.* 11,17), a passage which suggests that even here Isis is Rome's supporter, and which, I believe, points towards Lucius' eventual migration to Rome.

The *Metamorphoses* presents a chaotic world in which all bounds of human good are shattered by the operations of *fortuna*, a world from which Lucius needs to escape. The motivation for Lucius' relocation to Rome is

<sup>17</sup> In Apuleius's day the concentration of land ownership in ever fewer hands was well underway, and this episode reflects unsavory methods the wealthy used to obtain their greater holdings; on this point, see MacMullen 1974, 38–40

<sup>18</sup> *Onos* 16.

<sup>19</sup> Hall 1995, 52.

<sup>20</sup> Zeitlin 2001, 220–224.

similar to that for his embrace of Isis-worship, and it involves similar ambiguities. By joining Isis, *fortuna videns*, Lucius will be protected at the center of spiritual authority. *Sacrosancta Roma* is under the direct rule of an emperor of godlike power, and there Lucius arrives at the center of temporal authority. Lucius blindly idealizes the Emperor's power and Rome's glory as he idealizes Isis-worship. Winkler has pointed out the ambiguity of the final image of the bustling Lucius displaying his shaven head as he performs his offices. The true value of Lucius' Roman career is likewise problematical.

I suspect some significance in Lucius' arrival at Rome on December 12<sup>th</sup> (Apul. *Met.* 11,26), not long before the Saturnalia, a season of topsy-turvydom. The last episodes at Rome possess too many initiations (three!) visions and conclusions.<sup>21</sup> According to the paradigm of the ideal coming-of-age story, the hero should achieve special status; and so Isis guarantees to Lucius that he will flourish at Rome. But when Lucius arrives at Rome not only is the cost of living very high, but the repeated demands for new initiations suggest that this cult is a fraud which allows the Isis-priests to milk the pliable. Finally Osiris appears to the worried Lucius,<sup>22</sup> announcing he will achieve great glory as an advocate, and that he should not fear the *malevolorum disseminationes* ('the slanders of detractors', Apul. *Met.* 11,30). The reader might suspect these *disseminationes* arise from more than Lucius' open embrace of exotic Isis-worship. Lucius would have fit precisely into Juvenal's image of the ever-adaptable *Graeculus*, those Greeks at Rome who took positions of power formerly reserved for true Romans.

By moving to Rome Lucius has abandoned the familiarity of Greece, the security of his illustrious lineage and his Greek identity, to be a permanent, and widely unloved, alien. In Greece Lucius has useful connections with family and friends; at Rome his whole community seems to consist of his fellow Isis-worshippers. Unlike the usual participant in the heroic quest who returns home with profit to his community, Lucius fails to bring any real benefit to his own people, but abandons it for a new locale and nation. Note there are no good exiles in the *Metamorphoses*: Aristomenes, Socrates, Thylyphron all left home because of failure, humiliation or punishment. Further, Lucius' strenuous efforts at Rome recall those of the *prologus*; Lucius has put hard-working self- and career enhancement above country and tradition. Consider how the priest's description of his dream, which contains the peculiar *Madaurensem* (see below), also offers a promise that Lucius will achieve

<sup>21</sup> Winkler 1985, 215–223; Finkelpearl 2004, 319–342.

<sup>22</sup> Harrison (2000, 246) suggests that Lucius may be seen as a 'hyperdutiful and autosuggestive religious maniac, motivated by self-induced miraculous visions'.

*studiorum gloria* ('fame for his studies', Apul. *Met.* 11,27), a promise of success the gullible Lucius would eagerly hear and believe. Likewise Osiris later promises Lucius would gain *gloriosa ... patrocina* ('fame ... as an advocate', Apul. *Met.* 11,30). Lucius' supposed relative is Plutarch, who in *On Tranquility of Mind* (470 C) described how many elite Greeks sought after high positions in Roman administration and in *On Exile* disparaged those Greeks who refused the burdens of ruling their native cities and moved to Rome. Lucius seems to have abandoned traditional Greek religion, becoming one of the college of Pastophori whose special clothing and a shaven head clearly mark him as Other. Lucius asserts (11,30) that this *collegium* was a fairly old Roman tradition, founded by Sulla. Thus this cult is, if anything, Roman – another evidence of Lucius' new connection with the ruling power. I suggest that Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* presents a chaotic world wherein the values of native land and even family are dissolved, where Roman subjects grab at centers of power, safety and success, and forge those identities which can do them the most service, but often fail, due to the blinding power of ideology as well as personal weakness.

The infamous crux, *Madaurem* (11,27)<sup>23</sup> probably offers a metatextual reference to Apuleius himself, whose mixed background and natural eclecticism could hardly be fixed in one ethnic identity. Apuleius' career shows considerable similarities with that of Lucius.<sup>24</sup> Men of complex background like Favorinus were skirting traditional notions of ethnicity gained through birth, replacing them with standards of *paideia* gained through prodigious learning.<sup>25</sup> Now North Africa's Romanization did not reach far into the countryside, being largely a phenomenon of the urban elite, who thus knew from practical experience how thin the 'Romanness' of their country was,<sup>26</sup> and the African dimension of Apuleius' work has become more evident.<sup>27</sup> Apuleius presents a similar figure who tried to move from the provincial margins to the center. His reader might suspect that Apuleius expresses through the *Metamorphoses* some ambivalence concerning his own Romanization, for Lucius' career is hardly a hearty advertisement for such cultural

<sup>23</sup> See Van der Paardt 1981, 96–106; Smith 1972, 513–34; Penwill 1990, 223–236. I take *Madaurem* as doing triple-duty; it is a metafictional reference to Apuleius himself, for Lucius is a 'man from Madaurus' since his origin, ultimately, arises from Apuleius of Madaurus; it also hints that Apuleius identifies with Lucius. But Lucius' too easy acceptance of this oracle also illustrates his gullibility.

<sup>24</sup> Harrison 2000, 217–8.

<sup>25</sup> Whitmarsh 2001b, 91–130.

<sup>26</sup> Finkelpearl 1998, 136–140, who cites Champlin 1980, 12–18.

<sup>27</sup> See Bradley 1997, 214–4; also Edwards 2001; Finkelpearl 1998, 135–140.

abandonment. If indeed Apuleius composed the *Metamorphoses* later in his career after returning ‘home’ to North Africa and Carthage,<sup>28</sup> he can be seen as mocking those ambitious folk who go to Rome and do not realize they can never fit in — the story of Lucius of Romanized Corinth could be that of Apuleius from Romanized Madauros, for he too once made his move to Rome from the provinces, and then returned.

Turning to the Greek works, Chariton’s *Chaireas and Callirhoe* (= *C&C*)<sup>29</sup> resembles a historical novel,<sup>30</sup> yet also reflects the socio-political realities of Chariton’s time,<sup>31</sup> its dreams of a possible alternative; as Connors has recently pointed out,<sup>32</sup> *C&C* presents a moment of transition between empires, as the power of Athens has waned and a new Syracusan power is emerging. The text also reveals the contradictory attitudes which made various forms of accommodation acceptable for Rome’s subjects. Many of *C&C*’s historiographical elements blur the differences between the fifth century B.C.E and the reader’s own era, allowing more contemporary resonances. From the beginning the union of Chaireas and Callirhoe is a matter of state;<sup>33</sup> there is a corresponding significance in how Chaireas and Callirhoe mature not only as marital partners, but as the future leaders of Syracuse.

Callirhoe’s father is the idealized Hermocrates,<sup>34</sup> and Chaireas’ father is Ariston, Syracuse’s second leading man (1,1,3–4). Syracuse’s ephebes in turn vigorously support Chaireas (see 1,6,5; 8,6,11). As I have detailed elsewhere,<sup>35</sup> Chaireas and Callirhoe are destined to rule (as is probably their

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<sup>28</sup> Harrison 1996, 493; Harrison 2000, 9–10, 251.

<sup>29</sup> For my text I employ Goold 1995.

<sup>30</sup> On *C&C*’s historical dimensions see Bartsch 1934, 1–34; Schmeling 1974, 51–56, 76–80; Plepelits 1976, 16–17; Perry 1967, 77–78; Hunter 1994, 1055–61; Salmon 1961, 365–76; on *C&C* as a historical novel, see Hägg 1987, 184–204.

<sup>31</sup> Chariton probably writes in the second half of the first century C.E.; see Ruiz-Montero 1980, 63–9; Reardon, 1996, 312–317.

<sup>32</sup> Connors 2002, 12–26.

<sup>33</sup> A public assembly in which Eros plays the demagogue settles the rivalry between Ariston and Hermocrates (1,1,12) and permits the wedding, which all Syracuse celebrates. Callirhoe’s death is likened to the fall of the city (1,4,5), and the entire city attends her funeral; Chaireas declares his murder of Callirhoe has taken away the demos’ crown (1,5,5). Later Syracuse’s fleet searches for her with the participation of all orders. The citizen body observes Theron’s interrogation, and when Chaireas and Callirhoe finally return, the whole city listens to Chaireas’ account.

<sup>34</sup> On the idealizing of Syracuse and Hermocrates, see Bompaire 1977, 55–68; Billault 1989, 540–48.

<sup>35</sup> Alvares 1997; Alvares 2001–2.



child too),<sup>36</sup> and their adventures provide a survey of various political systems: Callirhoe's suitors represent the Greek tyrants, bandits such as Theron embody the prehistoric period,<sup>37</sup> as well as those outlaw elements opposed to the social order,<sup>38</sup> the Athenians represent oppressive democracy,<sup>39</sup> the Ionians the compliant (but luxurious) subject state, not a Greek democracy but a form of benevolent (and popular<sup>40</sup>) aristocracy, the Egyptians the rebellious and more nationalistic subject state, and the Persians the autocratic state of power. As one goes east luxury and wealth increase, as does autocracy and the influence of slaves,<sup>41</sup> culminating in the eunuch Artaxates, who has vast influence,<sup>42</sup> while democracy and human rights decline. In contrast to these political formations stands Syracuse, an idealized Greek city-state and democracy guided by the superlative Hermocrates,<sup>43</sup> where the social orders work in relative harmony, where justice is done.<sup>44</sup> All these locales present ample opportunities for our protagonists' social and political education.

Aphrodisias (as seen in its Sebasteion, theater and inscriptions) cultivated close relations with Rome while participating fully in the sophisticated culture of the Greek east.<sup>45</sup> Dionysios, even more than Lucius, embodies an

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<sup>36</sup> Callirhoe, Chaireas and Dionysios declare the child will return to Syracuse; see 2,11,2; 8,5,15; 8,7,12.

<sup>37</sup> As pointed out by Thucydides in his 'Archaeology', 1.5.6; for more on the depiction of robbers in Apuleius and in the Greek novels, see Riess 2001.

<sup>38</sup> On bandits, real and imagined, in the Roman empire, see McGing 1998, 159–183; Shaw 1984, 3–52; Riess 2001.

<sup>39</sup> For Chariton's depictions of Athens, see Smith 2004.

<sup>40</sup> *C&C*'s Miletus displays no obviously democratic processes. Its temple to Homonoia (3,2,16) mentioned only in reference to marriage rituals, nevertheless recalls the tense political realities of many Greek cities. Dionysios is also shown attending aristocratic *symposia* and the ease with which Dionysios seeks help from the satrap Pharnaces suggests that in Chariton's Miletus the aristocrats are united under the rule of their 'first man' Dionysios, whose status is tied to his relationship to Persian power; see Alvares 2001–2, 130.

<sup>41</sup> Despite some positive qualities, *C&C*'s slaves are shown to have a fundamentally base nature and, in Ionia and Persia, exert a negative influence; see Schmeling 1974, 151; Alvares 2001–2, 124.

<sup>42</sup> Note how Mithridates, on arriving for trial at Babylon, feels compelled to give him presents (5,2,2).

<sup>43</sup> On Syracuse as a guided democracy, see Hunter 1994, 1077.

<sup>44</sup> As shown by the trials of Chaireas and Theron; see Alvares 1993, 153–67; Ruiz-Montero 1989, 113–18.

<sup>45</sup> See Reynolds 1982; Erim 1986; Smith 1993; Jones 1992, 162–4.

ideal of Greek life under Rome.<sup>46</sup> He is fantastically wealthy, the ‘first man’ in Ionia, outstanding in *paideia*, the sort of public benefactor increasingly important in the Hellenistic and Roman world, and a friend of satraps (read Roman governors) and even the of Great King (read emperor), who can indeed be received in his home (1,13,1). During the Egyptian rebellion he brilliantly commands a contingent in the Persian army (6,9,2). But Chariton’s text undercuts Dionysios’ achievements and implies delusion in his willing accommodation. Dionysios, although becoming the King’s official friend (7,5,15), is left raising a child he mistakenly believes his own and cherishing a mere statue, and finally declares that jealousy and Babylon have together ruined him (8,5,15).<sup>47</sup>

Although Chariton’s presentation recalls the lurid depictions of Persian life and despotism which go back to Ctesias,<sup>48</sup> continue through the Hellenistic historians and are also found in Plutarch’s *Life of Artaxerxes*, in many ways *C&C*’s Persian *imperium* recalls Rome’s, including its relations with subject peoples.<sup>49</sup> Callirhoe and Chaireas observe Ionian duplicity and accommodation and Persian oppression. Dionysios’ wealth, power and *paideia* are not allied with equally outstanding virtues. For example, although Dionysios knows Callirhoe’s origins and promises to return her (2,5,11–12), he cooperates in Plangon’s schemes (2,6,4–5), and later embraces Phocas for causing Chaireas’ ship to be destroyed (3,9,11). Callirhoe and Chaireas also experience the realities of slavery; Callirhoe is sold to a bailiff who intends her for his master’s pleasure (2,6,2), and assumes that Dionysios would not allow her child by Chaireas to live (2,10,1–2). Chaireas is subjected to brutal servitude which recalls the labors of a Roman-era *latifundium*. There Chaireas clearly betrays his class attitudes. He and Polycharmus, although innocent, are nearly crucified in the aftermath of an escape attempt (4,2,7–11). Yet when brought before Mithridates, there is no hint that they disagree with executing innocent slaves along with the guilty.<sup>50</sup>

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<sup>46</sup> Schmeling 1974, 145; Helms 1966, 101; Reardon 1996, 329; Ruiz-Montero 1989, 137; Alvares 2001–2, 127.

<sup>47</sup> Hunter (1994, 1062) notes Dionysios “has to settle for the Persian happiness of great power rather than the Greek ideal of *homonoiia*.”

<sup>48</sup> See Baslez 1992, 201–1; Bartsch 1934, 5; Drews 1973, 103–132.

<sup>49</sup> On the conflation of Persia and Rome, and how Chariton depicts a Persia in which elements of Greco-Roman legal and political practice appear, see Mason 1974, 157; Bowie 1974, 201; Connors 2002, 12–25; Alvares 2001–2, 120–123.

<sup>50</sup> Saïd 1999, 97.

Traveling eastward, our protagonists observe how all persons at Babylon are considered as the Great King's slaves (4,6,8; 5,2,2; 6,1,1), how the Great King permits a trial to be subverted by passion (5,4),<sup>51</sup> and employs religious pretence to avoid declaring Callirhoe's marital status (6,2,2). Callirhoe faces the threats of Artaxates, who thinks all things are possible to the powerful (6,5,10). A central theme of *C&C* is the 'supremacy of the rule of law over inequality and tyranny';<sup>52</sup> the repeated injustices of the Persians finally cause Chaireas to fight against Persia. Thus when Chaireas and Polycharmus go over to the Egyptians,<sup>53</sup> who have elected their king (6,8,2), Chaireas declares that Artaxerxes has treated them tyrannically (7,2,4). Chaireas becomes the embodiment of Greek martial *arete* as with his picked three hundred Dorians,<sup>54</sup> he duplicates the naval victory at Salamis, Xenophon's retreat with the Ten Thousand, and Alexander the Great's conquest of Tyre and capture and merciful treatment of the Persian queen. In Syracuse Chaireas, resplendent in a general's armor and bearing the spoils of Medes (8,6,12) appears as Hermocrates' fitting successor.

So what have they learned? In the Egyptian King's council Chaireas seemed prepared to challenge the Persian empire's existence (7,4). Chaireas symbolically conquers the Great King by capturing his wife, as observed in the letter Chaireas sends to him (8,4,2–3; see also 8,1,13–14). Yet when Callirhoe declares that the King, although he loved her, never touched her, not even a kiss, Chaireas is *sorry* for revolting (8,1,16). There is no further talk of assaulting Persia; indeed, Chaireas boasts to the Syracusans of reconciling them with the Great King (8,8,10). Yet, considering what our protagonists have experienced, how is this reversal explained? Perhaps Callirhoe lies to keep Chaireas from attempting something rash. Or is it perhaps because Callirhoe really believes that Artaxerxes is basically noble? Quite possibly. The idealization of the Great King goes back to Aeschylus and Herodotus, and continued into the Roman imperial period, and *C&C*'s Artaxerxes par-

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<sup>51</sup> Alvares 1997, 621.

<sup>52</sup> Hunter 1994, 1061; see also Ruiz-Montero 1994, 1038.

<sup>53</sup> Egypt was seen as particularly resistant to Greek and Roman culture and power; see Alvares 2001, 11–19, with bibliography, especially Briosio-Sánchez 1992, 197–215; Balsdon 1979, 68–9.

<sup>54</sup> *C&C* exhibits a pro-Doric bias; see 7,3,8–9. Considerable references to famous individuals and events of Doric history appear in the rhetoric and literature of the early Roman Empire, such as Plutarch's *Life of Lycurgus*, *Sayings of Famous Spartan Men*, Dio of Prusa's *Trojan Speech*; see Bowie 1974, 171; Rawson 1969, 109–115.

tially recalls the ideal king of Stoic-Cynic philosophy.<sup>55</sup> Further, to many Greeks, Plutarch for example, Romans were somewhere between Greeks and barbarians, capable of improvement, especially through Greek *paideia*,<sup>56</sup> and this notion is reflected here, for the Great King does return to his former virtues,<sup>57</sup> as demonstrated by his abandonment of unneeded baggage (including Callirhoe) on Arados (7,4,12–13), his granting of Callirhoe to Dionysios (7,5,15), his eager embrace of Statira (7,4,11–13) and his employment of a philosopher to reconcile the Egyptians (8,3,10).<sup>58</sup> *C&C* reproduces the contradictory attitudes of Greeks who enjoyed and even profited from their relationship with Rome.<sup>59</sup> It is an accommodationist strategy to downplay systemic evils and focus on the ruler, who is represented as betrayed or corrupted by his underlings or as one who has merely fallen from his innate nobility and self-control, but remains potentially an ideal leader.

But in Chaireas' case past has been prologue. Hermocrates was a friend to the Great King – who even sends him presents (2,6,3). In defeating Artaxerxes' forces but returning his Queen, Chaireas, like Hermocrates before him, has reached a *modus vivendi* with a dominant power, as Callirhoe also does in her own way.<sup>60</sup> Chariton probably lived early enough to see Nero's fall and Vespasian's accession with help from the East. Note how a micro-cosmic empire spontaneously organizes itself around Chaireas, comprised of Dorians, Aradians, and even Egyptians, and when Chaireas returns to Syracuse, his proven Dorian comrades are each given a talent (making them aristocrats) and land is even donated to the Egyptians to farm (8,8,14).<sup>61</sup> Chaireas has gathered true Greeks of value out of the Greek diaspora, and given them a social position where they can revitalize a traditional Greek

<sup>55</sup> Momigliano 1975, 123–123–135; Karabélias 1990, 395–6; Ruiz-Montero 1989, 139–41; Helms 1966, 80–87; Alvares 2001–2, 124–5; see also discussion in Whitmarsh 2001b, 181–246.

<sup>56</sup> Preston 2001, 86–119.

<sup>57</sup> See Alvares 2002a, 107–115.

<sup>58</sup> See Alvares 2001, 18–19. Nerva and later Trajan pretended to honor philosophers to present themselves as anti-Domitians; see Whitmarsh 2001b, 157–8.

<sup>59</sup> Some members of the Greek elite recognized that Rome's suzerainty kept them in power; note Plutarch's comments that the Greeks perhaps have as much freedom as their rulers (the Romans) let them, and 'perhaps more would not be better for them...' (*Praecepta of Statecraft* 824 C); see Alvares 2001–2, 120.

<sup>60</sup> Callirhoe replays Statira's kindness to her and ensures she is returned (8,3,1) and later urges Statira to write her often and even commends her child to the Queen (8,4,7–8).

<sup>61</sup> For the Eastern Greek cities dealing with large non-Greek populations was a concrete issue, which makes Hermocrates' care for the Egyptians, a people particularly disliked by many Greeks, quite significant.

polis. Despite accommodationist attitudes, Chaireas shows he has learned the true power of the Greeks, and the need to focus that power, as well as to take a proper concern for non-Greeks. *C&C* also reflects a fantasy that Rome, under pressure, will be forced to respect and even depend on its Greek element, and thus allow a true freedom of the Greeks, as Aemilius Paulus and Nero once proclaimed.

*Daphnis and Chloe* (= *D&C*), for its part, seems more the *bella fabula* of an idealizing narrator who cannot avoid including some unpleasant realities.<sup>62</sup> Winkler sees a narrative of the protagonist's socialization into the harsh realities of the urban and adult worlds,<sup>63</sup> particularly in how Chloe's freedom is repressed. This repression (which I believe not quite so brutal) is not arbitrary; note that Daphnis does not pursue sex with Chloe after his lesson from Lykainion (3,20; 3,24), he waits until Chloe and he attain a married status and their true social positions, that is, until after the necessary oppressions of adult life have been sanctioned by social demands, not merely by individual desire.<sup>64</sup> Correspondingly *D&C* can be read not only as a myth concerning the development and discovery of sexual love, but also about the development of civilization and its institutions.<sup>65</sup> *D&C*'s utopian dream is that the couple, due to their unique education, will restore an original and more harmonious manner of life. But *D&C* presents disconnections between what the couple experience, what they seem to learn, and the form of social life they construct.

The countryside in antiquity remained in practice a denigrated place to be exploited;<sup>66</sup> note how at 3,21 fishermen are seen rowing hard to get their catch to town. This bucolic tale is infused with the perspectives and prejudices of an urbanite.<sup>67</sup> Its frame narrator was hunting on Lesbos (proem, 1,1) having a vacation in the countryside, when he came upon the painting;<sup>68</sup> in this he recalls the Methymnean youths who used the countryside as their

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<sup>62</sup> On the idealizing narrator, see Morgan 1994, 65; Morgan 2003, 174; on the text's naturalistic details, see Pandiri 1985, 116–141; Morgan 2003, 178–9; Winkler 1990, 107–112; Saïd 1999, 97–107.

<sup>63</sup> Winkler 1990, 101–26.

<sup>64</sup> See Alvares 2006, 24–5.

<sup>65</sup> Hunter 1996a, 377–383.

<sup>66</sup> The economic interaction between city and countryside was more nuanced than the 'consumer city' model espoused by Weber; see Parkins 1997, 83–111; on negative views of the countryside, see Saïd 1999, 86–88; MacMullen 1976, 28–56.

<sup>67</sup> Saïd 1999, 97–107.

<sup>68</sup> There may have been an increase in bucolic motifs in the painting and other art of Longus' era; see Effe 1999, 198, note 30 for further discussion and bibliography.

playground.<sup>69</sup> These youths, to recoup their losses, tried to seize Daphnis (2,14), and when the rustic court ruled against them, they resorted to force (2,17), and rebuffed, started a war (2,19). Daphnis and Chloe experience (in somewhat attenuated fashion) the oppressions inherent in a social structure which permits slavery and absentee landownership. They demonstrate a blinkered form of the ‘double vision’ seen before, because Longus depicts their work as a form of play, more like Marie Antoinette playing the shepherdess than a depiction of the labors of real rustics.<sup>70</sup>

Effe has detailed the fashion among the Greek elite for imagining the countryside as an idyllic alternative to the city and as a repository of cultural, moral and even philosophic values; not, generally speaking, the countryside as it actually existed, but as a place where a certain illusion of escape could be maintained.<sup>71</sup> Celebrating the rural Dionysia was a common pleasure of the Greek urban elite; no doubt many, like the vacationers of Dionysophanes’ party, wanted an idealized experience of a supposedly forgotten simplicity, an idealization which allowed the masters to think their country slaves were not so badly off. But even Longus shows that the truth was different. During the invasion Chloe is treated like another captured goat by the Methymneans (3,20). The rustics must pretty up the agricultural areas so their masters can properly enjoy the vintage (4,1–5). Slaves cannot marry without the master’s permission (3,31) and the slaves fear torture after the ornamental garden is ruined (4,7–8). Lykainion is too sophisticated for the countryside (3,15), which fuels her attempt upon Daphnis. The parasite Gnathon, designated as *pepaideumenos* (4,17),<sup>72</sup> attempts to molest Daphnis (4,12) and convinces Astylus to give Daphnis to him to be ‘trained’ (4,18). Chloe becomes fearful when she (along with Daphnis) is about to get her first sight of a master they only known by name (4,6).<sup>73</sup> The couple also experience how money subverts community and relationship; Chloe’s parents must be bought off with a huge dowry – a reality Daphnis hides from his adoptive father Lamon (3,29), who is equally out for gain. At the end Daphnis and Chloe learn that they were exposed by their parents for reasons of economy and status.

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<sup>69</sup> As does rich Astylus, described as spending ‘all his time amusing himself’ (4,11).

<sup>70</sup> Although Daphnis in fact demonstrates the results of his labors, and claims an impressive range of agricultural skills.

<sup>71</sup> Effe 1999, 192–203 and for an expanded version of this discussion, Effe 1977.

<sup>72</sup> Goldhill 1995, 47.

<sup>73</sup> The rich owner whose wealth is the land but who lives in the city is a common figure in the Greek novels; see Saïd 1999, 92–3; MacMullen 1974, 5.

As they mature, despite some critical learning opportunities, the protagonists demonstrate little obvious awareness of the injustice of their social circumstances.<sup>74</sup> Yet in their wedding and in their subsequent lives the couple create an alternative to the worlds they were born and raised in. Their wedding presents an ideal comic paradigm,<sup>75</sup> the creation of a more equal and harmonious society, as individuals from the city, country and even animals participate (4,38). As the couple recovered an original form of less aggressive love not by thought, but by a better communion with the natural and divine world away from the *paideia* of the city, so Daphnis and Chloe recover the original form of a less exploitative society, where the countryside's natural values can be properly augmented by urban technique.<sup>76</sup> Daphnis does not free the slaves or directly challenge this social structure; rather Daphnis and Chloe will assert the values of their country existence, continuing to live a pastoral life propitiating the rural gods, who sponsor such values (3,39).

Daphnis will dwell among the people he rules and who provide for him. Saïd imagines the adult Daphnis not laboring, but living as if on a perpetual country holiday.<sup>77</sup> I think this view neglects the assertion of Daphnis' real pastoral skills (4,14), his valuation of those skills (3,29,2), and the mythic ideals underlying the elite's desire for a refuge in the country. These last items connect to the ancient myth of a prelapsarian rural paradise without the alienations of urban life, of class society, and of labor. Although the couple embrace (at least temporarily) some aspects of city culture, they soon return to the countryside *μη φέροντες τὴν ἐν ἄστει διατριβὴν* 4,37), and, despite the city's delicacies, they find no food better than apples and milk (4,39). Such an abandonment of city life would have been unthinkable for most members of the Greek elite. That they give their children pastoral names and have them suckled by a sheep and a goat (4,39) are also programmatic actions. Thus I observe here a more pointed rejection of city-life and its status pretensions, and a partial refusal to accommodate to the *status quo*. Longus is not advocating a new type of life patterned on the practice of Daphnis and Chloe, nor is he simply peddling sophisticated sentimentality, although

<sup>74</sup> But note how Daphnis cleverly parries the insults of Dorkon concerning his wealth and birth (1,16), and his self-defense during the rustic 'trial' (2,16).

<sup>75</sup> Here I mean 'comic' in the sense of Frye's *mythos of comedy*, which ends amid the creation of a new society, as symbolized by a wedding. The overarching Judeo-Christian narrative is comic, and thus wedding imagery abounds, from the *Song of Songs* to the Marriage of the Lamb in the *Book of Revelation*; see Frye 1957, 163–4; Frye 1976, 171.

<sup>76</sup> Morgan 1994, 66–72.

<sup>77</sup> Saïd 1999, 105–7.

this aspect exists.<sup>78</sup> Rather, Longus' pastoral world is an allegory of the superior world whose outline he vaguely intuits, a traditional, archetypal image on which he can project his imaginative ideals.

In conclusion, while these three works are hardly novels programmatically oriented toward socio-political realities and engaged with notions about these realities, nevertheless they contain significant narratives about how their protagonists, as they mature, accommodate themselves to the social and political realities of their milieu, and, more importantly, find or create alternatives to those realities, whether it is a new life as Isis-worshipper at Rome, as leaders of a revived Syracuse, or as individuals who live a life which is both pastoral and aristocratic.

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<sup>78</sup> I acknowledge contradictions between Longus' idealizing views of the countryside and those passages in which Longus looks down at his rustics or adopts an essentially aesthetic attitude toward the countryside. But I see Longus practicing a form of the *desultoria scientia* the *prologus* of the *Metamorphosis* claims, and suspect that Longus, like Apuleius, indulged in strong dreams of a better world, dreams which informed their fictions; however, conforming to their vocation as sophists writing for the sophisticated elite with an aim to delight (note how the prologues of both works stress the reader's pleasure) Longus and Apuleius naturally play to the tastes of their audience.



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