

The Spell of Achilles Tatius: Magic and Metafiction in *Leucippe and Clitophon*

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Eros is “...δεινὸς γόης καὶ φαρμακεὺς καὶ σοφιστής...”
(Plato, *Symposium* 203d)

Introduction

In the beginning of Book Two of Achilles Tatius’ *Leucippe and Clitophon*, the clever but thus far failed lover Clitophon witnesses a remarkable – and useful – scene. He passes by just as Clio, Leucippe’s slave, is stung on the hand by a bee. He sees Leucippe soothe Clio’s pain by singing incantations (ἐπάδω) she says she learned from an Egyptian woman.¹ When Clitophon, determined to woo Leucippe, finds himself alone with her on the following day, he pretends that he too has been stung by a bee. Leucippe approaches, asking where he has been stung. In reply, Clitophon says,

¹ παύσειν γὰρ αὐτὴν τῆς ἀλγηδόνης δύο ἐπάσασαν ῥήματα· διδασθῆναι γὰρ αὐτὴν ὑπὸ τινος Αἰγυπτίας εἰς πληγὰς σφηκῶν καὶ μελιτῶν. Καὶ ἅμα ἐπῆδε· καὶ ἔλεγεν ἡ Κλειὼ μετὰ μικρὸν ῥάων γεγονέναι. (2.7 - “...she would, she said, stop her pain by chanting two spells; she had been taught by an Egyptian woman how to deal with wasp- and bee-stings. As she had chanted, Clio had said that the pain was gradually relieved.”). All Greek text of *Leucippe and Clitophon* is that of Garnaud 1991. All translations are cited, with occasional alterations, from Whitmarsh 2001. I want to give special thanks to Catherine Connors for her insightful comments throughout the drafting of this paper. Thanks too to Alex Hollmann and Stephen Trzaskoma for feedback on earlier versions of this project. The anonymous referees for *Ancient Narrative* made helpful suggestions that improved this paper and I thank them for their time and expertise. Any remaining errors are my own.

“Κατὰ τοῦ χείλους...ἀλλὰ τί οὐκ ἐπάδεις, φιλτάτη;”

Ἡ δὲ προσῆλθέ τε καὶ ἐνέθηκεν ὡς ἐπάσουσα τὸ στόμα, καὶ τι ἐπιθύριζεν, ἐξ ἐπιπολῆς ψαύουσά μου τῶν χειλέων. Κἀγὼ κατεφίλουν σιωπῇ, κλέπτων τῶν φιλημάτων τὸν ψόφον, ἡ δὲ ἀνοίγουσα καὶ κλείουσα τῶν χειλέων τὴν συμβολὴν τῷ τῆς ἐπωδῆς ψιθυρίσματι φιλήματα ἐποίει τὴν ἐπωδὴν. Κἀγὼ τότε ἤδη περιβαλὼν φανερῶς κατεφίλουν· ἡ δὲ διασχοῦσα,

“Τί ποιεῖς;” ἔφη· “καὶ σὺ κατεπάδεις;”

“Τὴν ἐπωδόν,” εἶπον, “φιλῶ ὅτι μου τὴν ὁδύνην ἰάσω.”

Ὡς δὲ συνῆκεν ὁ λέγων καὶ ἐμειδίασε, θαρσύνσας εἶπον· “Οἱμοι, φιλτάτη, πάλιν τέτρωμαι χαλεπότερον ἐπὶ γὰρ τὴν καρδίαν κατέρρευσε τὸ τραῦμα καὶ ζητεῖ σου τὴν ἐπωδὴν. Ἡ που καὶ σὺ μέλιτταν ἐπὶ τοῦ στόματος φέρεις· καὶ γὰρ μέλιτος γέμεις, καὶ τιτρώσκει σου τὰ φιλήματα. Ἀλλὰ δέομαι, κατέπασον αὖθις καὶ μὴ ταχὺ τὴν ἐπωδὴν παραδράμης καὶ πάλιν ἀγριάνης τὸ τραῦμα.”

Καὶ ἅμα λέγων τὴν χεῖρα βιαιότερον περιέβαλλον καὶ ἐφίλουν ἐλευθεριώτερον· ἡ δὲ ἠνείχετο, κωλύουσα δῆθεν.

“On the lip,” I replied. “Why do you not chant your spell, dearest?”

She drew me near and placed her mouth upon mine for the spell: she began to whisper something, brushing the surface of my lips. I in turn began to kiss silently, concealing the sound of the kisses while she parted and joined her lips with the whispering of the spell, turning incantation into osculation. And then I threw my arms around her and began to kiss her openly. She recoiled.

“What are you doing?” she cried. “Are you also reciting a spell?”

“It is my enchantress that I am kissing,” I replied, “because you cured my pain.”

She understood my meaning and smiled, so I spoke up boldly: “Alas, dearest, I have been wounded again, and more grievously: the wound has plunged down into my heart, and needs your spell. You too must have a bee on your lips: you are full of honey and your kisses wound me. I beg you, chant your spell again, and do not aggravate the old wound by racing through the spell at speed.”

With these words, I clasped her more forcibly and began to kiss more freely. She acquiesced, with a show of resistance. (2.7)

In this scene, Leucippe applies her Egyptian-learned healing to Clio's bee sting in the performance of a magical ritual depicted as authentic.² Her curative singing is described throughout with the word ἐπῳδῶ and its derivatives, which are used regularly of incantation.³ Leucippe, at first apparently unaware that Clitophon has tricked her into a kiss, then connects her own literal act of enchanted healing to the metaphorical use of the same language when she asks if his kisses are his own sort of spell (καὶ σὺ κατεπῳδεῖς;). She thus offers Clitophon a perfect opening to sexualize the language of magic.⁴ Clitophon capitalizes on this moment, describing Leucippe as an "enchantress," ἐπωδός, pairing the literal and magical meaning with the metaphorical and erotically charged meaning.⁵ While this scene depicts authentic – and effective – magical practice in Leucippe's healing of Clio's sting, magic is also used as a tool of sexual persuasion and coercion. Clitophon re-purposes Leucippe's magical healing as a manipulative tool. In this scene, at least, Clitophon is quite indifferent to magic *per se*. He has no sting for Leucippe to mystically heal, and the supernatural power of magic is irrelevant. Instead, Achilles suggests that magic's true world-changing potency lies in its use as a tool to deceive and persuade.

² By "authentic" I mean that there is no internal suggestion, for instance, that Leucippe's soothing of Clio's sting is disingenuous. I am not suggesting, however, that Leucippe's actions can be described as authentic in terms of actual Greek magical practice, although see *PGM* 7.193-196 for help with a scorpion sting. See Nutton 2012, 275-277, for a discussion of the intersection of incantation and medical healing and, from a rhetorical point-of-view, Romilly 1975, 14.

³ *LSJ* s.v. ἐπῳδῶ.

⁴ Because all of our knowledge is channeled through Clitophon as first-person narrator, we get only a partial understanding of the scene. As the scene progresses it seems clearer that Leucippe herself wishes to kiss Clitophon and that Clitophon's deception may offer *her* the perfect opportunity to kiss him while still maintaining her culturally prized claim of innocence and chastity. This is not inconsistent with Leucippe's character at the beginning of the novel. Unlike the heroines of the other ideal Greek novels, Leucippe does not come to assertively guard her virginity until later in the story when Artemis insists that she remain a virgin. For a comparison between the lack of sexual innocence in Achilles' depictions of Leucippe and Europa, see Bartsch 1989, 53ff.

⁵ Leucippe's characterization as an enchantress will return in Book Five when Melite, unaware of Leucippe's true identity but believing her to be from Thessaly, asks her to enchant Clitophon, on which more below.

Leucippe's enchanted healing and Clitophon's subsequent sexual manipulation are paradigmatic of Achilles' novel-wide discourse, which follows a consistent pattern whereby magical practices are entirely different from initial appearances either because they are ineffectual, result in unintended consequences, or are the basis for deception. As Achilles undermines the power of magic, he simultaneously glorifies rhetoric, performance, and narrative as world changing through comparison to the powers conventionally vested in magic. In addition, Achilles uses magical language metaphorically throughout the novel, as here where Clitophon describes Leucippe as an "enchantress" because of her sexual allure. These metaphors underscore the fact that the novel classifies persuasion, whether sexual or verbal, as more influential than the supernatural force of magic.

Magic is a persistent presence in literature that spans the Greco-Roman world from epic to elegy, tragedy to philosophy.⁶ Thematically and metaphorically the ancient novel incorporates the language and rituals of ancient magic to a degree not present in other genres of ancient literature.⁷ Petronius' *Satyricon* includes elements of magic (e.g. 61ff.) and the entire plot of Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* hinges on magic and its power in the world.⁸ The five extant Greek romance novels – in their travel to mysterious lands and patent engagement with mystery religions⁹ – incorporate magic into their narratives through representations of magical practices, recurring magical motifs, and metaphorical language.¹⁰ Whereas the

⁶ For a comprehensive examination of the role of magic in literature, see Graf 1997, particularly Chapter 6.

⁷ See Ruiz-Montero 2007 for an overview of magic in the ancient novel and a comparison between the novels' representation of magic and what can be gleaned of magical practices from non-literary sources. Ruiz-Montero, although focusing largely on the Greek novels, says very little about magic in *Leucippe and Clitophon*.

⁸ For more on magic in Apuleius, see Ruiz-Montero 2007, Frangoulidis 2008, and Baker 2012.

⁹ For an overview of the relationship between magic and mystery religion, see Graf 1997, 96-117, and 1991 and Betz 1991. For an interpretation of the role of mystery cults and religion in the ancient novel, see the now controversial Merkelbach 1962 and 1994, Beck 1996, Edsall 2000/1, and Zeitlin 2008.

¹⁰ The Greek romance incorporating the least magical material is the earliest extant text, *Callirhoe* (5.9, where Persian μάγοι are mentioned). The *Ephesiaca* includes a few magical scenes (e.g. 1.2, where Eros is said to arm himself with ἐρωτικά φάρμακα, and 1.5) while *Daphnis and Chloe*, the *Ethiopica*, and *Leucippe and Clitophon* heavily incorporate magic, although in distinct ways. *Daphnis and Chloe* uses magical language to describe animal husbandry, love, and sex although there are no depictions of genuine magical practice in the text (e.g. 1.19, 2.4, 2.7). The *Ethiopica* employs magical language, themes, and representation of magical practice throughout and engages in an explicit discourse about low magic and true wisdom (Yatromanolakis 1985, Jones 2005). The fringe novels also incorporate magic: according to Photius' summary in his *Bibliotheca*, Iamblichus' *Babyloniaca*

other “ideal” Greek romances, however, take for granted the power of magic to effect change in the world, it will become clear that Achilles’ treatment has more in common with that of three roughly contemporary authors who use representations of magic as a locus for self-reflective metaliterary commentary about fiction: Antonius Diogenes, Lucian, and Apuleius.

Magic as a Metaphor for Persuasion

Throughout *L&C* Achilles employs magical language metaphorically.¹¹ Most frequently he uses words that allude to magic in key moments of persuasion, marking the fact that in his novelistic world the effective use of rhetoric and performance are vested with supernatural power. For instance, as Clitophon continues his attempts on Leucippe’s chastity, he repeatedly employs persuasive language to win her and frames this with an embedded metaphor. He describes his own behavior in the following way: “Ταῦτα πολλάκις κατεπάδων ἐπεπείκειν τὴν κόρην ὑποδέξασθαι με τῷ θαλάμῳ νυκτός...” (2.19 – “By repeating these sentiments to her like a spell I prevailed upon her to receive me into her bedroom that night.”).¹² Here Clitophon’s words metaphorically assume magical powers capable of persuading a virgin to surrender to his sexual advances, which is underlined by the juxtaposition of *καταπάδω* and *πείθω*. Clitophon is also called a *φαρμακεύς*, a “sorcerer,” by Thersander because of his power over Leucippe and Melite (6.17); and he is called a *γῶης*, “magician” or “charlatan,” when he successfully uses rhetoric in his trial for murder (7.11).

Likewise, women’s sexual power or “charms” and their ability to manipulate men are described with magical language. For instance, it has been conjectured that women’s cosmetics are described using the word *φάρμακον* in Menelaus’ anti-woman screed at the end of Book Two.¹³ In a similar vein and in the same

not only depicts various types of magic but the author himself claims to be a trained magician (94.75b.20ff.).

¹¹ For a general overview of the use of magical language across genres in the context of love, see Murgatroyd 1983, who unfortunately passes over the ancient novel.

¹² *LSJ* s.v. *καταπάδω*. I disagree with the *LSJ*’s interpretation of *κατεπάδων* in this context. It states that it should be interpreted here to mean “to be always repeating.” In the context of *L&C*, however, I believe that a magical interpretation is most appropriate.

¹³ It has been argued that *φίλημάτων* at 2.38.2 in the manuscripts does not make good sense and should be replaced. Knox conjectured *φάρμακον* (meaning “cosmetics”) as a replacement, which is supported by Vilborg. Although *φάρμακον* can simply mean “makeup” or “drug” in a more neutral reading, in the context of Achilles’ novel it is freighted with its magical (and more menacing) meanings: “spell,” “potion,” or even “poison.” If this emendation is correct, Menelaus, in philosophizing about the superiority of sex with males,

speech, Menelaus says that, unlike boys, whose kisses are pure and unadulterated, women “work magic,” μαγγανεύω, when they kiss (2.38). This is reminiscent of Leucippe’s charm-cum-kiss at the beginning of Book Two and makes one wonder whether Leucippe’s participation in Clitophon’s ruse was entirely innocent.¹⁴ Women’s tears are even described as supernaturally powerful, γοητότερον, to those who see them (6.7). In none of these instances is actual magical practice being alluded to. On the contrary, each of these magical words is used metaphorically to explain the otherwise inexplicable power of persuasion. Combined with the continual undermining of the supernatural powers of magic that I will articulate below, this metaphorical language demonstrates that, in the novel, persuasion has supplanted magic in its ability to shape the world.

Menelaus: Egyptian Magician?

In Book Three of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, Achilles crafts a sustained magical fabrication that repeats and magnifies several motifs first seen in his depiction of Leucippe’s bee magic. Clitophon and Leucippe’s ship breaks up in a storm and they are tossed onto the shore of Egypt near Pelusium. While making their way toward Alexandria, they are captured by Egyptian *boukoloi*. Clitophon is rescued by a group of soldiers but Leucippe, who had been designated for sacrifice to cleanse the herdsmen army, remains in their custody (3.12). The following day from the opposite bank, Clitophon witnesses a gruesome ritual in which Leucippe is apparently sacrificed on a makeshift altar.¹⁵ She is split open from heart to belly and her innards are roasted and eaten; the human sacrifice has concluded in cannibalism.

Clitophon, part of the internal audience, as well as the novel’s readers, the external audience, are stunned by this unexpected turn of events.¹⁶ The scene is intensified for the reader because Clitophon – who, as the novel’s ego-narrator, has up to now been peppering his narration of earlier events with information that

would be implying an unnatural manipulation inherent in cosmetics that is akin to magic (2.38), which is very much in keeping with the rest of his speech and the way magic is depicted throughout the novel.

¹⁴ See note 4 for more on the suggestion that Leucippe is more sexually savvy than Clitophon knows or conveys in his narrative.

¹⁵ See Rives 1995 for a diachronic study of human sacrifice in Greco-Roman literature. Cassius Dio attributes the same behavior to the same group in a remarkably similar portrayal (72.4.1ff).

¹⁶ Some scholars, however, offer an alternative reading (e.g. see Cueva 2001 for a comedic reading of this scene).

he later learned, thereby diminishing the suspense – here reverts to a strict chronological narration, leaving his audience temporarily ignorant of the outcome.¹⁷ In doing so, Clitophon amplifies his own emotional experience at the time of the “sacrifice” and, although against generic expectations, makes the reader believe that Leucippe is in reality killed.¹⁸ In fact, it is Achilles’ tendency to break from the novel’s conventions – and the general literary convention that forbids killing a main character in the second book – that makes this scene even more believable, despite its absurd theatrics.¹⁹ Within the larger narrative, this scene looks backwards and forwards simultaneously. First, it recalls the dream of her mother when Leucippe was moments from losing her virginity to Clitophon. This dream, patently symbolizing Leucippe’s deflowering, wakes her mother in a panic and sends her rushing into Leucippe’s room to end the seduction. The language of this scene is notably similar to that of her faux sacrifice.²⁰ Leucippe’s “sacrifice” also reminds the reader of the paintings of Prometheus and Andromeda that Leucippe and Clitophon had seen upon their arrival in Egypt just a few pages earlier (3.6ff.).²¹ This scene, therefore, has symbolic significance for the text and re-presents recurring motifs as well as foreshadowing Leucippe’s repeated false-deaths.

The apparent sacrifice and consumption of Leucippe also sets the scene for Menelaus, their friend and traveling companion, to perform a sham magical ritual. Clitophon becomes separated from Menelaus during the shipwreck and they are only reunited after Clitophon has witnessed Leucippe’s disembowelment. In his grief, Clitophon decides to take his own life until, from out of nowhere, Menelaus

¹⁷ Reardon 1994, 82-83, emphasizes the “highly sophisticated sensationalism” of this scene.

¹⁸ Chew 2000 offers an analysis of *Leucippe and Clitophon* as a parody that acts as a “criticism of the [generic] model.”

¹⁹ As stated by Morales 2001, x, citing Morgan 1995, 142: “Viewed against the four other ‘ideal’ romances, Achilles Tatius emerges as an *enfant terrible* who ‘conducts a prolonged guerrilla war against the conventions of his own genre.’” Her larger point, however, is that “what constitutes the ancient novel cannot be demarcated along discrete lines.”

²⁰ Achilles writes, “ἔτυχε γὰρ ὄνειρος αὐτὴν ταραξάς. Ἐδόκει τινὰ ληστήν μάχαιραν ἔχοντα γυμνὴν ἄγειν ἀρπασάμενον αὐτῆς τὴν θυγατέρα καὶ καταθέμενον ὑπτίαν, μέσσην ἀνατεμεῖν τῇ μαχαίρᾳ τὴν γαστέρα, κάτωθεν ἀρξάμενον ἀπὸ τῆς αἰδοῦς.” (2.23 – “She was disturbed by a dream, in which a brigand carrying a naked blade kidnapped her daughter and carried her off; then he laid her down on her back and cut open the middle of her belly with the knife, starting down below at her most intimate parts.”).

²¹ For more, see e.g. Bartsch 1989, esp. 55-62. Anderson 1979 also discusses these paintings, focusing on the meaning of previously misunderstood pomegranate that is held by the statue of Zeus Cesios in this same scene. His explanation for the symbolism of the pomegranate, although centered on Achilles’ mockery of the mysteries, also works well as a clue regarding the deception of his audience through Menelaus’ magical act. Of the pomegranate, Anderson writes, “Achilles specialises in wry cruelty, and in the manipulation of vaguely religious material” (518).

rushes to his side and disrupts his suicide attempt. Clitophon explains that, having seen Leucippe die, he wishes also to die. Achilles writes,

Λέγει οὖν ὁ Μενέλαος· “Ἄλλ’ εἰ διὰ τοῦτο θέλεις ἀποθανεῖν, ὦρα σοι τὸ ξίφος ἐπισχεῖν· Λευκίππη δέ σοι νῦν ἀναβιώσεται.” Βλέψας οὖν πρὸς αὐτόν, “Ἔτι μου καταγελάς,” ἔφην, “ἐπὶ τηλικούτῳ κακῷ; Εὖ γε, Μενέλαε, Ξενίου μέμνησαι Διός.” Ὁ δὲ κρούσας τὴν σορόν, “Ἐπεὶ τοίνυν ἀπιστεῖ Κλειτοφῶν,” ἔφη, “σύ μοι, Λευκίππη, μαρτύρησον, εἰ ζῇς.” Ἄμα δὲ εἶπε καὶ δῖς πού καὶ τρεῖς ἐπάταξε τὴν σορόν, καὶ κάτωθεν φωνῆς ἀκούω καὶ πάννυ λεπτῆς. Τρόμος οὖν εὐθὺς ἴσχει με καὶ πρὸς τὸν Μενέλαον ἀπέβλεπον, μάγον εἶναι δοκῶν. Ὁ δὲ ἥνοιγεν ἅμα τὴν σορόν καὶ ἡ Λευκίππη κάτωθεν ἀνέβαινε, φοβερὸν θέαμα, ὃ θεοί, καὶ φρικωδέστατον. Ἀνέφκτο μὲν αὐτῆς ἡ γαστήρ ἅπασα καὶ ἦν ἐντέρων κενή· ἐπιπεσοῦσα δὲ περιπλέκεται μοι καὶ συνέφουμεν καὶ ἄμφορ κατεπέσομεν.

Μόλις οὖν ἀναζωπυρήσας λέγω πρὸς τὸν Μενέλαον· “Οὐκ ἔρεῖς μοι τί ταῦτα; Οὐχὶ Λευκίππην βλέπω; Ταύτην οὐ κρατῶ καὶ ἀκούω λαλούσης; Ἄ οὖν χθὲς ἐθεασάμην, τίνα ἦν; Ἡ γὰρ ἐκεῖνά ἐστιν ἡ ταῦτα ἐνόπνια. Ἄλλ’ ἰδοὺ καὶ φίλημα ἀληθινὸν καὶ ζῶν, ὥς ἐκεῖνο τὸ Λευκίππης γλυκύ.”

Menelaus replied: “If that is the reason for your death-wish, then now is the time to hold back the sword. Leucippe will now be resurrected before your eyes.” I stared at him. “Are you still mocking me,” I asked, “even at a time of such despair? An excellent way of showing how mindful you are of Zeus Xenios!” He tapped on the coffin, and said: “Well then, since Clitophon will not believe...Hey! Leucippe! If you are alive, prove it!” As he spoke he beat on the coffin some two or three times. From deep down, and extremely faintly, I heard a voice! I was immediately seized by trembling, and turned to look at Menelaus, thinking he must be a miracle-worker (*magos*). At the same time he opened the coffin and Leucippe climbed out from down below. Ye gods, what a fearful, chilling spectacle! Her entire belly had been carved open and was bereft of viscera. She threw herself upon me, I flung my arms around her, and the two of us fell to the ground as if we were one.

After struggling to regain my composure I said to Menelaus: “Will you not tell me what is going on? Is this not Leucippe that I can see? Is this not she whom I hold, and whose voice I hear? What were those spectacles I beheld yesterday? Either they were a dream or this is. But see! This must be a living, breathing kiss, since this is Leucippe’s sweetness.” (3.17ff.)

Menelaus does not divulge that Leucippe's sacrifice was a ruse, and, because this is Leucippe's first *Scheintod*, the audience has no reason to doubt that she is truly dead.²² When Menelaus says that she will come back to life (ἀναβιώσεται) after being sacrificed and partly consumed, there seems to be only one way that could take place: by raising the dead through necromancy. He then pretends to be engaging in exactly that. Clitophon is so convinced by the act that he decides Menelaus must be a μάγος. This word well describes the conflicting ways of reading Menelaus' behavior in this scene. μάγος can simply mean "wizard" (or, as Whitmarsh translates, "miracle-worker"), which is apt given that Menelaus appears to perform a magical ritual. Since, however, there were frequent allegations that those acting as μάγοι were frauds (e.g. Luc. *Alex.* 6.10), this word also comes to mean "impostor" or "charlatan," which is more fitting here since Menelaus' magical performance is a hoax. μάγος, then, perfectly captures the nature of Menelaus' behavior insofar as his con is hidden under magical cover. As Leucippe emerges from the coffin with a gaping, bloody wound, Clitophon is terrified and continues to believe that magic is at work.²³

After Clitophon begs Menelaus to explain what is happening, he maintains his magical masquerade. Achilles writes,

“Ἀλλὰ νῦν,” ὁ Μενέλαος ἔφη, “καὶ τὰ σπλάγχνα ἀπολήψεται καὶ τὰ στέρνα συμφύσεται, καὶ ἄτρωτον ὄψει. Ἀλλ' ἐπικάλυψαί σου τὸ πρόσωπον· καλῶ γὰρ τὴν Ἑκάτην ἐπὶ τὸ ἔργον.” Ἐγὼ δὲ πιστεύσας ἐνεκαλυψάμην. Ὁ δὲ ἄρχεται τερατεύεσθαι καὶ λόγον τινὰ καταλέγειν· ἅμα λέγων περιαιρεῖ τὰ ἐπὶ τῇ γαστρὶ μαγγανεύματα τῆς Λευκίππης καὶ ἀποκατέστησεν εἰς τὸ ἀρχαῖον. Λέγει μοι· “Ἀποκάλυψαι.” Καὶ ἐγὼ μόλις μὲν καὶ φοβούμενος – ἀληθῶς γὰρ ὦμην τὴν Ἑκάτην παρῆναι –, ὅμως δ' οὖν ἀπέστησα τῶν ὀφθαλμῶν τὰς χεῖρας καὶ ὀλόκληρον Λευκίππην ὀρῶ. Ἔτι μᾶλλον οὖν ἐκπλαγεὶς ἐδεόμην Μενελάου, λέγων· “ὦ φίλτατε Μενέλαε, εἰ διάκονός τις εἶ, δέομαί σου, ποῖ γῆς εἰμι καὶ τί ποτε ταῦτα ὀρῶ;” Καὶ ἡ Λευκίππη, “Παῦσαι,” ἔφη, “Μενέλαε, δεδιττόμενος αὐτόν. Λέγε δὲ πῶς τοὺς ληστὰς ἠπάτησας.”

²² For more on *Scheintod* in Achilles Tatius, see McGill 2000, who particularly focuses on Leucippe's decapitation at sea at 5.7. Immortality is thematized in this text through Leucippe's frequent false deaths and the symbolism of plants and animals, which receive lengthy digressions, such as the phoenix and date palm.

²³ The feeling of humiliation and mockery Clitophon expresses in the word *καταγελαῖς* when Menelaus suggests that Leucippe will be resurrected recurs at 5.25 and 5.26 in a similar context of magical deception when Melite learns that Leucippe is not a Thessalian witch and Clitophon has been lying to her, about which more below. Clitophon's humiliation is shared by the reader.

Λέγει οὖν ὁ Μενέλαος · “Οἶδας, ὡς Αἰγύπτιος εἰμι τὸ γένος...”

“And now,” said Menelaus, “her innards will be restored to her and her stomach will be resealed: you will see her wound disappear. But...cover your face, for I call upon Hecate to perform this act!” I believed him and covered it. He began his mumbo-jumbo, reciting some formula or other: as he did so, he unpeeled the miraculous device from Leucippe’s stomach and made her as good as new. Then he said: “You may reveal your face.” I was hesitant and fearful, thinking that Hecate really was there, but I did nevertheless remove my hands from my eyes and behold Leucippe whole. Still more amazed at this, I asked Menelaus: “Menelaus, my excellent friend, if you are some divine apostle, tell me, I beg you: what land am I in? What on earth are these phenomena I am witnessing?” “Menelaus,” said Leucippe, “stop scaring him. Tell him how you trumped those bandits.”

So Menelaus replied: “You know I am of Egyptian descent...” (3.18ff.)

At the beginning of this passage, Menelaus pretends that he needs privacy to call upon the goddess of the dark arts, Hecate. Entirely trusting in him and in the power of magic, Clitophon is terrified of the goddess and covers his eyes. Menelaus performs a magical incantation and Leucippe comes back to life. In retrospect, Clitophon realizes that in this moment Menelaus removed the false stomach that had been attached to Leucippe to make her disembowelment appear real. But Clitophon is unaware at the dramatic time that he is being deceived; he believes in Egyptian magic and thinks that Menelaus is a magician.²⁴ In order to understand what has happened, Clitophon asks where he is, although he already knows the answer: he is in Egypt. Finally, as if to explain the entire situation, Menelaus reminds a confused Clitophon the first thing we learn about him when he enters the narrative in Book Two: that he is Egyptian.²⁵

This scene displays Menelaus’ gifts as a deceptive performer and Achilles’ cynical *modus operandi* in regards to magic. First of all, Clitophon has been duped. The religio-magic ritual that he thought he saw performed – beginning with the sacrifice of Leucippe, in which the language activates both religious and magical connotations,²⁶ and ending with the “magical” healing of her abdomen –

²⁴ Or perhaps a *parhedros*. The verb form of δίακονος, διακονέω, appears throughout *PGM* and specifically in the context of serving a god at *PGM* 36.304.

²⁵ Menelaus arrives on the scene with the phrase “Εγὼ Μενέλαος,” εἶπεν, “τὸ δὲ γένος Αἰγύπτιος.” (2.33 – “My name is Menelaus,” he said, “and my family is from Egypt.”).

²⁶ Clitophon’s words are ambiguous as to whether he understands this ritual as religious or magical. He says that, over the body of Leucippe, the priest “...ἤδεν, ὡς εἰκόσ, ᾠδὴν

has been fabricated through Menelaus' clever showmanship. As with much of this novel, what seems real is actually theater; theatrical props enable Menelaus to fake Leucippe's sacrifice and healing.²⁷ For a short time at least the reader is duped along with Clitophon by Menelaus' magical farce.

What makes this all the more powerful – and persuasive – an experience for Clitophon and the reader is the locus for these events and the ethnicity of the man performing them. Menelaus, in disguise as an Egyptian brigand, sacrifices Leucippe and then, out of disguise, brings her back to life. The fact that he is Egyptian and the scene is set in Egypt is a fundamental aspect of this deception. The combination of Egyptian backdrop and incantatory healing cannot help but take the audience back to Leucippe's genuine magical healing of Clio's sting, brought about by those spells learned from an Egyptian. In Greco-Roman literature, Egypt is also the home of Busiris and human sacrifice, cannibalism, and necromancy are thought of as stereotypically Egyptian behaviors.²⁸ For the audiences of Leucippe's sacrifice, the setting creates an expectation of bizarre religio-magic activity and we are therefore primed for this when Menelaus begins the ritual. Despite the fact that he is well aware that he is in Egypt, Clitophon flags the magical connotations of the setting by asking Menelaus where he is, indicating that renewed knowledge of his surroundings may help him understand the peculiar things he has seen. Finally, Menelaus himself takes advantage of Clitophon's expectations when, in order to explain his unusual pseudo-magical behavior, he begins by reminding Clitophon of his Egyptian ethnicity.

It turns out, however, that Clitophon's stereotypes about Egyptian religious observance and magical ritual have led him astray from a correct interpretation of events. While Menelaus' identity as an Egyptian is critical for understanding how

Αἰγυπτίαν· τὸ γὰρ σχῆμα τοῦ στόματος καὶ τῶν προσώπων τὸ διελκυσμένον ὑπέφαιεν ᾠδὴν.” (3.15 – “began to chant what was in all probability an Egyptian hymn: the shape of his mouth and the twisted contortions of his face suggested a hymn.”). While ᾠδή could indicate an Egyptian religious prayer, it could also indicate a magical incantation of Egyptian influence, especially given the context. The ambiguity seems intentional.

²⁷ Mignogna 1997 discusses the theatricality particular to this scene and suggests that it is looking to a mimic-pantomimic version of *Iphigenia in Tauris*, on which more later.

²⁸ For an in depth exploration of Egypt in Greco-Roman literature, particularly the novel, and the mutual influence of Greek and Egyptian literature on one another, see Nimis 2004. He writes, “Egyptian xenophobia, frequently connected with cannibalism, persists as a stereotype of Egyptians to the very end of antiquity” (37). He also, however, discusses the larger ambivalence toward Egypt. For more on this ambivalence in Heliodorus in particular, see Jones 2005. In the ancient novel, necromantic magicians tend to be Egyptian. In Apuleius' *Metamorphoses* Zatchlas is an Egyptian prophet who brings a corpse back to life (2.28). In Heliodorus' *Ethiopica* an old Egyptian witch brings the body of her son, a young soldier, back to life (6.12-5). For raising-the-dead in the novels, see Slater 2007.

he deceives the bandits²⁹ it nearly fatally deceives his audience; Clitophon is so convinced by Menelaus' faux ceremony that he almost kills himself. Although no actual magic takes place, however, the outcome of Menelaus' magical performance is precisely what he and Clitophon hope for: Leucippe remains alive. Achilles Tatius shapes this magical scene in a way that deceives his audience and foils their expectations, while simultaneously setting up the magical charade as the engineer of Leucippe's survival. In addition, although the magical ritual represented is counterfeit, Clitophon's belief in it brings the audience into a momentarily magical space and underscores the plausibility of the scene. Achilles frames this magical representation as an event that would be believable to his audience, even if their expectations are ultimately foiled. Just like Menelaus, Achilles uses bogus magic to manipulate his audience.

This scene from *L&C* appears to be the inspiration for a similar magical farce in Heliodorus' *Ethiopica* where Calasiris, the Egyptian priest, pretends to perform magic over Chariclea in order to free her from the evil eye, although neither of them genuinely believes that she is afflicted by it (4.5).³⁰ Taking advantage of other characters' stereotypes about Egyptians, Calasiris uses this artificial "low magic" ritual (complete with laurel, fire, and incense as props), in order to get closer to Chariclea. He himself describes his pseudo-magic as a "stage performance" (4.5 – "...ὥσπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς τῆς ὑποκρίσεως..."). This despite the fact that "low magic" is contemptible to Calasiris.³¹ Just as in Menelaus' performance above, the outcome of this false magic is exactly as Calasiris hopes it will be. Although efficacious magical practices are depicted throughout Heliodorus' text, here the author takes a page straight from Achilles Tatius' playbook: a fabricated magical performance that exploits the audience's stereotypes about Egyptians and

²⁹ Menelaus' Egyptian birth enables him to falsely befriend the bandits, who recognize him when he is captured (3.19ff.).

³⁰ For more on the relationship between these two novels, see Plepelits 1996.

³¹ In describing Theagenes' arrival at his doorstep for help in his romantic pursuit of Chariclea, Calasiris touches on Egyptian stereotypes, and the differences between low magic and true wisdom, saying: "...having heard at the party that I was from Egypt and a high priest, he had come to enlist my help with his love, laboring, I suppose, under the common misapprehension that the wisdom of Egypt is all one and the same kind. On the contrary: there is one kind that is of low rank and, you might say, crawls upon the earth; it waits upon ghosts and skulks around dead bodies; it is addicted to magic herbs, and spells are its stock-in-trade; no good ever comes of it; no benefit ever accrues to its practitioners; generally it brings about its own downfall, and its occasional successes are paltry and mean-spirited – the unreal made to appear real, hopes brought to nothing; it devises wickedness and panders to corrupt pleasures" (3.16). Jones 2005, 81, writes, "Calasiris manipulates the guru stereotype for a higher purpose: by *appearing* to advocate the base magic he abhors, he remains faithful to his divinely sanctioned mission..."

presents the manipulation of other's *belief* in magic to be a persuasive force in the world. There is also, however, a significant difference between the approaches of these authors to magic. Whereas Heliodorus uses magic to make a philosophical and religious point, Achilles seems most interested in undermining magic in order to make a statement about the persuasive power of performance, rhetoric, and narrative.³²

The language used in Menelaus' theatrical healing of Leucippe also subtly speaks to the way Achilles uses magic throughout his novel. The word *μαγγανεύματα*, which means "trickery" in the plural, describes the bladder that is stuffed with innards, attached to Leucippe's abdomen, and then split open by the rigged theatrical sword. The bladder is, of course, an ingenious type of trickery and deceives the Egyptian herdsmen and Clitophon into believing that Leucippe's sacrifice and consumption are authentic. The deception is effective because of the context of theatricality within which it is placed: there are costumes, props, lies of identity, and an audience (the brigands, Clitophon, the novel's readers) that is vulnerable to deception because it believes what it sees to be "true" and therefore expects a certain outcome, arousing an involuntary suspension of disbelief.³³

Menelaus' trickery, however, extends beyond Leucippe's pretend sacrifice into a prolonged deception of Clitophon centered on falsified magical rituals. The stuffed bladder, these *μαγγανεύματα*, and Menelaus' magical performance are the tools of Clitophon's second deception. How fitting, then, that the word used to describe the heart of this deception is etymologically linked to magic. *μαγγανεύμα* comes from the "magical" word *μαγγανεύω*, the primary meaning of which is "to use charms or philtres," which then metaphorically comes to mean "to play tricks." This word in turn comes from *μάγανον*, signifying "a means for charming or bewitching others, philtre."³⁴ Menelaus uses falsified magic to persuade Clitophon. The whole scene, then, is the dramatized equivalent of *μαγγανεύματα* as magic is manipulated into a deceit. Like Clitophon's use of the word *μάγος* to describe Menelaus, this word encapsulates Achilles' approach to magic in the novel: weak as a practice but powerful as a tool of manipulation.

³² As Plepelits 1996, 394, states: "...a comparison shows that Heliodorus consistently changed the motifs he borrowed from Achilles Tatius in the sense of greater idealization, or, in other words, that parallel motifs in Achilles Tatius are always more realistic, more profane, more human."

³³ See Morgan 1993, 218 and *passim*, for an analysis of a similar dynamic in Heliodorus.

³⁴ *LSJ* s.v. *μαγγανεύμα*, *μαγγανεύω*, and *μάγανον*.

Achilles Tatius' Menelaus also evokes the mythological Menelaus, brother of Agamemnon, husband of Helen, and temporary resident of Egypt.³⁵ There are diverse accounts of the "Homeric" Menelaus' time in Egypt. In Herodotus, for instance, Menelaus unjustly sacrifices two Egyptian children to improve sailing conditions after getting Helen back from the safekeeping of Proteus, with whom she has lived during the entire Trojan War (2.119). This criminal act is echoed – and perhaps even made right – in the artificiality of his sacrifice of Leucippe.³⁶ Likewise, the "magical" knowledge of Achilles' Menelaus is foretold in the experiences of his Homeric predecessor. In Homer's *Odyssey*, Menelaus relates his trials in Egypt, where he lived for 7 years following the Trojan War. He was stranded for 20 days on the island of Pharos until he was given the secret to overcoming the divine, shape-changing Proteus by Proteus' daughter. According to one reading, we should understand Menelaus' taming of Proteus in the *Odyssey* – which takes place while he is living in Egypt, the "typological equivalent to the Underworld" – as a religio-magical ritual analogous to Odysseus' own act of necromancy in the *Nekyia*.³⁷ Achilles in fact appears to humorously allude to the epic Menelaus' virtual imprisonment on Pharos when he depicts his own character delaying a trip there because of bad omens and ultimately begging off, claiming illness (5.4, 5.6). Achilles' Menelaus seems to remember what happened to Homer's Menelaus and thus alter his behavior.

This scene also portrays Leucippe in terms that are strikingly reminiscent of Iphigenia. Iphigenia is deceived into leaving Argos by the lie that she is to marry Achilles and it is in her wedding garments that she is sacrificed by Agamemnon.³⁸ As if to mark the similarities between these two women, even before Leucippe is taken for sacrifice Clitophon grieves her in terms that recall the unholy mixing of marriage and murder in Iphigenia's story, which is surprising given that he and Leucippe are far from nuptials at this point (3.10). Both maidens are also "sacrificed" to benefit an army. Iphigenia is sacrificed by Agamemnon, Leucippe is sacrificed by a man with the same name as Agamemnon's brother. But if one especially considers the trajectory of Iphigenia's story in Euripides' *Iphigenia in*

³⁵ Their similarities are noted by Nimis 2004, 48, who says that Menelaus' name "cannot but recall his famous Homeric namesake and his episode in Egypt, where he acquired, depending on the account, either secret knowledge or his wife back."

³⁶ Nimis 2004, 50, states that Achilles' Menelaus "is a far more attractive character than his Homeric namesake, who, according to Herodotus, really does engage in human sacrifice in order to effect his escape from Egypt."

³⁷ Powell 1970, 427ff., articulates the parallels between the way the death-rebirth motif is experienced by Odysseus and Menelaus.

³⁸ The author's name, related as it is to the Greek hero, may be relevant here.

Tauris, their shared traits begin to multiply. For instance, both girls are only apparently sacrificed. Although countless people witness both sacrifices first hand – all of whom appear to unanimously agree that the virgins were killed – this turns out to be incorrect.³⁹ Both Iphigenia and Leucippe are Greek virgins imprisoned among barbarian *boukoloι* who practice human sacrifice.⁴⁰ Both too write letters as tools of recognition that describe themselves as having been killed and yet remaining alive – a notable contradiction – although Leucippe’s misidentification and epistolary recognition come later (*IT* 769, *L&C* 5.18). So similar are the experiences of these two heroines, it has been persuasively argued that this scene is a riff on a Roman mime or pantomime that staged Iphigenia’s sacrifice.⁴¹

I will return to the metaliterary implications of Achilles’ allusions to *Iphigenia in Tauris* below, of which there are many, but at the moment wish to point out perhaps the most obvious link between these girls: both are sacred to Artemis. Iphigenia is rescued by Artemis’ direct intervention and becomes her priestess. In typical Achilles Tatius style, however, Leucippe’s rescue is instead brought about through human ingenuity – the meticulous planning of Menelaus and Satyrus and a “magic” manipulation – rather than by *deus ex machina*, as in Iphigenia’s myth. Although Artemis does not swoop in to save Leucippe, Leucippe’s enactment of Iphigenia’s sacrifice explicitly signposts her connection to Artemis for the first time in the novel, which is confirmed after the danger has passed. At the beginning of Book Four, once Leucippe has been rescued and the couple reunited, Clitophon wants to consummate their relationship but Leucippe refuses. Achilles writes,

‘Η δέ, “Ἄλλ’ οὐ θέμις,” ἔφη, “τοῦτο ἤδη γενέσθαι. Ἡ γάρ μοι θεὸς Ἄρτεμις ἐπιστᾶσα πρώην κατὰ τοὺς ὕπνους, ὅτε ἐκλαιον μέλλουσα σφαγήσεσθαι, ‘Μὴ νῦν,’ ἔφη, ‘κλαῖε· οὐ γὰρ τεθνήξῃ· βοηθὸς γὰρ ἐγὼ σοι παρέσομαι. Μενεῖς δὲ παρθένος, ἔστ’ ἂν σε νυμφοστολήσω· ἄξεται δὲ σε ἄλλος οὐδείς ἢ Κλειτοφῶν.’”

“No,” she said, “it would now be against divine law for that to occur. For Artemis appeared to me in a dream the night before last while I was weeping at the thought of my sacrifice. ‘Do not cry now,’ she said, ‘You will not die,

³⁹ In this, Iphigenia should perhaps be seen as a model for Leucippe’s repeated false deaths. As part of a larger argument about humor in the novels, Cueva 2006, 109, states, “...when human sacrifice or cannibalism occurs in the ancient Greek novels the Euripidean plays dealing with Iphigenia exert influence.” He does not, however, connect Leucippe directly to Iphigenia.

⁴⁰ See Hilton 2012 for a discussion of the shipwreck theme shared by these texts.

⁴¹ Mignogna 1997.

for I shall be there to succour you. You shall remain a virgin until I lead you up the aisle; and none other than Clitophon will wed you.” (4.1)

Artemis’ protection of Leucippe continues through the remainder of the novel. For instance, Leucippe calls on Artemis when Thersander is threatening her virginity (6.21) and it is to the precinct of Artemis that Leucippe flees for protection when she escapes imprisonment (7.13).

Leucippe’s connection with Iphigenia and Artemis extends to another goddess present in this scene, even if only in name, Hecate. Menelaus invokes this goddess of magic and the moon as part of his magical charade. Although the explicit purpose of this invocation is to further deceive Clitophon, it is also significant that in some versions of the myth Artemis grants immortality to Iphigenia who comes to be worshipped as Artemis *Einodia*, also known as Hecate.⁴² This further fosters the connection between Leucippe and Iphigenia’s false sacrifice and suggests that Leucippe has a relationship to magic through its patron goddess. The magic, however, is artificial. Hecate is not present. Menelaus’ invocation of her is merely for theatrics and the connection between Leucippe and this goddess is a false one. This hints at Leucippe’s participation in false magic that will be developed later in the novel.⁴³

Leucippe as Thessalian Witch

Leucippe is again associated with magic in Book Five, where Achilles depicts her acting the role of Thessalian witch. Her performance adds to Achilles’ mockery of the faith individuals place in magic and magicians and further demonstrates that rhetoric and performance are more powerful than magic. This lie is initiated when Melite and Clitophon encounter an enslaved and temporarily disfigured

⁴² For sources linking Iphigenia to Artemis *Einodia* and Hecate, see Gantz 1993, 26ff., 582-583, 686. Also mentioned by Cueva 2001, 108-109.

⁴³ Depending on one’s reading of the text at 1.4.2-3, Clitophon may also compare Leucippe to Selene. For support of this reading, see Vilborg 1962, loc. cit., and Morales 2004, 40, who cites earlier work. If this is the correct reading, Leucippe is at different moments related to each goddess in the trinity of Selene-Artemis-Hecate. This makes her mother’s name, Pantheia, have new meaning. Cueva 2006, 141, suggests that Leucippe’s association first with Selene and then with Artemis is part of a “transformation from normal person to witch” undertaken by Leucippe in the course of the novel. What is notable to me, however, is the fact that Leucippe does not in truth become a witch but merely uses this false identity to her own advantage, on which more below.

Leucippe on Melite's estate in Ephesus. Leucippe declares her highborn, free status but perpetuates the lie that she is a Thessalian named Lacaena, an identity that we learn was given to her by the slave trader who sold her to Melite's slave, Sosthenes (5.17). Because of Leucippe's transcendent beauty, indicative of a free person rather than a slave, Melite promptly frees her from her chains and ensures that she be treated properly.

Although Clitophon soon comes to learn Leucippe's true identity, Melite continues to believe that she is a Thessalian woman and, with growing frustration over Clitophon's resistance to consummating their relationship, turns to "Lacaena" for help. Melite says,

“Τὰ μὲν ἐμὰ ὅπως ἔσχεν,” ἔφη, “πρὸς σὲ φιlanθρωπίας, περισσὸν εἰδυῖα σοι λέγειν. Δικαία τυγχάνειν, ἀλλ' οἷς ἂν δύνῃ, τὴν ἴσιν ἀποτίσαι μοι χάριν. Ἀκούω τὰς Θετταλὰς ὑμᾶς ὧν ἂν ἐρασθῆτε μαγεύειν οὕτως, ὥστε μὴ πρὸς ἑτέραν ἔτι τὸν ἄνθρωπον ἀποκλίνειν γυναῖκα πρὸς τε τὴν μαγεύουσαν οὕτως ἔχειν, ὡς πάντα νομίζειν ἐκείνην αὐτῷ. Ἐμοὶ τοῦτο, ὦ φιλάττη, φλεγόμενη πάρασχε φάρμακον.”

“It is unnecessary for me to tell you of the benevolence I feel towards you: you already know. You have received only your just due but return me an equal favor, using the powers you possess! I have heard that you Thessalians bewitch those you desire, to deprive a man toward inclinations towards any other woman, and make him feel that the bewitcher is everything to him. Grant me this drug, my dearest friend - I am on fire!” (5.22)

Melite assumes that “Lacaena” has the power to bewitch Clitophon on her behalf solely because of her Thessalian origins. That Thessalian women have magical skills – especially related to herbs, calling down the moon, and the love spells that are subsequently cast from the moon's dew – is a trope in Greco-Roman literature.⁴⁴ Melite's idea about Thessalian women hews so closely to the literary trope, in fact, that one might conclude that she adopted the notion from reading Greek literature. Melite herself flags the second-hand nature of her belief about Thessalian women when she uses the word ἀκούω. Rather than “knowing” it to be true,

⁴⁴ For a discussion of Thessaly as the literary “land of witches,” see Phillips 2002, who argues that this reputation is purely mythical and literary rather than being based in real ritual practices specific to Thessaly. He says, “increasingly... ‘Thessalian’ acquires the more general sense of ‘magical’ and loses any geographical determination” (379). Ogden 2002, 236-240, offers a description of the characteristic behavior of Thessalian witches, i.e. drawing down the moon, as well as multiple sources beginning chronologically with Aristophanes' *Clouds*.

Melite says that she has “heard” it. Melite may even have given Leucippe special treatment due to the witchy implications of her identity and a hope that she could help Melite magically win Clitophon.

Like Leucippe’s false Thessalian origins, her assumed name also suggests magical powers. The slave name given by the trader to Leucippe, “Lacaena,” implies “a connection to Helen...who is frequently referred to in Greek literature as ‘the *Lacaena*.’”⁴⁵ Among the many literary Helens, the Helen of Homer’s *Odyssey* is particularly associated with Egyptian magic. In Book Four of the *Odyssey*, when Telemachus visits Menelaus, Helen drops a *pharmakon* of forgetfulness into their wine. We are told that this *pharmakon* was acquired from “Polydamna of Egypt, where the fertile earth produces the greatest number / of medicines, many good in mixture, many malignant / and every man is a doctor there and more understanding / than men elsewhere...” (4.228-232).⁴⁶ This again brings to mind Leucippe’s use of healing magic learned from an Egyptian woman. The link to Helen connoted by “Lacaena,” then, compounded with the magical associations of Thessaly, furthers the deception of Leucippe as magically skilled. This may be intentional: the trader seems to understand that the traits this name suggests, extraordinary beauty and magical power, make Leucippe even more valuable. That Leucippe chooses to keep the false identity assigned to her by the slave-trader – even as she asserts her wrongful enslavement and mistreatment – implies that she too grasps the magical connotation of her fake identity and that it might be used to her advantage.

Achilles Tatius also appears to have another literary depiction of Helen in mind when he gives Leucippe the name Lacaena in Book Five. Many of her experiences in this book echo those of the eponymous heroine of Euripides’ *Helen*.⁴⁷ In the *Helen*, Helen of Troy never actually sailed to Troy but instead was a guest at the court of Proteus in Egypt while her *eidolon*, fashioned by Hera, went to Troy and became the object over which the Greeks and Trojans fought and died. By the dramatic time, Proteus is long dead and his son, Theoclymenus, is pressing Helen to become his wife against the vow of his father and divine wishes. The *Helen* depicts Menelaus arriving in Egypt with his men and Helen’s *eidolon*, unexpectedly finding the true Helen, and attempting to free her and flee home to Greece.

⁴⁵ Whitmarsh 2001, 158, s.v. *Lacaena*.

⁴⁶ Translation is that of Lattimore 1967.

⁴⁷ For a discussion of whether the *Helen* should be considered a tragedy as well as its similarity to *Iphigenia in Tauris*, mentioned above as another of Achilles’ intertexts, see Burian 2007, 30-35 and Wright 2005.

There are many allusions to the *Helen* in Book Five of the novel, from broad thematic parallels to shared language.⁴⁸ The beauty of both Helen and Leucippe is the cause of their troubles and time in Egypt brings them into great danger.⁴⁹ Just as there are two Helens in the tragedy, one real and one false, there are two Leucippes in this part of the novel. Clitophon sees the false Leucippe beheaded while the real one is snatched away and enslaved. Neither Menelaus nor Clitophon recognizes his heroine when he first sees her (*Hel.* 545ff., *L&C* 5.17).⁵⁰ Menelaus inadvertently ends up with two wives, Helen and her *eidolon*. Clitophon, too, ends up with two “wives,” Leucippe and Melite, although neither relationship is consummated until later. In order to delay sleeping with Melite, Clitophon goes so far as to suggest that Leucippe may have an *eidolon*, like Helen (5.16). Helen repeatedly asserts her chaste devotion to Menelaus even in the face of threats (e.g. 63ff.). And Leucippe, despite near constant pressure, proclaims her fidelity to Clitophon in the letter she writes him and continually thereafter (5.18). Helen crops her hair short to persuade Theoclymenus that she is grieving a dead Menelaus (e.g. 1053). Leucippe’s hair is cropped due to her enslavement (5.17). Powerful men, Theoclymenus and Thersander, pursue the heroines against their wishes and at risk of death to Menelaus and Clitophon.

The parallels between these heroines are further marked by similarities of language in the texts. When Leucippe describes her loss of status to Melite and Clitophon and begs them for help, her words echo those of Helen: both describe themselves as women once free but now enslaved.⁵¹ At this moment, Leucippe suddenly shifts into iambic trimeter, the meter appropriate to tragedy,⁵² emphatically signaling that she has assumed a tragic persona. I would argue that, with this metrical anomaly, Leucippe marks her theatrical debut as the title character in Euripides’ *Helen*. Later, Leucippe will herself describe the role of Lacaena specifically as a dramatic one, when she says, “φέρε πάλιν ἐνδύσωμαί μου τὸ δρᾶμα·

⁴⁸ One may also consider Menelaus’ rescue of Leucippe from death in Egypt in Book Three as recalling Helen’s flight from Egypt with Menelaus in Euripides’ *Helen*.

⁴⁹ Menelaus’ rescue of Leucippe from barbaric Egyptians in Book Three also bears resemblance to the rescue of Helen in Euripides’ *Helen*.

⁵⁰ Likewise, Iphigenia goes unrecognized by Orestes in *Iphigenia in Tauris*. See Wright 2005, 297-307, for an analysis of this motif in Euripides’ “escape-tragedies.”

⁵¹ Helen says, “...δούλη κατέστηκ' οὖσ' ἐλευθέρων ἄπο” (275 – “I have become a slave though I was born of free parents.”). Leucippe says of herself to Melite and Clitophon, “...ἐλευθέρην μὲν, ὡς ἔφυν, δούλην δὲ νῦν...” (5.17 – “...a free woman by birth – though a slave now...”).

⁵² Noted by Whitmarsh 2001, who says, “They may be cited from a lost tragedy; alternatively, Achilles may be using the metrical form to create a tragic subcurrent for this passage.” (158, s.v. *a free woman...a slave now*).

φέρει πάλιν περιθῶμαι τὴν Λάκαιναν” (6.16 – “Come, it is best to resume my dramatic role, to wear once again the costume of Lacaena.”). Finally, the language in which each heroine addresses her new “master” is remarkably similar. Funnily enough, neither of these men is truly the master of either woman and each address of “master” has a measure of dramatic irony. And again, for emphasis, Leucippe’s utterance is placed in iambic trimeter.⁵³ Leucippe’s resemblance to the Helen of Euripides’ drama further establishes her links to Egypt as she is given the name Lacaena at the moment of her transition from Egypt to Ephesus, bearing marks of her time in Egypt and Helen’s backstory with her as she comes to fully embody her new persona.

Leucippe’s false identity, then, can be read as a pastiche of notions about women and magic from literature: Thessalians have special powers in erotic magic and Helen, the quintessential Greek bad girl, had access to exotic Egyptian potions. Other novels of the same period more often than not depict magic, and specifically Thessalian witches, as a genuine force in their fictionalized worlds. Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* is an apt comparison here, with its plot circling around “real,” “live” Thessalian witches with their fearsome erotic, magical powers. It is not possible to make a legitimate claim that, in the world of the *Met.*, Thessalian witches are just a bygone literary topos with no true power. In that text they are a living, breathing presence. Enjoying that novel, therefore, necessitates a certain belief – or suspension of disbelief – on the part of the reader. But by importing this literary stereotype into the fictive universe of *L&C*, where there is no allowance for such supernatural events, Achilles stresses the capacity of literature to persuade its audience of untruths. It is in *this* environment that Leucippe takes advantage of misleading literary ideas (that are nevertheless “true” for other texts) and turns them to her own benefit, further revealing the force of persuasive literature and persuasive performance and posing provocative metaliterary questions about which fictions in which fictional worlds ought to be believed.

Leucippe’s true identity, however, means that she does not have access to magic – aside from the little charm used to heal Clio – and she would be unlikely to use it on Melite’s behalf if she did. After all, she herself wants Clitophon. So strong is the association between Thessalian women and magic, however, that Leucippe feels unable to deny that she has supernatural power. Upon learning that Clitophon had not yet slept with Melite, Leucippe is thrilled and performs the role

⁵³ Helen, in trying to deceive Theoclymenos by convincing him that she has relented to his wishes, says to him, “ὦ δέσποτ’ – ἤδη γὰρ τόδ’ ὀνομάζω σ’ ἔπος...” (1193 – “Master – for that is the name I will call you from now on...”). Leucippe addresses Clitophon in her letter saying, “...τῷ δεσπότη μου. Οὕτω γὰρ σε δεῖ καλεῖν...” (5.18 – “...to my master, for that is what I must call you...”).

that her name has given her.⁵⁴ By the time Melite learns the true identity of “Lacaena,” Thersander, her husband, has appeared and imprisoned Clitophon. Enraged and mortified at the discovery that “Lacaena” is Leucippe, Melite enters Clitophon’s cell and shouts at him, saying,

“ὦ ζεύγος κατ’ ἐμοῦ γοήτων, ἀνδρὸς καὶ γυναικός. Ὁ μὲν τοσοῦτόν μου χρόνον κατεγέλα, ἡ δὲ ἀπῆλθε κομιοῦσά μοι φίλτρον. ἐγὼ δὲ ἡ κακοδαίμων ἡγνόουν αἰτοῦσα παρὰ τῶν ἐχθίστων κατ’ ἐμαυτῆς φάρμακον.”

“Oh man and woman, what a pair of sorcerers united against me: the one mocking me for all this time, the other off to fetch a charm for me! I, ill-starred woman, had no notion that I was asking my bitterest enemy for a drug to use against myself!” (5.25)

As with the dual nature of the word μάγος in Menelaus’ magical charade, Melite’s use of γόης taps into its two meanings: “sorcerer” and “cheat” and she makes this explicit. Clitophon has cheated her and Leucippe has acted the part of Thessalian sorcerer. Melite expected erotic magic to win Clitophon over but instead she has been deceived by two γόητες.

Despite the fact that erotic magic fails for Melite she does not give up on sexually pursuing the hero. She displays great rhetorical skill and it is her words that ultimately persuade him. The final part of her speech to Clitophon rehashes the request she made to “Lacaena,” which she frames as a mark of her love and desperation for him. After explaining that he will be freed and Leucippe will come to him, Melite says of Leucippe,

“διανυκτερεύσειν γὰρ ἔλεγεν εἰς τὸν ἀγρὸν βοτανῶν ἕνεκεν χάριν, ὥς ἐν ὄψει τῆς σελήνης αὐτὰς ἀναλάβοι. Οὕτω γὰρ μου κατεγέλα· ἤτησα γὰρ φάρμακον παρ’ αὐτῆς ὥς Θετταλῆς κατὰ σοῦ. Τί γὰρ ἡδυνάμην ἔτι ποιεῖν ἀποτυγχάνουσα ἢ βοτάνας ζητεῖν καὶ φάρμακα; Αὕτη γὰρ τῶν ἐν ἔρωτι δυστυχοῦντων ἡ καταφυγή.”

“...she said she would spend the night on the estate looking for herbs, so that she could pick them under the gaze of the moon. This is how she mocked me, for I asked her for a drug to use against her, thinking she was Thessalian.

⁵⁴ φήσασα δὲ ἀνερευνήσειν, εἰ συγχωρήσειεν αὐτῇ, βοτάνας γενομένη κατὰ τοὺς ἀγρούς, ἀπιοῦσα ὄχρετο· ἀρνούμενη γὰρ οὐκ ὤετο πίστιν ἔξειν· ὅθεν οἶμαι καὶ ἐπηγγεῖλατο (5.22 – “...what [Leucippe] said was that, if permitted, she would go to the estate and seek out some herbs. And she went. She thought, clearly, that she would not be believed if she refused: that, I imagine, is why she promised...”). Catherine Connors has helpfully pointed out that οἶμαι may indicate a certain nervousness on Clitophon’s part regarding the possibility that Leucippe does in fact have magical powers.

What could I do when success was eluding me, other than seek herbs and drugs? For that is the last refuge of the unfortunate in love..." (5.26)

This reveals the extent to which Leucippe embodies her false identity as a Thesalian witch: she insists that she pick the love herbs by moonlight, thereby adding an authentic magical touch to the performance. It also demonstrates, however, that, while magic is ineffectual in and of itself, it is useful as a tool of manipulation and persuasion. Not only does Leucippe's charade convince Melite and win Leucippe a measure of freedom, but Melite's speech, with which she persuades Clitophon to sleep with her, incorporates an account of failed magic as a key aspect of persuasion. In other words, Melite turns the magical tables on her deceivers. At the end of her speech, Clitophon says, "Ταῦτα φιλοσοφήσασα – διδάσκει γὰρ ὁ Ἔρως καὶ λόγους – ἔλνε τὰ δεσμὰ καὶ τὰς χεῖρας κατεφίλει καὶ τοῖς ὀφθαλμοῖς καὶ τῇ καρδίᾳ προσέφερε καὶ εἶπεν." (5.27 – "With this philosophical exposition done (Eros even teaches eloquence) she started loosing my bonds, kissing my hands and placing them upon her eyes and heart..."). Against all odds – Leucippe and Clitophon have just been reunited *and* Melite's presumed-dead husband has arrived on the scene – the two have sex right there on the floor of Clitophon's cell and Clitophon partly summarizes the moment by saying, "Αὐτουργὸς γὰρ ὁ Ἔρως καὶ αὐτοσχέδιος σοφιστής" (5.27 – "Eros is a resourceful, improvising sophist."). Love magic never succeeds in *Leucippe and Clitophon* and here it is merely a farce. Persuasion, on the other hand, taught by Eros the σοφιστής, is repeatedly shown to be effective in sexual conquest.

Clitophon's statements, that Eros teaches eloquence and is a sophist, point to the speech of Diotima's recounted by Socrates in Plato's *Symposium* in which, while describing the genealogy and traits of Eros, she says that he is a "δεινὸς γόης καὶ φαρμακεὺς καὶ σοφιστής" (203d.5 – "master of jugglery, witchcraft, and artful speech").⁵⁵ These words can be translated in multiple ways, but Diotima seems to be associating Eros with trickery, magic, and sophistic persuasion, all three of which are part of Achilles' discourse in the novel. The *Symposium*, as well as the *Phaedrus*, is an important intertext for *L&C* and scholars have debated to what extent Achilles' readers should take his "philosophizing" seriously.⁵⁶ What I am interested in here, however, is the fact that Achilles revises Diotima's idea, leaving out the notion that Eros is a γόης καὶ φαρμακεύς. This is particularly

⁵⁵ Translation is that of Lamb 1925. See also *L&C* 1.10, where Clinias says that Eros "is a self-taught sophist."

⁵⁶ Morales 2004, esp. 51ff., discusses the scholarly history of the question and ultimately rejects the notion that Achilles is engaged in a "sustained philosophical inquiry" (57). See also Ní Mheallaigh 2007, and, most notably, Dressler 2011.

notable – and appropriate – in the context of this scene as Eros is emphatically *not* a magician for Melite. Erotic coupling occurs in the novel through performance and rhetorically skilled language rather than magic, which is rendered impotent. In the scene above, magic has failed where rhetoric has succeeded and Achilles' Eros updates Plato's to reflect that.

It is at this point that Achilles' debt to Euripides must be more fully acknowledged. In a masterful analysis of Euripides' *Helen*, *Iphigenia in Tauris*, and *Andromeda*, Matthew Wright argues that these dramas were performed as a tragic trilogy that posed grave philosophical questions about appearance versus reality, truth versus falsehood, and the limitations of language in distinguishing between them.⁵⁷ He further maintains that Gorgias' *On What is Not* and *Encomium of Helen* were Euripides' "principal inspiration" in confronting these ideas in his trilogy.⁵⁸ I have already suggested that Achilles' depiction of Leucippe is indebted to Euripides' *Helen* and *Iphigenia*. As I will argue shortly, Gorgias is also of central importance for Achilles' novel. Briefly, however, I want to further pursue why Achilles might seek inspiration in these two heroines and their representation in Euripidean drama. There are many fruitful directions this inquiry could take. First of all, by associating Leucippe with *Iphigenia and Helen* – who represent completely opposed versions of "the female" and whose life stories are interconnected but turn out quite differently – Achilles offers conflicting ways of reading Leucippe. Second, because these two heroines have mythologies with bipartite endings, both of which Euripides dramatized, they are well suited to plastic narrative and its lack of predetermination.⁵⁹ Achilles may also have seen in Euripides' *Helen* and *Iphigenia in Tauris* qualities that he himself admired and would go on to imitate in his novel: the bending of generic expectations and a "happy ending" that is perhaps not very happy at all.

In *L&C* Achilles also confronts issues that Euripides (and Gorgias) contemplated long before him: misrepresentation of truth and falsehood, the confusion between appearances and reality, the complexities of belief and disbelief, and the

⁵⁷ Wright 2005. I owe thanks to the anonymous referee for *AN* for drawing my attention to Wright's monograph, whose discussion of Euripides' "escape-tragedies" is unexpectedly illuminating for Achilles' use of Euripidean drama (although the novel is never mentioned by Wright).

⁵⁸ Wright 2005, esp. 270ff.

⁵⁹ Here, too, consider the implicit comparison between Leucippe and *Andromeda* made through the ekphrasis of the painting at 3.7, discussed by Bartsch 1989, esp. Ch 2. *Andromeda* also has a bipartite myth with a "happy" and "unhappy" ending relevant to *L&C*. In one she gives birth to Perses, while in the other she is abandoned by Perseus. Wright 2005 discusses the fragments of Euripides' *Andromeda* alongside the *Helen* and *Iphigenia in Tauris*.

use of language to manipulate perception. Achilles' allusions to Euripides' *Helen* and *Iphigenia in Tauris*, I propose, draw attention to his own interrogation of these literary and philosophical concepts as does his representation of magic. For instance, by embedding extensive references to *Iphigenia in Tauris* – which focuses on the split between how things look and how they truly are – in the scene depicting Leucippe's false sacrifice and reanimation, Achilles emphasizes his own interrogation of truth, falsehood, and the manipulation of language in this scene and in his novel as a whole. Likewise, Book Five, in which Leucippe is extensively equated to the Helen of Euripides' *Helen*, centers on false appearances and misrecognition much as Euripides' drama did. Whereas Euripides uses these motifs to interrogate myth, Achilles uses the same to ask questions specifically related to fiction.

Gorgias the Egyptian, Gorgias the Sophist

We also see erotic magic go awry in Book Four, where Achilles depicts the inadvertent poisoning of Leucippe through the mis-dosing of a love philter.⁶⁰ Here too Achilles manipulates the reader's expectations through magic, the outcome of which is entirely different than expected. While still in Egypt, Leucippe suddenly becomes insane, falling to the ground, violent to those who try to help her, even exposing her genitalia in public (4.9). She is taken to the house of her hosts and bound to prevent her from hurting herself or someone else. A doctor is called in to give Leucippe a healing φάρμακον, but she does not improve and remains tied up in bed. After ten days of delirium Leucippe shouts in the night “Διὰ σὲ μαίνομαι, Γοργία” (4.15 – “You are the reason for my madness, Gorgias!”). The following day they search the city for the mysterious Gorgias. During their search, a young man, Chaereas, comes to them, saying that he will save Clitophon and free Leucippe from her illness. In reflecting on this, Clitophon says,

Ἐκπλαγεῖς οὖν καὶ θεόπεμπτον εἶναι νομίσας τὸν ἄνθρωπον, “Μὴ Γοργίας,” εἶπον, “τυγχάνεις;” “Οὐ μὲν οὖν,” εἶπεν, “ἀλλὰ Χαιρέας· Γοργίας γάρ σε ἀπολώλεκεν.” Ἔτι μᾶλλον ἔφριζα καὶ λέγω· “Τίνα ταύτην ἀπώλειαν, καὶ τίς ἐστὶν ὁ Γοργίας; Δαίμων γάρ μοι τις αὐτὸν ἐμήνυσε νύκτωρ· σὺ δὲ διηγητὴς γενοῦ τῶν θείων μηνυμάτων.” “Γοργίας ἦν μὲν,” ἔφη, “Αἰγύπτιος στρατιώτης· νῦν δὲ οὐκ ἔστιν, ἀλλ’ ἔργον γέγονε τῶν βουκόλων. Ἦρα δὲ τῆς σῆς γυναικός· ὦν δὲ φύσει φαρμακεὺς σκευάζει τι φάρμακον ἔρωτος καὶ

⁶⁰ For more on accidental poisoning via love philter, see Faraone 1999, 110-119, although his discussion is limited to the inadvertent poisoning of men by women.

πείθει τὸν διακονούμενον ὑμῖν Αἰγύπτιον λαβεῖν τὸ φάρμακον καὶ ἐγκαταμίξαι τῷ τῆς Λευκίππης ποτῶ. Λανθάνει δὲ ἀκράτῳ χρησάμενος τῷ φαρμάκῳ, καὶ τὸ φίλτρον εἰς μανίαν αἵρεται. Ταῦτα γάρ μοι χθὲς ὁ τοῦ Γοργίου θεράπων διηγῆσατο, ὃς ἔτυχεν αὐτῷ συστρατευσάμενος ἐπὶ τοὺς βουκόλους· ἔσωσε δὲ αὐτόν, ὡς εἰκός, ὑπὲρ ἡμῶν ἡ Τύχη. Αἰτεῖ δὲ χρυσοὺς τέσσαρας ὑπὲρ τῆς ἰάσεως· ἔχει γάρ, φησὶν, ἑτέρου φαρμάκου σκευήν, δι' οὗ λύσει τὸ πρότερον.”

I was stunned, thinking the man must be a divine emissary. “You wouldn’t happen to be Gorgias, would you?” “Of course not,” he replied. “My name is Chaereas: Gorgias is the man who has ruined you.” I shuddered all the more at this. “What do you mean, ruined?” I asked. “And who is this Gorgias? Some deity revealed his name to me last night: interpret the divine revelation for me.” “Gorgias,” he said, “was an Egyptian soldier. He is now no longer: the Herdsmen did for him. He was smitten with desire for your wife. Being skilled in herbs and potions, he prepared a love-drug, and persuaded your Egyptian servant to take it and pour it in with Leucippe’s drink; but he inadvertently served it unmixed, and the potion brought on her madness. Gorgias’ servant recounted all this to me yesterday: as it happened, he accompanied him on the expedition against the Herdsmen, but Fortune, so it seems, saved him for us. He is asking for four gold pieces in exchange for the antidote (he has another drug prepared that can overturn the first one).” (4.15)

As in the case of Menelaus, one of the first things we learn about Gorgias here is that he is Egyptian. He is also described as a φύσει φαρμακεύς who prepares a φάρμακον ἔρωτος, also called a φίλτρον. While φύσει could simply mean “by nature,” the possibility that it instead means “by origin,” i.e. as an Egyptian, is compelling here. Furthermore, the drug reaches the mouth of Leucippe not from Gorgias directly but from an assistant, who is also Egyptian. The Egyptian origin of both these men is stressed through repetition of Αἰγύπτιος. The audience has yet another Egyptian magician on its hands as well as an Egyptian assistant, and, after the magic-based deception perpetrated by the Egyptian Menelaus, the reader is on guard against further magical trickery. Unlike Menelaus, however, Gorgias does not strive to deceive an audience through clever showmanship. Instead he genuinely attempts to win Leucippe through his love potion. Because of the magical incompetence of himself and his assistant, however, Egyptian magic turns out to be a failure. Rather than trapping Leucippe in deep passion for Gorgias, the unmixed drug poisons her and plunges her into madness.

Ancient erotic magic has several ways to lure a lover.⁶¹ In addition to potions, like the one Gorgias deploys here, binding spells or (*philtro*)*katadesmoi* metaphorically bind the victim to the will of the magician or one on whose behalf the magician is working. Although Gorgias attempts to bewitch Leucippe with a potion, the fact that she is literally bound to her bed reads as a physical manifestation of the metaphorical binding achieved by *katadesmoi*. This is marked by Clitophon's fixation on Leucippe's bindings, expressed through his continual lamentations about them (4.9-10), which include a desire to himself become her bonds (4.9). In addition, when Leucippe wakes from her madness, she asks who bound her (4.17). But this "binding" is a failure; what was meant to be metaphorical is rendered literal, attaching Leucippe physically to her bed rather than sexually and/or emotionally to Gorgias.

Here the power of "magic" spins out of control. The antidote that is administered to Leucippe at the suggestion of Chaereas, marked as Asclepian rather than Egyptian and barbarian like the Gorgianic φάρμακον (4.17), drives out her illness. Chaereas has saved the day, liberating Leucippe from her bonds. But the liberation of the antidote is only temporary. Chaereas uses it as part of his own sexual pursuit of Leucippe. At the beginning of Book Five, after the couple arrives in Alexandria with the help of their "friend" Chaereas, there is a revelation. Achilles writes,

Ὁ γὰρ Χαιρέας πρὸ πολλοῦ τῆς Λευκίππης ἐλάνθανεν ἐρῶν καὶ διὰ τοῦτο μεμηνύκει τὸ φάρμακον, ἅμα μὲν ἀφορμὴν οἰκειότητος ἑαυτῷ θηρώμενος, ἅμα δὲ καὶ ἑαυτῷ σώζων τὴν κόρην.

This is what happened. Chaereas had long ago conceived a secret passion for Leucippe, and this was the reason why he had made the revelation about the drug, both as an opportunity to snare us into his friendship and as a means of rescuing the girl for himself. (5.3)

Chaereas' anti-love-potion, therefore, offered on the pretense of saving Leucippe is, in truth, intended to free her from one bond just to entangle her in another. Although initially the first φάρμακον seems dangerous and the second salutary, the outcome is quite different. The second drug, too, is a love potion of sorts, enabling Chaereas to make an attempt on Leucippe's chastity and dragging the couple back into disaster.

⁶¹ For an overview, see Faraone 1999.

Yet another way this magical scene is more-than-meets-the-eye is in the name of its primary actor. Gorgias, the Egyptian soldier and failed magician, shares the name of the famous 5th century Sicilian sophist. This is no coincidence.⁶² Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen* is one of the most thorough early treatments of magic in the Greek world. It is not really about magic, though, but the persuasive potential of λόγος. According to Gorgias, Helen cannot be blamed for leaving Agamemnon for Paris and starting the Trojan War if she was persuaded by the gods, force, love, or λόγος, which is so powerful that it can bewitch like a φάρμακον. In talking about the incantatory effect of words, Gorgias writes,

αἱ γὰρ ἔνθεοι διὰ λόγων ἐπῳδαὶ ἐπαγωγοὶ ἡδονῆς, ἀπαγωγοὶ λύπης γίνονται· συγγιγνομένη γὰρ τῇ δόξῃ τῆς ψυχῆς ἡ δύναμις τῆς ἐπῳδῆς ἔθελξε καὶ ἔπεισε καὶ μετέστησεν αὐτὴν γοητεία. γοητείας δὲ καὶ μαγείας δισσαὶ τέχναι εὖρηνται, αἱ εἰσι ψυχῆς ἀμαρτήματα καὶ δόξης ἀπατήματα.

Inspired incantations through speeches are inducers of pleasure and reducers of sorrow; by intercourse with the mind's belief, the power of incantation enchants and persuades and moves it by sorcery. Two arts of sorcery and magic have been invented; they are deviations of mind and deceptions of belief.⁶³ (10)

And he continues...

ὥσπερ γὰρ τῶν φαρμάκων ἄλλους ἄλλα χυμοὺς ἐκ τοῦ σώματος ἐξάγει, καὶ τὰ μὲν νόσου τὰ δὲ βίου παύει, οὕτω καὶ τῶν...τῶν λόγων οἱ μὲν ἐλύπησαν, οἱ δὲ ἔτερψαν, οἱ δὲ ἐφόβησαν, οἱ δὲ εἰς θάρσος κατέστησαν τοὺς ἀκούοντας, οἱ δὲ πειθοῖ τινα κακὴ τὴν ψυχὴν ἐξεφαρμάκευσαν καὶ ἐγοήτευσαν.

Just as different drugs (φάρμακον) expel different humours from the body, and some stop it from being ill but others stop it from living, so too some speeches cause sorrow, some cause pleasure, some cause fear, some give the hearers confidence, some drug and bewitch the mind with an evil persuasion. (14)

⁶² Scholars have pointed out the shared name (e.g. Whitmarsh 2001) but have not advanced an argument about the meaning.

⁶³ Text and translation of Gorgias' *Encomium of Helen* are from MacDowell 1982. For a brief discussion of Gorgias in the history of ancient magic, see Braarvig 1999, 35-37. For a more complete analysis, see Romilly 1975.

Gorgias assimilates the uncanny power of words to another power that cannot be rationally explained, that of magic. According to him, both speech and magic have the same τέχνη, the ability to create illusions that lead the mind/soul astray (ψυχῆς ἀμαρτήματα) and deceive one's beliefs (δόξης ἀπατήματα). In *L&C*, Achilles brings to life what was merely theoretical in Gorgias. Furthermore, the final line, stating that some speeches drug and bewitch (ἐξεφαρμάκευσαν καὶ ἐγοήτευσαν) the mind, is echoed in Achilles' use of magical language as a metaphor for sexual and verbal persuasion.

Neither Gorgias nor Achilles is interested in magic as such but in the power of rhetoric to shape and control the world and the distance between appearances and reality. And Achilles' debt to the sophist extends beyond the name of the Egyptian general. His writing displays several traits frequently described as "Gorgianic," including: "antithesis, alliteration, homoeoteleuton, hyperbaton, isocolia."⁶⁴ Achilles uses these formal traits, borrowed from Gorgias, as part of the persuasion of narrative but takes them further. For Gorgias, language can bewitch *like* magic. In Achilles' novel, in contrast, language surpasses magic's ability to bewitch. The joke here seems to be on the Egyptian Gorgias: if only he had taken the advice of his Sicilian predecessor and used rhetoric rather than magic! Just as Gorgias demonstrates the supernatural power of λόγος in his *Encomium*, Achilles uses his "magic" narrative to manipulate and, to some extent, control his readers, luring them into his power.⁶⁵ Furthermore, by "killing off" his character Gorgias, Achilles cleverly suggests that he himself has surpassed the sophist, positioning himself as the new rhetorical master and offering an updated theory on magic and rhetoric. Achilles' Gorgias represents the failure of actual magic but the success of literary magic.

Magic and Metafiction: Who is the master magician in L&C?

As I have been suggesting, by demystifying magic and equating it to persuasive language, Achilles assigns it a power very like that of fiction itself: both use words that, when strung together by a skilled practitioner, have the ability to control the course of events and create deceptive illusions. "Magic" in Achilles' novel, then, becomes a locus for self-aware reflection on fiction, fiction writing, and fiction

⁶⁴ Vilborg 1962, 16. Achilles' Gorgianic style is also acknowledged by Morales 2001, xxii, who adds *apheleia* and *asyndeton* to Vilborg's list.

⁶⁵ If we take this just one step further, perhaps the novel could be read as an encomium to Leucippe, Achilles' substitute Helen. After all, despite the power of the gods, force, love, λόγος, and even φάρμακον, Leucippe remains a virgin! Or at least our author leads us to believe that she does.

reading. Like other authors of the ancient novel, Achilles' metafictional impulse has long been recognized.⁶⁶ For example, it has been suggested that Achilles characterizes Clitophon in such a way as to explore the dynamic between the novel's author, first-person narrator, *actor*, and reader.⁶⁷ Likewise, *L&C* can be read as an extended experiment with the boundaries of the genre, including the fact that Achilles supplies a mismatched frame at the beginning and end of the text, thereby encouraging his readers to question whether Leucippe and Clitophon get the happy ending they may expect from such a novel.⁶⁸ In other words, Achilles' depictions of magic can be seen as part of the novel's larger preoccupation with theorizing about fiction.

In the *L&C* scene depicting Menelaus' magical charade, Achilles underscores the relationship between magic and fiction by positioning Menelaus as a stand-in for himself. Menelaus drives the plot through his behind-the-scenes machinations, performs an expert dramatic magical performance, and controls the concealment and revelation of information just as the author does. Likewise, Clitophon, as a witness to the spectacle and interpreter of the action, stands in the place of Achilles' reader.⁶⁹ In this role, Clitophon models multiple possible reactions to Leucippe's false sacrifice and revivification. It is through Clitophon that we see the "right" and the "wrong" response to magic and, therefore, to fiction itself. When Clitophon, the bandits, and the Egyptian army witness Leucippe's sacrifice, it is necessary that Menelaus' performance (and Achilles' writing) be masterful in order to be persuasive. At the same time, it is critical that the audience suspend its disbelief. Without the performer and audience behaving properly, the entire farce would fall apart and Leucippe – along with Menelaus and Satyrus – would die "for real." But Clitophon, in trying to commit suicide, takes this suspension of disbelief entirely too far and models the dangers of fiction to the unsophisticated.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ For an overview of self-reflexivity in the Greek novel, see Morgan 1993, *passim*, and Fusillo 2009. Fusillo suggests that, in Achilles Tatius' period of novel writing, "this self-reflexivity turns out to be an implicit theory: an aesthetic reflexion [sic] upon the hermeneutics of narration" (166).

⁶⁷ Whitmarsh 2003.

⁶⁸ Repath 2005.

⁶⁹ Although he is admittedly more of a second reader than a first on the grounds that he is reporting what he saw retrospectively rather than in real time and, therefore, is also in control of how and when the reader gets information that he himself already has.

⁷⁰ As Ni Mheallaigh 2014, 78, states in her discussion of metafiction in Lucian: "...we are all familiar with the figure of fun who is the dupe of such literary deception rather than its accomplice, and who believes the illusion rather too literally: several ancient anecdotes record literal-minded belief which expose an inability to read or interpret art properly, from the birds who peck at the tantalizingly realistic grapes in Zeuxis' painting, to the funny interventions in tragedy by spectators who are outraged by the violence which is being

In his use of magic as a platform for investigating the role of truth, lies, and (dis)belief in prose fiction, Achilles seems a product of his time, if not his more narrow sub-genre of the “ideal” Greek romance. Three fiction writers roughly contemporary with Achilles, Antonius Diogenes, Lucian, and Apuleius, also use magic and the supernatural as space in which to probe similar issues. For instance, John Morgan has suggested that the magic book of the wizard Paapis in Antonius Diogenes’ *Incredible Things Beyond Thule* “inscribe[s] the author’s own power to control his fictional world and make ‘unbelievable’ things happen, so correlating the powers of magician and novelist to shift the paradigms of normality.”⁷¹ Lucian’s *Philopseudes* – his “most overtly metafictional dialogue”⁷² – likewise explores the interplay between supernatural, magical tales and fiction. Karen Ni Mheallaigh has richly analyzed this text in terms that have influenced my reading of Achilles. She describes magic as a metaphor “used in *Philopseudes* for the bewitching effects of lies.”⁷³ This is similar to magic in *L&C*, although Achilles’ presentation is more subtle insofar as there is no explicitly dramatized debate about when and how to believe as there is in Lucian’s text. Instead, readers are left to their own interpretative devices based on how each magical scenario unfolds.

Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* includes an examination of truth and lies in storytelling and the (misleading?) role of autopsy in discerning the difference, which is similar to *L&C*. In Book One of the *Met.*, Lucius uses his experience as a witness of one unbelievable act – a young man’s limber ascent of a sword that is deep in another man’s gullet – to corroborate the truth behind a stranger’s account of magical phenomenon, as if all unbelievable occurrences were equally plausible. Wytse Keulen reads the description of the sword-swallower and circulator as “symbolic of the literary activity in which the novel’s author and his reader engage.”⁷⁴ He goes on to say,

“Through the text we see a sophist treating his audience to an astonishing performance of rhetorical prestidigitation, representing the stylistic and rhetorical tastes of his time.... We as readers of this novel may also be invited to

portrayed on stage. Art, poetry and tragedy are deceptive inasmuch as they provide illusions, but they do so without the intention to deceive; being deceived by art in the way one might be deceived by lies constitutes a misunderstanding of what art sets out to do. In this case, the skill lies, rather, in recognizing the deception and savouring the artifice with which these illusions are constructed.” Clitophon clearly lacks this particular skill.

⁷¹ Morgan 2009, 130.

⁷² Ni Mheallaigh 2014, 72.

⁷³ Ni Mheallaigh 2014, 90.

⁷⁴ Keulen 2003, 161.

perceive our own role in an equally negative light; we are being confronted with the fact that we also are swallowers of fiction.”⁷⁵

This reading of Apuleius’ literary project can equally apply to Achilles and Achilles’ readers may experience similar anxiety regarding their position vis-à-vis the fictionality of the text.

Leucippe’s sacrifice and reanimation, then, can be read as an interrogation of the contract between writer and audience member (or reader) that was theorized, at least about tragedy, in the ancient world. Again we turn to the sophist Gorgias, who, according to Plutarch, asserted that for a tragic poet and audience “the deceiver is more just than the non-deceiver, and the deceived is wiser than the undeceived. The deceiver is more just because he has fulfilled his promise; the deceiver is wiser, because it takes a measure of sensibility to be accessible to the pleasures of literature.”⁷⁶ Gorgias’ theory about the pact between “deceiver” and “deceived” is apt in this scene, which, as noted, is among the most dramatic and tragically allusive in the novel – from its incorporation of theatrical props to Leucippe’s implicit comparison to the many Iphigenias, particularly that of *Iphigenia in Tauris*. Additionally, as grounds on which to examine belief and non-belief, Achilles selects an especially suitable tragic heroine in Iphigenia. After all, her story branches in two quite opposite directions – death and life. What to expect? What to believe, when the narrative can turn out in such contrary ways? In the language of their dialogue, Clitophon and Menelaus emphasize the way in which belief and disbelief play out in fiction as well as the role of autopsy in discerning what to trust (3.17 – βλέψας, ἀπιστεῖ, μαρτύρησον, ἀπέβλεπον, θέαμα, βλέπω, ἐθεασάμην, ἰδοῦ, ἀληθινόν; 3.18 – ὄψει, πιστεύσας, ἀληθῶς γὰρ ὤμην..., etc.). This conversation between “writer” and “reader” influences the actual reader’s experience of the scene and, in turn, the novel as a whole.

As is typical of Achilles, however, this compact with his readers takes a devious turn and even the savvy ones, i.e. those who allow themselves to be deceived, are ultimately taken advantage of.⁷⁷ We are supposed to believe what we “see,” otherwise we are performing our role in bad faith, refusing to participate in

⁷⁵ Keulen 2003, 167.

⁷⁶ *Moralia* 348c, as cited from Russell and Winterbottom by Laird 1993, 172, who says that Gorgias’ statement “could just as well have implications for other kinds of story, including ‘prose fiction.’” Gorgias’ theory on belief and disbelief in tragedy is also discussed by Ní Mheallaigh 2014 and Keulen 2003 in reference to Lucian and Apuleius, respectively. This may be another reason that Gorgias’ name makes an appearance in the character of the Egyptian general who poisons Leucippe.

⁷⁷ Bartsch 1989, esp. Ch. 2, discusses a similar dynamic in the way Achilles uses the ekphrasis of Andromeda and Prometheus leading up to the “sacrifice” of Leucippe.

the fun of fiction. And so we do; we indulge the conceit that Achilles can make anything happen in his fictional world, including killing his female lead. We believe it too because, like Clitophon, who freezes with shock, and the soldiers of the Egyptian army, who alternately cry out and avert their eyes (3.15), we have witnessed it ourselves and have no information that would destabilize this conclusion.⁷⁸ The same holds true for the scene that follows. During Menelaus' pseudo-magical raising of Leucippe from death, until Clitophon begins to insert retrospective commentary, we share his point of view as he oscillates between terror and joy in Leucippe's magical reanimation. But ultimately our suspension of disbelief, undertaken voluntarily as part of fiction-reading, backfires. Although we have "seen it with our own eyes," we are utterly incorrect about the reality of the scene and cannot grasp the truth until Menelaus and Satyrus explain it to us directly. This is the novelist's ultimate bait and switch. In describing the pleasure of fiction, Morgan writes that the reader,

"is made to savour the fact that fiction enables him to believe things that in another context – reality – would be incredible; but because he knows that in the world of the fiction the incredible is true he is also placed in a position of detached superiority to those who cannot see the truth."⁷⁹

For Achilles' reader, though, detached superiority quickly yields to embarrassment as the events for which disbelief has been suspended – here Leucippe's death and rebirth – prove false, while things that perhaps seem real outside of the novel, such as magic, are undermined within its pages.

⁷⁸ As stated by Morgan 1993, 214, in reference to Heliodorus: "...figures in the narrative are employed to enact the response elicited from the reader inside the world of the fiction, thus providing him with a focus of identification. But, by becoming, as it were, part of an audience inside the fiction, the reader finds that, by analogy with his fictional counterparts, he is implicitly responding to a visually perceived reality rather than to a verbally mediated fiction." The only information that could potentially destabilize the reader's experience of Leucippe's "death" is the generic expectation that the heroine live to experience the happy ending. Repath 2005 discusses what can be drawn from Clitophon's apparent melancholy at the start of the novel, the absence of Leucippe, and the mismatched beginning and ending and argues that it is part of a strategy to subvert existing generic conventions. It is my feeling that readers are positioned for a genre-bending unhappy ending by Clitophon's sadness in the beginning, which opens space to believe in Leucippe's false deaths.

⁷⁹ Morgan 1993, 217.

So, if *Leucippe and Clitophon* is filled with the failure and falsification of magical practice and the exaltation of the uncanny power of performance, rhetoric, and narrative, who is the most effective “magician” in Achilles’ text? Why, the author himself, of course, who just so happens to be from Egypt.⁸⁰

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⁸⁰ Achilles’ Alexandrian origins are stated in the *Suda* and confirmed in his manuscripts and in the Byzantine testimonia (Whitmarsh and Morales 2001, p. xii-iii).

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