

Novelistic nights

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Objektyp: **Article**

Zeitschrift: **Entretiens sur l'Antiquité classique**

Band (Jahr): **64 (2018)**

PDF erstellt am: **12.07.2024**

Persistenter Link: <https://doi.org/10.5169/seals-816257>

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VII

KOEN DE TEMMERMAN

NOVELISTIC NIGHTS¹

1. Introduction

The term ‘ancient novel’ is anachronistic and refers to a number of Greek and Latin fictional prose narratives of which most are now dated to the first few centuries of the common era.² In this paper, I will be concerned, first and foremost, with the extant Greek novels (the so-called “Big Five”), which arguably form the clearest thematic sub-group within the corpus: love stories with a more or less recognizable plot pattern of falling in love, separation, reunion and happy ending. These novels are Chariton’s *Callirhoe* (ca. 50 AD), Xenophon of Ephesus’ *Ephesiaca* (ca. 100), Achilles Tatius’ *Leucippe and Clitophon* (ca. 150), Longus’ *Daphnis and Chloe* (ca. 200) and Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica* (ca. 250 or 350). On the Latin side, I deal with Petronius’ *Satyrica* (fragmentarily preserved, 2nd half of the 1st cent. AD), Apuleius’ *Metamorphoses* (mid 2nd cent.) and the

¹ I thank Angelos Chaniotis for his invitation to contribute. I also thank him and all other contributors to the *Entretiens* for rich discussion and helpful comments. Sincere thanks also go to Pierre Ducrey and Gary Vachicouras for their generous hospitality at the Fondation Hardt; to Danny Praet for bibliographical suggestions; and to Olivier Demerre for insightful comments on an earlier draft of this chapter. It was written under the European Union’s Seventh Framework Programme (FP7/2007-2013) with the support of the European Research Council Starting Grant n. 337344.

² Introductions to the genre are WHITMARSH (2008) and CUEVA / BYRNE (2014). The standard English translation of (much of) the Greek corpus is REARDON (2008).

anonymous *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri* (possibly 5th or 6th century and probably going back to a Greek original). Furthermore, I will occasionally draw attention to Greek novels that have come down to us fragmentarily, either in papyrus fragments (e.g. *Metiochus and Parthenope*, dated to the 1st cent. BC) or Byzantine summaries.³

Although the corpus in modern scholarship sails under one broad, generic banner, its texts are, in fact, diverse in many ways. This is no less true with regard to how they represent the night and nocturnal phenomena. There are quantitative differences, of course, both in the amount of nocturnal time used as temporal setting (either in the frame narrative or in embedded ones)⁴ and in the extent to which characters and narrators reflect upon the night and associated concepts. The forms of reference too differ considerably: in some cases explicit references to sunset/night/dawn/day clearly mark the beginning and/or end of nights, while in others a nocturnal setting is simply implied and may or may not have a clearly identifiable beginning and/or end in the text. Although the novels broadly echo rhetorical guidelines on the alternation between day and night as a structural aspect of narrative representation of time,⁵ precise chronological reconstructions of long periods of time in

³ The fragments are edited by STEPHENS / WINKLER (1995). On these texts see also MORGAN (1998). The so-called “fringe novels” (such as the *Alexander Romance*, *Life of Aesop*, Philostratus’ *Life of Apollonius*, and the *Apocryphal Acts of the Apostles*) remain outside the scope of this paper for reasons of space.

⁴ What we have left of Lollianus’ *Phoenicica* makes this novel perhaps the “darkest” of the entire corpus in the sense that three of the four short fragments narrate episodes explicitly set at night (νυκτὸς πρ[.], A.1 recto 16; ἐπ]εὶ δὲ νύκτες μέσαι ἦσαν, B.1 verso 23; νυκτὸς ἔτι, *P.Oxy.* 1368, c. II, 16). The *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyri*, on the other hand, has only one or two nocturnal scenes. Heliodorus’ novel *Aethiopica* is different again in that one single night in the frame narrative extends over almost two books (3, 4, 9-5, 3, 2) as it accommodates a narration of a long, embedded story.

⁵ See THEON *Prog.* 79, 4 Sp. II on this alternation (νυκτὸς οὔσης ἢ μεθ’ ἡμέραν) as a constitutive element of narrative (διήγημα).

terms of days and nights are usually not possible because of the many iterative and durative phrases.⁶

Of course, novelistic nights are not only used as a structural device; they are also semantically invested in many ways and tap into a large web of associations. They are times of discussion, deliberation and solitary thought; laments; banquets; military activity and tomb robbing; travelling, storm, shipwreck and drowning at sea; story-telling; slave-revolts; adultery (real or alleged), seduction, erotic persuasion and negotiation; flight, imprisonment and escape; divine revelation (notably in dreams) and intervention, magic, necromancy, metamorphosis and religious initiation; recognition and misrecognition; transvestism; oath-swearing; all-night vigils/festivals; and different forms of violence (abduction, murder, human sacrifice, attempted rape, suicide (both attempted and successful), and destruction of property).⁷

This paper explores from a narratological point of view some of the most salient aspects of novelistic representations of the night. How are nights and nocturnal experiences constructed and connoted, and by whom? Who perceives the night and how? What forms do such perceptions take and to what effect? In answering these questions, I argue that ancient novelists consciously construct the night as a narrative trope and capitalize on it in order to reach specific effects. Since to the best of my knowledge no study of the night in the ancient novel currently exists, I have chosen to provide a first road into the topic with a paper that covers a number of night-related aspects rather than offering a more detailed reading of just one.

⁶ E.g. X. EPH. 1, 12, 3 (“They stayed on the island for a few days”). HAGG (1971) 32-41, 53-58, 68-76 does the math for Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, and Achilles Tatius. Heliodorus is quite exceptional in providing a clear-cut alternation of six consecutive nights and days in books 1 to 6 (and another series of three in book 7).

⁷ See also the contributions of WILSON and CARLA-UHINK in this volume, on the association of the night with violence in (other genres of) ancient literature.

2. Real and literary nights: extra-textual conventions and narrative *topoi*

In the opening chapter of this book, Angelos Chaniotis observes that “[a]n author’s decision to explicitly mention the night as the background of an event or to create a nighttime setting for a fictional narrative is intrinsically connected with widespread perceptions of the night” (p. 9). A good example of such a connection is offered by the famous first lines of Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*, which begins *in medias res* at the “smile of daybreak” (Ἡμέρας διαγελώσης, 1, 1, 1): a group of brigands peer over a mountain top overlooking the Heracleotic mouth of the Nile and witness what evidently is the result of a carnage that has taken place at the banks of the river. Their inability to understand the scene in front of them reflects that of the reader, who will be filled in gradually throughout the first half of the novel. The passage tantalizingly foregrounds the liminal moment between night and day as a time that separates the unknown and mysterious that has taken place at night from what is perceivable through visual observation under the light of day. It draws on widespread associations of the night⁸ and at the same time makes them functional to the narrative architecture of the novel.

Occasionally the novels themselves are explicit about the importance of widespread, extra-textual conventions about and connotations of the night. One of these is the nocturnal exacerbation of suffering. In the *Aethiopica*, for example, the two protagonists are taken captive by brigands and transported to their headquarters in the Nile Delta, where they arrive at sunset (Ἦδη δὲ ἡλίου πρὸς δυσμὰς ἰόντος, 1, 7, 1) and are eventually left alone to sleep. The narrator describes how they experience that night:

“Silence (Σιγῆς) enveloped the marsh. It was the time of the first watch (νυκτὸς εἰς πρώτην φυλακὴν προελθούσης). For the girl and her companion the absence of people (τὴν ἐρημίαν) to

⁸ On night and secrecy/mystery/lack of knowledge more generally in Graeco-Roman culture, see BECKER (2013) 583-585.

interrupt them presented a good opportunity for voicing their sorrows. In my opinion (οἴμαι), the night (τῆς νυκτός) aggravated their misery, for there was no sight or sound (οὐδεμιᾶς οὔτε ἀκοῆς οὔτε ὀψεως) to distract them, and they could devote themselves solely to their grief.” (Hld. 1, 8, 1)⁹

In this passage, the impact of the night on the disposition of the protagonists is made subject to a specific pose of the narrator, who claims uncertainty and speculates (οἴμαι) about it. As John Morgan has shown, this pose of uncertainty imitates a historiographical mode of writing that surfaces throughout Heliodorus’ novel in order to enhance the story’s realism.¹⁰ In this passage, the narrator stages himself as drawing on extra-textual, commonsensible knowledge about the emotional impact of nocturnal environments on people. He does so in order to create the illusion that such knowledge allows him full access to the psychology behind the behaviour of the characters about whom he narrates. In the process, different, widespread associations of the night (silence, absence of people, darkness)¹¹ are not just foregrounded but also explicitly presented as plausible catalysts for the exacerbation of suffering to which the protagonists are subject.

Such introductions of pockets of non-fiction in the fictional world are particularly tangible when they come in the form of maxims.¹² Like Heliodorus, Achilles Tatius dwells on the exacerbation of suffering at night but he elaborates it at length in gnomic discourse drawing on medical terminology.¹³ The hero of the novel, Clitophon, narrates how he fell in love at first

⁹ Here and elsewhere, translations of Heliodorus are taken from MORGAN (2008a), slightly adapted where appropriate.

¹⁰ MORGAN (1982) 227-232, who mentions (but does not discuss) this passage (228).

¹¹ On isolation at night, for example, see ANDERSON (1956); on nocturnal silence, BELTRÁN SERRA (2010).

¹² On maxims in the Greek novel, see HÄGG (1971) 107, MORGAN (1993) 202-203, and WHITMARSH (2003) 193.

¹³ PANAYOTAKIS (1998) discusses another novelistic passage (in Apuleius) where medical discourse conceptualizes nocturnal behaviour; on medical representations of nocturnal phenomena in general, see WÖHRLE (1995) 73-77.

sight with Leucippe, the heroine, and as a consequence was unable to sleep at night. He explains that “it is a rule of nature (ἔστι μὲν γὰρ φύσει) that both diseases and bodily wounds are more painful by night (νυκτί χαλεπώτερα) and besiege us all the more (μᾶλλον) when we are resting (ἡσυχάζουσι)” (1, 6, 2).¹⁴ This maxim is supported by a long elaboration that further proclaims general truths about night and day (among other things):¹⁵ it is stated, for example, that while during the day (ἐν ἡμέρᾳ) the eyes and ears are absorbed in many activities and help to mitigate illness by giving the soul no leisure in which to suffer (1, 6, 2-4), at night all the emotions dormant during the day burst out (πάντα γὰρ ἐξεγείρεται τότε τὰ τέως κοιμώμενα): “the woes of the grieving, the cares of the troubled, the fears of the endangered, the fire of lovers” (τοῖς πενθοῦσιν αἱ λῦπαι, τοῖς μεριμνῶσιν αἱ φροντίδες, τοῖς κινδυνεύουσιν οἱ φόβοι, τοῖς ἐρῶσι τὸ πῦρ). Not only does this passage (again) articulate explicitly the existence of universals about nocturnal experience, it also foregrounds them (again) as heuristically relevant to the narrator: Clitophon assumes the existence of a universal law about the night (it intensifies all emotions), which he applies, by deduction, to his own, specific situation (his love is intensified at night) in order to come to grips with the emotions that he experienced as a character in the story that he is narrating.

At the same time, Clitophon’s discussion resonates profoundly with generic codification. What he describes is, of course, a clear case of love-induced insomnia, one of the many narrative *topoi* in the genre¹⁶ — and one of the few where the night is implied by definition.¹⁷ The *topos* is nowhere better explained than in

¹⁴ Translations from Achilles Tatius are taken from WHITMARSH (2001) and slightly adapted where appropriate.

¹⁵ On the specific form of these and other gnomic elaborations in Achilles Tatius, see DE TEMMERMAN (2014) 183-184 (with references to *progymnasmata* treatises).

¹⁶ See LÉTOUBLON (1993) for an extensive overview and discussion of these *topoi*.

¹⁷ E.g. CHARIT. 1, 1, 8; 6, 7, 1; ACH. TAT. 1, 6, 2; X. EPH. 1, 3, 4; LONGUS 1, 13, 6; 2, 7, 4; and HLD. 4, 7, 7. The *topos* has a long literary history: see

Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, where Calasiris realizes (just like the reader) that Chariclea's insomnia is part of a cluster of symptoms of lovesickness. His insight is contrasted with the opinion of her adoptive father Charicles, who is at a loss as to what causes her distress. He does observe that much of her suffering takes place during sleepless nights (τὴν νύκτα πᾶσαν ἄυπνον διαγαγούσης, 3, 18, 2; τῆς παρηκούσης νυκτός, 4, 5, 2) but is easily fooled by Calasiris into believing that she suffers from a real illness. It takes a learned physician to explain to Charicles that, in fact, "inexplicable insomnia" (ἀπροφάσιστον ἀγρυπνίαν) is one of the symptoms of lovesickness (4, 7, 7). It is difficult not to read this passage in a metaliterary key: it foregrounds and, indeed, explains one of the main generic codes regarding both the representation of love and lovesickness and the role of the night in it.

The opposition between night and day to which we have seen Clitophon draw attention, is often articulated by the plot lines underlying individual episodes: when Artaxerxes, the Persian king in Chariton's novel, has fallen in love with Callirhoe, his eunuch tries and persuades him to turn away from his passion. He is successful at first (Παραυτίκα μὲν οὖν ἔπεισε) but when night comes (νυκτὸς γενομένης) the king once more succumbs to passion (6, 7, 1). In Xenophon's novel, the protagonists themselves aim to uphold the distinction between night and day: when they have fallen in love, they attempt to limit their amorous suffering to the night and reinstall normality into their lives during the day. Habrocomes goes off to his usual (συνήθη) exercises and Anthia worships the goddess as usual (ἐξ ἔθους). But no matter how hard they try, their nocturnal suffering does impact their daytime occupations: the night wears out their bodies so much (τὰ σώματα ἐκ τῆς παρελθούσης νυκτὸς πεπονηκότα) that during the day their eyes are lifeless and their complexion has changed.¹⁸ Despite their efforts, the night does

FERNÁNDEZ CONTRERAS (2000) and MONTIGLIO (2016) — only the latter of these discusses the novels.

¹⁸ Translations from Xenophon of Ephesus are taken from ANDERSON (2008) and slightly modified where appropriate.

leave a permanent, visible impact during the day; it cannot be contained that easily.

Another night-related concept to recount love is robbery. Real robberies are usually set at night in the novels,¹⁹ a simple fact that Tlepolemus (in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*) exploits when he pretends to be a robber and fabricates a story about a nocturnal raid (*nocte promotā*, 7, 7) in order to construct a reliable self-characterization in front of his audience (of real robbers). In Apuleius' story of Amor and Psyche, real and metaphorical robbery merge in order to characterize Amor: he is introduced as having a disdain for law and order and running about at night through people's houses (*per alienas domos nocte discurrens*) armed with flames and arrows (4, 30). Although part of this description is in line with the traditional iconography of Amor,²⁰ it also resonates with the instances of real, nocturnal robbery that immediately precede this story (4, 8; 4, 9-21).²¹ Against this background, Amor is metaphorically presented as the erotic equivalent of the real, nocturnal robber. This equation of Amor and robbery is not unique²² but Apuleius uses nocturnal imagery specifically to drive the point home.

Some novelists build further on the association between love and robbery in general, and on that between the night and abduction in particular. Achilles Tatius has Leucippe present her own elopement from home as the abduction of a willing victim: she herself invites Satyrus to "snatch her away" from home (ἐξαρπάσαστέ με, 2, 30, 1) — which will eventually materialize during a nocturnal flight (περὶ πρώτας νυκτὸς φυλακῆς, 2, 31, 3). In Heliodorus' novel, the hero and heroine likewise elope together at night in a scene that may hark back to Achilles

¹⁹ E.g. CHARIT. 1, 9, 1; X. EPH. 3, 8, 3 (both are nocturnal tomb robberies); APUL. *Met.* 3, 28; 4, 22 (main narrative); 4, 9-21 (embedded narrative).

²⁰ LIMC 3.1 s.v. Eros, 975-976 and LIMC 3.2 s.v. Eros, 366-387 (on Eros with torches); LIMC 3.2 s.v. Eros, 332-361 (on Eros as bowman).

²¹ It is told, let us not forget, in the robbers' cave and addressed to a girl who has just been taken captive by them during a nocturnal raid (4, 22).

²² It surfaces in LONGUS too (Τὸ ἔρωτος ληστήριον, 1, 32, 4), and also immediately after a "real" robbery has taken place (i.e. Daphnis' abduction by pirates). On this equation, see TURNER (1960) 121.

Tatius. This elopement too is staged as a robbery: Theagenes and an armed band (ἔνοπλος κῶμος, 4, 17, 3) literally snatch away (ἀναρπάζουσιν, 4, 17, 4) Chariclea from her bedroom in the middle of the night (μέσαι νύκτες, 4, 17, 3) — a time chosen precisely as to cause greater alarm (4, 17, 5). The narrator is explicit that she has been informed beforehand and willingly submits to the violence (έκοῦσαν ὑφισταμένην, 4, 17, 4). Moreover, Chariclea's elopement, just like Leucippe's, is presented as an escape from parental control (it is engineered by Calasiris to take the heroine away from her Delphian adoptive father). A striking difference between the two episodes, however, is the motivation of the heroine: Chariclea's willingness to elope is inextricably bound up with her love for Theagenes. Calasiris informs her that if she is willing to elope with him before she is compelled to marry her foster-father's marriage candidate, she will marry Theagenes. Her answer leaves no doubt about what she really desires ("it is hard, even repugnant, to as much as speak of preferring another to Theagenes", 4, 13, 4). Leucippe, on the other hand, is conspicuously silent about her feelings for Clitophon and about whether or not they play any role at all in her decision to escape.²³ In the two novels, then, the motif of nocturnal abduction of the heroine is creatively reworked but this reworking in each case takes the characterization of the "abducted" heroine in a very different direction.

3. Describing the night: a nocturnal battle

Another type of violence set at night is the nocturnal battle.²⁴ Traditionally, battles offer occasion for description, and the description of nocturnal battles or *nyktomachiai* in particular is a stock example of what *progymnasmata* treatises identify as a

²³ In fact, she only insists that she wants to be taken away from her mother (2, 30, 1). On the profound questions surrounding the feelings of Achilles Tatius' heroine for the hero, see DE TEMMERMAN (2014) 187-202.

²⁴ On ancient night battles, both in reality and in literary representations, see DOWDEN (2010) 110-112.

mixed or compound ecphrasis: rather than focussing on one object, it describes “both how the battle is conducted and what the night is like”.²⁵ Longus capitalizes on progymnasmatic guidelines in his description of a nocturnal battle (2, 25, 3-4). When a number of pirates (who have abducted the heroine) spend the night in a boat at sea, Pan fools them into believing that they are being attacked. The narrator concludes his description of this event with the observation that “one might have thought one was watching a night-time battle (νυκτομαχίαν), but there was no foe there (οὐ παρόντων πολεμίων)”. As is well known, progymnasmatic doctrine consistently emphasizes the importance of visual power generated by descriptions, which should “vividly represent before one’s eyes what is being shown” (ὕπ’ ὄψιν ἄγων ἐναργῶς τὸ δηλούμενον, Nicol. *Prog.* 68, 8-9 Felten²⁶). Novelists are well-versed in rhetorical theory on ecphrasis,²⁷ one of the staples of the genre. Heliodorus, for example, describes a nocturnal fire through the eyes of two characters who have been under attack during a day-time battle that precedes (and causes) it.²⁸ This focalization is marked explicitly by the narrator (the two emerge from their hiding place and see [ὄρωσι] the island in the grip of the blaze) and is further underlined both by interpretations (the fire is referred to as a catastrophe; τὸ κακόν) and by words referring to their visual perception: the flames at first remain hidden (ἐλάνθανεν) to them because during day-time the visual perception of the fire (ἡ πυρὸς ὄψις, 2, 1, 1) is prevented by the sunlight; but after sunset (ἔδυσ καὶ νύκτα ἐπῆγεν) the flames take on “a glaring brilliance that lit the sky for miles around (πορρωτάτω διεφάνετο)”.

²⁵ APHTH. *Prog.* 47, 3-5 Sp. II on “compound” (συνεζευγμέναι) descriptions. See also PS.-HERMOG. *Prog.* 16, 21-22 Sp. II and THEON *Prog.* 119, 3-5 Sp. II on “mixed” (μικτή) ecphrasis.

²⁶ PS.-HERMOG. *Prog.* 16, 11-12 Sp. II, APHTH. *Prog.* 46, 15-16 Sp. II and THEON *Prog.* 118, 7-8 Sp. II use almost identical phrases.

²⁷ On ecphrasis in the novels, see BARTSCH (1989) and WEBB (2009) 178-185.

²⁸ MENZE (2017) 214-216 reads internal focalization in Heliodorus generally as contributing to the stylistic virtue of clarity (σαφήνεια); he does not discuss this passage.

Longus, on the other hand, describes the nocturnal battle itself. Since it is defined by darkness and absence of vision, this passage carefully constructs the effect of vividness through aural rather than visual references. Although the description starts, like Heliodorus', with a reference to the land ablaze with fire, it subsequently draws attention to the sounds that the pirates hear: "there came a noise (κτύπος ... ἤκούετο) of the splashing of oars Someone gave the call (Ἐβόα τις) to arms, another shouted (ἐκάλει) for the commander". This privileging of aural over visual perception departs from the usual, combined references to both visual and aural perceptions in ecphrases of events (such as a battle and a procession — another textbook example of ecphrasis²⁹ — in Hld. 1, 30, 1-3 and 3, 1, 3-4, 7 respectively³⁰). It foregrounds the nocturnal aspect of the scene and makes the reader's experience of it coincide with that of the pirates, who are literally in the dark about what is going on around them and depend entirely on their sense of hearing.

Another way for the narrator to underline the perceptual slipperiness of the nocturnal battle is the persistent language of illusion, appearance and semblance, which highlights the impossibility of referring to them in terms of hard facts:

"all the land suddenly seemed (ἐδόκει) ablaze with fire ... there came a noise ... as if (ὡς) a great fleet were sailing in to the attack ... one man appeared (ἐδόκει) to have been wounded, one lay on the ground in a semblance of death (σχῆμα ... νεκροῦ μιμούμενος)."

This recurrent emphasis on uncertainty, illusion and the absence of correct, factual knowledge resonates with Thucydides' descriptions of nocturnal battles at Plataea (2, 2-5) and in Sicily (7, 43-44), which are mentioned in the *progymnasmata*

²⁹ NICOL. *Prog.* 68, 16-17 FELTEN singles out "processions" (πανηγύρεις) as objects of ecphrasis.

³⁰ On types of perception in both episodes, see MENZE (2017) 197, 241-242. He erroneously refers to the battle as nocturnal (192-193); in fact, evening draws in only in 1, 33, 4.

as examples of *nyktomachiai*. In the Sicilian battle, Thucydides develops an *a fortiori* argument to reflect explicitly on how clouded representations of night-time battles inevitably are:

“Events are clearer in daytime operations, but even then the participants have no overall picture, but only a vague knowledge of what was going on in their own particular area. In a night battle ... how could anyone be certain of anything?” (Thuc. 7, 44).

Thucydides, to be sure, addresses a heuristic problem that night-time battles pose to himself as a historiographer; but at the same time, he traces it back to the ignorance of the observers on the ground who are involved in the battle and have an incomplete view of what is going on. Longus capitalizes on the latter point through his language of uncertainty and illusion, which again places the focalization of this episode with the pirates: rather than explaining in detail what happens exactly, he reflects their limited knowledge. The same point surfaces in Thucydides’ description of the battle at Plataea, where attention is drawn to the fact that, because of the darkness, the Plataeans are unable to assess the situation correctly: they initially act upon the (mistaken) assumption that their assailants are much more numerous than they actually are (2, 3, 1). Theon in his discussion of narrative (*diégêma*) recommends this detail (among others) as one which makes Thucydides’ account credible (*πιθανόν*, *Prog.* 85, 5-10 Sp. II). In Longus, both the language of illusion (which echoes Thucydides in underlining the limited knowledge of the observers on the ground) and the emphasis on aural perception can be said to produce the same effect.

4. Nocturnal thoughts

In the novels, as in much other literature, insomnia is induced not only by love(sickness) but also by all sorts of cognitive activity: thinking, worrying, deliberating, planning.³¹ As

³¹ On the notion of the ‘night thought’ and its contextualization in (a part of) the literary tradition, see HANDLEY (2007).

far as we can tell, a small pottery fragment from the Roman period that has been identified and assigned to *Metiochus and Parthenope*³² seems to present precisely one of these activities:

“Parthenope,
are you forgetful
of your Metiochus?
From the day
you [left], as if
my eyes were glued fast,
without sleep.”³³

Although we obviously need to be careful when interpreting these few, isolated lines, they may have been part of a letter or, more likely, soliloquy of Metiochus (either in the actual novel or in a rhetorical exercise based on it).³⁴ Rather than suffering from love-induced insomnia, he (also?) seems to worry about his absent beloved (about her faithfulness more specifically) and indicates that he passes sleepless nights over it. Such insomnia is recurrent throughout the genre³⁵ and often offers an opportunity for detailed psychological introspection into how characters weigh ethical, social and political arguments. Especially Chariton exploits it for reasons of psychological characterization. Much of Callirhoe’s famous ethical dilemma about whether or not to commit abortion is set at night (δι’ ὅλης νυκτός, 2, 9, 6). Some of the male characters also ponder at night. When Dionysius, a rich landowner in Miletus, has fallen in love with Callirhoe, he realizes that he will not be able to sleep and therefore prolongs the drinking after dinner with his friends. He dismisses the company when the night is far advanced (ἐπεὶ δὲ προέκοπτε τὰ τῆς νυκτός, 2, 4, 3) but is too preoccupied to sleep (ὑπνου μὲν οὐκ ἐλάγχανεν). Rather than being a clear-cut case of love-induced insomnia, this night scene accommodates a conflict in Dionysius between reason

³² GRONEWALD (1977).

³³ Text and translation: STEPHENS / WINKLER (1995) 94.

³⁴ See STEPHENS / WINKLER (1995) 93 on these possibilities.

³⁵ It is thematized most explicitly by Heliodorus’ priest Calasiris, kept awake at night by the interpretation of an oracle and a dream (3, 11, 4; 3, 15, 2-3).

and passion (ἀγῶνα λογισμοῦ καὶ πάθους, 2, 4, 4). He struggles with what he considers to be ethically problematic aspects of his infatuation: that he is still in mourning for his recently-deceased wife, that Callirhoe is a slave (or so he thinks) and therefore incompatible with his own social station, and that strictly speaking she does not even belong to him because her sale has never been officially concluded. At the same time, nocturnal deliberation also comes with the suggestion that the night clouds rational judgement. The Persian satrap Mithridates, heated with wine and passion during a nocturnal (νύξ) drinking party, says as much: he advises Chaereas, who has just discovered that his wife has married another man (and has a child with him), to think about all this the next day, when they are sober (4, 3, 12).

Traditionally, thought-induced insomnia characterizes statesmen — an idea that ultimately harks back to the *Iliad*, where Agamemnon is reprimanded in a dream that “a man who is a counselor should not sleep the whole night through” (οὐ χρὴ παννύχιον εὔδειν βουλευφόρον ἄνδρα, 2, 24). The idea is recurrent in Greek literature and the Iliadic line is adduced as an example of a maxim (*gnômê*) in Ps.-Hermogenes’ *Progymnasmata*.³⁶ In a lengthy elaboration (8, 13-28 Sp. II), the author explains the validity of the maxim by stating that it is necessary for a leader to be engaged in thought (ἀεὶ διὰ φροντίδος εἶναι) and that sleep, on the contrary, takes away counsel (ὕπνος δὲ βουλήν ἀφαιρεῖται). In addition, he reasons *e contrario* that, whereas there is nothing wrong with a private individual (ιδιώτης) sleeping throughout the whole night, a king should be awake. Whereas in the *Iliad* the maxim depicts Agamemnon rather straightforwardly as a less-than-ideal leader,³⁷ Chariton picks up the *topos* of the sleepless ruler in a more complex way.

³⁶ PS.-HERMOG. *Prog.* 8, 12 Sp. II. On this maxim and instances of sleepless rulers in Greek literature, see DOWDEN (2003) 142-145 and MONTIGLIO (2016) 202.

³⁷ On Agamemnon’s (negative) characterization more generally, see TAPLIN (1990).

When the Persian king Artaxerxes reflects at night (νυκτὸς δὲ ἐπελθούσης) about whether or not to summon Dionysius and his beautiful wife to Babylon (as one of his satraps has asked him to do), he not only weighs different political arguments (such as the dignity of his royal position and his satrap's reaction to his answer) but at the same time is also affected by his solitude, the wine and the darkness, all of which urge him to send for the beautiful woman (4, 6, 6-7). As Silvia Montiglio argues, the scene at least partly deconstructs the *topos* by showing Artaxerxes' nocturnal deliberations "susceptible to extra-political motives".³⁸

The *topos* is again reworked, I would add, in a comparably deconstructive way in one other passage in the novel. When, towards the end of the novel, Chaereas, the novel's hero, has become a successful admiral of the Egyptian fleet in a war against the Persians, he is unexpectedly reunited with Callirhoe on the island of Aradus. The narrator is explicit that, although Chaereas was used (εἰθιστο, 8, 1, 13) to sleep on board ship "because he was busy night and day" (νυκτὸς καὶ μεθ' ἡμέραν πολλὰ πράττων), at that occasion he delegates everything to his best friend and goes to bed with Callirhoe without even waiting for the night to fall (οὐδὲ νύκτα περιμένοντας). The contrast between his usual behaviour and this course of action suggests a conscious reworking of the *topos* of the sleepless ruler. Whereas before the reunion Chaereas behaves as a good leader, he suddenly behaves as Ps.-Hermogenes' "private individual" as soon as he has found Callirhoe again. At this point, it is important to recall why Chaereas joined the Egyptian forces in the first place: as part of a plan to take revenge on Artaxerxes when he thought that because of him he had lost his wife Callirhoe for good (7, 1). No matter how successful he has been as an army general, now that he has found her, he immediately puts his military commitment into perspective again. He is, according

³⁸ MONTIGLIO (2016) 200, who also deals with other nocturnal reflections by Artaxerxes (200-203).

to the generic codes underlying his story, a love hero first, and a military leader second.

The question of whether Chaereas fully lives up to his obligations as an army leader is further developed throughout the subsequent, nocturnal scene. The reunited protagonists tell stories to each other and make love in a scene clearly modelled on the reunion of Odysseus and Penelope in the *Odyssey*,³⁹ two paradigms appropriate not only because of the reunion of husband and wife but also, as we will see presently, because of the qualities of cleverness and ruse that characterize them. When during the night (ἔτι δὲ νυκτός, 8, 2, 1) they are interrupted by the sudden arrival of a messenger, Chaereas, first, “like a good general” (ὡς δὲ στρατηγός ἀγαθός) orders him to come in; but as soon as he hears the bad news that he bears (Artaxerxes has killed the Egyptian king and is now making for Aradus), he jumps up. Callirhoe holds him back and urges him not to rush off (ποῦ σπεύδεις ...;) and to think about the circumstances (βουλευσασθαι περὶ τῶν ἐφεστηκότων) before doing anything. She argues that making the news public would cause insurrection among the soldiers. Chaereas is persuaded by her advice (ἐπίσθη τῇ συμβουλῇ), abandons his original idea and mobilizes his forces in less than no time by playing a trick on them (τέχνης, 8, 2, 5; he has them believe that the Egyptians have beaten the Persians). As suggested by the repeated presence of terms denoting the necessity of cognitive activity (βουλευσασθαι, συμβουλῇ), Chaereas initially seems to fall short of what Ps.-Hermogenes foregrounds as crucial characteristics of a good leader during nocturnal deliberation (cf. βουληφόρον, βουλήν, φροντίδος). Eventually he is successful in managing the situation but not before Callirhoe has shown him the way. This episode resonates with other instances in the last book of the novel where Chaereas’ leadership abilities show a crack here and there,⁴⁰ but this is the only one where this happens through systematic engagement of the narrator with a night-related *topos*.

³⁹ *Od.* 23, 296 is cited when they turn from story-telling to love-making.

⁴⁰ DE TEMMERMAN (2014) 103 discusses another episode.

5. Naughty nights: sex and magic

Chaereas' and Callirhoe's reunion scene is also emblematic in another respect: novelistic nights are full of erotic encounters. In Xenophon of Ephesus, both Hippothous and Aegialeus meet their beloveds at an all-night festival (παννυχίδος, 3, 2, 3 and 5, 1, 5). For unsuccessful lovers too, the night is erotically charged: one of Callirhoe's suitors, for example, complains to his fellow-suitors that they have lain waking at the door of her house (προσαγρυπνοῦντες, Chariton 1, 3, 2) — an echo of the famous poetic tradition of the *paraclausithyron* in Hellenistic poetry and its successors.⁴¹

Of course, one specific instance of nocturnal, erotic encounters is again inscribed into the generic DNA of the novels, where the wedding night of the love couple is a central *topos*.⁴² It often includes a public nocturnal ceremony (Chariton mentions torches, λαμπάδων, as part of the procession, 1, 1, 13) and the first sexual encounter of the protagonists (occasionally couched in metaphorical language itself reminiscent of social-religious practices associated with the night).⁴³ A frequent variation on this *topos* is its association with death, especially of the bride. It is exploited, for example, by Xenophon, whose heroine Anthia, in order to escape a second marriage, commits suicide at the night of the planned wedding by drinking what she believes to be poison (in fact, it is only a sleeping potion; 3, 6, 1). Both the preparation of the bridal chamber and the singing of the *hymenaios* in the household echo her real wedding night with Habrocomes in the beginning of the story but

⁴¹ AMBÜHL (2010) 262-263.

⁴² It typically occurs either at the beginning of the story (Chariton and Xenophon) or at the very end (Longus). On Xenophon's relatively elaborate representation of the wedding night, see MONTIGLIO (2016) 207; and TAGLIABUE (2017) 21-52 on the "two nights of love" marking both the beginning and the end of the story.

⁴³ Chaereas, in a letter to his wife, refers to their first sexual experience as "that night of initiation (τῆς νυκτὸς τῆς μυστικῆς) when you first knew a man, and I a woman" (4, 4, 9).

this time the bridal chamber is turned into a tomb (θάλαμον τὸν τάφον, 3, 7, 2).⁴⁴

The proper time to have sex is at night. This is Daphnis' underlying assumption when he, after Chloe's abduction by Lampis, imagines that "when night comes he will go to bed with her" (ἀρπάσας οἴχεται, νυκτὸς δὲ γενομένης <συγ>κοιμήσεται, 4, 28, 3). Interestingly, this passage occurs towards the end of the novel, when the initially ignorant protagonists have spent most of their time discovering and learning about love and sex. Earlier in the novel, their ignorance is repeatedly underlined by what is itself an inversion of the notion that the night is a suitable time for lovers to be together. After Daphnis and Chloe have been instructed by Philetas about the three remedies to love ("a kiss, an embrace and lying down together with naked bodies", 2, 7, 7), they try to put his advice into practice but are left frustrated (they do not grasp the true meaning of Philetas' words): they drive their flocks home at the end of the day and detest the night (τὴν νύκτα μισοῦντες, 2, 11, 3) because it separates them. Another day, they again drive their flocks home at night (νυκτὸς ἤδη ἐπιγινομένης, 2, 38, 1) and make a pact to drive them down to the pasture early the next day, so that they can be together again as soon as possible after their nocturnal separation. At the crack of dawn (Ἄρτι γοῦν ἀρχομένης ἡμέρας), they go to the pasture, where they kiss, embrace and lie down naked together again.

In these passages, their being together and their erotic behaviour are clearly marked as day-time activities, which invert the traditional connotation between sex and night and illustrate the fact that they still have a long way to go in their gradual discovery of sex and its social codification. Their erotic

⁴⁴ On the *topos* of marriage and the death of the bride, see WESSELING (1993) 121-132. Another prominent example is to be found in the tale of *Amor and Psyche* in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*, where an oracle combines language of marriage and death (*funerei thalami*, 4, 33) to predict Psyche's nocturnal sexual encounters with Amor and where the subsequent marriage procession is consistently described as a funereal wedding (*feralium nuptiarum*, 4, 33).

behaviour is nocturnal only in so far as it appears in their “dreams of love” (ὄνειρατα ἐρωτικά, 2, 10, 1), which are cast explicitly as imagined realizations of what does not actually happen during the day (“all the things they had not done during the day”). John Morgan is right that this psychological dream reflects a widespread view about dreams reflecting the day’s preoccupations;⁴⁵ more specifically, it offers the protagonists an experimental zone to act against their inhibitions — not so much the moral inhibitions that have been associated with psychological dreams in ancient fiction⁴⁶ but rather technical inhibitions resulting from a lack of factual knowledge. But by the time we reach the fourth (and final) book, Daphnis’ thoughts about Chloe’s imagined, nocturnal sexual intercourse with Lampis show precisely how much progress he has made by then. Whereas earlier he did not even know what sex was, he now has been taught (by Lycaenion, 3, 18) how to have sex and has acquired a cultured notion of it: he now unambiguously imagines sex as nocturnal, and builds on this when voicing his worries about what will/can happen to Chloe after her abduction.

Sexual satisfaction of adulterous desires too is sought at night.⁴⁷ When adultery is staged or supposed rather than real, characters consistently exploit nocturnal timing in order to make their fabrications plausible to other characters. Thisbe, who has fooled Cnemon into believing that his step-mother Demaenete has a lover, tells him at night (νυκτί, 1, 12, 1) that he is in Demaenete’s bedroom at that very moment. When Thisbe herself later gives her own version of this story, she says that she went to Cnemon at night for secrecy’s sake (νύκτωρ ...

⁴⁵ MORGAN (2004) 185.

⁴⁶ LEV KENAAN (2010).

⁴⁷ Demaenete, for example, declares her love for her stepson Cnemon during the day but it is only at night (ἑσπέρας γενομένης ... νυκτός, 1, 10, 2), when his father is going to be away all night (διανυκτερεύειν), that she comes to him and tries to seduce him. Similar example in APUL. *Met.* 9, 20 (*Iamque nocte promotā*). Some novels in this context are explicit about the connection between nocturnal sex and the need for secrecy (e.g. HLD. 7, 26, 1 νυκτός ὑπὸ σκότους ... λαθεῖν).

ὥς ἂν γνοίῃ μηδεὶς, 1, 16, 2) but it is clear that her choice of this moment was equally instrumental to her own (hidden) agenda, i.e. to see Cnemon condemned for attempted patricide. Indeed, because Cnemon immediately believes that she is speaking the truth, he rushes into the bedroom of his step-mother, sword in hand. The success of Thisbe's ruse, in other words, depends on the credibility of her story generated by the implicit assumption that adulterous sex takes place at night.⁴⁸

In the Latin novels, the connection between night and sex is especially strong, systematic and persistent. In Petronius, sex only happens at night (as far as the fragmentary status of the novel allows us to tell).⁴⁹ When depicting the sex lives of his protagonists, Petronius uses the night in order to play on the Greek novelistic, 'ideal' depiction of the amatory behaviour of protagonists. Whereas the Greek novels, like Petronius, usually situate amatory behaviour at night (as we have seen), their protagonists normally do not have sex with each other until it is sanctioned by marriage (which often takes place only at the end of the novel). Petronius' central love couple, on the contrary, has sex all the time, with each other and with others, and always at night. Ascyltus steals Giton away from Encolpius to have sex with him *totis noctibus* (79-81); Eumolpus too makes advances to Giton at night (92); he also tells how he found at night both Encolpius and Giton with a girlfriend whom they shared among each other (105). And when Encolpius is struck by impotence during his sexual encounter with Circe, she orders him to go to sleep that night without Giton (129). Since Encolpius follows her advice, the narration simply skips the entire night and jumps to the next morning, when Encolpius

⁴⁸ In Apuleius' novel, Charite builds on the same assumption when she fools the murderer of her husband into believing that she will have sex with him and in the process insists on secrecy — it results in him yearning for “night and hidden darkness” and to the furtive lovemaking (*de furtiuo concubitu, noctemque et opertas exoptat ultro tenebras*, 8, 10).

⁴⁹ E.g. 85-87 (*tertia nocte*, 86; 87), 112 (with many explicit references to the nocturnal time).

gets up (131). Especially against the background of all the preceding nocturnal sex scenes, this last instance once again (and rather amusingly) underlines the systematic connection between sex and night in Petronius, but this time *ex negatiuo*: no sex at night, no story to be told.

In Apuleius too, there is a systematic connection between sex and night both in the main narrative and in the embedded narratives.⁵⁰ Often it is functional to plot development and interconnected with notions of secrecy, (lack of) vision and (thus) inaccessibility of knowledge and truth.⁵¹ Ultimately, it serves the ideological agenda underlying the novel's narrative of conversion in the famous eleventh (and final) book (the so-called Isis book). It does so by constructing a parallel configuration between sex and magic. Like sex, magic is an exclusively nocturnal activity, both in the embedded narratives⁵² and the main narrative.⁵³ Of course, Apuleius resembles other novelists in this association⁵⁴ but in his novel magic, just like sex, undergoes an ultimate reassessment in the final book. At Cenchreae, one of Isis' cult places, the goddess reveals to Lucius how to change

⁵⁰ E.g. 2, 10 (*prima face ... tota ... nocte*), 2, 17 (*ad confinia lucis*), 7, 14 (*noctem unicam*), 9, 22 (*metis die proprinquante*), 9, 28 (*noctu diuque*), 10, 19 (*noctis unius concubitum*), 10, 22 (*noctis futurae; uitata lucis conscientia*).

⁵¹ The story of Amor and Psyche (4, 28 - 6, 24) is, of course, the clearest example: the restriction of sex to night-time is crucial for Amor's desire not to be seen by his wife.

⁵² E.g. Meroe's removal of Socrates' heart and its replacement by a sponge (1, 11-19). On this and other stories of nocturnal attacks by night hags, see SPAETH (2010).

⁵³ The witch Pamphile, for example, is explicit that she can perform magic at night only (3, 16).

⁵⁴ Examples are HLD. 6, 13-15 (where a necromancer is as explicit as Pamphile that her rites can only be performed at night: *νυκτερινός*, 6, 13, 6), X. EPH. 5, 7, 7 (where Anthia builds on the association when she fabricates a story about her encounter with a ghost at an all-night festival), IAMBL. *Babyloniaca* (where two characters successfully pretend to be ghosts during a nocturnal episode; PHOT. *Bibl.* 74b31), LOLLIANUS' *Phoenicica* (where a ghost appears to Glauketes at night: *νυκτός*, 16; *P.Oxy.* 1368, c. II), and PETR. *Sat.* 62 (where a story is told about a nocturnal metamorphosis of a man into a wolf).

back from asinine to human form,⁵⁵ after which he converts to and is initiated in her cult and becomes a priest in her service. This consecration is arguably fundamental to our reading of the novel as a whole. Since the entire novel is an ego-narration by Lucius, we now (and only now) realize that all of the preceding story has been told to us by an Isiac priest who, after pledging to spend the rest of his life in the service of the moon goddess, recounts the life of his former, uninitiated and therefore unenlightened and erring self. This contrast gravitates mainly around sex and magic. Isis tells Lucius that, after having thrown off his asinine appearance, he will spend the rest of his life in her service, which will include abstinence from marriage and sex (*tenacibus castimoniis*, 11, 6). And magic, equally prominent throughout the preceding books, is now replaced by truly religious experience and divine revelation.⁵⁶

In both cases, the night is the most important trope to drive the point home. The eleventh book cries out the importance of the night as a marker of profound, symbolic meaning. Unlike many of the earlier books, which start either at daybreak⁵⁷ or around midday⁵⁸ and often draw attention to the presence of the sun, this book opens with Lucius waking up at night (*circa primam ferme noctis uigiliam*, 11, 1) and beholding the extraordinary brilliance of the moon (a description echoed by that of Isis herself a little later: *candore* 11, 1, *albo candore lucida*, 11, 3).⁵⁹

⁵⁵ This is the first in a series of nocturnal divine revelations to Lucius, with visions of Isis (11, 22), her chief priest (11, 20) and Osiris (11, 27; 11, 28; 11, 29).

⁵⁶ FRANGOULIDIS (2008) 177-179 contrasts Lucius' contact with Isis and his contact with magic in 2, 32.

⁵⁷ *Ut primum nocte discussa sol nouus diem fecit*, 2, 1; *Commodum punlicantibus phaleris Aurora roseum quatiens lacertum caelum inequitabat*, 3, 1; *Ut primum tenebris abiectis dies inalbebat et candidum solis curriculum cuncta collustrabat*, 7, 1; *Noctis gallinico*, 8, 1.

⁵⁸ *Diem ferme cerce medium*, 4, 1.

⁵⁹ On Isis (originally a solar goddess in pharaonic Egypt) as a lunar deity among Greeks and Romans since Hellenistic times, see DELIA (1998); *LIMC* 5.1: 776 (on Isis-Selene and Helios), 795 (on Isis-Luna) and BORCHHARDT-BIRBAUMER (2003) 47. On her associations with the night more generally (and her nocturnal search for Osiris), see GRIMAL (2002) *s.v.* Isis.

His initiation into her cult again foregrounds night and day as being at the centre of religious experience: it takes place from dusk onwards (*sol curuatus intrahebat uesperam*, 11, 23) and takes him to the boundaries of death and back, after which he sees the sun flashing with bright light in the middle of the night (*nocte media uidi solem candido coruscantem lumine*, 11, 23).⁶⁰ The difference between night and day collapses: night and day become one in a moment of ultimate divine revelation of religious truth. Lucius' metamorphosis too (at daytime under a brilliant sun, 11, 13) is couched in the same imagery evoking the contrast between night and day. During a nocturnal appearance, Isis announces that Lucius' "day of salvation is dawning" (*illucescit dies salutaris*, 11, 5) and Lucius identifies his own metamorphosis as a restoration "to the daylight from the dead" (*diurnum reducemque ab inferis*, 11, 8).⁶¹ The combined metaphor clearly casts Lucius' preceding asinine existence (which covers the preceding novel from 3, 24 up to this point) as a nocturnal and lifeless period which is now about to end thanks to divine salvation. His previous life, where nights accommodated both sex and the dark powers of magic, will be replaced by days of abstinence and of true, religious experience and divine revelation — a notion captured, for example, by Lucius' oxymoronic characterization of Osiris' nocturnal mysteries as "illumination" (*nocturnis orgiis illustratus*, 11, 28). The narrative ideology of the (final book of the) *Metamorphoses* bans both sex and magic from a truly religious life, and the night is a fundamental trope for Apuleius both to thematize these two areas first and to reject them at the end.

⁶⁰ On this image in ritual sources and other mystery cults, and on its philosophical associations, see KEULEN *et al.* (2015) 400. See INSTONE (2007) on similar (and similarly oxymoronic) imagery in another but comparable (life and dead) context.

⁶¹ On the eleventh book of the *Metamorphoses* as one of progressive 'solarization', see KEULEN *et al.* (2015) 372, 400, 417-418.

6. Nocturnal story-telling

Stories are told at night. This idea, connected with the tradition that poetic inspiration comes during sleep, is at least as old as the *Odyssey*, where Odysseus with his long story (books 9-12) enchants his Phaeacian audience throughout the evening and night (νύξ, 11, 330; νύξ δ' ἤδε, 11, 363).⁶² The novelist who exploits this motif most intensively is Heliodorus. The two main embedded narratives in his novel, that of Cnemon (1, 9-18) and that of Calasiris (2, 24, 5 - 5, 1, 2; 5, 17, 2 - 33, 3), are told at night; in both cases the nocturnal time is repeatedly emphasized. When Cnemon is asked to tell his story, he protests that what is left of the night would not be long enough for this (οὐδ' ἂν ἐπαρκέσειε τὸ λειπόμενον πρὸς τὸ διήγημα τῆς νυκτὸς, 1, 8, 7) and that, besides, the protagonists themselves need sleep and rest after all that they have been through (they have just spent some time lamenting their own recent misadventures). But he is persuaded and tells his story, which is interrupted when he repeats his earlier concern (“we are far into the night and you badly need rest”, 1, 14, 2) in an attempt to cut his story short — again unsuccessfully. This attempt recalls a similar attempt by Odysseus during the short intermezzo of his story (*Od.* 11, 333-384): he too suggests to break off his story because it is time for sleep (ὥρη εὐδειν, 11, 330-331). His additional comment that the night would be too short for him to tell all details (πρὶν γὰρ κεν καὶ νύξ φθῖτ' ἄμβροτος, 11, 330) is also echoed by Cnemon's initial protest. But what sets the two narrators apart is that Odysseus wants to break off his story because he himself is tired,⁶³ whereas Cnemon consistently insists on the tiredness of his interlocutors.

⁶² See also AMBÜHL (2010) 262. On the *Odyssey* as an important model for Heliodorus throughout the novel, see FUSILLO (1989) 28-32 and MORGAN (2008b) 224-225 among others.

⁶³ That he judges it time *for him* to sleep becomes clear when he adds that he can either sleep “here” (αὐτοῦ, 11, 332) or in his ship.

This episode is part of a metaliterary game set up by Heliodorus in connection with the second embedded narrative in the novel: that told by Calasiris to Cnemon during two consecutive nights (ἐσπέρας οὔσης ἤδη καὶ νυκτός, 3, 4, 9; ἐννυκτερεύειν, 3, 4, 11; τῆς νυκτός, 5, 33, 4). Like Cnemon's story, Calasiris' echoes Odysseus' story to the Phaeacians.⁶⁴ Like Odysseus, Calasiris suggests to break the story and have some sleep (5, 1, 3), thereby drawing attention to his own need for sleep as a result of both his old age and the remembrance of sorrow. But unlike Odysseus (and like Cnemon), Calasiris seems particularly concerned about the tiredness of his interlocutor. He observes that Cnemon is still wide awake and not at all fatigued by the inordinate length of his story, despite the fact that they are in the small hours of the night (ἤδη γοῦν οὐκ ὀλίγης μοίρας τῆς νυκτός, 4, 4, 2), and concludes that he seems proof against sleep. A little later, he is explicit that, since his tale has dragged on far into the night (μέχρι πόρρω τῶν νυκτῶν, 5, 1, 3), Cnemon must be collapsing by now, however indefatigable a listener he may be and however forcefully he fights against sleep.

In both Heliodorean episodes, the narrator explicitly foregrounds the question of how much of his nocturnal storytelling his interlocutor can take before being overcome by sleep. Cnemon answers that he would not want to stop listening to the story "even if you were to go on telling it for dozens of nights and scores of days without a break" (5, 1, 4). It is difficult not to read this comment as a metaliterary praise by Heliodorus of his own novel. Of course, the story that Calasiris has been telling all this time is, precisely, that of Chariclea and Theagenes, which the reader has been eager to find out ever since (s)he found the couple at the banks of the Nile in the opening lines of the novel.

⁶⁴ The libation to Hermes in 3, 5, 1, for example, recalls the bedtime libation in *Od.* 7, 136-138. MORGAN (2008a) 414 n. 86.

7. Conclusion

It will be clear that an analysis of the night in the ancient novel in its entirety cannot but point towards a picture of variation and differentiation. Of course, there are general tendencies throughout the genre in the sense that it adopts widespread images and stereotypes associated with the night — some of them are even inscribed into the generic DNA of the novels, so to speak, as part of *topoi* (wedding nights, love-induced insomnia, dreams), themselves often continuing literary traditions harking back to the oldest genres such as epic. Much of this will correspond with what we find in other ancient literary genres. What is perhaps more interesting in terms of interpretative mileage, is that the novelists do not simply use the night as a structural device or a background that provides colouring. Rather, they are very much aware of the possibilities of using it as a trope that can be employed for a diverse range of narrative effects. Heliodorus, for example, exploits both the night and the specificity of fiction to enhance realism; and Achilles Tatius has his narrator Clitophon inscribe the night, and the universals connected with it, into the gnomic apparatus with which he bombards his reader throughout the entire novel (and through which he characterizes himself as a narrator of his own, emotional past). Nocturnal violence is made functional to the characterization of the abducted heroine, again both in Heliodorus and in Achilles Tatius, the latter of whom perhaps does so in ways that are generically rather troubling. Longus turns, for his description of nocturnal violence, to progymnasmatic doctrine and incorporates the specific, cognitive limitations that come with the description of nocturnal battles (as already thematized by Thucydides in a similar context). The night is also a catalyst that psychologically characterizes through ethical dilemma some of the most important characters in Chariton (Callirhoe, Dionysius, Artaxerxes), who consciously deconstructs the *topos* of the sleepless statesman in order to raise questions about the military qualities of his love hero. Fundamental associations between the night and sex too are creatively reworked:

in Longus it contributes to fleshing out Daphnis' evolution towards sexual maturity, and Apuleius organizes his novel around a profound ambiguity of the night, shifting, and ultimately rejecting, both its sexual and magical associations in his final book of divine revelation. Nocturnal story-telling, finally, is used by Heliodorus to get a metaliterary message across.

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DISCUSSION

R. Schlesier: Concerning the classification of novels with regard to religious experiences, there has been a heated debate since Karl Kerényi,¹ who interpreted the narrative of the novels as containing a “Mysteriensinn”, and Reinhold Merkelbach, *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike*, who went a step further and considered them as “wirklich Mysterientexte”.² Against this background, how would you contextualize the emphasis on the liminal and mysterious quality of the night in some of the novels? What do you think, in this respect, of the interpretation of the night episodes, for instance, in Albert Henrichs, *Die Phoinikika des Lollianos*?³

K. De Temmerman: Both Karl Kerényi and Reinhold Merkelbach read the ancient novels as cult texts and are part of a wider tradition of scholarship that interprets them as religious narratives.⁴ Whereas for Kerényi they reflect details of the Isiac cult, for Merkelbach each novel encodes information about a different cult. Henrichs agrees and reads Lollianus’ *Phoenicica* as representing the mystery cult of Dionysus-Zagreus (pp. 77-78). In general terms, the question of whether or not

¹ K. KERÉNYI (1927), *Die griechisch-orientalische Romanliteratur in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung* (Tübingen).

² R. MERKELBACH (1962), *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike* (Munich). On the debate see A. HENRICHS (2006), “Der antike Roman: Kerényi und die Folgen”, in R. SCHLESIER / R. SANCHIÑO MARTÍNEZ (eds.), *Neuhumanismus und Anthropologie des griechischen Mythos. Karl Kerényi im europäischen Kontext des 20. Jahrhunderts* (Locarno), 57-70.

³ A. HENRICHS (1972), *Die Phoinikika des Lollianos. Fragmente eines neuen griechischen Romans* (Bonn).

⁴ See also, for example, F. ALTHEIM (1942), “Helios und Heliodoros von Emesa”, *Albae Vigiles* 12, 93-124 (for whom Heliodorus was a devotee to the Emesan Sun god).

the ancient novels are religious texts (and, if so, how precisely we need to conceptualize and explain their religious dimensions) is itself debated.⁵ Even if scholars are divided on this, it is fair to say that most agree that the views of Kerényi and Merkelbach are not persuasive in their original forms.⁶ I too believe that caution is strongly advised; and that, as John Morgan points out, there is a danger of developing circular arguments (given the paucity of external evidence about the detailed rituals of the mystery cults).⁷ In Lollian's *Phoenicica*, the night is heavily connoted (and I do not think that these connotations can easily be limited to what for Henrichs is relevant for mapping Lollian's scenes on the mystery cult). The fragments that we have left of this novel narrate a defloration at a festival or party, a ritual murder, an episode of cannibalism, group sex, plundertaking from dead bodies, a dressing-up in white and black costumes and the appearance of a ghost. Most, and possibly all, of these episodes are set at night (νυκτὸς πρ[.], A.1 recto 16; ἐπ]εὶ δὲ νύκτες μέσαι ἦσαν, B.1 verso 23; νυκτὸς ἔτι, P.Oxy. 1368, Column II, 16).⁸ There is no way to tell whether these episodes are in any way representative of the novel as a whole; or, indeed, to determine what are their place and role in it. Nevertheless, even in their fragmentary state they clearly foreground the night as a time not only of sex, violence, secrecy and magic, but also of marginality, deviation and perversion.

⁵ See, for example, J.R. MORGAN (2008), "Heliodoros: An Ethiopian Story", in B.P. REARDON (ed.), *Collected Ancient Greek Novels* (Berkeley), 350-351 vs. K. DOWDEN (1996), "Heliodoros: Serious Intentions", *CQ* 46, 267-285.

⁶ For sensible criticism, see, among others, A.D. NOCK (1928), "Karl Kerényi: Die griechisch-orientalische Romanliteratur in religionsgeschichtlicher Beleuchtung", *Gnomon* 4, 485-492, and R. TURCAN (1963), "Le roman 'initiatique': à propos d'un livre récent", *Revue d'histoire des religions* 163, 149-199.

⁷ J.R. MORGAN (1979), *A Commentary on the Ninth and Tenth Books of the Aethiopica of Heliodoros* (Oxford), xl-xli.

⁸ Except, perhaps, the ritual murder and the cannibalism (B.1 recto), where the night is not explicitly mentioned.

R. Schlesier: If the night is treated in the novels as an intensifier of emotions, does this concern rather positive or rather negative emotions, or both? In general, one would like to know the way in which the novels transformed the treatment of the night in earlier genres and by earlier authors. A case in point would be the relationship between the novels and the *Corpus Hippocraticum*.

A. Chaniotis: Renate Schlesier's remark on the significance of the corpus of medical authors is crucial. I would like to comment on this. The passage in Achilles Tatius, in which the pain of love during the night is described (1, 6, 2-4) is in fact a medical description of the symptoms of love.

K. De Temmerman: As for the intensification of emotions, I think it is difficult to posit firm rules on whether it is valued positively or negatively: it depends on the narrative context and is taken in different directions by different novelists. Secondly, earlier literature is of course very important, as ancient novelists have been shown to heavily engage intertextually with a number of earlier genres (mainly epic, philosophical prose and tragedy). I agree that medical authors too are relevant, especially in novelistic representations of love, as shown for example by Patrick Robiano for Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*.⁹

V. Pirenne-Delforge: Dans le roman *Daphnis et Chloé*, il faut du temps pour que les protagonistes intègrent l'idée qu'une relation sexuelle ne pourra intervenir que la nuit. L'association entre la nuit et le sexe est aussi ancienne que la *Théogonie*, puisqu'Ouranos désireux de s'unir à Gaia "amène la nuit avec lui" (v. 176) et que Philotès, au sens d'union sexuelle, fait partie de la cohorte des enfants de Nyx (v. 224). Même s'il n'y avait pas d'interdit spécifique du sexe diurne dans les représentations

⁹ P. ROBIANO (2003), "Maladie d'amour et diagnostic médical: Érasistrate, Galien et Héliodore d'Émèse, ou du récit au roman", *Ancient Narrative* 3, 129-149.

grecques des relations amoureuses, le sexe nocturne ne fait pas forcément de la nuit une ‘hétérotopie’: c’est plutôt une forme de ‘norme’. Peut-on considérer que le roman de Longus atteste un renforcement d’une telle norme, assortie d’une dissociation entre lumière diurne et relations sexuelles?

K. De Temmerman: Oui, dans le passage que j’ai discuté le roman de Longus se tourne vers l’association entre la nuit et le sexe comme une norme sociale, exactement pour souligner l’ignorance de Daphnis, qui ne la connaît pas (encore).

A. Chaniotis: I would prefer to speak of a polarity between day and night, not of a heterotopia. This polarity can be clearly seen, when we examine the metaphors used for the arrival of the day — which is a peaceful arrival — and the arrival of the night that resembles an aggressive take-over.

R. Schlesier: Using night as a signifier that connects positive and negative aspects, the example of Xenophon’s transformation of the nocturnal bridal chamber into a tomb is illuminating. But is this typical for the novel? Or is this rather an adaptation of a *topos* already present in other and earlier genres (e.g. Sophocles, *Antigone* 891)?

K. De Temmerman: In general terms, the novels certainly resemble many other genres in their use of widespread associations of the night. In my paper, I have tried to clarify how they creatively adopt such associations; how, in other words, an analysis of their use/representation/connotation of the night pays off for our reading of them. The passage in Xenophon, indeed, draws on an association already present in tragedy, a genre which in this episode is also brought to the fore given Anthia’s lamenting monologue. Heliodorus too builds on the same image when he has Charicles tell how his daughter on her wedding night died in a fire in her room so that “before the wedding anthem was finished it modulated into a funeral dirge” (2, 29, 4).

R. Schlesier: Comparing historiography and the novel, you stress a difference in authentication. But do you think that the historians' conscious decisions to include night scenes in their narratives necessarily differ from the novelists' decisions?

K. De Temmerman: I think there is a difference given the specifically fictional quality of the novel. Even if in ancient historiography (and biography, for that matter) the borderline between fact and imagination is notoriously porous, the novels are built on the specific premise of a fictional contract: the reader knows that novel heroines like Callirhoe and Chariclea never existed but that they and their entire stories are invented constructs. This is different from historiography and biography, where we deal with literary (and often imaginative) reconstructions of pre-existing persons and events. In *The Distinction of Fiction*, Dorrit Cohn discusses this issue at length.¹⁰ As for night scenes, I do not think that how a historian builds on their cultural associations is qualitatively different from how a novelist does, in the sense that similar associations of the night and related concepts are likely to be at work in those genres. What is different, however, is that historians, in view of what their readers accepted as or believed to be historical fact, may be slightly more limited than novelists as to which specific events can reasonably be set at night. It remains difficult for a historiographer, I imagine, to have the battle of Cannae take place at night since it was commonly known already in Antiquity to have been a daytime battle. Battles in fiction, on the other hand, can be set at night (or not) for whatever reason, which for a novelist increases literary possibilities such as those that we have seen at work in Longus' description of the *nyktomachia*.

L. Dossey: Angelos Chaniotis has advised that day and night should be regarded as a polarity (not a heterotopia). The night

¹⁰ D. COHN (1999), *The Distinction of Fiction* (Baltimore).

has its own norms, just as the day has. As Vinciane Pirenne-Delforge said, sex at night was *part* of the norms for the night; it wasn't breaking the rules (as with a heterotopia). It seems to me that in most of your paper, the night of the Greek novels is compatible with the night in Angelos's "Long Hellenistic Age". It is a time for sex, emotion (both pleasurable and painful), conviviality, dreams, gods, and the dead (including ghosts, magic). These things weren't a negative in the night, but part of the normal night. Even the ghost stories weren't very evil. However, in your paper, Apuleius stands out as doing something new. In book 11, Apuleius rejects both sex and magic in the night and instead substitutes a chaste, much more controlled service to the goddess Isis. In Heliodorus (which I would see as mid-4th century), something similar occurs. The magic in Heliodorus is portrayed as far more horrible than in the other Greek novels. This novel, as you say, emphasizes solar imagery and embraces the sun cult and light. Chastity is also emphasized. I wonder if Heliodorus and to some extent Apuleius can be seen as *rejecting* the norms of the ancient Greek night, perhaps fitting with the more negative view of nighttime ritual discussed in Filippo Carlà-Uhink's paper and the fourth-century colonization of the night by the day discussed in mine?

K. De Temmerman: This is a very interesting observation and you are right that the centrality of solar and lunar imagery is one aspect that Apuleius' novel has in common with Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*. Although this novel is not a story of conversion, it does end (like the *Metamorphoses*) with an ordination in priesthood (in this case of the two protagonists) and a religious transformation (not of the protagonist, as in Apuleius, but of the Ethiopian society, which progresses from endorsing to abolishing human sacrifice to the Sun and Moon gods). You are also right that the sun is very prominent throughout Heliodorus' novel. Indeed, the whole novel is captured between two striking solar images: the rising sun at daybreak in the opening sentence,

as we have seen, and the final line, where the author identifies himself as Heliodorus (“Gift from the sun”), a Phoenician from Emesa and one of the clan of the Descendants of the Sun (ἄνθρω Φοῖνιξ Ἐμισσηνός, τῶν ἀφ’ Ἡλίου γένος, 10, 41, 4) — unsurprisingly, there is much scholarship exploring possible connections with the famous Emesan Sun cult. I am less sure that we can read this novel as rejecting the norms of the ancient Greek night. In fact, the night has positive valuations too in the *Aethiopica* and the moon is almost as central to the story as the sun (Chariclea is compared to famous lunar deities as Isis and Artemis from the start, and at the end she becomes a priestess of the Ethiopian moon goddess).

I. Mylonopoulos: Only one question out of ignorance: Are there instances in which nocturnal stories are the focus of the nocturnal storytelling you addressed in your paper? Do we have cases in which people are telling each other nocturnal love stories, nocturnal horror stories or speak about their dreams in the (fictitious) context of a nocturnal story telling?

K. De Temmerman: Yes, there are some examples of nocturnal events narrated by intradiegetic narrators at night. Chariclea’s abduction from Delphi (Hld. 4, 17), for example, is part of his long embedded narrative that is told at night. However, I have not been able to find instances where the novelists capitalize on this idea.

A. Chaniotis: A final remark concerning references to the senses. We note that the darkness of the night increases the importance of senses other than sight. We can see this e.g. in Chariton 1, 3, 2 with references to things smelled (μύροις ... δᾶδας ἡμικαύτους) and touched (οἴνου πηλὸν ἐποίησαν).