

MALE PERPETRATORS OF VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN ACHILLES TATIUS' *LEUCIPPE AND CLITOPHON**

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ABSTRACT

No study of violence against women in Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon* has yet focussed on the male perpetrators of that violence. I contend that the novel depicts male perpetrators as failing to live up to the masculine ideal, 'othering' them from traditional masculinity, and accompanying positions of power, within the novel. This allows the perpetrators to represent a male whose masculinity is conflicted due to shifting notions of masculinity, resulting in a sense of insecurity and powerlessness that is sometimes compensated for with violence against women. The novel invites male readers to identify with these perpetrators temporarily, thus allowing them a brief respite from their own concerns about masculinity and power by enjoying the effects of this violence.

Keywords: violence, masculinity, women, Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon*

Introduction

Violence against women, especially sexualized violence, is hardly unknown in ancient Greek and Roman literature but it reaches the level of a topos in literature of the Roman Empire. It has been noted as early as the first century AD,¹ but is especially prevalent in the Greek novels and martyr accounts of the second to fourth centuries AD.² The second-century AD novel *Leucippe and Clitophon* by Achilles Tatius is probably the most overt example of this trend amongst the novels, as the violence against women is excessive

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¹ Richlin 1992b:164.

² See Chew 2003:129–31 on Greek novels and martyr accounts; Morales 2008:53 on Greek novels.

even when compared to the others.³ Despite purporting to be a tale about love and the trials of ἔρωτος (μύθων ... ἔρωτικῶν, ‘of love stories’, 1.2.3),⁴ the characters in this novel collectively experience storms, shipwrecks, capture by bandits and battles. One of the staples of this violence is physical, sexual and psychological violence against women by men, including rape, kidnapping, assault, murder, and threats thereof. The majority of the violence is committed against female characters individually, one at a time, and is, in contrast to other descriptions of violent events in the novel, graphic and sensationalist.⁵

Awareness of gender, which is often used as a synonym for women’s issues, and the growth of feminism in the field of Classics, have led several scholars to delve into the issue of violence against women in the novels.⁶ Their methodology has involved problematizing the position of women, either within the text or within patriarchal society, or problematizing violence within Graeco-Roman society of the first to fourth centuries AD and then examining its effects, on both characters and the reader.⁷ From these approaches several different explanations for violence against women have been proposed, with suggestions as diverse and contradictory as seeing the female as the victim of sadistic violence and the male as pornography viewer, to seeing the female as victim and the male as masochistic sympathizer/empathizer. Still others see the female as a victor over violence.⁸

³ While usually dated to the 2nd century AD, a more exact date for this novel is a matter of debate (Whitmarsh 2001:xiv–xv).

⁴ All translations are my own. Thank you to Sonja Gammage for her feedback on my translations. The Greek text is taken from Garnaud 1991. All references are to Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe and Clitophon*.

⁵ The only real exception is the ἐκφρασις of a painting of the torture of Prometheus (3.8) which is described in the same kind of detail.

⁶ Although an important point, the argument that violence against women in literature was normal in an era when violence in general was a staple of imperial entertainment (see Hall 1995:49–50; Chew 2003:132. See also Plass 1995:16–17) is simply not sufficient to explain the excessive levels of violence against women in these texts.

⁷ For problematizing the position of women within the text, see Montague 1992:248; King 2012. For problematizing the position of women within patriarchal society, see Winkler 1990; Egger 1994. For problematizing violence within Graeco-Roman society of the 1st to the 4th centuries AD, see Chew 2003.

⁸ For female as victim of sadistic violence and male as pornography viewer, see Elsom 1992:217; Montague 1992:238–40, 243; Morales 2004:169; 2008:53. See also Konstan 1994:72; Haynes 2003:5. For female as victim and male as masochistic sympathizer/empathizer, see Ballengee 2005:131, 145, 159. For male as anxious sympathizer/empathizer of violent female penetrability, see Zeitlin 2012:114–21. For

These approaches have led to valuable scholarship on areas previously taken for granted, bringing female characters to the fore.⁹

However, although the views of scholars like Chew, who believes that the violence is a substitute for the sex act,¹⁰ and what King calls the traditional, misogynistic view of the text¹¹ of scholars like Elsom, Montague, and Morales, who see the female as the victim of sadistic violence and the male as pornography viewer,¹² all hold a great deal of merit in my opinion, I believe all of these approaches also suffer from one important shortcoming. Uncovering the reasons for violence against women in any context requires understanding that this violence is generated by a multiplicity of elements comprising the male perpetrator, the act of violence itself, the victim, and the effects of the violence. However, Hunnicutt, in her exposition of using patriarchy as a tool for understanding violence against women, states that much of the modern literature on this issue presents men, namely male perpetrators, as an “unproblematic given”, exempting ... [them] from serious study’.¹³ So far studies on violence against women in the ancient Greek novels have fallen into the same trap. This becomes especially problematic for understanding *Leucippe and Clitophon* when one considers how many episodes of violence against women, and how many male perpetrators of that violence, there are in this novel. Current theories which attempt to account for violence against women in the Greek novels are therefore insufficient to explain the degree of violence to be found in Achilles Tatius’ novel.

This article takes a perpetrator-centred approach, reading the text closely to discover how the perpetrators are constructed. Despite early feminist scholarship on the nature of violence against women, which assumes such violence is the result of men in patriarchal systems reinforcing their domination, studies of violence against women in modern contexts have shown that ‘it is actually the least powerful men [within their particular patriarchal hierarchies] who victimize women under social pressure to

female as ‘victor’ over violence, see Winkler 1990 (but see Goldhill 1995:30–45); Egger 1994:272–74; Chew 2003:139; King 2012.

⁹ Especially, the subjectivity of the heroine, her position as the often central character of the plot, and the importance and depth of the role she has to play in interpreting the narrative.

¹⁰ Chew 2003:139. See also Fredericksen 2018:78, 81, who believes that sexuality and violence are so intertwined in Achilles Tatius that the novel is unable to distinguish between them.

¹¹ King 2012:147.

¹² See n8 above.

¹³ Hunnicutt 2009:559.

accrue more power and redeem their “wounded masculinity”.¹⁴ Many possible reasons for a sense of disempowerment and a wound to masculinity have been posited by scholars.¹⁵ As male power identities in patriarchal societies are usually encoded in notions of masculinity, these reasons include shifting, conflicted notions about what constitutes masculinity in any given society, leading to feelings of anxiety and insecurity in men who are uncertain how to gain and maintain their perceived positions of dominance.¹⁶ Depending on the unique circumstances of any given society, some men may feel the need to compensate for this sense of insecurity through violently reinforcing the relationships in which they feel they still have power,¹⁷ usually those with women.¹⁸

The main male character, Clitophon, has already been noted by several scholars as having an uncertain masculinity as he constantly misperforms, misunderstands and/or misrepresents aspects of his masculinity.¹⁹ However, the perpetrators of violence in the novel have never been problematized in light of this observation about Clitophon’s masculinity. This study shows that male perpetrators of violence against women in Achilles Tatius do not conform to the masculine ideal of the novel. This construction of

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ See Morgan 2006 for a discussion of different possible threats to masculinity given by scholars.

¹⁶ See Connell 2005²:77–78 on the complexities of ‘hegemonic masculinity’, the prevailing masculinity in a society, in which authority resides. For examples of what might cause shifting notions of masculinity, and the resulting anxiety and insecurity, see Connell 2005²:77–78 on the undermining of traditional notions of one hegemonic masculinity and the creation of another. See Hoad 2007:70, 84; Voss 2012:13–14; Freedman and Jacobson 2012:9, 11; Isike 2012:24–28 on especially the undermining of traditional notions of masculinity through the introduction or imposition of contradictory notions of masculinity via colonization or globalization. See Winter 2004 s.v. ‘Crisis of Masculinity’; Morgan 2006:111–12; Hunnicutt 2009:561 on changes in different societal, economic and political structures relating to masculinity.

¹⁷ Hunnicutt 2009:560. Hunnicutt 2009:558–59, 563–64 makes it clear that not every powerless man will turn to violence, as continually changing societies and factors within them, such as age, race, class, nationality, and religion, all mediate the degree to which males might have the need, or the opportunity, to commit violence against women.

¹⁸ While women are almost always the victims of such violence, any socially inferior person or one who seems to be contributing to a breakdown in traditional gender roles by acting outside of those assigned roles can also become a victim.

¹⁹ See Jones 2012:59–60, 70–72, 128–30, 135–37 for examples of Clitophon’s misperformance of masculinity; Bird 2020:69–73 on Clitophon’s misunderstanding of *σωφροσύνη*, an aspect of masculinity; Morgan 2007:108–17 on Clitophon’s misrepresentation of aspects of his character, especially aspects of his masculinity.

them as 'other' to the ideal creates characters who are displaced, and thus insecure, in relation to their masculinity and power relations with others. When read together with existing discussions on the depiction of the female victims of violence, a possible new reason for the violence emerges. I contend that the sheer number of episodes of violence against women in the novel suggests a preoccupation with a feeling of insecurity and a need to compensate for it, on the part of the author and possibly his readers.

Masculinity, power, and the readers of Achilles Tatius

Little is known of the author, Achilles Tatius,²⁰ but the sophistication and erudition of his novel suggest he was part of the educated elite. In addition, while the gender composition and educational level of readers of the ancient novels are matters of much debate, Bowie argues realistically that the likelihood is that, while a wider audience was possible, the intended reader of the novels, like those in the style of Achilles Tatius, was a reasonably high-class, educated male.²¹ The construction of masculinity and its encoded power relations for the high-class, educated male in the second century AD was a product of the political and social situation of the time. Greek-speaking people had already been feeling the effects of Roman conquest since the second century BC as political power moved from fairly autonomous Greek and Hellenistic leaders to the Roman conquerors and their local sympathizers. Augustus' seizure of power at the end of the first century BC brought about the beginning of a fully realized autocratic rule in Rome, which effectively sidelined the Senate and invested power in a tightly controlled bureaucracy.²² Under Imperial rule, Roman men found themselves as politically disempowered and as disenfranchized as Greek-speakers did.²³

The result of changing political structures seems to have also led to a change to social structures, including a shift in notions of masculinity. Studies suggest that ideal 'hegemonic masculinity', the prevailing masculinity in which authority resides,²⁴ had previously been predicated on the position of the male as a free, politically and sexually active citizen, usually of the elite, with mastery over subordinates.²⁵ To restore order and their

²⁰ Whitmarsh 2001:xii.

²¹ Bowie 2003²:92, 106. See also Jones 2012:11n48.

²² Skinner 2014²:320–21.

²³ Konstan 1994:223; Haynes 2003:99.

²⁴ Connell 2005²:77–79. Connell points out that there are probably not many men who actually meet the standards of the normative masculinity in their society.

²⁵ Joshel and Murnaghan 1998. However, it should be noted that masculinity is a fluid construct, constantly open to change to suit male needs (Joshel and Murnaghan

sense of self-identity in this new world, men turned to the only power relationships they had left, those within the domestic sphere.²⁶ This expressed itself as a growing, idealized interest in the self and marriage. Ideal masculinity in this changed world began to focus on a new ethic of self-mastery.²⁷ This no doubt brought a sense of security to some men. However, evidence from the novels suggests that, conversely, traditional, 'classical', high-status masculine power identities of mastery over not only self, but all others as well, were also still being privileged,²⁸ even though there was no place for such identities. Thus some men may well have been conflicted in their sense of masculine power identities.

Connors points out that the Greek novels, while having their settings in 'vaguely classical times, when Greek cities were still free' and carefully avoiding overt references to imperial Rome and its rule, nevertheless did not escape their socio-historical context.²⁹ The author was going to express his feelings and/or those he believed would appeal to his readers about their socio-political situation. Jones echoes Connors' point, specifically in regard to gender, noting the appearance of contemporary concerns about masculinity interlaced with elements of classical masculinities in the novels. She further suggests that the male protagonists in the novels exhibit a concern for the appearance or 'performance' of masculinity which would only have been included if it was identifiable for the male reader. In particular, she feels that Clitophon, the male protagonist of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, shows the 'pressures experienced by every elite male to conform to the script of masculinity.'³⁰ These then were the feelings and concerns about masculinity and power which appear to be reflected in the novel.

1998:12). Therefore, masculinity was actually not a static or homogenous concept as the ideal suggests.

²⁶ Haynes 2003:99.

²⁷ Konstan 1994:221–22; Swain 1996:128; Skinner 2014²:317–18.

²⁸ Joshel and Murnaghan 1998:13 on classical masculine identities; Haynes 2003:96; Jones 2012:15, 269 on masculine identities in the Greek novels.

²⁹ Connors 2008:162. Also Swain 1996:109, 113.

³⁰ Jones 2012:6–7, 11–15 (quotation 11). Jones questions whether Achilles Tatius' representation of Clitophon as failing to perform masculinity might not be his way of resisting hegemonic ideals of masculinity by questioning their attainability and validity, as this misperformance 'both emphasizes his period's concern for masculinity, and perhaps subversively questions the importance of those concerns' (2012:11).

Male perpetrators in the novel

However, the world of the novel is idealistic, ostensibly representing the masculinity and power relations of an earlier, 'classical' period in which the novel is set. In such a world, men would supposedly have no reason to feel conflicted and insecure in terms of their power relations. Therefore, Achilles Tatius expresses these feelings in his characters by making them feel them for other reasons. He does this by creating an ideal civilization based on an equally ideal masculinity, compounded of classical and contemporary notions of masculinity, and then continually presents characters who cannot, or do not, meet this ideal.³¹

The masculine ideal in the novel is hegemonic, representing civilization and traditional power structures. The particular qualities of this ideal masculinity in the novel, in the opinion of Jones, are παιδεία and ἀνδρεία, qualities of, as Haynes puts it, the 'warrior-citizen'.³² Having παιδεία entails having both a specialized education, based on a study of oratory and Classical literature, as well as a mode of ethical behaviour expected of those with such an education, involving self-mastery and moderation.³³ Class status is therefore wrapped up with definitions of ideal masculinity, as those with such an education are the elite males of society, and not subject to the will of subordinates. Ἀνδρεία is manly courage, usually displayed in actions, such as prowess in battle or athleticism, but which, in the novel, can also involve 'Stoic endurance of personal suffering', or even noble suicide and control of one's lust.³⁴ However, violence for the sake of violence is unacceptable, as it violates παιδεία. Violence is identified with the outsider.³⁵ I would add one more aspect to this overview of novelistic masculinity. Stephens notes that characters in novels who act according to the ideal are

³¹ Jones's discussion of masculinity in Achilles Tatius is predicated on the belief that some of the male characters, especially the protagonist Clitophon (see n19 above), but also Clinias, Menelaus, and Thersander, misperform masculinity, challenging masculinity in both the genre and the elite world (Jones 2012:223–25, 237–38, 251–60, 262). However, the examples she discusses are all elite males and she does not take this discussion further to include other males of the novel, such as the perpetrators of violence against women, except for short discussions on the lack of self-control and the effeminizing tendencies of bandits (Jones 2012:108, 130n127, 255–56).

³² Haynes 2003:96.

³³ Jones 2012:20–22. Also Haynes 2003:96, 139nn44, 45; King 2012:154–55.

³⁴ Jones 2012:93–95 (quotation 95). Although Jones 2012:22, 94 makes it clear that παιδεία and ἀνδρεία cannot actually be so easily defined. See Jones 2012:20–173 for detailed discussions on παιδεία and ἀνδρεία in the ancient world and in the novel.

³⁵ Haynes 2003:96.

perceived as acceptably Hellenistic, even when they are not Greek.³⁶ Masculinity in the novel might then be loosely defined as being male, elite, Hellenistic, having self-control, moderation, and courage. However, Achilles Tatius destabilizes his characters in terms of the masculine ideal by writing them as unable to live up to these qualities due to their lack of self-control, moderation, and courage, or by being subject to, or outside of, the societal hierarchy. Thus, they begin to be partly identified in opposition to the ideal, or 'othered',³⁷ creating in them a sense of displacement and/or disempowerment in relation to masculinity and societal power structures in the novel.

Male perpetrators in Achilles Tatius run the gamut from gods, mythological figures, elite men of education and status to brigands and slaves. The first perpetrator met in the novel is actually a god. Gods are not usually measured against mortal notions of masculinity,³⁸ but these gods form part of a theme of men who ought to be admirable but are not because they fail to live up to the ideal. In this case, the power of their divine position is undermined by another, more powerful being who strips them of self-control and autonomy. The first is Zeus when he abducts Europa in his bull form (1.1.2–13) in order to rape her.³⁹ Zeus is usually a powerful figure and king of the gods. His strength, in bull form, is at first emphasized as he is described riding the crest of a wave in the middle of the sea and flexing his muscles. However, as we reach the end of the description we find that he is not actually operating by his own will. The bull is in fact being led by Eros in full array of quiver and torch, which the reader would know are the tools of

³⁶ Stephens 2008:56–57. Stephens 2008:60–61 shows that this is also true of characters in *Leucippe and Clitophon*. Clitophon, while a self-declared Phoenician by birth (1.3.1), seems to have a Greek ancestry, but of what sort is not made clear. In addition, the novel does not seem to distinguish Phoenicians from Greeks to any great extent (Morales 2004:49).

³⁷ Both Joshel and Murnaghan 1998:11–12 and Jones 2012:5 point out that masculinity was defined in terms of the 'other', as men constructed masculine identity by projecting wholesale what they did not want to be onto these 'others', such as women, slaves, foreigners, bandits, etc. Therefore, in a sense, all perpetrators could be argued to be associated with all 'othered' groups, even when these associations are not made obvious by Achilles Tatius. Jones 2012:251–52, 55 notes several such instances of the 'othering' of male perpetrators (Callisthenes, Thersander, Clitophon) as also being effeminizing. However, as Achilles Tatius does not make these clear in the text, I feel that Jones is taking the reading of subtext too far in these instances.

³⁸ Although the obvious exception is Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, where the gods are not only prolific perpetrators of violence against women, but also quite human in their characterization as self-interested and capricious.

³⁹ However, Bartsch 1989:54, 64 points out that Europa's calm face does not suggest that she is being taken away unwillingly.

Eros' trade when enflaming people to love (or lust). On noting Eros, the narrator mentions his all-encompassing power in that he 'rules over heaven and earth and sea', ἄρχει ... οὐρανοῦ καὶ γῆς καὶ θαλάττης (1.2.1). Eros even has a surreptitious smile as though mocking Zeus as it was his power which had caused Zeus to turn into a bull (δι' αὐτὸν γέγονε βουῶς, 'he became a bull because of him', 1.1.13). The other god perpetrators are Apollo in his pursuit of Daphne, who the reader will know has been struck with an arrow by Eros to induce love (1.5.5), and Pan in his pursuit of the unnamed Syrinx (8.6.7),⁴⁰ both also with the intention of raping their victims. Like Zeus, both Apollo and Pan are yet more love-struck gods, who ought to have self-mastery and autonomy but who instead, due to the precedent set in the first episode, the reader now knows are also under the power of another god, Eros.

However, the most numerous perpetrators are not gods, but mortal men. One might expect that, among mortal men, the brigands would then be the most prolific,⁴¹ but instead there are just as many young men of elite status of whom παιδεία and ἀνδρεία would be expected, who take part in acts of violence against women, usually in some sort of association with bandits.⁴² In several episodes two different kinds of perpetrator are intertwined, the outlaw and the man within society's borders who does not follow society's rules. Such a set of perpetrators are Callisthenes, a suitor of Leucippe, and his hired robbers who kidnap Calligone, mistaking one woman for the other (2.16.2–18). Callisthenes, while a wealthy young man of Leucippe's home city, is described as 'profligate and extravagant', ἄσωτος ... καὶ πολυτελής (2.13.1), wishing to have Leucippe as his wife and lover purely on hearsay about her beauty. In fact, the narrator notes that the 'wantonness of the licentious', τοῖς ἀκολάστοις ὕβρις (ibid.) is such that they can suffer from desire merely through words and their own imagination without ever having seen the object of their desire. His suit is turned down by Leucippe's father on the basis of his uncontrolled lifestyle. He is motivated to attempt

⁴⁰ Briand 2018:144, 146 actually refers to Pan as the god of sexual violence.

⁴¹ Whitmarsh 2011:157 notes that perpetrators of sexual aggression are usually marked as 'culturally deviant' in the Greek novels, but he only cites barbarians and criminals (and in the case of Longus, city-folk) as examples.

⁴² The narrator of this novel, and therefore of these episodes, is the male protagonist, Clitophon. As many of these episodes of violence are directed against his beloved Leucippe, his descriptions of them are bound to include harsh judgements of them as inappropriate 'others'. This gives Achilles Tatius a logical reason within the narrative for many of the male perpetrators' 'othered' depictions. (See Morgan 2007:108, 110–14, 118–19 on the unreliability of Clitophon as a narrator, who manipulates the story to suit his idea of how he wants himself and Leucippe to be presented.)

a marriage by rape because of this rejection and his own unfulfilled desires.⁴³ Calligone has an array of perpetrators against her, none of whom have a stable masculine or societal position. The robbers are actually local fishermen who have chosen to step outside the law. They do not belong to the elite so they are not expected to conform to the ideal of self-control. However, they have chosen to move from possibly law-abiding citizens to pirates and thus are outsiders to society for not obeying the law. Nevertheless, they are also subordinate to Callisthenes as his hired hands. They are also ‘othered’ towards the feminine as they have no qualms about dressing up in disguise as women in order to carry out the plan (2.18.3). Callisthenes, of whom the ideal would be expected,⁴⁴ does not conform to the social rules of self-control and moderation in regard to his lust. Furthermore, as Haynes points out, Callisthenes’ position should have separated him from considering and using the violence of the robbers,⁴⁵ but instead he resorts to cowardly, underhand tactics to gain his desires.

Another young man, Chaereas, also hires outlaws for his dirty work, when he gathers a group of pirates to kidnap Leucippe (5.3.2, 7.1–2). Much as in the case of Callisthenes and Calligone, a young man who ought to have self-control and moderation allows his lust to overcome him and causes a young woman to be kidnapped by bandits.

More bandits are introduced with Leucippe’s capture, seeming sacrifice, and ritual consumption by the βουκόλοι, or herdsmen (3.15).⁴⁶ Whitmarsh calls the herdsmen the ‘stock baddies of the novels’, a group of organized bandits with a ‘king’ (3.9.3).⁴⁷ It is uncertain if they were based on real pirates,⁴⁸ but, unlike the other bandits, these are given a full description. They are huge, terrifying savages, darker in colour than the other characters in the novel, and they speak a barbarian language⁴⁹ (πλήρης ἦν ἡ γῆ φοβερῶν

⁴³ See Whitmarsh 2020:65, who notes the resemblance of Callisthenes’ behaviour to the practice of ‘abduction marriage’.

⁴⁴ Haynes 2003:139. This is also in contrast to his later change of heart after he falls in love with Calligone and becomes the possessor of all virtues, including self-control and prudence (8.17.3–6). However, Bird 2020:81 is sceptical of this reformation, believing that Sostrates, who reports this information, may have been fooled by Callisthenes.

⁴⁵ Haynes 2003:96.

⁴⁶ Bierl 2012:149–57 discusses the blending of sexuality and violence, together with the sacred aspects of this sacrificial spectacle.

⁴⁷ Whitmarsh 2001:155. See also Hilton 2020:130–31 on the prior use of the herdsmen motif in Greek literature.

⁴⁸ Whitmarsh 2001:155. But see Hilton 2020:131, 135–37.

⁴⁹ See Furiati 2002:137 on how the bodies of the herdsmen clearly mark their ‘otherness’. Although Hilton 2020:131 feels that the detailed, realistic description of

καὶ ἀγρίων ἀνθρώπων· μεγάλοι μὲν πάντες, μέλανες δὲ τὴν χροάν, ... ψιλοὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς, λεπτοὶ τοὺς πόδας, τὸ σῶμα παχεῖς· ἐβαρβάριζον δὲ πάντες, ‘... the land was full of terrifying and savage men: all huge, and with black skin, ... with bare heads and feet, and stout in body, all were speaking like barbarians’, 3.9.2).⁵⁰ They are outsiders to the social hierarchy in that they are foreigners and they have no interest in following the rules of civilized society. The bandit who takes Leucippe away to be sacrificed has long, wild hair (3.12.1). His horse is equally hairy and has none of the trappings of civilization, such as a saddle or face-guard. When the bandits marching the prisoners come up against the Egyptian army, they further show their barbarism by fighting with clods of earth against the shields, spears, and swords of the socially sanctioned army (3.13.2–5), an improvised and underhand fighting method antithetical to the ideals of hoplite warfare.⁵¹ In addition to their barbarism, Hilton suggests that the lack of civilized equipment for their horses and their poor armaments may also indicate a low economic status.⁵² Despite their savage behaviour, the army is easily able to ward off these clods with their shields and then eventually, surrounding the bandits through militarily superior manoeuvres, all but massacre them. When the general of the army⁵³ wants to attack their stronghold, and discovers that the bandits number about 10 000 men, he is still convinced that his 5000 men, with the addition of 2000 more, can rout even 20 000 bandits (3.24.1–2). The herdsmen are presented as ultimate scare figures yet, compared to the civilized army, they are rendered powerless. These men are further disempowered by finding themselves in the desperate position of having to sacrifice a maiden in order to purify their den, an act that cannot be deferred, and no doubt becomes urgent, because their stronghold is about

the herdsmen and their circumstances throughout the novel ‘actually reduces the supposed savagery of their nature’.

⁵⁰ See Hilton 2020:143–44 for a discussion of the difficulty in translating the phrases ψιλοὶ τὰς κεφαλὰς, λεπτοὶ τοὺς πόδας. I agree with his translation, which makes more sense in the context of the passage.

⁵¹ Jones 2012:108n56.

⁵² Hilton 2020:132.

⁵³ This general, Charmides, also has sexual designs on a female, Leucippe (4.2.1, 6.2), which Menelaus, a friend of Clitophon, fears will lead to violence (4.8.5–6). Hilton 2019:574–75 argues quite convincingly that Charmides’ description of the capture of the hippopotamus and his account of the analgesic elephant (4.2–5) constitute a subtle sexual threat to Leucippe, where Leucippe is the elephant, to be ridden by Charmides. However, the general is prevented from attempting or causing harm to Leucippe by the fit of madness she has (4.9.1–3) after Gorgias overdoses her (4.15.4) and by Charmides’ attack on the herdsmen (4.11.1–2). Nevertheless, he too shows a lack of self-control in contemplating violence for the sake of lust (Bird 2020:91).

to be attacked by the army.⁵⁴ Part of this act of sacrifice involves not only disembowelling a maiden but also committing cannibalism, an act which further separates them from civilization. In fact, Morales points out that this sacrifice is part of a discourse of ethnocentrism vilifying foreigners.⁵⁵ The herdsmen have their own form of bravery⁵⁶ but their barbaric depiction and possible poverty clearly separate them from ideal masculinity and civilized society.

Tellingly, the next attack on a woman is perpetrated by another Egyptian who cannot help but be read in terms of these herdsmen. The soldier Gorgias has Leucippe dosed (4.15.4), or more accurately overdosed, with an aphrodisiac which makes her lose her senses (4.9.1–2). Despite belonging to the seemingly civilized army, he is specifically noted as an Egyptian who has used a trick to try and win Leucippe, not long after Clitophon has favoured the reader with his assessment of tricks and Egyptians⁵⁷ in relation to the herdsmen. He accuses them of having used a devious trick rather than their own manhood to defeat the army temporarily and of being weak in the face of misfortune and headstrong in victory (4.14.9). Gorgias is therefore not only showing no self-control or moderation, and employing cowardly tactics, he is also taken out of civilization and recast as a bandit and an outsider.

Clitophon himself, the hero of the novel, is earlier also cast as a bandit but in a more subtle way. A brigand viciously disembowels the heroine Leucippe in a dream of her mother's (2.23.5), even as she is about to be penetrated by her lover Clitophon in the waking world, and lose her virginity. The metaphor for Leucippe's loss of virginity is obvious. The robber seizes Leucippe without permission, positions her as if for intercourse and then violates her by penetrating her with his 'blade', μάχαιρα, starting from her genitals (lit. 'from her shame', ἀπὸ τῆς αἰδοῦς, *ibid.*), the blade being a typical

⁵⁴ This act, while an act, seems to have worked temporarily for the herdsmen, who go on to defeat the army through a trick later in the narrative (4.13–14). However, they themselves are later ultimately defeated by a larger force sent for the task (4.18.1).

⁵⁵ Morales 2004:168. See also 169n28. See Hilton 2020:133 on the aspects of Egyptian magical practices in this ritual.

⁵⁶ See Jones 2012:130, who states that intelligence and cunning are vital elements of ἀνδρεία. But see also Jones 2012:201n80 on the typical characterization of bandits, like these herdsmen, as lacking ἀνδρεία.

⁵⁷ Menelaus describes himself as being of Egyptian birth and descent (2.33.2; 3.19.1), but his behaviour is that of a Greek man and, as such, acceptable (Stephens 2008:60–61).

phallic symbol.⁵⁸ In a similar way, Clitophon, an elite young man,⁵⁹ therefore becomes a bandit⁶⁰ as he is also about to violate her and tear away her virginity with his ‘weapon’, a phallus.⁶¹ Clitophon too does not have society’s permission to take her virginity as they are unmarried. He has not controlled his lust and duly fulfilled society’s dictates.

Even mythological figures undergo this characterization.⁶² Tereus, the violent rapist of his sister-in-law Philomela, cuts out the woman’s tongue so that she cannot reveal to her sister what has happened (5.3.4–8, 5.2–9). Tereus is a Thracian. Clitophon says that ‘to barbarians, it seems, one wife is not sufficient regarding Aphrodite [i.e. lust], especially whenever the opportunity is given to them to be wantonly licentious.’ Βαρβάρους δέ, ὡς ἔοικεν, οὐχ ἰκανὴ πρὸς Ἀφροδίτην μία γυνή, μάλισθ’ ὅταν αὐτοῖς καιρὸς διδῶ πρὸς ὕβριν τρυφᾶν (5.5.2). What makes Tereus a barbarian in this case is not just his foreignness, but also his inability and unwillingness to control his sexual desires, the opposite of civilized self-control. When he unknowingly eats his son, served to him as punishment by his wife and sister-in-law, his inadvertent cannibalism reminds the reader of the cannibalism of the herdsmen and therefore he also acquires shades of these bandits.

The final, and perhaps most notable, set of perpetrators to be discussed are not a bandit and an educated young man, but they have a similar dynamic. They are a slave and his master, who ill-treat Leucippe when she

⁵⁸ Goldhill 1995:36 points out that the language of wounding and slaughter is a common analogy in Greek literature, especially ancient novels, for a defloration. On the violence of female loss of virginity, see Winkler 1990 on *Daphnis and Chloe*; Montague 1992:242–45 on *Daphnis and Chloe* and *Leucippe and Clitophon*. (See Zeitlin 2012:114–19 on the anxiety of the male over a woman’s defloration in *Leucippe and Clitophon*.)

⁵⁹ It could even be argued that he is ‘othered’ as a foreigner because he is a Phoenician (1.3.1; 6.9.2). However, it is Clitophon’s failure to live up to Greek rules of masculine conduct that is emphasized here.

⁶⁰ Melite calls Clitophon a bandit when he will not make love to her (5.25.7).

⁶¹ Unusually for a novel heroine, Leucippe is, at least in Clitophon’s mind, quite willing to have sexual intercourse with her beloved before marriage (2.19.1–2, 6), but the interweaving of the violent language of the dream into the moment turns their proposed consensual sexual act into a sexual assault.

⁶² There is also a depiction of mythological violence against a woman in an ἔκφρασις of the sacrifice of Andromeda (3.7). However, in that case, the ‘perpetrator’ is a non-human monster. On the other hand, there is violence inherent in Andromeda’s rescuer, and future husband. Perseus flies to her almost naked, carrying a dangerous-sounding blade that is a combination of sword and sickle, a weapon which takes on phallic significance (see Morales 2004:177) as the reader has already been primed to equate the loss of virginity with violent assault and disembowelment due to the mother’s dream (2.23.5).

comes into their hands as a slave (5.17.3–10). Her aggressor at first is revealed to be her master's bailiff, Sosthenes. As a bailiff on a country estate, Sosthenes is a slave with a management level of responsibility but as a slave he has no rights in society.⁶³ When Leucippe, as a slave, appeals to Melite as her owner's wife and as a fellow female, Melite is disgusted by Sosthenes' treatment of one of her slaves, having him called to her immediately. He shows his knowledge of the powerlessness of his position even as a high-level slave by coming to her in distress, knowing that she has all the power over him. Indeed, Melite berates him and strips him of his supervisory position. He also seems to have no personal power, because while he was bailiff he tried to induce Leucippe to serve his sexual needs but he could not compel her to do so. Not able to impose his will on her, he resorted to physical violence, lashing her.

Leucippe then comes under sexual and physical attack from her master, Thersander, through the instigation of Sosthenes, who wants revenge for his demotion (6.3.3–6). Thersander would seem to be a perfect example of ideal masculinity. He is 'a leading representative of the upper crust and ostensibly gifted with the good breeding to preserve the social order'.⁶⁴ However, once again this is not the case. Thersander might be the master of the house but he is overcome with lust for Leucippe (6.4.4, 6.3, 7.3). Shaw illustrates how Thersander begins his association with Leucippe by trying to initiate a romantic relationship, showing a degree of self-control at the beginning (6.18.2), although this does not last long. In turn, he wishes her to react as a free person.⁶⁵ However, with each successive overture, Leucippe physically resists him. First, he places his hand on her neck to initiate a kiss, but she bows her head to thwart his efforts, so he next resorts to placing a hand under her chin to lift it, and then, when that does not work, he forces her chin up while also pulling viciously on her hair (6.18.4–6). By continually resisting him Leucippe is breaking his romantic fantasy.⁶⁶ This leads Thersander temporarily to stop his assault. However, his frustration over his powerlessness turns him to further violence. Shaw believes that Thersander has to change the script from that of romance to force to get what he wants.⁶⁷ In this, Thersander shows himself as a direct example of a man feeling wounded in terms of his masculinity. Leucippe's resistance directly threatens his sense of masculine power identity as a dominator over women, and therefore his acts of violence escalate as he attempts to exert control over

⁶³ Bradley 2011:242; Morley 2011:279–80.

⁶⁴ Frilingos 2009:838.

⁶⁵ Shaw 1996:270.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*

⁶⁷ *Ibid.*

her. Thersander is actually very much like a modern domestic abuser as he now beats and verbally abuses her (6.20.1–3).

However, Thersander is still also typical of perpetrators in the novel. Thersander's slave had accused him of effeminacy and incited him to his initial action (6.17.2–5). He is 'othered' by assaulting Leucippe, as it illustrates his lack of sexual restraint in regard to her.⁶⁸ Like his slave he is unable to compel her to have sexual intercourse with him, or even to kiss him, despite trying to force her, and he also escalates his violence. In fact, Leucippe says to Thersander, 'You are not acting like a free nor like a noble [man]: and you imitate Sosthenes: the slave is worthy of the master.' Οὔτε ὡς ἐλεύθερος ποιεῖς οὔτε ὡς εὐγενής· καὶ σὺ μιμῆ Σωσθένην· ἄξιός ὁ δοῦλος τοῦ δεσπότου (6.18.6). This casts Thersander in the role of subjugated, uncontrolled slave.⁶⁹ Furthermore, his actions in trying to have sex with Leucippe are constantly compared, often in conjunction with those of Sosthenes, with those of the bandits and pirates throughout the novel (6.13.1, 22.1–2), but he is accused of being the worst bandit of them all (ὁ μέγας ... ληστής, 'the great bandit', 8.5.6).⁷⁰ Thereby the noblest perpetrator also becomes the most degraded outsider of them all, as a slave and bandit who has no 'connection with the ethical values that define civilized manliness'.⁷¹

By examining the male perpetrators of these many acts of violence against women, the following observations can be made. As noted, all these men are lacking in the expected qualities of civilized, ideal masculinity, and are either outsiders to society, under the control of another in the social hierarchy, or some combination thereof, destabilizing their masculine identity and place in society by this 'othering'. Perpetrators include elite men within the social hierarchy who have become displaced because they have chosen not to follow the expectations for their position, namely by showing no self-control or courage. Others are social outsiders who never fitted into

⁶⁸ See Bird 2020:80–81 on the ironic use of σωφροσύνη at 8.9.2, 10.7 to describe Thersander, when his actions show him to be anything but self-controlled.

⁶⁹ See Jones 2012:254–60, esp. 254 on the enslavement of Thersander to his lust and his resulting passivity.

⁷⁰ Jones 2012:255 suggests that as bandits are characterized as being sexually insatiable, this too is applied to Thersander. However, I do not believe that this characterization is clearly articulated in Achilles Tatius. Morales 2004:179 suggests a parallel between Tereus and Thersander in that both are Thracian, which would have strengthened my argument by making Thersander a raping barbarian. However, Thersander comes from Ionia (6.12.2), probably the city of Ephesus where he lives, and although Ionia was in Asia Minor near the province of Thrace, Thrace itself was situated on the adjacent European continent.

⁷¹ King 2012:155.

the hierarchy of society by being foreigners. There are also a large band of social and legal outsiders in the form of the many bandits and pirates. The intertwining of many of these character types means that the qualities of one type often become associated with another, turning elite men into uncontrolled bandits and slaves.⁷² Lastly, there are those within the social hierarchy but who occupy a lesser position by being under the control of others in that hierarchy, such as the love-struck gods and the slave, who become defeated subordinates.

Male perpetrators in the context of discussions of violence against women

Achilles Tatius' favoured *topos* of encouraging the reader, either explicitly or implicitly, to equate the effects of violence against female victims, who are always young, nubile, and high-class women, with beauty, and to find such effects, including marks on the body and the physical manifestation of fear, aesthetically, and even sexually, pleasing has already been well established by a variety of scholars.⁷³ To give a few prominent examples, several victims, including Europa's friends who witness her abduction (1.1.7–8), Andromeda, and Leucippe, are described in terms that clearly show they are traumatized but at the same time also sexual objects. Europa's maidens are described as having half-smiles, perhaps in response to the divine visitation, but their hair is loose, possibly in distress, their faces are pale, they stare wide-eyed after the bull, their arms outstretched to stop it, and their mouths open 'as if intending to utter a shout of fear', ὥσπερ ἀφήσειν ὑπὸ φόβου μέλλουσαι καὶ βοήν (1.1.7). Yet the author also notes their uncovered legs and naked feet, even in their distress.⁷⁴ This description of their reaction is a double entendre, capable of being read as fearful but also sexual. The effects of this description are to turn them into helpless objects of violence put on display for the enjoyment of the reader as if they were sexual objects, and as if fear itself were sexually beautiful.

In the case of Andromeda's depiction, in an ἔκφρασις describing her sacrifice to propitiate a monster, violence has obviously already been perpetrated on her to bring her to the rock, as her arms are described as discoloured with bruises and she has had to be shackled into place (3.7.4). This depiction shows her in a defeated, vulnerable, and torturous position, crouching in a depression on the rock with her hands hanging like grapes and looking dead, no doubt because the circulation has been cut off. Both

⁷² See Burrus 2005:63 and Frilingos 2009:838 for similar observations on the equivalence between bandits and criminals and supposedly civilized men.

⁷³ Montague 1992:243; Konstan 1994:37; Morales 2004:169; Ballengee 2005:143–44. See also Richlin 1992a:xiv; Chew 2003:139.

⁷⁴ Montague 1992:244.

fear and beauty can be seen in her face, her cheeks are pale yet they have a little blush, her eyes are full of anxiety, like wilting violets. The author concludes that she has been depicted 'with beautiful fear', εὐμόρφῳ φόβῳ (3.7.3). For this episode Ballengee notes not just a link between beauty and terror, but indeed how terror actually heightens beauty.⁷⁵ The equating of beauty with fear suggests that the author is encouraging the reader to gain aesthetic pleasure from a suffering woman showing fear.

Leucippe's tears are described as 'turning her grief into beauty', αὐτὴν τὴν λύπην εἰς κάλλος νενικηκότα (6.7.3), and Achilles Tatius provides a soliloquy on the beauty tears bring to the eyes. The author once again provides a description of suffering which is to be appreciated in the same manner as beauty.⁷⁶ Therefore, it is not surprising that so many scholars have suggested that the main purpose of the violence is pornographic, for the sadistic enjoyment of the powerful, dominant male reader.⁷⁷ However, having now also problematized male perpetrators, it can be seen that there is a disconnect in the logic of this point of view. Male readers were apparently being asked to appreciate and enjoy the effects of violence, and therefore place themselves in the position of the perpetrators of the violence in the novel, while at the same time these perpetrators are all 'othered' by being deficient in ideal masculinity, outsiders to society, or in positions of relative powerlessness. Despite this negative portrayal of perpetrators, Whitmarsh suggests how such an identification could be made by the reader. He posits that readers can sympathize with both the hero and the anti-hero at the same time. The very fact that the perpetrators are present in the narrative makes a temporary identification with these deviant figures possible, even if it is eventually discarded.⁷⁸ I therefore suggest that identification with the perpetrators was temporarily possible because they reflect the possible sense of insecurity and disempowerment of the reader. Furthermore, by viewing the violence and being encouraged to gain pleasure from the fear and suffering of a powerless victim, the reader was enabled to experience a

⁷⁵ Ballengee 2005:146–47. Also Morales 2004:175–76.

⁷⁶ Even in horrific scenes, such as the episode during which Leucippe is apparently eviscerated (3.15.4–5), a sexual appreciation of those suffering is encouraged. Morales 2004:168, 171–72 (quotation 172) not only suggests that the theatricality of the episode protects the reader from reacting with horror to the sacrifice, she further points out that Clitophon's reaction when he sees the disembowelment is similar to his reaction when he sees Leucippe for the first time. Thus 'the experiences of gazing with desire and gazing with horror' are related, and imbue Clitophon's gaze upon the scene with an erotic element in the eyes of the reader.

⁷⁷ Elsom 1992:217; Montague 1992:238–40, 243; Konstan 1994:72; Morales 2004:169; 2008:53.

⁷⁸ Whitmarsh 2011:157–58.

momentary release from the frustration of powerlessness and to enjoy the power trip of dominating someone he perceived to be less powerful than himself, as well as reasserting his own masculine position for himself.⁷⁹ The sheer number of episodes of violence against women in the novel suggests a preoccupation with this sense of conflict and insecurity, and an accompanying need to compensate for it.

Clitophon as a conflicted male

The strangely dissonant experiences of Clitophon, the hero, specifically in regard to violence against women, strengthen the argument that violence against women in the novel indicates a preoccupation with a sense of conflict in terms of masculinity and power structures, and attempts to compensate for it. Clitophon has a dual nature as both perpetrator and victim.⁸⁰ At first, he wishes to be the perpetrator of the ‘violence’,⁸¹ in taking Leucippe’s virginity, but almost immediately he also begins to show a conflicted, uncertain masculinity⁸² by his effeminizing victimization, a theme which continues as the story progresses. He is ‘emasculated’ in a dream when a Gorgon uses a sickle to cut off the appendage which is attached to him from the waist down, his betrothed (1.3.4). He also experiences two beatings at the hands of Thersander (5.23.5; 8.1.3–4), during which he makes no attempt to defend himself,⁸³ and is chained up, stripped, and suspended in anticipation of torture (7.12.2), turning him into a passive body which cannot protect itself from harm as a man ought to do.⁸⁴ It should be noted, though, that the episodes of violence in which he is the victim are never as graphic and sensationalist as those against women. However, he

⁷⁹ In fact, this can be taken even further if one considers Joshel’s 1992 thesis that the body female has been used in Latin literature as a space to represent the body politic. The novel reader may well have been enjoying the reassertion of his dominance even over untouchable political authority.

⁸⁰ Burrus 2005:67 sees him as an active lover rendered passively queer in the face of the violence against Leucippe.

⁸¹ See Morales 2004:169–70, who suggests that the links drawn between sex and violence in the novel lead the reader to view Clitophon, and all lovers, as violent aggressors.

⁸² Briand 2018:143 points out that Clitophon is ‘sensitive and weak, even “feminine”, according to the ethical, stylistic, and cultural criteria of his time’. See also 147. For ways in which Clitophon is effeminized, see Briand 2009:339, 341–42; Zeitlin 2012:110–12, 113; Jones 2012:233–34, 237–54. For the passivity and effeminization of the novel hero in general, see Haynes 2003:81–100.

⁸³ Although he attempts to excuse this behaviour on the grounds of self-restraint (Jones 2012:250).

⁸⁴ Jones 2012:250–51. In this regard, he is also like a slave (Jones 2012:254).

also constantly finds himself the helpless witness to the suffering and violence inflicted upon Leucippe. When Leucippe is apparently disembowelled during a ritual sacrifice and her entrails then eaten, Clitophon is the helpless victim, staring at the sight in shock (3.15.5–6).⁸⁵ When Leucippe is suffering from fits of madness due to an overdose of aphrodisiac, Clitophon empathizes with her suffering and rails against Fortune but does nothing constructive to help her (4.9.4–7). Later, Clitophon has to watch from a distance as Leucippe is apparently beheaded by pirates (5.7.4–5).⁸⁶ This helpless, passive attitude is typical of the novel hero, according to Haynes, and she speculates that the powerlessness of the heroes, such as Clitophon, may have been attractive in various ways to men who felt politically marginalized by changing power structures.⁸⁷

In these instances, Clitophon has something in common with the maidens who witness the kidnapping of Europa (1.1.7–8). Their mostly traumatized reactions suggest that these women are experiencing the psychological effects of the violence as helpless witnesses. From witnessing these acts, Clitophon also becomes a psychological victim of the violence. The reader thus identifies with him as the hero of the novel, but may also be identifying with him as the victim. However, as the author has primed the reader to equate beauty with fear, and to find fear attractive and enjoyable, the focus on Clitophon's shock and his lamentations, including a suicidal soliloquy and attempted self-sacrifice over Leucippe's coffin after he sees her disembowelled (3.16–17.5), turn him into a victim whose suffering⁸⁸ is

⁸⁵ Although Briand 2009:340 does point out that, as narrator, Clitophon gives a detailed description of his silence and passivity.

⁸⁶ Konstan 1994:69 suggests that Clitophon also sees himself as a victim in relation to the rape of Philomela.

⁸⁷ Haynes 2003:99.

⁸⁸ Leucippe's apparent disembowelment occurs in a manner similar to the dream of her mother (2.23.5), which, as mentioned earlier, was intended to evoke the act of defloration of Leucippe by Clitophon. However, it should be noted that I do not believe there is an unambiguous link between these two episodes. The act of the dream disembowelment is reversed, with the herdsman's sword cutting downwards from under the heart (3.15.4), rather than up from her genitals. I believe this reversal also subtly signals the reversal of victim, as the focus shifts from Leucippe to Clitophon. Clitophon's disempowered masculinity moves him from being the would-be perpetrator of violence against virginity to being its victim. For the focus on Clitophon's suffering rather than Leucippe's when she is disembowelled, see Morales 2004:172. The same focus on Clitophon occurs when Leucippe is apparently beheaded (5.7.4–5). (Elsom 1992:216 notes Clitophon's role as sufferer but believes he is showing castration anxiety and that Leucippe represents his phallus.)

also to be appreciated by the male reader along with that of the women.⁸⁹ Clitophon even compares himself in his grief to the female Niobe when she loses her children. In this way he could be considered to be further effeminized. Clitophon's contradictory characterization as perpetrator, sympathetic victim, and object of violence, make him a symbol for a reader similarly conflicted in his own masculinity.⁹⁰

Conclusion

Taking a perpetrator-centred approach shows that, despite the attention-capturing salacious details of the episodes of violence against women and the nature of the victims in *Achilles Tatius*, the male perpetrators are just as important in the construction, and consequent understanding, of these episodes. They come from all strata: gods, educated young elite, bandits, and slaves, but they all have one thing in common. They all fall short to some degree of the masculine ideal, being 'othered' as lacking in self-control, courage, and concern for society's rules, or as subordinates. This displacement from positions of power and status results in them representing the disempowerment of males whose sense of masculinity is insecure. Male readers would therefore be able to identify with them, in spite of their negative portrayal. When this view of male perpetrators is read together

⁸⁹ The only other act of violence against a male is in the other half of the diptych depicting *Andromeda* (3.7), namely the torture of *Prometheus* (3.8). Morales 2004:174–75 notes similarities between the *Andromeda* and *Prometheus* scenes, including themes of display, for the edification of the characters and reader, and torture, which in turn, also through *Andromeda*'s role as a sacrifice, foreshadow *Leucippe*'s apparent disembowelment by the herdsmen (3.15.4–5, Bartsch 1989:58–59; Konstan 1994:70). From this argument and the emphasis on the suffering of *Prometheus*, I believe *Prometheus* bridges the gap between female victims and *Clitophon*.

⁹⁰ Jones 2012:11, 72, 221, 237–38 suggests several times that *Clitophon*'s misperformance of masculinity (as well as that by the other characters she assesses) was perhaps *Achilles Tatius*' way of allowing *Clitophon* (and others) to break through into the 'real', thus enabling the male reader to identify with him as a more realistic, less-than-perfect man. However, she also believes that despite being 'Greek' in character, *Clitophon*'s identification as Phoenician separates him from the reader, as he then has 'licence to misperform masculinity' (Jones 2012:270). This contradiction in *Clitophon*'s characterization as 'same' and 'other' to the reader only adds to my argument as it shows another layer of conflicted identity to *Clitophon*. At another level, it is possible that *Clitophon*'s depiction as Phoenician and victim may distance the reader from the perpetrators he describes. However, I do not believe any distance created can be substantial enough to undermine my argument because of his dual characterization as also being assimilated Greek and perpetrator.

with the suggestion that, at the same time, the perpetrators are being made available for identification by the reader through the portrayal of the effects of violence against women as something to be enjoyed, the reason for the violence can be understood in a new way. The construction of all elements of these episodes, perpetrators, victims, and the effects of the violence, allows readers briefly to re-establish a sense of domination and security, thus providing a cathartic and reaffirming power experience that might allow them some relief from their own anxiety and frustration. The sheer number of episodes of violence against women, and the multitude and variety of perpetrators, suggest that Achilles Tatius was reflecting on the concerns within himself and/or others about contemporary notions of masculinity and the possible need to compensate for feelings of insecurity about power relations with others, when presenting violence against women and its male perpetrators in his novel. This argument is bolstered when one considers that the male protagonist, the one character above all others who might be expected to generate empathy in the male reader, himself has a conflicted masculinity.⁹¹ He is both perpetrator and victim, 'same' and 'other'. He is the symbol of what the male reader wished he were and what he was afraid he might be.

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⁹¹ This is not only in relation to episodes of violence against women, but, according to several scholars, can be found throughout the novel as a whole (see the various footnotes in the section 'Clitophon as a conflicted male' above.) This study shows that Clitophon as perpetrator and victim is another layer of this multi-faceted character that still needs to be explored.

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