

Ι

INTRODUCTION

Achilles Tatius

Despite the explosion of interest in ancient fiction over the last few decades, Leucippe and Clitophon remains the least studied of the five major Greek novels. To my knowledge, this is the first published monograph on Achilles; so far Leucippe has been left on the shelf. 'Most moderns,' explains Ewen Bowie in his entry on Achilles Tatius in the Oxford Classical Dictionary, 'uncertain how to evaluate him, prefer Longus and Heliodorus.' Graham Anderson concurs: 'Even at the lowest level of literary criticism, at which writers receive one-word adjectives, one can do something for the rest of the extant novelists: Xenophon of Ephesus is naïve. Heliodorus cleverly convoluted, Longus artfully simple: yet what is one to say about Achilles?' Scholarship on the novel is moving forward so quickly that these comments will soon seem dated. Nevertheless, they are symptomatic of a fundamental difficulty: there is no consensus about what to make of Achilles Tatius; at the most basic level, about how to read him. Parody? Pastiche? Pornography? It is, as John Morgan puts it, a 'hyper-enigmatic'

Part of the problem is that Achilles Tatius is frequently evaluated against the norms of the genre (often as the Joker in the pack: '[Achilles Tatius] inverse systématiquement les conventions du genre'; 'He conducts a prolonged guerrilla war against the conventions of his own genre', and the norms and the genre are themselves problematic to define. It is important to note that recent approaches to the genre have been driven by the last few decades'

¹ OCD, 3rd edn (1996), 7.
² Anderson (1997), 2279.
³ Morgan (1996b), 188.

⁴ Plazenet (1997), 322. ⁵ Morgan (1995), 142.

⁶ The bibliography on this is considerable. I have found of particular use or interest Kuch (1989a), 11–51 for a discussion of the ancient terminology, Winkler (1994), Fusillo (1991), Sandy (1994), Selden (1994), Doody (1996) who all, in their different ways, take



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intense interest in the novels' representations of sexuality, sparked in part by Michel Foucault's focus on the ancient novel in the third volume of his *History of Sexuality*. The result has been to privilege those novels that evince similar patterns regarding gender – Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, Longus, Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus – and to downplay those which do not. A more inclusive circumscription, which is encouraged by the variety of content and style in the material collated by Stephens and Winkler and identified as fragments of novels, would obviously set different generic standards and expectations within and against which to judge *Leucippe and Clitophon*.

Several scholars have argued that the readership of the novels in the ancient world largely consisted of women. Of course, many of the arguments for a female readership of the novel are primarily indicative of scholars' own prejudices. When the novels were considered hackneyed, sentimental, pulp fiction, it followed only women and other undiscerning communities of readers would be entertained by them. Recently, more positive reasons have been proposed for a mainly female readership. Focusing on the novels' representations of strong and erotically powerful women, Brigitte Egger has argued that the five 'ideal' Greek novels operate on a principle of 'practical androcentrism' but 'emotional gynocentrism'. Her analyses, drawing on the reader-response

a quite relaxed or inclusive view of genre and Branham (2002), who argues instead for the value of more, and more refined, generic distinctions.

⁷ Foucault (1984), on which see especially Konstan (1994), Goldhill (1995) and Morales (forthcoming).

⁸ Stephens and Winkler (1995).

⁹ Many held the view that because the novels were poor literary works, it followed that they were intended to be read by women. Cf. Altheim (1948), esp. 42 and Scobie (1973a), esp. 93–5, who compared the Greek novels to stories in women's magazines. Perry famously defined the audience as 'the poor-in-spirit': Perry (1967), vii. Rohde (1914) reasons that, as the Greek romance is a decadent genre, indicative of a society in moral decline in which women were assuming more power, it was most likely intended for women. Hägg (1983) and Holzberg (1996) view the prominent role given to women as evidence of a largely female readership: 'Most of the surviving texts offer a strikingly large variety of opportunities for women readers to identify with the characters in the story . . . [o]f great[] interest for women readers was probably the frequent portrayal of heroines as more active, more intelligent and more likeable than their often almost colourless lovers', Holzberg (1996), 35. For further discussion and reviews of the scant ancient testimony on readership see: Egger (1988) and (1990), esp. 1–20 and appendix; Wesseling (1988); Bowie (1994); Stephens (1994); Morgan (1995).

¹⁰ Egger (1990), 365.



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theories of Jauss and Iser, of how the internal structures of the texts might invite interest and identification from women readers, are significant contributions to our appreciation and understanding of the narratives' textual strategies. However, attempting to identify what characteristics of a narrative might be more attractive to a female than a male audience still proves a hazardous enterprise. For Egger, Melite is one of the characters whose individuality, independence and humour, demonstrated in her skilful seduction of Clitophon, make her most likely to appeal to women readers. In contrast, Ewen Bowie considers Melite's conquest of Clitophon 'a male orientation which should give pause to theories of a chiefly female readership'. In contrast, In contrast, In contrast, Ewen Bowie considers Melite's conquest of Clitophon and contrast of the characters whose individuality, independence and humour, demonstrated in her skilful seduction of Clitophon, make her most likely to appeal to women readers. In contrast, Ewen Bowie considers Melite's conquest of Clitophon and criefly female readership'.

The trend at the moment is to assume an exclusively, or largely, male readership. 13 Literacy rates are the chief reason for suggesting that the readers of the novels were the same community of readers who read Homer, Thucydides, Plato, Plutarch and other literature, though possibly in smaller number, and that this community consisted of a small number of elite men and a much smaller number of elite women.¹⁴ Seven papyri of Leucippe and Clitophon have been found, more than of any other Greek novel, but still far fewer than works by authors on school curricula. However, when the evidence is as exiguous as it is in this case, it can easily be framed to argue for a number of different positions. Thus, the answer to the question of who read the ancient novels is even more likely than usual to reflect the politics of the academy, rather than to construct a 'true' picture. As Margaret Anne Doody points out: 'The tendency to remasculinize the ancient novels in the 1990s is not so much any new discovery as a register of the fact that the Greek novel is going up in academic estimation, and is now to be reclaimed by mainstream classicists.'15 It is significant that both male and female characters in the novels read and write. If Achilles Tatius' internal readership is in any way indicative of his actual readership, then women are likely to have been included.

¹¹ Egger (1990), 75–6. On Melite's (subversive) appeal, see Cresci (1978) and below, Ch. 4.

¹² Bowie (1989), 134.

¹³ Wesseling (1988); Stephens (1994); Bowie (1994) and see also Morgan (1995), 143.

¹⁴ See Stephens (1994). ¹⁵ Doody (1996), 24.



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When Clitophon comments that 'the female of the species is rather fond of myths' (5.5), it is inviting to read this not only as an ironic reflection on the misogynist tale he is about to tell Leucippe, but also as a self-conscious nod to some of Achilles' readers. All of this is far from conclusive, but on balance, I am assuming a largely elite readership which included men and women. An equally inconclusive, but potentially more interesting question is how that audience may have been *positioned* by the text, with regard to gender. This is a subject briefly addressed in the final section of my second chapter.

We have very little certain information about the author of Leucippe and Clitophon (Τὰ κατὰ Λευκίππην καὶ Κλειτοφῶντα), which was possibly simply known by the title *Leucippe*. The author does not reveal any information about himself in the text of the novel itself.¹⁶ Even his name is in dispute; the vast majority of manuscripts have Tatios, but a few, like the tenth-century encyclopaedia Suda, refer to him as Statios. A connection between his name and the Egyptian god Tat has been suggested. ¹⁷ The name Achilles Tatius indicates that he was a Greek who had Roman citizenship (Achilles is a famous Greek name and Tatius and Statius are common Roman names). According to the manuscripts and the Byzantine testimonia, Achilles was a native of Alexandria (and so would be a Greek Roman Egyptian) and, according to the Suda, also wrote works On the Celestial Sphere, Etymology, and a Miscellaneous History of Many Great and Illustrious Men. 18 The lexicographer Thomas Magister refers to Achilles as a rhetor, a professional orator, but we have no further evidence for this. The Suda's assertion that he later became a Christian and a bishop seems (at best) unlikely. 19 A similar path was said to have been chosen by

¹⁶ Unlike Chariton and Heliodorus. All known testimonia on him are collected in Vilborg (1955), 163–8.

¹⁷ Cf. Vilborg (1962), 7.

¹⁸ ἔγραψε δὲ περὶ σφαίρας καὶ ἐτυμολογίας καὶ ἱστορίαν σύμμικτον, πολλῶν καὶ μεγάλων καὶ θαυμασίων ἀνδρῶν μνημονεύουσαν (Suda s.v. 'Αχιλλεὺς Στάτιος ed. A. Adler, vol. 1, 439). If the Suda is correct that Achilles Tatius the novelist is also the Achilles Tatius who wrote On the Sphere, then fragments of the work on the sphere survive in An Introduction to Aratus' Phaenomena, ed. Maass (1898). Some scholars, however, place the author of On the Sphere later, probably in the 3rd century CE.

¹⁹ Suda s.v. 'Αχιλλεὺς Στάτιος: γέγονεν ἔσχατον χριστιανὸς καὶ ἐπίσκοπος.



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Heliodorus,²⁰ and it is very doubtful that both (if either) novelists became bishops. Even less probable is the story in the *Acta Sanctorum* that the parents of St Galaktion were called Leucippe and Clitophon.²¹ These anecdotes are most likely part of a strategy of appropriation of the novels into a Christian agenda, without which they might never have been preserved.²²

The date of the novel is also disputed. A papyrus published in 1938 and dated to the second century CE made scholars reassess the general consensus that *Leucippe and Clitophon* was an imitation of Heliodorus' *Aethiopika*, and might have been written as late as the sixth century CE.²³ Another recent papyrus find confirms the second century date.²⁴ We have, then, a *terminus ante quem*, but it is hard to be any more precise than to place Achilles Tatius somewhere in the second century CE, possibly not later than the middle of that century.²⁵ This means he was writing during the time known as 'The Second Sophistic', the modern term for the cultural characteristics of the first three centuries CE, and which is increasingly (if erroneously) used to denote that whole historical period. 'Second Sophistic' is a term originally coined by Philostratus in the third century CE, who uses it to refer to a style of oratory *in persona* – improvisations based on historical figures – which was inaugurated

²⁰ Socrates Hist. Eccl. 5.22. See Sandy (1982), 3 for discussion of testimonia on Heliodorus as bishop.

²¹ Cf. Delahaye (1921), 33ff., Dörrie (1938), Plepelits, 411.

Garland (1990), 65: 'Significantly, the Byzantines tended to ignore the innately erotic qualities of the novels . . . it was this belief [i.e. that Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius provided models of good conduct] that enabled the Byzantines to peruse the romances without shame and consider them allegories of the virtues of the soul and its mystical union with God.' Allegorical interpretations of the novels were proposed by Psellos, Phillipos da Ceranii and Joannes Eugenikos; see Wilson (1983), 186, 217.

Vogliano (1938). The general consensus that Heliodorus came before Achilles in fact only crystallised in the early seventeenth century. In the sixteenth century, the majority of editors and translators reflected the order given by the *Suda*. As the estimation of Heliodorus' aesthetic importance steadily increased, the chronological classification of the novels began to be questioned, until in 1625, in an epitaph to the reader in his translation of *Leucippe and Clitophon*, A. Rémy suggested that Achilles Tatius imitated Heliodorus. This became the new orthodoxy: Plazenet (1997), 143. On Achilles Tatius as a parody of Heliodorus, see Durham (1938). More generally on Achilles and parody see Fusillo (1991), 97–108.

²⁴ See Laplace (1983b).

²⁵ As Willis (1990) argues, from his dating of the Robinson-Cologne papyrus. The papyri of AT 3.17–25 (P. Duk. Inv. 772) formerly P. Rob. Inv. 35 can at the time of writing be viewed on the web at http://scriptorium.lib.duke.edu/papyrus/records/772.html. See also Plepelits (1996), 388–90.



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by Aeschines.²⁶ It has, however, come to refer to the resurgence of interest in Greek education and values under the Roman Empire.²⁷ The forces behind this glorification of Greece are complex, but factors include increased economic prosperity as a result of the Pax Augusta, and the enthusiasm of Hellenophile emperors like Nero and Hadrian.²⁸ That there was a marked interest in sophistry during this period is not in question, but 'Second Sophistic' can be an unhelpful historiographical heuristic.²⁹ 'Second', in particular, has the pejorative associations of the sequel. Many of the theories of the 'origins' of the ancient novel have been influenced by the ideology informing this periodisation, and posit the novel as derivative of, or a degraded version of, other genres.³⁰ Like the novels of Longus and Heliodorus, Leucippe and Clitophon is conventionally called 'sophistic' because of its paraded paideia and ostentatious use of rhetoric. For Achilles, eros (desire) is himself a sophist: 'a self-taught sophist' (1.10.1) and a 'resourceful, improvising sophist' (5.27.4).³¹ One of the broad aims of this book is to consider what sort of knowledge is being proffered here: does this sophistic work have anything to teach us?

Leucippe and Clitophon does not appear to have had a great influence on the literature of late antiquity, with the notable exception of Musaeus' poem *Hero and Leander* (c. fifth–sixth century CE),³² and, to a lesser extent, Nonnus' fifth-century epic *Dionysiaca*.³³ It appealed, however, to Byzantine writers and was imitated in the first Byzantine novel, *Hysmine and Hysminias*, written in the eleventh century by Eustathius Macrembolites.³⁴ The ancient Greek novel re-entered the critical discourse for the first

²⁶ Lives of the Sophists 481.

²⁷ On the term and the period it denotes, see Anderson (1993), Bowersock (1969) and (1974), Bowie (1974) and (1982), Brunt (1994), Goldhill (2001a), esp. 14–15, Reardon (1971), Schmitz (1997), Swain (1996), esp. 1–6, and Whitmarsh (2001), 41–5.

²⁸ The best discussion is that of Schmitz (1997).

 $^{^{29}}$ Whitmarsh gives an excellent discussion of the history and politics of the phrase: Whitmarsh (2001), 41–5.

³⁰ Useful discussions are found in Stephens and Winkler (1995), 11–18 and Doody (1996).

³¹ The idea that eros was a sophist has a long literary history. Especially important are episodes in Xenophon's Cyropaedia 6.1.41 and Plato's Symposium 203d.

³² On which see Morales (1999). ³³ On which see Shorrock (2001).

³⁴ On the reception of *Leucippe and Clitophon* in Byzantine writing, see Alexiou (1977); Dyck (1986); Beaton (1988b); Garland (1990); Wilson (1983); Plepelits (1996), 411–14; Beck (1976).



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time since antiquity in sixteenth-century France, when Hellenism was very much in vogue on the literary scene.³⁵ Its complex role in the development of the modern novel and theories of fictionality has been the subject of extensive debate and two important recent studies.³⁶

Two sixteenth-century translations (or, more properly, adaptations) of Leucippe and Clitophon expurgate and alter the text of Achilles in a way which provides a good illustration of some of the problems that faced, and still face, readers of Achilles Tatius. The first is that of Jacques de Rochemaure in 1556, which was one of the first published translations of Achilles Tatius and followed the Latin text of Annibale della Croce published in 1544.³⁷ Della Croce's Latin translation and its French adaptations comprise only the last four books of Leucippe and Clitophon (i.e. it starts after Leucippe willingly goes to bed with Clitophon and then, thwarted, elopes with him) and it also cuts the scene where Clitophon and Melite make love.³⁸ For these readers, it seems, the novel can be read as a story which promotes good, honest values if, and only if, various episodes are excised. The emphasis in these adaptations is upon chastity and the union of marriage. Uncertainty about how to understand the moral attitudes of Leucippe and Clitophon, and whether or not it has a coherent moral agenda, is at the heart of debates about the extent to which Achilles strains the conventions of the genre or breaks them. It is an issue to which this book repeatedly returns. How to decide what is parenthetical or ornamental,

³⁵ Plazenet (1997), 18. For the influence of the novels on French literary criticism, particularly the *Parnassé reformé* of Gueret (1647), the *Lettre-traité* of Pierre Daniel Huet (circulated in 1666) and two works of Abbé Prévost (*Le Pour et Contre* and *Histoire d'une Grecque moderne*) from the eighteenth century, see Létoublon (1993), ch. 2 and Plazenet (1997). Plazenet provides a comparative study of the reception of the Greek novels in France and England in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and her work shows just how complex a process appropriation can be. See also Sandy (1996) and, more generally on Achilles' *Nachleben*, Plepelits (1980), 48–61. The *Editio Princeps* of Achilles Tatius was Heidelberg 1601. It was preceded by Latin translations: Della Croce, 1544 (partial), 1554 (complete), and first translated into French in 1545, then into Italian in 1546, into English in 1597, Spanish in 1617 and German in 1626.

³⁶ Doody (1996) and Plazenet (1997).

³⁷ Les quatre derniers livres des propos amoureux contenans le discours des amours et mariage du seigneur Clitophont et de damoiselle Leucippe. Lyon, C. Marchant (1556). Reprinted in 1572 and 1573.

³⁸ It took another decade before della Croce published a translation which included the first half of the novel.



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and what then to do with those divisions, are the central concerns of my third chapter, which analyses 'digressions' in the novel.

The second French adaptation that deserves mention is that of J. Hérembert, published in 1599 as Les advantureuses et fortunées amours de Pandion et d'Yonice. A considerable amount of Achilles Tatius is closely translated, but the crucial modification is that Hérembert starts the narrative with Clitophon's narration (cutting all the narration of the anonymous traveller who begins Achilles' novel, including his stunning *ekphrasis* of the painting of Europa). It ends with the marriage of Leucippe and Clitophon. This narrative organisation betrays (and solves) another problem commonly identified by Achilles Tatius' readers: what to make of the failure of the narrative to return to the opening frame and the problems of interpretation that this raises. The beginning of the novel, and the various reading strategies that it might demand of its readers, is the subject of the first part of my second chapter and the problem of the ending of the novel is discussed in Chapter 3. Narrative, then, and how one reads it, are one of the two central concerns of this book. The other, to which I shall now turn, is vision and visuality.

Vision and visuality

There is a considerable and sophisticated body of scholarship on ancient visuality and the works of Jaś Elsner, Françoise Frontisi-Ducroux, Simon Goldhill, and Andrew Stewart have been particularly important in showing just how complex and varied this field is.³⁹ Greek literature has always been

³⁹ Elsner (1995) is fundamental reading; see also Elsner (1992), (1994), (1996b), (1998), (2000a) and (2000b) on a whole variety of aspects of Roman and Graeco-Roman visuality; Frontisi-Ducroux (1994), (1996) on Greek art and vision; Frontisi-Ducroux and Vernant (1997) on Graeco-Roman visuality especially specularity; Goldhill (1994) on the Hellenistic viewer; (1996) on the discontinuities in visuality between the classical city, Hellenistic Alexandria and the Second Sophistic; (1998) on viewing and Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, and (2001b) on vision and cultural identity in Second Sophistic texts; Stewart (1997) on ancient visuality, with a focus on ancient Greek art and the body. Also important are Bartsch (2000) on vision, sexuality and philosophy in classical antiquity; Bryson (1990) and (1994) on classical art and the gaze; Barton (1993) and (2002), and all the essays in Fredrick (2002a) on 'the Roman gaze'; the essays in Richlin (1992b) on pornography in antiquity; Simon (1988) on ancient optics; Bettini (1992) and Steiner (2001) on statues and visuality; Vernant (1998) and (1991), 141–85 on the gaze in Greek myth and ritual; and Zeitlin (1994) on visuality and Euripidean drama.



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ocularcentric.⁴⁰ The Homeric epics provide abundant attestation to the power of vision. The *Odyssey* is energised by curiosities, revelations, and epiphanies. When the Iliadic hero is repeatedly displayed as 'a wonder to behold', thauma idesthai, or when Priam calls Helen, that iconic beauty, to witness with him the great spectacle of war fought over her, 'we the audience become', as Segal says, 'spectators of the power of vision itself'41. Helen's lust-lure dazzles throughout Greek literature.⁴² The sight of her transfixes and destroys. The vengeful posse in Stesichorus 'at the sight of Helen dropped their stones to the ground'. 43 In Euripides' Women of Troy, Hecuba begs Menelaus to kill Helen without looking at her, 'lest she seize you by desire, for she takes the eyes of men, destroys cities, burns houses: such charms does she have' (890–3). This most displaced and displayed female, with her inescapable force-field of desirability, shines through in the portrayals of Leucippe and the heroines of the other Greek novels.⁴⁴

'Among mankind, the ears are less trusting than the eyes', says a character in Herodotus (1.8.3), whose *Histories* are a 'display', apodeixis (1.1), of the things which he considers 'worth seeing', axiotheeton.⁴⁵ This statement of the supremacy of sight is spoken by the Lydian king Candaules (in a tale that the character Clinias will use, in a highly partial interpretation, as an illustration of the evils, for men, of marriage in the first book of Leucippe and Clitophon (1.8.5)). 'Enamoured of his own wife' and thinking her 'the most beautiful woman in the world' (1.8) Candaules coerces his friend Gyges to see his wife naked. Gyges is horrified by his own (unwilling) voyeurism ('There are long established truths for us to learn from, and one of them is that everyone should look to his own'); it offends against *nomos* and *aidos*. The transgression is noticed by Candaules' wife who insists that Gyges murder her husband ('on the very spot where he showed me to you naked') and marry her, thereby excising a corrupt king and restoring the

⁴⁰ Ocularcentrism (also spelt oculocentrism) is a term coined by Jay to refer to the hegemony of vision in modernity: Jay (1988) and (1993).

⁴¹ Segal (1995), 185. See also Prier (1989), 25-117.

⁴² The best discussion is Austin (1994). ⁴³ Stesichorus, frg. 201 *PMG*.

⁴⁴ On Helen and Callirhoe, see Laplace (1980b).

⁴⁵ On Herodotus and vision see in particular Hartog (1988).



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stability of her *oikos*.⁴⁶ This programmatic tale⁴⁷ is constructed through and against the many mythological accounts which tell of visual infringements, such as Teiresias catching sight of Athena bathing and being struck blind as a punishment;⁴⁸ and Actaeon glimpsing Artemis naked and being ripped to pieces by his own hounds as a result.⁴⁹ All these tales are ways of thinking about and controlling scopic protocols.

Visual relations – central to the works of these two great storytellers, Homer and Herodotus – play a privileged role throughout Greek literature and, as we shall see, Achilles Tatius' novel is conscious of its place in a long literary and mythic tradition of thinking about sight. Moreover, although Leucippe and Clitophon's exclusion of Rome and Latin literature is as conspicuous as its insistent reference to Greek literature, the novel is none the less a product of the Roman Empire. Rome, and its visual operations, necessarily forms part of the cultural and historical contexts of Achilles, even though our inability precisely to pinpoint a specific historical moment for this author frustrates any attempt to site him with precision. I shall return to particular Roman genres, especially the mime and controversiae, during the course of the book; suffice it to note for now that Leucippe and Clitophon was written and first read in a supremely spectacular society. It is the product of a visually voracious and violent world, in which there was a heightened, sometimes paranoid, awareness of the pleasures and dangers of spectatorial relations.⁵⁰

The novel is, therefore, grounded in both a Greek literary tradition of writing about vision and in contemporary Roman visual

- ⁴⁶ There is a papyrus fragment of a fourth- or third-century BCE tragedy on this theme, which includes a speech by the queen herself (called Nysia in later sources): P. Oxy 2382; TGF no. 664 (pp. 248–51), translated and discussed in Page (1951). See Hall (1989), 65 with n. 37. Obviously, staging the myth as a drama in which the queen is named and speaks for herself, involves very different framing and focalisation from that in Herodotus' version.
- 47 The Candaules episode is the first episode to be narrated in detail and sets in motion the chain of obligation and revenge which runs through the text.
- 48 As told in Callimachus' Hymn 5. This poem is very much concerned with vision, with how we see gods, and whether or not we *choose* to see, as Hunter (1992) discusses.
- ⁴⁹ Heath (1992) discusses the full range of sources for this myth. On the various penalties for mortals who look upon goddesses, see Buxton (1980) and further Vernant (1991), 27–49 and Steiner (1995).
- ⁵⁰ See especially Bartsch (1994); Barton (1993) and (2002); Boyle (2003), 59–67; Elsner (1998); Fredrick (2003a) and Gunderson (2003).