

Handout for “Achilles Tattius’ *Leucippe and Clitophon in Passio Sanctorum Galactionis et Epistemes*”

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Abstract Link:

<https://camws.org/sites/default/files/meeting2020/abstracts/2105PassioSanctorumGalactionis.pdf>

The Protagonists and Plato’s *Symposium*¹

1. The story of Aristophanes: Pl. *Symp.* 191d (trans. W.R.M. Lamb)²

ἔστι δὴ οὖν ἐκ τόσου ὁ ἔρωσ ἔμφυτος ἀλλήλων τοῖς ἀνθρώποις καὶ τῆς ἀρχαίας φύσεως συναγωγὲς καὶ ἐπιχειρῶν ποιῆσαι ἓν ἐκ δυοῖν καὶ ἰάσασθαι τὴν φύσιν τὴν ἀνθρωπίνην. ἕκαστος οὖν ἡμῶν ἔστιν ἀνθρώπου σύμβολον, ἅτε τετμημένος ὡσπερ αἰ ψῆτται, ἐξ ἐνὸς δύο· ζητεῖ δὴ ἀεὶ τὸ αὐτοῦ ἕκαστος σύμβολον.

Thus anciently is mutual love ingrained in mankind, reassembling our early estate and endeavoring to combine two in one and heal the human sore. Each of us, then, is but a tally (σύμβολον) of a man, since every one shows like a flat-fish the traces of having been sliced in two; And each is ever searching for the tally that will fit him.

2. Clitophon’s dream: Ach. Tat. 1.3.4³

ὄναρ ἐδόκουν συμφῦναι τῇ παρθένῳ τὰ κάτω μέρη μέχρις ὀμφαλοῦ, δύο δὲ ἐντεῦθεν τὰ ἄνω σώματα. ἐφίσταται δὴ μοι γυνὴ φοβερὰ καὶ μεγάλη, τὸ πρόσωπον ἀγρία· ὀφθαλμοὺς ἐν αἵματι, βλοσυραὶ παρειαί, ὄφεις αἰ κόμαι. ἄρπην ἐκράτει τῇ δεξιᾷ, δᾶδα τῇ λαιᾷ. ἐπιπεσοῦσα οὖν μοι θυμῷ καὶ ἀνατείνασα τὴν ἄρπην καταφέρει τῆς ἰξύος, ἔνθα τῶν δύο σωμάτων ἦσαν αἰ συμβολαί, καὶ ἀποκόπτει μου τὴν παρθένον.

I saw a dream that I was joined with the maiden (Calligone) at the body parts downward from the stomach, and we were two bodies above it. A fearsome and great woman stood over me, savage in her face. Her eyes were red with blood. She had shaggy cheeks and had snakes for hair. She held a sickle in her right hand and a torch on the left. Then, falling with anger upon me and raising her sickle, she brought it down on my waist, where the two parts of the bodies were joined, and she separated the maiden away from me.

3. Episteme’s response to Galaction’s arrest: *Passio Sanctorum Galactionis et Epistemes*, 1.12⁴

¹ Note: All translations, aside from handout 1, are my own.

² Greek text (and translation) borrowed from Plato, *Lysis, Symposium, Gorgias*, trans. W.R.M. Lamb (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1968).

³ Greek text borrowed from Achilles Tattius, *Achilles Tattius: Leucippe and Clitophon*, trans. Stephen Gaselee (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1969).

⁴ Greek text borrowed from Hippolyte Delehaye, *Acta sanctorum quotquot toto orbe coluntur, vel à catholicis scriptoribus celebrantur* vol. 66 (Bruxelles: Culture et Civilisation, 1965).

καὶ ὡς ἤκουσεν, ὅτι ὁ κύριος αὐτῆς Γαλακτίων ἀπέρχεται δεδεμένος ἐπὶ τὸν ἄρχοντα τοῦ τυφθῆναι, πεσοῦσα παρὰ τοὺς πόδας τῆς διακόνου, λέγει πρὸς αὐτήν· «Εὐξαι ὑπὲρ ἐμοῦ, δέσποινά μου· ἰδοὺ γὰρ ἀλγεῖ μου ἡ καρδία πάνυ, ὅτι τὸν κύριόν μου Γαλακτίωνα ἦραν οἱ θεομάχοι πρὸς τὸν παράνομον καὶ ἀσεβέστατον ἄρχοντα. Καὶ ἰδοὺ πορεύομαι καγῶ, ἵνα σὺν αὐτῷ τελειωθῶ.»

And as she heard that her lord Galaction, being bound, went out to the ruler to be beaten, falling before the feet of the deaconess, she said to her, “Pray for my behalf, my mistress. For behold, my heart entirely grieves, since those god-fighters have taken my lord Galaction to the lawless and most impious ruler. And behold, I am also going in order that I become perfected with him.”

4. Galaction’s and Episteme’s dismemberment: *Passio Sanctorum Galactionis et Epistemes*, 1.15

Ὁ ἄρχων λέγει τοῖς ὑπηρέταις· «Κόψατε τὰς χεῖρας αὐτῶν, ἵνα μὴ βλασφημῶσιν.»... Ὁ δὲ κάκιστος καὶ δεινὸς ἄρχων πάλιν διετάξατο κοπήναι αὐτῶν καὶ τοὺς πόδας... Τότε ὁ ἄρχων ἔδωκεν κατ’ αὐτῶν τὴν ἀπόφασιν τοῦ ἀποτμηθῆναι αὐτούς.

The ruler said to his servants, “Chop off their hands in order that they not blaspheme.”...And the most evil and wretched ruler again commanded that their feet be cut off...Then the ruler gave an order against them that their heads be cut off.

Torture and Virginity

5. Leucippe’s speech to Thersander: Ach. Tat. 6.21.1-2

τὰς βασάνους παράστησον. Φερέτω τροχόν· ἰδοὺ χεῖρες, τεινέτω. Φερέτω καὶ μάστιγας· ἰδοὺ νῶτος, τυπτέτω. Κομιζέτω πῦρ· ἰδοὺ σῶμα, καιέτω. Φερέτω καὶ σίδηρον· ἰδοὺ δέρη, σφαζέτω. ἀγῶνα θεάσασθε καινόν· πρὸς πάσας τὰς βασάνους ἀγωνίζεται μία γυνὴ καὶ πάντα νικᾷ.

Set up the tortures! Let him bring the wheel. Behold my hands, let him stretch them. Let him bring scourges also. Behold my back, let him strike it. Let him bring fire. Behold my body, let him burn it. Let him also bring iron. Behold my throat, let him slaughter it. Look at these new struggles. One woman struggles with all of the tortures and conquers everything.

6. The maidservant’s response to Episteme: *Passio Sanctorum Galactionis et Epistemes*, 1.12

Λέγει αὐτῇ ἡ διάκονος· «Μή, τέκνον μου Ἐπιστήμη, μὴ ἀπέλθης, μήπως οὐχ ὑπομείνης τὰ βασανιστήρια καὶ ἀρνήσῃ τὸν Χριστόν, μολύνῃς δὲ καὶ τὴν παρθενίαν σου»

The deaconess said to her, “Don’t do it, Episteme, my child. Don’t go out, lest you do not endure the torture chamber and you deny Christ and you defile your maidenhood.”

7. The closing lines of Leucippe's speech to Thersander: Ach. Tat. 6.21.4

ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ γυμνή, καὶ μόνη, καὶ γυνή, ἐν ὄπλον ἔχω τὴν ἐλευθερίαν, ἣ μήτε πληγαῖς κατακόπτεται, μήτε σιδήρῳ κατατέμνεται, μήτε πυρὶ κατακαίεται. οὐκ ἀφήσω ποτὲ ταύτην ἐγὼ· κἂν καταφλέγῃς, οὐχ οὕτως θερμὸν εὐρήσεις τὸ πῦρ.

I am naked, alone, and a woman, but I have one weapon—my free spirit—which cannot be beaten down by scourges nor cut into pieces by iron nor burned by fire. I will not ever give this up. And although you try to consume it, you will thus not find a fire hot enough.

Conclusion8. Clitophon sees Leucippe and her beauty for the first time: Ach. Tat. 1.4.2

ὡς δὲ ἐνέτεινα τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς κατ' αὐτήν, ἐν ἀριστερᾷ παρθένος ἐκφαίνεται μοι καὶ καταστράπτει μου τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τῷ προσώπῳ.

And as I cast my eyes upon her (Panthea), a maiden appeared before me on her left and she struck my eyes as if with lightning because of her beauty.

9. Galaction goes out to meet Episteme, a beautiful woman: *Passio Sanctorum Galactionis et Epistemes*, 1.6

ὄθεν εὐρὼν κόρην τινὰ εὐμορφοτάτην πάνυ, θυγατέρα τινὸς τῶν μεγιστάνων, ὀνόματι Ἐπιστήμην, ὠρμάσατο αὐτήν, καὶ ποιήσαντες τὰ μνηστήρια, ἀπήρχετο ὁ μακάριος Γαλακτίων, καθὼς ἔθος ἐστὶ τοῖς νέοις, πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ μνηστήν·

After he (Galaction) found a certain exceedingly most beautiful maiden named Episteme, a daughter of one of the most powerful people, he set out from home to her. After having prepared the wedding rites, the blessed Galaction, just as it was the custom for the youth, went out for his betrothed.

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