

Magical rituals, although relatively common in ancient literature and as a focus of scholarly discussion, have not been sufficiently explored in the context of the ancient novel. While there has been some recent attention to magic in ancient novels (e.g., Jones 2005, Slater 2007, Ruiz-Montero 2007), *Leucippe and Clitophon*, although teeming with magical material, has remained overlooked in such studies, and so has the marked connection between Achilles Tatius' representation of magical practice and his notions about the manipulative power of rhetoric. This paper fills the void and argues that in *Leucippe and Clitophon* Achilles Tatius consistently represents magical ritual as either ineffectual, out of the magician's control, or simply deceptive, thereby asserting that rhetoric is the most powerful "magic" and he the preeminent "magician".

Achilles sensitizes his reader to the significance of magic by his use of metaphorical language throughout the novel. Most frequently, he employs words that allude to magical practice in key moments of persuasion: when Clitophon is attempting to woo Leucippe (κατεπάδων – 2.19); during his trial for murder (γότης – 7.11); in describing "womanly" charms (φάρμακον and μαγγανεύω – 2.38); when Thersander describes Clitophon's power over Leucippe (φαρμακεύς – 6.17); and more. This use of magical vocabulary runs throughout the novel to describe the manipulation inherent in persuasion and the indomitable power that one character holds over another.

Two rather more explicit depictions of magic, however, call for closer reading. In book 3, after being ship-wrecked onto the shore of Egypt, Clitophon witnesses the gruesome sacrifice, disembowelment, cannibalistic consumption, and, finally, necromantic restoration of Leucippe. Achilles has set the scene appropriately since all of these magico-religious practices are traditionally associated with Egypt (Rives 1995, Nimis 2004). Furthermore, they are orchestrated by a man named Menelaus, which recalls the more famous Menelaus' adventure in Egypt. Along with Clitophon, we discover, however, that Menelaus is no magician, and his magical ritual is a hoax made possible by theatrical props. In this instance, then, Achilles has used magic in his text to exert a persuasive – and deceptive – influence over his internal (brigands and Clitophon) and external (us) audience by subverting expectations, while simultaneously engineering Leucippe's survival through the magical charade. Just like Menelaus, Achilles uses bogus magic to manipulate his audience more effectively than real magic could.

So, too, magic, persuasion, and deception intersect critically in book 4. Leucippe is drugged and accidentally poisoned with a philter, called a φάρμακον ἔρωτος, under the direction of an Egyptian soldier/magician named Gorgias. In this complex scene, Gorgias has failed to seduce Leucippe with his potion, yet Chaereas, the man who offers an antidote, drags Leucippe and Clitophon into yet another disaster because of his unrequited love for her. The tension here turns on the notion that "real" magic fails where manipulation succeeds. This reading is all the more powerful if we associate the name of the Egyptian soldier not only with Menander's character or Plato's dialogue of the same name (Morales 2004) but also with the actual itinerant Sicilian sophist who equated the persuasion of λόγος with magic and φάρμακα in his *Encomium of Helen* (8-14), as I suggest we should.

Since the authentic magicians in *Leucippe and Clitophon* fail and the counterfeit magicians succeed, we are encouraged to wonder who is the most effective "magician", or agent of persuasion, in Achilles' text. It is critical for interpretation of the novel – and impossible to ignore – that the author himself wins the title. His careful readers will delight in the connection when recalling that he just happens to be from Egypt.