

LIT 636
Love, Death, & Destiny: The Ancient Novel

Convenor: Dr Meredith J C Warren
m.j.warren@sheffield.ac.uk

Jessop West room 2.22
x 20502

Office Hours: Tuesdays 10–12

The fictional narratives of Greco-Roman antiquity play a foundational role in the Western literary tradition. In this module students will encounter the extant masterworks of Chariton, Xenophon of Ephesus, Achilles Tatius, Longus, Heliodorus, and Apuleius—authors once widely read in the ancient world—as well as two Jewish and Christian examples: *Joseph and Aseneth* and the *Acts of Paul and Thecla*. The ancient novels, the earliest examples of the genre, are a ripe literary field to explore the construction of gender, human sexualities, the relation of lovers to family and society, and the intersection of eroticism with ancient religious sensibilities.

Instruction:

Weekly seminars (1.5hrs) x 10

Required texts:

1. B. P. Reardon, ed., *Collected Ancient Greek Novels* (University of California Press, 1989, 2008)
2. Apuleius, *The Golden Ass* (G. P. Walsh, trans.; Oxford World Classics, 2008)
3. Lucian of Samosata, *Vera Historia*
Available free for Kindle app here:
https://www.amazon.com/gp/product/B0083ZN9UC/ref=as_li_ss_tl?ie=UTF8&camp=1789&creative=390957&creativeASIN=B0083ZN9UC&linkCode=as2&tag=thepubdomrev-20#nav-subnav

Or on Project Gutenberg here:
<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/10430/10430-h/10430-h.htm>
4. Two other texts, *Joseph and Aseneth* and *The Acts of Paul and Thecla* will be made available online.

A list of recommended secondary texts can be found at the end of this document.

Assessment:

6000 word essay (100%)

In week 9, students will give a presentation on a tentative essay topic and any progress/research questions in order to get feedback from peers.

Schedule & Reading

Week 1 – 29 September

Topic: The ancient novel: History & Context.

Read: Introduction in Reardon; David Konstan, “The Invention of Fiction,” in *Ancient Fiction and Early Christian Narrative*” (on MOLE).

Week 2 – 6 October

Topic: Gods, Mortals, & Fate: Chariton, *Chaereas & Callirhoe*

Week 3 – 13 October

Topic: Sex & Violence: Achilles Tatius, *Leucippe & Clitophon*

Week 4 – 20 October

Topic: Foreign Lands & Foreign People: Xenophon of Ephesus, *An Ephesian Tale*

Week 5 – 27 October

Topic: The Pastoral & Empire: Longus, *Daphnis & Chloe*

Week 6 – 3 November

Topic: Ethnicity & Identity: Heliodorus, *An Ethiopian Story*

Week 7 READING WEEK—NO SEMINAR

Week 8 – 17 November

Topic: Science Fiction? Lucian of Samosata, *True Histories*

WEEK 9 – 24 November

Presentations on Paper topics

WEEK 10 – 1 December

Topic: The Latin novel: Apuleius, *Metamorphoses* or *The Golden Ass*

WEEK 11 – 8 December

Topic: Jewish narrative fiction: *Joseph and Aseneth*

WEEK 12 – 15 December

Topic: The ancient novel becomes Christian: *Acts of Paul and Thecla*

Reading List

- Accardo, P. 2002. *The Metamorphosis of Apuleius: Cupid and Psyche, Beauty and the Beast, King Kong*. Madison, NJ.
- Anderson, G. 1984. *Ancient Fiction: The Novel in the Graeco-Roman World*. London and Sydney.
- Aubin, Melissa M. "Reversing romance?: The acts of Thecla and the ancient novel." In *Ancient fiction and early Christian narrative*, 257-272. Atlanta: Scholars Pr, 1998.
- Aune, David, ed. *Greco-Roman Literature and the New Testament*. SBL Sources for Biblical Study 21. Atlanta: Scholars Press, 1988.
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- Bohak, Gideon. "From fiction to history: contextualizing Joseph and Aseneth." *Society Of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 35 (1996): 273-284.
- Boughton, Lynne Courter. "From pious legend to feminist fantasy: distinguishing hagiographical license from apostolic practice in the Acts of Paul/Acts of Thecla." *The Journal Of Religion* 71, no. 3 (July 1991): 362-383.
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- Chesnutt, Randall D. "From text to context: the social matrix of Joseph and Aseneth." *Society Of Biblical Literature Seminar Papers* 35 (1996): 285-302.

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- Cooper, Kate. "The Ancient Novel," pp. 20–44 in *The Virgin and the Bride Idealized* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1996)
- Courtney, E. A. 2001. *Companion to Petronius*. Oxford.
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- de Jong, I., R. Nünlist, and A. Bowie (eds.). 2004. *Narrators, Narratees, and Narratives in Ancient Greek Literature*. Leiden.
- de Temmerman, Koen. *Crafting Characters: Heroes and Heroines in the Ancient Greek Novel*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014.
- Di Marco, Francesca. "Undressed: the naked female body as a sign of holiness in apocryphal and hagiographical literature." In *Studia patristica*, 499-508. Louvain: Peeters, 2010.
- Docherty, Susan E. "Joseph and Aseneth: rewritten Bible or narrative expansion?." *Journal For The Study Of Judaism In The Persian, Hellenistic And Roman Period* 35.1 (2004): 27-48.
- Dubé, Joseph. "Boy Oh Boy: Homoeroticism in the Ancient Greek Novel," *Hirundo: The McGill Journal of Classical Studies* 3 (2005): 75–90.
- Dulk, Matthijs den. "I permit no woman to teach except for Thecla: the curious case of the Pastoral Epistles and the Acts of Paul reconsidered." *Novum Testamentum* 54, no. 2 (2012): 176-203.
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