Xenophon of Ephesus and Orality in the Roman Empire*

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Of the five authors of the so-called novels of "love and adventure" perhaps the least studied is Xenophon of Ephesus. This is so because, ever since the *Suda* attributed ten books to the *Ephesiaca* while the text of the novel contains just five, Xenophon has traditionally been regarded as having the least literary merit.[1] And despite the valuable counterarguments of T. Hägg, who held that Xenophon's reputation as an epitomizer is based mainly on his particular narrative technique and that the text may in any case include a number of lacunae, the epitome theory has held sway for years.[2] Shortly after Hägg's study, I myself made a study of Xenophon's characteristic "KAI style" together with the other particles in the surviving books, and concluded that the style is constant in all five of them and that the words are undoubtedly those of the author himself.[3] In more recent studies the tendency has been to accept the text's originality,[4] though there are still those who believe in the epitome theory.[5] The most likely date of composition of the work

* This paper is dedicated to the memory of my dear friend A. Scobie. A previous version of it was delivered at the Corpus Christi College (Oxford) and at the University of Exeter, to whose audiences I am very grateful, especially to Dr. E.L. Bowie and to Prof. C.G. Gill. I wish also to express my gratitude to Prof. J. Nollé, of the *Kommission für Alte Geschichte* (Munich) and to Prof. E. Vogt (University of Munich) for their friendly and learned comments. Finally I am also very grateful to Prof. G. Schmeling for his kind and useful supervision of my English.

[1] For broad surveys of the novelist see H. Gärtner, "Xenophon von Ephesos", *R.E.* II 9, 2055–2084; Schmeling 1980, and Ruiz-Montero 1994. Gärtner, *o.c.*, observes his rhetorical devices, and also Müller 1981.

[2] See Hägg 1966.

[3] Ruiz-Montero 1982.

[4] See especially the valuable analysis by O'Sullivan 1995.

[5] For example Swain 1998, 104.

would seem to have been the reign of Hadrian or Antoninus Pius. There are no surviving fragments of the novel: the so-called *Antheia* fragment would appear not to be a part of this particular novel but of some other work inspired perhaps by Xenophon.[6]

In my doctoral dissertation defended in 1979, though not published until 1988, I compared the structural model discovered by Propp in the Russian fairy-tale with that of the five love novels,[7] and noted that the first two novels by Chariton and Xenophon were closest to the fairy-tale model, while the quest of a lover for the other may be likened to *The Man on a Quest for his Lost Wife,* which is a central part of the "romantic fairy tale".[8] The novel which is closest to the folk-tale structure is plainly that of Xenophon, and this is what needs to be borne in mind in any study of the novel, though this does not necessarily imply, as O´Sullivan has recently asserted, that it is the first of its kind.[9] The oral storytelling features of the novel are so pronounced that, at times, the parallels with the folk-tale seem obvious: its continual repetitions at all sorts at different levels, the lack of motivation in the plot, the contradictions, the information gaps, the break-neck pace of the different episodes, the psychological superficiality of its characters (divided into good and bad) who appear in droves and are all given names – however fleeting their appearance – in a kind of *horror vacui* which aims at both realism and lifelikeness, all help to distinguish the novel and to give Xenophon the appeal of the "conteur populaire", as Dalmeyda remarked in his edition of 1926.[10]

I must confess that I have always felt a certain attraction for this novelist, almost universally dubbed as both gauche and incompetent, an attraction which began to trouble me and made me sceptical about my intellectual capacity and even my sanity, until a short time ago I read an astute and apparently normal critic like Richard Hunter who described the *Ephesiaca* as "one of the most fascinating texts in Antiquity".[11] I certainly felt relieved and also encouraged to pursue my research on this enigmatic text, which is the subject of my paper, which is divided into three parts. In the first I shall high-

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[6] See the commentary by Stephens and Winkler 1995, 277 ff.; López Martínez 1998, 296–306; Morgan 1998, partic. 3353–3354.
[7] Propp 1968: see Ruiz-Montero 1988.
[8] See Thompson 1966: H 1385.3; Aarne-Thompson 1964, 400–425.
[9] See O'Sullivan 1995, 165.
[10] Dalmeyda 1926, XXVII. I follow here the edition by Papanikolaou 1973.
[11] In his "response" to Morgan 1997.

light the structural properties of the text, rehearsing some of the arguments I made in my thesis as well as suggesting some new points of interest. For this I shall focus specially on the Jewish novels and the New Testament *Apocrypha*. In the second part I shall concentrate on aspects of both form and content in the short stories which make up the novel and which we might term "novelle" or "folk-stories", perhaps even "local legends", comparing them with other documents, both literary and non-literary, from its status as literature drawing the relevant conclusions in the third part.

I

I shall start with what we might call the text's "macrostructure", that is, the main lines of composition of the plot by following Propp's functional approach to narrative. In the *Ephesiaca* we can observe the combination and alternation of two compositional threads or axes, that of the "seeker hero", Habrocomes, and that of the "victimized hero", Anthia. The "seeker hero" is also, however, the protagonist of two distinct sequences in which he is also the victim of accusations by the women he has rejected. The Manto and Cyno episodes (II 2,3–10,2; III 12,2–IV 4,1) are in fact both variations on the theme of "Potiphar's wife" which, as Trenkner has noted, was already familiar in Greek folklore and literature.[12] In the case of Manto, Wills in his interesting study of the Jewish novels has rightly observed the parallels with the Joseph legend.[13] Here we find a variation on the motif of the "wise courtier", which was common in the Orient; like the courtier, Habrocomes, once his innocence is discovered, will be rewarded by Manto's father with the management of his estate (II 10,21). Xenophon's "sophron Habrocomes" may be compared to the "sophron Joseph" of the Joseph legends.

A grotesque distortion of this episode is provided by Cyno (III 12,4–6): here we have an ugly woman who falsely accuses the hero of having killed her husband, a story which is also reminiscent of *Susanna and the Elders.*[14] Moreover, the presence of Jewish communities in Ephesus (the native land of our Xenophon) and other towns in Asia Minor is, as Trebilco has noted, well documented.[15]

[12] Trenkner 1958, 64 ff.
[13] Wills 1995, 158–184.
[14] See Wills 1995, 52–60.
[15] Trebilco 1991, 37–57.

Reading these Jewish novels is extremely fruitful for, as Wills says, this "popular written narrative" is a kind of laboratory where we can observe the passage from the oral traditions to a "popular literary culture" and so attain a better understanding of the origins of the Greek novel too. Wills insists on "the literate character of the audience of these texts", texts which bear the imprint of a religious group and its relation to others.[16]

If we analyze the sequence of adventures of the "victimized hero", Anthia, after the separation of the lovers, we can also find other parallels. Anthia becomes the protagonist of a series of interlocking episodes which are carefully threaded together and framed by the "villainy" of the aggressor, Manto. This type of composition is frequent in one form of realist narrative that stresses the chaste and virtuous nature of the hero or heroine and, as can be seen in the *Apocrypha* of the New Testament and later hagiography, tends towards sacred legend,[17] and it is frequent also in one form of comic narrative, such as the *Ass*, which is the forerunner of the picaresque novel. The basic functions of these episodes are *Danger, The Action of the Hero / The Action of a Helper* and *Help.* The sequence is not present in Chariton's novel. There are thus two kinds of folk structure to be observed in Xenophon: the structure of the quest, based on the Proppian model, and the second chain of episodes stretching from *Danger* to *Help*. Within these episodes there is a series of motifs listed by Thompson, such as "girl kills man who threatens her virtue" (IV 5,5),[18] "illusion of death" (III 6,5),[19] or "woman slandered as adulteress is thrown into lion pit. Lions do not harm her" (IV 6,6),[20] a motif which is familiar to us through the Daniel episode in the Bible[21] and which here has the variant of the two terrible dogs. Anthia is a combination of the witty young lady of traditional storytelling and a female version of the "holy man" with divine protection (in this case, Isis), which is also typical of the folk-tale.

The motif of chastity preserved is what prevails in these Anthia episodes and, significantly, is found in the *controversiae* of Seneca.[22] It is worth mentioning here that similar episodes, with the same structure and semantics, are

[16] Wills 1995, 33; 36; 49; 213 ff.
[17] See Dan 1977, 17–30.
[18] Cf. Thompson 1966: T 320.2.
[19] Cf. Thompson 1966: R 1884; *cf.* T 311.2.1; K 522.0.1.
[20] Cf. Thompson 1966: B 522.3.
[21] *Daniel* VI 16 ss.
[22] Sen., *Contr.* I 2.

also present in the *Apocrypha* of the New Testament, even though, as Cooper has noted, their ideological and social function is quite distinct: where the novels stress the importance of marriage and the need to protect it in the best interest of the *polis*, the *Apocrypha* present a subversion of those values, shattering the social order.[23] There is a clear comparison between the novel we are dealing with and the *Acts of Paul and Thecla* though, as Artés has argued, the language employed is of a lower register.[24] Here we are presented with an act of villainy against the chastity of Thecla, who is saved by divine protection. That Habrocomes is the protagonist of the same episodes initiated, as we have seen, by Manto and Cyno shows that there is no necessary link between these folk stories and femininity. Moreover, it is clearly the case that, despite the counterarguments of Burrus in her interesting study of the chastity stories, these folk-stories are not necessarily related to the description of martyrdom.[25] Quite a different matter is, as she argues, the ideological appropriation of these folk-stories or their interpretation by a particular audience.

The oral dissemination of the *Acts of Thecla*, like that of other *Apocrypha*, as well as the oral material contained in all of them, are not in any doubt, but it is quite likely that novels such as the *Ephesiaca* would have impinged on the formation of the Acts as a literary genre as one of the first stages in the history of reception of the Greek novel. If, as scholars agree, in the case of both the Jewish novels and the Christian *Apocrypha* we are dealing with markedly religious texts that pose a model of identity, it is tempting to ask whether the same analogy applies to the case of Xenophon. We shall raise the question again a little later. What does seem clear, in my opinion, is that the circulation of motifs and folk-tales amongst different cultures and countries was profuse. The same holds for the *Life of Aesop* and the *Life of Alexander.*

II

1. I would like to turn now to questions of form and content in the novellas or folk-stories contained in Xenophon's novel. The novel as a whole is pre-

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[23] Cooper 1996, 43–67.
[24] Artés 1996, 51–57, and 1997, 33–53.
[25] See Burrus 1987, 57–60; 100. Add Rordorf 1986; Aubin 1998; and Thomas 1998.

sented as a kind of local history of Ephesus, and its very title recalls the *Milesiaca* of Aristides, though the narrative technique would seem to differ.[26] Our novel is a love story which takes place in Ephesus and is used to highlight both the local and the traditional dimension of the material used. This is especially evident when Xenophon employs as his mouthpiece an old woman who tells the story, *diegema,* of what has happened in the town, Tarsus (III 9,8 πάθος γενόμενον ἐν τῇ πόλει), which provides the plot of the novel. This of course recalls the πάθος ἐν Συρακούσαις γενόμενον which is narrated by Chariton at the start of his novel, together with the "*anilis fabula*" which is related by Apuleius in the *Metamorphoses* IV 27, the story of Cupid and Psyche (Apul. *Met.* IV 28 – VI 24), whose fairy-tale structure has been illuminated by Mantero and Ruffinatto,[27] a structure which is to my mind self-evident. The tradition is that of Parthenius' *Erotica pathemata* as well as the *Eroticai diegeseis* attributed to Plutarch, which were written perhaps at roughly the same time as Xenophon's work, and exhibit common stylistic features with the *Ephesiaca.*[28]

Another short narrative is the dream of Habrocomes in II 8,2 in which he sees his father freeing him from prison and is then transformed into a horse pursuing a mare before being transformed back into a human being after he finds the mare. The story is comparable to the famous metamorphosis into an ass in Pseudo-Lucian and Apuleius, whose folk character and dissemination have been analyzed in depth by Scobie.[29]

Let me turn now to the two autobiographies at the start of books III and V, which are both *diegemata* in the mouth of the bandit Hippothous and the fisherman Egialeus. They are love stories with an unfortunate ending for the lovers as one of them dies, but with clear thematic and stylistic connections to the main plot. To take the main stylistic traits they are based on word-repetition, the dominance of parataxis, with the use of "KAI style" and *lexis eiromene*, a hypotaxis restricted practically to the use of temporal clauses and a whole range of participles, both circumstantial and absolute, historical presents and the use of certain stereotyped formulae. I have underlined the

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[26] On the *Milesiaca* see recently Harrison 1998.
[27] Mantero 1973; Ruffinatto 1981.
[28] On the style of the stories by Parthenius see now Lightfoot 1999, 263–283. On the work by Plutarch – pseudo-Plutarch for others – see the commentary by Giangrande 1991.
[29] Scobie 1983.

repetitions, double-underlined the KAI style and historical present and used dotted lines to highlight participles. Let us look at the first text (III 2,1–6):

> "Ἐγὼ" ἔφη "εἰμὶ τὸ γένος πόλεως Περίνθου (πλησίον δὲ τῆς Θρᾴκης ἡ πόλις) τῶν τὰ πρῶτα ἐκεῖ δυναμένων· ἀκούεις δὲ καὶ τὴν Πέρινθον ὡς ἔνδοξος, καὶ τοὺς ἄνδρας ὡς εὐδαίμονες ἐνταῦθα. ἐκεῖ νέος ὢν ἠράσθην μειρακίου καλοῦ· ἦν δὲ τὸ μειράκιον τῶν ἐπιχωρίων· ὄνομα Ὑπεράνθης ἦν αὐτῷ. ἠράσθην δὲ τὰ πρῶτα ἐν γυμνασίοις διαπαλαίοντα ἰδῶν καὶ οὐκ ἐκαρτέρησα. ἑορτῆς ἀγομένης ἐπιχωρίου καὶ παννυχίδος ἐπ' αὐτῆς πρόσειμι τῷ Ὑπεράνθῃ καὶ ἱκετεύω κατοικτεῖραι· ἀκοῦσαν δὲ τὸ μειράκιον πάντα ὑπισχνεῖται κατελεῆσάν με. καὶ τὰ πρῶτα γε τοῦ ἔρωτος ὁδοιπορεῖ φιλήματα καὶ ψαύσματα καὶ πολλὰ παρ' ἐμοῦ δάκρυα· τέλος δὲ ἠδυνήθημεν καιροῦ λαβόμενοι γενέσθαι μετ' ἀλλήλων μό·οἱ καὶ τὸ τῆς ἡλικίας ἄλλοις ἀνύποπτον ἦν. καὶ χρόνῳ συνῆμεν πολλῷ, στέργοντες ἀλλήλους διαφερόντως, ἕως δαίμων τις ἡμῖν ἐνεμέσησε. καὶ ἔρχεται τις ἀπὸ Βυζαντίου (πλησίον δὲ τὸ Βυζάντιον τῇ Περίνθῳ) ἀνὴρ τῶν τὰ πρῶτα ἐκεῖ δυναμένων, ὃς ἐπὶ πλούτῳ καὶ περιουσίᾳ μέγα φρονῶν· Ἀριστόμαχος ἐκαλεῖτο. οὗτος ἐπιβὰς εὐθὺς τῇ Περίνθῳ, ὡς ὑπό τινος ἀπεσταλμένος κατ' ἐμοῦ θεοῦ, ὁρᾷ τὸν Ὑπεράνθην σὺν ἐμοὶ καὶ εὐθέως ἁλίσκεται, τοῦ μειρακίου θαυμάσας τὸ κάλλος, …

> "I belong", he said, "to one of the leading families of Perinthus, a city close to Thrace. And as you are aware, Perinthus is an important city and its citizens are well-to-do. There while I was a young man I fell in love with a beautiful youth, also from Perinthus, called Hyperanthes. I first fell in love with him when I saw his wrestling exploits in the gymnasium and I could not contain myself; during a local festival with an all-night vigil I approached Hyperanthes and begged him to take pity on me. He listened to me, took pity on me, and promised me everything. And our first steps in lovemaking were kisses and caresses, while I shed floods of tears. And at last we were able to take our opportunity to be alone with each other; we were both the same age, and no one was suspicious. For a long time we were together, passionately in love, until some evil spirit envied us. One of the leading men in Byzantium (the neighboring city) arrived in Perinthus: this was Aristomachus, a man proud of his wealth and prosperity. The moment he set foot in the town, as if sent against me

> by some god, he set eyes on Hyperanthes with me and was immediately captivated, amazed at the body's beauty…" (Transl. Anderson 1989)

We can compare it with the second story (V 1,4–11) which follows the same pattern.

The repetitive and formulaic style is typical in this novel and so well known that it's hardly worth insisting on.[30] But just to show that this is the case, let us look at another passage in the novel (III 11,2–5):

> ἔρχεται δή τις εἰς Ἀλεξάνδρειαν ἐκ τῆς Ἰνδικῆς τῶν ἐκεῖ βασιλέων κατὰ θέαν τῆς πόλεως καὶ κατὰ χρείαν ἐμπορίας, Ψάμμις τὸ ὄνομα. οὗτος ὁ Ψάμμις ὁρᾷ τὴν Ἀνθίαν παρὰ τοῖς ἐμπόροις καὶ ἰδῶν ἁλίσκεται καὶ ἀργύριον δίδωσι τοῖς ἐμπόροις πολὺ καὶ λαμβάνει θεράπαιναν αὐτήν. ὠνησάμενος δὲ ἄνθρωπος βάρβαρος κατευθὺς ἐπιχειρεῖ βιάζεσθαι καὶ χρῆσθαι πρὸς συνουσίαν· οὐ θέλουσα δὲ τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἀντέλεγε, τελευταῖον δὲ σκήπτεται πρὸς τὸν Ψάμμιν (δεισιδαίμονες δὲ φύσει βάρβαροι) ὅτι αὐτὴν ὁ πατὴρ γεννωμένην ἀναθείη τῇ Ἴσιδι μέχρις ὥρας γάμων, καὶ ἔλεγεν ἔτι τὸν χρόνον ἐνιαυτοῦ τεθεῖσθαι. "ἢν οὖν" φησὶν "ἐξυβρίσῃς εἰς τὴν ἱερὰν τῆς θεοῦ, μηνίσει μὲν ἐκείνη, χαλεπὴ δὲ ἡ τιμωρία." πείθεται Ψάμμις καὶ τὴν θεὸν προσεκύνει καὶ Ἀνθίας ἀπέχεται.

> "And sure enough someone did come to Alexandria, an Indian ruler, to see the city and do business. His name was Psammis. The man saw Anthia at the merchant's quarter, was ravished at the sight of her and have his will with her. She was unwilling and at first refused, but at length gave as an excuse to Psammis (barbarians are susperstitious by nature) that her father had dedicated her at birth to Isis till she was of age to marry, which she said was still a year away. "And so," she said, "if you offend the goddess´s ward, she will be angry with you and take a terrible revenge." Psammis believed her, paid homage to the goddess, and kept away from Anthia." (Transl. Anderson 1989)

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[30] See especially O'Sullivan 1995, and Ruiz-Montero 1982. Compare also repetitions such as ἀναθεῖναι ἀναθήματα in Paus. VI 3,14; VIII 42,8 and in X. Eph. V 10,6; 15,2; or ἐπίγραμμα ἐπιγραφῆναι in Paus. IX 11,1; X 1,10 and X. Eph. I 12,2; III 2,13, and the expressions θέαμα ἐλεεινόν in X. Eph. I 14,2; II 6,3 and ἐλεεινόν καὶ ἐν τῇ εἰκόνι in Paus. VII 26,8; μάντεις καὶ ἱερέας in X. Eph. I 5,6 and οὔτε μάντιν οὔτε ἱεροῖς in Paus. X 21,1.

The stylistic traits I have cited are typical of traditional narrative, as can be witnessed in a representative writer of the period, Pausanias. We can see them in the story of the love affair between Coresus, the priest of Dionysus, and Callirhoe (Paus. VII 21,1–4), or in the story of Euthymos and the ghost of the dead man (Paus. VI 6,9–10):

> Εὔθυμος δὲ – ἀφίκετο γὰρ ἐς τὴν Τεμέσαν, καὶ πως τηνικαῦτα τὸ ἔθος ἐποιεῖτο τῷ δαίμονι – πυνθάνεται τὰ παρόντα σφίσι, καὶ ἐσελθεῖν τε ἐπεθύμησεν ἐς τὸν ναὸν καὶ τὴν παρθένον ἐσελθὼν θεάσασθαι. ὡς δὲ εἶδε, τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἐς οἶκτον, δεύτερα δὲ ἀφίκετο καὶ ἐς ἔρωτα αὐτῆς· καὶ ἡ παῖς τε συνοικήσειν κατώμνυτο αὐτῷ σώσαντι αὐτὴν καὶ ὁ Εὔθυμος ἐνεσκευασμένος ἔμενε τὴν ἔφοδον τοῦ δαίμονος. ἐνίκα τε δὴ τῇ μάχῃ καὶ – ἐξηλαύνετο γὰρ ἐκ τῆς γῆς – ὁ Ἥρως ἀφανιζεταί τε καταδὺς ἐς θάλασσαν καὶ γάμος τε ἐπιφανὴς Εὐθύμῳ καὶ ἀνθρώποις τοῖς ἐνταῦθα ἐλευθερία τοῦ λοιποῦ σφισιν ἦν ἀπὸ τοῦ δαίμονος.
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> “But Euthymus happened to come to Temesa just at the time when the ghost was being propitiated in the usual way; learning what was going on he had a strong desire to enter the temple, and not only to enter it but also to look at the maiden. When he saw her he first felt pity and afterwards love for her. The girl swore to marry him if he saved her, and so Euthymus with his armour on awaited the onslaught of the ghost. He won the flight, and the Hero was driven out of the land and disappeared, sinking into the depth of the sea. Euthymus had a distinguished wedding, and the inhabitant was freed from the ghost for ever.” (transl. Jones 1918)

Such is his penchant for archaisms that Pausanias extends the style to his description of historical events, as in the Aristomenes episode (Paus. IV 18, 5–6), which is also an example of divine protection:

> ἔμελλε δὲ ἄρα καὶ αὐτόθεν ὁ δαίμων ἔξοδον ἀποφαίνειν αὐτῷ. καὶ ὁ μὲν ὡς ἐς τὸ τέρμα ἦλθε τοῦ βαράθρου, κατεκλίθη τε καὶ ἐφελκυσάμενος τὴν χλαμύδα ἀνέμενεν ὡς πάντως οἱ ἀποθανεῖν πεπρωμένον· τρίτῃ δὲ ὕστερον ἡμέρᾳ ψόφου τε αἰσθάνεται καὶ ἐκκαλυψάμενος – ἐδύνατο δὲ ἤδη διὰ τοῦ σκότους διορᾶν – ἀλώπεκα εἶδεν ἁπτομένην τῶν νεκρῶν.

ὑπονοήσας δὲ ἔσοδον εἶναι τῷ θηρίῳ ποθέν, ἀνέμενεν ἐγγύς οἱ τὴν ἀλώπεκα γενέσθαι, γενομένης δὲ λαμβάνεται·

"Even from here, as it seems, it was the will of heaven to show him a means of escape. For when he came to the bottom of the chasm he lay down, and covering himself with his cloak awaited the death that fate had surely decreed. But after two days he heard a noise and uncovered, and being by this able to see through the gloom, saw a fox devouring the dead bodies. Realizing that the beast must have some entrance, he waited for the fox to come near him, and then seized it." (transl. by W. H. S. Jones and H. A. Ormerod)

That this kind of style was used in ancient records of myths is evident in the work of authors such as Apollodorus: we can look at the start of the story of Antiope (Apollod. III 5,5):

Ἀντιόπη θυγάτηρ ἦν Νυκτέως· ταύτῃ Ζεὺς συνῆλθεν. ἡ δὲ ὡς ἔγκυος ἐγένετο, τοῦ πατρὸς ἀπειλοῦντος εἰς Σικυῶνα ἀποδιδράσκει πρὸς Ἐπωπέα καὶ τούτῳ γαμεῖται. Νυκτεύς δὲ ἀθυμήσας ἑαυτὸν φονεύει, δοὺς ἐντολὰς Λύκῳ παρὰ Ἐπωπέως καὶ παρὰ Ἀντιόπης λαβεῖν δίκας. ὁ δὲ στρατευσάμενος Σικυῶνα χειροῦται, καὶ τὸν μὲν Ἐπωπέα κτείνει, τὴν δὲ Ἀντιόπην ἤγαγεν αἰχμάλωτον. ἡ δὲ ἀγομένη δύο γεννᾷ παῖδας ἐν Ἐλευθεραῖς τῆς Βοιωτίας, οὓς ἐκκειμένους εὑρὼν βουκόλος ἀνατρέφει, καὶ τὸν μὲν καλεῖ Ζῆθον τὸν δὲ Ἀμφίονα.

"Antiope was a daughter of Nycteus, and Zeus had intercourse with her. When she was with child, and her father threatened her, she ran away to Epopeus at Sicyon and was married to him. In a fit of despondency Nycteus killed himself, after charging Lycus to punish Epopeus and Antiope. Lycus marched against Sicyon, subdued it, slew Epopeus, and led Antiope away captive. On the way she gave birth to two sons at Eleutherae in Boeotia. The infants were exposed, but a neatherd found and reared them, and he called the one Zethus and the other Amphion." (Transl. Frazer 1921)

Or in the most versatile of stylists, Plato, at the start of the myth of Prometheus in the *Protagoras* (*Prt.* 320d–e):

Ἦν γάρ ποτε χρόνος ὅτε θεοὶ μὲν ἦσαν, θνητὰ δὲ γένη οὐκ ἦν. ἐπειδὴ δὲ καὶ τούτοις χρόνος ἦλθεν εἱμαρμένος γενέσεως, τυποῦσιν αὐτὰ θεοὶ γῆς ἔνδον ἐκ γῆς καὶ πυρὸς μείξαντες καὶ τῶν ὅσα πυρὶ καὶ γῇ κεράννυται. ἐπειδὴ δ' ἄγειν αὐτὰ πρὸς φῶς ἔμελλον, προσέταξαν Προμηθεῖ καὶ Ἐπιμηθεῖ κοσμῆσαι τε καὶ νεῖμαι δυνάμεις ἑκάστοις ὡς πρέπει. Προμηθέα δὲ παραιτεῖται Ἐπιμηθεὺς αὐτὸς νεῖμαι, "Νείμαντος δέ μου," ἔφη, "ἐπίσκεψαι·" καὶ οὕτω πείσας νέμει. νέμων δὲ τοῖς μὲν ἰσχὺν ἄνευ τάχους προσῆπτεν, τοὺς δ' ἀσθενεστέρους τάχει ἐκόσμει· τοὺς δὲ ὥπλιζε, τοῖς δ' ἄοπλον διδοὺς φύσιν ἄλλην τιν' αὐτοῖς ἐμηχανᾶτο δύναμιν εἰς σωτηρίαν.

"There was one a time when there were gods, but no mortal creatures. And when to these also came their destined time to be created, the gods moulded their forms whithin the earth, of the mixture made of earth and fire and all substances that are compounded with fire and earth. When they were about to bring these creatures to light, they charged Prometheus and Epimetheus to deal to each the equipment of his proper faculty. Epimetheus besought Prometheus that he might do the dealing himself; "And when I have dealt," he said, "you shall examine." Having thus persuaded him he dealt; and in dealing he attached strength without speed to some, while the weaker he equipped with speed; and some he armed, while devising for others, along with an unarmed condition, some different faculty for preservation." (transl. by W. R. M. Lamb)

The origins of the style are, of course, to be found in ancient Ionian prose, in the *logographoi* and especially in Herodotus, from whom Pausanias takes it, since he was one of his models, together with Thucydides who, according to Strid, happened to be his favourite.[31] Pausanias' style is certainly more sophisticated than Herodotus' and our Xenophon's, but the comparison between Pausanias and Xenophon is, nonetheless, a potentially highly productive one.

Indeed, both authors share not only the same stylistic features but the same religious ideology grounded in what, since Herodotus, was the traditional concept of fatality and the inexorable nature of destiny and divinity. Thus the *nemesis theon* or *daimonon* which we have read in the autobiogra-

[31] Strid 1976. It is most useful to compare the archaic style of Xenophon and Pausanias with that of *logographoi* such as Pherecydes of Athens: see Dräger 1995.

phies, or equivalent concepts, are also present in Pausanias: τὸ χρεών, ὁ δαίμων, "the destiny", ὁ φθόνος δαιμόνων, "the envy of gods", or one of Pausanias's most cherished concepts, τὸ μήνιμα, "the wrath", which he employs in excess of twenty occasions, are repeated throughout the work.[32] To recall two famous love stories, those of Coresus and Callirhoe, already mentioned, and of Melanippus and Cometho (Paus. VII 19). In the latter we learn of Melanippus's *pathemata* which reveal the power of Eros: the love between them is symmetrical (ἐς τὸ ἴσον says Pausanias), stronger than the opposition of his father, and the motive for a consultation of the oracle and a comment by the author that love is the most important thing in the life.[33]

Nor should it be forgotten that Xenophon sets the verb μηνιάω near the beginning of his novel: μηνιᾷ πρὸς ταῦτα ὁ Ἔρως· φιλόνεικος γὰρ ὁ θεὸς καὶ ὑπερηφαίνοις ἀπαραίτητος (I 2,1). "Eros was furious at this, for he is a contentious god and inexorable against those who despise him."

The *menima* of Eros is the mark of all the *pathemata* of Habrocomes, just as it is in traditional mythology and in Pausanias, who incidentally also uses the adjective *aparaitetos* "inexorable" to describe divine *menima* (Paus. VII 25,1). This *menima* is connected with local legends. These have an etiological character and are based on the transgression of some divine law and its corresponding punishment.[34] But this is not the structure of the two autobiographies of Xenophon of Ephesus, which bear witness to another type of oral narrative which, in this particular case, have no etiological character.[35]

[32] I take the data from Habicht 1985, 156, who stresses the great importance of religion in Pausanias. For the remaining concepts cf. Paus. VI 4,9; VII 1,5; 3,2; 18,3; VIII 4,10; 10,3 (τὸ χρεών); IV 18,4–7; V 15,3; VIII 27,7; 33,1; X 2,6 (ὁ δαίμων). See also the valuable contributions edited by Bingen 1996, 117–160, especially those of Ameling, *ibid.* 117–160, partic. 145, and Alcock, *ibid.* 241–267, partic. 246.

[33] Cf. also Paus. VII 23,3; 26,8.

[34] The compositional structure of these legends is comparable to that which Dundes 1980 has observed: "Interdiction, Violation, Consequence, Attempted Escape". Some two thirds of the myths in Apollodorus's *Library* follow this or similar patterns, while the remaining third conform to the Proppian schema; hence a substantial portion of traditional Greek narrative follows these brief patterns: see Ruiz-Montero 1986, 29–40.

[35] It should be added that of the 33 characters who are named in the novel, 16 bear names that appear in Herodotus, 18 in the handbooks of Apollodorus and Hyginus and no fewer than 18 in Pausanias: Xenophon could be thus the novelist who takes the highest number of proper names from the mythological tradition. Certainly the fact that many mythological names appear in the inscriptions (cf. Ruiz-Montero 1994, 1107, n. 58) shows that they are contemporary names, but it could be also a mark of an hellenized social class, al-

There is no doubt that both Xenophon and Pausanias are part of the same literary culture: they both evince the same faith in the gods, their oracles (both mention those of Apollo and Apis) and their miracles;[36] both show the same interest in local festivals and cults,[37] the same interest in folk love stories,[38] folk ghost stories[39] or different kinds of *paradoxa*.[40]

2. Together with the written, frequently epic traditions, Pausanias often mentions the oral one: ἀκοὴν γράφω, οἱ ἀρχαῖα μνημονεύοντες, λέγουσιν οἱ ἐπιχώριοι, οἱ ἐξηγηταί, etc.,[41] "I write what I have heard", "historians of Peloponnesian antiquities say", "the natives say", "local guides". To the official traditions of the Hellenes he prefers the local ones, except when they are illogical or when a better tradition exists instead.[42] When a story is extremely well known, he refrains from relating it in its entirety.[43]

Anthia and Habrocomes share Pausanias′ interest in visiting different places: at Rhodos ἐξιστόρησαν (X. Eph. I 12,2); but also Psammis, a king of India, makes a visit to Alexandria (X. Eph. III 11,2), while Hippothous's bandits visit Laodicea in Syria X. Eph. (IV 1,1).[44]

This is all part of a broader cultural phenomenon. Strabo (I 19–20) relates that the inhabitants of the towns packed the theatres, where they liked to hear the poets recount the fabulous exploits of Hercules and Theseus. It is unclear whether Chariton is adopting a similar practice in setting the narration of the adventures of Chaereas and Callirhoe in the theatre of Syracuse at

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though not necessarily a high one. In any case these names may be yet another instance of archaism. Cf. also Swain 1998,. 96, n. 87.

[36] Cf. Paus. VI 20,7; VII 3,1; 8,9–19,1; 6; 21,1; 22,2; VIII 7,6; 9,4–11,10; 23,6; 24,8; 29,1; X 6,5; 10,6; 24,2, etc.

[37] Cf. Paus. VII 17,8; 18, 11–12; 20,6; 22,8; 23,9; 24,1; 4; 27,3; 8; VIII 8,1; 13,1; 19,1; X 32,14, etc.

[38] Cf. II 28,3–7; VI 23,5; VII 5,13; 17,9–10; 23,1–3; 4; X 32, 10, etc. Sexual violence (βιασθῆναι) against a maiden in VI 6,7; 22,9; VIII 47,4.

[39] Cf. Paus. VI 7,4; X 23,2, etc.

[40] Cf. Paus. VI 11,6; 26,2; VII 5,10–13; 17,10; 18,9; VIII 3,6; 7,1 ; 17, 1; 21,2; 22, 8, etc.

[41] For instance in Paus. VIII 10,1, etc. (ἀκοὴν γράφω); VI 4,8; 24,9; VII 18,2; 13; VIII 13,3; 14,10; 34,4, etc. (οἱ τὰ ἀρχαῖα μνημονεύοντες); VI 6,4; 24,9; 23,1–3; 27,1; VIII 6,1; 28,1, etc. (λέγουσιν οἱ ἐπιχώριοι); VII 6; VIII 28,7,etc. (οἱ ἐξηγηταί).

[42] See Paus. VI 9,1; VII 4,4; V 18,4; VIII 10,3; 14,6; 12; 15,5, etc.

[43] See Paus. VII 18,1; VIII 13,5; 18,8, etc.. There is no shortage of examples of *pathemata* described in paintings (*eikones, graphai)*: see VI 6,7; 23,6; 25,10; VIII 11,6, etc.

[44] Lucian also tells of the existence of local *exegetai* in *VH* II 3 b, *Amores* 8; cf. also Plut. *Mor.* 395a.

the end of his novel (VIII 7, 9). Pausanias (VI 23,7) also informs the reader that there is a gymnasium at Elis where recitals (*akroaseis*) of improvised speeches (λόγων αὐτοσχεδίων) and of all manner of written works (συγγραμμάτων παντοίων, possibly in prose) were presented. What we do know is that there were state-organized programmes of festivities where the Sophists described the local myths,[45] while inscriptions inform us of the honours heaped on epic poets and local historians – amongst them a certain Xenophon, by all accounts a child, in Samos – who wrote about local myths and city kinship ties, especially under the Antonini.[46] These are authors of *patria*, a compilation of the traditions of the forefathers.[47]

This phenomenon, which is well known, is typical of the Second Sophistic and obeys the impulse to assert a version of national identity in the face of the Roman Empire. The fashion for *archaiotes* sparks a revival orchestrated by the authorities, as illustrated in the creation of the Panhellenion by Hadrian around 130. The cities pay homage to their mythic founders, gods and foreign or home-grown heroes, and this is why the coinage system is such an important source of information. The cities indeed produce their own coins, representing the myths and legends of their forefathers. It is important to note that it is precisely by means of this mythic *syngeneia* that the cities are united, that is, the foreign becomes a part of the local; hence the predominance of travelling heroes like Hercules or Perseus, whose quests and performance of difficult tasks would make the foundation of the cities possible. At times the heroes and local gods are represented in the same way as the emperor,[48] who is not distinguished by his dress: this is important as it explains why "polis patriotism" was not incompatible with allegiance to Rome. But it is also important, in my opinion, in helping us to interpret the novel with which we are dealing and also the rest of the genre. The view, then, that myths pertain to the area of scholarship alone could not be farther from the truth. Mythology is, for political reasons, very much alive in the imperial age and, in the coinage system and in Pausanias, both an official and a local mythology are seen to exist side by side.

[45] Polem. *VS* I 25. Cf. Lindner 1994, 43.
[46] See Chaniotis 1988; there "Lokalgeschichten": 369 ff, E 24.
[47] To the studies by Lindner and Chaniotis add those of Strubbe 1984–1986; Scheer 1993; Weiss 1995.
[48] See Harl 1987; Lindner 1994, 31.

I have already stated that Pausanias transmitted love stories, and as we can see in the *Lexicon Iconographicum Mythologiae Classicae* (*LIMC*), many of these appear in contemporary iconography. It is worth noting especially that the stories of Atis, Antiope, Antinoe, Auge, Daphne, Ariadne, Callirhoe, Cephalus, Coresus and Callisto appear on local coins.[49] But even more important for the genre of the novel, it seems to me, is the fact that Ninos, founding hero of Aphrodisias, appears on coins in Anineta in the period of Antoninus Pius and the statue of Semiramis stands with other mythical heroes at the temple of Hierapolis;[50] that Pyramus and Thisbe appear on coins from Cilicia from the period of Marcus Aurelius, with a variant of the legend which has not survived in literary texts,[51] and that Hero and Leander appear on coins from Sestos and Abydos from the late 2nd century A.D., though their stories are told in the literature dating from the Hellenistic period.[52]

The relevance of these facts to the study of the Greek novel is, it seems to me, clear: Xenophon is reworking oral material of a local origin, that is, of the same nature as other local stories to be found in the period, though we cannot be sure the locality in question is Ephesus. It is possible he chose this city as his heroes' homeland because it was part of the novelistic tradition or, like Cnidos, Samos and Rhodos, part of the religious tradition. Lavagnini already noted the importance of local legends for the origins of the genre:[53] they certainly play a fundamental role in the *Ephesiaca* and probably do so in Chariton's *Callirhoe*, though Chariton was not from Syracuse, and also perhaps in *Ninos*. These *diegemata* were disseminated throughout the Empire, as we can read in Dio of Prusa XX 10, who reports having seen people in the hippodrome performing different activities: singing, reading poetry or relating stories and myths (μῦθον ἢ ἱστορίαν διηγούμενον). Scobie gathered information on different types of storytelling in the Empire, especially *apista*

[49] Attis: Paus. VII 17,9–10; *LIMC* III 1; 2 ; Antiope: Paus. IX 17,6; X 32,10–11; *LIMC* I 1; Antinoe: Paus. VIII 11,3; 8,4; 9,5; Auge: Paus. VIII 42, 2; *LIMC* III 2, nº 21 and 22; 26; Daphne: Paus. VIII 20,1; *LIMC* III 2 (without Leucippus); Ariadne: Paus. IX 40, 4; *LIMC* III 2, "addenda"; Callirhoe: Paus. VIII 24,8; *LIMC* V1: "Kallirrhoe" III; Cephalus: Paus. IX 29,6 ; *LIMC* VI 1; Coresus: Paus. VII 21,1–4; *LIMC* VI 1; Callisto: Paus. VIII 3,6–7; *LIMC* V 1.

[50] For Ninus see *LIMC* VI 1; Semiramis: *ibid.* VII 1–2.

[51] Cf. *LIMC* VII 1–2.

[52] Cf. *LIMC* VIII 1 (Suppl.).

[53] Lavagnini 1950, 1–105: "Le Origine del Romanzo Greco".

and *paradoxa*.[54] And it is important not to forget here the recurrence of the adjective *paradoxon* in the novel by Chariton, a veritable παράδοξόν τι according to the author, which provides a nexus between erotic literature and paradoxography.[55]

III

If the stylistic features of Xenophon of Ephesus conform to those of traditional narrative, it remains to examine the possibility that they also conform to an "oral performance", whether for reasons of religious aretalogy, as scholars since Kerényi have asserted, or for some other reason.[56]

Reading the novel as a whole as a religious exaltation of Isis is certainly possible, as the religious element is stressed at all kinds of different levels. If few novels such as the *Ephesiaca* make much of the fact that the heroes are mere puppets exposed to continual danger, this might be due to a desire to suggest the possibility of salvation through faith in Isis, who was worshipped in Ephesus from the 3rd century B.C. and, in the 2nd century A.D., was followed throughout the Empire.[57] Just as there existed a mythic *syngeneia*, so in the cities we find a religious *syngeneia*, and the cult of Isis would certainly have its part to play. Hence both polis and cosmopolis are seen to converge.[58] This strikes me as a more plausible explanation than the one offered

[54] Scobie 1969; 1979; 1983.

[55] A nexus confirmed in the recent studies of Stramaglia 1998, but rather overlooked by Schepens-Delcroix 1996, 1375–1460, partic. 1440–1442.

[56] For Xenophon and aretalogy see the bibliography mentioned in n.1, and Merkelbach 1994.

[57] Isis in Ephesus: Oster 1990, 1661–1728; see especially 1677: "Egyptian Cults". In coins dating from second century A. D. the goddess appears with flanking stags, as huntress, such as in X. Eph. I 12,6 and Paus. VII 24,1 ; 27,4. See also Waalters 1995; and Nollé 1996.

Most of the cities mentioned by Xenophon were, as I have noted in Ruiz-Montero 1994, sites of worship of Isis. On the numerous representations of the image of Artemis Ephesia, which is a part of the "policy of identification" of Ephesus and reaffirmed basic Greek values, see Thomas 1995. For Thomas "it is inconceivable that he (Xenophon) had never seen the goddess's image". The novels by Xenophon and Achilles Tatius would contribute to enlarge this policy to a broader audience.

[58] To the bibliography mentioned in the former note add Swain 1998, 100 ff: the novel as a reflection of the ideological concerns of the local elite, which emphasizes male and traditional values.

by the older view of the novel as a myth of man's solitude and alienation:[59] The hallmarks of the *polis* are more evident in Xenophon than has traditionally been assumed to be the case.

Xenophon's stylistic archaism is not incompatible with the religious realism (for want of a better word) to be found in the novel, just as the latter is not incompatible with a great idealism. The ambiguous, or rather polyhedral nature of the text is self-evident, and that is why I would like to make some concluding remarks based on a recent interpretation of the novel. The interpretation in question is in an article by Shea,[60] where the novel is presented as "a good evening's improvisation, or a model for an evening entertainment. In either case the episodes of the romance are suggested by the works of art 'inhabiting' the patron's dining room. This would account for the structural anomalies in the text". Clearly the existence of narrative paintings, both pagan and Christian, referred to by Shea, to which could be added other texts,[61] provides further proof of the oral, rather than literary, dissemination of the novels, like the existence of mosaics from Antioch and Daphne on *Ninus* or *Metiochus and Parthenope*,[62] and perhaps the popular theatre mentioned by Lucian.[63] But there is nothing to suggest a "performance through painting", let alone an "oral improvisation" in the case of the *Ephesiaca*.

Let us consider some rhetorical evidence: elsewhere I have stated that Xenophon does not refrain from using hiatus, constructing metrical clauses or adopting the Gorgian style at will, concluding that he combines both *apheleia* and *glykytes*.[64] Other features of his vocabulary should be cited, which are explained in an unpublished doctoral dissertation by L. López Jordán which I recently directed: Xenophon uses a higher proportion of Atticisms than Chariton (16% versus 10%), though of an inferior literary status; these Atticisms are distributed evenly throughout the novel. Of the 1700 words which comprise his vocabulary, some 90% appear in the other novelists, 73% coincide with those of Xenophon the Athenian, a higher proportion

[59] See MacAlister 1996, and the criticisms by Swain 1998, 108. See also the first chapter by Swain in Edwards and Swain 1997, 1–37.
[60] Shea 1998.
[61] For instance in the novels by Apuleius (VI 29), Longus (prooemion) or Achilles Tatius (I 1,2).
[62] For the mosaics see Quet 1992.
[63] Lucian. *De salt.* 2; *Pseud.* 19; 25.
[64] See Ruiz-Montero 1994, 1116.

than those which coincide with the New Testament and the non-literary papyri. Xenophon also presents some possible *hapax legomena*, such as λυσσοδίωκτος and μιξοθάλασσος in the oracle of Apollo (I 8,2), which are clearly artificial and suggest a creative side to his work.

These are not the features of an improviser or of an uneducated author. In my opinion Xenophon is another face or aspect of the Second Sophistic, differing not just from Aristides but also from Chariton who, as his insistence on παιδεία and φιλανθρωπία displays, clearly shares the ideology of the ruling social elite. Xenophon is closer in style and atmosphere to the periegesis of Pausanias, another *pepaideumenos.*

Xenophon's work is the product of a rhetorical *mimesis* which adapts an oral style to oral material and which is inscribed in a particular literary tradition; the failure, the shortsightedness, is of modern critics who have used inadequate criteria by which to judge it.

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