

The *Ephesiaca* as a *Bildungsroman*

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Because of its apparent lack of sophistication the *Ephesiaca* of Xenophon of Ephesus has long been seen as the exception in the novelistic corpus.¹ However, scholars have recently reassessed its literary status and this novel is now considered fully integrated into the genre.² In this paper, I will further stress the quality of the *Ephesiaca*, by arguing that it is deliberately constructed as a *Bildungsroman* in which the protagonists move from a transient and merely physical conception of love to a faithful and more spiritual one.

As generically in the Greek novel the young protagonists fall in love at the beginning of the text and achieve their perpetual union as adults at the end, one might expect that this change in age and erotic experience would occur in the space between those events.

However, in the past scholars have discredited this idea. During the 1930s Bakhtin argued that, although ‘all action in the novel unfolds between these two points’, ‘the love between the hero and the heroine [...] remains absolutely unchanged throughout the entire novel’.³ As a result ‘the hiatus that appears between these two [...] biographical moments [...] changes nothing in the life of the heroes’.⁴ This assessment accorded well with

¹ Since the nineteenth century scholars have argued that the version we have of the *Ephesiaca* is an epitome: see Bürger 1893 and Gärtner 1967, 2056 – 2060 for this theory and Ruiz Montero 1994, 1094-1096 for a critical examination. In recent decades, Hägg 2004² and O’Sullivan 1995, 100-39, have offered an interesting confutation of this hypothesis, while Bianchi 2009 has raised the possibility that a longer and more elaborated version of the *Ephesiaca* than is current today may have existed as late as the Comnenian period. In this paper the core of my argument does not depend on resolving this complex issue; the discovery of patterns in the text we have neither confutes nor disproves Bürger’s and Gärtner’s theory, since an epitomiser could well preserve the evidence of neat and careful planning in the text.

² See Whitmarsh 2011, 25-68.

³ Bakhtin 1981, 89.

⁴ *Ibid.*, 89-90.

Rohde's earlier view of the novelistic protagonists as passive and emotionally static.⁵ In 1994 Konstan revisited this notion by concluding that 'the events in the Greek novel are designed to test the love of the primary couple'⁶ and thus the protagonists' 'loyalty or commitment to one another becomes the defining characteristic of their relationship'.⁷ This moral change, however, does not imply that there is a progress 'from a lower form of passion to a higher'.⁸ Konstan, like Bakhtin, believes that 'from the beginning, the love of the two protagonists is equal and alike'.⁹ When in 1996 Morgan addressed the applicability of the notion of *Bildungsroman* to ancient novels,¹⁰ he noted that, 'with one major exception [constituted by Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*], the Greek novelists did not explicitly or programmatically avail themselves of the potential of their form'.¹¹

In 2006 Lalanne focused on the protagonists' change of age and proposed a new interpretation by relating romantic narratives to the paradigm of the rite of passage.¹² This allowed her to identify a progression throughout every novel, in which the protagonists' initial involvement in society is followed by their marginalisation and final 'reintegration [...] into their communities as adults'.¹³ Furthermore, since this last event usually takes place in a *polis*, the novelists' description of this process appears to be a Greek re-

⁵ See especially Rohde's definition (1914, 426) of Xenophon's characters as 'blosse Marionetten, welche dieser stümperhafte Poet vor uns tanzen lasst' and Ruiz Montero 1994, 1105, who provides a list of similar statements.

⁶ Konstan 1994, 46.

⁷ *Ibid.*, 47.

⁸ *Ibid.*, 45.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ The description of *Bildungsroman* was first applied to some German romantic novels of the eighteenth and nineteenth century which 'follow the account of the development of the hero or heroine from childhood or adolescence into adulthood, through a troubled quest for identity' (Baldick 1990, 24). Overall, these narratives include both the description of the protagonists' development (*Entwicklung*) and their view of this process as a personal education (*Bildung*). Later, the convention of *Bildungsroman* was extended to other romances written in other languages, some of which focus on love, such as Flaubert's *L'Éducation sentimentale* and Lawrence's *Sons and lovers*. In my paper, I decided to use *Bildungsroman* because it is a convenient term for the *Ephesiaca*, but, as Morgan 1996 argues in his discussion of Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, I do not want to imply that a Greek novel can be exactly compared to the modern *Bildungsromane*.

¹¹ Morgan 1996, 165. On Longus' novel as a *Bildungsroman*, see also Laplace 1991, while on the same text as one which educates its readers, see Imbert 1992.

¹² As Bierl 2007, 262, n. 73 shows, other scholars earlier suggested the presence of passage rites in the novels, but Lalanne has the merit of having developed a complete theory of this notion.

¹³ Whitmarsh 2011, 43. This sentence is from his comment on Lalanne's view.

sponse to the Roman contemporary domination. This new model has generally been well received by scholars since it matches the kind of selfhood typical of the ancient world, in which, as Gill demonstrated, ‘the ethical life of a human being was, at the most fundamental level, shared rather than private and individuated’.¹⁴

Although Lalanne’s interpretation sheds new light on the Greek novel as a whole, I will show that the *Ephesiaca* does not fit perfectly into it. Unlike the other protagonists, Habrocomes and Anthia change their attitude towards love and their final reunion in Ephesus does not reintegrate them into the *polis* where they had grown up. Thus it can be argued that *Bildungsroman*¹⁵ and an alternative image of Greek society are part of Xenophon’s agenda.

In discussing the nature of the *Ephesiaca* as a *Bildungsroman*, which constitutes the core of my article, I will not argue that the protagonists radically change their ethos, as Habrocomes and Anthia are truly in love with one another from their very first encounter. It is rather the nature and the awareness of this bond which progress throughout the novel. In this respect, my approach builds on Konstan’s view of novelistic fidelity¹⁶ and is indebted to Jones’s recent study of *andreia*, the Classical Greek virtue which in the novels does not represent just ‘manly courage’ but also ‘endurance of circumstances’,¹⁷ ‘protection of chastity’¹⁸ and erotic courage.¹⁹ Jones argues that in the Greek thought ‘while *andreia* is conceived as natural to mankind,

¹⁴ Gill 1996, 14. Bierl 2007, 257 takes partial exception, as he offers a different interpretation of the presence of passage rites in the novels. In his view, the protagonists’ misadventures narrated in these texts are the result of ‘eine spielerische Phantasie’, which reflects the anxiety typical of adolescents and needs not be related to the historical context of the Imperial Era. In addition, Bierl argues that a sign of this ‘Phantasie’ is that, when the novels focus on the protagonists’ journey, the style of the narration begins to follow a symbolic and associative pattern which resembles the logic of human dreams. For an application of this theory on Xenophon’s *Ephesiaca*, see Bierl 2006. Although I am not sure that it is possible to relate modern theories about human self and dreams (as Bierl does) to ancient texts, I have a sympathy with his interpretation because it supports the idea that the protagonists of the *Ephesiaca* develop during their journey.

¹⁵ Laplace 1994 is the other scholar who already argued that the *Ephesiaca* can be interpreted as a *Bildungsroman*. Since some of her individual arguments are good but they do not highlight the existence of a careful planning in the text, I do not consider the core of her demonstration convincing.

¹⁶ See Konstan 1994, 45-55.

¹⁷ Jones 2007, 112.

¹⁸ *Ibid.*, 120.

¹⁹ As De Temmerman 2007, 106 argues, in erotic literature *andreia* is subjected to a ‘transfer of their normal connotations to the erotic sphere’. As a result, in the Greek novels it becomes the virtue of active lovers.

[...] it is also envisaged as subject to *paideia*'.²⁰ I will prove that a similar phenomenon concerns both Xenophon's protagonists whose increasing endurance is the result of Eros' education.

Habrocomes' involvement in this process is clear at the beginning of the novel. The entire first book focuses on Eros' anger against the arrogant Ephesian.²¹ As an act of revenge, the god makes the hero fall in love with Anthia and his agency continues through the ordeal of lovesickness.²² Later, Apollo's oracle suggests that Eros is also responsible for the protagonists' marriage,²³ and finally the presence of the god is evoked by Habrocomes after the pirates' erotic proposal: 'Now the god is working his vengeance (τιμωρίαν) on me for my arrogance (τῆς ὑπερηφανίας): Corymbus is in love with me, and Euxinus with you'.²⁴ Furthermore, the noun τιμωρία and the cognate verb τιμωρέομαι, 'to avenge', are introduced in the fourth chapter of the first book with reference to Eros' initial and future revenge,²⁵ while the enemies of the god are called ὑπερήφανοι.²⁶ Since in the first book Euxinus – and no one else – uses this group of words to describe Corymbus' plausi-

²⁰ Jones 2012, 102. The key role played by *paideia* emerges clearly in Chariton's Dionysius: see Jones 2007, 122.

²¹ Cf. X.Eph. 1,1,5: 'Habrocomes did not even recognize Eros as a god but rejected him wholesale and paid no attention to him' and 1,2,1: 'Eros grew furious at this'. Throughout the whole paper, apart from justified exceptions, the translation of the *Ephesiaca* is from Henderson 2009, while the Greek text is from O'Sullivan 2005.

²² See X.Eph. 1,4,5: 'Eros was still angry [...]'. On this key role played by Eros, see also Ruiz Montero 1994, 1127: Eros is the 'Anstifter des Handlungsgefüges' and 1097: 'Der schöne [...] Habrocomes verachtet Eros, weshalb ihm der Gott zürnt und die Rache in die Wege leitet. Diese besteht erstens darin, daß er Abrokomes' Liebe zu Anthia und die entscheidende Eheschließung herbeiführt'.

²³ See X.Eph. 1,2,6, second verse. I offer my personal translation: 'Both are affected by one disease, and its cure will come from where it arose (λύσις ἔνθεν ἀνέστη)'.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, 2,1,2.

²⁵ Cf. *ibid.*, 1,4,5: 'Don't abandon me or punish (μηδὲ τιμωρήσει) my rashness further' and *ibid.*: 'Eros was [...] determined to think of a great punishment (μεγάλην [...] τιμωρίαν) to visit on Habrocomes for his scorn'. By using τιμωρέομαι to describe Eros' revenge against Habrocomes Xenophon might be recalling Euripides' *Hippolytus*, where τιμωρήσομαι is used at the verse 21 to describe Aphrodite's desire to punish the tragic hero. The connection between the *Ephesiaca* and the *Hippolytus* has been made by some scholars such as Cueva 2004, 39 and Giovannelli 2008, 277: in my opinion, the first part of Habrocomes' story certainly proves Xenophon's knowledge of Hippolytus' myth, but the intertexts discovered are too general to demonstrate a literary engagement with the Euripidean tragedy.

²⁶ See X.Eph. 1,2,1: 'Eros is implacable against those who disdain him (ὑπερηφάνοις)'.

ble reaction to Habrocomes' rejection of his proposal,²⁷ Xenophon even seems to suggest identification between the pirate and Eros. Thus, in the first section of the novel, Habrocomes is led by this god to overcome his initial disdain of love through his engagement with Anthia and to suffer from the attack of a lustful rival. If we consider all these passages together, I would agree with Morgan that the hero 'over a restricted text-span certainly undergoes educative correction'.²⁸

In the fifth book Xenophon introduces 'one of the most explicit fictional moments of learning'²⁹ when Habrocomes reacts to Aegialeus' story by saying: 'now I have truly learned (καὶ νῦν ἀληθῶς μεμάθηκα) that true love (ἔρως ἀληθινός) has no age limit'.³⁰ Despite this episode, however, this process of learning seems to disappear in the central part of the text, as Eros is not mentioned again after the beginning of the second book.

In my opinion, this impression can be dispelled by analysis of the entire novel, which demonstrates that Xenophon is constantly interested in the change of the protagonists' approach to love. Firstly, our novelist gives them only two nights of love at the beginning and at the end of their journey, and thus makes these scenes the frame of the *Ephesiaca*'s plot. Xenophon produces a clear contrast between the two events.³¹ Each night evokes an episode of the *Odyssey*, namely Ares' and Aphrodite's love and the final reunion of Odysseus and Penelope, in which the couples involved have a very different approach to *eros*. The gods behave as physical lovers who just want to achieve sexual consummation, while the heroes focus on their exemplary preservation of fidelity. Since in both events these characters serve as models for the protagonists of the *Ephesiaca*, the Homeric intertext highlights the existence of a change in Habrocomes' and Anthia's erotic relationship. Secondly, the space between the two nights follows the same trajectory, since it is characterised by Habrocomes' and Anthia's progressive understanding of the importance of chastity during their clash with lustful enemies. Thirdly, this new focus on faithful love also assumes a social foundation. The protagonists' return to Ephesus leads them to the establishment of a new society which has love as its only reason for existence.

Given this framework, I will begin my analysis with the erotic nights.

²⁷ See *ibid.*, 1,16,5: 'there's no escape from retribution (οὐδεμία τιμωρίας ἀποφυγή) should you treat Corymbus with disdain (ὕπερηφανήσαντι Κόρυμβον)'.

²⁸ Morgan 1996, 176.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, 174.

³⁰ X.Eph. 5,1,12. The translation of this passage is my own.

³¹ Cf. *ibid.* 1,9 and 5,14.

1 *The contrast between the protagonists' two erotic nights*

After their wedding Habrocomes and Anthia spend their first night together and the importance of this event is stressed by the only ekphrasis of the novel: the canopy above Habrocomes' and Anthia's bed is decorated with many Cupids in love and with a representation of Ares' and Aphrodite's love affair.³² Overall, this piece of furniture offers an image of luxury and sexual excitement. The first feature originates from the sophistication of the entire chamber,³³ while lasciviousness is emphasised in its decorations which culminate in Ares' and Aphrodite's love affair.

In the ancient world their love story was well known; Homer, Plato, Apollonius Rhodius, Meleager and Lucretius are among the writers who mentioned it³⁴ and its representation in visual art was also very popular.³⁵ One reason for this lay in Ares' transformation into a lover, which became the 'allegory of the warrior spirit being won over by love'.³⁶

In the *Ephesiaca*, this view seems to be adopted, since Eros' introduction of Ares into Aphrodite's bed on the canopy suggests that it is impossible to resist the power of love. In addition, the importance of the *Odyssey* for the Greek novel as a whole,³⁷ and Xenophon's previous exploitation of this model,³⁸ open the possibility of a direct engagement with the Homeric story of Demodocus, the first account of this affair.

In the *Odyssey* the rhapsode's account takes a moral view, as Ares' and Aphrodite's relationship stands as a symbol for enjoyable and immoderate

³² See *ibid.*, 1,8,2.

³³ See *ibid.*: 'A golden bed had been spread with purple sheets'.

³⁴ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 8,266-369, Pl. *Symp.* 196d, Ap. Rhod. *Argon.* 1,742-746, *Anth. Pal.* 5,180,3-4 and Lucr. 1,29-40.

³⁵ On the portrait of Ares and Aphrodite as a couple, see LIMC 2.1 s.v. 'Ares' at 491: 'partenaires amoureux, il n'est pas étonnant qu'ils soient souvent figurés l'un près de l'autre (45-61.68.83.85.108.109.112.113.119)'. More specifically, this theme became very common in the Imperial Era, and especially in Roman art and culture: see LIMC 2.1, s.v. 'Ares/Mars' at 556: 'Das Thema Mars und Venus war eines der zentralen Themen in Religion, Philosophie sowie in der staatlichen und privaten Bildkunst'.

³⁶ Impelluso 2003, 148. More specifically, Lucretius shows that this theme could be used to express a view of the entire society, as he associates Venus' love with the achievement of peace in Rome (see Barchiesi 1994, 61).

³⁷ See Morgan and Harrison 2008, 220: 'the *Odyssey* with its combination of travel adventures and marital reunion validated as a correct narrative destination, is the principal foundation-text of the romance'.

³⁸ This is particularly clear in Apollo's oracle, which has its model in the Odyssean prophecy of Tiresias (*Od.* 11,100-137). On this parallel, see Tagliabue, in progress.

eros.³⁹ This twofold value is first indicated by the gods' reaction in the poem: while Hermes cheerfully expresses his desire to emulate Ares and have sex with Aphrodite,⁴⁰ the other gods harshly condemn their affair by saying: 'ill deeds (κακὰ ἔργα) thrive not'.⁴¹ Furthermore, a passage from Athenaeus about Greek *symposia* proves that this double interpretation became common in the Homeric readership:

ὁ δὲ παρὰ Φαίαξι Δημόδοκος ἕδει Ἄρεος καὶ Ἀφροδίτης συνουσίαν, οὐ διὰ τὸ ἀποδέχεσθαι τὸ τοιοῦτον πάθος, ἀλλ' ἀποτρέπων αὐτοὺς παρανόμων ὀρέξεων, ἢ εἰδὼς ἐν τρυφερῷ τι βίῳ τεθραμμένους κἀντεῦθεν ὁμοιώτατα τοῖς τρόποις αὐτῶν τὰ πρὸς ἀνάπασιν προφέρων.⁴²

Demodocus at the Phaeacian court sings of the amours of Ares and Aphrodite, not in approval of such passion but to deter his hearers from illicit desires, or else because he knew that they had been brought up in a luxurious mode of life and therefore offered for their amusement what was most in keeping with their character.

The lasciviousness and joy expressed by this Homeric scene accord with Habrocomes' and Anthia's attitude on their wedding night when they have their first sexual consummation⁴³ and they experience pleasure.⁴⁴ This corre-

³⁹ As we will see in Athenaeus' testimony (and it also emerges in Pl. *Resp.* 390b-c and in pseudo-Heraclitus' *Homeric Problems* 54,1 and 7), the moral criticism of this love is not focused on its adulterine nature, but on Ares' and Aphrodite's failure to control their desire. For this reason, I do not consider the former element significant in the *Ephesiaca*. In addition, this interpretation accords with the fortune of Ares' and Aphrodite's story in Roman art, a factor which might have affected Xenophon of Ephesus' exploitation of the same theme. Indeed, in its Roman reception the main reason for mentioning Ares' and Aphrodite's relationship was to celebrate the powerful love of this 'vielverehrtes Götterpaar' (LIMC 2.1, s.v. 'Ares/Mars' at 556), while no reference was made to Aphrodite's betrayal, as she was considered Ares' original spouse.

⁴⁰ Hom. *Od.* 8,339-342.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*, 8,329.

⁴² Ath. 1,14c-d.

⁴³ See X.Eph. 1,9,9: 'for the first time they enjoyed the first fruits of Aphrodite' (the translation of the last part of the sentence is from Anderson 1989, who, unlike Henderson 2009, correctly keeps the variant ἔργων introduced by Peerlkamp). I am grateful to the anonymous referees of *Ancient Narrative* for suggesting this point.

⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, 1,9,1: 'The same passion overtook them both: they could no longer speak or meet each others' eyes but lay relaxed in pleasure, shy, fearful [...]'. This achievement is not immediate, as the protagonists undergo a path in which they overcome their initial shame (see 1,9,1) and express their mutual desire through their tears before having sex (see 1,9,3).

spondence is deliberate, as the canopy's representations support Habrocomes' and Anthia's characterisation as physical lovers.

To begin with, the many Cupids represented in the first section anticipate the protagonists' erotic gestures:

- 'Cupids at play (παίζοντες Ἔρωτες)' are proleptic of the final battle played by the protagonists during the sexual union: 'all night long they compete (ἐφιλονείκουν) with each other';⁴⁵
- Cupids 'attending Aphrodite (Ἀφροδίτην θεραπεύοντες)' anticipate the submission of Anthia's eyes to Habrocomes: 'I join to you my own eyes, the servants of Habrocomes (τοὺς ὀφθαλμοὺς τοὺς ἔμοὺς τοὺς Ἀβροκόμου διακόνους)';⁴⁶
- Cupids 'riding mounted on sparrows' point out the existence of these birds, which in the Greek world were symbols of aphrodisiac.⁴⁷ With a creative touch, they enhance the emphasis placed on erotic consummation;
- Cupids 'plaiting garlands (στεφάνους)'. Garlands will be used by the protagonists as a symbol of their mutual love: 'let's drench our garlands (τοὺς στεφάνους) with each other's tears so that they too can share in our love';⁴⁸
- Cupids 'bearing flowers (οἱ δὲ ἄνθη φέροντες)'. This pun on Anthia's name subtly anticipates her entrance into Habrocomes' room.⁴⁹

In addition, a very close parallel is established between the protagonists and Ares and Aphrodite. Anthia's entrance into Habrocomes' room is described both before and after that of Ares to Aphrodite's bed.⁵⁰ Then, the goddess of love is evoked during the protagonists' sex, as this act is defined as 'the first fruits of Aphrodite (τὰ πρῶτα τῶν Ἀφροδίτης ἔργων)'.⁵¹ Finally, the conclusion of the *ekphrasis* is unexpected and hasty, because it does not include Aphrodite's consummation with Ares. Since Xenophon begins the following chapter by describing the protagonists' love, he might here be implying that

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 1,9,9.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.* 1,9,8.

⁴⁷ See Ath. 9,46, who ascribes this interpretation to Terpsicles, but this value seems to be already attested in the Classical Era, as Aristophanes' *Lysistrata* proves: cf. 723 with *Schol. ad versum*. On the στρουθός as Aphrodite's bird, see Pollard 1977, 29 and 147.

⁴⁸ X.Eph. 1,9,4. On this element, see Schissel von Fleschenberg 1909, 46: 'Die rolle der Kränze im Liebesspiel setzt I 8 voraus'.

⁴⁹ On this pun, see Cueva 2004, 42, who defines it as a 'figura etymologica'.

⁵⁰ Cf. X.Eph. 1,8,1: 'they escorted the girl (ἦγον τὴν κόρη) to the bridal chamber' and 1,8,3: 'under the canopy itself they brought Anthia to Habrocomes (κατέκλιναν τὴν Ἀνθίαν ἀγαγόντες)'.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 1,9,9.

this new episode must be read not only as a parallel scene, but also as the imaginative last part of the canopy's composition. In conclusion, Demodocus' story is used by the narrator to characterise Habrocomes' and Anthia's first experience of love, and since the protagonists are the only characters in the novel who see the canopy, their similarity to Ares and Aphrodite appears the result of their deliberate imitation. Furthermore, since in the Homeric poem the rhapsode's performance recalls Homer's activity,⁵² with the comparison between his protagonists and the divine lovers Xenophon even claims identification with the epic poet, which confirms the deliberateness of this exploitation of the *Odyssey*.

On the second night the protagonists' approach to love changes, as their meeting consists not of a sharing of sexual desire, but of a moral trial focused on preservation of chastity.⁵³ In this episode, their mutual commitment assumes an importance which was alien to them on the wedding night, where the only explicit mention of this virtue was made by Habrocomes at the end of his speech: 'you have your lover as your husband: may it be yours to live and die with him as a chaste wife'.⁵⁴

This new emphasis on fidelity has an intertextual foundation, since in this episode also Xenophon relies on the *Odyssey*: specifically the motifs of reunion and of nocturnal description of misadventures recall the last night of the poem, in which Penelope and Odysseus re-establish their union and tell one another what happened during their long separation.⁵⁵ Furthermore, the moment in which Anthia and Habrocomes go to bed is Homeric too, as in both texts all the other characters are sleeping.⁵⁶ Finally, Anthia's speech is reminiscent of both Odysseus and Penelope. The identification with the former is provided by her Homeric sentence 'I have found you again after wandering over many a land and sea (πολλήν γῆν πλανηθεῖσα καὶ θάλασσαν)',⁵⁷ and is confirmed by her formula 'since I have used every stratagem of virtue

⁵² See de Jong 2002, 191: 'The prominent role given to singers in the *Odyssey* [...] reflects the narrator's increased self-consciousness. He is a professional singer and through Demodocus and Phemius he can indirectly "promote" – perhaps even idealize – his own profession.'

⁵³ See *ibid.* 5,15,1: 'they defended themselves (ἀλλήλοισ ἀπελογοῦντο) all night long and easily convinced each other'.

⁵⁴ X.Eph. 1,9,2.

⁵⁵ Cf. X.Eph. 5,14 – 5,15,1 and Hom. *Od.* 23,241-365. On this connection, see Ruiz Montero 2003, 347, who includes in this parallel the previous series of recognitions made by Leucon and Rhode.

⁵⁶ Cf. X.Eph. 5,14,1 and Hom. *Od.* 23,297-299.

⁵⁷ X.Eph. 5,14,1. On this sentence as an '*Odyssey* parallel', see Hunter 1996, 191.

(πᾶσαν σωφροσύνης μηχανὴν πεποιημένη),⁵⁸ which seems to recall Odysseus' epithet πολυμήχανος.⁵⁹ In addition, since Anthia here summarises her entire journey, and in the analogous epic scene Odysseus' speech is a 'mirror-story'⁶⁰ of the *Odyssey*, Xenophon here claims a subtle identification between his novel and the Homeric poem, which gives final confirmation of his intertextual engagement.

Anthia's stratagems, however, do not relate to glory or adventures, but to preservation of *sōphrosynē*. This term designates the virtue which, from the sixth century BC onwards, has been linked by Greeks with 'a general idea of restraint or even abstinence',⁶¹ including chastity. Then, the Greek novel, following an attitude proper of the Imperial Era,⁶² accommodated it in a marital context.⁶³ Since in the *Odyssey* Penelope is famous for the stratagem of the loom,⁶⁴ which she deploys to maintain her fidelity to Odysseus, Anthia is also identified with her.⁶⁵

As the readers are clearly invited by the structure of the plot to compare this night with the Ephesian one, two erotic episodes of the *Odyssey* are used by Xenophon to present the protagonists' progression from a merely physical to a spiritual understanding of love, which is centred on fidelity. In addition, the existence of a change in Anthia is supported by her parallel with Odysseus, since the Homeric hero 'learns and develops through suffering'.⁶⁶

Finally, the second night of the *Ephesiaca* also evokes Chariton's recognition scene, in which Chaereas and Callirhoe similarly do not sleep but recount their stories to each other.⁶⁷ In this passage, the Odyssean debt is ex-

⁵⁸ X.Eph. 5,14,2.

⁵⁹ Cf. Hom. *Od.* 1,205; 5,203; 10,401, 456, 488, 504; 11,60, 92, 405, 473, 617; 13,375; 14,486; 16,167; 22,164; 24,192, 542.

⁶⁰ De Jong 2002, 563.

⁶¹ North 1966, 21. See, e.g., the Platonic reflection on this virtue in Pl. *Phdr.* 237e and *Symp.* 196c.

⁶² See Foucault 1984, esp. 228.

⁶³ For the combination of chastity with the idealization of marriage in Greek novels, cf. Chew 2000 and Burrus 2005.

⁶⁴ See its description made by the suitor Antinous in Hom. *Od.* 2,96-102.

⁶⁵ On the special emphasis placed on Anthia in this scene and in the *Ephesiaca* as a whole, see Tagliabue 2011.

⁶⁶ Rutherford 1986, 147. Here I follow Hunter 1996, 191's comment on this passage of the *Ephesiaca*: 'we should here not forget the "allegorical" and ethical use to which the figure of the suffering and the learning Odysseus was put in antiquity'. Thus, he adds: 'I myself doubt that ancient readers would consider Anthia [...] emotionally unaltered by her experiences'.

⁶⁷ Char. 8,1,14-17.

PLICITLY declared by Chariton, as he quotes the Homeric verse in which Odysseus' and Penelope's sexual union is described:⁶⁸

ἀσπάσιοι λέκτροιο παλαιοῦ θεσμὸν ἴκοντο
'they gladly came to the ancient rite of the bed'.⁶⁹

The relative chronology between *Callirhoe* and the *Ephesiaca* is currently debated due to a lack of evidence.⁷⁰ If we accept the hypothesis that Chariton wrote his novel before Xenophon, it is likely that the latter drew his reunion scene not just from the *Odyssey* but also from the former's text.⁷¹

In my opinion, this combination of models would make the Homeric intertextuality subtler. In the *Ephesiaca*'s night, Xenophon does not mention the protagonists' erotic consummation and it is difficult to understand whether this omission, which contrasts with the *Odyssey*, is meaningful. If our author read *Callirhoe*'s analogous episode and its Homeric quotation, his silence about sex would become a deliberate variation from Chariton and from the *Odyssey*. In this unexpected way Xenophon would confirm that the focus of his second night is not, as in the scene of the first night, on erotic consummation but on fidelity.⁷²

⁶⁸ *Ibid.*, 8,1,17.

⁶⁹ Hom. *Od.* 23,296.

⁷⁰ Very recently, Tilg has argued that *Callirhoe* was the first to be written, while Whitmarsh has taken issue with him. Cf. Tilg 2010, 85-92, following Bowie 2002, 47-63, and Whitmarsh 2011, 264, following O'Sullivan 1995.

⁷¹ In theory, one might argue that Xenophon is imitating only Chariton's novel. However, since the protagonists' final night in the *Ephesiaca* follows a series of references to the *Odyssey*, this possibility is unlikely.

⁷² The existence of this change is also supported by two other examples from the final book of the *Ephesiaca*: at a late stage of their lives, both Aegialeus, Habrocomes' host, and Polyidus, a soldier 'lusty in action' (5,3,1), move from an exclusively sexual love to a new one, in which they talk with their beloved and contemplate her sight. Aegialeus states: 'and so [...] this way I can always talk to her as if she were alive (ὡς ζώσῃ λαλῶ), and [...] the sight of her comforts me (αὐτή με παραμυθεῖται βλεπομένη)' (5,1,11), while Polyidus, after attempting to rape Anthia (see 5,4,5), 'in his affection considered it enough simply to look at her (βλέπειν) and talk with her (λαλεῖν αὐτῇ)' (5,4,7). The sharing of words between the two passages makes it likely that these characters are used by Xenophon to anticipate the protagonists' new kind of love.

2 *The protagonists' clash with the rivals: a performance of fidelity*

After the demonstration of a progression between the two nights, I shall argue that Xenophon extends this pattern to the entire novel through the protagonists' actions and speeches.

After the departure from Ephesus, Habrocomes and Anthia, warned by the third verse of Apollo's oracle – 'terrible their sufferings I can foresee and toils neverending' – ⁷³ are afraid to experience troubles and this expectation becomes reality, as they soon meet enemies who cause their separation and pose a threat to their love.

This long narrative sequence is characterised by a key feature: the more rivals Habrocomes and Anthia encounter ⁷⁴ the greater their mutual devotion becomes. Thus, the clash between the protagonists and their enemies introduces fidelity as the former's new concern and deepens their understanding of love.

Immediately after the wedding night, both Habrocomes and Anthia focus on fidelity in a shared oath, ⁷⁵ and as the former in the wedding night, they express their wish to maintain it by asking one another: 'Will we be allowed to spend our lives together (συγκαταβιῶναι)?'. ⁷⁶ This event and the words pronounced here are recalled later in the novel ⁷⁷ and this intratextual "game" culminates in the final night in Ephesus, where Anthia mentions the 'vows (τῶν ὄρκων)', ⁷⁸ and her "motto" 'I am still chaste (ἀγνή μένω σοι)' ⁷⁹ ideally answers Habrocomes' invitation in the oath: 'you will stay chaste for me

⁷³ *Ibid.*, 1,6,2.

⁷⁴ For a summary of the rivals and their attacks on the protagonists, see Schissel von Fleschenberg 1909, 56-57.

⁷⁵ This element is convincingly stressed by Schissel von Fleschenberg 1909, 48, who adds that the oath constitutes a new step of the protagonists' awareness because it shows their acceptance of the negative side of the oracle.

⁷⁶ X.Eph. 1,11,4.

⁷⁷ Habrocomes and Anthia mention the event of the oath six times (the former in X.Eph. 3,12,4 and the latter in 2,1,5, 3,5,7, 3,6,5, 5,8,9 and 5,14,3), while intratextuality accounts for three of its expressions. The first is the protagonists' quoted question: cf. 1.11,4 and 5,8,4. The second belongs to Habrocomes' individual speech: 'Anthia, [...] let's take an oath [...], that you will stay chaste for me (ἐμοὶ μενεῖς ἀγνή)' (1,11,4-5). For the other occurrences of this formula, cf. 4,3,3 and 5,14,2. The third expression belongs to Anthia's response: 'So I swear to you [...] that should I be separated from you [...], I will not continue to live or look upon the sun (οὔτε ζήσομαι οὔτε τὸν ἥλιον ὄψομαι)' (1,11,5). For its other occurrences, cf. 2,1,6 and 3,8,2 (with a little variation in the verb).

⁷⁸ See *ibid.*, 5,14,3: 'Has no one made you forget your vows, and me?'

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, 5,14,2.

(ἔμοι μιν εἰς ἀγνήν)'.⁸⁰ The discovery of this proleptic construction proves that fidelity is progressively associated with the protagonists in the text.

The first step of this development is the pirate episode. There Habrocomes, after his recognition of Eros' revenge, defines Corymbus' love for him as τὴν αἰσχρὰν ἐπιθυμίαν, 'the sordid lust', and refuses it because of his *sōphrosynē*.⁸¹ As the first formula is always used by Greek authors to denote a failure in the control of instinctive desires,⁸² Habrocomes expresses a strong condemnation of Corymbus' passion, which by contrast highlights his fidelity. The emergence of this simple pattern, according to which the rivals remind the protagonists of their mutual commitment, proves that the former stimulate the latter's *Bildung*.

Confirmation of this comes from Habrocomes' subsequent question: 'and what sort of life lies ahead for me, once I become a whore (πόρνῃ) instead of a man (ἀντὶ ἀνδρὸς) [...]?'⁸³ The interpretative key to this passage lies in the opposition between ἀνὴρ and πορνή. Since πορνή in Greek society indicated a temporary and immoral type of prostitute,⁸⁴ in which 'the mental image of a δουλή was evoked',⁸⁵ Habrocomes is interpreting his eventual acceptance of Corymbus' love as a kind of slavery. In addition, the adoption of the feminine gender further emphasises his feared submission, since passivity in love is proper to women.⁸⁶ Conversely, the self-definition of ἀνὴρ, the Greek term for husband, strengthens his commitment to Anthia.

The existence of this *Bildung* is confirmed throughout the rest of the protagonists' journey. Here the paradigm established in the Corymbus episode is expanded with repetitions and variations and the rise in the rivals' violence is matched by the increase of Habrocomes' and Anthia's ability to defend their mutual fidelity.⁸⁷

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, 1,11,4.

⁸¹ This is the entire passage: 'Is it for this that until now I have kept myself chaste (σώφρων), only to submit to the sordid lust of an amorous pirate?' (*ibid.*, 2,1,3).

⁸² See e.g. Xen. Ath. *Ap. Socr.* 30 and Epict. *Diss.* 2,1,10.

⁸³ X.Eph. 2,1,3.

⁸⁴ See Dover 1978, 20: 'πορνή [...] was the normal Greek word for a "prostitute"' and differs from the ἐτάιρα, 'who was maintained by a man [...] for the purpose of a sexual relationship without formal process of marriage'.

⁸⁵ Faraone and McClure 2006, 103.

⁸⁶ Confirmation of this comes from Achilles Tatius' novel: when Clitophon is defined as a 'young hustler (πορνός)' by Thersander's lawyer, he is also accused of becoming a woman in order to love men: 'this was her great misfortune, that her lover was the sort who imitates a man with women but becomes a woman with men' (Ach. Tat. 8,10,9).

⁸⁷ On this value, see also Laplace 1994, 448: 'Les malheurs qui, bientôt, se succèdent, sont autant d'occasions pour eux de se souvenir de leurs serments, de prouver et d'exprimer

The rivals' crescendo is easy to highlight.⁸⁸ The first enemies, namely the pirates and Manto, tell the protagonists about their love for them through the help of human and written intermediaries,⁸⁹ while the later ones, starting from Perilaus, adopt a direct approach to them and Psammis, Anchialus and Polyidus even attempt to rape Anthia.⁹⁰ This increase of lustfulness reaches its peak in the brothel, where there are many potential suitors – not just one – who are willing to pay for sex.⁹¹ Finally, this progression also concerns the construction of individual scenes: for instance, both the Manto and Cyno episodes combine Habrocomes' erotic rejection with a female revenge which accords with the "Potiphar-motif".⁹² Despite this parallel, however, lasciviousness characterises Cyno from her first presentation,⁹³ while Manto's behaviour degenerates only in the second part.⁹⁴ This variation fits into the increase of the rivals' danger.

This trajectory affects the protagonists' behaviour; in their responses to these perils their personalities progressively develop.⁹⁵ This pattern first describes Habrocomes who, after his intimate cry in front of Euxinus, refuses Manto's love with a short but very clear letter and Cyno's by leaving her house.⁹⁶ In the second part of the novel, this change relates to Anthia, who becomes able to defend herself from different kinds of enemies through a wide range of stratagems.⁹⁷

[...] leur désir de partager le même sort et d'être éternellement unis, dans la vie ou la mort'.

⁸⁸ Here I take issue with Konstan 1994, 45: 'the attempts upon the virtue of Habrocomes and Anthia are almost tediously repetitious'.

⁸⁹ Corymbus and Euxinus try to persuade the other's beloved (see X.Eph. 1,15,6), while Manto confesses her love for Habrocomes to Rhode (see 1,2,3), before sending him a letter (see 2,5,1-2).

⁹⁰ Cf. *ibid.*, 3,11,4, 4,5,5 and 5,4,5.

⁹¹ See *ibid.*, 5,7,3: 'When she got there [...], a crowd of men streamed over [...] and many of them ready to lay out money for what they wanted'.

⁹² On the presence of this motif in Manto's episode, see Ruiz Montero 1994, 1102, n. 77.

⁹³ See X.Eph. 3,12,3: 'Araxus had a wife foul to behold, much worse to listen to, insatiable beyond all bounds, named Cyno'.

⁹⁴ This happens after Habrocomes' rejection of her love. See *ibid.* 2,5,5: 'When she received this reply Manto flew into an uncontrollable rage'.

⁹⁵ On this point, I disagree with Cheyns 2005, 275, who argues that Habrocomes and Anthia 'sont façonnés une fois pour toutes, et uniquement en fonction du modèle qu'ils doivent représenter'.

⁹⁶ Cf. X.Eph. 1,16,6, 2,5,4 and 3,12,5.

⁹⁷ Cf. especially the false tale about her dedication to Isis (*ibid.* 3,11,4-5) and the fiction of the holy disease and the ghost story in the brothel episode (5,7,4-8).

Within this framework, it is significant that in each of these battles both protagonists relate their action to *sōphrosynē*.⁹⁸ While Habrocomes mentions this virtue after his meetings with both Manto and Cyno,⁹⁹ with Anthia there is a change in focalisation: in the first two occurrences the Ephesians and then Habrocomes call her ‘chaste’¹⁰⁰ but from the Perilaus’ episode onwards she begins to define herself as σώφρων.¹⁰¹ This shift becomes even clearer in her two prayers to Isis,¹⁰² in which she places this virtue under divine protection, and culminates in her Homeric formula pronounced in Rhodes – πᾶσαν σωφροσύνης μηχανὴν πεποιτημένη¹⁰³ – which represents the true synthesis of her life. Overall, this emergence of fidelity in the protagonists’ speeches confirms that their journey constitutes a *Bildung* for them.

In addition, Xenophon highlights this pattern through his progressive focus on *andreia*, whose value in the novelistic context has been specified in our introduction. In the first two references to this virtue Habrocomes fails to be *andreios*. In his first monologue the protagonist exclaims: ‘Until now Habrocomes was manly (ἀνδρικὸς), contemptuous of Eros, [...] and now I’m caught. [...] Wait: what an utterly worthless coward (ἄνανδρος) I am!’¹⁰⁴ Later, on the wedding night Habrocomes is accused by Anthia of being ἄνανδρος, ‘wanting in manhood’,¹⁰⁵ because he does not take erotic initiative. Conversely, during the journey the brigand Hippothous unexpectedly calls him ἀνδρικόν¹⁰⁶ and this well matches Habrocomes’ increase of courage in his reactions to his enemies. Similarly, from the third book onwards Anthia becomes paragon of *andreia*. When in Tarsus she states: ‘I am no such coward (ἄνανδρος) or so worthless (δειλή) in adversity’,¹⁰⁷ her *andreia* consists of her moral defence of fidelity from Perilaus’ attack. Later, Anthia

⁹⁸ See Schmeling 1980, 116: ‘this theme is present whenever either protagonist is on the stage’.

⁹⁹ Cf. X.Eph. 2,10,3 and 3,12,4.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. *ibid.* 1,2,6 and 1,9,3.

¹⁰¹ See *ibid.* 3,5,6: ‘Then she told Eudoxus [...] about her vows of chastity’.

¹⁰² Cf. *ibid.* 4,3,4 and 5,4,6.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, 5,14,2. The translation is: ‘Since I have used every stratagem of virtue’. Before this occurrence, two mentions of *sōphrosynē* concern the brothel episode and a third one follows Anthia’s nightmare: cf. 5,5,5, 5,5,6 and 5,7,2.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.* 1,4,1 and 1,4,2.

¹⁰⁵ *LSJ*, s.v. ἄνανδρος and δεῖλος.

¹⁰⁶ See X.Eph. 2.14.2: ‘I can see you, young man, [...] that you are handsome to look at and manly to boot (ἄλλως ἀνδρικόν)’.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 3,6,3.

displays *andreia* by murdering Anchialus¹⁰⁸ and through her successful performance in the brothel.¹⁰⁹

As a result, also the progressive introduction of this virtue in the text confirms that the protagonists' development extends from the erotic nights to the entire novel.

3 *The protagonists' foundation of a new society in love*

As Whitmarsh clearly argues, the *Ephesiaca* 'is built around a mythical structure of centre and periphery'.¹¹⁰ As soon as Habrocomes and Anthia leave Ephesus, their homeland, the places visited by them change and 'signify primarily in terms of otherness, as not-home'.¹¹¹ More specifically, the protagonists encounter their enemies not in Greek cities, but in 'semi-urbanised villages' and 'wilder spaces [...] such as woods and caves',¹¹² where pirates and bandits live.

At the end of the journey, however, the protagonists return to Ephesus and in their sacrifices to Artemis Whitmarsh identifies a 'powerfully symbolic, redemptory celebration of the Greek *polis* as the [...] centre of the world',¹¹³ to which both Habrocomes and Anthia are reintegrated as mature citizens.¹¹⁴ Thus, geography has a symbolic value in the *Ephesiaca* and bears a special relation to love, since the protagonists' marriage and reunion are set

¹⁰⁸ See *ibid.*, 4,5,5.

¹⁰⁹ See *ibid.*, 5,7,4-9. Immediately after, the heroine reacts to her dream of Habrocomes' betrayal by saying: 'I find resources of virtue (τέχνας σωφοσύνης) beyond a woman's means (ὕπερ γυναικάς)' (5,8,7). This last phrase subtly alludes to her acquisition of *andreia*. As a result of this description, I take issue with Lalanne 2006, 135: 'malgré ce souci constant de la part du romancier de perdre le lecteur dans le dédale des aventures rocambolesques destinées à éprouver la valeur d'Anthia, il ne semble pas que l'héroïne connaisse une réelle évolution'.

¹¹⁰ Whitmarsh 2011, 42.

¹¹¹ *Ibid.*, 46.

¹¹² *Ibid.* For a description of the countryside typical of the genre, see Saïd 1999.

¹¹³ Whitmarsh 2011, 42.

¹¹⁴ The change in the protagonists' age between the first and the last Ephesus is undisputable. As Lalanne 2006, esp. 82-84, notes, Habrocomes and Anthia are introduced in the novel as sixteen and fourteen years old (cf. X.Eph. 1,2,2 and 1,2,5) and their tender age means lack of independence, since they both live under their parents' control (see *ibid.*, 1,4,7, where Anthia explicitly admits this). Later, in the fifth book Xenophon mentions the death of the protagonists' parents, which is due to their 'old age and despair' (cf. *ibid.*, 5,6,3 and 5,15,3). This event suggests that time has passed during the protagonists' journey and makes Habrocomes and Anthia adults just before their return to Ephesus.

in Ephesus while the rivals' attacks happen abroad. Overall, the existence of this framework suggests that Xenophon's depiction of the world is circular, as is typical in the Greek novels,¹¹⁵ and this pattern might undermine the protagonists' progression in love.

In my opinion, however, this possibility is not real, because Habrocomes' and Anthia's journey culminates in the establishment of a different society in Ephesus, which is described by Xenophon in the last chapter of the novel.¹¹⁶ Its foundation is erotic: once arrived in their homeland, the Ephesian population disappears from the scene and the protagonists are joined only by the faithful lovers Leucon and Rhode, and Hippothous and Cleisthenes. This event demonstrates that in the *Ephesiaca* the description of the world mirrors the protagonists' progression to a new erotic ideal.

The core of this demonstration is the variation in the portrait of Ephesus: when the protagonists return home, they see a city which is different from the one of the first book. At the beginning of the novel Ephesus has its centre in Artemis' temple,¹¹⁷ and its inhabitants are portrayed as pious people.¹¹⁸ They attend the initial procession, make sacrifices to the goddess¹¹⁹ and participate in the protagonists' wedding¹²⁰ and subsequent departure.¹²¹ As a result, Ephesus is depicted as a wealthy Greek *polis* where the entire community supports marriage.¹²² A similar portrait also characterises the Rhodes of the first book, where Habrocomes and Anthia stop at the beginning of their journey. Although its description is briefer, at the protagonists' arrival

¹¹⁵ On this pattern, see Fusillo 1997, 214: 'The most typical feature of novelistic closure is circularity [...]. With the exception of Heliodorus, all the erotic novels end by re-establishing the initial situation'.

¹¹⁶ See X.Eph. 5,15.

¹¹⁷ Its importance is stressed by Xenophon with five occurrences: cf. 1,2,2, 1,2,7, 1,3,1, 1,5,3 and 5,15,2.

¹¹⁸ On the 'religiöse Nuancierung' which characterises the presentation of Ephesians and of other populations in the *Ephesiaca*, see Ruiz Montero 1994, 1126.

¹¹⁹ Cf. X.Eph. 1,3,1, 1,8,1 and 1,10,5.

¹²⁰ Cf. *ibid.* 1,7,3 and 1,8,1.

¹²¹ See *ibid.* 1,10, 5.

¹²² This is further stressed by the purpose of Artemis' ceremony: 'for it was customary at this assemblage to find husbands for the girls and wives for the ephebes' (*ibid.* 1,2,3). The importance of this city in the *Ephesiaca* is further stressed by Whitmarsh 2011, who believes, against Gärtner 1967, 2058-9, Griffiths 1978, 426 and Ruiz Montero 1994, 1090, that in its portrait there might be epichoric features. See esp. 30: 'Xenophon's Hellenised version of Artemis may well reflect not the author's ignorance of genuine Ephesian cult, but precisely the opposite: a tendency among contemporary Ephesians to downplay non-Greek elements'.

‘all the Rhodians gathered round’¹²³ and ‘offered many a sacrifice [...]’¹²⁴ to Habrocomes and Anthia; also in this city there is an inseparable bond between civic community and the protagonists’ love.¹²⁵

Unexpectedly, when in the last chapters of the novel the action leaves the ‘periphery’¹²⁶ and is again set in Rhodes and Ephesus, the same link is not retained. When Habrocomes and Anthia return to their homeland, although ‘the whole city has already heard the news of their salvation’,¹²⁷ the Ephesians do not engage in public sacrifices as at the beginning of the novel. Only Habrocomes and Anthia perform them, since they pay a private visit to Artemis before building graves for their parents – an action which concerns their interest alone.¹²⁸ Xenophon is here making the protagonists the only active members of Ephesus, and this suggests that their mature love is giving foundation to a new society.

Confirmation of this is given by the inclusion in this society of the ex-servants Leucon and Rhode and of Hippothous and Cleisthenes.¹²⁹ While the former share marital love with the protagonists, the second, being a homoerotic couple,¹³⁰ share only fidelity and this highlights that in Xenophon’s mind this virtue is even more important than marriage. Since Leucon and Rhode were originally servants and Hippothous a foreign brigand,¹³¹ their

¹²³ X.Eph. 1,12,1.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.* 1,12,2.

¹²⁵ On this feature as typical of the genre, see Perkins 1995, 52: ‘The romance with its emphasis on love, brought to fulfilment through the city’s or the fathers’ actions, should be read as celebrating the saving efficacy of the social order rather than as celebrating the power of individual desire’.

¹²⁶ Whitmarsh 2011, 42.

¹²⁷ X.Eph. 5,12,2.

¹²⁸ See *ibid.*, 5,15,2-3.

¹²⁹ See *ibid.*, 5,15,4.

¹³⁰ One might argue that the nature of Hippothous’ relationship with Cleisthenes is unclear, since the former is older than the younger and in Greece pederasty could not last a lifetime, as an age limit was imposed on the beloved (see Cantarella 2002², 39: ‘As a rule, the age for being loved was very short. Seventeen [...] was the furthest limit’). However, as the formula *παῖδα ποιησάμενος* (X.Eph. 5,15,4) suggests, the brigand might have transformed his homosexual love into adoption, since in Greek literature this expression is commonly used to designate this social institution (cf. e.g. Hom. *Il.* 9,494-495, Hdt. 6,57,5 and Dem. 4, 6, 31, 29 and 33). In this interpretation, I follow Konstan 1994, 39, who defines Hippothous’ relationship with Cleisthenes as ‘an enduring domestic association, comparable to marriage’ and Watanabe 2003, 36, who uses the term ‘co-habitation’.

¹³¹ See his presentation in the second book: ‘My family [...] is among the most powerful in Perinthus, a city near Thrace’. For the sake of length, I cannot properly discuss in this paper the role played by Hippothous in the *Bildungsroman*. On this complex figure, cf. Alvares 1995 and Watanabe 2003.

association with the protagonists proves that faithful love is the only foundation of this society, as status and provenance, which were important in the first *Ephesus*, no longer count. As a result, Xenophon is not accommodating the generic circularity, but giving a new social role to Habrocomes' and Anthia's relationship and this clearly confirms their *Bildung*.

Lastly, the introduction of a new *Ephesus* is anticipated by the portrait of Rhodes in the fifth book, where Xenophon seems to deconstruct his initial model of Greek city. At first glance, this Rhodes recalls the *Ephesus* and Rhodes of the first book, since Xenophon immediately mentions a holy place, Helios' temple, which is visited by many characters.¹³² However, as soon as Habrocomes arrives there, he does not come into contact with the Rhodian population but meets Leucon and Rhode who 'set up a monument inscribed with golden letters [...] in honour of Habrocomes and Anthia'¹³³ in the god's temple. This framework suggests that the foreign ex-servants are carrying out the function attributed in the first book to all the *Ephesians* and *Rhodians*. Later, Xenophon mentions 'a magnificent public festival for Helios [...] put on by all the *Rhodians*, with a procession and sacrifice, and a throng of citizens celebrating'.¹³⁴ Although this echo reminds the readers of the civic ceremonies of the first book and of the support given by the Greek *poleis* to the protagonists' love, this memory is immediately wiped out, as we read: 'Leucon and Rhode were on hand, not so much as participants in the festival as investigators after some news of Anthia'.¹³⁵ Again the ex-servants appear on the scene and divert our attention away from the population. Finally, when Anthia arrives at Rhodes, she visits and prays to Helios about her erotic suffering,¹³⁶ but she does not participate in the public ceremony and this lack of involvement is significant, given her key role in the *Ephesian* procession.¹³⁷

As a result, this framework suggests that Xenophon is using the Rhodes of the fifth book to recall and transform his first image of "civic" society. This is a subtle operation, since in the final paragraphs the *Rhodians* return to interact with the protagonists by helping Habrocomes to find Anthia¹³⁸

¹³² See X.Eph. 5,11,2.

¹³³ *Ibid.*, 5,10, 6.

¹³⁴ *Ibid.*, 5,11,3.

¹³⁵ *Ibid.*.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*

¹³⁷ See *ibid.* 1,2,5: 'Heading the line of girls was Anthia [...]'.
¹³⁸ *Ibid.* 5,13,2.

and celebrating their reunion, but at this point an attentive reader has certainly observed the existence of a variation.¹³⁹

Finally, further nuances of this “operation” must be noted. The choice of Rhodes instead of Ephesus for the protagonists’ reunion, rather than simply conforming to a chiasmic pattern,¹⁴⁰ might be seen as undermining the value of the latter city as homeland,¹⁴¹ which is stressed at the beginning of the novel. This shift of judgment accords with the protagonists’ two monologues before their arrival at Rhodes in which the memory of Ephesus no longer gives them comfort, as they miss their beloved.¹⁴² In addition, while in the first Ephesus both Habrocomes and Anthia are wealthy, the former arrives in Rhodes completely poor¹⁴³ and the latter as Hippothous’ slave.¹⁴⁴ Conversely, their ex-servants are very rich, since they have inherited the goods of their Lycian master.¹⁴⁵ This reversal of the initial hierarchy supports Xenophon’s deconstruction of his “civic” society and anticipates the protagonists’ foundation of a new society in the last Ephesus.

4 *Some possible objections*

The geography of the *Ephesiaca* acknowledges the existence of a progression of the protagonists’ erotic ideal; thus this novel truly appears to be a *Bildungsroman*.

¹³⁹ See *ibid.* 5,13,3-4.

¹⁴⁰ On this, see Whitmarsh 2011, 49: ‘another space that occupies a distinctive role in Xenophon’s symbolic geography is Rhodes, where the lovers stop off on both the outward and the return journeys, so that the itinerary becomes chiasmic’.

¹⁴¹ The setting of the protagonists’ reunion in a location which is different from the homeland is shared by the other novelists: a careful study of this issue has been conducted by David Konstan in the paper ‘*Eros and oikos*’, delivered at the *Colloquium on Greek and Roman novel* (Thessaloniki, 26 May 2011). I am really grateful to him for having allowed me to reading a first draft of this contribution.

¹⁴² Cf. X.Eph. 5,10,4 and 5,11,4. Conversely, in the second book Habrocomes exclaims: ‘Dearest father [...] and mother Themisto! Where is the happiness that we once thought was ours in Ephesus?’ (2,8,1). Similarly, in the Perilaus episode it is Anthia who is happy to refresh her memory of Ephesus through Eudoxus (see 3,4,3-4).

¹⁴³ See *ibid.*, 5,8,1: ‘lacking means (ἀπορίᾳ δὲ τῶν ἐπιτηδείων)’.

¹⁴⁴ See *ibid.*, 5,9,9: ‘Hippothous was quiet at first, after he had bought Anthia from the pimp [...]’.

¹⁴⁵ See *ibid.*, 5,6,3. For this reason, they offer the golden stele to Helios (see 5,10,6). I draw the striking opposition between the protagonists and their servants’ status from David Konstan’s paper delivered in Thessaloniki in May 2011.

Only three elements could still be raised in objection to this conclusion. Firstly, the disappearance of Eros after the beginning of the second book. Secondly, the only explicit reference to education in Aegialeus' story. Lastly, the existence of two elements in the text which apparently suggest identity rather than contrast between the two erotic nights: the motif of "life as a festival"¹⁴⁶ and the protagonists' reference in Rhodes to the permanence of their chastity. However, rather than disproving our reading of the text, these issues may strengthen it.

1) Eros' disappearance

Eros' presence might be subtly evoked not only in the description of the pirates, but also in the portrait of other rivals of the protagonists. First, as in Corymbus' case, both Manto's and Apsyrthus' revenge against the protagonists is described with the noun τιμωρία and the verb τιμωρέομαι¹⁴⁷ and Habrocomes' possible refusal is seen by Manto as an act of ὑπερηφανία.¹⁴⁸

Then, later in the novel τιμωρία and τιμωρέομαι are always related to the protagonists' most terrible punishments, namely Habrocomes' crucifixion,¹⁴⁹ Anthia's imprisonment in the ditch,¹⁵⁰ her enchainment by Rhenaea¹⁵¹ and her service in the brothel.¹⁵² Although in these passages, apart from the third one, the perpetrator of the revenge is not mentioned, an implicit reference to Eros' action might still be in play. Furthermore, as three of these occurrences belong to the protagonists' direct speeches, Habrocomes and Anthia could themselves be aware of the god's actions. This suggests that Eros is responsible for the whole of the protagonists' *Bildung*.

2) The unique reference to education in the Aegialeus episode

A similar positive reassessment can be extended to the Aegialeus episode. Its unique reference to erotic education is not meaningless but very profound,

¹⁴⁶ Cf. X.Eph. 1,10,2 and 5,15,3.

¹⁴⁷ Cf. *ibid.*, 2,5,5 and 2,9,2 in relation to Manto and 2,5,7, 2,6,1 and 2,10,1 in relation to Apsyrthus.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 2,5,2: 'think [...] what will happen to those who abetted your own arrogance (τῆς σῆς ὑπερηφανίας)' and 2,5,5: 'she set about considering how she would take revenge on the one who was scolding her (τιμωρήσαιο τὸν ὑπερηφανοῦντα)'.

¹⁴⁹ Cf. *ibid.*, 4,2,4 and 4,2,7.

¹⁵⁰ See *ibid.*, 4,6,6.

¹⁵¹ See *ibid.*, 5,5,1.

¹⁵² See *ibid.*, 5,5,6.

since Xenophon uses this passage to anticipate the protagonists' final erotic ideal. This is suggested by the description of Aegialeus' and Thelxinoe's affair.¹⁵³ While their falling in love establishes a clear parallel with that of the protagonists,¹⁵⁴ the opposition of Thelxinoe's family to her love for Aegialeus marks a first difference,¹⁵⁵ as well as their forced separation from their homeland.¹⁵⁶ Then, the story has a special conclusion: in Syracuse the old couple live a poor but happy life and their love outlasts death, since Aegialeus tells Habrocomes: 'Thelxinoe died here not long ago and her body is not buried: I keep her with me and am always kissing her and being with her'.¹⁵⁷

If we combine all these features, I would conclude that through this love story Xenophon is showing Habrocomes what he will experience with his wife in Rhodes: the achievement of an eternal love which takes priority over society,¹⁵⁸ homeland, wealth and sex. The key proleptic role of this scene in the construction of the *Bildungsroman* justifies the emergence here of the only explicit reference to education.

3) The identity between the two nights of love: "the life as a feast" and the immutability of the protagonists' chastity

Finally, I shall discuss the possibility that there might be identity and not contrast between the protagonists' two erotic nights. After Habrocomes and Anthia arrived in Ephesus and performed their duties, they 'went on to spend their life together (τὸν μετ' ἀλλήλων βίον) that they celebrated like a festival (ἐορτὴν ἄγοντες)'.¹⁵⁹ This motif of life as a festival" is part of the intratextuality between the protagonists' two erotic nights, as at the end of the Ephesian event we read: 'for the protagonists the life was a festival (ἐορτὴ δὲ ἦν ἅπας ὁ βίος αὐτοῖς) and everything was full of enjoyment (μεστὰ εὐωχίας)'.¹⁶⁰ Xenophon might here be providing final confirmation of his *Bildungsroman*.

¹⁵³ For this reason, Morgan 2004, 491 defines this story as 'a didactic analogy', as well as Hippothous' one at the beginning of the third book (see X.Eph. 3,2).

¹⁵⁴ Cf. *ibid.*, 5,1,6 and 1,3,1.

¹⁵⁵ See *ibid.*, 5,1,7.

¹⁵⁶ See *ibid.*, 5,1,9.

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid.*, 5,1,9.

¹⁵⁸ On this, see Konstan 1994, 226: 'The tale of the Spartan Aegialeus [...] is emblematic of love's indifference to society'.

¹⁵⁹ X.Eph. 5,15,3. The translation of this passage and of the following one is personal.

¹⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, 1,10,2.

To begin with, as Laplace notes, there is a quantitative difference in the protagonists' first and second experience of life as a feast: 'l'histoire d'Habrocomes et d'Antheia représente le passage d'un jour de fête à une vie de fête'.¹⁶¹ In addition, there is a qualitative change, since the definition of the protagonists' life moves from ἅπας ὁ βίος to τὸν μετ' ἀλλήλων βίον. Since in the final Ephesus the protagonists share all their actions, this second expression rather than indicating a part of their life might point out the new nature of their entire βίος, which lies in their union.¹⁶² In other words, this change would constitute the "ontological" result of the protagonists' *Bildung* focused on fidelity. Finally, since in the Imperial Era the motif of "living life as a feast" was used by philosophers to describe the ideal life,¹⁶³ the first occurrence of the *Ephesiaca* appears awkward, as it contains the expression 'everything was full of enjoyment (μεστὰ εὐωχίας)'. As this second word literally refers to a normal banquet,¹⁶⁴ Xenophon seems to remove the motif from its elevated dimension and transform it into an image of luxury, whose immoral value is supported by the protagonists' subsequent forgetting of the oracle.¹⁶⁵

Conversely, the second occurrence of the motif fits well the philosophical interpretation, as it lacks any materialistic element and is accompanied by an almost complete silence on the protagonists' wealth on their return to Ephesus: although in Rhodes Leucon and Rhode 'have turned their possessions' over to Habrocomes',¹⁶⁶ the only reference to them lies in the description of the graves of the protagonists' parents as 'great (μεγάλους)'.¹⁶⁷ Thus, I would conclude that 'for the protagonists the life was a festival' stresses Habrocomes' and Anthia's achievement of an ideal love rather than the identity with their life immediately after the wedding.

This leads me to consider the last objection: in their final dialogue in Rhodes, both Anthia and Habrocomes underline that they have been chaste all their lives. The former says: 'I am still chaste (μένω ἀγνή)',¹⁶⁸ while the

¹⁶¹ Laplace 1994, 444.

¹⁶² With a similar observation Laplace 1994, 445 suggests that the protagonists achieve a more inner experience of feast here: 'Au cours de ce récit d'une éducation amoureuse, la notion de fête, qui est d'abord la désignation d'un événement extérieur éphémère, devient donc celle de l'expérience intérieure d'une vie de couple'.

¹⁶³ Cf. e.g., Arr. *Epict.* 3,5,10, 4,1,108-9 and 4,4,24; Philo *Spec. Leg.* 2,42 and Plut. *Mor.* 477C.

¹⁶⁴ See *LSJ*, s.v. εὐωχία: 'good cheer, feasting'.

¹⁶⁵ See X.Eph. 1,10,2: '[...] and even the oracle was already forgotten'.

¹⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, 5,10,12.

¹⁶⁷ *Ibid.* 5,15,3.

¹⁶⁸ *Ibid.* 5,14,2.

latter replies: ‘you have recovered Habrocomes just as pure (καθαρόν) as when you left him in prison in Tyre’.¹⁶⁹ Starting from these passages, one might argue that, despite the long journey, the protagonists do not change. The value of this statement, however, must be clearly defined: since both adjectives ἄγνός and καθαρός mean ‘pure’ from a physical point of view,¹⁷⁰ Anthia and Habrocomes here prove that they have never lost their virginity, but this does not imply that their understanding of love has not changed, as other parts of the same dialogue strongly suggest.

Conclusion

The *Ephesiaca*, with its evolution toward ὁ μετ’ ἀλλήλων βίος, is truly a *Bildungsroman*. This definition is very significant, as it shows a way in which Xenophon’s novel claims originality in its genre. First, as Morgan already discussed in 1996, the Greek novels are not usually presented as *Bildungsromane*, apart from Longus’ *Daphnis and Chloe*. In addition, if we consider altogether the key features of the *Ephesiaca* – Eros’ attack against Habrocomes, the exploitation of two Odyssean nights and the final detachment of love from civic society – it is striking that they do not appear in the other texts of the corpus. Since each of these elements places an emphasis on Eros, I would conclude that the status as *Bildungsroman* makes the *Ephesiaca* the Greek novel which has the most radical focus on love.

First, Xenophon’s construction of his text as Eros’ attack against the protagonist is unparalleled, since the other authors only randomly interplay with this motif. This is clear in *Callirhoe* where at the beginning of the novel Eros is presented as the god responsible for the protagonists’ love,¹⁷¹ but then his direct agency is focused on their rivals Dionysius¹⁷² and Mithridates.¹⁷³ Later, the god is related to Chaereas only at the beginning of the eighth book, where the narrator states that his male protagonist with his wanderings ‘has now made full amends to Love [...]’,¹⁷⁴ having expiated his initial act of jealousy against Callirhoe.¹⁷⁵ An inconsistent interplay with the

¹⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, 5,14,4.

¹⁷⁰ See *LSJ* s.v. ἄγνός 1, ‘pure’ with reference to places and things dedicated to gods and s.v. καθαρός 1, ‘physically clean’.

¹⁷¹ See Char. 1,1,4.

¹⁷² See *ibid.*, 2,4,5.

¹⁷³ Cf. *ibid.*, 6,3,2 and 6,4,5.

¹⁷⁴ See *ibid.*, 8,1,3.

¹⁷⁵ See *ibid.*, 1,4,12: ‘overcome by anger, he kicked at Callirhoe as she ran forward’.

same god appears in Achilles Tatius, where Clitophon introduces himself as someone who has been mistreated by Eros but does not explain what happened to him.¹⁷⁶ Later, the protagonist describes his temporary resistance to love as a battle with Eros.¹⁷⁷ The plot of the text, however, lacks further development of this motif and, conversely, Eros attacks Clitophon's rival Charmides¹⁷⁸ as well as Euthynikos, a character of an embedded story.¹⁷⁹ Finally, in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* the god's power on the protagonists' love is addressed just at the beginning of the fourth book¹⁸⁰ and later when Calasiris talks with Charicleia.¹⁸¹ As a result, the choice to construct the text on Eros makes Xenophon different from the other Greek novelists who, conversely, also explore other themes such as wars, politics and athletics.

Only in Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, the other *Bildungsroman*, Eros plays the same structural role as in the *Ephesiaca*, because he 'controls the plot, both directly and indirectly, through Pan and the Nymphs'.¹⁸² However, in this novel the god of love is not hostile to Daphnis and Chloe but a benign shepherd¹⁸³ and for the protagonists 'it makes no sense to fight against him'.¹⁸⁴ Thus, Longus shares with Xenophon an emphasis on love but not the focus on Eros the warrior and this makes the *Ephesiaca* unique in the novelistic corpus.

In addition, the originality of this text is highlighted by the contrast between the two Odyssean erotic nights. While the memory of the union of Penelope and Odysseus in Ithaca is a generic feature,¹⁸⁵ the exploitation of

¹⁷⁶ See Ach. Tat. 1,2,1: 'How well I know him [Eros] – for all the indignities he has made *me* suffer'.

¹⁷⁷ See *ibid.*, 2,5,2, when Eros' voice replies to Clitophon's heart: 'How can I escape you when I attack from the skies with arrows and fire?'.

¹⁷⁸ See *ibid.*, 4,7,3, where Charmides describes Eros as an 'enemy' who is 'besieging me with his bow'.

¹⁷⁹ See *ibid.*, 8,12,1-8 for the entire story and 8,12,6 for Eros' attack against Euthynikos.

¹⁸⁰ See Hld. 4,1,1: 'for the young couple another tournament was still at its height, one presided over and referred, it seems to me, by Love, who was determined to use these two contestants, in the only match he had arranged, to prove that his particular tournament is the greatest of all'.

¹⁸¹ See Hld. 4,10,5: 'Love is the greatest of the gods, and stories are told that on occasion he masters even gods'.

¹⁸² Morgan 1994, 74.

¹⁸³ Cf. Longus 2,5,4, 3,12,1 and 4,39,2.

¹⁸⁴ Cummings 2009, 105.

¹⁸⁵ The pattern is clearly established by Chariton and Xenophon, but it is also introduced by Longus, since his novel concludes with the protagonists' night of love (see 4,40) and earlier in the text this author exploits the comparison between them and Odysseus and Penelope (see 3.25.1, where Chloe, like Penelope, has many suitors). Also in Heliodorus'

another Odyssean night is peculiar to Xenophon. Since the two epic scenes give foundation to the entire text, the erotic approach to the *Odyssey* which is typical of the genre is especially highlighted in the *Ephesiaca*, while in the other novels the Homeric model is also used to characterise the glory and strength of the male protagonists, as we see in the portrait of Chaereas, Daphnis and Theagenes.¹⁸⁶

Lastly, the final detachment of Habrocomes and Anthia from a traditional civic context is also unparalleled in the corpus. This is particularly true with *Callirhoe* where in the last book the protagonists return to Syracuse and find the same city of the beginning of the novel, as it is proven by the mention of collective celebrations¹⁸⁷ and by the convocation of the assembly¹⁸⁸ which eagerly listens to Chaereas' account of his journey.¹⁸⁹ A similar attitude is suggested by Achilles Tatius: his exploitation of Ephesus in the last two chapters of his novel¹⁹⁰ proves that in his view Greek society still has an influence on the final development of the protagonists' love. The same pattern can be subtly identified at the end of the *Aethiopica*: although the novel's conclusion is not set in Greece but in Ethiopia, the protagonists' marriage is celebrated with a public procession to Meroe¹⁹¹ and this land is portrayed as 'an idealised Hellenic community'.¹⁹² Thus, in the novelistic genre the final union of the protagonists does not usually lead to the foundation of an independent society in love but fits into a Greek civic space. Only Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* is comparable to the *Ephesiaca*, as at the end of

Aethiopica there is the memory of the Odyssean reunion in Ithaca, since the protagonists are clearly a double of the epic couple (see Morgan 2009, 35) and achieve their final union at the end of the novel (see Hld. 10,40). The only exception to this pattern is constituted by Achilles Tatius' text in which the description of the protagonists' final night is omitted (Ach. Tat. 8,19,2; 4). However, as Repath 2005 argues, this conclusion is a deliberate deviation from the genre and, thus, this lack of the Odyssean intertext paradoxically proves the novelistic fortune of this motif.

¹⁸⁶ Chaereas is identified by Chariton with Hector (see 7,2,4), Diomedes (7,3,5) and Agamemnon, while Daphnis becomes Odysseus from 3,26,1 onwards, when he begins to fight against Chloe's suitors and Theagenes is repeatedly associated with Achilles (cf. Hld. 2,34,4 and 2,35,1; 4,3,1 and 4,7,4).

¹⁸⁷ Cf. Char. 8,6,10 and 1,1,12.

¹⁸⁸ Cf. *ibid.*, 8,7,1 and 1,1,11.

¹⁸⁹ See *ibid.*, 8,7,9 - 8,8,11.

¹⁹⁰ See Ach. Tat. 7,7,1 - 8,19,2.

¹⁹¹ See Hld. 8,7,9 - 8,8,11. See esp.: 'The people cheered and clapped and danced as they escorted them into the city, where the more mystic parts of the wedding ritual were to be performed with greater magnificence'.

¹⁹² Morgan 2007, 155.

the story the protagonists leave the city of Mytilene for the countryside.¹⁹³ However, Daphnis and Chloe, unlike Habrocomes and Anthia, become there involved in pastoral activities¹⁹⁴ and have children with them¹⁹⁵ and, therefore, love is not the only value of their “special society”.¹⁹⁶

As a result, the *Ephesiaca* is an original novel because it is a *Bildungsroman* with a radical focus on love.¹⁹⁷

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¹⁹³ See Longus 4,37,1.

¹⁹⁴ See *ibid.*, 4,39,1.

¹⁹⁵ See *ibid.*, 4,37,2.

¹⁹⁶ See *ibid.*, 4,40,3. A further difference between Longus’ and Xenophon’s novels is that when Daphnis and Chloe arrive in the city, they are welcomed by the entire population which celebrates their marriage. See Longus 4,33,4: ‘The whole city was agog for the boy and the girl, and were already predicting a happy marriage [...]’.

¹⁹⁷ I am very grateful to John Morgan and Peter von Möllendorff for reading different drafts of this article and to the referees of *Ancient Narrative* for their very useful comments on the first submitted draft.

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