

Τὸ Ἔρωτος Ληστήριον: Pirates as Lovers in Xenophon of Ephesus and the Greek Novel

Piracy plays a very large role in the Greek novel, with pirates acting as the people movers and the enslavers, usually depicted as shrewd, lovers of profit. Beginning some time in the second century, however, pirates are depicted also as one threat to the *σωφροσύνη* of the heroine. With these later novels, pirates are not only enslavers but also potential lovers or rapists of the heroine. This paper will argue that Xenophon of Ephesus plays a large role in this process, as he is the first to have pirates as potential lovers of the heroine, or in the case of Habracomes and Hippothous, the hero. Xenophon of Ephesus was therefore being new and innovative with his use of pirates as love; indeed, the whole plot revolves around pirates in love. Xenophon of Ephesus is followed in this innovation by Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus.

In Chariton, Theron is a very shrewd lover of profit. He and his crew have lengthy discussions on the maximization of profit (1.10). There is no hint of him being a possible lover to Callirhoe, because that would impinge on his ability to make profit. In Longus, the scene of piracy is too short for there to be time to have a love interest, because they are thwarted by a herd of cows (1.28-32).

Xenophon of Ephesus has a long list of pirates acting as potential lovers to Anthia and Habracomes. Perhaps the most interesting example is Hippothous' love for Habracomes (books 3-5 passim). For Anthia one interesting example is Anchialus (4.5 seq.) Both lovers successfully preserve their *σωφροσύνη*. At the end of the novel, Habracomes, now essentially a pirate himself (he goes on raids with Hippothous throughout Books 4-5) is reunited with Anthia. This is rather ironic. Pirates being in love is a reoccurring theme throughout; the last pirate being Hippothous is an unexpected twist. By having a successive list of potential pirate lovers, Xenophon of

Ephesus is foreshadowing the big final twist, that Habracomes is a pirate. Anthia has successfully evaded many pirates, but ironically she ends up with a pirate in the end.

Perhaps the best testament to the success of Xenophon of Ephesus' use of pirates is in considering how Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus use this idea. Achilles Tatius has one example of a pirate in love, Chaereas, who for being in love and attempting to deprive his crew of profit, is killed by his men (8.16). Heliodorus has Trachinus in love with Chariclea (5.26). Thus Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus follow Xenophon of Ephesus in having pirates in love.

Xenophon of Ephesus is the first Greek novelist we have knowledge of who has pirates fall in love. The later novelists, Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus, by his influence, include pirates in love. By the simple fact of his influence on later novelists, perhaps the majority opinion of Xenophon of Ephesus as simple, unsophisticated novelist should be revised, as recent monographs (O'Sullivan 1995; Tagliabue 2017) have argued.

Bibliography

O'Sullivan, James N., 1995. *Xenophon of Ephesus: His Compositional Technique and The Birth of the Novel*. New York, De Gruyter.

Tagliabue, Aldo, 2017. *Xenophon's Ephesiaca: A Paraliterary Love-Story from the Ancient World*. Groningen: Barkhuis.