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Marco Fantuzzi, Françoise Létoublon, Enrico V. Maltese, Carmen Morenilla,
Alan H. Sommerstein, Pascal Thiery, Onofrio Vox, Bernhard Zimmermann

Fronteras entre el verso y la prosa en la literatura helenística y helenístico-romana

Homenaje al Prof. José Guillermo Montes Cala

*J. Guillermo Montes Cala (†), Rafael J. Gallé Cejudo,
Manuel Sánchez Ortiz de Landaluce y Tomás Silva Sánchez*
editores



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J. Guillermo Montes Cala

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ÍNDICE

<i>Las fronteras entre el verso y la prosa y la necesidad de editar un libro</i> (Rafael J. Gallé Cejudo)	pag. 13
<i>Curriculum científico</i> (cur: Rafael J. Gallé Cejudo & M. ^a de la Paz Fernández Montañez)	” 23
Montes Cala, José Guillermo	
<i>De Teócrito a Sannazaro: ego loquens en la bucólica</i>	” 45
<i>Πολλὰ ψεύδονται ἄοιδοί. Poesía o verdad: la gran escisión</i>	” 69
<i>La poética teocritea de las formas insertas</i>	” 89
Gallé Cejudo, Rafael J.	
<i>Textos de prosificación verificable en los Ἑρωτικά παθήματα de Partenio de Nicea</i>	” 137
Sánchez Ortiz de Landaluze, Manuel	
<i>Epigrama y paradigma mítico: la transformación de un género</i>	” 169
Silva Sánchez, Tomás	
<i>Mirabilia en prosa y en verso: sobre la poetización de contenidos paradoxográficos en la obra de los Opianos</i>	” 237
Amato, Eugenio	
<i>Spigolature coriciane (III)</i>	” 277
Bernabé Pajares, Alberto	
<i>Dioniso en Antímaco de Colofón</i>	” 291
Calderón Dorda, Esteban	
<i>La adivinación en Sófocles: aspectos léxicos</i>	” 297
Calero Secall, Inés	
<i>La maquinación y el engaño en el lenguaje figurado de Eurípides</i>	” 307
Campos Daroca, Javier	
<i>Plato Socraticus – Socrates Platonicus. Notas sobre Platón y el estilo simple en época imperial</i>	” 319
Clúa Serena, Josep Antoni	
<i>Adnotationes variae sobre los elementos paratextuales en la Alejandra de Licofrón</i>	” 329
Cusset, Christophe	
<i>Les voix féminines dans les Hymnes de Callimaque</i>	” 341

De Martino, Francesco	
<i>Apollonio Rodio e l'ekphrasis delle meraviglie</i>	pag. 357
Fernández Camacho, Pamina	
<i>Tierras de Jauja: la imagen del Extremo Occidente a través</i> <i>de las fuentes sobre producción alimentaria</i>	” 369
Fernández Delgado, José Antonio	
<i>Inversión moral y cósmica, premonición y ekphrasis en el segundo</i> <i>estásimo de la Electra de Eurípides</i>	” 379
García Romero, Francisco Antonio	
<i>La “máscara clásica” en Sócrates Escolástico y Sozómeno</i>	” 391
García Valdés, Manuela	
<i>El epigrama de Arión de Metimna y el mito de este poeta</i>	” 399
González Rincón, Manuel	
<i>Una balada popular griega del siglo XV: «Jartzianis y Aretí»</i>	” 411
Hernández de la Fuente, David	
<i>Odysseus in Spanish Literature: humanity on stage</i>	” 423
Iglesias Zoido, Juan Carlos	
<i>Dos alusiones homéricas en los engarces narrativos de los discursos</i> <i>de Tucídides</i>	” 433
López-Cañete, Daniel	
<i>Ovidius ὀδυσσάμενος: al hilo de trist. 3, 11, 59-66</i>	” 447
López Cruces, Juan Luis	
<i>Dos visitas yámbicas: Gílide e Hiponacte</i>	” 457
López Férez, Juan Antonio	
<i>El verbo ἐκδίδομι (“editar”, “publicar”), en Galeno</i>	” 469
López Martínez, M ^a Paz & Ruiz-Montero, Consuelo	
<i>Parthenope's Novel: P.Oxy. 435 revisited</i>	” 479
Llera Fueyo, Luis Alfonso	
<i>Algunos errores y lecturas curiosas en los mss. del De Natura</i> <i>Animalium de Claudio Eliano</i>	” 491
Magnelli, Enrico	
<i>[Theoc.] 27.68 e Nonno (Meineke aveva ragione)</i>	” 501
Martínez Fernández, Ángel	
<i>Notas de lectura sobre el Himno a Zeus DICTEO</i>	” 511
Molinos Tejada, M ^a Teresa & García Tejeiro, Manuel	
<i>Métrica y lengua en los fragmentos de Bión</i>	” 521
Morenilla Talens, Carmen & Bañuls Oller, José Vte.	
<i>El especial coro de la Helena de Eurípides</i>	” 531
Nieto Ibáñez, Jesús María	
<i>Epiménides de Creta: un profeta inspirado en San Pablo,</i> <i>la Patrística y el Humanismo cristiano</i>	” 543

Pérez Jiménez, Aurelio	
<i>Dolor, miedo e incertidumbre de las madres argivas en Eu.,</i> Suppl. 598-606	pag. 553
Pino Campos, Luis Miguel	
<i>Atlántida y Atlántidas: reflexiones de José Ortega y Gasset</i>	” 567
Pordomingo Pardo, Francisca	
<i>Al margen del canon: poesía helenística destinada a la performance</i> ..	” 577
Pòrtulas, Jaume	
<i>En torno a los Arnodoi de Argos</i>	” 595
Quijada Sagredo, Milagros	
<i>La retórica como competición: el debate entre el heraldo tebano</i> <i>y Teseo (Eurípides, Suplicantes 395-584)</i>	” 605
Redondo, Jordi	
<i>Homerismos, dialectalismos y koinismos en la Hécate de Calimaco</i> ...	” 617
Rodríguez Moreno, Inmaculada	
<i>Respuestas de Jámblico a los seres intermedios entre el hombre</i> <i>y la divinidad de Porfirio</i>	” 627
Ruiz Pérez, Ángel	
<i>El tipo de música que Apolo toca ante Cadmo en el primer Himno</i> <i>de Píndaro</i>	” 639
Schrader, Carlos	
<i>On Athenian political history in V c. B.C.</i>	” 649
Solís de los Santos, José	
<i>Un manuscrito de Demóstenes copiado por Thomas Bitzimanos</i> <i>y los estudios helénicos en la Sevilla moderna</i>	” 655
Stramaglia, Antonio	
<i>Out of fashion? A neglected declamatory theme in the Elder Seneca</i> <i>(Suas. 4.4)</i>	” 671
Suárez de la Torre, Emilio	
<i>Las epifanías de Atenea (selección)</i>	” 679
Urbán Fernández, Ángel	
<i>Algunas notas filológicas y aclaratorias a la Oratio 6 de Dión</i> <i>Crisóstomo, Diógenes o sobre la tiranía</i>	” 693
Vela Tejada, José	
<i>Algunas consideraciones sobre la transmisión de la Historiografía</i> <i>griega</i>	” 707
Vicente Sánchez, Ana & Ramón Palerm, Vicente	
<i>Escuela y retórica en la composición epistolar: progymnasmata</i> <i>en las Cartas de Alcifrón</i>	” 721

White, Heather	
<i>Textual Problems in Horace's Satires</i>	pag. 735
<i>Abstracts</i>	” 745
<i>Tabula Gratulatoria</i>	” 759
<i>Índice de autores antiguos y obras</i>	” 765

MARÍA PAZ LÓPEZ MARTÍNEZ
University of Alicante

CONSUELO RUIZ-MONTERO
University of Murcia

PARTHENOPE'S NOVEL: P.OXY. 435 REVISITED

Our aim is to provide a new edition with translation and commentary of POxy. 435, corresponding to the so-called *Parthenope's Novel*. The original, perhaps one of the first Greek novels, produced a long and complex tradition with versions in prose and verse and a Christian martyrology, and was translated into different languages (Greek, Arab, Persian and Coptic). Although our text is badly preserved and difficult to read, we offer new proposals of reading that allow a better understanding of the novel and its rich literary context.

Keywords: P.Oxy. 435, Greek novel, *Metiochus and Parthenope*.

The novel of *Metiochos and Parthenope*, probably *Parthenope*, like the *Callirhoe* by Chariton, has been transmitted to us through a series of papyri which are dated from the first half of the 2nd. century A.D. to the third A.D.¹ Moreover, an *ostrakon* has survived from the 1st century A.D. Several references to the characters also remain in other literary and iconographic sources from the Empire, along with quotes in Persian narrations, such as the collection of narrative *Dârâb-nâmah*, and, especially, the epic poem *Vâmiq u Adhrâ*, that is, *The lover and the Virgin*, by 'Unsòvrî, from the 11th century –of which almost 400 verses have been kept– which is very useful when it comes to reconstructing the plot of this novel. The Persian poem was composed in Pre-Islamic times, starting from a Pahlavi Persian text- probably in prose, from the 5th century- which was versified by the poet.

Metiochus and Parthenope are mentioned by Hdt. 6.39-41; 3.124, the former as the son of Miltiades of Thracian Chersonese, the latter as Polycrates

¹ See the data and bibliography in M^a P. López Martínez-C. Ruiz-Montero, “The *Parthenope's* Novel: *PBerol.* 7927 + 9588 + 21179 revisited” (forthcoming).

daughter, here unnamed, which means that this is a historical novel similar to that of *Ninus* and also that it belongs to the earliest stage of Greek love novels².

The novel plot probably followed the structural pattern of later love novels. However, in this case, it is Parthenope who seems to be seeking her husband or fiancé, whom she was going to find after many misadventures –that is why a *happy ending* appears as the most likely outcome.

The fragment about to be analysed here belongs to the section of the novel when the lovers are already separated and both of them are the protagonist of their own adventures.

We thank Mr. June Can from the Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library of Yale University for providing us the link to the digitized scan of this papyrus. We have also worked with the photograph of the fragment, and used the data in *TLG*.

The fictional text of *P.Oxy.* 435 is on the recto (like the largest fragment of *Ninus*). The back seems blank. According to Cavallo, it is written in the first half of the 2nd century A.D. but Stephens-Winkler assigned it much more later: the end of the third century A.D.³.

It preserves part of two columns, the *intercolumnium* and the upper margin. The first column contains 16 lines, whereas the second one only 4. There are no signs of punctuation but the scribe seems indicate some stops leaving empty the space of a letter, *vacat*. The author seems to avoid the hiatus but the text is very short.

² All the testimonies are collected by T. Hägg T. and B. Utas, *The Virgin and her lover. Fragments of an Ancient Greek Novel and a Persian Epic Poem*, Brill, Leiden-Boston 2003.

³ “Alla metà o seconda metà del IIp”, according to del Corso: A. Stephens-J. J. Winkler, *Ancient Greek Novels. The Fragments. Introduction, Text, Translation, and Commentary*, Princeton 1995, pp. 95-100; G. Cavallo, ‘Veicoli Materiali della Letteratura di Consumo. Maniere di scrivere e maniere di leggere’, [in:] O. Pecere and A. Stramaglia, *La Letteratura di Consumo nel Mondo Greco-Latino*, Cassino 1996, p. 21; A. Stramaglia, “Fra ‘consumo’ e ‘impegno’: Usi Didattici della Narrativa nel Mondo Antico”, [in:] O. Pecere and A. Stramaglia, *ibid.*, p. 123, n. 128; M. P. López Martínez, *Fragmentos papiráceos de novela griega*, Universidad de Alicante, Alicante 1998, pp. 133-134 [microfiche edition: Alicante 1994]; L. Del Corso, “Il Romanzo Greco a Ossirinco e suoi lettori”, [in:] G. Bastianini – A. Casanova, *I Papiri del Romanzo Antico. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi. Firenze, 11-12 Giugno 2009*, Firenze 2010, pp. 258-259.

It is a copy by a professional scribe, but the editorial level of the roll is medium-low⁴. The Berliner papyrus of this novel is also a careless piece of a professional work with mistakes of all sorts and signs *supra lineam*.

P.Oxy. 435 contains around 19 to 22 letters per line. It doesn't preserve any line of text completed but we can try to reconstruct the missing words taking into account the lines 4 to 5 where the text seems complete: καὶ δι' εὐθυ[μίας] εἶχον ἔδοσαν τε τὸ τά[λαντ]ον προθύμως, for example. Around four letters are missing at the beginning of each line.

Previous editors already reconstructed lines 1-5, but from line 6 to the end it has many problems of reading⁵.

Although editors like Zimmerman, Kussl, López Martínez, and Hägg-Utas considered that the fragment belongs to the *Parthenope's* novel, for Stephens-Winkler this adscription is not clear because “there are no reasons to imagine that the Corcyraeans as a group would have been concerned about her marriage” (p. 95). They concluded: “it may not even belong to a novel”. In their opinion a rhetorical exercise, a “private oration” or a “prose paraphrase or hypothesis of New Comedy” could be better (p. 96).

We think that the fragment belongs to this novel for several reasons. Firstly our text is very similar to some episodes we read in Chariton's novel where the *demos* is deeply involved with the marriage/*gámos* of the protagonists. We can find these scenes at the beginning of the plot:

Ἐνέστη νόμιμος ἐκκλησία. συγκαθεσθεις οὖν ὁ δῆμος τοῦτο πρῶτον καὶ μόνον ἐβόα “καλὸς Ἑρμοκράτης, μέγας στρατηγός, σῶζε Χαιρέαν· τοῦτο πρῶτον τῶν τροπαίων. ἡ πόλις μνηστεύεται τοὺς γάμους σήμερον, ἀλλήλων ἄξιοι.” τίς ἂν ἐρμηνεύσειε τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἐκείνην, ἧς ὁ Ἔρωσ ἦν δημαγωγός; ἀνὴρ δὲ φιλόπατρις Ἑρμοκράτης ἀντειπεῖν οὐκ ἠδυνήθη τῇ πόλει δεομένη.

⁴ Del Corso, *op. cit.*, p. 259: “Questa copia del romanzo di Metioco e Partenope mostra un'impostazione spiccatamente reader oriented. Ma si trattava di una copia allestita privatamente o di un'edizione professionale anche se di fattura medio-bassa? Il frammento supersite non consente di rispondere a questa domanda in maniera univoca”.

⁵ F. Zimmermann, *Griechische Roman-Papyri und verwandte Texte*, Heidelberg 1936, 62-63; R. Kussl, *Papyrusfragmente griechischer Romane*, Tübingen 1991, pp. 165-167; A. Stephens–J. J. Winkler, *op. cit.*, 97-100; López Martínez, *op. cit.* 133-134; Hägg-Utas, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-38. We thank the help of Holger Essler (Universität Würzburg), Lucio del Corso (Università degli Studi di Cassino) and Gianluca del Mastro (Università degli Studi di Napoli Federico II) who are not responsible for our mistakes.

κατανεύσαντος δὲ αὐτοῦ πᾶς ὁ δῆμος ἐξεπήδησε τοῦ θεάτρου, καὶ οἱ μὲν νέοι ἀπήεσαν ἐπὶ Χαιρέαν, ἢ βουλή δὲ καὶ οἱ ἄρχοντες ἠκολούθουν Ἑρμοκράτει· παρήσαν δὲ καὶ αἱ γυναῖκες αἱ Συρακοσίων ἐπὶ τὴν οἰκίαν νυμφαγωγούσαι. ὑμέναιος ἦδετο κατὰ πᾶσαν τὴν πόλιν· μεστὰι δὲ αἱ ῥύμαι στεφάνων, λαμπάδων· ἐρραίνεται τὰ πρόθυρα οἴνω καὶ μύροις. ἦδιον ταύτην τὴν ἡμέραν ἦγαγον οἱ Συρακόσιοι τῆς τῶν ἐπινικίων (I.1.11-13), throughout their adventures: “ἀπίωμεν εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν. τίς οἶδεν εἰ χρεία γένοιτο καὶ δικαστῶν;” “Οὐπὼ πᾶν εἶρητο ἔπος” καὶ ἤδη μεστὸν ἦν τὸ θέατρον. ἐκείνην τὴν ἐκκλησίαν ἦγαγον καὶ γυναῖκες. ὁ μὲν οὖν δῆμος μετέωρος καθῆστο, Χαιρέας δὲ πρῶτος εἰσηλθε μελανείμων... τὸ δὲ πλῆθος ἐβόα “θάρρει καὶ λέγε.” (3.4.4ff), and coming back to Syracuse when the hero narrates them in front of the demos at the theatre: Ἀθρόον δὲ τὸ πλῆθος ἀνεβόησεν “ἀπίωμεν εἰς τὴν ἐκκλησίαν.” ἐπεθύμουν γὰρ αὐτοὺς καὶ βλέπειν καὶ ἀκούειν· λόγου δὲ θάπτον ἐπληρώθη τὸ θέατρον ἀνδρῶν τε καὶ γυναικῶν. εἰσελθόντος δὲ μόνου Χαιρέου πᾶσαι καὶ πάντες ἐπεβόησαν “Καλλιρόην παρακάλει.” Ἑρμοκράτης δὲ καὶ τοῦτο ἐδημαγώγησεν, εἰσαγαγὼν τὴν θυγατέρα. πρῶτον οὖν ὁ δῆμος εἰς τὸν οὐρανὸν ἀναβλέψας εὐφήμει τοὺς θεοὺς καὶ χάριν ἠπίστατο μᾶλλον ὑπὲρ τῆς ἡμέρας ταύτης ἢ τῆς τῶν ἐπινικίων· (8.7.3 ff.).

Moreover the scene of our papyrus seems to introduce an assembly of Corcyraeans, probably at the theatre, like in the case of Chariton’s novel. We know from some Persian lexical books that Parthenope arrived at some islands as a slave. Our papyrus seems to take place at one of these islands, in that case Corcyra.

As it is well known, Corcyra plays an important role in the *Histories* by Thucydides and in the historical tradition. Herodotus mentioned Corcyra in connection with Polycrates of Samos and Periander of Corinth⁶. Moreover, it was considered the ancient home of Phaeacians.

Our edition of the text is as following:

	Col. I	
c. 4]μηι”.	οἱ δὲ Κερκυραῖοι ταῦ-	24 litt.
	τ’ ἀκο]ύσαντε[ς], τὸν μὲν Δημό-	21
	ξενο]γ ἐπήι[ν]ουν καὶ δι’ εὐθυ-	22
	μίας] εἶχον ἕδοσαν τε τὸ τά-	21
	λαντ]ον προθύμως καὶ κα-	[5] 19
c. 4]... ον αὐτὸν τῆς Παρθε-		22

⁶ Hdt. 3.48ss.

νόπ]ης φυλακ[α]- τῶ<i> δ' εἶναι		20
c. 4]ον τὸν .ὸ [.] .ανί αγ και		21?
c. 4]θης αγ [c. 5] τοῦ γάμου		22?
c. 4]ελησας[c. 5]θεντο δε	[10]	22?
τῶ]ι Ἀλεξιά[νδρωι] τὰ ἄλλα		19
c. 14 ἔ]νεκα και		22?
c. 4]c λαν[c. 11]θοο		22?
c. 4]φ αι[c. 15]ε		24?
c. 4]και θυ[c. 10]κα	[15]	21?
c. 4]ε ς[c. 15		22?

...

1-2 G-H || 2-3 Δημό[ξενο]γ Kussl: Δημο[χάρη]γ Zimm. || 3-5 G-H || 5-6 κα[c. 4]ςς ον vel: κα[c. 4]αγον (κα[τέτ]αςσον vel κα[τήγ]αγον) dubitamus : κα[τέλ]αβον Zimm. || 6-7 Παρθε[νόπ]ης Zimm.: παρθέ[νου] G-H || 8 [κῶρι]ον Rehm ap. Zimm.: [πιττ]όν dubitamus | Εὐ[φ]ρανίαν Zimm. || 10 c. 4]ελησας[Π : [ἐπιμ]έλησαι dubitamus | [cυνέ]θεντο Zimm.: θεντο S-W : [ἐπέ]θεντο dubitamus || 11 Ἀλεξιά[νδρωι] Zimm.: Ἀλεξια[μένωι] Rehm ap. Zimm. || 12 [ἐ]νεκα Zimm.

Col. II

νωτερα γενο[μεν- c. 8]
 ανηκουσαςπ[c. 10]
 [.]μην[.]πα.[]
 [.]οι[]

...

1 πιθα]νώτερα Zimm.: ικανώτερα Rehm ap. Zimm. || 1-2 γενο[μεν]αν S-W: γενο[μένη] Zimm. || 2 ἡκουσας Zimm.: ἀνήκουσας vel ἀνήκουσα vel ἡκουσα S-W dub. pos.

We supply Demoxenos in the lacuna of lines 2-3, a personal name attested to in an Athenian inscription of second century B.C.⁷ We agree with the identification of this name with Persian name Damkhasinus⁸. This character appears in Persian sources as a merchant who stole the heroine from Hanqalul, a slave-trader on Chios, and took her to another island.

⁷ IG XII 4,2, 462, 3 (Bosnakis): *Damoxénou*.

⁸ See Hägg-Utas 2003, 36.

Let's see the content of our text. The first seven lines are easy to understand, and are as follows: "The Corcyraeans, when they heard this, began to praise to Demoxenos and cheered him up and willingly gave him the talent and made him the Parthenope's guard, by being trustworthy (friend) they ... Euphranias to take care the wedding rite, and they let Alexander in charge to carry on the extant things because of his friendship and loyalty (or kindness and)".

lines 1-2: After μηι and before τὸν could be a *vacat* indicating stop, perhaps the end of Demoxenos's speech.

1. 2/3: Δεμό[ξενο]ν has finished speaking, and Corcyraeans are supporting his words and his behavior therefore they will entrust Parthenope to him.

On the other side, the form ἐπή[ν]ουν (1.3), frequent in Greek, is comparable with historical texts such as these of Xen. *Hell.* 1.5.4-8 as οἱ δὲ ταῦτα τε ἐπήνουν καὶ ἐκέλευον αὐτὸν (...) οἱ δὲ Ἀθηναῖοι ἀκούοντες ταῦτα ἀθύμως...; 4.8.2: οἱ δ' ἀκούοντες ταῦτα ἤδον τό τε καὶ ἐπήνουν καὶ ξένια προθύμως ἔπεμπον τῷ Φαρναβάζῳ; *Cyr.* 5.3.3: ὡς δὲ τοῦτ' ἤκουσαν, πάντες μὲν ἐπήνουν, πάντες δ' ἐνεκωμίαζον...

1. 3: The expression δι' εὐθυμίας appears only in Flavius Josephus *BJ* 4.42.3: ὁξεῖα γὰρ ἐν ἀμφοτέροις ἢ μεταβολή, κάκεῖνος ἄριστος ὁ κὰν τοῖς εὐτυχῇ μακρινήφων, ἵνα μένη καὶ δι' εὐθυμίας ἀναπαλαίων τὰ σφάλματα; and in Basilius, *Epist.* 42.4.62: Αἱ μὲν γὰρ τραγωδίαὶ ὥσπερ σκόλοπεσ τεῖς κατὰ τὸν βίον δι' εὐθυμίας καὶ χαρᾶς ἐν ταῖς καρδίαις αὐτῶν ἐμπήσσονται, but never with εἶχον.

1. 5-6: The previous editor's readings, κατέλιπον, preferred by Stephens-Winkler, and κα[τέ]λαβὸν, by Hägg, cannot be maintained. The form κα[τέ]λαβὸν, proposed by Zimmerman, seems to be possible from a paleographical point of view: tracks of *alpha* could be detected at the beginning of the lacunae, but after it one or even two *sigma* or a *gamma* are possible. So, we propose to read κατέτασσον or κατήγαγον. The first, an Ionian form, is attested to in historical sources with the meaning of "to assign", which fits well in our fragment too. Cf. Athen. 6.102.17⁹: Μύρων δὲ ὁ Πριηνεὺς ἐν δευτέρῳ Μεσσηνιακῶν (*FHG* IV 461) "πολλάκις, φησίν, ἠλευθέρωσαν

⁹ The last edition by S. D. Olson, *Athenaeus. The Learned banqueters, book VI-VII*, Cambridge (Mass.)-London 2008, prefers the double *sigma* too.

Λακεδαιμόνιοι δούλου καὶ οὐκ μὲν ἀφέτας ἐκάλεσαν (...) δεσποσιοναύτας δ' ἄλλους, οὐκ εἰς τοὺς στόλους κατέτασσαν, also with the double sigma. Although the Attic double ττ is more frequent (cf. Xen, *Oecon.* 9.14.1: αὐτήν...κατετάττομεν; D.S.13.60 ἐπὶ δὲ τῶν τειχῶν φύλακας κατέταττον; D. Hal. 6.2.2 κατέταττον στρατιάς), in the longest papyrus of this novel (PBerol. 7927 + 9588, line 31) we see *cήμερον* with *sigma* as well. In the case of *κατήγαγον* the meaning of the verb would be in this case “recall” or “restore”, according to Liddell-Scott-Jones.

The coordination of an aorist with an imperfect, typical for *koine*, would not be an obstacle, since it is also noticeable in our fragment: ἐπήνουν καί... εἶχον ἔδοσαν τε (1.3-4).

l. 6-7: φύλαξ would be Parthenope's protector, better than her gardian, following a model such as Xen. *Cyr.* 6.3.14: ἀπαντᾷ δ' αὐτοῖς καὶ δὴ ἐντὸς τῶν σκοπῶν σὺν τοῖς θεράποισιν ὁ πεμφθεὶς πάλαι κατάσκοπος, ὁ φύλαξ τῆς Σουσίδος γυναικός..., a text which belongs to the story about Panthea.

The echoes of *Parthenope* seem to be clear in some episodes of Chariton's novel. At first, we could compare our fragment with Char. 5.8.9, where the Persian king decides that his wife Statira becomes Callirhoes's keeper during the trial in Babylon. The eunuch Artaxates will repeat the decision to the queen as follows: ὁ δὲ εὐνοῦχος νοήσας τὴν ἔκπληξιν αὐτῆς “Καλλιρόη” φησὶν “ἔστιν αὐτῆ· πέπομφε δὲ αὐτὴν βασιλεύς, ἵνα παρὰ σοὶ φυλάττηται μέχρι τῆς δίκης.” As a consequence of the trial a husband ought to have been assigned to Callirhoe, but Fortune will give a different turn to the plot (6.8.1: Πᾶσαν δὲ κένην καὶ πᾶσαν ἐρωτικὴν ὁμιλίαν ταχέως μετέβαλεν ἡ Τύχη, καινοτέρων εὐροῦσα πραγμάτων ὑπόθεσιν· βασιλεῖ γὰρ ἦκον ἀπαγγέλλοντες Αἴγυπτον ἀφεστάναι μετὰ μεγάλης παρασκευῆς). Moreover, in 8.3.10, a character on which we shall return later, the Egyptian philosopher Demetrius, is let in charge to accompany the Persian queen till her country: ἦν οὖν τις ἐν Αἰγυπτίοις Δημήτριος, φιλόσοφος, βασιλεῖ γνώριμος, ἠλικία προήκων, παιδεία καὶ ἀρετῇ τῶν ἄλλων Αἰγυπτίων διαφέρων. τοῦτον καλέσας Χαιρέας εἶπεν “ἐγὼ ἐβουλόμην <μὲν> μετ' ἐμαυτοῦ σε ἄγειν, ἀλλὰ μεγάλης πράξεως ὑπηρετήν σε ποιοῦμαι.

The following section of the column is very difficult to read because of the number of *lacunae* it contains, but we shall undertake the task, introducing some proposals.

l. 7: The expression τῷ δὲ εἶναι seems to open the sentence, and, according to the *TLG*, is frequent in this position only in Galenus, presenting the

dative a “causal” meaning: *De causis pulsuum libri* iv 9.87: ...διαστρέφεται. τῷ δ' εἶναι πολλὰς τὰς τεινούσας αἰτίας δυσφώρατον τὸ καθόλου τοῖς πλείστοις τῶν ἀρχαίων ἰατρῶν ἐγένετο; *De diebus decretoriis libri* iii 9.922.16: τῷ δ' εἶναι τὸ μεταβάλλον ἐν κινήσει χρόνος ἀναγκαίως ἐξευκταί ταῖς μεταβολαῖς, etc. If we analyze the data, an accusative, as the subject or as the predicative of εἶναι, uses to follow this infinitive.

As the expression τῷ δὲ εἶναι opens the sentence, the reading]οντο preferred by Stephens-Winkler and by Hägg-Utas cannot be defended from a syntactical point of view. The meaning of this accusative -ον is not clear and is connected with the meaning of the verbal form that is also lacking in l. 9. Rehm proposed to read τῷ δὲ εἶναι κύριον, giving to τῷ δὲ εἶναι a final meaning. This reading is possible paleographically and linguistically, but an adjective such as πιπτόν or similar is also suitable here. Compare with texts such as D. Hal. *Antiq. Rom.* 4.55.4: ἐξ ἀπάντων τε τούτων δόξαντες φίλον [τε] πιπτόν εἶναι σφίσι τὸν ἄνδρα, and a closer example to *Parthenope*, Char. 3.9.12, where Dionysius praises the fidelity of his servant Phocas, (cf. Xen. *Cyr.* 6.1.44), and 8.8.7 where Polycharmus, the hero's friend is stressed as πιπτόν as well. In this case, the value of τῷ δὲ εἶναι would be causal.

l. 8: The name Εὐφρανίαν, already proposed by Zimmerman, also appears in Photius¹⁰ and other comparable names are attested to in inscriptions, papyri, or literary texts: Εὐφρανίσκος, Εὐφρανίδα, Εὐφραγίς, [Ε]ὐφράνιο[ς], etc.¹¹ Our name presents the ending -ία, frequent in comic names according to Chantraine¹². We cannot be sure that we are dealing with a speaking name but it is an interesting possibility¹³.

l. 9: The reading θηναί proposed by previous editors is not possible from a paleographical point of view. We read]θηγαν, which is suitable for paleographical and linguistic reasons. It seems to be a form of a verb in aorist, like ἔδοσαν in l. 4.

¹⁰ Already quoted by Hägg-Utas 2003, 36.

¹¹ Cf. Εὐφράνωρ is the most frequent in inscriptions. See also the data in *TLG*. A feminine form is attested to, [Ε]ὐφρανίαν Μάρκου θυγατέρα.

¹² P. Chantraine, *La formation des noms en grec ancien*, Paris 1933, 93.

¹³ For speaking names in the novel see C. Ruiz-Montero, “Xenophon von Ephesos: ein Überblick”, *ANRW* II 34.2, 1994, 1088-1138 (1106-1109) and her forthcoming paper: “Personal names in Antonius Diogenes’ *Incredible things beyond Thule*”.

We have some possibilities for]θησαν: An active aorist of a contract verb like βοηθέω; the third person of plural of an aorist indicative of τίθημι or its compounds; a passive form in θησαν with an active meaning, preceded by three, four or five letters, such as ωήθησαν, ἐτάχθησαν, ἐκυρώθησαν, or the like... A verb such as ἐκελεύθησαν or similar would be very suitable because of its meaning, but the number of letters at the beginning of the lacuna, six, seems to be an obstacle. Nevertheless, the possibility of using the passive voice instead of the media could be defended from a linguistic point of view, since it has been observed in Chariton¹⁴; consequently our verb could be constructed with an infinitive, as seems to be the case in l.10.

l. 10: we read]ελησac. , not]ελησαν as previous editors did. It could be a feminine genitive of a participle referring to Parthenope, but perhaps it is better to turn again to Chariton, to the scene where King Artaxerxes decides that his wife will charge of Callirhoe: Καλλιρόης ἐπιμελήσεται Cτάτειρα ἢ ἐμὴ γυνή (5.8.9). So we propose to read ἐπιμελήσacθαι, a reading which suits here very well both because of its meaning and because of the numbers of letters lacking in this line. The verb can be constructed with περί plus genitive, like it appears in l.9; for this construction cf. Xen. *Ana.* 5.7.10.

We discard that the verbal form]ελησac could belong to a compound of ἀμελέω, as Stephens-Winkler said, such as παραμελέω “to neglect”, or καταμελέω “to neglect completely”, governing the genitive τοῦ γάμου. Other possibility, also mentioned but discarded by Stephens and Winkler, is a form of τελέω. According to Liddell-Scott-Jones, this verb can appear in active and in passive in connection with a complement γάμον, being its meaning “to fulfill the ceremonies of a marriage”, as we see in Xenophon’s *Ephesiaca* 3.5.1: Ὡς οὖν πάντα τὰ περὶ τὸν γάμον ἐκτετέλεστο τῷ Περιλάῳ... referring to the wedding of Anthia with Perilaos. The meaning of this verb could be suitable to the context of this fragment, but the form ἐπιμελήσacθαι seems preferable for the above mentioned reasons¹⁵.

¹⁴ See A. D. Papanikolaou, *Chariton-Studien. Untersuchungen zur Sprache und Chronologie der griechischen Romane*, 1975, 59; cf. 64-65. See also F. Blass-A. Debrunner-F. Rehkopf, *Grammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch*, Göttingen 1975, 259.

¹⁵ The simple τελεῖν and the compound verb form ὑποτελεῖν are often used with the meaning of “to pay” taxes or other things, a meaning which seems less suitable here. Cf. Fl. Jos. *AJ* 4.206 Ἐκ μικθοῦ γυναικὸς ἡταιρημένης θυσίας μὴ τελεῖν; 5.129.2 συνεχώρησαν φόρου τελεῖν.

In l. 10 itself a new sentence is opened with the verb ἐπέθεντο, which seems better than παρέθεντο. Cf. Fl. Jos. *AJ* 15.184 παρετίθετο δὲ πάντα Φερώρα τάδελοφῶ. So the meaning of the last paragraph would be: “they let Alexander in charge to carry on the extant things because of his friendship and loyalty, or kindness”, or the like.

The name *Alexandros* appears in inscriptions, and an Alexander plays the role of Thecla’s suitor in the *Apocryphal Acts of Paul and Thecla* 26. 3-5 συρίαρχης τις Ἀλέξανδρος ὀνόματι ἰδὼν τὴν Θέκλαν ἠράσθη αὐτῆς... These texts are one of the first steps of the love novels reception.

We probably have an explanation of why they decide to choose Alexander in the formula we read in l. 12-13, which could be supplied as a formula of the type ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα καὶ εὐνοίας (very frequent in honorific decrees, as it is noted in inscriptions (more than 400 times) and whose origin is in Dem. *Cor.* 54. 6 ὅτις τε φανοῖ ὁ δῆμος Δημοσθένην Δημοσθένους Παιανιέα χρυσῶ στεφάνῳ ἀρετῆς ἕνεκα καὶ εὐνοίας ἧς ἔχων διατελεῖ..., or the like. In this aspect it is particularly interesting to quote here again the philosopher Demetrius appearing in Char. 8.3.10, to whom we have referred previously. Chariton mentions that he is superior to other Egyptians because of his παιδείας καὶ ἀρετῆς, “his culture and his virtue”, and we read other similar *formulae* in contemporary texts: cf. Plut. *Brut.* 12.2 πίστεως...εὐνοίας ἕνεκα; *Marc.* 29.12.3 ἀρετῆς καὶ πίστεως; *Arat.* 50.88 πίστεως καὶ χάριτος; φιλίας καὶ πίστεως; 806F3 εὐνοίας καὶ φιλίας; Lucian, *Apol.* 14.7 πίστεως καὶ σπουδῆς καὶ εὐνοίας; Ael. Arist. *Rod. peri Omonoias* 561.24; φιλίας καὶ πίστεως, etc.. Already Xen. *Cyr.* 7.3.12 σωφροσύνης ἕνεκα καὶ πάσης ἀρετῆς, in the story about Panthea.

l.12: An infinitive could be supplied in l.12: we are thinking of verbs such as ἀνατρέπω or διοικέω. But an adverb would be possible as well.

The second column could be referring to Parthenope, may be calmer after listening the designs of Corcyraeans.

Finally we would like to draw some conclusions.

The text introduces three male characters that should carry out the orders of the Corcyraeans. These three men are apparently positive. The first two seem to be supported by the Corcyraeans by their previous good behavior, while the third is in charge of future actions.

We do not know if Parthenope marries a leading man of Corcyra, like Callirhoe marries Dionysios after she has been bought in exchange for a talent, or like Anthia must marry Perilaos in Xenophon’s novel, as we have

seen. The echoes of our novel probably arrive as far as Charicleia by Heliodorus.

The historiographical tradition is the main hypotext of our fragment, like *Ninus* and *Callirhoe*. Although the text is very short, it contains *variatio* of the word order in the first seven lines, and the use of the *amplificatio* can be observed too in the second part. This is a procedure that also appears in the first column of *Ninus*'s papyrus. The use of the hiatus is comparable to that of the papyri of *Ninus*'s novel and of *Callirhoe*.

As we conclude in our analysis of *PBerol.* 7927 + 9588 + 21179, both *Ninus* and *Parthenope* share the same level of classicist Greek. Perhaps it is not a coincidence that Lucian quotes both of them in *Pseudol.* 25 (cf. *On Dance* 2; 54). We shall also remember that the *ostrakon* of this novel belongs to a school environment¹⁶. The chronology of both novels might have been close too, and they achieved a similar level of success in the Roman Empire.

Parthenope's novel seems to be the most important love novel in the transmission of the genre to the East, but probably the footsteps of other Greek novels could be detected in the Persian sources, so research should continue.

¹⁶ Cf. A. Stramaglia, above, n. 3, and P. Parsons, 'Panionis and the culture of culture (P.Oxy. LXXI 4811), [in:] G. Bastianini - A. Casanova (eds.), *ibid.* pp. 43-49, here 48-49.