NOTES AND DISCUSSIONS

DETOUR EN ROUTE IN THE AEGEAN SEA?
XENOPHON OF EPHESUS 5.10.2

Xenophon's novel is famously crammed with geographical names, covering four major areas clockwise: Ionia, Asia, Egypt, Magna Graecia, and—again—Ionia. Some scholars have detected minor errors,[1] especially in the Egyptian wanderings of Hippothoos, one of the three main characters, yet Xenophon's geography is, on the whole, accurate.[2] Thus, according to John Morgan, "Xenophon seems almost to invite us to map his plot in real geography,"[3] and in commenting on the aborted cruise to Egypt in Book 1, Gareth Schmeling claims that "Xenophon has a fairly clear image of a map in his mind. . . . As characters travel from one site to another . . . Xenophon directs them on the shortest possible route."[4]

By and large, Schmeling's rule holds true for the rest of the novel as well, especially when it comes to sea routes, which are sensible and straightforward. Sometimes the author is careful enough to mention the most obvious intermediate ports of call, and he is explicit in recording the impediments that occasionally prevent his characters from reaching their destinations.[5] A strange detour, however, occurs in Habrocomes' *nostos*. When bound for Rhodes from Sicily, he stops at Crete and, astonishingly, at Cyprus (5.10.2):

1. See, e.g., Dalmeyda 1926, xiii. It must be stressed, however, that Hippothoos' knowledge of the territory is poor and his movements are unpredictable, his aim being to rob passing travelers. His are "erratic movements" rather than "errors": as Chew (1998) has remarked, in the *Ephesiaka* the narrator has a tendency to adopt his characters' perspective.

2. The most thorough study devoted to Xenophon's geography is an unpublished dissertation from the Université Catholique de Louvain. After some fifty pages of painstaking analysis, the author draws the following conclusion: "Disons d'abord, et d'une façon générale, que notre auteur connaît sa matière. . . . Ses erreurs sont en effet très rares, et se réduisent à deux principales: la question des frontières entre l'Ethiopie et l'Egypte, et la situation de Périnthe . . . au milieu de la géographie souvent très fantaisiste de ses contemporains, surtout des romanciers, Xénophon fait figure d'homme savant, bien en possession des données qui vont lui fournir le cadre de son récit" (Avaert 1948, 67).

3. Morgan 2007, 151.

4. Schmeling 1980, 32.

5. Here are the main characters' sea routes (square brackets indicate that the character does not succeed in reaching a given destination). Habrocomes: Ephesus–Samos (1.11); Samos–Rhodes via Cos–Cnidos (1.11–2); Rhodes–Egyptian sea [Egypt] (1.14); Egyptian sea–Tyre (1.14); Cilicia–Pelusium [Alexandria] (3.12); Egypt–Syracuse [Italy] (5.1); Syracuse–Nucerium (5.8); Nucerium–Rhodes via Sicily–Crete–Cyprus (5.10, on this see below); Rhodes–Ephesus (5.15). Anthia: Ephesus–Samos (1.11); Samos–Rhodes via Cos–Cnidos (1.11–2); Rhodes–Egyptian sea [Egypt] (1.14); Egyptian sea–Tyre (1.14); Cilicia–Tarsus (2.13); Tarsus–Alexandria (3.8); Alexandria–Tarentum (5.5); Tarentum–Rhodes (5.11); Rhodes–Ephesus (5.15). Hippothoos: Perinthus–Byzantium (3.2); Perinthus–Lesbos (3.2); Lesbos–Phrygia (3.2); Tarsus–Syria–Phoenicia–Egypt (4.1); Alexandria–Taormina [Syracuse] (5.6); Taormina–Tarentum (5.9); Tarentum–Rhodes (5.11); Rhodes-Ephesus (5.15); Ephesus–Lesbos–Ephesus (5.15).

ὁ δὲ Ἁβροκόμης τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἐπιπόνως ἐν τῷ Νουκερίῳ εἰργάζετο, τελευταῖον δὲ
οὐκέτι φέρων τοὺς πόνους διέγνω νεὼς ἐπιβὰς εἰς Ἔφεσον ἀνάγεσθαι. καὶ ὁ μὲν νύκτωρ
κατελθὼν ἐπὶ θάλασσαν ἐπιφθάνει πλοίῳ ἀναγομένῳ καὶ ἐπιβὰς ἔπλει τὴν ἐπὶ Σικελίας
πάλιν, ὡς ἐκεῖθεν ἐπὶ Κρήτην τε καὶ Κύπρον καὶ Ῥόδον ἀφιξόμενος κἀκεῖθεν εἰς Ἔφεσον
γενησόμενος· ἤλπιζε δὲ ἐν τῷ μακρῷ πλῷ καὶ περὶ Ἀνθίας τι πυθέσθαι. καὶ ὁ μὲν ὀλίγα ἔχων
τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἀναγόμενος καὶ διανύσας τὸν πλοῦν τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἐπὶ τῆς Σικελίας ἔρχεται
καὶ εὑρίσκει τὸν πρότερον ξένον τὸν Αἰγιαλέα τεθνηκότα· ἐπενέγκας δὲ αὐτῷ χοὰς καὶ
πολλὰ καταδακρύσας, ἀναχθεὶς πάλιν καὶ Κρήτην παρελθών, ἐν Κύπρῳ γενόμενος, ἡμέρας
διατρίψας ὀλίγας καὶ εὐξάμενος τῇ πατρίῳ Κυπρίων θεῷ ἀνήγετο καὶ ἧκεν εἰς Ῥόδον·

Now Habrocomes at first struggled hard in Nuceria, but at last he could not bear his labors
and decided to take ship for Ephesus. One night he went down to the sea and just caught
a ship sailing. He boarded her and sailed back to Sicily, with a view to making for Crete,
Cyprus and Rhodes, and from there to Ephesus; he also had hopes of hearing some news
of Anthia during the course of his long voyage. He sailed with few provisions and com-
pleted the first part of the journey to Sicily, where he found his former host, Aegialeus,
dead. When he had poured a libation for him and wept copiously, he set sail again; he
passed Crete and arrived in Cyprus; after a few days there and a prayer to the ancestral
goddess of the Cyprians, he sailed off and arrived in Rhodes. (Trans. Anderson [1989])

Such an itinerary is—to say the least—bizarre: whereas Crete and Rhodes are on the
route to Ephesus, Cyprus lies in an entirely different area of the Mediterranean Sea:
Habrocomes would be completely off course there, [6] and a vessel would require some six
or seven extra days of dangerous, open-sea sailing to cover such a distance. [7] Needless
to say, the problem is all the more embarrassing because Rhodes, on the other hand,
is just around the corner for someone sailing eastbound from Crete, and is directly on
the route to Ephesus.

A similar case, from Chariton's novel, may help shed light on the problem (3.3.17–
18):

Θήρων δὲ ἐμνημόνευεν ἑαυτοῦ, πανοῦργος ἄνθρωπος, καὶ "Κρὴς" εἶπεν "εἰμί, πλέων δὲ
εἰς Ἰωνίαν ἀδελφὸν ἐμαυτοῦ ζητῶν στρατευόμενον κατελείφθην ὑπὸ τῶν ἐπὶ τῆς νεὼς ἐν
Κεφαλληνίᾳ, ταχείας [δὲ] τῆς ἀναγωγῆς γενομένης ἐκεῖθεν."

Theron summoned all his unscrupulous cunning. "I am a Cretan," he said, "and I am sail-
ing to Ionia to look for my brother, who is a soldier. I was left behind by the ship's crew in
Cephallenia, when they left me there in a hurry." (Trans. Reardon [1989])

Theron's route is obviously implausible, since nobody, on leaving Crete, would ever
head for Cephallenia in order to reach Asia Minor. As has been suggested, Cephallenia
must be an error, the right toponym being a less-well-known island (possibly Calymna/
Calymnos). [8] Whose mistake is this, however? And of what sort? It is reasonable to

6. To quote Rohde's scathing remark, "Wer wäre wohl je, wie es der Habrokomes des Xenophon tut,
um von Italien nach Ephesus zu kommen, zuerst nach Kreta, dann nach *Cypern* und von dort nach Rhodus
gefahren! Diese sonderbare Verworrenheit geographischer Vorstellungen fällt aber um so stärker auf, als Xe-
nophon offenbar in der selbstgefälligen Auslegung geographischer Kenntnisse sich und den Lesern an vielen
Stellen noch ein besonderes Fest zu bereiten befliessen ist" (Rohde 1914, 423).

7. That much can be worked out from the estimated figures in Casson 1951, 145 table 1 (Rhodes–Cyprus
1.5/2.5 days; Cyprus–Rhodes 4/5 days).

8. Roncali 1996, 196–97: "è probabile che 'Cefalonia' sia un errore per un'isola meno nota, per esempio—
suggeriva D'Orville—Calimne (Kalymna), del gruppo delle Sporadi, nel mar Egeo, una delle isole del per-
corso alato di Icaro."

think that the blame lies with the copyist of the thirteenth-century *codex unicus*,[9] who is notoriously prone to all sorts of blunders, with an estimated average of one error every two lines.[10] It may be noted, moreover, that the manuscript—which is the *codex unicus* for both Xenophon and Chariton—shortly postdates the Byzantine renaissance of the Greek novel. One clear tendency of the Byzantine novels is a drastic simplification of the geographical settings: toponyms are now either invented or reduced to extremely important ones, like Crete, Cyprus, and Rhodes.[11] It may be the case that such a tendency—rather than a scribe's slip—also affected our copyist, whose awkward proclivity to intentional and banal simplification is a well-known fact.[12] Possibly a Cappadocian who moved to Constantinople,[13] he was probably much more knowledgeable about romances, both ancient and Byzantine, than about sea routes, and it is arguably no accident that Cephallenia plays an important role in Heliodorus' *Aethiopika*,[14] which in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries was by far the best known among the ancient Greek novels.[15]

Returning to Xenophon of Ephesus, I would like to suggest that the port of call between Crete and Rhodes was, in all likelihood, not Cyprus but Carpathos, an island that was obscure enough to be discarded by the copyist. Carpathos is precisely on the route between Crete and Rhodes, so it would make perfect sense from a nautical point of view (note that, apparently, Habrocomes reaches his port of call right after passing Crete).[16] Despite its earlier insignificance and later decadence, moreover, Carpathos must have acquired some importance under the Roman Empire: around 400 C.E., a

9. Laur. Conv. soppr. 627 (late thirteenth century). See Bianchi 2001 and the *praefatio* and bibliography included in J. O'Sullivan's 2005 Teubner edition of Xenophon.

10. Reardon 1982. Achilles Tatius' text, which in the same manuscript (and by the same hand) covers less than four books out of eight, features no fewer than 250 *lectiones singulares* (Bianchi 2001, 173).

11. Theodorus Prodromus' *Rodanthe and Dosikles* provides a useful example. Textual echoes make it clear that Theodorus knows and imitates Xenophon's novel (see Borgogno 1985 for the relevant details). Like Xenophon, Theodorus gives Rhodes a pivotal role in the story, as the first stop of the lovers after their departure and the last one before they return home. Thus, Theodorus recreates the (quite exceptional) circular pattern of the *Ephesiaka*, but in a very simplified form: instead of Xenophon's astonishing variety of names and places, Theodorus' geography is limited to a handful of names, including Abydos, Rhodes, Crete, Cyprus, and—astonishingly—Pisa.

12. According to Bianchi (2001), who has recently come up with the most thorough discussion of the manuscript so far, the copyist's text "si caratterizza per un alto numero di banalizzazioni del testo, semplificazioni del dettato, esplicitazioni di forme sottintese ovvero ellittiche, aggiunte e trasposizioni (talora riconducibili a sviste, ma il più delle volte intenzionali). . . . Gli interventi del copista si scorgono in ogni scritto presente in F: se, tuttavia, alcuni di questi richiedono cautela nella valutazione, altri denunciano apertamente la scarsa *doctrina* dello scriba" (170).

13. The manuscript is signed by one Demetrius of Melitene. The whereabouts of the copyist, however, are far from certain: the signature is by a different hand, and—whatever his origin—we do not know where the copyist actually spent his adult life. For a full discussion, see Bianchi (2001), who argues for Constantinople as the copyist's milieu. An Eastern provenance is favored by Roncali (1996, 7).

14. Heliod. *Aeth*. 4.16.7, 5.22.2.

15. Heliodorus' tradition boasts no fewer than thirty manuscripts and three independent branches (see Colonna 1987, 34–35). Xenophon's and Chariton's *codex unicus*, namely Laur. Conv. soppr. 627, also features Achilles Tatius' and Longus' novels, but it does not include Heliodorus'. Rather than the opposite, this exclusion indirectly testifies to the popularity of Heliodorus in the twelfth century, whose novel was much imitated by the novelists (especially Theodorus Prodromus and Nicetas Eugenianus) and was even the object of an allegorical commentary by Philippus Philagathus. Laur. Conv. soppr. 627 was arguably a manuscript designed for private use (see, e.g., Roncali 1996, 8), and the user—no doubt a voracious reader of erotic novels—was probably in possession of an independent copy of Heliodorus' novel, which is why it is not included in our manuscript.

16. For instance, Apollonius Rhodius' Argonauts call on Carpathos before approaching Crete: cf. 4.1635–37. Rhodes–Carpathos–Crete was probably a common ancient route (see Kollias 1970), as it is today for ferryboats.

classis carpathica was eventually detached from the *classis syriaca*, so that the island became a naval station of Rome,[17] whose sailors were renowned for their nautical skills.[18] Along with its mention in Homer's Catalogue of Ships,[19] the growing nautical importance of Carpathos would account for Xenophon's choice of making it a port of call in the *Ephesiaka*. Yet, again, palaeography is unlikely to be the right key to the problem. After all, Κύπρος (or its cognate κύπριος) occurs no fewer than three times in our passage, and its resemblance to Κάρπαθος is rather vague. Such a stubborn perseverance in misreading his model would be too much even for our incautious copyist; his mistake, if that is what it is, must be intentional.

As in the case of Cephallenia, the copyist was probably influenced by erotic narrative, where Cyprus and its patron goddess obviously play a major role. Moreover, additional evidence is arguably provided by Stephanus of Byzantium, who in his *Ethnika* has two interesting consecutive entries, namely, Κάρπαθος, also spelled Κράπαθος, and Καρπασία, also spelled Κραπασία.[20] As we are told, Καρπασία is one of Cyprus' cities and an island in its own right (actually one in a group of minuscule rocky islands not far off today's Carpasia peninsula, i.e., the northeastern tip of Cyprus),[21] and we even learn that Xenagoras called the latter Κάρπαθος. It is not hard to suppose that our copyist had some smattering of such (rather confusing) geographical speculation, which contributed to his choice of replacing a then-obscure toponym such as Carpathos with an explicit mention of Aphrodite's island, as if glossing a difficult word. Cyprus, which allegedly hosted nobody less than Helen,[22] is admittedly an intriguing option for an erotic novel, and yet it seems to be totally at odds with Xenophon's sensible geography:[23] all in all, I think we may cautiously restore the island of Carpathos into Habrocomes' *nostos*.[24]

To conclude with a joke, we may note that Pliny's one piece of ethnographic information about Carpathos is that it boasted a powerful medicament, inhibiting all

17. Cf. *Cod. Theod.* 13.5.32. Cf. also Isid. *Etym.* 14.6.24: *Carpathos una ex Cycladibus a meridie posita contra Aegyptum. . . . ex hac insula dicuntur et carpasiae naves, magnae et spatiosae.*

18. In a very short letter to a friend, Synesius compares the ships of Carpathus to those of the Phaeacians (*Ep.* 38 Garzya), and the island's sailors are implicitly praised at the beginning of a slightly longer letter to his brother (*Ep.* 53 Garzya).

19. *Il.* 2.676. Cf. *Hymn. Hom. Ap.* 43.

20. *Ethnika*, q.v.: **Κάρπαθος**, νῆσος πλησίον τῆς Κῶ. Ὅμηρος ["Κράπαθόν τε Κάσον τε καὶ Κῶν." Διονύσιος δὲ Κρήτης,] "Κάρπαθος αὖτ' ἐπὶ τῆσι ποτὶ ζόφον, [ἐγγύθι δ' αὐτῆς Κρήτη τιμήεσσα."] ὁ οἰκήτωρ Καρπάθιος καὶ Καρπαθία, καὶ Καρπάθιον. **Καρπασία**, πόλις Κύπρου, ἣν Πυγμαλίων ἔκτισεν, ὡς Ἑλλάνικος ἐν τοῖς Κυπριακοῖς. Διονύσιος δὲ διὰ διφθόγγου Κραπάσειαν αὐτήν φησιν ἐν τρίτῳ Βασσαρικῶν "ἠδ' ὁπόσοι Κινύρειον ἰδ' αἰπεινὴν Κραπάσειαν." ἔστι καὶ νῆσος Καρπασία κατὰ τὴν ἄκραν τὴν Σαρπηδονίαν. Ξεναγόρας δὲ Κάρπαθον αὐτήν φησι. Δημήτριος δ' ὁ Σαλαμίνιος Καρβασίαν φησίν, ὅτι πρὸς τὸν καλούμενον κάρβαν ἄνεμον κεῖσθαι δοκεῖ. ὁ πολίτης Καρπασεώτης ὡς Μαρεώτης. καὶ τὸ κτητικὸν Καρπασεωτικὸς καὶ Καρπασεωτικὴ ἄκρα. Θεόπομπος ἐν δεκάτῳ Καρπασεῖς αὐτούς φησιν, ἴσως ἀπὸ τοῦ Κάρπασος, ὡς Ἀντίοχος Ἀντιοχεύς, ἀφ' οὗ Καρπάσεια.

21. Cf. Strabo's Καρπασίαι νῆσοι (14.6.3).

22. Schol. Eur. *Andr.* 898.

23. The patron goddess of Carpathos is probably Athena: see Bürchner 1919, col. 2002. Carpathos' ties with Athena date back to the time of the Athenian empire, when it contributed to the construction of a temple for Athena *Athênôn medeousa* (*IG* I³, 1454). See Anderson and Dix 2004.

24. The text, then, would run as follows: καὶ ὁ μὲν νύκτωρ κατελθὼν ἐπὶ θάλασσαν ἐπιφθάνει πλοίῳ ἀναγομένῳ καὶ ἐπιβὰς ἔπλει τὴν ἐπὶ Σικελίας πάλιν, ὡς ἐκεῖθεν ἐπὶ Κρήτην τε καὶ **Κάρπαθον** καὶ Ῥόδον ἀφιξόμενος κἀκεῖθεν εἰς Ἔφεσον γενησόμενος· ἤλπιζε δὲ ἐν τῷ μακρῷ πλῷ καὶ περὶ Ἀνθίας τι πυθέσθαι. ὁ μὲν ὀλίγα ἔχων τὰ ἐπιτήδεια ἀναγόμενος καὶ διανύσας τὸν πλοῦν τὰ μὲν πρῶτα ἐπὶ τῆς Σικελίας ἔρχεται καὶ εὑρίσκει τὸν πρότερον ξένον τὸν Αἰγιαλέα τεθνηκότα ἐπενέγκων δὲ αὐτῷ χοὰς καὶ πολλὰ καταδακρύσας, ἀναχθεὶς πάλιν καὶ Κρήτην παρελθών, ἐν **Καρπάθῳ** γενόμενος, ἡμέρας διατρίψας ὀλίγας καὶ εὐξάμενος τῇ πατρίῳ **Καρπαθίων** θεῷ ἀνήγετο καὶ ἧκεν εἰς Ῥόδον·

libidinous desire.[25] Habrocomes will always be true to his supposedly dead spouse, but for the time being he is wrong: Anthia is alive, and, right after Habrocomes' last stop in Carpathos, groom and bride will spend the night together in Rhodes. Any reader cannot but remember the couple's first night in Ephesus, when a tapestry representing Ares and Aphrodite made the foreplay all the more titillating, until the lovers eventually "enjoyed the first fruits of Aphrodite; and, each trying to prove they loved the other more, there was ardent rivalry all night long" (1.9.9). This time in Rhodes, however, their rivalry seems to take a different turn, whereby words replace deeds: Anthia kisses Habrocomes, to which he replies by protesting he has stayed chaste, with the result that "they made these protestations of innocence all night long" (5.15.1). Anything to do with Carpathos? Mighty Aphrodite's Cyprus seems to be a faraway land indeed.

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25. *HN* 28.32: *peregrinae sunt et lynces, quae clarissime quadripedum omnium cernunt. ungues earum omnes cum corio exuri efficacissime in Carpatho insula tradunt. hoc cinere poto propudia virorum, eiusdem aspersu feminarum libidines inhiberi.*

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