

"Paradoxography and novelty in the erotic novel: Some examples in Chariton, Longus and Xenophon".

This paper aims to analyze the use of paradoxographical themes (*mirabilia*) in the erotic novels of Chariton, Longus and Xenophon of Ephesus. We define the concept of paradoxography and its general use in Greek literature, since Homer to the novelists and establish the general lines that rule this genre. Finally we analyze some texts of the above mentioned authors in which examples of paradoxography appear, and also material considered as extraordinary by the authors themselves.

The Ionian historians, fond of telling about the natural phenomena and all the miraculous places, animals, plants they found; and Herodotus, among others, paved the way for the compilers of paradoxographical themes.

This new interest for wonders of different kinds connected perfectly well with the new interests and preoccupations of a convulsive epoch affecting spiritual and religious forms of thought, as it occurred in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Centuries A.D. The increasing superstition among ample layers of people and the influence of religious and magical currents coming from the Orient, gave way to a new conception of the extraordinary, now understood as a symptom of the wonders of Nature that seemed to be ruled by divinity in all its manifestations.

We can find a proof of these tendencies in the search of novelty that surrounds the literature of the period, so as the presence of paradoxographical themes (*mirabilia*). The authors of the erotic romance – also known as romance of love and adventures- try to adjust to the pattern of the two young and beautiful lovers, separated by a series of adventures that threaten their chastity and fidelity, but they include situations that are extraordinary (*paradoxa*) or novel (*kaina*). We present examples of prodigies narrated by Longus during the abduction of Chloe (2, 25, 3-4); the incredible adventures the heroine of Xenophon Ephesius has to deal with, and the quasi-fantastic situations that surround Habrocomes, saved from crucifixion; or his meeting with a fisherman and his momified wife.

But we also consider other aspects of paradoxography: the facts without an evident marvelous component, but which are qualified by the author himself as being *paradoxon* or *kainós*, as Chariton does when he describes certain facts of his novel as being extraordinary, incredible or novel.

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