

Space in Ancient Greek Literature

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CHAPTER TWENTY-SIX

XENOPHON OF EPHEBUS

K. de Temmerman

Forms of Space

Xenophon of Ephesus' narrator is hardly visible at all.¹ Accordingly, and unlike the other Greek novels, references to the narrator's own space are absent in this novel. The huge majority of spaces function as setting. Most of the geographical locations are part of a vast territory covered by the travels of various characters,² the main story lines of which roughly describe a clockwise trajectory from Asia Minor (Ephesus) via Mediterranean islands such as Samos, Cos, Cnidus and Rhodes to Phoenicia (Tyre), Cilicia (Tarsus) and Cappadocia (Mazacus), to Africa (Egypt), to Europe (Sicily and Italy) and back to Asia Minor via Mediterranean islands such as Crete, Cyprus and, again, Rhodes.³

Frames are limited to a few places that do not function as setting, for example references to India (3.11.2; 4.1.5), Thrace (3.2.1) and Babylon (1.8.2; 2.7.3).⁴ A striking difference from the other novels is the absence of any frames constructed by intertextuality or the evocation of famous *lieux de mémoire*, as we see, for example, in (→) Chariton. The absence in Xenophon of spaces evoked through metaphor (or analogy) is, of course, entailed in Scobie's observation that comparisons and metaphors

¹ See SAGN 1: 489.

² The boundaries of this area are Perinthus (3.2.1) and Byzantium (3.2.5) to the north, Sicily (Syracuse, 5.1.1; Tauromenium, 5.6.1) and southern Italy (Tarentum, 5.5.7; Nuceria, 5.8.1) to the west, Mazacus (in Cappadocia; 3.1.1), Antioch (2.9.1), Laodicea (4.1.1), Tyre (1.14.6) and Pelusium (3.12.2) to the east and Coptus (4.1.4) and the Ethiopian heights (4.1.5, 3.1) to the south.

³ See also Lowe 2000: 230–231.

⁴ Possibly, we should also include the Nabataean ostriches which, according to Papanikolaou 1973, are depicted on the tapestries above Habrocomes' and Anthia's bed (1.8.2). However, Giangrande 1964 reads *Arabikais* ('Arabic') rather than *Nabataiais* and our only manuscript of this text reads *anabatai* ('mounted').

in general are almost absent from this novel.⁵ It is also in line with the widely-acknowledged dearth of literariness in the novel. As J.R. Morgan points out, narrative fiction is an interplay between techniques evoking fictional belief in the narratee on the one hand (such as, for example, a recognizable setting) and, on the other hand, techniques aiming at drawing the narratee's attention to the fictionality, literariness or artfulness of the textual surface of the narrative, such as, for example, through intertextual resonances.⁶ In Kytzler's view, the low number of comparisons in Xenophon's novel is an indication that Xenophon is unwilling rather than unable to adopt figurative language.⁷ I would add that the low frequency of metaphors in general and of metaphorically evoked frame space in particular may also be read as a marker of Xenophon's style as an example of *apheleia* or 'simple discourse', one of the main stylistic categories (*ideai*) in Greek literature of the first few centuries of the Common Era.⁸ Ancient treatises state explicitly that *apheleia* should avoid metaphors altogether (which, according to Ps.-Aristides and Hermogenes, contribute to creating solemn discourse, the traditional opposite of *apheleia*).⁹ Demetrius, for example, is explicit that the most important characteristic of simple discourse is clarity (*saphē lexin*, *Eloc.* 191), which is traditionally opposed to metaphorical language¹⁰ and which, as he points out, is maintained by words in their proper sense (*en tois kuriois*, *Eloc.* 192), as opposed to their figurative use. The absence of metaphorically evoked frames in Xenophon, then, may be in line with this broader tendency of *apheleia* to favour literal discourse over the use of metaphors.

Turning now to the construction of settings, Xenophon's handling of space, like (→) Chariton's, is often marked by a historiographical mode of writing. Just as in Chariton, the protagonists' separation (2.8.1)

⁵ Scobie 1973: 1 gives the numbers (Xenophon uses only 4 similes, whereas Heliodorus uses 120, Achilles Tatius 110, Longus 107 and Chariton 49). It is telling that the *Ephesiaca* is the only extant novel that hardly occurs in Morales' 2005 discussion of metaphor in this genre.

⁶ J.R. Morgan 1982: 222; J.R. Morgan 1993: 197–224.

⁷ Kytzler 1996: 350.

⁸ See, among others, Ruiz-Montero 1982: 306–321; Ruiz-Montero 1994b: 1115–1116; Ruiz-Montero 2003: 222–228; González García 1986: 9–46; González García 1989: 225–228; and Turasiewicz 1995: 178–180.

⁹ Ps.-Aristid. *Rh.* 1.30; Hermog. *Id.* 248.9–10.

¹⁰ See, for example, Arist. *Po.* 22.1–9, where metaphor is opposed to clarity (*saphē*) and associated with riddles. See also Lausberg [1960] 1998: §§ 1239–1240 on tropes as means of alienation.

establishes two different story lines that are kept apart for most of the novel. The narrator freely and very frequently switches between these lines.¹¹ Again as in (→) Chariton, this alternation is usually panoramic; the narrator stops narrating about one protagonist and moves on to the other. In most cases, there is no organic connection between the strands and the alternation is abrupt, although in some cases the narrator tries to facilitate the transition by verbal echoes connecting two settings—a technique, again, found in historiography too.¹² After the narrator has recounted Anthia's presence in the Syrian countryside, for example, he switches to Habrocomes' storyline at the moment when Anthia is thinking about the latter:

So she [Anthia] was in the country with the goatherd, always weeping for Habrocomes. Meanwhile, Apsyrus, searching the cramped quarters where Habrocomes had been living before his punishment, came across Manto's note to Habrocomes.¹³ (2.10.1)

Xenophon is innovative in comparison to Chariton in his construction of not just two but *four* independent story-lines (as well as those of Habrocomes and Anthia, there are those of Hippothous and of Leucon and Rhode), all of which involve travelling, form a complex and dense narrative web and come together only at the very end of the novel.¹⁴ To make these story-lines interact, Xenophon's narrator at times uses a 'smoothing' technique comparable to the above-mentioned technique of verbal echoing. When two story-lines meet, as regularly happens, the narratorial standpoint is shifting, scenic, actorial rather than panoramic: the narrator follows one character to one particular location, where there happens to be a character with whom the subsequent section of the narrative deals (see also (→) Chariton and (→) Achilles Tatius). When Polyidus, for example, sails up the Nile in search of Hippothous, he arrives in Coptus, where he intercepts Anthia. The story-line of Anthia is then picked up as part of the story-line of Hippothous rather than as a result of an abrupt ('panoramical') switch to another setting.¹⁵

¹¹ Xenophon's alternation technique is discussed at length by Hägg 1971: 154–177. See also *SAGN* 2: 464–465.

¹² See Konstan 2002: 9.

¹³ Translations are taken from G. Anderson [1989] 2008 and slightly modified where needed.

¹⁴ For a detailed overview of all four story-lines, see Bierl 2006: 94–97, Anhang 2.

¹⁵ The same shifting, scenic, actorial presentation structures the protagonists' reunion (5.13.2): the narrator recounts Habrocomes' presence on Rhodes, where Anthia arrives

As a rule, the setting is represented by stray indications that create a plausible background anchoring the plot in 'real' space.¹⁶ The novel's opening line, for example, firmly anchors the protagonists in their home city Ephesus ('Among the most influential citizens of Ephesus was a man ...', 1.1.1). The only places where many geographical indications are concentrated are overviews of travel routes. Here too, the creation of a sense of realism seems the narrator's main concern. The most elaborate example is the route followed by Hippothous' band of brigands from Tarsus in Cilicia to Coptus near Ethiopia:

... Hippothous' band moved off from Tarsus and made their way to Syria forcing any opposition in their path to submit. They burned villages and slaughtered large numbers. In this way they reached Laodicea in Syria, and there they took lodgings, not as pirates this time, but posing as tourists. There Hippothous made repeated inquiries in the hope of somehow finding Habrocomes. When he drew a blank, they took a rest and then made for Phoenicia, and from there to Egypt, for their plan was to overrun the country. They gathered a large band of robbers and made for Pelusium; sailing on the Nile to the Egyptian Hermopolis and Schedia, they put in to Menelaus' canal and missed Alexandria. They arrived at Memphis, the shrine of Isis, and from there travelled to Mendes. And they recruited natives to serve in their band and act as guides. Going through Tawa, they reached Leontopolis, and passing a number of towns, most of them of little note, they came to Coptus, which is close to Ethiopia. There they decided to do their robbing, for there was a great crowd of merchants passing through for Ethiopia and India. (4.1.1–5)

Although the narrator does not cede focalization to Hippothous or his brigands, the depiction of space in this passage is shifting, scenic and actorial: the narrator accompanies Hippothous on his route. The passage as a whole may serve to highlight the wide geographical range of Hippothous' activities as a leader of brigands and the care with which he recruits members for his band, but another function of Hippothous' movements is plot-related: the whole itinerary leads up to Coptus, where he intercepts Anthia, the heroine of the novel, who is being held there. It is difficult to see any clear relevance of the many specific places mentioned other than a pretended geographical precision, offering stepping

and finds him. A similar example is the reunion of Habrocomes with Leucon and Rhode (5.10.9–11).

¹⁶ See E.L. Bowie 1977: 94 on plausibility in the depiction of the countryside in particular.

stones that allow us to trace Hippothous' route that leads him to rescue Anthia.¹⁷ Even if, as scholars have observed, Xenophon's actual geographical precision in this passage (and elsewhere) is limited,¹⁸ the pretence of geographical accuracy (however vague or factually incorrect) can be read as a pose aligning Xenophon's narrative with historiography. The presence of this genre becomes tangible in another passage where the narrator pays attention to such geographical detail: he mentions that the distance between Ephesus and Artemis' sanctuary is seven stades (1.2.2), which is a detail taken from Herodotus (1.26.2).¹⁹ Other than that, detailed information is virtually absent and places within geographical settings are usually indicated vaguely. After Habrocomes and Anthia, for example, have been imprisoned by Phoenician pirates, they are taken not to the city of Tyre, but 'to a place nearby' (1.14.7).²⁰

Xenophon's novel also resembles (→) Chariton's in that there is a lack of detailed description of space. Landscapes are hardly described at all and settings are generally limited to standard novelistic venues such as a brothel (5.7.1), a prison (2.7.1), quarries (5.8.2), caves (2.14.1) and a cliff on the banks of the Nile (4.2.2), about none of which is any spatial detail given. Synoptic descriptions are limited to the opening chapters of the first book.²¹ The first such description is that of the procession in honour of Artemis in Ephesus:

All the local girls had to march in procession, richly dressed, as well as all the young men of Habrocomes' age—he was around sixteen, already a member of the Ephebes, and took first place in the procession. There was a great crowd of Ephesians and visitors alike to see the festival, for it was the

¹⁷ Similar (but shorter) overviews of places on travel routes are found at 3.2.11–14 (Hippothous' route from Byzantium to Cilicia); 5.1.8 (Aegialeus' route from Sparta to Syracuse); and 3.1–3 (Hippothous' route from Area to Alexandria, and then on to Sicily). See also Saïd 1994: 218, for whom cities in the novels are above all landmarks that allow the reader to root the heroes' travels in the real world.

¹⁸ See, for example, G. Anderson [1989] 2008: 155 n. 18.

¹⁹ See Lavagnini 1950: 153–155.

²⁰ There are many other examples: Xanthus is said to be 'a town some distance from the sea' (2.10.4); Habrocomes meets Hippothous 'not far from the robbers' cave' in Cilicia (2.14.1); their lodgings in Mazacus are 'near the gates' (3.1.3); after her death, Anthia is taken to 'the tombs near the city' (3.7.4); both Aegialeus and Althaea live 'near the sea' (5.2.2, 11.2); Habrocomes takes lodgings 'near the harbour' on Rhodes (5.10.4).

²¹ This observation roughly reflects the observation by other scholars of a puzzling discrepancy between the abundance of detail in some passages at the beginning of the story and a narrative 'skeleton' stripped of all detail in other passages ('auffällige Kürze und Trockenheit der Darstellung', Bürger 1892: 36; see also Rohde [1876] 1914: 430).

custom at this festival to find husbands for the girls and wives for the young men. So the procession filed past—first the sacred objects, the torches, the baskets, and the incense; then horses, dogs, hunting equipment ... some for war, most for peace. And each of the girls was dressed as if to receive a lover. Anthia led the line of girls. ... When the crowd of girls came past, no one said anything but ‘Anthia!’. But when Habrocomes came in turn with the Ephebes, then, although the spectacle of the women had been a lovely sight, everyone forgot about them and transferred their gaze to him and was smitten at the sight. (1.2.2–9)

In this description, the presentation is fixed, scenic and actorial: the narrator imagines himself as being positioned among the spectators, to whom he explicitly draws attention (‘a great crowd of Ephesians and visitors alike to see the festival’). We may even argue that the procession is depicted not through the eyes of the primary narrator but through those of the bystanders, whose reactions are elaborately monitored at the end of the description. The narrator, that is, describes the procession as the crowd sees it pass before their eyes. Consequently, the organization of the ekphrasis is temporal: *first* (*prōta*) come the sacred objects, and *then* (*epi toutois*) the horses and dogs. This mode of description suits well the dynamic aspect of a procession (compare the description of a procession in (→) Josephus). This description complicates traditional characterizations of description as a pause in the progression of time (as opposed to narration, to which time progression is intrinsic): here, we have a description in which the narrator discusses people and objects that appear consecutively over time.

The second synoptic description is that of Habrocomes’ and Anthia’s bridal chamber:

The chamber (*thalamos*) had been prepared: a golden couch (*klinē*) had been spread with purple sheets, and above it hung an awning with an embroidered Babylonian tapestry (*skēnē*). Cupids were playing, some attending Aphrodite, who was also represented, some riding on Nabataean ostriches, some weaving garlands, others bringing flowers. These were on one half of the canopy (*skēnēs*); on the other was Ares, not in armour, but dressed in a cloak and wearing a garland, adorned for his lover Aphrodite. Eros was leading the way, with a lighted torch. Under this canopy they brought Anthia to Habrocomes and put her to bed, then shut the doors. (1.8.1–3)

Like that of the procession above, this description is dynamic. It briefly mentions the room but immediately zooms in on the couch and quickly moves on to the embroidered tapestry. The organization of the ekphrasis of the depiction on this tapestry is spatial: it first deals with the Cupids

on one half of the tapestry, and then with Ares on the other half. Its function is clearly thematic. It echoes the famous description of the bed of Ares' and Aphrodite's adultery in the *Odyssey* (8.266–332) and therefore highlights, by contrast, the notoriously central role played by marital fidelity in the story.²² The evocation of adultery in the ekphrasis of the marriage bed contrasts sharply with the story of the two protagonists, whose love is sanctioned from the beginning onwards by lawful marriage and whose marital fidelity will be repeatedly threatened until the end of the novel but will ultimately be victorious.²³

Functions of Space

Turning now to the functions of space, we may start with its thematic function. As in most Greek novels, space is closely connected with the theme of travelling.²⁴ In Xenophon, this function is even thematized to an extreme degree. We have already seen that Xenophon doubles the number of story-lines in Chariton and that space is instrumental to all of them.²⁵ Indeed, scholars have not been slow to observe that this short novel covers a bewildering number of settings following each other at a frenetic pace.²⁶ Attention is drawn to the thematic function of space at times when space and action become even more closely interconnected than usual, for example when part of the setting (a panoply dedicated by Habrocomes and Anthia earlier in the story) becomes instrumental in effecting a recognition leading to the novel's happy ending—a technique well known since Odysseus' recognition in the (→) *Odyssey*.

²² See Shea 1998: 65–67. The depiction of the divine but adulterous love pair has surprised scholars. See, for example, Schmeling 1980: 28: 'Why put such a scene over the marriage bed of especially chaste lovers? Does Xenophon know what he is doing? Do dirty scenes produce fertility? Passion? Or is a little humor intended?'

²³ On the importance of *sōphrosunē* as a central theme in Xenophon's novel, see Schmeling 1980: 38, 116 and Brethes 2007: 154–163.

²⁴ For details, see the chapter on (→) Chariton. On spatial representation as instrumental for the depiction of love and longing in Xenophon's novel in particular, see Bierl 2006: 75, 85–93.

²⁵ Although Hägg 1971: 157 is surely right to claim that, even when Habrocomes and Anthia pass through the same cities, 'this nearness in space is never used dramatically and only seldom even alluded to at the transitions.'

²⁶ See, for example, Hägg 1971: 296–297. Of course, since the extant text as we have it may be an epitome of a longer version (see SAGN 1: 489 n. 1 and SAGN 2: 453), we might speculate that the alternation of settings may originally have been less rapid.

Moreover, at the beginning of the novel, space is announced almost explicitly as a thematic marker by the fact that an oracle predicts the adventures of the protagonists in conspicuously spatial terms:

... for them I see terrible sufferings and toils that are endless;
 both will flee over the sea (*hupeir hala*) pursued by madness;
 they will suffer chains at the hands of men who mingle with the seas
 (*mixothalassois*);
 and a tomb (*taphos*) shall be the bridal chamber (*thalamos*) for both, and
 fire the destroyer;
 and besides the waters of the river Nile, to holy Isis
 the saviour you will afterwards offer rich gifts (1.6.2)

Even if some details of this prediction do not correspond with the ensuing events,²⁷ it introduces a number of spaces that function as settings throughout the novel (Egypt, for example, is the primary setting of the plot in books 3 and 4). Moreover, it anticipates a number of spaces that not only act as setting in this particular narrative, but, more broadly, are easily recognized as topical settings in the novelistic genre: abduction by pirates at sea (as happens to the protagonists at 1.12.3) and burial in a tomb (as happens to Anthia at 3.8.1). The metaphor aligning tombs with bridal chambers foreshadows Perilaus' use of this metaphor when he thinks Anthia dead ('what kind of bridal suite (*thalamos*) will I take you to—a tomb (*taphos*), 3.7.2) and, as a novelistic topos,²⁸ inscribes itself in a rich literary tradition on the conflation of images of marriage and death.²⁹ The idea that the oracle can be read as a spatial blueprint for the narrative to come is further supported by the emphasis on space in the motivation of the protagonists' parents to send them away from the city: following the oracle (*kata ta bebouleumena*), they want them to see 'some other land and other cities' (*allēn ... gēn kai allas poleis*, 1.10.3). If the sequence of different spaces throughout the novel is bewildering, Xenophon's narrator at least makes clear at the beginning of the story that space will play a thematically crucial role.

²⁷ Anthia, for example, repeatedly visits sanctuaries of Isis in Memphis (4.3.3; 5.4.6) but never offers gifts to this goddess. She and Habrocomes do make a dedication in the sanctuary of Helios on Rhodes (1.12.2–3). See also Schmeling 1980: 89–90 and SAGN 2: 460–461.

²⁸ On tombs as novelistic topoi, see Létoublon 1993: 74–78. On the conflation of marriage and death in the novel, see Wesseling 1993.

²⁹ See, for example, Rehm 1994 on this motif in tragedy.

Space also has symbolic functions. First of all, there is the opposition between public and private space, which is occasionally thematized in this novel (but much less than in (→) Chariton). The secludedness of home thematizes the usual topics of emotional introspection³⁰ and confidential conversation.³¹ It also functions as a marker of care for others and safety. Hippothous, for example, when he recognizes Anthia, takes her to his house (*pros heauton*, 5.9.9) and tries to console her. When he discovers that she is also the wife of his friend Habrocomes, he keeps her there (*tēs oikias*, 5.9.13) and lavishes every attention on her.³² The connection between secludedness, in particular home space, and safety is common in novels.

The second type of symbolic function of space concerns religious space, which is prominent in Xenophon's as well as other novels. This is usually shaped by famous sanctuaries of various gods and goddesses across the Mediterranean. In most cases, these locations echo broad themes of the novel. The temple of the goddess-virgin Artemis (1.3.1), for example, provides the setting for the protagonists' first encounter. This setting, like the tapestry discussed above, highlights chastity as a central theme. In addition, Anthia is repeatedly depicted in sanctuaries of Isis (in Memphis, 4.3.3; in Coptus, 5.4.6), who was, among other things, the protector of women and marriage in Hellenistic and Roman times. Furthermore, the first stage of the protagonists' journey ends at Samos, which is explicitly identified as 'the sacred island of Hera' (1.11.2), another goddess fostering marriage and family values. Next stops on the route are Cnidus and Cos (1.11.6), which are, of course, important cult centres of Aphrodite and Asclepius respectively, the former being emblematic of the erotic subject matter of the novelistic genre.

For the characters, religious space acts as a place suitable for taking oaths (Manto takes Rhode before the family shrine and asks her to swear not to betray her, 2.3.4), as a setting of oracles predicting the future

³⁰ Habrocomes and Anthia, for example, fall in love at a public procession, but their emotions are discussed only after they have arrived home (1.3.4).

³¹ Corymbus and Euxenus, for example, speak to Anthia and Habrocomes in private (*idiai*, 1.16.2) and let them return to their usual quarters afterwards (2.1.1). Similarly, Anthia takes Eudoxus to a private room (*oikēma tī ēremaion*, 3.5.5) to ask him for a potion that will allow her to commit suicide. The confidentiality of the scene is made explicit by Anthia's request that he report none of their conversation to anyone (3.5.5).

³² Similarly, when Anthia has simulated an epileptic fit in order to escape prostitution, the brothel keeper takes her home (*eis tēn oikian*, 5.7.5), makes her lie down and looks after her.

(Apollo's oracle at Colophon, 1.6.1; the Apis temple in Memphis, 5.4.8), as a place to pray for a good outcome of adventures (Anthia's prayer in Isis' temple in Memphis) and as a guarantee of safety and inviolability (Anthia's refuge as a suppliant in Isis' temple in Coptus, which she leaves only when Polyidus has promised not to use force). For the narratees, on the other hand, religious spaces at the beginning and the end of the novel roughly construct a ring composition (as in (→) Chariton). After the protagonists' first encounter in the famous temple of Artemis outside Ephesus (1.3.1), their parents request an oracle at the equally famous temple of Apollo in Colophon (1.6.1). Subsequently, the protagonists reach Rhodes, where they make a dedication to Helios in his famous temple (1.11.6). Some of these sanctuaries visited at the beginning of the trip also act as settings at the end of the narrative. Leucon and Rhode are reunited with Habrocomes in the temple of Helios at Rhodes (5.10.6) and Habrocomes and Anthia are reunited with each other in front of the temple of Isis on the same island (5.13.3). Afterwards, they all return to Ephesus, where they first visit Artemis' temple (5.15.2) and only then go to the city (5.15.3). The ring composition, then, looks as follows: city of Ephesus—temple of Artemis outside the city—temple of Helios at Rhodes—adventures—temple(s) of Helios (and Isis) at Rhodes—temple of Artemis outside the city of Ephesus—city of Ephesus.³³ This progression recalls the image of temples as transitional zones as thematized in (→) Chariton's novel and in other genres (see, for example, (→) Pindar).

In some instances, symbolic functions of space overlap with characterizing functions. To some extent, space 'out there' (as opposed to the protagonists' home city) is instrumental in all novels as a stage for danger and subversion of civic law.³⁴ In Xenophon's novel, such non-urban space is represented by the countryside in general but especially by forests and the Nile Delta. These places are all semantically charged as spaces of lawlessness, disruption of civic order, danger and death. As Saïd observes, Anthia is forced, as a punishment, to live in the countryside with a

³³ There are other markers of ring composition in this episode. The fact that Anthia puts her arms around Habrocomes and addresses a speech to him (5.14.1–3) recalls embraces and speeches during their wedding night (1.9.1–9). And the narrator's comment that the rest of their lives together resembles one long festival (5.15.3) recalls the festival where they first met.

³⁴ See Saïd 1987: 151–154. On the marshes of the Nile delta in particular as a locus of disorder, brigandage and defiance of state authority in the novels of Xenophon, Achilles Tatius and Heliodorus, see Romm 2008: 117–118.

supposedly evil slave (2.9.2), whereas various forests act as the settings of her near-execution (2.11.3), her kidnapping by pirates (2.11.11), and her near-death as a human sacrifice (2.13.1–3).³⁵ These non-urban spaces flesh out Anthia's vulnerability to disruptions of civic order (and it is significant that Anthia's sacrifice is prevented at the last minute by the armed forces of Perilaus, who, as the eirenarch of Cilicia (2.13.4), for a moment imposes civic order on this wild place). I would add that they also serve to characterize Hippothous and his band of brigands as enemies of civic institutions. In fact, space is functional in marking Hippothous' personal development from being part of the civic establishment to becoming an outlaw and back again.³⁶ As a member of the local elite (3.2.1) in Perinthus, he is initially depicted in typically urban civic spaces such as the gymnasium (3.2.2) of his home city and in Byzantium, where the social setting is, again, that of the local elite (3.2.5). The part of his name referring to horses (*hippo-*) is traditionally associated with wealth and the upper class.³⁷ His transition to a life of brigandage is clearly aligned with his rejection of his urban environment: after having buried his beloved, he decides not to return to Perinthus (3.2.14) but to travel to Phrygia Magna and Pamphylia, where he takes to brigandage. From that point onwards, he roams in a thick wood (*hulē daseia*, 2.11.11) and is repeatedly located in caves (*tou antrou*, 2.14.1; also 2.14.5; 3.3.4; 4.3.6, 4.1, 5.1, etc.). Significantly, his life in these environments is concomitant with his conscious efforts to destroy civic space: he attacks and burns villages and houses (4.1.1; 5.2.2). His transition back to civic life is similarly marked by a change in setting: when his band of brigands has been annihilated, he travels to Sicily and in the city of Tauromenium marries a rich, old woman. Once he inherits her fortune (5.9.1), he lives the life of a rich man (5.9.2) and is depicted almost exclusively in urban settings (Tauromenium, Tarentum, Ephesus). The fact that Hippothous' marriage is the direct result of the necessity to support himself (*aporiai ... tēn aporian*, 5.9.1) verbally echoes the reason why he took to brigandage in the first place (*aporia biou*, 3.2.14) and suggests that this episode is constructed as the counterpart of this earlier transition. Whereas first he responds to this necessity by rejecting urban environments and, indeed,

³⁵ Saïd 1987: 153–154.

³⁶ On this development (but not so much on its spatial configuration), see Alvares 1995 and Watanabe 2003.

³⁷ See M. Jones 2006: 558 on a character named Aristippus in Heliodorus.

destroying civic space, he now responds to it by returning to an urban environment and embracing one of the most important civic institutions.

This distinction between city and countryside resonates with other passages in the novel where urban space is associated with wealth and therefore experienced to be a place of civilization, opportunity, cultural sophistication and beauty. Babylon, for example, is the place of origin of embroidered tapestries (*epoikilto skēnē*, 1.8.2) and of clothes sent as presents (*dōrōn*) together with 'plenty of gold and silver' (*khruson aphthonon kai arguron*, 2.7.3). And Hippothous goes round the city of Tarentum in the hope of buying something elegant (5.9.5). Broadly speaking, then, the countryside is firmly opposed to the city in terms of acceptance and rejection of societal norms and values.

Below the surface, however, things may be a bit less clear-cut.³⁸ The whole island of Sicily, firstly, is aligned with urban space in that it is also associated with wealth and opportunity. Hippothous goes there because he has heard that the island is large and prosperous and therefore thinks that he is most likely to escape detection there and make a living (5.3.3; see also 5.1.1).³⁹ As brigands, moreover, Hippothous and his band at times adapt themselves to urban, civilized settings. As centres of wealth, cities of course form a pole of attraction to the brigands. The centripetal force exercised by cities upon spatially and socially marginalized figures such as them is visualized when the narrator mentions that it is 'not far from the robbers' cave' (*ou pro pollou tou antrou*, 2.14.1) that Hippothous decides to leave Cilicia and make for Pontus, 'for they tell me that wealthy men live there' (2.14.3). Similarly, he thinks of Mazacus, another Cappadocian city, as a fine, large town from which he intends to recruit 'able-bodied young men to reconstitute his band' (3.1.1). Moreover, Hippothous and his band consciously adopt a cultivated form of behaviour in order to merge temporarily into an urban environment. When they arrive in the city of Laodicea (4.1.1), for example, they pose as tourists (4.1.1). For a moment, then, the country-dwelling brigands transform

³⁸ See also Sluiter's and Rosen's (2006: 3–4) observation that binary oppositions between city and countryside in other literary genres often turn out to be problematic rather than clear-cut.

³⁹ Although not thematized to any extent, we may infer that a motivation similar to Hippothous' lies behind Aegialeus' and Thelxinoe's flight from Sparta to Sicily: since they are lovers and Thelxinoe has been given in marriage to someone else, their flight to Sicily (5.1.4–8) aims at escaping detection and making a living elsewhere.

themselves to fit into the urban environment. These passages show the permeability between and shapeability of the categories of city and countryside. As such they resonate with the overall tendency of Hippothous to choose consciously the settings in which he operates and consequently to adapt his way of life to them.

Psychologizing functions of space are rare. Probably the only such case is the alienating effect that changes in geographical settings have on the protagonists. Anthia, for example, laments her fate in front of the temple of Isis in Memphis, when she is about to be taken to India by Psammis:

until now I have remained chaste, since I was regarded as sacred to you, and I have preserved my marriage to Habrocomes undefiled. But from this point I go to India, far from the land of Ephesus, far from the remains of Habrocomes. (4.3.3)

Anthia clearly imagines her future transfer from Egypt to India as a liminal moment. As such, her conceptualization is comparable to that of Callirhoe of her own transfer to Babylon in (→) Chariton. This desperate rehearsal by the heroine of her position is contrasted by the deliberate adoption of space by the protagonists' captors as an argument in persuasive strategy. Whereas the protagonists themselves lament the fact that they are in 'a savage land' (*en gēi barbarōn*, 2.1.2), the Phoenician pirate Euxinus explicitly refers to the strangeness of this land (*gē xenē*, 1.16.5) in order to underline to Habrocomes his defencelessness and to convince him to submit to another pirate's sexual advances. Place is not only experienced by the protagonists as hostile to them, but also exploited by their enemies as such. This employment of space is instrumental in the depiction of the dynamics of control of characters over each other, which is a concern much more elaborately explored in other novels, such as (→) Chariton's and (→) Achilles Tatius'.

Conclusion

The construction of space in Xenophon's *Ephesiaca* deviates from that in other novels in a number of ways: the narrator's own space in this novel is invisible and there is a conspicuous absence of interaction with the literary tradition and, accordingly, of metaphorically evoked frames (an absence, I argue, in line with his aphelic writing style). Moreover, Xenophon is innovative in comparison to Chariton in his construction of not just two but *four* independent story-lines.

On the other hand, Xenophon's construction of space is also reminiscent of Chariton's. Just like Chariton (but unlike novelists from Achilles Tatius onwards), he presents space mainly through stray indications. Moreover, he does not provide much spatial detail, constructs a ring composition through the deliberate alternation of domestic and sacred space at the beginning and the end of the novel and often adopts historiographical modes of writing (the particular attention paid to travel routes evokes the presence of geographic precision; alternation between different story-lines is often panoramic, but in some instances smoothed).

Xenophon differs from the other novelists in that by far the most important function of space in his novel is thematic: whereas other novelists widely explore other functions of space too, the act of travelling is of central importance; just as in the *Odyssey*, space is instrumental in effecting a recognition; and spatial descriptions mainly provide analogies to major themes, such as love, chastity and marriage. Religious spaces in particular are symbolically charged to act as such instantiations (which forms a contrast with Chariton's subtler and richer adoption of this type of space).

Occasionally (but more rarely than in the other novels), space also has characterizing and psychologizing functions. Examples are the depiction of the countryside, forests and caves as spaces of disruption of civic order (which is instrumental in marking Hippothous' personal development from being part of the civic establishment to becoming an outlaw and back again) and Anthia's experience of leaving Egypt for India (which is reminiscent of Callirhoe's experience of crossing the Euphrates) respectively.