

Rohde's Theory of Relationship Between the Novel and Rhetoric and the Problem of Evaluating the Entire Post-Classical Greek Literature

The one hundred and fiftieth anniversary of the first publication of Rohde's monograph on the Greek novel is drawing near affording a welcome occasion for raising the big question as to what remains of it today, all the more as the ancient novel, just due to his classical work, has become a major area of research. The aforesaid monograph, considered to be one of the greatest scientific achievements of the eighteenth century, can be justifiably used as a litmus test for ascertaining how efficient methods hitherto employed were or, in other words, whether we are entitled to speak of the continuous progress in research or the opposite is true. Finally, the questions raised in the monograph will turn out to be more important than the results obtained by the author, in so far as the latter, based on his unfinished theses, proved to be very harmful to evaluating both the Greek novel and the entire post-classical Greek literature. In this paper we focus our attention on two major questions raised by the author such as division of the third type of narration in the rhetorical manuals of the classical antiquity and the nature of rhetoric, as expressed in the writings of the major exponents of the Second Sophistic so as to be in a position to point to the way out of aporia, with the preliminary remark that we shall not be able to get the full picture of the Greek novel until the two remaining big questions posed by the author, such as the role played by both Tyche and women in the Greek novel, are fully answered.

Introduction

In many respects, Rohde's famous monograph *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*¹ can be regarded as a classic example of what is referred to as a scientific work *par excellence* because, among other things, some of its key theses, such as the one on the relationship between the novel and the so-called sophistical rhetoric,² seemed to have stood the test of time for almost a century and a half since they saw the light of day – a fact which clearly demonstrated their relevance³ for the present research. That's one of the reasons why in the eyes of many Rohde's theoretical construct assumed characteristics of a structure of colossal proportions, erected on solid foundations and built of earthquake resistant and

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¹ The first edition appeared in 1876 with a second one ensuing in 1900; the third, with an important appendix by W. Schmid, was printed in 1914 and reprinted in 1960.

² What is being referred to here is the third chapter entitled *Die griechische Sophistik der Kaiserzeit*.

³ Rohde's theory of relationship between the novel and rhetoric was regarded by none other than Eduard Norden, *Die antike Kunstprosa, von VI. Jahrhundert v. Chr. bis in die Zeit der Renaissance* (Stuttgart und Leipzig: Teubner, 1915³), 275 as almost flawless: "Ich brauche darauf (sc. das Inhaltliche der Deklamationen) nicht näher einzugehen, da alle in Betracht kommenden Einzelheiten besonders von Rohde mit solcher Meisterschaft dargestellt und zu einem großen Bilde zusammengefaßt sind, daß ich nichts hinzufügen habe."

1 explosion proof materials so as to be well-equipped for taking the full brunt of
2 shock waves⁴ without suffering greater damage.

3 Two starting points of Rohde's theory, as reflected in his theses on both the
4 division of narration ('statement of facts') in the grammatical and rhetorical
5 manuals and the stylistic tendencies expressing themselves in the period of the
6 Second Sophistic (quite rightly deemed crucial for our understanding of the Greek
7 novel), could have justifiably been regarded as a kind of fuse added in the
8 foundations and walls of his theoretical construct.

9 While confronted with Rohde's comprehensive approach to the phenomenon,
10 as testified by his evident effort to supplement the already wide range of primary
11 sources with the complementary material borrowed from the field of archeology,
12 ethnology, history of art and painting, we cannot shake off the feeling that he
13 carried out a detailed and thorough analysis of the phenomenon which, for
14 precisely this reason, assumed characteristics of the mentioned monumental
15 edifice with its huge, imposing blocks being, as it seemed, in perfect harmony with
16 each other.

17 The problem arose when small, "despised" details with the destructive power
18 of dynamite came into play, as a result of which Rohde's theoretical construct, no
19 matter how reliable its starting points were, was leveled with the ground, with only
20 one of its cornerstones having⁵, as commonly accepted, remained in its place as
21 something to be reckoned with in future research. Before giving our due
22 consideration to the mentioned cornerstone, we shall, because of the complexity
23 inherently present in the methodological approach to the phenomenon, first
24 concentrate on the detail due to which Rohde's attempt to shed light on *drama* and
25 *plasma* as a genre-designation⁶ of the Greek novel by using evidence found in the
26 ancient theory of narration and, above all, in the definition of its third type in both
27 Cicero⁷ and the author of *Rhetorica ad Herennium*⁸ was doomed to end in failure.

28 From a technical point of view Rohde got into trouble by losing sight of the
29 key fact that the strong evidence concerning both the origins and poetics of the
30 Greek novel could be found in the complicated division of the third type of
31 narrative as expressed in the works of the mentioned Latin authors, only if all
32 instances of the use of *drama* and *plasma* in the Greek novel as well as in the

⁴ Metaphor borrowed from Giuseppe Giangrande, "On the Origins of the Greek Romance: The Birth of a Literary Form", *Eranos* 60, (1962), 132.

⁵ That was not, as asserted by Giangrande in his excellent study "On the Origins of the Greek Romance", 125, Alexandrian love elegy.

⁶ Appearing for the first time in mid Byzantine period, more precisely in Photius, and equated with the so-called fictional narrative in all the technical manuals of Late antiquity. On other terms such as *dramatikōn* (*dramatikón*), *sýntagma dramatikōn* (*sýntagma dramatikón*), *ἑρωτικῶν δραμάτων ὑπόθεσις* (*erotikōn dramáton hypóthesis*) used by Photius as the genre terms cf. Erwin Rohde, "Der griechische Roman", 376, n. 1.

⁷ Cicero, *On Invention*, 1, 27. It should be noted that two the remaining two types of narration are, unlike the third one, closely associated with the forensic oratory, with the first one being identified with setting forth the facts before a law court and the second one with the so-called incidental narrative in a trial.

⁸ Anonymus, *Rhetorica ad Herennium*, 1, 12.

1 writings of the exponents of the Second Sophistic⁹ were subjected to some kind of
 2 hermeneutical analysis. Some of the essential meanings of the above-mentioned
 3 genre-designations, such as *subject-matter of myth, symbol, aetion, aenigma,*
 4 *concept (conchetto), metamorphic states of mind and body, every type of reversal,*
 5 and especially one characterized by a *happy ending* could have been deciphered
 6 only in this way and thus enable us to draw the conclusion that no fewer than three
 7 types of subdivision, otherwise based on the criteria of (1) veracity of what is
 8 narrated¹⁰, (2) narrating person¹¹ and (3) the nature of ending, were completely
 9 fused to each other in the complicated division of the third type of narration, or
 10 rather narrative in the above-mentioned Latin authors – something that sheds light
 11 on the phenomenon of a happy ending in the plot of the Greek novel, a
 12 phenomenon that was regarded by Rohde as some kind of a brutal, unpoetic

⁹ Cf. our studies: “Il termine ‘drama’ nelle ‘Eikones’ di Filostrato” *Invigilata Lucernis* 38 (2016), 99 - 117, “*Dr@ma, plēsma e màqoj* nei romanzi di Achille Tazio e del Macrembolita e i fondamenti filosofici del genere” *Classica et Christiana* 11 (2016), 123 - 178), “Die Gattungsbezeichnung ‘drama’ und der Symbolismus in Makrembolites’ Roman”, *Classica et Christiana* 13 (2018), 63 - 148), “Zu einer philosophischen Poetik des Romans Rhodanthe und Dosikles von Theodoros Prodromos”, *Classica et Christiana* 14 (2019), 105 - 164. If our name appears more often here, it is because our attention was focused on certain aspects of literary works neglected in previous research on the subject.

¹⁰ Karl Barwick, “Die Gliederung der Narratio in der rhetorischen Theorie und ihre Bedeutung für die Geschichte des antiken Romans”, *Hermes* 63 (1928), 282 noticed two of them, namely subdivisions based on criteria of veracity of what is narrated [*fabula* = *màqoj* (narrative neither true nor probable), *historia* = *fstor...a* (an account of exploits actually performed), *argumentum* = *dramatikòn* or *plasmatikòn* (an account of imaginary exploits, which yet could have occurred)] and narrating person (*genus in personis positum* = *kat! pròswpa*), whereas the remaining subdivision, i.e. third one, based on the criterion of ending such as a happy outcome (*iucundo exitu rerum*), was detected by us [“*Dr@ma, plēsma e màqoj* nei romanzi di Achille Tazio e del Macrembolita e i fondamenti filosofici del genere” *Classica et Christiana* 11 (2016), 123 – 178], namely a subdivision in which the key elements of both the plot and poetics of the Greek novel, such as never-ending reversals of fortune (*fortunae commutatione*) as well as metamorphic states of mind and body such as austerity and gentleness, hope and fear (*festiuitas ... confecta ex animorum dissimilitudine, grauitate lenitate, spe metu*), also found their reflection. Failing to observe this third type of subdivision was the reason behind the decision taken by almost all scholars to return to Rohde’s unfinished theses, which in turn led to taking a distance from his right attitude towards the theory of narration found in the mentioned works of the two Latin authors and rightly regarded by him as a fundamental starting point in every attempt aimed at deciphering both the genesis and poetics of the novel. The studies of the Greek novel thus ended up getting caught in a vicious circle, as implicitly acknowledged by both Karl Barwick, “Die Gliederung der Narratio in der rhetorischen Theorie”, *Hermes* 63 (1928), 287 and Carl Werner Müller, “Chariton von Aphrodisias und die Theorie des Romans in der Antike,” *Antike und Abendland* 22 (1976), 116.

¹¹ This type of subdivision (*genus in personis positum* = *kat! pròswpa*) is also threefold depending on who narrates: the author himself (*genus enarratiuum*), characters acting on the stage (*genus imitatiuum*) or both the author and the characters (*genus commune*).

1 element,¹² due to which the Greek novel, as it seemed to him, deserves to be
 2 placed at the lowest level on the scale of values, even beneath naive and puerile
 3 fairy tales.¹³ This can be explained by the fact that he didn't have the slightest idea
 4 of how this type of a happy ending might also be deeply founded on Plato's
 5 concept of happiness understood as *eùdaimon...a* (*eudaimonía*),¹⁴ as expressed
 6 at the very end of the myth of the winged chariot in *Phaedrus*,¹⁵ with polar
 7 opposite feelings such as *man...a* (sc. erotic *manía*) and *swfrosúnē*
 8 (*sophrosýne* - *continence*) continuously pulsating and being closely intertwined
 9 with each other in the soul of the lover and his beloved¹⁶ – something that in the
 10 mentioned context was regarded as a guarantee of their happy and blissful life in
 11 this world, and, on a purely methodological level, had its tangible parallel with
 12 *man...a* (*manía*) and *lògoj* (*lógos*) woven into one harmonious and indivisible
 13 whole in Plato's own oeuvre.¹⁷

14 Only in this way, i.e. on condition that the above-mentioned requirements
 15 were fulfilled and Platonic origin of the subdivisions of the third type of narration
 16 noticed, can we fully understand quite an uncommon and at first sight somewhat
 17 strange definition of what is called *dramatikòn* (*dramatikón* = *argumentum*) in
 18 11th century Byzantine rhetoric or, to be more precise, in Doxapatres' *Homelieae* in

¹² *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer* (Leipzig: Breitkopf und Härtel, 1914³), 307: "... schwächere Dichter tuen vielleicht ganz recht, wenn sie, der oben erwähnten Brutalität ausweichend, ihre Dichtungen nach dem Prinzip der sog. poetischen Gerechtigkeit anlegen, welche nichts anderes ist als eine Sanktionierung jenes Glaubens an die kausale Verknüpfung zweier so völlig geschiedener Dinge, wie sittliche Güte und irdisches Glück sind".

¹³ *Der griechische Roman*, 307: "In voller Unschuld lebt dieses höchst unwirkliche Prinzip freilich nur im Märchen, welchem (ganz im Unterschied vom Mythos) dieser kindliche Optimismus wesentlich und überall eigen ist".

¹⁴ Cf. Friedemann Buddensieck, "Eudaimonie / Glückseligkeit" in Christian Schäfer, *Platon-Lexikon: Begriffswörterbuch zu Platon und der platonischen Tradition* (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 2007), 116. With regard to the fact that we encounter emblematic concepts of Plato's philosophy widely applied in Makrembolites' novel in the form of barely visible symbols, we are, as it seems, fully entitled to suppose that the third subtype of division within the third type of narration is, like other two ones, also of Platonic origin. However, in Augusto Rostagni's famous study, *Aristotele e l'aristotelismo nella storia dell'estetica antica: origini, significato e svolgimento della Poetica* (Torino: Bottega d'Erasmus, 1955), 223 the mentioned subtype of division was, despite all this, closely associated with Theophrastus and the Peripatetic tradition.

¹⁵ Plato, *Phaedrus*, 255e.

¹⁶ The plot of the Greek novel could rightly be regarded as a specific "palingenesis" of the old Platonic myth of the winged chariot, just due to the fact that the roles assigned to the protagonists of the Greek novel are reminiscent of those played by the dark and white horse in the mentioned myth.

¹⁷ Cf. Giovanni Reale, *Platone, Fedro: introduzione, traduzione, note e apparati* (Milano: Bompiani, 2000), 231, n. 132.

1 *Aphthonium*,¹⁸ where the above-mentioned type of narrative is characterized as an
 2 adaptation of the subject-matter of poetry aimed at meeting the needs of prose
 3 composition in the schools of rhetoric. This was, as will be seen shortly, the
 4 definition that, contrary to all expectations, led us without, so to speak, any margin
 5 of error to unraveling the riddle called the origins of the Greek novel and its
 6 poetics, only on condition that light has previously been shed on the relationship
 7 between *subject-matter of poetry*, or rather *myth* and Plato's style and method.

8 Thus, all prerequisites were fulfilled for focusing our attention on the only
 9 cornerstone of Rohde's monumental edifice seemingly spared from the blast and
 10 still believed to be worth preserving. What we are referring to are his theses on
 11 relationship between the novel and sophisticated rhetoric which many thought were
 12 as an obvious result protected from all types of shock waves in the future until
 13 another small, "despised" detail of enormous blasting potential found in Lucian's
 14 implicit poetics came into play.

17 **Lucian's Self-Interpretation as the Implicit Poetics of All Authors of the** 18 **Second Sophistic**

19
 20 Contrary to all expectations, the sudden appearance of *subject-matter of*
 21 *poetry* in Doxapatres' definition of *dramatikon* had a higher purpose exceeding by
 22 far the one usually associated with the expressiveness of a poetic word,¹⁹ as can be
 23 inferred indirectly from Lucian's three canons of both distinguished authors and
 24 exemplary works of art appearing in his dialogues *De saltatione*²⁰, *Lexiphanes*²¹
 25 and *Imagines*²², which could rightly be regarded as the three instances of self-
 26 interpretation to be applied to all the other major exponents of the Second
 27 Sophistic as well. We can fully understand the meaning of the expression *subject-*
 28 *matter of poetry* in Doxapatres' definition only when we ascertain whether there
 29 are constants in the mentioned canons. And the results are the following: Homer

¹⁸ Christian Waltz, *Rhetores Graeci* (Tübingen: J. G. Cotta, 1834), vol. 2, 201, 10: ... *œj tosj poihtikosj jrmōzonta mēlista drēmasi*. What is noteworthy is that in Doxapatres' definition *dramatikon* has essentially the same meaning as *argumentum* in Roman rhetoric, namely *subject-matter of poetry*, which was, unfortunately, largely ignored in previous research on the subject. Cf. Charlton Lewis – Charles Short, *A Latin Dictionary* (Oxford: Clarendon Press), s.v. *argumentum* as well as *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* s.v. *argumentum*.

¹⁹ Cf. Lucian, *Charon, or the Inspectors*, 7 where Homer's poetic word is represented as being even capable of provoking storms on the peaceful water surface of the river of the dead as soon as it is uttered by the author on the boat of Charon.

²⁰ *Dance*, 60–61, where Homer, Hesiod and the best poets, and especially those of tragedy, are referred to as canonical. The lack of mention of Plato's name in Lucian's writing can be explained by the fact that it is essentially based on his doctrine of the parts of soul as expressed in the fourth book of the *Republic*, 439d – 440e and explicitly mentioned by the author himself (70).

²¹ 22.

²² *Essays in Portraiture*, 6, 7, 8 and 17.

1 and Hesiod referred to as the best poets,²³ tragedy and comedy²⁴ (as far as the
 2 latter is concerned Lucian seems to have had in mind that of Aristophanes), Plato,
 3 and Socrates as the protagonist of his dialogues. Thus, Plato's name appears in a
 4 very indicative context, where a close relationship has been established between
 5 his work and that of the authors interested in subject-matter of poetry or, in other
 6 words, *myth*. This can be explained by his apparent aspiration to visualize mythical
 7 patterns when his concept essentially determined by *logos* cannot be developed
 8 any further, and this very conceptualization of the mythical imagery²⁵ helps us
 9 understand why Socrates, along with Homer and Hesiod, was represented as an
 10 exemplary painter in the canon of fine and plastic arts in *Imagines*,²⁶ and why so
 11 large a space in the text of the Greek novel was reserved for the descriptions of
 12 paintings and sculptures having, as will be seen later, a profound philosophical
 13 dimension.

14 A very close relationship has thus been established between mythical, or
 15 rather poetic image, and pictorial (sculptural) concept on one side and the Platonic
 16 idea on the other, as testified by an illustrative example from Lucian's above-
 17 mentioned work, in which painting the portrait of Panthia – a woman of divine
 18 beauty and on top of that inspired by men's aristocratic ideal of *kalokagathia*
 19 (*kalokagathia*) – with words was deliberately chosen to visualize, as far as the
 20 needs of rhetorical instruction are concerned, the two basic principles of the new
 21 rhetoric given in a bare outline in *Phaedrus*,²⁷ such as the analytical partition of a
 22 phenomenon (*diairēseis* - *diareseis*) and synoptic reduction of the partitioned to a
 23 single idea (*sunagōgē*... - *synagogai*), with both of them being slightly modified
 24 and disguised as *paradeigmata* (*paradeigmata*) and *archētypa* (*archētypa*) in

²³ It is noteworthy to point out that in the canon appearing in *Lexiphanes* Homer and Hesiod were not explicitly mentioned as such, as in the case of the catalogues we encounter in the *Dance* and *Essays in Portraiture*.

²⁴ It is worthy of note that there is no mention of comedy in the canon appearing in the *Dance*, which can be explained by the fact that what was termed *tragodia* included, implicitly, comedy, all the more as the latter was Lucian's favourite genre, otherwise characterized as "attractive, lovely comedy" in his canon in *Lexiphanes*.

²⁵ It should be pointed out that giving Thucydides the status of canonical author in *Lexiphanes* (22) can be interpreted in the same way, since his conceptual elaboration of real, historical events may have been regarded as a kind of complement to Plato's method applied to the polar opposite subject-matter, such as myth. We can rightly assume that, as far as literary canons are concerned, Lucian passed over in silence Herodotus' work which seemed to be of greater importance than that of Thucydides to the men of letters in their attempt to work out literary material, as can be inferred from his writings *Herodotus or Aëtion* and *On the Syrian Goddess*, the latter of which stands out from the former for a noble attempt at imitating the celebrated historian's style. Truth be told, there is yet another exception in so far as we encounter rhetoricians presented as canonical authors in *Lexiphanes* (para. 22).

²⁶ *Essays in Portraiture*, 17: "We shall require many models ... and one, like herself (sc. Panthia), Ionic, painted and wrought by Aeschines, the friend of Socrates, and by Socrates himself, of all craftsmen the truest copyists because they painted with love".

²⁷ 266b.

1 his dialogue²⁸ closely associated with *Imagines* – something that points to the fact
 2 that the relationship between archetype, Platonic idea and poetic image has
 3 become ever more evident in the early period of the Second Sophistic.²⁹

4 This has brought us one big step closer to our goal of understanding the true
 5 nature of the Second Sophistic in so far as the description of painting the portrait
 6 of Panthia enabled us to see clearly what the use of the above-mentioned
 7 principles (*diairéseis* and *synagogai*) in the schools of rhetoric looked like. What is
 8 being referred to here is the method that could best be characterized as *assembling*
 9 or, in other words, *montage*, which makes it even more difficult to understand the
 10 real meaning of things just due to the fact that nowadays *montage* itself is largely
 11 identified with a wide range of purely technical and mechanical skills all too
 12 craftsmanslike in nature. The paradox, then, is that in Lucian's epoch, as opposed
 13 to now, the aforesaid method was under the influence of Plato's philosophy
 14 closely linked to achieving sublime, lofty objectives in the field of art and
 15 literature, as can be inferred from the fact that the author's painting, or rather
 16 *assembling* the portrait of Panthia with words was represented as if the greatest
 17 names of fine and plastic art shared the task of portraying with each other and
 18 consequently shaped that part of her figure in the elaboration of which they were
 19 thought to be peerless,³⁰ as advocated by none other than Socrates in his
 20 conversations with both Parrhasius the painter³¹ and Cleiton the sculptor³² in
 21 Xenophon's *Memoirs of Socrates*, which can rightly be regarded as the legend of
 22 Socrates launched almost immediately after his death with the aim of putting the
 23 key terms of his political testament in *Alcibiades*³³ into practice as far as the
 24 literary activity is concerned. It's a strange paradox that the products of this
 25 seemingly dead art sprung from *montage* are, far from being dead and lifeless,
 26 truly immortal, in so far as their life in eternity is guaranteed by nothing else than

²⁸ *Essays in Portraiture Defended*, 10.

²⁹ *Essays in Portraiture*, 15.

³⁰ *Essays in Portraiture*, 6 – 7.

³¹ Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3, 10, 1 – 5.

³² Xenophon, *Memorabilia*, 3, 10, 6 – 15.

³³ 123d–e. What we are referring to are *sophía* and *epiméleia* (*wisdom* and *industry*) as concepts initially having political dimension, concepts which will be later on, due to Xenophon's *Memorabilia*, closely associated with the central principles of the new rhetoric in *Phaedrus* (*diairéseis*, *synagogai*) and thus give occasion for promoting the *montage* as the most efficient method for increasing creativity in literary writings, as will be seen later. That the new rhetoric had carried off an overwhelming victory over the rhetoric of a scholastic, technical type in the period of the Second Sophistic can be inferred, among other things, from a particularly characteristic statement we come across in Eunapius's *Lives* (497) about Libanius' rival Acacius said to have decisively based his method on ancient models (*léxis metà krótou pros ton archaíon metéstrephe týpon*). On the basis of the similar formulation in Lucian [*To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words* (3): *archaióterón ti tou plásmatos*] we can rightly assume that what was meant was Socratic *plasma* – something that Rohde failed to notice, as will be seen later. The same is also true for his failure to observe that *Phaedrus*, Socrates and Plato's oeuvre as a whole account for the better part of the citations and allusions in Philostratus and Eunapius' *Lives of the Sophists*, as can be concluded from the citation and allusion index such as the one provided by Wilmer Cave Wright in his study edition of the mentioned authors.

1 the method itself. In order to understand how it is at all possible that an eternal life
 2 pulsates at high pressure through something seemingly dead, light must previously
 3 be shed on the phenomenon of the old Socratic *plasma* and the symbolism closely
 4 connected with it, as reflected in both Lucian's and Philostratus' work.

5
 6
 7 **Lucian, Old Socratic *Plasma* and the Principles of the New Rhetoric and New**
 8 **Art in *Phaedrus***

9
 10 Lucian's description of painting the portrait of Panthia contains two key
 11 messages, with the first of them reading: the above-mentioned principles are by
 12 themselves capable of making a divinity of a mortal woman, as was actually the
 13 case with Panthia after being happily turned into an artist's model, and the second
 14 one being not so easy to decipher due to both a relatively unusual milieu it was
 15 transmitted from and something that appeared at first sight to be purely
 16 craftsmanslike in nature. This second message was for yet another reason hardly
 17 detectable, as evidenced by the fact that it has been conveyed implicitly to the
 18 readership exhorted by their author to raise the logical question as to how great
 19 potential the above-mentioned method must necessarily have for making a god of
 20 an artist, i.e., rhetorician, if what seemed to be an ordinary artist's model acquired,
 21 due to that, characteristics of immortality.³⁴

22 The answer to the question of what has such a daemonic power could be
 23 found in the emblematic passage from the second part of Plato's programmatic
 24 dialogue where we come across Socrates' open confession that he personally
 25 regards anyone capable of looking at the same time towards One (*synagōgāi*) and
 26 many (*diairéseis*) as a god, which makes him walk after that person and
 27 enthusiastically follow in his footsteps.³⁵ This kind of "following in someone
 28 else's footsteps" will, as will be seen later, turn out to be the keywords when it
 29 comes to shedding light on the phenomenon of the Greek novel as well as the
 30 better part of post-classical Greek literature. Thus, the main message, conveyed
 31 through painting the portrait of Panthia, essentially characterized by *montage*,
 32 reads: the author makes known to his readership in a graphic and yet enigmatic
 33 way that he, filled with a kind of religious fervour, also keeps following in
 34 Socrates' footsteps, looking on him as a divinity, as testified, among other things,
 35 by the fact that both the concepts and the scenic elements of his dialogues are
 36 reminiscent of their Platonic models.³⁶

³⁴ That can explain the habit of the sophists to dress themselves in the finest clothes in their public appearances, a fact for which Rohde had only the ready-made qualifier *barbarian* just due to his misunderstanding of the phenomenon.

³⁵ *Phaedrus*, 266b–c with an allusion to Homer "Odyssey (5, 193): Ἐν τε τῆν Ἰλλόν ἰγῶσμαι δυνάτῳ ἐν καὶ ἴπῳ πῶλλον ἢ πεφύκῳ δῖον, τοῦτον δὲ κωκῶν κατ' ὀπίσσω μετ' ἑκείνου ἔστε γεοὺ καὶ μῆντοι καὶ τοῦτον δυνάμην αὐτῷ δῖον.

³⁶ Cf. *The Dead Come to Life, or the Fisherman*, 6 where the message of Lucian's devoutness to the ideals of Platonic, or rather Socratic philosophy is conveyed implicitly with the

1 We can grasp the very essence of *montage* as a method closely connected with
 2 and inseparable from *following in someone else's footsteps* when contrasting it with
 3 its very opposite, such as *invention* – something that will shed light on and help us
 4 understand what seemed at first sight to be quite uncommon aesthetic and
 5 evaluation criteria applied in later times, such as those of the Second Sophistic,
 6 namely criteria which turned out unexpectedly to be essentially based on both the
 7 key premises of Platonic philosophy and its emblematic images. In Lucian's fairly
 8 brief writing *Prometheus es in verbis*, we come across such an emblematic image
 9 exuding Platonic influence and showing in a vivid, straightforward manner the
 10 core of the relationship between the two opposite methods referred to above, with
 11 the invention itself, explicitly characterized as *plasma*, being therein symbolized
 12 by Promethean figures made of clay and becoming living creatures as soon as
 13 Athena breathes into the mud and thus makes the clay models live, which is why
 14 the creation resulting from such a method assumed, as was to be expected,
 15 characteristics of a full-blown, truly living art.³⁷

16 On the other hand, the *assembling* itself, based in a decisive measure on the
 17 archetype, (*ἄρχειτύπον* - *archétypon*), was also denoted by the term *plasma* in
 18 Lucian's mentioned work and, moreover, additionally characterized by the
 19 attribute *ἄρχειότερον* (*archaióteron*)³⁸ with the intent of giving honour to the
 20 method itself, as testified by the fact that he prides himself on his devoutness to the
 21 *montage* while disparaging the invention as *καίνεσις* (*kainótes*)³⁹, *καίνοποιεῖν*
 22 (*kainopoieîn*)⁴⁰ and *καίνοργόν* (*kainourgón*)⁴¹ understood as the *sheer novelty*
 23 and as such lasting only for a short period of time. For now at least, we have the
 24 sense that the seemingly dead art which originated in the process of *assembling* is
 25 of a higher order than the one sprung from invention, and what we still need to be

use of the plural (philosophers) instead of the singular (philosopher), as can be inferred from the emblematic concept of the poet or rhapsode as a bee flitting from flower to flower borrowed from *Ion*, 534a-b: "I have always consistently admired philosophy and extolled you (sc. all of you) and lived on intimate terms with the writings that you have left behind. These very phrases that I utter – where else but from you did I get them? Culling them like a bee, I make my show with them before men, who applaud and recognize where and from whom and how I gathered each flower ..." The English version of the passage is borrowed from A. M. Harmon's study edition of Lucian (Loeb Classical Library), which is also true for all the other instances of quoting the mentioned author.

³⁷ *To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words*, 3: ... *συνεῖργεζετο δὲ τὴν κατὰ τὴν ἄρχειν ἄρχειν ἄρχειν τὸν φησὶν κατὰ ἀμύουσα ποιοῦσα εἶναι τὰ πλάσματα (ἐμψύχα ποιοῦσα τὰ πλάσματα).*

³⁸ *To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words*, 3: *ἡ μὲν οὖν πᾶσι φανερὸν ἐστὶν, καίνοποιεῖν δὲ καὶ καίνοργόν τι τὸ πλάσμα, οὐδὲ τὸ ἀρχαίωτον τὸ πλάσμα.*

³⁹ *To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words*, 3.

⁴⁰ *To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words*, 3.

⁴¹ *To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words*, 3.

1 assured that our initial assumption was not off the mark is yet another emblematic
2 image now concerning the concept of assembling, i.e. *montage* itself.

3 As such an image could not be found in Lucian's work, we were thus forced
4 to make a detour into the same spiritual milieu and one of its most representative
5 works such as Philostratus' *Imagines*, where we came across it. The finding itself
6 surpassed all expectations in so far as it subsequently turned out that Philostratus'
7 description of a painting representing Daedalus' workshop⁴² makes up – together
8 with Lucian's emblematic image of Prometheus' modeling human figures in clay –
9 some kind of a methodological diptych, with its parts standing in sharp contrast to
10 each other. That on the painting referred to above Daedalus is represented as
11 Socrates and his workshop as that of Socrates can be inferred from the fact that he
12 speaks Attic, being, moreover, barefooted and clothed in tribon as a characteristic
13 Socratic overcoat. That this is an allusive and yet elegant technique can be
14 deduced from the fact that before starting on modeling his figures Daedalus is
15 represented as “looking intently at the intelligible reality exceeding by far the
16 cognitive powers of the human mind,”⁴³ – a fact which clearly points to the
17 famous passage from the myth of the winged chariot in *Phaedrus* dealing with
18 *Øperour£nioj* (*hyperouránios*)⁴⁴, i.e. the top of the vault of heaven as a realm of
19 perfect Forms, which could be regarded as yet another clear indication that
20 Philostratus thereby wanted to lay particular stress on the fact that he remained
21 faithful to the ideals of a new art essentially based on the key postulates of the new
22 rhetoric as expressed in *Phaedrus*.

23 What is going on in the mentioned workshop clearly suggests that life pulsates
24 at high pressure through this seemingly dead art sprung from *montage*, with
25 figures including that of a cow being present in it in all their developmental
26 phases, i.e. from a rough draft and its somewhat elaborated version to the shapes
27 already giving an inkling of motion and gradually coming out of the workshop,
28 and thus covering all the stages in their life progress, from, so to speak, a bud to a
29 ripened fruit, so that it is hard to shake off the feeling that a specific sea of life
30 overflows from the workshop of Daedalus, Socrates' legendary ancestor. There is
31 no more doubt that Lucian's *old plasma* is nothing else than Socrates' plasma,
32 with the quintessence of this “new” art, essentially determined by *montage*, lying,
33 unlike that of Promethean plasma and its narrow, limited lifespan, just in
34 *palingenesis*, i.e. in a never-ending process of rebirth of the same mythical and
35 poetic concept in the form of *plasma* and its eternal life in metamorphose, as
36 shown by the fact that the concept itself, although substantially the self-same, is
37 increasingly assuming new forms with the result that a steady flow of diversity
38 circulates through thematic uniformity and monotony, which is to be regarded as
39 *atopon*, with one and the same poetic motif simultaneously being the same and

⁴² *Imagines*, 1, 16 (Pasiphae).

⁴³ *Imagines*, 1, 16): αὐτῶν δὲ Δα...δαλοῖς ἔτικ...ζει μὲν καὶ τῷ εἰδοῖ ὀψρσοφῶν τι
καὶ ἄνουν βλῆπων ... (*hypérsophón ti kai énnoun blépon*).

⁴⁴ 247b–248a.

1 different, as in the case of another painting by Philostratus⁴⁵ representing Achilles
 2 as a child and his ethos. Thus, what has emerged is a sharp contrast between
 3 Promethean plasma and its limited lifespan on one side and the old Socratic
 4 plasma on the other, with the latter's daemonic potential to give its creations
 5 eternal life.

6 We can get the full picture of the art symbolized by Daedalus' workshop only
 7 after having hermeneutically read, along with Lucian and Philostratus' work,
 8 Plato's early dialogues, where we come across a whole series of artisan terms and
 9 expressions used in an attempt by the above-mentioned authors to graphically
 10 illustrate strenuous exertions in seeking to shed light on, elaborate and put
 11 finishing touches to a detail found in the archetype, such as *forging by the*
 12 *craftsman's hammer in the blacksmith's workshop* in Lucian,⁴⁶ *boring, polishing*
 13 *with the cutting edge* and *sawing* in Philostratus,⁴⁷ or again kindred expressions
 14 like *scraping, filing, whetting* and *cutting to small pieces* in Plato's *Hippias*,⁴⁸
 15 which explains in the best way possible why such an art is so close to life, as
 16 evidenced by the fact that its creations cover a long distance from a bud to a
 17 ripened fruit or, to be more precise, from a rough draft to the final, polished
 18 version. A passage from Lucian's fairly brief work *Prometheus es in verbis*
 19 graphically illustrates the essence of such an art, a passage that will bring us closer
 20 to both the ideal of life and aesthetics and evaluation criteria, otherwise closely
 21 associated with the phenomenon of Socrates' old *plasma*, without which it is not at
 22 all possible to understand either the poetics of the novel or the better part of the
 23 'corpus' of post-classical Greek literature.

24 25 26 **The Song of the Sirens: Old Socratic "Plasma" at its Best and its Reflection in** 27 **the Greek Novel**

28
29 Despite what has been said about the main aesthetic and methodological
 30 principles, as expressed in Philostratus and Lucian's emblematic images and the
 31 literary canons of the latter, we need yet another key detail which additionally
 32 could explain why the old Socratic *plasma* held a special attraction for the above-
 33 mentioned authors, as evidenced by the fact that they walked after Socrates with
 34 religious fervour and followed in his footsteps, inspired, as it seems, by the above
 35 mentioned celebrated message of *Phaedrus*, which made them look on the

⁴⁵ *Imagines*, 2, 2 (Education of Achilles).

⁴⁶ *In Praise of Demosthenes*, 14: *æmyucon ka^ sfur>laton ™po...hsen tÕn lÕgon*
 (*émpsychon kai sphyrélaton epoíese ton lógon*).

⁴⁷ *Imagines* 1, 16: ... *tîn 'Erètwn ka^ of tÕ trÚpanon ... stršfontej ka^ of ...*
tù skepErnJ lea...nontej t! m»pw °kribwmšna ... of de ™p^ toà pr...onoj ænnoiEn
te Øperbebl»kasi p@san (*trýpanon, sképarnon, prion*).

⁴⁸ *Greater Hippias*, 304b: *kn»smat£ to... ™stin ka^ peritm»mata tîn lÕgwn ...*
kat! bracÝ diVrhmšna (*knésmata ... kai peritmémata ton lógon katá brachý diereména*).

1 legendary philosopher as a divinity - something that will provide an incentive for
 2 recreating ideals of aesthetics and life, restored to all their former glory in the later
 3 periods of the Second Sophistic, as will be seen shortly.

4 We can obtain an answer to the question concerning a magnetic attraction
 5 exerted on the men of letters by Socrates' plasma compared, among other things,
 6 to the songs of the Sirens in Alcibiades' speech in the *Symposium*,⁴⁹ only when
 7 establishing a connection between the critical judgments of two authors, who, as
 8 far as ancient literary criticism is concerned, were the only theoreticians of style
 9 that hit the mark and noticed an ironical, comical note in Socrates' or Plato's way
 10 of speaking and writing, as testified by Aristotle's assertion⁵⁰ that Plato by using of
 11 one and the same stylistic device in *Phaedrus* such as dithyrambic compounds
 12 managed to achieve a huge effect, resulting in the fusion of polar opposites, such
 13 as pathos and humour, and what Aristotle seemed to hint at was most probably
 14 Socrates' second speech on love as well as its emblematic feature, the myth of the
 15 winged chariot. Aristotle's assertion becomes increasingly important if
 16 complemented by the statement we encounter in Lucian's writing *De domo*⁵¹ about
 17 Socrates proclaiming the lofty ideals, and at the same time imperceptibly poking
 18 fun at Phaedrus of Myrrhinus as if the latter were – to paraphrase the author's
 19 words – a small, snotty child.

20 Thus, the myth of the winged chariot turned out to be, in keeping with
 21 Norden's favourite term, a specific *Signatur* of Socrates' style, in so far as both
 22 flying up to ethereal heights, clothed in lyric images, and a certain comicality
 23 reminiscent of childish naïve tales were mixed with and fused to each other in it
 24 such a way, that the human eye – to use yet again Philostratus' celebrated
 25 analogy⁵² – might not be capable of discerning where the sublime ends and the
 26 comical begins and what is so laughable in an absolutely lofty subject-matter.⁵³
 27 This kind of unparalleled combination of polar opposites in Socrates' style was
 28 regarded, due to its daemonic power, as something beyond imitation, just the way
 29 any attempt to remain indifferent to this type of creation reminiscent of a specific
 30 song of the Sirens was deemed next to impossible. What can be adduced as an
 31 additional reason to explain how peerless this feature of Socrates' style was is
 32 Lucian's oeuvre itself in which the method of interweaving polar opposites such as
 33 the serious and the laughable was characterized by perfect harmony and
 34 symmetry,⁵⁴ yet despite all this, the above-mentioned parts of a whole might be
 35 separated from each other if an operation were to be carried out on the text with

⁴⁹ 216a.

⁵⁰ *Art of Rhetoric*, 3, 7 (1408b).

⁵¹ *Hall*, 4.

⁵² Philostratus, *Imagines*, 2, 2.

⁵³ On the mixture of the serious and the laughable as a widespread ideal of life and aesthetics in late antiquity and the Middle Ages see Ernst Robert Curtius, *Europäische Literatur und lateinisches Mittelalter* (Bern: Francke Verlag, 1961³), 419 – 434. It is worth mentioning that Platonic origin of the mixture is not even touched upon in his summary presentation of the phenomenon.

⁵⁴ *To One Who Said You're a Prometheus in Words*, 5.

1 the precision of a surgeon, so that an attentive reader, in keeping with Philostratus'
 2 analogy, could almost without difficulty discern where the serious ends and the
 3 laughable begins.

4 Thus, as far as the aforesaid main characteristic of Socrates' style is
 5 concerned, the men of letters had to content themselves with a substitute for it,
 6 such as imitating the remaining features of his art of speaking, with those allusive
 7 and symbolic standing out distinctly from the rest, as testified by a particularly
 8 characteristic passage from Plato's early dialogue *Laches*⁵⁵ where we come across
 9 an explicit statement saying that Socrates' speech on children passes, as a rule,
 10 imperceptibly into one about men – a fact which recommended him for the teacher
 11 of children and adults and, by the same token, of the entire Greek world, which
 12 will find its clear reflection in both the novel and the works of the major exponents
 13 of the Second Sophistic, as will be seen shortly. Another characteristic of Socrates'
 14 style, as expressed in dithyrambic compounds, poetic images and analogies,
 15 seemed convenient to be set as a model for imitation, all the more as it was, along
 16 with the aforementioned ones, used in his speeches in *Phaedrus* and *Phaedo* in
 17 such a way that the entire phenomenon could rightly be regarded as a
 18 philosophical poetry.⁵⁶

19 Finally, a combination of the mentioned features of Socrates' style
 20 immediately sprang to mind as an ideal solution, in so far as this kind of
 21 philosophical poetry seemed to be closely linked to the symbol and thus to leave
 22 ample room for men of letters to exalt the glory of Socratic or Plato's philosophy
 23 with the noble aim to make it, in keeping with the key message of Socrates'
 24 political testament in *Alcibiades*,⁵⁷ continuously resound like a specific song of the
 25 Sirens for centuries to come – something that, as far as the mentioned litterateurs
 26 are concerned, could have been achieved by playing a specific game of hide-and-
 27 seek with the analogies, namely a play essentially based on recycling one and the
 28 same archetypal idea and resulting in an entire sea of concepts. That the above-
 29 mentioned testament might have played an important role in the process of
 30 conceiving the poetics of both the Greek novel and the literary products of the
 31 Second Sophistic can be deduced from the fact that for the men of letters Platonic
 32 philosophy, Socratic style and its marvelous plasma were, no matter how
 33 paradoxical it may sound, more important than their own writings, as can be

⁵⁵ 188b.

⁵⁶ Cf. Giovanni Reale, *Platone, Simposio: introduzione, traduzione, note e apparati* (Milano: Bompiani, 2000), 41: "... Platone vuole indicare in modo emblematico (sc. by means of Socrates' successful attempt to drive Agathon and Aristophanes to the admission that the same man could have the knowledge required for writing comedy and tragedy and that the fully skilled tragedian could be a comedian as well) la sua convinzione di essere proprio lui *tale poeta*. La sua opera, nella dimensione del vero guadagnato mediante la filosofia, e quindi come poesia filosofica, invero e supera la tragedia e la commedia."

⁵⁷ 123d, where the stress is laid on the two crucial forces, such as 'wisdom' and 'industry', or rather *sof...a* (*sophía*) and *πῆμιςλειά* (*epiméleia*) which were to be given later on a role of a specific bulwark in defending the Greek living space from foreign influences as well as a guarantor of victory in any future clashes with the barbarian element.

1 inferred from Lucian's explicit statement,⁵⁸ which could serve as the guideline for
 2 reading their own oeuvre including that of the authors of the Greek novel.

5 **Byzantine Novel: Barbarism or Symbolism?**

7 It is through use of symbols that the two exponents of the genre in the age of
 8 Komnenoi, Makrembolites' and Prodromos' novel, bring us closer to
 9 understanding higher-order goals with which both the origins and poetics of the
 10 genre are closely associated. Unraveling enigmas posed by hardly visible symbols
 11 was only possible by applying the method of comparative analysis requiring a lot
 12 of repeated reading of the same text. There is, however, an additional problem
 13 consisting in the fact that the aforesaid symbols are fully disguised by what
 14 seemed at first sight to be disconnecting formulations making no sense –
 15 something that Rohde couldn't help but label "barbarian,"⁵⁹ given his
 16 misunderstanding of the phenomenon. Ironically enough, what appears at first
 17 sight to be a senseless formulation ended up having not only its logical place in the
 18 composition of a whole but also a capacity of making that whole assume, in
 19 keeping with the key principles of Lucian's poetics, characteristics of harmony and
 20 symmetry. As far as the composition itself is concerned, key passages from
 21 Makrembolites' novel, i.e. those introductory, central and concluding, fully
 22 characterized by the emblematic images of Plato's philosophy, point more than
 23 anything else to just that kind of conclusion, which might not be drawn if the
 24 compositional aspect was overlooked, with the above-mentioned images being, as
 25 a result of this kind of failure, inevitably reduced to nothing else than a platitude
 26 and inflatedness.

27 Already in the introductory passages from Makrembolites' novel we come
 28 across the scene wherein the novel protagonist compares himself to both divinity⁶⁰
 29 and Socrates.⁶¹ The names of Socrates' legendary ancestors, Daedalus⁶² and

⁵⁸ *The Dead Come to Life, or the Fisherman*, 6: "... and although ostensibly it is I whom they (sc. men) admire for the bouquet, as a matter of fact it is you (sc. philosophers, first of all Socrates and Plato) and your garden, because you have put forth such blossom, so gay and varied in their hues – if one but knows how to select and interweave and combine them so that they will not be out of harmony with one another."

⁵⁹ *Der griechische Roman*, 561: "... und das Ergebnis ist doch nur ein, selbst den Achilles überbietendes Wortgekräusel und peinliches Difteln in armselig anspruchsvollen Phrasen (sc. in Makrembolites' novel), denen die ganz korrupte ... Redeweise ... noch einen besonders barbarischen Zusatz gibt."

⁶⁰ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 3, 1: ἡκω κῶρυξ καὶ δῆκομαι παρ' αὐτῶν οὐκ αἰ κῶρυξ ἅλλ' αἰ κεῖ.

⁶¹ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 3, 2): ἡμὲν δὲ περὶ ἐστῶσι, καὶ λαμπρὸν τὴν κορὸν τοῦτον ἡ...σσοῦσιν, οὐκ ἔστιν ἡ σωκράτους ἡ ζωῶν περὶ ἐστῶσι.

⁶² *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 5, 6: ἡ περὶ (sc. figuras avium) ... Δαίδαλον κεῖ τεχνόρῃσεν ...

1 Hephaestus,⁶³ are also mentioned in the same context and, moreover, associated
 2 with the making of bird figures adorning the well in the garden in Aulikomis,
 3 namely a well the motionless water surface of which is said – due to the wonderful
 4 effect produced by white island marble laid in its bottom and artfully marked by
 5 dark dappling – to make an impression of running like a stream, with stormy sea
 6 waves⁶⁴ at times seemingly swelling on it, which seems to contain a veiled allusion
 7 to both the emblematic feature of Socrates’ speeches, equated in *Hippias* with
 8 making muddy the discussion,⁶⁵ and the daemonic power of his word reminiscent
 9 of a truly poetic, i.e. Homeric, utterance capable of provoking storms even on the
 10 river of the dead in the underworld, as can be inferred from a passage from
 11 Lucian’s oeuvre.⁶⁶ There is in the same context yet another emblematic image, this
 12 time borrowed from *Ion*, in which poet or, to be more precise, rhapsode is
 13 represented as an ordinary channel having no higher purpose than to let the
 14 daemonic force of poetry, streaming from the divine, celestial heights, pass
 15 through him⁶⁷ and thereby create the possibility for that force to both reveal itself
 16 to the world and people and make them dance to the beat of its lovely rhythms
 17 capable of galvanizing anyone. In a specific game of hide-and-seek the archetype
 18 in *Ion* was subjected to a strange kind of metamorphosis in Makrembolites’ novel,
 19 as a result of which it turned out to be almost unrecognizable, as evidenced by the
 20 fact that the men appearing in the archetypal concept were substituted in the latter
 21 with the trees, said to be broadening their branches and embracing themselves in
 22 the rhythms of a choral song⁶⁸ in order to form a vault of crowns impenetrable to
 23 sun-beams otherwise reaching to the ground only when Zephyrus creates some
 24 kind of a channel on the top of crowns by shifting their leaves with his whiff –
 25 something that in an allusion to the celebrated *Iliad* verse⁶⁹ was characterized by

⁶³ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 5, 6: § p£nd’ (sc. figuras avium) “Hfestoj
 ™calkoÚrgħse·

⁶⁴ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 5, 7: tÕn toà fršatoj puqmšna nhsièthj ™kÒsmei
 l...qoj leukÕj mšn, ¶ll’ Øpemela...neto kat! mšrh ... æj ™nteàqen dokeçn tÕ Údwr
 kineçsqai dihnekîj ka^ katakumatoàsqai ka^ oÇEon çnakurtoàsqai·

⁶⁵ *Lesser Hippias*, 373a: ¶ll! Swkr£thj ... çe^ tar£ttei ™n toj lÒgoij ka^
 ™oiken éesper kakourgoànti·

⁶⁶ *Charon, or the Inspectors*, 7. Cf. n. 19.

⁶⁷ *Ion*, 533d – 534b: æsti g!r toàto tšcnh mèn oÙk çn par! so^ per^ `Om»rou
 eâ lšgein, Ò nàn d¼ ælegon, çe...a dè dÚnamij ¼ se kineç·

⁶⁸ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 4: d£fnh g!r ka^ murr...nh ka^ kÚparittoj ka^
 ¥mpeloi ... ™faploàsi toÝj kl£douj æj cecraj ka^ éesper corÕn susths£mena
 katorofoàsi tÕn kÁpon·

⁶⁹ 8, 19: seir¼n cruse...hn ™x oÙranÒqen krem£santej·

1 the novel's protagonist as *chryseá seirá* ("a chain of gold")⁷⁰ symbolizing the
2 heavenly love⁷¹ in Lucian and, by the same token, enthusiasm and mania-related
3 origins of both poetry and rhetoric⁷² streaming from the realm beyond heaven, as
4 depicted in the myth of the winged chariot.

5 We also come across reflections which the two emblematic metaphors
6 appearing in the second part of *Phaedrus*, such as *writing in the black water*⁷³ and
7 *planting the garden of letters*⁷⁴ found in the concluding passages from
8 Makrembolites' novel, where the author gives vent to his own and his dearest's
9 desire for their love adventures to be written in a kind of indelible script so as to be
10 eternized, and for better understanding of what follows it is also worth noting that
11 the mentioned metaphors were used by Socrates for the purpose of demonstrating
12 all the impotence of the script when contrasted with the living and breathing word
13 and its daemonic power to imprint itself on the soul of the listeners. It was,
14 however, not that difficult to notice the reflection of the aforesaid metaphors in
15 Makrembolites' novel, given that we find them therein slightly modified and
16 changed into metaphors of both *painting on water*⁷⁵ and *painting by means of*
17 *plants and their floral adornment*.⁷⁶ It was, however, much harder to fathom out

⁷⁰ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 4: ἡμίση δὲ εἶπον „δὲν: χρυσαῖν ἡμῶν μοι τῆν
seirén, Sèsqenej. On the popularity of the Homeric image closely associated with the myth of the
winged chariot in the period of the Second Sophistic cf. Lucian, *Hermotimus or Concerning the*
Sects, 3: Ἐπὶ τοῦ Ὀμῆρου Ζεῦς χρυσαῖν τῆν σεῖραν κατὰ τὴν ἀποτοῦ Ἰὸγου, ὅφ' ἐν
se fñasp' dhlad¾ ka^ fñakouf...zei prõj aøtõn.

⁷¹ Lucian, *In Praise of Demosthenes*, 13: τῆν δ' οὐραν...οὐ χρυσαῖν τῶν σεῖρων
ælxin (sc. *kñntauq' "n filosofoj tũ lögj) oũ pur^ ka^ tõxoj ἡμῶν dusalqej*
nõsouj traumætwn.

⁷² *In Praise of Demosthenes*, 13 where Demosthenes' oratory is essentially characterized
by *sõphron mania*: ... ἢ ἡμῶν τῆν ἀποτοῦ τοῦ κελου ἕκραντὸν τε καὶ κατὰ τὴν „δῆσαν
ἡμῶν xormisan (sc. *τῆν δ' οὐραν...οὐ χρυσαῖν τῶν σεῖρων) man...v sèfroni tĩn yucĩn*
...

⁷³ 276c: οὐκ ἔρα σπουδὴ ἀὐτῆς ἡμῶν ὕδατι γράψαι μέλανι σπε...ρῶν διὰ καλῆμου
met, lögwn fdunætwn mèn aũtoj lögj bohqen, fdunætwn δὲ fkanĩj tflhqá
didexai (*ouk ára spoudé autà en hýdati grápsei mëlani ...*).

⁷⁴ 276d: ἢ τῶν μὲν ἡμῶν γράμματα κῆρῶν ... παίδων ἐκρίν σπερεῖ τε καὶ
græyei, õtan δὲ græfv, autũ te õpomn»mata qhsaurizõmeno ... (*tous men en*
grámmasi kèpous ... sperei te kai grápsei).

⁷⁵ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 11, 21: σὺ δ' ἢ ποσειδὼν ... ἡμῶν οὐκ περισεῖς
τῆν mn»mhn (fqnaton) ... t, kaq' ἡμῶν ἡμῶν ὕδατι katazwgrafĩn ka^ mšcrij
ἡμῶν scætwn thrĩn fñapõnipta (*en hýdati katazographõn*).

⁷⁶ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 11, 22): σὺ δ' ἢ γὰρ μάτηρ ... φύτ' δ' οὐκ ἐναδῆσαι
ðmènuma ... õlon drõma tõ kaq' ἡμῶν tosj futõj katazwgrafoàsa (*tois phytõis*
katazographõsa).

1 their meaning just due to the fact that it was, first of all, necessary to establish a
 2 logical relationship between the keywords appearing in the same context, such as
 3 the names of the mythical personalities Icarus, Daphne and Hyacinth, including
 4 the emblematic metaphor of living speech as a sculpture in Plato's *Republic*,⁷⁷
 5 slightly altered by the addition of the adjective *katēcruson* (*katáchryson*) in
 6 Makrembolites.⁷⁸ Only thus was it possible to draw the conclusion that the author
 7 by using of the above-mentioned keywords makes it known to his readership in a
 8 more implicit manner that his own story might also be eternized only if it assumes,
 9 like Socrates' life and words, characteristics of myth and legend – something that
 10 can only be achieved by applying the frequently mentioned principles of the new
 11 rhetoric, *diareseis* and *synagogai*, to his own written compositions as well as by
 12 modeling his own and his protagonists' course of action down to the last detail
 13 upon Socrates' life, which found its reflection in the way of living enjoying
 14 widespread popularity in the later periods of the Second Sophistic covered by
 15 Eunapius' *Lives*, as will be seen shortly.

16 That it's all about Socratic model is further corroborated by the final message
 17 we encounter at the very end of the novel, with the genre's term *drama*⁷⁹
 18 appearing in it not at all, as it might seem at first sight, by sheer chance, a term
 19 with the help of which an essential relationship might, contrary to all expectations,
 20 be established between the allusiveness of Socrates' word, symbolism and the
 21 novel as a genre. And the message itself is hidden, as evidenced by the fact that the
 22 author recommends his own and his darling's adventures simultaneously to the
 23 opposed groups within the reading audience,⁸⁰ as represented by those already
 24 seized by erotic mania as well as those whose attitude to love is marked by
 25 continence, i.e. "sophrosýne", while, regarding the full context essentially
 26 characterized by the emblematic images and metaphors of Platonic philosophy, it
 27 is pretty much clear that the message itself was conveyed in an enigmatic way to
 28 the entire readership, just because in the adventures referred to above both
 29 "manía" and "sophrosýne" were – in keeping with the final message of the myth of
 30 the winged chariot – interwoven with and fused to each other in perfect unity and
 31 proportion, considered to be a guarantee of a blissful life in this world.

32 That the final message, conveyed by the author at the very end of his work,
 33 should be interpreted in a symbolic way is further corroborated by yet another

⁷⁷ 540c: *pagkēlouj, æfh, toÝj ¥rcontaj, ð Sèkratej, éesper &ndriantopoiŒj
 &pe...rgasai* (*hóspēr andriantopoiós apéirgasai*).

⁷⁸ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 1, 4: *ka... tij tîn NýigŒnwn katarrhtoreÚsei taàta ka^
 æj &q&natJ st»IV tosj lŒgoij &ndri&nta caklourg»sei kat&cruson* (*andriànta katáchryson*).

⁷⁹ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 11, 24: *klÁsij æstw tí b...blJ tŒ kaq' `Usm...nhn
 dr@ma ka^ tŒn `Usmín...an ™mš* (*to kath' Hysmínen dráma kai tòn Hysminían emé*).

⁸⁰ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 11, 23: *Óson mèn oân ™n &nqrèpoj ™rwtikèteron,
 tîn pollín ™rwtikín caritwn ™m@j &pod&xetaj ka^ Óson parqenikŒn ka^ semnoterŒn,
 tÁj swfrosÚnhj p&lin &q&setaj: ka^ oÚtwj ™m<n æstaj t| tÁj mn»mhj &q&nata*.

1 scene we come across almost at the very end of Prodromos' novel, with the key
 2 principles of old Socratic plasma, or rather new rhetoric, *diairéseis* and *synagogai*,
 3 being in it visualized, as was otherwise the case with Lucian's *Imagines*. What is
 4 depicted in the mentioned scene are the embraced figures of the protagonists and
 5 their fathers at the moment of the highest possible delight such as their
 6 reunification in the garden of Kratandros' house in Cyprus after so long a period of
 7 time marked by endless wandering and suffering. The form of the embraced
 8 figures intertwined with each other and characterized as *pléσij* (*plásis*), gives the
 9 impression as if four bodies either coalesced into one head or one head ramified
 10 into four bodies,⁸¹ with Socratic plasma's key principles, unrecognizably modified
 11 into *diairšw* (*diairéo*) and *suniz£nw* (*synizáno*), thus being with almost
 12 religious fervour represented and eternized as a sculpture and, moreover, in the
 13 key passage such as the concluding one. We were, as it seems, quite justified in
 14 speaking of religious fervour, just due to the fact that one of the key terms, which
 15 is used to denote perfect number⁸² in the philosophy of Pythagoras, appears in the
 16 above-mentioned passage from Prodromos' novel – something that could be
 17 explained by the author's noble aim to achieve perfection in a symbol-based
 18 elaboration of detail.

19 The central part of Makrembolites' novel or, to be more precise, its fourth
 20 book,⁸³ which is largely made up of the description of the ensemble of three large
 21 scale paintings depicted on the garden wall in Aulikomis, speaks volumes about
 22 the author's aspiration to achieve perfection in terms of composition. What we are
 23 referring to is a series of wall paintings with Eros' boyish figure represented as
 24 naked and disproportionately large and, moreover, placed right in the middle of the
 25 cycle so as to be framed on one side by allegorical representations of Virtues and
 26 on the other by those of months, symbolized by the human figures denoting time
 27 and season-limited occupations, such as those of soldier, gardener, ploughman,
 28 shepherd and hunter, to mention just a few. We shall decipher the hidden meaning
 29 of the ensemble of paintings only when equating the allegorical figures of the
 30 Virtues and those of the months with the world of gods and the world of men
 31 respectively, which gives occasion for interpreting Eros' central position in the
 32 mentioned ensemble in accordance with the key message of Socrates' discourse in
 33 the *Symposium*, with Eros himself being therein identified with the daemon filling
 34 the void between these worlds by both transmitting and interpreting messages
 35 coming from the world of gods to that of men, and conversely.⁸⁴ Thus, the cycle of

⁸¹ Theodoros Prodromos, *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, 9, 317 – 330: *ka^ schmatismŌn kainŌn m̄xezwgr£foun: / ærĩnto g|r tšttarej ¥nqrwpoi k£tw / æj e,,j kefalʒ/4n prospéfukŌtej m...an / ... / m...an kefalʒ/4n e,,j tetraktŸn swm£twn / diaireq£san, À tetraktŸn swm£twn / oŒEon sunizhkukan e,,j k£ran m...an: / zùŌn ti tetr£swmon, À toÙnant...on / monoprŌswpon tett£rwn zèwn pl£sin.*

⁸² *Rhodanthe and Dosikles*, 9, 326, 327.

⁸³ *Hysmine and Hysminias*, 4, 3 – 20.

⁸⁴ 202e.

1 paintings with the key thesis of Socrates' speech in the *Symposium* depicted in it
 2 turned out to be nothing else than a symbol of the daemonic power of the old
 3 Socratic plasma, which, like Eros himself, transmits messages from one world to
 4 another.

5 On the basis of evidence obtained by unraveling the symbols, we are in a
 6 position to conclude that the old Socratic plasma was identified with the song of
 7 the Sirens even in an epoch as late as that of the Komnenoi. This tendency cannot
 8 be fully understood without evidence provided by Eunapius for the leading
 9 exponents of the Second Sophistic in its later, second phase such as, to name just a
 10 few, Chrysanthius, Aedesius and Prohaeresius who made great efforts to imitate
 11 Socrates' life down to the last detail, with this excessive zeal going in
 12 Prohaeresius' case so far as to induce him to spend cold winters in Gaul
 13 barefooted⁸⁵ and yet clad in a tiny threadbare cloak as well as to drink nearly
 14 freezing water of the Rhine regarded by him as the height of luxury,⁸⁶ and all of it,
 15 as it seems, with the aim to surpass his master's legendary achievement during his
 16 military episode in ice-cold Potidea.⁸⁷ The Second Sophistic in a later phase
 17 covered by Eunapius' *Lives* is of paramount importance for understanding the
 18 phenomenon of the Greek novel due to, among other things, the fact that even the
 19 female exponents of this intellectual current, such as Sosipatra, follow, full of
 20 enthusiasm, in Socrates' footsteps,⁸⁸ which can explain in the best way possible
 21 the important role played by women in the plot of the Greek novel – something for
 22 which Rohde was unable to find an explanation,⁸⁹ despite the fact that it was
 23 within reach.

24 The life of Libanius, as depicted in Eunapius' *Vitae*,⁹⁰ shows the extent to
 25 which the sophists of the period were driven by passion ambition to live up to their
 26 billing as Socrates' followers. What is being referred to here is a noble effort made
 27 by Libanius or, to be more precise, his "mission impossible" undertaken with the
 28 aim to transfer the mentioned daemonic features of Socrates' style to his way of
 29 living and his course of action. As it was very hard, as far as Socrates' style is

⁸⁵ Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists*, 492.

⁸⁶ *Lives of the Sophists*, 492.

⁸⁷ Plato, *Symposium*, 220b.

⁸⁸ Cf. Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists*, 470 where the most sublime aspect of Platonic philosophy, such as both the translation of ideas and forms from the place beyond heaven to the earthly plane and the divination closely associated with it, as depicted in the myth of the winged chariot in *Phaedrus*, is personified by a woman, none other than Sosipatra, who is, not at all by mere chance, presented as falling to both prophetic ecstasy and divinatory mania at the very moment she was discoursing on the central theme dealt with in the mentioned Plato's work, such as the constituent parts of the soul and its descent into earth. Of the influence exercised by Xenophon's *Memorabilia* upon Eunapius' writing clearly speaks the fact that Sosipatra's character is modeled on the famous passage from the mentioned work (1, 4), where Socrates lays stress on the importance of divination for every well-ordered society.

⁸⁹ *Der griechische Roman*, 71: "Im wirklichen Leben entwickelte sich höchstens den Heteren gegenüber eine gewisse Ritterlichkeit, die nun freilich mit einem sehr unangenehmen Zusatz frivoler Sentamentalität versetzt war ... Von einer wesentlich veränderten Stellung ehrbarer Mädchen und Frauen erfahren wir nichts".

⁹⁰ 495 – 496.

1 concerned, to discern where the serious ends and the laughable begins and what it
 2 is so laughable in quite a lofty subject-matter, so Libanius himself was in a similar
 3 way regarded as a second self by all those admitted to his teaching despite the fact
 4 that they were pursuing modes of life opposed to one another, with the
 5 consequence that everyone applauded in him qualities that were opposite. This can
 6 be explained by the fact that all possible temperaments were pulsating in Libanius'
 7 personality, including those contrasting with each other and mutually exclusive.

8
 9
 10 **A Short Synopsis of Rohde's Theses as Presented in the Mentioned Chapter**
 11 **and Seen Through the Prism of the Newly Gained Results**

12
 13 Due to the limited space, we focus our attention only on some of Rohde's
 14 particularly characteristic theses, as presented in the mentioned famous chapter, so
 15 as to highlight the deficiencies in their elaboration, and, by the same token, to
 16 point to the need for re-evaluating the entire corpus of post-classical Greek
 17 literature, all the more as the mentioned theses have done, as already seen, a great
 18 injustice to the Greek novel to degrade it to the level of barbarism, caricature⁹¹
 19 and, moreover, children's naive fairy tales.

20 That something was wrong, as already implied above, with Rohde's theses is
 21 also shown by the fact that the Greek novel, contrary to what was thought, turned
 22 out to be a specific hymn to both Platonic philosophy and the legendary Socratic
 23 plasma – a fact which may urge the need for revising some of his famous theses,
 24 all the more as they, erroneously considered undisputed, found their reflection in
 25 large-scale works on literary history, rhetorical prose and the novel as a genre,
 26 such as those of Albin Lesky⁹², Eduard Norden⁹³ and Michail Bachtin⁹⁴
 27 respectively. Taking a retrospective look at Rohde's theses seems to be important
 28 for yet another reason, since by doing so a key principle of great relevance to
 29 modern-day literary studies will be brought to light, along with a methodological
 30 imperative of great significance for future research on both the novel and the entire
 31 post-classical Greek literature.

32 All the shortcomings of Rohde's theses were evident from the fact that low
 33 and selfish motives such as glory, splendid outward appearance and riches were
 34 regarded by him as the three mighty Sirens exercising a decisive influence over
 35 both the world view and the literary activity of the leading exponents of the
 36 Second Sophistic, while, on the contrary, they were inspired by the lofty ideal of
 37 following in Socrates' footsteps and made great efforts to dance to the rhythms of

⁹¹ *Der griechische Roman*, 559: "Der ganze Roman (sc. that of Makrembolites) ist nichts als eine Karrikatur der Erzählung des Achilles Tatius".

⁹² *Geschichte der griechischen Literatur* (Bern und München: Francke Verlag, 1971³).

⁹³ *Die antike Kunstprosa*.

⁹⁴ "Epos e romanzo" in *Problemi di teoria del romanzo: metodologia letteraria e dialettica storica* (Torino: Einaudi, 1976).

1 corybantic élan⁹⁵ setting in motion his speeches in *Phaedrus* so as to be able to
 2 revive in the best way possible his old plasma which they, following the example
 3 of Alcibiades in Plato's homonymous dialogue, deemed to be a rapturous song of
 4 the Sirens. It is, therefore, not at all surprising that he characterized the rhetoric of
 5 the period as nothing else than "the Asiatic oratory known for its evil nature,"⁹⁶
 6 with just the qualifier "Asiatic" being indicative of his disparaging attitude
 7 towards both the novel and rhetoric, in so far as it, instead of a geographic term,
 8 became an evaluation criterion now standing for literary creation of the worst
 9 possible kind, equated with the greatest possible evil and in other passages from
 10 his monograph characterized as "an eloquence bereft of emotions,"⁹⁷ "rhetorical
 11 emptiness"⁹⁸ as well as "immense vanity."⁹⁹ Rohde was, unfortunately, unaware of
 12 the far-reaching consequences of the negative kind this thesis of his would
 13 necessarily have had if a question arose of how it was at all possible for such evil
 14 to continue to exist for an entire millennium and yet experience a resplendent
 15 renaissance in an epoch as late as that of the Komnenoi.

16 17 18 **Conclusion: The Forthcoming Battle for Symbols** 19

20 Finally, it turned out that all deficiencies in Rohde's attitudes towards the
 21 Greek novel resulted from the fact that his research on the theory of narrative,
 22 quite rightly deemed a strong starting point, was not brought to an end, in so far as
 23 it was not extended to the Byzantine period, more precisely to both 11th century
 24 rhetoric and the work of one of its most prominent exponents, with the *subject-*

⁹⁵ Cf. Eunapius, *Lives of the Sophists*, 501 – 502 where we come across a very revealing metaphor of reasoning, or rather elaborating the concepts and arguments as a "dance unfolding in the soul," namely a metaphor used by the author to graphically illustrate the effects of Chrysanthius' speech which like the sweetest song insinuates itself into all men's ears so as to both find its echo in the souls of the entire audience and – in keeping with the ideal of the new rhetoric as advocated by Socrates in *Phaedrus* – be adapted to the most diverse temperaments. The whole passage can also be regarded as an echo of Plato's concept of theater of the world as reflected in the *Laws*, where the very processions, sacrifices, songs and dances were pointed out as the most advisable way of acting for man, regarded as an ordinary marionette of a deity, to spend his life in peacetime as best as possible by playing at the noblest of pastimes, in *Philebus* (50b) succinctly characterized as tragedy and comedy of life.

⁹⁶ *Der griechische Roman*, 311: "Außer einer strengeren und nüchterneren Übung der Kunst ... gab es eine üppigere Weise, welche im Glanze eines barock überladenen und grellen Schmuckes der Rede sich gefiel, die unter dem Namen der asianischen übel bekannte Beredsamkeit."

⁹⁷ *Der griechische Roman*, 348: "Freilich war diese Art empfindungsloser Schönrederei die notwendige Frucht einer bis zur höchsten Stufe der technischen Entwicklung getriebenen Redekunst ..."

⁹⁸ *Der griechische Roman*, 380: "Wir haben diese rhetorische Leere, der jeder Gegenstand lediglich zum Vorwand und Anlaß über rein formalen Kunstübung dienen muß, aus dem ganzen Wesen der Sophistik zu begreifen versucht; wir werden nicht erwarten, daß aus den erotischen Exerzitien dieser Wortkünstler eine tiefere Seelenerfahrung zu uns spreche."

⁹⁹ *Der griechische Roman*, 341: "Vorán steht eine, zuweilen ganz maßlose Eitelkeit. Diese war freilich ein natürlicher Ergebnis ihres, ganz auf die persönliche Virtuosität gestellten Berufes."

1 *matter of poetry* appearing all of a sudden in his definition of the third type of
 2 narration, which, from a purely formal point of view, could explain why stylistic
 3 elements of poetry have been widely applied in the Greek novel's prose narrative.
 4 As a result, Rohde had no other choice but to postulate omnipotence of rhetoric as
 5 expressed in its centripetal force strong enough, in his view, to "suck in" all other
 6 genres, including both poetry and philosophy itself.

7 A satisfactory explanation regarding the nature of rhetoric in the period of the
 8 Second Sophistic, erroneously thought to be barbarian, could be found in
 9 Eunapius' *Lives of the Philosophers and Sophists*, which Rohde, for the reason
 10 stated above, didn't dare to take into account, which ultimately proved to be an
 11 utter failure. Only on the basis of evidence provided by Eunapius, far-reaching
 12 conclusion of paramount importance for the poetics of the Greek novel could be
 13 drawn pointing to *Phaedrus*, the two Socrates' speeches in it and their astonishing
 14 *plasma* as a prime mover behind all the ideals from which the Greek renaissance
 15 of later times, including those of the Second Sophistic, drew its inspiration, a
 16 *plasma* that could in the best way possible explain the process of blending and
 17 fusing together poetry, philosophy and rhetoric with the purpose of creating a
 18 unified, organic whole.

19 Thus, Rohde's controversial theses enabled us to draw three far-reaching
 20 conclusions as far as both the Greek novel and the entire post-classical Greek
 21 literature are concerned. First, we can rightly assume that the Greek novel still
 22 remains largely unread, and this is also true for the better part of the post-classical
 23 Greek literature when it comes to an in-depth analysis of the texts. Second, the
 24 importance and relevance of the Greek novel to both the contemporary reading
 25 audience and the studies of modern literature is demonstrated by the fact that both
 26 the genre's plot and metaphors are laden with symbolism, as shown by particularly
 27 characteristic passages from Byzantine novel, which gives rise to the assumption
 28 that a literary work bereft of a profound philosophical poetics is not worth a great
 29 deal. Third, a major breakthrough in understanding the poetics of the Greek novel
 30 can only be achieved through unrelenting battle for symbols.

31 Despite all that has been said about Rohde's theses, it would be wrong to
 32 conclude that his classical work is of little worth for inspiring further research
 33 efforts. As in the case of every major monograph, much of the book's significance
 34 lies in the fact that it raised the questions, such as those concerning the nature of
 35 the so-called erotic narrative (*erotische Erzählung*), the nature of sophistic
 36 rhetoric and the role played in the Greek novel by both Tyche and women, none of
 37 which was fully answered to this very day. It can therefore be argued that what
 38 Hans-Georg Beck said about Krumbacher's classical work has to be true for
 39 Rohde's celebrated monograph as well:

40
 41 "Was immer methodisch und sachlich an diesem Buch veraltet sein mag, ohne es ein
 42 paarmal durchgelesen zu haben, sollte man bei byzantinischer Literatur nicht
 43 mitsprechen!"
 44
 45

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