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“Rome in the Greek Novels? Images and Ideas of Empire in Chariton”

Critical Editions, Translations, and Commentaries

The Greek text below is from the Blake edition; unless otherwise noted, the English translations are from Reardon

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- Reardon, B. P., trans. 1989. “Chariton: Chaereas and Callirhoe.” *In Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, ed. B. P. Reardon, 17-124. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.

1. Chariton Chaereas and Callirhoe 1.1.1

Χαρίτων Ἀφροδισιεύς, Ἀθηναγόρου τοῦ ῥήτορος ὑπογραφεύς, πάθος ἐρωτικὸν ἐν Συρακούσαις γενόμενον διηγῆσομαι.

I, Chariton of Aphrodisias, the clerk of the speaker Athenagoras, shall now tell the story of a love affair that happened in Syracuse. (my translation)

2. Chariton 4.6.1 Dionysius requests Pharnaces' help

αὐτὸς δὲ ἄμυναν ἐπενόησε τοιαύτην. ἐπεδήμει κατὰ καιρὸν ὁ Λυδίας καὶ Ἰωνίας ὑπαρχος Φαρνάκης, ὃς δὴ καὶ μέγιστος εἶναι ἐδόκει τῶν ὑπὸ βασιλέως καταπεπομένων ἐπὶ θάλατταν. ἐπὶ τοῦ-τον ἦλθεν ὁ Διονύσιος, ἦν γὰρ αὐτῷ φίλος, καὶ ἰδιολογίαν ἠτήσατο μόνος. “ἰκετεύω σε” φησὶν, “ὦ δέσποτα, βοήθησον ἐμοὶ τε καὶ σεαυτῷ. Μιθριδάτης γάρ, ὁ κάκιστος ἀνθρώπων, καὶ σοὶ φθονῶν, ξένος μου γενόμενος ἐπιβουλεύει μου τῷ γάμῳ καὶ πέπομφε γράμματα μοιχικὰ μετὰ χρυσίου πρὸς τὴν γυναῖκα τὴν ἐμήν.”

For himself, he thought of the following way of defending his interests. At just that time Pharnaces, the governor of Lydia and Ionia, was on a visit there; he was considered the most important of the governors appointed by the king over the coastal regions. Dionysius went to him—he was a personal friend—and asked for a private interview. “Sir,” he said, “please help me and yourself. Mithridates, who is a wretched villain and jealous of you, was my guest; now he is trying to destroy my marriage—he has sent letters to my wife, along with money, to provoke her to adultery.”

3. Chariton 4.6.3-4 Pharnaces' letter to the king

ὑπέσχετο οὖν βοηθήσειν αὐτῷ κατὰ τὸν δυνατὸν τρόπον καὶ γράφει δι' ἀπορρήτων ἐπιστολὴν.

"Βασιλεῖ Βασιλέων Ἀρταξέρξη σατράπης Λυδίας καὶ Ἰωνίας Φαρνάκης ἰδίῳ δεσπότη χαίρειν. Διονύσιος ὁ Μιλήσιος δοῦλός ἐστι σὸς ἐκ προγόνων πιστὸς καὶ πρόθυμος εἰς τὸν σὸν οἶκον. οὗτος ἀπωδύρατο πρὸς με ὅτι Μιθριδάτης ὁ Καρίας ὑπαρχος ξένος αὐτῷ γενόμενος διαφθείρει αὐτοῦ τὴν γυναῖκα. φέρει δὲ μεγάλην ἀδοξίαν εἰς τὰ σὰ πράγματα, μᾶλλον δὲ ταραχὴν· πᾶσα μὲν γὰρ παρανομία σατράπου μεμπτή, μάλιστα δὲ αὕτη. καὶ γὰρ ὁ Διονύσιός ἐστι δυνατώτατος Ἰόνων καὶ τὸ κάλλος τῆς γυναικὸς περιβόητον, ὥστε τὴν ὕβριν μὴ δύνασθαι λαθεῖν."

So he promised to help him as much as he could and wrote a confidential letter.

Pharnaces, the Satrap of Lydia and Ionia, sends greeting to his Master Artaxerxes, the King of Kings. Dionysius of Miletus is your slave, like his ancestors before him, and a loyal and zealous friend to your house. He has complained to me that Mithridates, governor of Caria, who has been his guest, is trying to seduce his wife. This is bringing great discredit on your government—in fact it is causing disturbance; any improper behavior in a satrap is reprehensible, but this is particularly so. Dionysius is the most powerful of the Ionians, and his wife's beauty is celebrated, so this outrageous behavior cannot escape notice. (trans. Reardon)

4. Chariton 4.6.5 The king reads the letter

Ταύτην τὴν ἐπιστολὴν κομισθεῖσαν [ὁ] βασιλεὺς ἀνέγνω τοῖς φίλοις καὶ τί χρὴ πράττειν ἐβουλεύετο. γνώμαι δὲ ἐρρήθησαν διάφοροι· τοῖς μὲν γὰρ Μιθριδάτῃ φθονοῦσιν ἢ τὴν σατραπείαν αὐτοῦ μνωμένοις ἐδόκει μὴ περιορᾶν ἐπιβουλὴν εἰς γάμον ἀνδρὸς ἐνδόξου, τοῖς δὲ ῥαθυμοτέροις τὰς φύσεις ἢ τιμῶσι τὸν Μιθριδάτην (εἶχε δὲ πολλοὺς «καὶ» προεστηκότας) οὐκ ἤρεσκεν ἀνάρπαστον ἐκ διαβολῆς ποιεῖν ἄνδρα δόκιμον.

When this letter arrived, the King read it to his friends and discussed with them what to do. Different views were expressed. those who were envious of Mithridates or coveted his satrapy thought that a design on the wife of a man of distinction should not be overlooked. The more phlegmatic among them, and those who respected Mithridates—and they were numerous and highly placed—did not like the idea of ruining a respected man on the basis of a report of misbehavior.

5. Chariton 4.6.6 The king consults his advisers

ἀγχωμάτων δὲ τῶν γνωμῶν γενομένων ἐκείνης μὲν τῆς ἡμέρας οὐδὲν ἐπεκύρωσεν [ὁ] βασιλεὺς, ἀλλ' ὑπερέθετο τὴν σκέψιν· νυκτὸς δὲ ἐπελθούσης ὑπεδύετο αὐτὸν μισοπονηρία μὲν διὰ τὸ τῆς βασιλείας εὐπρεπές, εὐλάβεια δὲ περὶ «τοῦ» μέλλοντος· ἀρχὴν γὰρ ἔχειν τὸν Μιθριδάτην καταφρονήσεως. ὥρμησεν οὖν καλεῖν ἐπὶ τὴν δίκην αὐτόν·

Opinions were evenly balanced; the King made no decision that day and postponed the inquiry. When night came, a feeling of righteous repugnance came over him, as he kept in mind the dignity of his royal position, but he was moved also by caution as he considered the future—this could encourage Mithridates to treat him with disrespect. So he was moved to summon him to trial.

6. **Chariton 4.6.7 The subscriptio**

γράφει δὲ καὶ πρὸς Φαρνάκην "Διονύσιον, ἐμὸν δοῦλον, Μιλήσιον, πέμψον."

He wrote to Pharnaces, "Send my slave, Dionysius of Miletus." (trans. Reardon)

7. **Chariton 4.6.7 The king as a private individual**

ἄλλο δὲ πάθος παρήνει μεταπέμπεσθαι καὶ τὴν γυναῖκα τὴν καλήν· σύμβουλοι γὰρ οἶνος καὶ σκότος ἐν ἐρημίᾳ γινόμενοι καὶ τούτου τοῦ μέρους τῆς ἐπιστολῆς ἀνεμίμησκον βασιλέα, προσηρέθιζε δὲ καὶ φήμη, Καλλιρόην τινὰ καλλίστην ἐπὶ τῆς Ἰωνίας εἶναι·

But a different sentiment urged him to send for the beautiful woman as well; in his solitary state, wine and darkness played on the King's mind and reminded him of that part of the letter too. In addition, he was excited by the rumor that someone by the name of Callirhoe was the most beautiful woman in Ionia.

8. **Chariton 5.4.5-6 Description of the courtroom**

Ἐπεὶ δὲ ἦκεν ἡ κυρία τῶν ἡμερῶν, ἐκαθέσθη βασιλεύς, ἔστι δὲ οἶκος ἐν τοῖς βασιλείοις ἐξαιρετός, ἀποδεδειγμένος εἰς δικαστήριον, μεγέθει καὶ κάλλει διαφέρων· ἔνθα μέσος μὲν ὁ θρόνος κεῖται βασιλεῖ, παρ' ἑκάτερα δὲ τοῖς φίλοις οἱ τοῖς ἀξιώμασι καὶ ταῖς ἀρεταῖς ὑπάρχουσιν ἡγεμόνες ἡγεμόνων. περιεστᾶσι δὲ κύκλῳ τοῦ θρόνου λοχαγοὶ καὶ ταξίαρχοι καὶ τῶν βασιλέως ἐξελευθέρων τὸ ἐντιμότατον, ὥστε ἐπ' ἐκείνου τοῦ συνεδρίου καλῶς ἂν εἴποι τις "οἱ δὲ θεοὶ παρ Ζηνὶ καθήμενοι ἡγορόωντο."

When the appointed day came, the King took his seat. There is a special room in the palace which is designated as a law court, an usually big and beautiful room. In the middle stands the King's throne; on each side are places for the King's friends, those who in rank and ability count among the first in the land. Around the throne stand captains and commanders and the most distinguished of the King's freedmen—one could well say of such an assembly, "The gods, sitting at Zeus's side, held debate."

9. **Chariton 5.4.7 The entrance of the litigants**

παράγονται δὲ οἱ δικαζόμενοι μετὰ σιγῆς καὶ δέους. τότε οὖν ἔωθεν μὲν πρῶτος ἦκε Μιθριδάτης, δορυφορούμενος ὑπὸ φίλων καὶ συγγενῶν, οὐ πάνυ τι λαμπρὸς οὐδὲ φαιδρὸς, ἀλλ', ὡς ὑπεύθυνος, ἐλεινός· ἐπηκολούθει δὲ καὶ Διονύσιος Ἑλληνικῷ σχήματι Μιλησίαν στολὴν ἀμπεχόμενος, τὰς ἐπιστολὰς τῇ χειρὶ κατέχων.

Those involved in the case are brought in in silence and trepidation. Well, on this occasion Mithridates was the first to appear, early in the morning; he was escorted by his friends and related, and was far from bright and cheerful in appearance, but rather, as befitted a man under examination, pathetic to behold. Dionysius followed; he was dressed in Greek style, wearing a Milesian robe, and had the letters in his hand.

10. Chariton 5.4.8 The *salutatio*

ἐπεὶ δὲ εἰσήχθησαν, προσεκύνησαν. ἔπειτα βασιλεὺς ἐκέλευσε τὸν γραμματέα τὰς ἐπιστολὰς ἀναγνῶναι, τὴν τε Φαρνάκου καὶ ἣν ἀντέγραψεν αὐτός, ἵνα μάθωσιν οἱ συνδικάζοντες πῶς εἰσῆκται τὸ πρᾶγμα. ἀναγνωσθείσης δὲ τῆς ἐπιστολῆς ἔπαινος ἐξεργράγη πολὺς τὴν σωφροσύνην καὶ δικαιοσύνην θαυμαζόντων τὴν βασιλείῳ.

Once in court, they made their obeisance. Then the King ordered the clerk of the court to read the letters—that of Pharnaces and his own reply—so that his fellow judges should know how the matter had come to court. When his letter was read out there was a great burst of applause—people approved the King’s moderation and sense of justice.

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