In Cyropaedia Xenophon investigated leadership by presenting the life story of Cyrus II, founder of the Persian Empire. Because the story differs flagrantly from other sources and the narrative’s pace and texture are unlike those of ordinary Greek historiography, many analysts have classed the work as fiction. In the Cyropaedia, techniques of military and political leadership are exposed both through example and through direct instruction; but Cyrus’s achievement (i.e., absolute autocracy) is not an unambiguous (or readily transferable) good, and the final chapter recalls that, despite Cyrus, Persia had declined.

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Abstract

In part 1, I argue that in Roman Greece Panthea and Abradates’ novella from the Cyropaedia was so extraordinarily famous that Xenophon of Ephesus must have borrowed and allusively adapted their names so as to give sprechende Namen to his novel’s heroes (‘Anthea’ = ‘Flora’, ‘Abrocomes’ = ‘Delicate hair’). In part 2 and 3, I explore the intertextual potential of such a reference. Echoes from the Cyropaedia prove an important ingredient of Xenophon’s novel, helping define its fictional status in and against the background of its classical model. In part 4 I turn to the names themselves, arguing that Xenophon felt the need to hellenise his character names, which suit very well his implicit ‘revision’ of Panthea’s novella.

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In Cyropaedia Xenophon investigated leadership by presenting the life story of Cyrus II, founder of the Persian Empire. Because the story differs flagrantly from other sources and the narrative’s pace and texture are unlike those of ordinary Greek historiography, many analysts have classed the work as fiction. In the Cyropaedia, techniques of military and political leadership are exposed both through example and through direct instruction; but Cyrus’s achievement (i.e., absolute autocracy) is not an unambiguous (or readily transferable) good, and the final chapter recalls that, despite Cyrus, Persia had declined. Xenophon of Ephesus: His Compositional Technique and the Birth of the ‘Anti-Tragic’ Novel. By Capra, Andrea. Read preview. Academic journal article Asian Narrative. 'The (Un)happy Romance of Curleo and Liliet' Xenophon of Ephesus, the Cyropaedia and the birth of the 'anti-tragic' novel. By Capra, Andrea. Read preview. Article excerpt. Given the subject of the book, dating to the late 19th century, this is nothing more than a passing remark, and yet it sounds very promising. Once we accept that the name of Xenophon of Ephesus may be a pseudonym, as most later scholars do, (2) the second inference on his character names should be obvious enough. Apparently, however, this has not been the case.