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CUPID'S REVENGE

Translations of a Greco-Roman Eros
in 17th-century Sweden



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By the river Niger, the ways of love are different from those by the lakes Mälaren and Vänern. I have been told that here constancy is a virtue, but there she is considered a sin. In Sweden, he who wishes to love rightly needs no more than one beloved, and it often happens that even having one is too demanding. But in Ethiopia, one must have many mistresses; our poor king who recently died would be the best witness of this.¹

This is the opening of a short text preserved in a manuscript at the National Library of Sweden – “papegâijan förtâlier sin och apinians historia” – attributed with some certainty to Johan Ekeblad (1629–97).² The title indicates the narrator: a parrot, who tells the story of himself and a female monkey.³ Kurt Johannesson, who published the text in 1960, suspected a connection to the French animal fable and noted that the first collection of La Fontaine’s *Fables* appeared in 1668, when Ekeblad was visiting Paris.⁴ With its animal protagonists, the story may indeed appear to be a fable, but a closer look betrays a rather different literary pedigree. The parrot was once a shepherd in Ethiopia, where he had many mistresses, but did not feel for any of them the true love that he expressed in words. Cupid, “who eagerly punishes the one who says what he doesn’t mean and mocks him”,⁵ took his revenge and made the shepherd fall in love with a shepherdess who was as false as he had been, pretending at first to be flattered but then dismissing him for someone else. Driven mad by desire, the shepherd wandered through the wilderness and covered himself in leaves from the trees; Cupid found him there and transformed him into a parrot of the same colour as those leaves. The shepherdess too was turned into an animal matching her tendency to pretend: a monkey. The two lived together in the wild forest, but they were caught by humans and ended up in Sweden.

Rather than being a traditional moral fable, the story tells of a metamorphosis caused by Cupid (Eros), opening with a pastoral narrative frame, and closing with a travel element that connects Africa to Sweden. If the attribution to Ekeblad is correct, the story was written by a cosmopolitan aristocrat and diplomat who travelled extensively and spent long periods in France, where narratives of this type were far more common than in the North. His other preserved compositions, ranging from numerous letters to what looks like a fragment of an erotic novel, all reveal close familiarity with the kinds of ancient and French literature that would have inspired the story of the parrot and the monkey. This essay explores such connections between continental trends and the first Swedish prose compositions about love and desire. I focus on Ekeblad alongside his contemporary Urban Hiärne (1641–1724), author of the pastoral romance *Stratonice*, sometimes referred to as the first Swedish novel.⁶ My aim is to show how the storyworld of Greco-Roman desire reached 17th-century Sweden through several European channels, many of which lead to the ancient Greek novels that were immensely popular at the time.

The storyworld of Eros

A collection of poems by Hiärne, preserved in the Uppsala University Library, contains a cycle under the heading “Title pages of *Stratonice*” (*Titelbladen på Stratonice*), probably intended to be inserted in a final version of the rather short prose narrative *Stratonice*.⁷ The first poem of the *Stratonice* cycle is about the lover’s suffering and the relief to be found in expressing one’s pain. In my unpoetic translation the second stanza runs as follows:

The sick nevertheless finds comfort
in the address and pity of friends
when he in a voice broken by sighs
may burst into lamentation and whining,
but to keep silent when it aches and burns,
o heaven what a bitterness that is.⁸

Together with the parrot's story cited above, these lines offer a good introduction to the storyworld of ancient desire, personified by the Greek Eros and the Roman Cupid. Desire is an illness caused by the arrows of a god in the guise of a winged little boy. He looks young, but he is older than time. He moves swiftly, attacking with his arrows and setting hearts on fire. This gives him complete power over humans, animals, and gods. He made Zeus turn himself into a bull in order to abduct Europa and he caused the Trojan war by infusing Paris with desire for Helen. The experience of desire is bittersweet, or perhaps first sweet and then bitter – filled with pain and pleasure in equal measure.⁹ Anyone who tries to resist his power is punished, often in spectacular ways: Eros always wins.

Eros appears throughout ancient literature and in all kinds of texts, ranging from tragedy and epigrams to philosophy and medical treatises. He is known to a wider audience through the poetry of Sappho and Catullus, but the storyworld of Eros – a complete setting that describes his agency and its results – is depicted primarily in the ancient Greek novels: Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*, Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon*, and Heliodorus' *Theagenes and Chariclea* (*Aethiopica*).¹⁰ All three novels depict the absolute power of Eros, but it is the proem to *Daphnis and Chloe* that provides the best analogue for the parrot's story and the stanza by Hiärne. Longus states that the story to follow:

will cure the sick, comfort the distressed, stir the memory of those how have loved, and educate those who have not. For certainly no one has ever escaped Desire [Eros], and no one will, as long as beauty exists, and eyes can see.¹¹

There is no reason to suspect any direct intertextual link here, but as the only Greek novel set in a pastoral storyworld, *Daphnis and Chloe* constituted a particularly important influence for the baroque pastoral that was popular in the 17th century.¹² With the French translation by Jacques Amyot being published in 1559, predating the *editio princeps* of 1598, *Daphnis and Chloe* became very popular and spread into other languages, while at the same time offering inspiration for early

novelists such as Honoré d'Urfé with his massive *L'Astrée* (1607–1627), and also his less well-known pastoral poem *La Sireine* (1604). Amyot's translation was held in such high regard that it almost surpassed the original and was translated into other languages (for instance, into English in 1587), but others returned to the original for their translations, such as the first German version in 1615: *Lustgarten der Liebe von steter brennender Liebe zweier liebenden jungen Personen Daphnidis und Chloe zu Mytilenen von Longo sophista beschrieben und aus dem Griechischen verteutscht*.¹³

And yet, the most successful of the three novels was Heliodorus' *Ethiopian Story*, describing the adventures of the brave Charikleia and her Theagenes – translated into French by Amyot as early as 1547 and appointed the best of all poetic models by Julius Caesar Scaliger (1484–1558) in his *Poetices libri septem* (1561). In the preface to his translation, Amyot emphasized the foundational quality of Heliodorus for the novelistic undertaking. This praise was further developed a century later in Pierre-Daniel Huet's *Traité de l'origine des romans* (1670), where the origin of the novel was traced all the way back to Arabo-Persian models, with an emphasis on the central position of the Greek novels, including the Byzantine 12th-century versions, and in particular Heliodorus. After an analysis of the narrative devices of the novel, underlining its verisimilitude and emotionality, Huet stated that these features had been useful for more recent authors such as Honoré d'Urfé.¹⁴ Huet thus noted what has become even clearer in hindsight: the transmission and popularity of the Greek novel provided a model for novels composed in France from the early 17th century onwards.¹⁵

Ekeblad and courtly cosmopolitanism

Johan Ekeblad was only 20 years old when he joined the court of Queen Christina (r. 1632–54) in 1649. By then he had already travelled rather extensively in Europe, studied in Germany, and joined the embassy of Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie to France (1646–49). The latter ended with Ekeblad deep in debt, but these experiences certainly provided him with insight into the cosmopolitan life of a European.¹⁶ That insight brought with it learning in languages and

literatures, including the classical heritage. As a writer, Ekeblad is known above all for his letters, of which around 750 have been preserved. The letters offer a window into his family relations and his life at court, but they also indicate his literary preferences: he cites ancient writers such as Plato and Livius, as well as later authors like Michel de Montaigne (1533–92) and Martin Opitz (1597–1639). Ekeblad's extensive reading also marks his other preserved writings (some 800 pages in total), ranging from notes and excerpts to lists of books, including titles in especially French, but also Latin, Italian, Dutch, German, and English.¹⁷

Ekeblad stayed at the court of Christina until her abdication in 1654, giving him the opportunity to meet a number of European intellectuals who visited the learned queen. In one interesting coincidence, the French orientalist Samuel Bochart was invited in 1652 to study Christina's collection of manuscripts, accompanied by Pierre Daniel Huet, author of the *Traité de l'origine des romans* mentioned above.¹⁸ After Christina's abdication, Ekeblad was ordained chamberlain to Queen Hedvig Eleonora, so he remained in royal circles. The debt that he had taken on as a young man in Saumur was resolved when he married in 1662: the father of the 16-year old Christina Hägerstierna was a wealthy French immigrant – Claude Rocquette, knighted as Hägerstierna – who took care of his son-in-law's money trouble. Ekeblad then took leave from his service at court, but did not leave public life entirely. For instance, he was sent to Paris as Swedish envoy in 1669–72, when he had a series of audiences with Louis XIV.

These biographical details, known from Ekeblad's own letters and other sources, have shaped interpretations of his writings, in particular a short prose fragment which appears to be the opening of a novel or novella.¹⁹ The first sentence foreshadows in gnomic form a story in which someone's good intentions fall short: "It is generally observed that when one has one's mind truly set on doing something and when one's spirit is most fully absorbed by fulfilment, that is when some obstacle always appears and forces one to have second thoughts".²⁰ The third-person narration then follows how a man named Balke (later Kable), tired of the court where he has spent most of his young life, travels to a remote estate that he has recently inherited and where he will soon set up life with his young bride. As the young man imagines

the future pleasures of his lovely bride, Ekebland introduces the erotic character of the story:

The mere thought of daily discovering at Talso (that was the name of his house) in peace and *plaisir* some new beauties with which his most handsome Stacrin was gifted corporeally as well as spiritually, made him hurry up his journey the more [...].²¹

As hinted from the start, these good intentions are soon thwarted by a party at an estate along the way, Dumfalsör. Despite the flirty invitations, delivered in the setting of a garden, Balke decides to travel on to his own estate (now Dalso), but then has second thoughts and returns. By then, the hostess – Balkes’s “best friend”, Babe – and her friend Mendelindor have already gone to bed, because it is early morning, but Babe’s faithful maid Nikar lets him into the bedroom:

He nevertheless entered the room and sat down by the bed, pushing the curtains aside, and saw to his greatest pleasure the fair Mendelindor’s naked arm, much whiter than the sheet itself upon which she had thrown it, and moreover with one breast all uncovered. On the other side was laying Babe, whose entirely beautiful waist was seen through the thin quilt with which they were covered, and they were sleeping most sweetly. When Kable was not content with the mere admiration of these sleeping beauties but slowly bent over in order to kiss the most beautiful breast, she woke up and turned her head towards the side where Kable was, “Am I dreaming or is that you?”, she said [...].²²

The text ends soon after, with Balke being shoved into Babe’s cabinet while the two women get dressed, and it is impossible to say whether it was intended to open a longer novel or not. In light of this daring scene, it seems likely that the text was written for Ekeblad’s own pleasure and perhaps for a smaller circle of male friends. As mentioned above, interpretations have been largely biographical, understanding the story as a brief *roman-à-clef* with Balke/Kable as Ekeblad himself, Stacrin as his young bride Christina Hägerstierna, and Babe as Ebba Ulfsparre. Along the same lines, Johan Nordström dated

it to 1664 (Ekeblad's wedding) or later, but it cannot be dated with any certainty.²³

Regardless of any autobiographical character, the story is clearly erotic and vaguely bucolic, even if there is no mention of Cupid/Eros or shepherds. The pastoral is invoked through the contrast – well known from both ancient and contemporary French novels – between city/court and countryside, and the storyworld of Eros is represented by the flirty tone between characters, the late-night garden setting, the servant girl as a mediatrix, and the male gaze towards the female body. Some names recall a French setting (Dumfalsör, Babe), while the name Nikar has an almost Greek ring. There is accordingly good reason to read Ekeblad's story in relation to continental trends: simultaneously novelistic, pastoral, erotic, and potentially autobiographical.

Hiärne and his loving shepherds

A similar world of pastoral charms, in a more clearly Greco-Roman guise, are known from the hand of the slightly younger Urban Hiärne, best known for his medical career and his fight against witchcraft trials. Hiärne was born in 1641 in Swedish Ingria (Ingermanland). He was the son of a poor vicar and grew up in Nyenschantz (Nyenskans), a Swedish fortress at the site of present-day St Petersburg. This is where Hiärne began his schooling, which included several languages (Swedish, Latin and Greek, probably also German and Russian).²⁴ In 1655, when his father had already passed away, he was sent to the university in Dorpat (now Tartu), but he ran out of money and went to Narva, whence he left on his own for Sweden in 1657, following the Russian invasion of 1656. Only fifteen years old, Hiärne ended up in Strängnäs, where the principal of the renowned Regium Gustavianum Gymnasium Strenghense took him in.²⁵ From there on, the way to the court in Stockholm and the university at Uppsala seems to have been brief and uncomplicated.

Hiärne came to Uppsala in 1661 to devote himself to medicine. He describes his arrival in a letter to his brother Thomas, expressing worry about his books, which seem to be on their way across the Baltic Sea – “I cannot possibly be without them” – and mentions in

passing an entertaining autopsy that the famous Olaus Rudbeckius has performed on a cat.²⁶ This brief but skillful sketch of a scene, produced with only a few strokes, indicates Hiärne's talent for playful storytelling. He stayed in Uppsala until 1667, and came to be part of a circle of students who called themselves a troop of shepherds (*herdeskara*), role-playing an idyllic pastoral ideal. They all took on pastoral names – Hiärne's was Celadon, after the hero of d'Urfée's novel – and modeled their activities and writings on the norms of pastoral orders, the most important of which was to write love songs for their beloved shepherdesses. These activities are well-documented in letters, orations, autobiographical notes, and poems, including the rather detailed description of the amorous adventures of Celadon in a friend's satirical poem delivered at Hiärne's wedding party in Stockholm in 1676.²⁷ It is within this context that Hiärne composed the pastoral romance *Stratonice*, in the manuscript titled "A short story and memorial about the love of the shepherd Celadon and the noble shepherdess Stratonice".²⁸

According to the manuscript, *Stratonice* was composed in two portions (1666 and 1668), and it remained unpublished until 1856. It has been interpreted primarily as a pastoral *roman-à-clef*, possibly the first Swedish novel. The latter has been refuted based on the missing lyrical sections, but these have been preserved separately and were likely intended to be inserted.²⁹ The autobiographical element is indicated in both the title's "memorial" and the protagonist's name Celadon, well-documented as Hiärne's pastoral alter ego. The novel seems to describe his desire for the young and noble Margareta Bielke – an identification that has been considered so evident that her portrait is printed in both a doctoral dissertation on Hiärne in 1942 and the 1952 edition of *Stratonice*.³⁰ While Celadon is certainly Hiärne himself and other characters represent contemporary figures, including members of the royal family, the autobiographical interpretation, together with the search for the "first Swedish novel", has overshadowed the complex character of *Stratonice*.³¹

Olof Strandberg, the author of the above-mentioned doctoral dissertation, places *Stratonice* within the German tradition of pastoral novels (*Schäferereien*), composed as prosometrics and set in a German bucolic world. The precursor of this tradition was Martin

Opitz with his *Schäfferey von der Nimfen Hercenie* (1630), followed by many others. Strandberg takes Hiärne's early training in German as an indication that he would draw primarily on a German tradition. However, 17th-century literary trends were less restricted by language than one might assume. Hiärne was indeed German-speaking and did not learn French until his time in France (1670), but that does not mean that the French literary trends did not reach him; he read Corneille in German translation, for instance.³²

The prosometric German pastoral of Opitz and his followers drew on the same Greco-Roman tradition that influenced d'Urfée's *La Sireine* (in verse) and *L'Astrée* (in prose): works ranging from Vergil's *Bucolica* to Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe*. The prosometric form of *Stratonice* and the anonymous 1659 manuscript *Herrestadsromanen*, along with the use of Greco-Roman names drawn from various genres, accordingly do not point in only one direction, but rather to a polyphonic and complex pedigree that is shared with early modern novels written in French. The name *Stratonice* may seem unusual to scholars used to the Swedish setting,³³ but the name of this originally Seleucid queen, known from ancient Greek authors like Plutarch, was well known in the 17th century and used for various representations and adaptations in words, music, and art. Hiärne's *Stratonice* is indeed a pastoral *roman-à-clef*, but as such it also opens up a sense of playfulness and the possibility of multiple interpretations. It can also be seen, we might say, as a Greek novel set in the storyworld of Eros.

Proto-novelistic storyworlds in 17th-century Sweden

Let us return to the parrot and the monkey, the former shepherd and shepherdess in Ekeblad's tale who have come from Ethiopia to Sweden. After they had been caught in the jungle, they were first brought to Portugal:

where the severity of the cane did not become us, since gossip and pretense are far from as common there as in Sweden, where we now find ourselves. Here we are doing rather well, as we still retain something from our former kind.³⁴

The story then closes with a brief allegorical explanation, depicting an insincere and manneristic court life where people behave like monkeys and chatter about nothing like parrots. Although this conclusion turns the story into a moralizing fable, the text as a whole can more productively be read as an elaboration of three literary trends from the novelistic storyworld of desire: a metamorphosis caused by Cupid/Eros, a pastoral setting, and an element of travel that connects Africa with Europe. All three elements were fully present in French literary circles of the 17th century: erotic metamorphoses were well known not only from Ovid and Apuleius, but also from popular fairy tales;³⁵ pastoral love stories were known from Longus and d'Urfé;³⁶ and the African storyworld was represented both by Heliodorus and in contemporary novels. These interests in French literary circles inevitably became part of Swedish cultural concerns. As Sweden became an important player in international politics and diplomacy under Queen Christina, the country's elite took over French taste and manners, transferred through intense contacts with the continent in general and France in particular.

Another text with a similar pedigree appears at the end of the same folder of manuscripts in the National Library, consisting of note books and single pages of different quality and size, all bound together: an untitled dialogue between Apollo and the Muses, which prompts a second dialogue between two lovers.³⁷ Apollo starts by complaining that love is no longer the subject of speech or writing, and therefore asks the Muses to speak of Acante, who seems to have fallen for a certain Climene, a girl from the countryside. What follows is a kind of rhetorical play, where two Muses (Melpomene and Thalie) first perform a serious dialogue between Acante and Climene, drawing on the entire arsenal of Cupid's storyworld (beauty causes desire, desire is a god, a poison and an illness, and so on). Apollo then interrupts and asks for another mode: "Enough of this kind at the moment, tell us now something that is funny on the same theme!"³⁸ After a brief exchange on whether Acante can be turned into a funny character, the Muses take the cue and offer a (shorter) comical version. Apollo closes the narrative frame with a brief line of regret: "You stop all too soon!"³⁹

This dialogue not only offers another version of the erotic and

pastoral storyworld known from novels and other texts studied here, but also points towards the social and occasional function of such storytelling. In the Uppsala circles of Hiärne, friends would take on pastoral characters and perform these literary roles not only as co-students, but also for certain occasions such as weddings.⁴⁰ The fact that the real persons behind the fictional names were known was part of the game, just as it was in the French literary salons. Masquerades and other plays built on taking on different characters were very popular, especially in aristocratic and courtly circles.⁴¹ Allegories and biographical aspects were not the sole pleasures to be found in such literary, geographic, and historical games, but rather offered additional layers to an elaborate display of learning and wit. In many ways, such a use of the erotic storyworld is indicated in the texts themselves: the need to talk about desire in order not to fall ill or be in pain is reflected in the texts of both Ekeblad and Hiärne, echoing the Greek novels and, at the same time, tying in with ancient and contemporary discussions on medicine and physiology.

These texts may have been written far from the Parisian salons, but the folders of manuscripts in which the majority of stories discussed here have been preserved – the two folders from the Ekeblad family in the National Library of Sweden – indicate familiarity with continental, especially French, material. Both folders contain primarily texts in French – for instance, fables, elegies, and letters – but also notes in German, English, Spanish, and Latin, together with copied poems and music sheets. Several printed pages of the journal *Mercure* are preserved next to copies of other issues of the same journal, witnessing how fast and efficiently news travelled across Europe in the 17th century. Imitations of ancient Greek poets (Sappho, Anacreon) sit next to lists of characters for masquerades where aristocrats dress up as farmers and Persians (Figure 1). This information was left out when the texts were first published in the twentieth century, but it is necessary in order to fully understand the literary context in which they were produced – to see them as literary and cultural translations of a multi-lingual storyworld shared across Europe.

Ekeblad and Hiärne both belonged to extensive European networks that made literary trends readily available to them. They came from different backgrounds and it is tempting to assume that Ekeblad, with

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Le Chevallier de Flamarin.	{	Comediens.
M ^{lle} Daufoij.		
M ^r . Bielle	{	Payfan
M ^{lle} Murinet		
M ^r . Dangeau	{	Charlatans
M ^{lle} de la Princesse de Hesse		
M ^r . le Chevallier Jen Kins	{	Allemands
ambass. d'ang ^{re}		
M ^{lle} Bochoet	{	Persians
M ^r . le Comte de Sonigsmarc		
M ^{lle} de la Comtesse de Lamarc	{	Indiens.
M ^r . le Prince Charles d'Hesse		
M ^{lle} de Bombruge	{	Hongrois
M ^r . le Comte de Lix		
M ^{lle} Scharemberg	{	Esclaves
M ^r . Barillon Ambass.		
M ^{lle} de la Comtesse de Crevin	{	Jardiniers
M ^r . le Comte Philippe		
M ^{lle} Lubcrade la cadette	{	Pellerins
M ^r . de Daville		
M ^{lle} de la Duchesse de Chaulnes	{	Italiens.
M ^r . le Chevallier de Williamson		
Ambassadeur d'ang ^{re}	{	
M ^{lle} de Rou Rinken		

Figure 1: National Library of Sweden, Engeströmska samlingen, C. VI. I.21. Photo: Ingela Nilsson.

his privileged upbringing on the family estate and access to more or less unlimited resources, could allow himself to be more daring and less classicizing in his writings than Hiärne, who had struggled harder for his social position but in fact was more learned than many noble men. Regardless of their differences of background and age, they moved in interconnected circles, with the court as a space they had in common (though not at the same time), and they had access to the same rich literary heritage based in the Greco-Roman tradition. Throughout this essay, I have emphasized the Greek novels, which were embedded in the wider context of ancient literature, where Greco-Roman mythology and authors like Herodotus, Lucian and Plutarch were mined for characters, settings, and other plot elements that could be adapted to the expectations of various audiences in different corners of Europe.

This literary context explains the presence of Stratonice as Hiärne's heroine, probably drawn from Plutarch, and his own alter ego Celadon, drawn from d'Urfée. It explains the pastoral settings as well as the storyworld of Eros, which would have been familiar through the novels to a large part of learned Scandinavian audiences. And more than any far-fetched autobiographical interpretation of how the parrot's description of the monkey is a result of Ekeblad's unhappy marriage,⁴² this context also explains the presence of the curious couple in Sweden. In the 17th century, translations of Heliodorus's *Ethiopian Story* were available in several private libraries in Sweden,⁴³ and as early as 1635, visitors to Kronborg castle in Helsingør could enjoy a series of paintings depicting scenes from the adventures of Charikleia and her Theagenes – at least if they were granted access to the king's chamber.⁴⁴ Such translations and paintings were appreciated all over Europe, and Sweden was no exception. A painting by David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl, dated to 1670 and now in the National Museum of Sweden, offers another possible clue to Ekeblad's metamorphosis story: a young African man, elegantly dressed, is accompanied by parrots and monkeys (Figure 2). Was the apparent fable perhaps composed as an ekphrastic play with a scene to be enjoyed at the Stockholm court? One thing is clear: the road from Ethiopia to Sweden was not that long, especially not for a parrot struck and transformed by desire.



Figure 2: David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl (1628–1698), *Pojke med papegojor och markattor* (NM 1407). Photo: Anna Danielsson, Nationalmuseum.

Notes

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- 1 National Library of Sweden, Engeströmska samlingen, C. VI. I.21, containing miscellaneous texts bound together, of which the story cited is the first. Ed. by Kurt Johannesson, “Två prosastycken av Johan Ekeblad”, *Samlaren* vol. 81 (1960), 195–203, here 196: “wid flooden Niger älskar man intet på sådant sätt som man älskar wid mälaren och wäneren. det är migh sagdt bleffuit att man håller här beständigheeten för een dygd, män där hålles hon för een last. i swerige behöffuer den som rätt will älska intet meer än een kiäreste, och ofta händer att han haar förmycket, när han haar een allena. män wti Etiopien är aff nöden till att haa många wätresser, wår stackars kong som doog för någon tidh sedan skall bäst kunna witna detta wara sant”. All translations from Swedish into English are my own.
- 2 Johannesson, “Två prosastycken”, 195. As noted by Johannesson, the cover is misleading: the texts date from the 1660s to the 1690s and thus to the time of Johan Ekeblad, or possibly his son Claes. The text under discussion here is clearly in Johan’s handwriting.
- 3 “papegäjjan förtäljer sin och apinians historia” (The parrott tells his and the monkey’s story), with the female form of monkey (*apinia*); Johannesson, “Två prosastycken”, 196.
- 4 Johannesson, “Två prosastycken”, 195, also noting that there is more fable material in C. VI. I.21. There are indeed several fables, as in C. VII. I.4 (on which see further below), all in French and in the form of the traditional moral fable.
- 5 Johannesson, “Två prosastycken”, 196: “som ijffrigt straffar den som säijer det han intet meenar och narrar honom”.
- 6 Cf. Mats Malm, *Textens auktoritet. De första svenska romanernas villkor* (Eslöv/Stehag: Brutus Östlings bokförlag Symposion, 2001), esp. 11–12, on printed novels and *Adalriks och Giöthildas Äfventyr* (1742–44) as the first Swedish novel; see also 287–88, n. 11, on unprinted texts such as *Stratonice*.
- 7 Olof Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning* (Stockholm: Geber, 1942), 59; Bernt Olsson, Barbro Nilsson eds., *Urban Hiärne, Samlade dikter* (Stockholm/Lund: Svenska vitterhetssamfundet, 1995), 12–13. See also further below.
- 8 No XVI in Olsson, Nilsson eds., *Samlade dikter*, 79: “Den krancka finner lijkwäl tröst / aff wengers tilltal och medhlijdande / då han medh suckförbruten röst / fåår brista lööf medh klag och qwijdande, / men tjiga still, när wärck och swedan skär, / o himmel hwadh för bitterhet thet ähr”.
- 9 For the most famous and influential modern discussion of this aspect, see Anne Carson, *Eros the Bittersweet: An Essay* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986).
- 10 There are now numerous studies of the ancient Greek novel, including the classic and still excellent account by Tomas Hägg, *The Novel in Antiquity* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1983). For a more recent and shorter introduction, see Massimo Fusillo, “Mapping the Roots: The Novel in Antiquity”, in *Fictional Storytelling the Medieval Mediterranean and Beyond*, Carolina Cupane, Bettina Krönung eds. (Leiden: Brill, 2016), 21–38. For translations of all Greek novels including the so-called fringe, see Bryan P. Reardon ed., *Collected Ancient Greek Novels* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989).
- 11 Translation by Christopher Gill in Reardon, *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, 289, slightly revised.
- 12 On Hiärne and the German tradition of *Schäfereien*, see Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, esp. 48–52.

- 13 For details, see Maria Pia Pattoni, “Longus’ *Daphnis and Chloe*: Literary Transmission and Reception”, in *A Companion to the Ancient Novel*, Edmund P. Cueva, Shannon N. Byrne eds. (Oxford: Blackwell, 2014), 584–597, esp. 584–586. On the German translation of 1615, attributed to David Wolstand, see Otto Schönberger, tr., *Longos, Hirtengeschichten von Daphnis and Chloe* (Berlin: Akademie-verlag, 1980), 49; cf. Ondřej Cikán, Georg Danek ed. and tr., *Longos, Daphnis und Chloë. Ein poetischer Liebesroman* (Vienna and Prague: Kētos, 2018), 295 with n. 66.
- 14 On Huet’s treatise, see Camille Esmein, “Le *Traité de l’origine des romans de Huet*, apologie du roman baroque ou poétique du roman classique?”, *Cahiers de l’Association internationale des études françaises* vol. 56 (2004), 417–436. The treatise of Huet was translated into English as early as 1672, but it became more known in the translation by Stephen Lewis first published in 1715 and then frequently reprinted up until the 19th century.
- 15 Hägg, *The Novel in Antiquity*, 192–213; Margaret Anne Doody, *The True Story of the Novel* (London: Fontana Press, 1996); Michael Reeve, “The re-emergence of ancient novels in western Europe, 1300–1810”, in *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel*, Tim Whitmarsh ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), 282–298.
- 16 References to the biography of Ekeblad here and in the following are based on “Johan (Joan, Jean, Jahan) Ekeblad”, urn:sbl:16807, *Svenskt biografiskt lexikon* (Bengt Hildebrand), consulted 2024-06-14.
- 17 Sture Allén, <https://www.svenskaakademien.se/svenska-akademien/sammankomster/hogtidssammankomsten/2003/sture-allen>, consulted 2024-06-14.
- 18 Tua Korhonen, “Christina of Sweden and her knowledge of Greek”, *Arctos* vol. 43 (2009), 41–56, esp. 51.
- 19 National Library of Sweden, Eneströmska samlingen, C. VII. I.4, containing miscellaneous texts bound together, of which the cited story is the last. Ed. by Johan Nordström, “Ett bidrag till den svenska prosaberättelsens historia”, *Sammlaren* vol. 2 (1921), 215–19, who refers to it as a novella or novel fragment (*lilla novell – eller romanfragment*).
- 20 Nordström, “Ett bidrag”, 217: “Gemenligen skal man see at när man sätter seig något synnerliget wist före till at göra, och då när man måst har espriten full aff till att fulbordat, at då altid kommer något hinder i wägen som bringar een till att falla på andra tankar”.
- 21 Nordström, “Ett bidrag”, 217: “Dän tanken allena till att på Talso (så heete hans huus) wti roo och plaisir dageligen descouvrera några nya skönheeter som hans alerwakreste Stacrin rikligen was begåffuat med så wäl till kräppen som till espriten, kom honom till att skynda så mycket meer sin reesza”.
- 22 Nordström, “Ett bidrag”, 218: “han gick likwäl in och satte seig wid sängen, ypnandes sakte förläten, fick han med störste nöje see dän sköna Mendelindors blåtta arm whitare mycket än sielffua laakanet som hon hade kastat honum på och därtill med dät eena bröstet hellt otiltäkt, på andre sidan låg Babe hvars heela wakre taille syntes igenom dät tunna täket, som de wore tiltäckte med, de wore då äffuen uti deras sötteste sömn, när Kable intet lät nöija seig med admirationen allena wtaff denne säffuande skönheeterne, wtan sträkte seig sakte fram till att kyssa dät aldrasköneste bröstet hwarutaff hon wagnade owh wändw hufudet på dän sidan Kable war, drömmar iag äller äret du, sade hon”. I have added punctuation in the English translation, for the sake of clarity.

- 23 Nordström, “Ett bidrag”, 216.
- 24 Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, 19; for his childhood and upbringing, see 7–18.
- 25 Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, 25; for his studies in Ingria and Sweden, see 19–29.
- 26 Letter cited in full in Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, 37–38, “iagh kan ingalunda ware dem föruthan”. For his time in Uppsala and Stockholm, see 30–36.
- 27 Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, 39–40.
- 28 *Een kort Berättelse och Memorial om Herden Celadon och den ädle Herdinans Stratonices kärleek*, Uppsala University Library, D 701. First published by Hanseli 1856; then by von Platen 1952.
- 29 For a survey with full references, see Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, 47–48. On the “missing” lyrical sections, see p. 59 and the more recent Olsson, Nilsson, *Samlade dikter*, esp. 12.
- 30 Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*; Magnus von Platen, ed, *Urban Hiärne, Stratonice* (Stockholm: Hugo Gebers förlag, 1952).
- 31 Strandberg not only offers a complete key to the names and thus “unmasks” the “real events” of the novel (Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, 46: “Efter demaskeringen av de i memorialet skildrade händelserna framstår verklighetsförloppet på följande sätt: [...]”), he also offers another “first Swedish novel” in the form of the anonymous so-called *Herrestadsromanen*, preserved in manuscript form and dated to 1659 (Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, 53; on *Herrestadsromanen*, see 52–53 and 127–138). The title is invented by Strandberg and refers to the manuscript provenance, Herrestad. Strandberg notes the similarities to both Ekeblad’s fragment (Johan Nordström) and a verse fragment by Christoffer Leyoncrona; see also Malm, *Textens auktoritet*, 287–288, n. 11.
- 32 Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, 107.
- 33 Olsson, Nilsson, *Samlade dikter*, 7: “det i tidens diktning ovanliga namnet” (the unusual name in poetry of the time).
- 34 Johannesson, “Två prosastycken”, 197: “hwarest lansens humör stoog oss intet wäl an, effter såsom squaller och aperij går intet så der i swang som i swergie, hwarest iah förnimmer wij nu äre stadde. här finna wij oss rätt wäl emädan wij har ännu något quar aff wår förra art”.
- 35 Karin Kukkonen, “Embodied Narrative at Play in the Seventeenth-Century Fairy Tale”, *Martels & Tales: Journal of Fairy-Tale Studies* vol. 37 (2023), 157–174.
- 36 To mention but two: *Zayde* (1671) by Marie-Madeleine de La Fayette (for which Huet wrote his *Traité de l’origine des romans* as a preface; cf. above), and *Oroonoko: or, the Royal Slave* (1688) by Aphra Behn.
- 37 National Library of Sweden, Engeströmska samlingen, C. VI. I.21. Ed. by Johannesson, “Två prosastycken”, 197–203.
- 38 Johannesson, “Två prosastycken”, 200: “noog wtaff det slaget för denne gången, säijer oss nu något som är lustigt på samma materian”.
- 39 Johannesson, “Två prosastycken”, 203: “i ända mekta snart”.
- 40 See e.g. Strandberg, *Urban Hiärnes ungdom och diktning*, 38–43. Cf. Olsson, Nilsson, *Samlade dikter*, 14, who argue against the idea of occasional poetry (*tillfällespoesi*), but that depends on how we define occasional literature. For a recent discussion of possible definitions, see Ingela Nilsson, *Writer and Occasion*

in Twelfth-Century Byzantium: The Authorial Voice of Constantine Manasses (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2020), esp. 4–13 and 181–184.

41 See Kukkonen, “Metamorphosis.”

42 Cf. Johannesson, “Två prosastycken”, 196 (“Men inför den häftiga bitterheten i Ekeblads historia frågar man sig om inte detta är ett högst personligt dokument. Ekeblads äktenskap med Kristina Hägerstierna, ingånget 1662, var uppenbart olyckligt och ledde till något av en skandal, ty Ekeblad förälskade sig i den ofrälse Sara Swebilius, med vilken han också gifte sig efter hustruns död. Den hatfulla skildringen av apinian kan således emanera ur dessa äktenskapliga slitningar”).

43 As far as I know, no complete inventory of Greek novels in Swedish libraries has been undertaken, but a quick look at the Skokloster library catalogue is probably representative with its Latin translation from 1601 (together with a later French translation from 1727).

44 Joaneath Spicer, “Heliodoros’s An Ethiopian Story in Seventeenth-Century European Art”, in *Images of the Black in 17th-century European Art*, Henry Louis Gates, David Bindman eds. (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2010), 1–29, esp. 15–16 and 18.)