

The *Sphragis* of Heliodoros, Genealogy in the *Aithiopika*, and Julian's *Hymn to King Helios*¹

J. L. HILTON²

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Howard College

Abstract: This article analyses the final sentence of Heliodoros's *Aithiopika* as a *sphragis* — an autobiographical statement by the author. Heliodoros here stresses his descent from Helios, as one of characters in the romance, Persinna, also does. However, while genealogy (or *physis*) is an important element it is counterbalanced by the relativization of knowledge in the *Aithiopika* — *nomos* is king. The tension between these concepts is resolved by reading the romance in the light of Julian's *Hymn to Helios*.

Keywords: Heliodoros; *Aithiopika*; Julian; *Hymn to Helios*; Genealogy.

The final sentence of the *Ethiopian Story* provides the best evidence we have for the identity of the author.³ The text reads as follows (10.41.4):

Τοιόνδε πέρας ἔσχε τὸ σύνταγμα τῶν περὶ Θεαγένην
καὶ Χαρίκλειαν Αἰθιοπικῶν· ὁ συνέταξεν ἀνὴρ Φοῖνιξ
Ἐμψηγός, τῶν ἀφ' Ἡλίου γένος, Θεοδοσίου παῖς Ἡλιόδωρος.

The composition of the Ethiopian story about Theagenes and Charikleia ends here. A Phoenician of Emesa, one of those who trace their descent to Helios, the son of Theodosius, Heliodoros, composed it.

The fact that these words occur at the end of the work, rather than at the beginning as was the case with the majority of the ancient novelists apart from Xenophon of Ephesus,⁴ may be

¹ Text received on 05/20/2011 and accepted on 01/04/2012.

² hilton@ukzn.ac.za.

³ Cf., e.g., E. Rohde, *Der Griechische Roman Und Seine Vorläufer* (Darmstadt 1914) 465-467 [437-438].

⁴ J. J. Winkler, 'The Mendacity of Kalasiris and the Narrative Strategy of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*: *Yale Classical Studies* 27 (1982) 93-158, at 96 and n. 6, states that the 'novels of Longus, Achilles Tatius, Chariton, and Antonius Diogenes begin ... by identifying the author and the circumstances of

explained by the complex construction of the opening of Heliodoros's narrative, which draws the reader into the story by releasing puzzling visual information sparingly.⁵ The final position was also traditional in the case of an authorial statement (σφραγίς).⁶ In the ancient world there was no copyright law — instead authors established their rights over their work by appending a short autobiographical note to the text.⁷ The sentence

discovery (Diogenes, Ach. Tat.) or composition (Longus, Chariton) of the story.' Cf. Chariton, Χαρίτων Ἀφροδισιεύς, Ἀθηναγόρου τοῦ ῥήτορος ὑπογραφεύς, πάθος ἐρωτικὸν ἐν Συρακούσαις γενόμενον διηγήσομαι (1.1.1); Τοσάδε περὶ Καλλιόρης συνέγραψα (8.8.16); Achilles Tatius, Ἐγὼ δὲ καὶ τὰ ἄλλα μὲν ἐπὶ γυναικὸς γραφῆς, ἅτε δὲ ἦν ἐρωτικὸς περιεργότερον ἔβλεπον τὸν ἄγοντα τὸν βούν Ἐρωτα (1.2.1) — the author then hands over the narrative to his fictional ego-narrator, Kleitophon, Ὁ δὲ ἄρχεται τοῦ λέγειν ὧδε: Ἐμοὶ Φοινίκη γένος, Τύρος ἢ πατρίς, ὄνομα Κλειτοφῶν (1.3.1); Longus, Ἐν Λέσβῳ θηρῶν ἐν ἄλσει Νυμφῶν θέαμα εἶδον κάλλιστον ὧν εἶδον (*Prologue* 1). Even the sophisticated Apuleius presents the prologue (for the most part) in the first person, although there is a considerable debate about who this person is (see Ahuvia Kahane and Andrew Laird (edd.), *A Companion to the Prologue of Apuleius' Metamorphoses* [Oxford 2001] *passim*). According to Photius, Antonius Diogenes made use of the epistolary form (and so, presumably, the first person also) in dedicating his work to his sister, Isidora. Cf. Photius, Ἐπιστολὴν μὲν οὖν κατ' ἀρχὰς τοῦ βιβλίου γράφει πρὸς τὴν ἀδελφὴν Ἰσιδωραν, δι' ἧς εἰ καὶ τὴν προσφώνησιν αὐτῇ τῶν συγγραμμάτων δείκνυται πεποιημένος (*Bib.* 166.111a.41 [Bekker]). The best parallel to the final sentence in Heliodoros is the ending of the novel of Xenophon of Ephesus: Ξενοφώντος τῶν κατὰ Ἀνθίαν καὶ Ἀβροκόμην Ἐφεσιακῶν ε' λόγων τέλος.

⁵ See J. R. Morgan, 'The *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros: Narrative as Riddle': J. R. Morgan and R. Stoneman (edd.), *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context* (London and New York 1994) 97-113; W. Buehler, 'Das Element Des Visuellen in Der Eingangsszene Von Heliodors *Aithiopika*': *WS* n.s. 10 (1976) 177-185.

⁶ The term σφραγίς is more accurate than κολοφών to describe such authorial statements, since the latter is generally used of a concluding argument in a philosophical treatise in antiquity: cf., e.g., Plato *Euthd.* 301e; *Laws* 673d; *Thet.* 153c.

⁷ For σφραγίς in the sense of a warrant, cf. Theognis 19; as a guarantee of secrecy, cf. Pseudo-Lucian *Epigr.* 11, and particularly Julian *Hymn to Helios* 141c and in magical texts (cf. LSJ *ad loc.* II).

is also written in the third person, whereas the earlier Greek novelists usually wrote about their work in the first person.⁸ The use of the third person is characteristic of the prefaces of the Greek historians and is in keeping with the historiographical pose Heliodoros adopts elsewhere in the work.⁹ There is no way of telling whether the final sentence was written by the author or by a copyist,¹⁰ but the formal style and the personal details offered carry some weight in favour of it having been written by Heliodoros himself.¹¹ If so, it reveals that Heliodoros, a Phoenician from Emesa in Syria, thought it important to record his descent from Helios (τῶν ἀφ' Ἡλίου γένος).

Genealogy is a theme in the *Aithiopika*. The romance is centrally concerned with birth, family, home, nationhood, race, and their opposites — illegitimacy, exile, alterity, and foreignness.

⁸ See above, note 4.

⁹ For example, Herodotos: Ἡροδότου Θουρίου ἱστορίας ἀπόδεξις ἦδε (Prol. 1.1); Thucydides Θουκυδίδης Ἀθηναῖος ξυνέγραψε τὸν πόλεμον τῶν Πελοποννησίων καὶ Ἀθηναίων (1.1.1); Lucian *Hist. Conscr.* 54. Xenophon's *Ephesiaka*; the *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyrii*; the *Alexander Romance* are presented anonymously. The placing of the sentence at the end of the romance resembles the concluding autobiographical statement of Ammianus Marcellinus (31.16.7). For the historiographical pose of Heliodoros, cf. J. R. Morgan, 'History, Romance and Realism in the *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros': *Classical Antiquity* 1 (1982) 221-265. Walther Kranz, 'Sphragis: Ichform Und Namensiegel Als Eingangs- Und Schlussmotiv Antiker Dichtung': *RhM* 104 (1961) 3-46, at 44-45, refers to similar statements by the authors of rhetorical and philosophical works and by vase painters such as Exekias (e.g., ΕΞΕΚΙΑΣΕΓΡΑΦΣΕΚΑΠΟΕΣΕΜΕ, Berlin 1720; *ABV* 143.1), although there the vase speaks.

¹⁰ For scribal subscriptions, cf. Leighton D. Reynolds and Nigel G. Wilson, *Scribes & Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (Oxford 1974) 35-37, 219, and the references there. The *Historia Apollonii Regis Tyrii* ends with a final sentence in the third person, but without any reference to the author.

¹¹ V. L. Hefti, *Zur Erzählungstechnik in Heliodors Aethiopica* (Vienna 1950) 129-131, regards the final sentence as suspect, but J. R. Morgan, *A Commentary on the Ninth and Tenth Books of the Aithiopika of Heliodoros* (Diss. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979) ad loc., accepts it as genuine.

The most important instance of this is, of course, the strange paradox of Charikleia's seemingly illegitimate birth (Hld. 4.8), whose story is paradigmatic for the work as a whole.¹² Charikleia is born white to the Ethiopian Queen Persinna, whose decision to expose her daughter creates two identities for the child — one legitimate and Ethiopian and one illegitimate and Hellenistic/Egyptian. It gives her multiple 'fathers' — Greek, Egyptian, and Ethiopian — and competing world views — Greek learning, Egyptian religiosity, and Ethiopian solar theology. It propels her to Delphi, the central and traditionally the most authoritative site of the Greek religion from which she must seek her return beyond the borders of the οἰκουμένη. Yet she, and her story, for which she is the cypher, remain one and within her and in it these three nations are ultimately united.¹³ To secure her reinstatement Heliodorus deploys a considerable weight of learning, both religious and secular, from within and without the Hellenistic world.

Throughout the narrative, emphasis is placed on the need to resolve the consequences of the heroine's traumatic birth; the search for understanding of this enigma drives the plot forward

¹² On the birth of Charikleia, see J. L. Hilton, 'An Ethiopian Paradox: Heliodorus, *Aithiopika* 4.8': Richard Hunter (ed.) *Studies in Heliodorus* (Cambridge 1998) 79-92; Tim Whitmarsh, 'The Birth of a Prodigy: Heliodorus and the Genealogy of Hellenism': Richard Hunter (ed.) *Studies in Heliodorus* (Cambridge 1998) 93-124; M. D. Reeve, 'Conceptions': *Proceeding of the Cambridge Philological Society* 215 (1989) 81-112. The King and Queen of Ethiopia had been childless for ten years before Charikleia was born; the King, Hydaspes, had been hoping for an heir to his line, which descended from Helios, Dionysos, Perseus, Andromeda, and Memnon. However, Charikleia was born white to her black parents and the Queen, Persinna, although she knew that this had happened because she had seen a painting of Andromeda at a precise and auspicious time for conception, decided to expose the child and to tell her husband that the infant had died at birth, because she realised that no-one would believe her explanation.

¹³ For an inclusive reading of the ancient novels, see D. L. Selden, 'Genre of Genre': J. Tatum (ed.) *The Search for the Ancient Novel* (Baltimore and London 1994) 39-64.

until the revelation of the truth in Book 10. The author insists on presenting the paradoxical biological facts; Persinna observed that, on the one hand, Charikleia's skin gleamed with a colour alien to the Ethiopian tribe (ἐπειδὴ δέ σε λευκὴν ἀπέτεκον, ἀπρόσφυλον αἰθιόπων χροιάν ἀπαυγάζουσιν, Hld. 4.8.5, 10.14.2) and on the other that her features (τὸ πρόσωπον) were not Greek (Hld. 10.7.5).¹⁴ The puzzle of her daughter's appearance was a mystery that astounded the king and his wise gymnosophists (Hld. 10.13.3), despite the fact that Persinna had published her explanation of her daughter's 'birth, nationality, and fate' (γένος ... καὶ ἔθνος ... καὶ τύχην φράζει, Hld. 4.11.4) on her birth-band. After exposing her daughter, Persinna later regretted her decision and tried unsuccessfully to find anyone resembling her among her people (κατὰ τὸ ἔθνος). She entrusts the recovery of her daughter to an Egyptian priest, Kalasiris, who laments Charikleia's loss of her rightful place in the royal family (Hld. 4.9.2, βασίλειον γένος). Charikleia herself is delighted to learn of her descent (Hld. 4.12.1, γένος) and her only goal in the second half of the romance is to regain her royal birthright (γένος) by escaping from Delphi with Theagenes and Kalasiris (Hld. 4.13.2; 4.18.5). Making use of oracles, dreams, and Persinna's written evidence, the three are led to Ethiopia, where Charikleia regains her place in the royal family through recognition of a birth-mark which proves her genealogy. Throughout the work her Ethiopian identity and her religious role within Ethiopian society are viewed positively,¹⁵ while at the conclusion her Greek one is still acknowledged by the presence of

¹⁴ The meaning of ἀπρόσφυλος as 'alien', 'not related to the tribe', is clear from (Hld. 5.7.3). Here bandits surround Theagenes and Charikleia when they are shipwrecked on the coast of Egypt. The outlaws threaten to kill them but relent when they perceive their beauty. 'For even the hand of a savage, it seems, is overawed in the presence of beauty; even the eye of a stranger (ἀπρόσφυλος ὀφθαλμός) is made gentle at the lovely sight.'

¹⁵ For the positive view of Ethiopia and Ethiopians in the romance, see F. M. Snowden, *Blacks in Antiquity: Ethiopians in the Greco-Roman Experience* (Cambridge, Mass. 1970) 54-55; 1983: 148.

Charikles in the final scenes. Her genealogical line of descent is mentioned repeatedly: Charikleia appeals to the Sun, the forefather of her ancestors (Hld. 10.11.3, γενεάρχης) in the same way as Persinna had done (Hld. 4.8.2); Hydaspes attributed the discovery of the truth of Charikleia's birth to his ancestral gods, Memnon, Perseus and Andromeda, the founders of his race (Hld. 10.24.1), who are displayed in a pavilion in the recognition scene at the end of the romance (Hld. 10.6.3). At the same time, the Greek god Apollo is equated with the Ethiopian Helios (Hld. 10.36.3). Nurture as well as nature is accommodated in the resolution of her story.

The importance of birth and nationality in the *Aithiopika* is not confined to the story of Charikleia. One of the many narrative doublets in the work, or in this case a narrative triplet, focuses on the importance of birth and nationality as credentials for marriage.¹⁶ A rich Tyrian merchant seeks the hand of Charikleia, praising his noble birth (γένος ἔνδοξον, Hld. 5.19.2). Her guardian, Kalasiris, refuses the match on the grounds that he could not marry his daughter to a foreigner who lived in a nation (ἔθνος) so far separated from Egypt (Hld. 5.19.3). When the merchant offers to adopt Egyptian ways and to take Egyptian nationality (ἔθνος ... καὶ πατριδα), Kalasiris promises to go along with his wishes, but only to humour him. In the contrasting second narrative, Nau-sikles is quite happy to marry his daughter to Knemon with a generous dowry, and asks nothing from him in return, because he knew his family, home, and nationality (Hld. 6.8.1, γένος καὶ οἶκον καὶ ἔθνος). Knemon was an Athenian by birth (Hld. 1.9.1), whom Theagenes and Charikleia are delighted to meet because he was born Greek and spoke the language (Hld. 1.8.6, Ἕλληνα ὡς ἀληθῶς τὸ γένος καὶ τὴν φωνήν). He is reluctant to accompany them on their journey to Ethiopia, however, and seeks to return

¹⁶ For narrative doublets in the *Aithiopika* see J. R. Morgan, 'Narrative Doublets in Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*: Richard Hunter (ed.) *Studies in Heliodorus* (Cambridge 1998) 60-78. Morgan does not discuss the present case, however.

home to his family in Athens (Hld. 6.7.4; 6.7.6; 6.7.9). The core narrative of the romance could be seen to belong alongside these two cases. Even more noble than the Tyrian merchant, Charikleia's lover, the Thessalian envoy Theagenes, is a true Greek, descended directly from Neoptolemos, Achilles, the son of Peleus and Thetis, and ultimately from Hellen, the son of Deukalion (Hld. 2.34.2, οἱ μὲν Αἰνιᾶνες, ἔφη, Θετταλικῆς ἐστὶ μοίρας τὸ εὐγενέστατον καὶ ἀκριβῶς Ἑλληνικὸν ἀφ' Ἑλλήνος τοῦ Δευκαλίωνος), yet he gives up his home and nation, and by his elopement with Charikleia he calls down on himself the prospect of being punished with impalement, and on his people (γένος) and their descendants the loss of their privileges at Delphi and a cycle of revenge (Hld. 4.20.2). Like Knemon, however, Charikleia seeks only to return home to the land of her birth (ἡ ἐνεγκοῦσα — a word possibly coined by Heliodoros) on the request of her mother.¹⁷ The coinage of the word ἡ ἐνεγκοῦσα by Heliodoros, is a significant recognition of the importance of her birth, while at the same time the role played in her story by her adoptive fathers, Kalasiris and Charikles, is not undervalued. Besides Charikleia, Knemon, Kalasiris, Theagenes, Charikles, and Homer are all exiled from their homelands and aspire to return home. As Morgan notes, narratives that are so strikingly parallel demand interpretation.¹⁸ This narrative triplet shows that exile and return oscillate throughout the work and are structurally related, though not always resolved.

¹⁷ The word ἡ ἐνεγκοῦσα meaning 'homeland' or 'land of birth', if not first used by Heliodoros, was certainly unique to the fourth century and a favourite of the author. Cf. J. E. Mayor, "ἡ ἐνεγκοῦσα in Heliodoros": *JP* 15 (1886) 174-176. The term is used of Knemon's exile (Hld. 1.14.1; 6.2.3), Charikleia's home (Hld. 3.11.5; 4.9.2; 4.12.3; 7.14.7; 8.3.7 also refers to Theagenes, 10.7.8, 10.16.6, 10.15.9), Theagenes' (Hld. 2.4.1), Kalasiris's (Hld. 2.23.3; 2.25.4; 2.30.1; 3.15.3; 3.16.5), Charikles' Delphi (Hld. 2.29.5; 4.19.7; 4.19.8), Homer's (Hld. 3.14.4). Hydaspes mentions Ethiopia as the land of his birth (Hld. 10.16.4).

¹⁸ *Studies in Heliodorus* (Cambridge 1998) 60, 77.

Heliodoros' partial model for this emphasis on γένος and ἔθνος was Herodotos, whose complex ethnographical outlook is reflected in his frequent use of these same terms.¹⁹ Nevertheless, the use of γένος in Heliodoros is far more frequent than ἔθνος, whereas in Herodotos ἔθνος is by far the more common word.²⁰ Heliodoros, like Herodotos, features many exotic nations such as the Seres (Hld. 10.25.2), who bring gifts of silk to Hydaspes, the Arabs (Hld. 10.26.1) bearing incense and spices, the Trogodytes (Hld. 10.26.2) with ant-gold (a notably Herodotean touch), the Blemmyes who presented Hydaspes with a crown of bows and snake-bone arrowheads (Hld. 10.26.4, and the Auxomitai (Hld. 10.27.1) accompanied by a camel. In addition, there are the Ionians (Hld. 1.22.2; 7.19.6), the βουκόλοι (Hld. 2.17.4); the Aenianes (Hld. 2.34.5, 2.34.7); Thessalians (Hld. 4.5.5, 4.20.2, 10.36.3); the people of Chemmis (Hld. 6.13.2), the Greeks (Hld. 7.12.6, 8.17.3), and the Persians (Hld. 7.14.2, 7.20.4) — all of whom are referred to by the word γένος. However, in Heliodoros γένος is also used of in-born characteristics such as family (Hld. 2.9.2, 6.2.3) or sex (Hld. 6.11.2, 9.3.8, 10.4-5, 10.19.2) and even of a non-biological class (the Persian eunuchs, Hld. 8.17.4; 9.25.5) and of what amounts to a religious caste (the inherited priests: Hld. 1.19.7, 3.16.4 τὸ προφητικὸν γένος; Hld. 3.19.3, τὸ λόγιον

¹⁹ The importance of Herodotos for Heliodoros is evident from the following intertexts: the Paeonian lake-dwellers (Hdt. 5.16, cf. Hld. 1.5), the Egyptian priesthood (Hdt. 2.37, cf. Hld. 1.19), Rhodopis (Hdt. 2.134-135, cf. Hld. 2.25), Lycurgus (Hdt. 1.65, cf. Hld. 2.27), Egyptian writing (Hdt. 2.36, cf. Hld. 4.8), the hunting chain (Hdt. 6.31, cf. Hld. 6.13), the Egyptian exiles in Ethiopia (Hdt. 2.30, cf. Hld. 8.1), gold chains (Hdt. 3.23, cf. Hld. 9.1), arrows hide the sun (Hdt. 7.226, cf. Hld. 9.18), the Table of the Sun (Hdt. 3.18, cf. Hld. 10.2), the horse sacrifice to Helios (Hdt. 3.18, cf. Hld. 10.6), ant-gold (Hdt. 3.102, cf. Hld. 10.26).

²⁰ For the distinction between γένος and ἔθνος in Herodotos, see C. P. Jones, "ἔθνος and γένος in Herodotos": *CQ* 46.2 (1996) 315-320, who sees the terms as linguistically marked and unmarked versions of the same concept. Total figures for ἔθνος in Herodotos = 130, γένος = 64; in Heliodoros ἔθνος = 11, γένος = 59.

γένος; Hld. 4.12.1, τὸ σοφῶν γένος; Hld. 7.8.3 ἱερὸν ἅπαν γένος; Hld. 7.11.5, προσητικόν τε καὶ ἱερατικόν γένος). This reflects what is known of priesthoods in Egyptian religion, of course. Herodotos (Hld. 2.37) informs us that when the chief-priest of a god dies in Egypt, his son inherits the position. In the *Aithiopika*, Thyamis and Petosiris contest the inheritance of the priesthood of Isis from their father, Kalasiris. When Kalasiris disappears from Memphis as a result of his sexual encounter with Rhodopis (Hld. 2.25.2) and the prophecy concerning the strife of his sons (Hld. 2.25.5), the office of high priest falls to Thyamis as his eldest male descendant (Hld. 7.2.2-5). However, his brother Petosiris, observing the infatuation of Arsake with Thyamis, makes this grounds for contesting the inheritance. Thyamis is exiled and Petosiris is made high priest instead.²¹ Similarly, when Charikleia is recognised as the daughter of Hydaspes and Persinna, she automatically inherits the priesthood of Selene from her mother (Hld. 10.41.1). Because of the stress on lineage, chastity among priests is important in the *Aithiopika*. Even male priests like Kalasiris and Thyamis are expected to abstain from sex, at least outside of marriage, and Persinna advises her daughter to revere chastity above all other qualities.²²

Like his model, Herodotos (Hdt. 2.22; 2.32), Heliodoros underlines the somatic differences between races in the *Aithiopika* and emphasises their alterity.²³ Moreover, these racial differences

²¹ This element in the narrative is probably based on a similar theme in the Egyptian *Contest for the Benefice of Amun* in the Inaros-Petubastis Cycle. See Ian Rutherford, 'The Genealogy of the *Boukoloi*: How Greek Literature Appropriated an Egyptian Narrative Motif': *JHS* 120 (2000) 106-21, esp. 109-113.

²² Michael J. Anderson, 'The *Sophrosune* of Persinna and the Romantic Strategy of Heliodoros' *Aethiopica*': *CPh* 92.4 (1997) 303-22. Chastity is also a male virtue in the work, cf. Hld. 2.25.2 (Kalasiris), 4.18.6 (Theagenes), 7.2.3 (Thyamis).

²³ For example, Charikleia is struck but not disturbed by the black skins of the βουκόλοι, because she is more intent on her lover Theagenes (Hld. 1.2.9;

are accentuated by Heliodoros' insistence on drawing attention to the problem of intercultural communication between Greeks, Egyptians, Persians, and Ethiopians.²⁴ Herodotos also mentions the problem of language and the need for interpreters (for example, Hdt. 4.25), but throughout the *Aithiopika*, the problem of intelligibility and cultural and intellectual difference is of central impor-

1.3.1). At first she takes them to be the dark spirits of the dead (Hld. 1.3.2). When Hydaspes offers to marry his daughter to him, Meroebos' black skin glows when he blushes like a 'flame licking over soot' (Hld. 10.24.2, cf. Philostr. VA 6.12.4). Sisimithres' skin is pure black (Hld. 2.30.1). The Ethiopian army is recognised from the colour of their skins (Hld. 8.16.3). The gymnosophist Sisimithres notes that character is more important than skin-colour (Hld. 10.10.4). An early critic, Dilke 1969: 353-354 took the *Aithiopika* as a satire on race. He also notes (1980: 271) that the work ends with black and white living happily together.

²⁴ J. J. Winkler, 'The Mendacity of Kalasiris and the Narrative Strategy of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*: *Yale Classical Studies* 27 (1982) 104, noted that 'Heliodoros is unique in ancient literature for his continual attention to problems of language and communication.' Relevant references include: Hld. 1.4.1 (Charikleia cannot understand the Egyptian bandit), Hld. 1.7.3 (Theagenes and Charikleia can only communicate with Knemon not with the Egyptians), Hld. 1.19.3 (Knemon could understand Egyptian but Thyamis could not understand Greek), Hld. 1.21.3 (Knemon interprets Charikleia's words to Thyamis), Hld. 2.18.3 (Knemon interprets the words of Thermouthis), Hld. 2.21.5 (Kalasiris asks Knemon how come he, a Greek, was in Egypt), Hld. 2.33.1 (Charikleia could not understand Greek when she was first adopted by Charikles), Hld. 5.8.4 (Nausikles speaks Greek to Charikleia so that the Persians would not understand his words), Hld. 6.12.3 (Kalasiris communicated with the woman of Bessa in Egyptian), Hld. 6.14.1 (Kalasiris interprets the Egyptian woman's words for Charikleia), Hld. 7.19.3 (Arsake could understand Greek but could not speak it, so she communicates with Theagenes and Charikleia through an interpreter), Hld. 8.17.2 (the Ethiopians communicate through an Egyptian who could also speak Persian, Theagenes, who had long been familiar with Egyptian, replies), Hld. 9.1.5 (Hydaspes puts Greek-speaking guards in charge of his prisoners), Hld. 9.25.3 (Hydaspes communicates with his prisoners in Greek — the gymnosophists and kings of Ethiopia know Greek), Hld. 10.9.6 (Sisimithres speaks in Greek so that the Ethiopians would not understand), Hld. 10.31.1 (Hydaspes speaks in Greek to Theagenes), Hld. 10.39.1 (Sisimithres speaks in Ethiopian so that the Ethiopians could understand), Hld. 10.40.1 (Hydaspes speaks in the native tongue).

Ágora. Estudos Clássicos em Debate 14 (2012)

tance that frequently confounds the reader's efforts to interpret the narrative.²⁵ This raises the question of competing world-views and epistemological indeterminacies in the romance. One manifestation of the contestation of knowledge in the work concerns Winkler's so-called amphibolies — instances in which two or more competing explanations are provided, without the author or speaker necessarily taking a stand as to which is true. There many more of these in the *Aithiopika* than Winkler identified, some of great importance for the workings of the plot, and, although Herodotos was clearly a model, they go beyond being part of the duplicitous nature of Kalasiris²⁶ or being merely a historiographical pose by the author, although they do also play this role.²⁷ They are not restricted to the author or his surrogate, Kalasiris, but are expressed by a variety of characters, including Charikles, the old woman of Bessa, Charikleia, Theagenes, and Hydaspes, while retaining much the same character as the authorial amphibolies. Moreover, as in Herodotos,²⁸ they occasionally report theoretical discussions or the ideas of people other than the author or the characters, and sometimes are of great narratological significance, determining the outcome of the plot, rather than being dismissive remarks as in Herodotos. Many of these are entirely 'rational' and do not involve a supernatural explanation at all.²⁹ Others do involve some supernatural force such as Tyche, or the 'will of

²⁵ For the aporetic qualities of the *Aithiopika*, see J. R. Morgan, 'Reader and Audiences in the *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros': *GCN* 4 (1991) 85-103.

²⁶ J. J. Winkler, 'The Mendacity of Kalasiris and the Narrative Strategy of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*: *Yale Classical Studies* 27 (1982) 93-158, esp. 122.

²⁷ J. R. Morgan, *Classical Antiquity* 1 (1982) 229-234.

²⁸ Apposite examples in Herodotos are: Hdt. 1.137 (If a child killed its parents it would either be a changeling or the fruit of adultery because no normal child would do this); Hdt. 2.181 (A league was concluded by Amasis with the Cyrenaeans, by which Cyrene and Egypt became close friends and allies. He likewise took a wife from that city, either as a sign of his friendly feeling, or because he had a fancy to marry a Greek woman).

²⁹ Hld. 1.31.4, 2.13.2, 2.25.2, 2.34.2, 3.14.4, 4.1.2, 5.23.2, 8.9.3.

heaven', but not only is the supernatural force characterised in vague and varying terms, but the choice to be made is often left entirely open.³⁰ Occasionally, the supernatural force is deemed malevolent and the second alternative softens the force of the blasphemy.³¹ There are even supernatural forces at work in the world that oppose the magic of Kalasiris (cf. ἀντίθεος, Hld. 4.7.13).³² They are also the main vehicle of the pluralistic outlook of the romance, since they often indicate that two or more points of view are presented as equally valid. They occasionally (Hld. 1.3.1, 1.30.6) point to cultural contestations within the work arising from epistemological *aporia* in which two incompatible points of view can simultaneously be true when seen from different points of view. These amphibolies suggest that we need not feel constrained to read the romance as Hellenocentric or as a text that resists Hellenocentrism, but as a text that articulates and ultimately unites different perspectives and views knowledge in this world as ultimately indeterminable.³³

The cultural character of knowledge in the *Aithiopika* is therefore complex. Sandy attributes Kalasiris' duplicity to 'his emphatically Egyptian background', while Szepessy, Dowden and

³⁰ Hld. 1.2.5, 2.20.2, 2.29.4, 5.4, 5.27.1, 7.6.4, 7.11.4, 8.9.2, 9.8.2, 10.28.4. On the vagueness of the divine in Heliodoros, see Kathryn Chew, 'Divine Epistemology: The Relationship between Speech and Writing in the *Aithiopika*': Victoria Rimell (ed.) *Seeing Tongues, Hearing Scripts* (Groningen 2007) 279-298, at 282.

³¹ Hld. 5.4.

³² See J. L. Hilton, 'The Meaning of *Antitheos* (Hld. 4.7.13) Again': *Acta Classica* 40 (1997) 87-90.

³³ Hellenocentric: Simon Swain, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World, Ad 50-250* (Oxford 1996) 118; resistant G. W. Bowersock, *Fiction as History: Nero to Julian* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1994) 48; dualistic Rohde, *Der griechische Roman*, 464/435. See more recently Chew, 'Divine Epistemology', 289, who emphasises how knowledge comes to be in the *Aithiopika* rather than what they know. Chew sees the indeterminacy of knowledge stemming from the 'plurality of belief systems in the Roman Empire' that results in 'a fragmentation of divine authority in the world' (p. 295).

others argue for a hierarchy of knowledge: Greek, Egyptian, and Ethiopian.³⁴ However, it is hard to maintain the view that Kalasiris' 'wisdom' can only be characterised as Egyptian. Heliodoros goes to great lengths to represent him at Delphi answering questions, in the Greek, or specifically Herodotean manner, about why different nations worship different animals (Hld. 2.27.3) and about the building of the pyramids, the Egyptian labyrinth, and the Nile (Hld. 2.28). This passage, as well as his deployment of Greek doctrine about the evil eye, adapted from Plutarch,³⁵ show him to be learned in Hellenistic science as well as Egyptian magic and astrology. He dresses as a conventional Greek, rather than as an Egyptian priest (Hld. 2.21.2).³⁶ Kalasiris is something of a polymath, and he is prepared to exploit his knowledge of both Egyptian and Hellenistic knowledge to fulfill his promise to Persinna to bring her daughter home. Likewise Charikles, whose life narrative is structurally but inversely similar to that of Kalasiris, exiles himself from Greece to Egypt, where he investigates at first hand Egyptian lore about the Nile (Hld. 2.29.5), buys herbs and roots that grow in India, Ethiopia, and Egypt (Hld. 2.30.2 — an action that attracts the notice of Sisimithres), and expresses a high opinion of Kalasiris' knowledge of Egyptian magic (Hld. 3.9.1). Similarly too, the Ethiopian-born Charikleia is trained in the Hellenistic sophistry and argumentation that Charikles had taught her as a philosophical basis for her life (Hld. 2.33.5). Finally, Homer is exiled by his father, because a patch of hair on his thigh proved that he had been fathered by Hermes (Hld. 3.14), but in his

³⁴ G. N. Sandy, *Heliodorus* (New York 1982) 146; T. Szepessy, 'Die *Aithiopika* Des Heliodoros Und Der Griechische Sophistische Liebesroman': *Acta Antiqua Scientiarum Hungaricae* 5 (1957) 241-259, at 252-254; Ken Dowden, 'Heliodoros: Serious Intentions': *Classical Quarterly* 46.1 (1996) 267-286, at 280.

³⁵ M. Dickie, 'Heliodoros and Plutarch on the Evil Eye': *CPh* 86.1 (1991) 17-29.

³⁶ J. R. Morgan, 'The Representation of Philosophers in Greek Fiction': J. R. Morgan and Meriel Jones (edd.), *Philosophical Presences in the Ancient Novel* (Groningen 2008) 23-51, at 40.

case the amphibolic suggestion is made that he deliberately decided to become a citizen of the world rather than claim citizenship of any one state and this serves as a precursor of the final resolution of national differences at the conclusion of the work.

Kalasiris provides a good example of the complex characterisation of knowledge in the *Aithiopika*. He was, in his own estimation, highly regarded by the Ethiopians for ‘making a god of’ (ἐκθειάζων) Egyptian wisdom by adding Ethiopian learning (Hld. 4.12.1).

Ἐγὼ λέγων, ὦ θύγατερ, ἦλθον καὶ εἰς Αἰθίοπας
ἐπιθυμία τῆς παρ’ ἐκείνοις σοφίας: ἐγενόμην καὶ Περσίννῃ τῇ
σῇ μητρὶ γνῶριμος, οἰκειοῦται γὰρ αἰεὶ τὸ σοφῶν γένος ἢ
βασίλειος αὐλῇ καὶ ἄλλως εἶχόν τι καὶ δόξης πλεον τὴν
Αἰγυπτίων σοφίαν προσθήκη τῆς Αἰθιόπων ἐκθειάζων.

"My daughter," I said, "I went to the Ethiopians out of a desire for their wisdom. And I became known to your mother, Persinna, for the royal palace is a permanent home to the philosophical breed and besides I held some prestige there because I had raised the wisdom of Egypt to the status of a religion by the addition of that of Ethiopia."

The word ἐκθειάζων here bears the meaning ‘deifying’, but Heliodoros also uses the term of the divinization of the Nile (Hld. 9.9.4), where it is balanced by a word (θεοπλάστουσι ‘they fabricate gods’) — elsewhere only used by Philo Judaeus (*Life of Moses* 2.195) in a severe attack on the Egyptian belief that the River is a deity. Philo’s scepticism has evidently rubbed off on Hydaspes who states amphibolically that the Nile is a river, or, as Egyptians believe, a god (Hld. 9.22.7). Philostratos mentions belief in the divinity of the Nile as a tenet of the Ethiopian gymnosophists on the grounds that it is both earth and water (VA 6.6). Heliodoros is evidently aware of this passage because he notes that Egyptians believe that life is sustained principally by the combination of moist and dry elements. Heliodoros confuses Egyptian and Ethiopian beliefs here. The episode illustrates the potential problems raised by nations contesting their religious beliefs.

Kalasiris does make wisdom a matter of culture — Egyptian v. Ethiopian — and Philostratos (VA 6.6) likewise talks of a hierarchical scale of wisdom embracing Egyptian, Ethiopian, and Indian. In practice, however, the situation is more complex. Sisimithres (Hld. 2.31.1) states that the sole precept of the Ethiopian gymnosophists was not to abandon a soul once it had taken human form (ψυχὴν ἅπαξ ἐνανθρωπήσασαν). This has been taken as evidence of Heliodoros' knowledge of Christian doctrines, since the term ἐνανθρωπήσασαν is certainly used almost exclusively by Christian writers. However, Sisimithres talks of an incarnated soul rather than an incarnated saviour and the reference could equally be to neoPythagorean ideas of reincarnation, especially as Heliodoros is using Philostratos' account of the visit of the neoPythagorean hero Apollonios of Tyana to the gymnosophists in Ethiopia as his model. Other 'Ethiopian' practices, such as the sacrifice of white horses to the Sun (Hld. 10.4.5, 10.6.5) are clearly taken from Herodotos (1.216). Similarly, the aversion expressed by the gymnosophists for human sacrifice can be paralleled in Plutarch (*Pelopidas* 21) and in Philostratos' *Life of Apollonios*, in which the man from Tyana condemned human sacrifice as barbaric (VA 6.20.3, 7.11.3, 7.20.1, 8.7.3, 8.7.35-45) and avoids blood sacrifice in general although accused of it himself (VA 1.10-11). Sisimithres' claim that a person's character is as important as his appearance in matters of justice (Hld. 10.10.4), while it gains significance from its context which involves claimants who are racially distinct, must have been a commonplace of juristic rhetoric.³⁷ The Ethiopian gymnosophists adopt a consistently high moral ground, but the knowledge they have of the world is essentially neoPythagorean or neoPlatonist.

So far, what I have been arguing in this paper is that Heliodoros' *Aithiopika* contains within it two different quasi-Herodotean paradigms — on the one hand it emphasises the importance of ge-

³⁷ See, for example, *Anonymous Seguerianus Rhetorica*, 1.90.4 on appearance and character as parts of rhetorical narrative.

nealogy, home, nationality, race and their opposites (what we might term φύσις), on the other, it relativises knowledge, and proclaims that law or convention (νόμος) is king. The question that arises is whether these two may be reconciled. I suggest that they can and that the solution may be found in the fourth-century solar theology of the Roman Emperor Julian's *Hymn to King Helios*. If the fourth-century date of Heliodoros is accepted, then the two men were contemporaries. There are a number of intersections between the extant writings of the two authors. The many references to Helios in the *Aithiopika*, exemplified by the author's σφραγίς, are answered by a plethora of allusions to the cult in Julian (one need look no further than the *Hymn to King Helios* for this, but Julian, like Heliodoros, also thought of himself as the child of Helios, cf. *Or.* 7.229C). Julian knew of erotic fiction, although he deemed this form of literature unsuitable for priests to read (*Ep.* 89b.354-354). Heliodoros' account of the Oroondates' defence of Syene against Hydaspes closely resembles Julian's version of Constantius' defence of Nisibis against the Persian king, Sapor (Hld. 9.2-9.5, cf. *Jul. Or.* 1.27a-30b, 2.62b-63a), although the incident was probably well known in the fourth century.³⁸ Both authors describe Persian cataphract 'knights' (Hld. 9.15, cf. *Jul. Or.* 1.30, 2.57b). Less well known is Julian's reinauguration of the spring of Kastalia at Delphi (Amm. Marc. 22.12.8) as part of his struggle to revive pagan religion. Heliodoros rather unusually makes Delphi an important location in his narrative (especially in Books 3-4). His account of the hecatomb of animals sacrificed as part of the ceremony in honour of Neoptolemus (Hld. 3.1-3, cf. the hecatomb lined up by Persinna at 10.4) recalls Julian's attempt to

³⁸ There is by now a vast literature on this with little agreement. See Bowersock, *Fiction as History*; C.S. Lightfoot, 'Facts and Fiction — the Third Siege of Nisibis — Ad 350': *Historia* 37 (1988) 105-125; Morgan, *Commentary*, ad loc.; T. Szepessy, 'Le Siège de Nisibe et la Chronologie d'Héliodore': *Acta Antiqua Scientiarum Hungaricae* 24 (1976) 247-276. The fourth century date is, on balance, most likely.

revive blood sacrifices (Amm. Marc. 22.12.6). Julian sacrifices a white bull 'like a king' (*Letter to Libanius* 399d), just as Hydaspes does white horses (Hld. 10.6, 10.28 – the colour of the bulls is not mentioned, but Charikleia rides in a chariot drawn by white oxen, Hld. 10.41). Julian recounts the famous story of Antiochos and Stratonike (*Mis.* 17), while Heliodoros adapts it to the 'illness' of Charkleia as a result of the onset of her passionate love for Theagenes (Hld. 4.7). Both observe the distinction between *onar* and *hypar* (Hld. 3.12, cf. Jul. *Ep.* 108.2 where it is proverbial). Heliodoros may share Julian's antipathy for Christians, as he flirts with blasphemy in his account of the 'counter-god' who was opposing Kalasiris' magic (Hld. 4.7.5).³⁹ Heliodoros' authorial description of the Neiloa and the flooding of the Nile (Hld. 9.9) is matched by Julian's interest in the subject (*Letter to Ecdicius* 432b). Julian's discourse on kingship (*Or.* 2.86) is exemplified by the justice and mercy exercised by Hydaspes towards his enemies (Hld. 9.26). There is a common interest in tests of chastity and legitimacy in both writers (Jul. *Or.* 2.81d [Celts], 5.160 [Claudia], Hld. 10.8-9 [the grid-iron]), especially when the latter is manifested by birthmarks (Hld. 10.15-16 [the birthmark on Charikleia's arm], cf. Jul. *Or.* 2.82c-d [a white shoulder indicates descent from the house of Pelops]). Both are knowledgeable about precious stones (Jul. *Or.* 2.51a, Hld. 2.31.2, 5.13.3) and both have a taste for symbols and enigmas (Jul. *Against the Galilaeans* 356c-d, *Or.* 7.216b-d; Hld. 2.31.2, 3.13.3, 3.15.1). Heliodoros' concern with language and communication (above, n. 19) is shared with Julian (*Against the Galilaeans* 134d [the Tower of Babel]). The list could be extended, but it seems clear that Julian and Heliodoros had remarkably similar views of the world.

Julian composed his hymn to Helios under the influence of the neoPlatonist philosopher Iamblichus of Chalcis (*Or.* 4.146c; 157d), whose influence over Heliodoros can be seen in his use of

³⁹ See Hilton, 'The Meaning of *antitheos*', and J. R. Morgan's paper at the Lisbon conference in July 2008.

terms such as ὁμοειδέες and θεολογία (according to Iamblichus, this was a subject taught by Pythagoras, *De Vita Pyth.* 19.93.1-2).⁴⁰ Kalasiris' discussion of higher and lower wisdom (Hld. 3.16.3) owes something to Iamblichus' *On the Mysteries* (c.f., e.g. *On the Mysteries* 3.27-29; 3.4-6), as does the notion of the ἀντίθεος (Hld. 4.7.3, cf. Iamblichus *On the Mysteries* 3.31.38-40). Julian also acknowledges that Heliodoros' birth-place, Emesa, was a sacred place because of the cult of Helios there (*Or.* 4.150c-d). In many ways the *Aithiopika* echoes the ideas in this text, particularly with respect to the descent of the heroine from Helios.

In Julian's hymn, as he received it from Iamblichos, Helios takes on a triadic and neoPlatonic form of the Good, the intelligible gods, and Helios, the sun of the material world. Helios occupies a middle and mediating role between the intelligible world and the realm of sense-perception. This Helios works through the pagan gods — Apollo, Athena, Dionysos, the Muses (*Or.* 4.144a-b; 152d), and the literature which celebrates their achievements, to influence events on earth. The energy of Helios privileges the heroes, demons, and angels. This metaphysical universe is broadly recognisable in the *Aithiopika*, where Apollo and Dionysos are mentioned as associates of Helios (Hld. 4.8.3, 10.2.2, 10.6.5), and where heroes such as Neoptolemos and 'the demonic' play an important part. Julian notes the close relationship between Helios and Selene (*Or.* 4.149d; 152c) and Heliodoros has Charikleia finally become the priestess of Selene (Hld. 10.41.2).

⁴⁰ On the *Hymn to Helios* see Rowland Smith, *Julian's Gods: Religion and Philosophy in the Thought and Action of Julian the Apostate* (London and New York 1995) 139-178; Polymnia Athanassiadi, *Julian: An Intellectual Biography* (London; New York 1992) 161-191; Alice Gardner, *Julian: Philosopher and Emperor and the Last Struggle of Paganism against Christianity* (London 1895) 175-189. On Mithraism in the ancient fiction, see Roger Beck, 'History into Fiction: The Metamorphoses of the Mithras Myths': *Ancient Narrative* 1 (2001-2002) 283-300. While much has been written on Mithraism and the cult of *sol invictus* in the ancient world, relatively little attention has been paid to Julian's appropriation of it.

Kalasiris' distinction between higher and lower wisdom is reflected in Julian's distinction between the higher part of our world — the heavens and planets — and the inferior part — the world of becoming. Julian also states that Helios exerts providence through Athena Pronoia (*Or.* 4.149b), which is echoed by the importance attached to foresight in the romance: for example, Kalasiris claims to have had foreknowledge of the disaster that would strike his family (*Hld.* 2.24.6), and foresight is required to preserve Charikleia safe until the time comes for her sacrifice (*Hld.* 9.25.5, cf. also 10.23.3). The interpretation of oracles, dreams, and necromantic rituals in the romance is all part of this need for prescience. This is the most certain form of intelligence in a world in which understanding is flawed and imperfect. The rigid distinction between the intelligible and the material world explains the amphibolous nature of the *Aithiopika*. When knowledge is uncertain deciding between alternatives is futile. Certainly, when viewed from the perspective of solar theology it is mistaken to rank Hellenistic values higher than any others. All beliefs are subsumed equally beneath the mediating power of Helios, through whom mortals attempt to access the intelligible world. Julian's hymn emphasises the unifying function of Helios. For Julian, in keeping with the cosmopolitan spirit of late Roman religion, solar polytheism provided a way to unify the different races of men and different forms of civilisation. Mithraism was a universal cult that was confined to no one nation or sex.⁴¹ Julian observes that Apollo as the colleague of Helios has given humanity wisdom and government. He has civilised the world by means of Greek colonies and so made it easier for the world to be governed by the Romans (*Or.* 4.152d).

Ὁ δὲ αὐτῷ συμβασιλεύων Ἀπόλλων οὐ πανταχοῦ μὲν
 ἀνῆκε τῆς γῆς χρηστήρια, σοφίαν δὲ ἔδωκεν ἀνθρώποις
 ἔνθεον, ἐκόσμησε δὲ ἱεροῖς καὶ πολιτικοῖς τὰς πόλεις θεσμοῖς;
 οὗτος ἡμέρωσε μὲν διὰ τῶν Ἑλληνικῶν ἀποικιῶν τὰ πλεῖστα

⁴¹ Gardner, *Julian*, 189, 179.

τῆς οἰκουμένης, παρεσκεύασε δὲ ῥᾶον ὑπακοῦσαι Ῥωμαίοις ἔχουσι καὶ αὐτοῖς οὐ γένος μόνον Ἑλληνικόν, ἀλλὰ καὶ θεσμούς ἱερούς, καὶ τὴν περὶ τοὺς θεοὺς εὐπιστίαν ἐξ ἀρχῆς εἰς τέλος Ἑλληνικὴν καταστησάμενοις τε καὶ φυλάξασι.

‘And has not Apollo, who is [Helios’] colleague in empire, set up oracles in every part of the earth, and given to men inspired wisdom, and regulated their cities by means of religious and political ordinances? And he civilised the greater part of the world by means of Greek colonies, and so made it easier for the world to be governed by the Romans. For the Romans themselves not only belong to the Greek race, but also the sacred ordinances and the pious belief in the gods which they have established and maintain are, from beginning to end, Greek’ (tr. Wright).

Helios cares for the whole human race in common but especially for Rome (*Or.* 4.157a). Julian’s solar theology makes Homer right to claim to be a citizen of the world. Within it are reconciled all the nations of the earth beneath the smiling visage of the Sun. The many nations which gather at Hydaspes’ court — a veritable United Nations in fact — are embraced with the Eithiopian cult of Helios.

However, Julian’s hymn also specifically emphasises the generative power (τὸ γόνιμον) of Helios (*Or.* 4.140a-c), which manifests itself in both the intelligible and the material world.⁴² As a result, heredity and legitimate descent from a line of ancestors is important (cf. Jul. *Misopogon* 348b-c) and this explains differences in national characteristics — each nation shares the nature of its national gods (*Against the Galileans* 115d-e). In Julian’s Hellenistic view of the world nobility and descent from the gods were vital.

This notion of the creative power of the Sun is evident in the narrative of Charikleia’s conception as the result of Hydaspes’ dream at noon in mid-summer in Meroë (*Hld.* 4.8.4). The astrolo-

⁴² See also terms such as γεννᾶν (*Hld.* 22.7), γένεσις (*Hld.* 9.10, 16.22, 17.9, 24.24), γενεαλογῶν (*Hld.* 11.5), γεννητική (*Hld.* 17.7), all of which can be matched in Julian.



gical significance of the heroine being conceived when the power of the sun was at its height is surely not fortuitous and compares well with Julian's discussion of how the pine sacred to Attis was felled on the day that the sun reaches its height (Jul. *Hymn to the Mother of the Gods* 168c-d). Julian emphasises the importance of inheriting a link with ancestors (*Or.* 4.131b):

Ζηλῶ μὲν οὖν ἔγωγε τῆς εὐποτμίας καὶ εἴ τῳ τὸ σῶμα
 παρέσχε θεὸς ἐξ ἱεροῦ καὶ προφητικοῦ συμπαγὲν σπέρματος
 ἀναλαβόντι σοφίας ἀνοιῖται θησαυροὺς.

'I envy the good fortune of any man to whom the god has
 granted to inherit a body built of the seed of holy and inspired
 ancestors, so that he can unlock the treasures of wisdom.'

Julian states that the light of the sun gives form to the world and everything in it in the same way that a craftsman creates objects from matter (*Or.* 4.134c). According to the Phoenicians, he reports, Aphrodite assists Helios in his procreative function (*Or.* 4.150b). Moreover, Julian regards Helios as the common father of mankind because man and the sun beget man (λέγεται γὰρ ὁρθῶς ἄνθρωπος ἄνθρωπον γεννᾶν καὶ ἥλιος, *Or.* 4.131c). The best condition to be in is to have inherited the service of the god from a long and unbroken line of ancestors (Κάλλιστον μὲν οὖν, εἴ τῳ ξυνηνέχθη καὶ πρὸ τριγωνίας ἀπὸ πολλῶν πάνυ προπατόρων ἐφεξῆς τῷ θεῷ δουλεῦσαι, *Or.* 4.131c-d). For Julian, the light of Helios bears the same relation to this visible world as truth has to the intelligible world (*Or.* 4.133b) and acknowledges that this too is a doctrine of the Phoenicians (*Or.* 4.134a).⁴³ These ideas are echoed in the *Aithiopika* in which the heroine is finally recognised as the legitimate heir of Hydaspes and Persinna, and through them of Memnon, Andromeda, and ultimately, Helios himself. If Charikleia's story is somehow synechdochal for the romance in general then the work itself is the product of the god's enlightening power. Hence the allegorical interpretation of Philip

⁴³ Gardner, *Julian*, 184.

the Philosopher.⁴⁴ However the work is fathered also through the generative power of Heliodoros, who declares himself to be a descendant of the sun in his σφραγίς (Julian includes a σφραγίς or seal in his text 141d, which sums up his eulogy of the god). When read in the light of Julian's *Hymn to Helios*, the final sentence of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika* takes on a special significance.

References

- Michael J. Anderson, 'The *Sophrosune* of Persinna and the Romantic Strategy of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*: *CPh* 92.4 (1997) 303-22.
- Polymnia Athanassiadi, *Julian: An Intellectual Biography* (London; New York 1992).
- Roger Beck, 'History into Fiction: The Metamorphoses of the Mithras Myths': *Ancient Narrative* 1 (2001-2002) 283-300.
- G.W. Bowersock, *Fiction as History: Nero to Julian* (Berkeley and Los Angeles 1994).
- W. Buehler, 'Das Element Des Visuellen in Der Eingangsszene Von Heliodors *Aithiopika*': *WSn.s.* 10 (1976) 177-185.
- Kathryn Chew, 'Divine Epistemology: The Relationship between Speech and Writing in the *Aithiopika*': Victoria Rimell (ed.) *Seeing Tongues, Hearing Scripts* (Groningen 2007) 279-298.
- M. Dickie, 'Heliodoros and Plutarch on the Evil Eye': *CPh* 86.1 (1991) 17-29.
- Ken Dowden, 'Heliodoros: Serious Intentions': *Classical Quarterly* 46.1 (1996) 267-286.
- Alice Gardner, *Julian: Philosopher and Emperor and the Last Struggle of Paganism against Christianity* (London 1895).
- V. L. Hefti, *Zur Erzählungstechnik in Heliodoros Aithiopika* (Vienna 1950).
- J. L. Hilton, 'The Meaning of *Antitheos* (Hld. 4.7.13) Again': *Acta Classica* 40 (1997) 87-90.

⁴⁴ For this, see L. Tarán, 'The Authorship of an Allegorical Interpretation of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*: *Sofihis Maihtores 'Chercheurs De Sagesse' Hommage a Jean Pépin* (Paris 1992) 203-230.

- J. L. Hilton, 'An Ethiopian Paradox: Heliodoros, *Aithiopika* 4.8': *Cambridge Philological Society* Supplementary Volume no.21 (1998) 79-92.
- C. P. Jones, 'Ἐθνός and γένος in Herodotos': *CQ* 46.2 (1996) 315-320.
- Ahuvia Kahane and Andrew Laird (edd.), *A Companion to the Prologue of Apuleius' Metamorphoses* (Oxford 2001).
- Walther Kranz, 'Sphragis: Ichform Und Namensiegel Als Eingangs- Und Schlussmotiv Antiker Dichtung': *RhM* 104 (1961) 3-46.
- C. S. Lightfoot, 'Facts and Fiction — the Third Siege of Nisibis — Ad 350': *Historia* 37 (1988) 105-125.
- J. E. Mayor, 'Ἡ ἐνεγκοῦσα in Heliodoros': *JP* 15 (1886) 174-176.
- J. R. Morgan, *A Commentary on the Ninth and Tenth Books of the Aithiopika of Heliodoros. Book 10* (Diss. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979).
- J. R. Morgan, 'History, Romance and Realism in the *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros': *Classical Antiquity* 1 (1982) 221-265.
- J. R. Morgan, 'Reader and Audiences in the *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros': *GCN* 4 (1991) 85-103.
- J. R. Morgan, 'The *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros: Narrative as Riddle': J. R. Morgan and R. Stoneman (edd.), *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context* (London and New York 1994) 97-113.
- J. R. Morgan, 'Narrative Doublets in Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*': Richard Hunter (ed.) *Studies in Heliodorus* (Cambridge 1998) 60-78.
- J. R. Morgan, 'The Representation of Philosophers in Greek Fiction': J. R. Morgan and Meriel Jones (edd.), *Philosophical Presences in the Ancient Novel* (Groningen 2008) 23-51.
- M. D. Reeve, 'Conceptions': *Proceeding of the Cambridge Philological Society* 215 (1989) 81-112.
- Leighton D. Reynolds and Nigel G. Wilson, *Scribes & Scholars: A Guide to the Transmission of Greek and Latin Literature* (Oxford 1974).
- E. Rohde, *Der Griechische Roman Und Seine Vorläufer* (Darmstadt 1914).

- Ian Rutherford, 'The Genealogy of the *Boukoloí*: How Greek Literature Appropriated an Egyptian Narrative Motif': *JHS* 120 (2000) 106-21.
- G. N. Sandy, *Heliodorus* (New York 1982).
- D.L. Selden, 'Genre of Genre': J. Tatum (ed.) *The Search for the Ancient Novel* (Baltimore and London 1994) 39-64.
- Rowland Smith, *Julian's Gods: Religion and Philosophy in the Thought and Action of Julian the Apostate* (London and New York 1995).
- F. M. Snowden, *Blacks in Antiquity: Ethiopians in the Greco-Roman Experience* (Cambridge, Mass. 1970).
- Simon Swain, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism, and Power in the Greek World, Ad 50-250* (Oxford 1996).
- T. Szepessy, 'Die *Aithiopika* Des Heliodoros Und Der Griechische Sophistische Liebesroman': *Acta Antiqua Scientiarum Hungaricae* 5 (1957) 241-259.
- T. Szepessy, 'Le Siège De Nisibe et la Chronologie d'Héliodore': *Acta Antiqua Scientiarum Hungaricae* 24 (1976) 247-276.
- L. Tarán, 'The Authorship of an Allegorical Interpretation of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*': *Sofihs Maihtores 'Chercheurs De Sagesse' Hommage a Jean Pépin* (Paris 1992) 203-230.
- Tim Whitmarsh, 'The Birth of a Prodigy: Heliodoros and the Genealogy of Hellenism': Richard Hunter (ed.) *Studies in Heliodoros* (Cambridge 1998) 93-124.
- A. Wifstrand, 'Zu Dn Romanschriftstellern' in A. Wifstrand (ed.) *Eikota. Emendation Und Interpretationen Zu Griechischen Prosaikern Der Kaiserzeit. V. Zu Den Romanschriftstellern* (Lund 1944-1945) 69-110.
- J. J. Winkler, 'The Mendacity of Kalasiris and the Narrative Strategy of Heliodoros' *Aithiopika*': *Yale Classical Studies* 27 (1982) 93-158.

* * * * *

Resumo: Este artigo analisa a frase final das *Aithiopika* de Heliodoro como uma *sphragis* — uma declaração autobiográfica do autor. Neste passo, Heliodoro sublinha a sua descendência de Hélios, à semelhança de Persina, uma das personagens do romance. Contudo, apesar da sua importância, a genealogia (ou *physis*) é contrabalançada pela relativização do conhecimento nas *Aithiopika* — o *nomos* é soberano. Resolve-se a tensão entre estes conceitos, propondo-se uma leitura do romance à luz do *Hino a Hélios* de Juliano.

Palavras-chave: Heliodoro; *Aithiopika*; Juliano; *Hino a Hélios*; Genealogia.

Resumen: Este artículo analiza la frase final de las *Etiópicas* de Heliodoro como una *sphragis* — una declaración autobiográfica del autor. En este fragmento subraya Heliodoro su descendencia de Helios, al igual que una de los personajes de su novela, Persina. Sin embargo, aun siendo un elemento importante, su genealogía recibe el contrapunto de la relativización del conocimiento en las *Etiópicas* — el *nomos* es soberano. La tensión entre estos conceptos se resuelve con la lectura de la novela a la luz del *Himno a Helios* de Juliano.

Palabras clave: Heliodoro; *Etiópicas*; Juliano; *Himno a Helios*; Genealogía.

Résumé: Cet article analyse la phrase finale des *Éthiopiennes* d'Héliodore comme une *sphragis* — une déclaration autobiographique de l'auteur. Dans cet extrait, Héliodore souligne sa descendance d'Hélios, tout comme Persine, l'un des personnages du roman. Toutefois, et ce malgré son importance, la généalogie (ou *physis*) est contrebalancée par la relativisation de la connaissance dans les *Éthiopiennes* — le *nomos* est souverain. On résout la tension entre ces concepts en proposant une lecture du roman à la lumière de l'Hymne à Hélios de Julien.

Mots-clé: Héliodore; *Éthiopiennes*; Julien; *l'Hymne à Hélios*; Généalogie.