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CHARACTERIZATION AND PHILOSOPHICAL DECOR IN HELIODORUS' *AETHIOPICA**

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This paper proceeds along two lines that converge on the issue of Platonism in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*. In part I, I consider the characterization of the Egyptian Isiac priest Calasiris. Part II deals with views expressed in the novel that are associated with Platonism. With one exception (9.9), Calasiris acts as spokesman for these views. My thesis is that they constitute an aspect of the aged priest's characterization rather than a statement of coherent philosophical doctrine. Thus philosophy functions in the *Aethiopica* as decor rather than as message or *clef*. However, it is not, as Rohde long ago implied (see below, note 1), glittering but meaningless window-dressing. It contributes to the portrayal of the most engaging character in the novel and, as I argue in my conclusions, is one of the means used by Heliodorus to structure his work.

Just as Platonist literary exegesis is based on the premise that certain creative literature contains hidden, underlying meaning, so Calasiris offers philosophical and religious justification for withholding or disguising the truth from other characters in the story (see below, pp. 149 and 150–51). It is no accident that Heliodorus repeatedly deceives the reader in the same way by disguising or holding back important information from him. The implication seems to be that just as only the sage can discern the mysteries implanted in the enigmas of theosophic literature, so only the discerning reader can extract meaning from the labyrinthine narrative twists of the *Aethiopica*. This linking of metaphysical mystery and narrative complexity can be best summarized by quoting the words put into the mouth of Calasiris' protegée Chariclea:

* This paper has had a long period of gestation, in the course of which I have incurred many debts. It began as an exposé that I was invited by M. Jacques Bompaire to present to his seminar on Heliodorus at the University of Paris-Sorbonne. To him, the students and the animateur M. Alain Billault—hommage d'affecteuse reconaissance. Dr. J. R. Morgan, M. Alain Billault and Professors B. P. Reardon and J. Winkler have generously responded to my pleas for advice. My most recent debt is to the two anonymous referees, who have clarified my thoughts on a number of topics and have helped me to exploit my material better; and to the Editor, for his wise choice of referees.

> Great affairs require great preparations. Events whose beginnings the divine power has from the outset laid down in a complex way must have conclusions that are long drawn out in the fulfilment. (9.24.3–4)

One qualification must be stated at the outset. The Platonism, Stoicism and Pythagoreanism of the Imperial period are scarcely distinguishable on several issues. Indeed, two modern authorities on ancient thought could not agree, with Geffcken labeling as Neoplatonism in the *Aethiopica* what Nilsson preferred to term the ordinary Neopythagoreanism of the fourth century.[1] For my purposes, which do not include the elucidation of any school of philosophical thought, it has been convenient to subsume under the epithet "Platonist" ideas and principles shared by all these groups or most closely associated with Platonism. This procedure probably results at times in doxographical imprecision; but given, for the topics that I shall be considering, the imbalance of extant classical works in favour of the Platonists, the bias is inevitable.

I
Calasiris

The question of Calasiris' role in the *Aethiopica* is central to an understanding of the work, touching directly on the issues of Heliodorus' craftsmanship and of any underlying philosophical or religious impulse that the work might embody. Dissatisfaction with the portrayal of the aged Isiac priest dates from at least as long ago as the eleventh century. At that time, Michael Psellos, in response to criticisms of the *Aethiopica* being voiced in highly educated circles, maintained that Heliodorus had with great subtlety rescued Calasiris from being an apparent pander. Psellos is explicit about the old man's *prima facie* culpability:

> Indeed, he elevates the aged Calasiris from the charge of pandering . . . , until by the complexity of his art he has eliminated the apparent charge.

[1] J. Geffcken, *The Last Days of Greco-Roman Paganism* (Europe in the Middle Ages: Selected Studies, no. 8), trans. and rev. S. MacCormack (Amsterdam 1978) 84–85. M. P. Nilsson, *Geschichte der griechischen Religion* II (Munich 1961²) 565. E. Rohde, *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*, rev. W. Schmid (1914³; repr. Hildesheim 1960) 438, refers to the philosophical texture of the *Aethiopica* as a hackneyed patchwork of Neopythagoreanism, Pythagoreanism and Platonism. The confusion existed in antiquity: the Cronius identified by Porphyry (below, note 24) as a Pythagorean is described by other ancient authorities as a Platonist. For the testimonia see K. Praechter, *RE* 11.2 (1922) 1978–82, s.v. "Kronius (3)"; see also J. M. Dillon, *The Middle Platonists* (London 1977) 379–80. See also below, note 29. Some of the material in the first two sections of Part I of this paper is based on part of a book on Heliodorus that I have prepared for publication by Twayne Publishers. I refer throughout this paper to the *Aethiopica* in the critical edition by R. M. Rattenbury and T. W. Lumb (1935–1943; repr. Paris 1960).

Psellos also suggests in general terms a view of the whole that avoids such misunderstanding:

> The work has been constructed . . . in the skilful manner of Isocrates and Demosthenes; for when viewed at a distance its diffuseness is seen to be well planned, and the counter-currents contribute directly to this impression. The reader will at first think that the work contains much that is superfluous, but as the story progresses he will marvel at the author's planning.[2]

Modern critics, it seems, have jumped too soon to conclusions about Calasiris, without waiting for the implications of Heliodorus' complex artistry to take effect; for complex events "must have conclusions that are long drawn out in the fulfilment." By repeatedly misleading the reader with deceptive and partial accounts in order to generate and maintain suspense, Heliodorus has allowed some impatient readers to take false first impressions as mistaken last impressions. The most recent writer on the subject has concluded that "Calasiris' practice is blatantly phoney. . . . Calasiris works, not miracles, but the intrigues demanded by the plot."[3]

I propose reconciling the conflicting views of Calasiris as charlatan or as pagan saint by arguing that Heliodorus has intentionally cast him in the mould of the complex and authentic holy men of the Imperial period, who in actual fact often exhibited divine duplicity.

Calasiris the Charlatan

First, Calasiris the trickster. On this score there can be no doubt. He stands condemned out of his own mouth and by his closest associates. One of his interviews with his impressionable young companion Cnemon will serve to cast suitably unfavourable light on to him and at the same time present a passage that will be of importance for my subsequent arguments. In maintaining that he was instructed by a divine vision, not a mere dream, to take the hero and heroine Theagenes and Chariclea to whatever place suited the gods, Calasiris enlists the support of Homer to demonstrate his ability to detect divine presence:

[2] Psellos' so-called "De Chariclea et Leucippe Iudicium" is available in A. Colonna's critical edition of the *Aethiopica* (Rome 1938). In line 1, Psellos speaks of the interest of οἱ ἄγαν πεπαιδευμένοι in the romances of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius. "Philip the Philosopher" (also available in Colonna) speaks in the twelfth century of a large number of philologists gathered to mock and jeer at his beloved *Aethiopica*. "Philip," too, seems to have been conscious of Calasiris' duplicity, for he refers to his use of the "medicinal lie" (ὡς φαρμάκῳ χρῆσθαι τῷ ψεύδει, p. 367, line 47; cf. Plat., *R.* 459c–d) in support of friends and ambiguously describes the old man as "resourceful" (εὐμήχανος).

[3] A. Heiserman, *The Novel before the Novel* (Chicago 1978) 203. Cf. the highly favourable anonymous appreciation of the *Aethiopica* in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* (July, 1843) 119, "Like Scott's Peregrine Touchwood . . . , he cannot find it in his heart to take but the most round-about way."

> The method [of recognizing divine presence] . . . the wise Homer expresses obscurely, but most readers overlook the hidden meaning. (3.12.2)

He then quotes *Iliad* 13.71–72 (which contains a pun on the name of his interlocutor Chemon):

> ἴχνια γὰρ μετόπισθε ποδῶν ἠδὲ κνημάων
> ῥεῖ᾽ ἔγνων ἀπιόντος. ἀρίγνωτοι δὲ θεοί περ.

Cnemon is forced to concede:

> It seems that I am one of the majority of readers and it was probably because you wanted to prove this that you reminded me of verses of which I have known the superficial meaning since the time I learned to read, but of the theological meaning implanted within them I am ignorant. (3.12.3)

Calasiris proceeds "to raise his mind to the Heights of Mystery," rather like the fake rapture of Euripides in the *Acharnians* and Socrates in the *Clouds*, explaining to Cnemon that gods and divine spirits "may escape the notice of the profane but will not escape the knowledge of the sage" (3.13.2). In a passage that will also be important for later discussion, Calasiris enumerates the tell-tale signs of divine presence and concludes:

> These things, which Homer knew because he was an Egyptian and thoroughly educated in divine matters, he wrapped up symbolically in verses, leaving them to be understood by those capable of understanding them. (3.13.3)

Cnemon expresses surprise at the reference to Homer's Egyptian birth, which launches Calasiris on a "philological" justification of his claim (3.14–15).

At the very least Calasiris has been guilty of affectation in his relations with his naive interlocutor. In the set of episodes to be discussed now he is guilty of fraud. In these, he is concerned to extricate Chariclea from her foster-father Charicles, a priest of Apollo at Delphi, and, as it transpires, to restore her in accordance with divine will to her rightful place in Ethiopia as princess. Even his concern, not to mention his methods, is doubly suspect. First, there is no convincing reason stated why Charicles should not be expected to release his foster-daughter to Calasiris' care once her true status has been explained to him, although one can appreciate that he has become very strongly attached to her. Second, Calasiris gives to his initial discovery of Chariclea's presence at Delphi two contradictory explanations, the one secular (2.26.1) and the other attributed to divine intervention (4.13.1).[4]

[4] See B. P. Reardon, *Phoenix* 23 (1969) 302 (of 291–309), for fuller discussion of the contradiction and bibliography on the subject.

As for Calasiris' methods, they are clearly fraudulent. He applies the privileged religious knowledge with which he has impressed Cnemon to the service of love, becoming in effect like the bawd of Latin love-elegy or the wily go-between slave of Greek New Comedy and its Latin adaptations. In response to Theagenes' despair of ever being loved in return by Chariclea, he reacted:

> I pretended to be annoyed and said, "Will you not stop abusing me and my art, whereby she has been conquered and forced to love you and prays to behold you, as though you were a god?" (4.6.4)

Theagenes has turned to him in the first place because his Egyptian background had suggested the kind of help an expert in love-remedies could provide:

> I guessed that he was coming to get help in his love-affair because he had heard at dinner that I was Egyptian and a prophet and because he was suffering, I supposed, like many others from the mistaken illusion that the wisdom of Egyptians is of only one type. (3.16.2)

That wisdom, "which crawls along the ground" and is the concern of graveyard-stalking necromancers, like the crone at the end of Book 6, is, Calasiris explains, to be distinguished from the true wisdom, which "looks up to the heavens" (3.16.3), as Calasiris had earlier (3.13.1). Claiming the true wisdom for himself, he immediately pretends to apply the second, discredited type of wisdom to the resolution of the problems facing the young lovers, after deciding "that the time was ripe to make a show of miracles to him [viz. Theagenes] and to divine what I already knew." (3.17.1)

Likewise, he pretends that he has accomplished the love-match desired by Charicles for his nephew and foster-daughter "by my great art and wisdom" (4.14.1) and adds that Charicles must act "while the girl is under the imposed, unyielding force of passion effected by my art" (4.15.3). In these three instances of Calasiris' relations with his trusting friends, his art—*τέχνη*—takes the form of the (pretended) magical practices that his Greek companions expect of Egyptian prophets.[5]

Having deceived two people who have put their trust in him, Calasiris now tries to practise deception on Chariclea. He burns frankincense, mutters prayers and brandishes laurel, stopping only after "pouring forth what was so much nonsense to both me and the girl" (4.5.3). But she will have none of it. The wry smile (Ἡ δὲ *πυκνὰ τὴν κεφαλὴν ἐπέσεισε*) with

[5] For this sense of *τέχνη* cf. Philos. *VA* 1.2, and below, note 42.

which she greets his performance (ἠρχόμην ὥσπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς τῆς ὑποκρίσεως) helps to explain why Calasiris later acknowledges her shrewdness and congratulates her for her skill at duplicity (5.26.2).

Another example of Calasiris' deviousness occurs when he deceives his avaricious host Nausicles by pretending magically to remove from a fire a precious stone that he has literally had up his sleeve (5.13.2).[6]

Egypt and Holy Men

Part of the explanation of Calasiris' apparently contradictory character lies in his emphatically Egyptian background. On the positive side, Egypt stood for all that was holy and good. As pseudo-Apuleius succinctly states, [*Aegyptus*] *mundi totius est templum* (*Asclepius* 24). In speaking of Porphyry's address to the probably fictitious Egyptian priest Anebo, Geffcken avers, "We are dealing here with the Neoplatonist idea of the inherited and innate wisdom of the Egyptians."[7]

Calasiris himself, however, is conscious of a negative prejudice against Egypt (" . . . the mistaken illusion that the wisdom of the Egyptians is of only one [disreputable] type"). This attitude emerges clearly from the entries cited in LSJ s.v. αἰγυπτιάζω: "to be like an Egyptian, i.e. to be sly and crafty, Cratin. 378, cf. Ar. *Th.* 922." The context of the Aristophanic entry applies perfectly to the posturing of Calasiris. It concerns the charade of Euripides and Mnesilochus, whom a woman reproaches:

> I think that he's a trouble-maker and that you are his accomplice. It's not for nothing that you've been playing these tricks (ἠγυπτιάζετο).[8]

Rohde long ago expressed uneasiness about Calasiris as being both the most solemn receptacle of religious wisdom and a trickster ("der Schalk in den Nacken"). He has also succinctly expressed the essence of what "Egyptianness" represented in classical antiquity, "The portrayal of Calasiris mixes the marvellous tendencies of the wise holy man with those of the crafty Egyptian."[9] Charicles presumes that Calasiris embodies this mixture when he urges Calasiris, "Apply some of your wisdom and trickery, *à l'égyptienne*" (2.33.6).

[6] According to Lucian's account of Alexander of Abonuteichos, which will be discussed below, one of the male prostitute Alexander's first customers was a γόης who claimed among other things to know the secret of discovering treasures.

[7] Geffcken (above, note 1) 66. In the accompanying note 101 and p. 53 with note 90, he also refers to Plotinus' reverence for Egyptian wisdom and to that of the Stoicizing Chaeremon. See also Porph. *Philosophia ex Oraculis Haurienda*, pp. 140–41, ed. G. Wolff; and T. Szepessy, *AAntHung* 5 (1957) 245.

[8] The lexicographers base their definitions on the comic playwrights. See Hsch., ed. K. Latte, s.v.; St. Byz., ed. A. Meineke, s.v.; and *EM*, ed. T. Gaisford, s.v.

[9] Rohde (above, note 1) 448–49.

We have just seen that Theagenes supposes that the combination of priesthood and Egyptian nationality offers the possibility of a magical resolution to his love-problems. Cnemon approves of Calasiris' claim of Egyptian nationality for Homer because of "the poet's habit of mixing mystery with every kind of pleasure" (3.15.1). The implication seems to be that Homer was Egyptian and *therefore* enigmatic. Similarly, Cnemon compares Calasiris' deviousness with the versatility of the legendary Egyptian prophet Proteus (2.24; cf. *Odyssey* 4.351–569). Herodotus gives a more favourable account of Proteus than does Homer. In the historian's version, he is, like Calasiris, a native of Memphis who, much as Calasiris acts as guardian of Chariclea, looks after Helen until Menelaus arrives to recover her (2.112–20).[10]

Like Calasiris, the Egyptian priest Paapis in Antonius Diogenes' *Wonders beyond Thule* is forced to flee his native Egypt and is welcomed into the household of the heroine. Both Egyptian priests cause the flight of the heroines from their homes; but there the similarities end, for Paapis reduces the family of the heroine in Antonius Diogenes' romance to zombies.[11] Finally, there is Nectanebus, the fabled last native ruler of Egypt, whose magical powers seemed to the compilers of the various versions of the Alexander-romance to epitomize the heritage of Egypt. He, too, in his relations with Olympias, proved to be a master of deceit, as will be explained in the section that follows.

Ancient Sages

We have seen that Egyptian nationality in itself could undermine a sage's credentials as an authentic holy man and that Theagenes and Charicles both assume from Calasiris' background that he is a disreputable trickster. In more general terms, sages of any nationality frequently provoked contradictory responses to their claims and actions. Detailed consideration of Calasiris' relations with his two wards—Theagenes and Chariclea—and with her foster-father—Charicles—will enable us to assess his characterization against the backdrop of other literary portrayals and historical accounts of sages.

Throughout his relations with his three friends at Delphi, Calasiris acts in the capacity of adviser and is in some ways reminiscent of the modern psychiatrist who practises deception—for the patient's own good. When the physician Acesinus confesses that he is capable of treating illnesses of the soul only when they have a physiological cause and that he cannot therefore treat Chariclea's love-sickness, it is Calasiris to whom her foster-father turns

[10] For further discussion of Proteus as the symbol of versatility see M. Detienne and J.-P. Vernant, *Cunning Intelligence in Greek Culture and Society*, trans. J. Lloyd (Hassocks 1978), as indexed s.v. "Proteus."

[11] Phot. *Bibl.*, codex 166, 109a, lines 29–36, and 110b, lines 26–33, ed. R. Henry.

for the benefit of his wisdom and trickery, *à l'égyptienne* (4.7 and 2.33.6).[12] It is as though a trickster is required to combat psychosomatic tricks. Thereafter, Calasiris' deceptions are designed to gain the confidence of his "patient," Ἔχεις ἐν ἐμοὶ τὸ πιστόν (4.5.7), and (and this is the other side of his dual character) to hoodwink Charicles into entrusting to him the swathe left by Chariclea's mother with her daughter at the time of her exposure. He hopes to find on it the explanation of the girl's origins and the solution to the riddling prophecy concerning Chariclea that was pronounced to him at Delphi (4.5.1 and 2.35.1).

Now what we are dealing with here is paternalizing posturing, with the notion that deception is acceptable when it occurs in accordance with some worthwhile objective. The best known example of this attitude is Plato's "noble lie" (*R.* 3.415b–c).

Synesius of Cyrene, the pagan Neoplatonist who reluctantly became a Christian bishop, exemplifies the attitude:

> This resurrection, which is an object of common belief, is nothing for me but a sacred and mysterious allegory, and I am far from sharing the views of the vulgar crowd thereon. The philosophical mind, albeit the discerner of truth, admits the employment of falsehood. . . . Just as the eye would be injured by excess of light, and just as darkness is more helpful to those of weak eyesight, even so do I consider that the false may be beneficial to the populace, and the truth injurious to those not strong enough to gaze steadfastly on the radiance of real being. . . . I can take over the holy office on condition that I may prosecute philosophy at home and spread legends abroad.[13]

[12] Galen's treatment of a case of love-sickness, Erasistratus' diagnosis of a similar problem and Aristaenetus' story of a physician who employs deception to satisfy a young man's infatuation with his father's mistress all bear striking resemblances to Acesinus' diagnosis of a psychological disorder; see D. W. Amundsen, "Romanticizing the Ancient Medical Profession . . . ," *Bulletin of the History of Medicine* 48 (1974) 320–37. For a strictly secular instance of the theme of (medical) *remedium amoris* see Ach. Tat. 5.27.2 and 6.1.1. At X. Eph. 1.5.7, priests pretend to propriate the δαίμονες that are supposed to be causing love-sickness (cf. Hld. 4.7.12). On δαίμονες as the cause of hallucinations suffered by victims of the sacred disease and by unmarried young women see the fragmentary Hippocratic treatise *Virg.*, ed. E. Littré (1853; repr. Amsterdam 1962), VIII, 466–71. P. Brown, "The Rise and Function of the Holy Man in Late Antiquity," *JRS* 61 (1971) 96 (of 80–101), comments on the use of placebos by holy men of late antiquity.

[13] I owe the reference to Synesius' 105th epistle to H. I. Marrou, "Synesius of Cyrene and Alexandrian Platonism," in *The Conflict between Paganism and Christianity in the Fourth Century*, ed. A. Momigliano (Oxford 1963) 148–49 (of 126–50). The translation is that of A. FitzGerald, *The Letters of Synesius of Cyrene* (London 1926) 200. The subject of the suitability of myths to the general public will be treated more fully later. St Jerome's contrived explanation that St Peter and St Paul only pretended to disagree over an issue of Christian observance is another instance of the Christian appropriation of Plato's "noble lie":

An episode in the *Aethiopica* that I have already mentioned illustrates Calasiris' appropriation of the view that the sage may justifiably sacrifice the truth to expediency. It stands in marked contrast to the high-minded religious principles that he expounds to his ward Chariclea at 6.14. There, he cautions her against her desire to take part in necromantic rites in order to learn about Theagenes because "it is not right for the prophet either to undertake or to take part in these sacrifices" (6.14.7). Since Calasiris has no motive at this point for misleading Chariclea about his religious convictions, it seems reasonable to suppose that they are intended to be regarded by the reader as his earnest views on the subject.

Now, in the episode already referred to, Chariclea's foster-father has entreated Calasiris for advice about what turns out to be love-sickness. Acting on this advice, he has called in the best medical doctors available, who, as we have seen, diagnose that the disorder is in her soul (4.7.7). Charicles, who imagines that Chariclea will now be amenable to the marriage to his nephew that he has long been eager to promote, is overjoyed at the diagnosis and greets Calasiris enthusiastically, Τοῦτο σοφία, τοῦτο φιλία (4.7.1). Calasiris' response is once again to posture as though on the stage (cf. 4.5.3: ἠρχόμην ὥσπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς ὑποκρίσεως):

> At this announcement I gave myself airs, raising my eyebrows in self-importance and adopting a nonchalant gait. (4.7.2)[14]

The two verbal elements ("gave myself airs" and "raising my eyebrows in self-importance") convey well-attested connotations of posturing (see note 14); the adverb βλακῶες (my "nonchalant") is less specific (LSJ suggest "coxcomb") but in the context of the sentence is reminiscent of the mannered nonchalance adopted by Socrates to impress his naive interlocutor Philocleon in the *Clouds*.

The play-acting continues in earnest:

> "It was patently clear," I said, "that she was not going to stand up to my first attack, even without any of my greater weapons being unleashed." (*ibid.*)

This sounds suspiciously as though Calasiris claims to have employed magic or to have invoked spirits, and this impression is borne out by what

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see P. Auvray, *Recherches de science religieuse* 29 (1939) 594–610. Cf. Aug. *Quaest. Evang.* 2.51 (Migne, *PL* 35.1362), *Fictio igitur quae ad aliquam veritatem refertur, figura est: quae non refertur, mendacium est.*

[14] I have put the fullest legitimate emphasis on the posturing connotations of ἐθρυπτόμην and ἀνέσπων τε τὴν ὀθρύν. See LSJ s.v. θρύπτω: "to be coy and prudish, bridle up, esp. when asked a favour," "give oneself airs"; and s.v. ἀνασπάω: "pucker the eyebrows and so put on a grave important air" ("pucker" is corrected in the LSJ *Supplement* to "raise"). At 2.10.2 a high-ranking member of Thyamis' robber-band "puts on the airs of being a robber officer" (ὑπασπιστὴς εἶναι τοῦ λῃστάρχου θρύπτεται), in order, presumably, to impress an Athenian female captive.

follows. Chariclea's foster-father has come to the conclusion "that she had been overcome by your wisdom" (ὑπὸ τῆς σῆς σοφίας ἑάλωκεν, 4.7.8). In other words, he supposes that Calasiris has employed his wisdom and trickery *à l'égyptienne* (2.33.6), and Calasiris nurtures belief in his magical expertise in matters of the heart (4.14.1 and 4.15.3). Charicles then describes Chariclea's symptoms and Calasiris replies:

> "Charicles," I said, "you are not far off the mark in saying that the girl is under the spell of daemons. For she is being troubled by the great powers that I myself have called down. . . . But it seems to me that some evil daemon (ἀντίθεος) is impeding their action and contending with my assistants." (4.7.12–13)

This part of Calasiris' reply recalls the evil daemons and sacrilegious theurgists anathematized in Iamblichus' *On the Mysteries of Egypt* ("Those men who are filled with feeling and evil undertake through their close relationship to call to themselves the evil spirits"), where the rare use of ἀντίθεος coincides with Calasiris' application of the term.[15]

> And so do not in any way regard as holy *manteia* these sacrilegious errors of impiety . . . [such as] invoking evil daemons, which they call *antitheous*, in place of the gods. (3.31; p. 177.12–18)

As we read further, however, it becomes clear that all that Calasiris has just said is only pretence:

> . . . so that it is now time for you to show me the swathe that you say was left with your daughter, . . . for in my opinion there is reason to fear that it is inscribed with charms that have hardened her heart, through the agency of someone who has from the outset planned to have her finish her days without love or children. (4.7.13)

The object of the charade has been to throw light on to the enigmatic Delphic pronouncement:

> I could think of only one way to discover where they [viz. Chariclea and Theagenes] were to be sent: if somehow I could get my hands on the swathe that had been left with Chariclea and on which Charicles said that he had heard that her life-history had been pricked in. (4.5.1)

In Calasiris' defence we can say that he has compromised his high-minded religious principles in the service of a higher goal. No such

[15] On the word ἀντίθεος see Nilsson (above, note 1) 566; and E. R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley 1963) 298.

justification is to hand to explain away the deceptions practised by all ancient sages. This is particularly true in the case of the Egyptian mystic Nectanebus, whose seduction of Olympias during her husband's absence is garnished with a layer of hocus-pocus that cannot disguise either the passionate sexuality of the sage or the promiscuity tacitly agreed by both parties. It is worthwhile lingering over this Egyptian fraud for a few moments. He vividly illustrates the kind of fraudulent spiritual adviser whom Calasiris pretends to be; and like him, Nectanebus plays the part of "marriage counsellor."[16]

Having fled from Egypt, Nectanebus establishes himself in Pella as a priest, astrologer and Egyptian prophet. He comes to the attention of Olympias, whom he stares at; "for he was smitten with desire," adds the Armenian version. She expresses to him her fears about being rejected by her husband, and he replies *untruthfully* (ψευσάμενος), "As an Egyptian prophet, I can help you so that you will not be rejected by Philip" (4). When she asks how, he replies, "You are to mate with a terrestrial god and by him to conceive and to bear a son" (*ibid.*). He then explains that the god will be Libyan Amnon. It is clear from what follows that after performing a protracted show of ritual he disguises himself as the god whom he has predicted (although she has agreed to keep her eyes closed) and has sexual intercourse with her.

Admittedly, the example of Nectanebus is extreme, but it does at least provide an instance of an exiled Egyptian sage adopting "counselling" methods that are, to say the least, unorthodox. The realistic tradition contains a more credible and creditable group of holy dissimulators. Indeed, the pagan intellectual tradition provides an item of specialized terminology, κακοτεχνία, "a technical term for the subornation of perjury, and in general [it] designates disingenuous ruses by which anyone attains an end," that was applied by Heraclitus to the allegedly fraudulent practices of Pythagoras.[17]

Lucian's satirical attacks on two contemporary figures illustrate the divergent reactions generated by charismatic spiritualists during the Imperial period. Alexander of Abonuteichos, in spite of Lucian's ceaseless

[16] What follows is based, because of the availability of a modern critical edition, on the B-version of the Alexander-romance: L. Bergson (ed.), *Der griechische Alexanderroman Rezension B* (Stockholm 1965), chaps. 4–10. The supplement to this version is taken from the Armenian recension, trans. A. M. Wolohajian (New York 1969).

[17] Quoted from the section on Shamanism in W. Burkert, *Lore and Science in Pythagoreanism*, trans. E. L. Minar, Jr. (Cambridge, Mass., 1972) 161. Alexander of Aphrodisias, in *Supplementum Aristotelicum*, ed. I. Bruns (Berlin 1887) II.1, p. 180, lines 14–33, applies the term to frauds (γόητες) who base their charlatanry on the proposition that everything happens in accordance with Fate. J. S. Morrison, "Pythagoras of Samos," *CQ* N.S. 6 (1956) 136 (of 135–56), in summarizing the near-contemporary evidence for Pythagoras, concludes, "To his admirers he is a man of supernatural gifts and power, to the sceptics a charlatan."

sarcasm, has more in common with Pythagoras than being accused of practising κακοτεχνία.[18] Cumont has argued that a committed Pythagorean can be found between the lines of the satirist's caricature. For our purposes, the important detail that emerges from the accusations is Lucian's assertion that Alexander's teacher was a medical colleague of Apollonius of Tyana and claimed to be able to concoct love-philtres (5). Lucian's disregard of Alexander's undeniable reputation as a charismatic religious "personality" and his abusive linking of him to the even more greatly venerated holy man of Tyana suggest that the distinction between sage and charlatan was not always so distinct that it could not be wilfully distorted.

Evidence independent of Lucian's other squib on a contemporary figure, *On the Death of Peregrinus*, portrays Peregrinus Proteus as a noble and dedicated philosopher (Gel. 12.11 and Philostr. *VS* 563). Reading between the taunts and sneers of Lucian's account, one sees that Peregrinus' career shares common ground with that of Calasiris.

Like Calasiris, Peregrinus became entangled in a sordid domestic affair and was forced as a result to flee from his home (Hld. 2.25, *Peregr.* 10), a pattern of enforced exile found in the fate of Homer's cattle-rustling *mantis* Melampus and his descendant the exiled prophet Theoclymenus, that of Calasiris' son—the Isiac priest Thyamis (Hld. 7.2)—and that of the unscrupulous Egyptian Paapis in Antonius Diogenes' romance.[19] Much as Calasiris turns for consolation and moral reinforcement to the Gymnosophists of Ethiopia and the religious atmosphere of Delphi (4.12 and 2.26), so Peregrinus flees to Palestine and there becomes a leading figure in the Christian hierarchy (11).[20] Like Calasiris' commitment to asceticism (e.g., 2.23), Peregrinus' mission included renouncing his paternal estate, albeit temporarily for reasons of expediency, according to Lucian (15). Finally, we come to Peregrinus' dramatic suicide at Delphi in 165, "Why is he throwing himself into the fire? By god, in order to

[18] Lucian, *Alex.* 4; see also above, note 6. For what follows I have benefitted from F. Cumont, "Alexandre d'Abonotichos," *RHR* 86 (1922) 202–10. G. Bowersock, *Greek Sophists in the Roman Empire* (Oxford 1969) 71, surveys the evidence for the broadly based and long lasting prestige of Alexander and the cult founded by him.

[19] Charicles, the foster-father of Chariclea and a priest of Apollo, turned his back on domestic misfortune and, like Calasiris, sought consolation in Ethiopia and Egypt (2.29). For Melampus and Theoclymenus, see *Od.* 11.291 and 15.225 and 276. For Paapis, see Phot. *Bibl.* 109a, lines 30–32, ed. R. Henry. All these outcast holy men serve as rejoinders to Rohde's description (above, note 1) 448, of Thyamis' dual careers of both priest and robber-chief as "ein unverständliches Kompositum." R. MacMullen, *Aegyptos* 44 (1964) 197 (of 179–99), refers to monks who were "fugitive criminals." Brown (above, note 12) 93 concludes that separateness, i.e., being an outcast, was a distinctive feature of Christian holy men of the fifth and sixth centuries.

[20] On a subsequent occasion Peregrinus turned to Egypt for a programme of asceticism under Agathoboulos (cf. *Demon.* 3). Like Alexander of Abonuteichos, Peregrinus therefore studied under a reputable teacher, in spite of Lucian's negative portrayals.

show resolution, like the Brahmans" (25). For all practical purposes, the Brahmans can be equated with the Gymnosophists whose code of behavior Calasiris emulates.

To Lucian, Peregrinus' actions represented tiresome vainglory and play-acting:

> Ἡ δὲ πᾶσα τοῦ πράγματος διασκευὴ τοιάδε ἦν. τὸν μὲν ποιητὴν οἶσθα οἷός τε ἦν καὶ ἡλίκα ἐτραγῴδει παρ' ὅλον τὸν βίον, ὑπὲρ τὸν Σοφοκλέα καὶ τὸν Αἰσχύλον. (3)[21]

Similarly, Calasiris steps on to the stage as he undertakes the "cure" of Chariclea, Ἠρχόμην ὥσπερ ἐπὶ σκηνῆς τῆς ὑποκρίσεως (4.5.3).[22]

We are now in a position to draw some conclusions from what has been said about such prophets as Calasiris, Nectanebus, Alexander of Abonuteichos and his associates and Peregrinus Proteus. On the one hand, there is the pattern of the outright frauds, such as Nectanebus and Paapis, whose duplicity is evident to everyone except those who have fallen directly under the spell of their compelling personalities. On the other hand, there are the holy men and miracle-workers like Alexander of Abonuteichos and Peregrinus Proteus, whose actions are open to conflicting interpretations. To some, they appeared to be messiahs; to others (such as Lucian), they were charlatans and their followers were hopelessly naive dupes. Charicles' and Chariclea's reactions to Calasiris illustrate the ambivalent reception accorded some holy men. Charicles, after enlisting Calasiris' aid, makes a brief appearance at the end of the story to denounce him as a charlatan (10.36.4). To Chariclea, however, although she has seen through her mentor's play-acting (4.5.4), he remains the "most holy of men," whose religious teachings enable her to shore up the sagging faith of her mate Theagenes (8.11.9). There is still a third category, which in a sense bridges the two previous categories, and which is rationalized by Synesius' defence of divine duplicity. Deception is justified on the grounds that it serves some greater, divine purpose.

Calasiris exemplifies all three types of sages, and it is this overlap that has caused misunderstanding of Heliodorus' artistic intentions. He practises deception for two reasons. The first reason, which in itself would

[21] Lucian also represents Socrates' philosophical acceptance of death as a sham (*D. Mort.* 21). Cf. *Alex.* 60, Τοιοῦτο τέλος τῆς Ἀλεξάνδρου τραγῳδίας καὶ αὕτη τοῦ παντὸς δράματος ἡ καταστροφὴ ἐγένετο.

[22] This is not to deny that Heliodorus' frequent use of dramatic metaphors more often than not has no special significance. On the subject see J. W. H. Walden, "Stage Terms in Heliodorus's Aethiopica," *HSCP* 5 (1894) 1–43. W. Bühler, "Das Element des Visuellen in der Eingangsszene . . . ," *WS* N.F. 10 (1976) 177–85, has effectively analyzed the opening "shot" of the *Aethiopica* from the perspective of modern cinematographic techniques. Brown (above, note 12) 94 emphasizes the theatrical display of the holy men of late antiquity.

not exonerate him from the charge of being a fraud, is that others expect Egyptian sages to be magicians (3.16.2). Second, he exploits this expectation in order to trick Charicles into releasing information that will enable him to restore Chariclea to the land of her birth in accordance with divine will (4.5.1). Calasiris gives a typically sardonic twist to the Synesian type of formulation of two levels of truth when he dazzles his callow interlocutor Cnemon with a (specious) demonstration of the hidden, underlying meaning of Homer's verse (3.12.2). Similarly, Calasiris takes high-minded exception to the disreputable methods and goals of "popular wisdom" but seizes the opportunity to make use of the foreknowledge provided by it (6.14–7.1.1).

Calasiris is a complex character and cannot be labeled fraud *or* holy man. He is both. The result, artistically, is not an incomprehensible character, as Rohde charged, but rather the successful albeit sardonic portrayal of an authentic type of holy man of late antiquity. Heliodorus has portrayed him as embodying the qualities of charlatans and of sages and has fused the two sets of qualities with the Synesian type of theory of holy lying.

II
Philosophical Decor in the *Aethiopica*

In the preceding pages I have tried to fit Calasiris into a prevalent pattern in the conduct of ancient sages and the reactions of others to them. In what follows I shall be concerned to show more specifically that Calasiris and certain incidents in the *Aethiopica* reflect patterns of thought broadly and sometimes closely consistent with the kinds of philosophical search for the hidden meanings of literature and life that prevailed during the Imperial period. Since I shall be associating Heliodorus with ideas that flourished in the third and fourth centuries, although they existed as early as the time of Socrates, it should be stated that I favour the fourth-century, post–350 date of composition for the *Aethiopica*. This view depends on the argument that Heliodorus modeled the siege of Syene in Book 9 on the historical third siege of Nisibis by the Persian king Sapor II in 350. The post-350 date accords perfectly with the eleventh-century chronographer Theodosius Meletinus' linking of Heliodorus' *floruit* to the reign of Theodosius the Great (397–395).[23] However, since similar though less fully developed ideas about the principles of allegorical interpretation existed much earlier, the traditional date of *c.* 230 for composition of the *Aethiopica* does not invalidate my arguments.

[23] On the chronology of the *Aethiopica* see my bibliographical survey, *CW* 67 (1974) 345–46. The only subsequent detailed studies are T. Szepessy, "Le siège de Nisibe et la chronologie d'Héliodore," *AAntHung* 24 (1976) 247–76 (in favour of the date of *c.* 230); and J. R. Morgan, *A Commentary on the Ninth and Tenth Books of the Aithiopica of Heliodorus* (D. Phil. thesis, Oxford 1978) ii–xxxvii (in support of the post-350 date).

It will be convenient initially to continue the theme of Calasiris' portrayal as trickster in another guise: Platonist allegorist. I have already mentioned in translation (above, p. 144) the passage where Calasiris cites Homer to convince Cnemon that he is capable of distinguishing between divinely inspired dreams and actual divine presence:

> Ὅν τροπόν, . . . , ὦ τέκνον, καὶ ὁ σοφὸς Ὅμηρος αἰνίττεται, οἱ πολλοὶ δὲ τὸ αἴνιγμα παρατρέχουσιν. (3.12.2)

There follows the quotation from Homer (*Il.* 13.71–72), and then Cnemon responds:

> Ἀλλ' ἦ καὶ ἔοικα τῶν πολλῶν εἶναι καὶ τοῦτο ἴσως ἐλέγχειν, ὦ Καλάσιρι, βουλόμενος τῶν ἐπῶν ἐμνημόνευσας, ὧν ἐγὼ τὴν μὲν ἐπιπολῆς διάνοιαν ὅτε περ καὶ τὴν λέξιν οἶδα ἐκδιδαχθείς τὴν δὲ ἐγκατεσπαρμένην αὐτοῖς θεολογίαν ἠγνόηκα. (3.12.3)

Homer held a cherished place in Platonist thought. The Platonist tradition of allegorical interpretation of his works was rationalized in this way: Homer was a great poet but some of what he says seems to be unworthy of a great poet; therefore, the apparent "monstrosities" must contain some deeper, hidden meaning worthy of his ethical and religious teaching. This approach to Homer culminates some hundred years after the time of Heliodorus in the Neoplatonist synthesizer Proclus:

> Since therefore myths [such as those of Homer] incite those who are naturally more intelligent to a desire for the theory hidden within them and through their apparent monstrosities (διὰ τὴν φαινομένην τερατολογίαν) incite them to search for the truth that lies enshrined in the sanctuaries of the myths, but since they also prevent the profane (τοῖς βεβήλοις) from approaching those things to which they have no right, how could they not be eminently suitable to the gods themselves, whose essence they represent?[24]

[24] Procl. *In R.*, I, pp. 85.26–86.5, ed. W. Kroll (1899; repr. Amsterdam 1965). J. A. Coulter, *The Literary Microcosm* (Leiden 1976) 50, discusses the passage in the context of Neoplatonic literary theory. Cf. Porph. *Antr.* 4, ed. A. Nauck: Homer's fabrication of all the obscurities and anomalies that Cronius has detected (they are summarized in chapter 3) shows that neither a charming story nor a topographical account was the poet's intention, but rather Homer intended allegory. On the subject of ancient allegorical interpretation I have found the following studies most useful: F. Buffière, *Les mythes d'Homère et la pensée grecque* (Paris 1956); O. Casel, *De Philosophorum Graecorum Silentio Mystico* (1919; repr. Berlin 1967); W. Theiler, "Der Mythos und die Götter," in *Horizonte der Humanitas: Festschrift W. Wili*, ed. G. Luck (Berne 1960) 15–36; N. J. Richardson, "Homeric Professors in the Age of the Sophists," *PCPS* 201 (1975) 65–81. I have not consulted R. D. Lamberton, *Homer the Theologian: The "Iliad" and "Odyssey" as Read by the Neoplatonists of Late Antiquity*, 2 vols. (diss., Yale 1979). According to *DA* 40 (1980) 5852–53A, chap. 3 of vol. I treats "traces of Homer-interpretation in Heliodorus' *Ethiopica* . . . as well as a critical text by ['Philip the Philosopher'] which interprets the novel as a Neoplatonic allegory."

Porphyry expresses the opinion that Homer's thoughts are not so easy to fathom as some suppose and that while all the early poets expressed themselves about the gods and daemons through enigmatic symbols (δι' αἰνιγμῶν ἐσήμαναν), Homer kept these matters hidden (ἀπέκρυψε) to an even greater degree.[25]

The platonizing Christian bishop Synesius provides a remarkable parallel to Calasiris' strained interpretation of Homer. He has just stated, on the authority of Homer (*Il.* 13.355), that Zeus' superior knowledge derives from his being older than the other gods:

> But if any one is persuaded on the authority of other passages that the rule of Zeus rests in the strong hand, as in the text . . . [βίῃ δ' ὅγε φέρτερος ἦεν (*Od.* 18.234)], that man's acquaintance with poetry is that of the vulgar (φορτικῶς ὡμίλησε), and he has never heard of the philosophy therein. . . . It is in this sense that to the words "he was superior in prowess," he has fastened the words "he is more ancient in days," meaning that Zeus is an elder-born intelligence; for what else is strength of mind but intelligent thought? Whosoever, being a god, is deemed worthy to rule over gods, rules in that he is mind by the superior force of wisdom.[26]

Neoplatonic allegorical interpretation of Homer is also evident in the comparison by Proclus' teacher Syrianus of the sacrifices offered by Achilles at Patroclus' funeral with "the Chaldaean sacrament of immortality. Syrianus asserts that all the ritual acts performed by the Homeric Achilles at the funeral pyre 'imitate' the Chaldaean mystery."[27] Lewy adds that "the external rites of the first act of mystery, which must be represented as analogous to those performed by the Homeric Achilles, recall the ceremonial of the necromancers" as described by Heliodorus (6.14–15).[28]

The extract quoted above from Proclus expresses the additional justification of Homer's use of allegory that the mysteries must be kept hidden from the profane. This characteristically Platonist idea is also echoed in the passage of Heliodorus under consideration. Calasiris speaks of the masses who overlook Homer's hidden meaning; and Cnemon confesses to being one of them, having only a superficial understanding

[25] Porph. *On the Styx, apud* Stob. II, p. 14, lines 10–13, ed. C. Wachsmuth. I owe the reference to Buffière 421.

[26] Synesius, *On Dreams* 1.131c–d, ed. N. Terzaghi; trans. A. FitzGerald, *The Essays and Hymns of Synesius of Cyrene* (London 1930) 327. The description assigned by Synesius to Zeus is applied by Homer to Odysseus.

[27] Quoted from H. Lewy, *Chaldaean Oracles and Theurgy* (Cairo 1956) 206. The text in question is Proclus (above, note 24) I, pp. 152.7–153.20.

[28] *Ibid.* 208. In the accompanying note 133 Lewy mistakenly cites Hld. 4.14–15 instead of 6.14–15. On p. 219 Lewy notes other appropriations of Homer by Chaldaeans.

and being ignorant of the theology contained in Homer's verses (3.12.2). Calasiris adds that the profane would remain oblivious of what the sage like himself would grasp, Τοὺς μὲν δὴ βεβήλους κἂν διαλάθοιεν τὴν δὲ σοφοῦ γνῶσιν οὐκ ἂν διαφύγοιεν (3.13.2).

As we have seen, Proclus speaks of the function of allegory as being partly to keep sacred matters from the profane (τοῖς βεβήλοις). In a part of the *On the Styx* subsequent to what I paraphrased earlier, Porphyry states that Homer employed allegory and that he himself, like Cnemon, has only touched the surface of the Homeric material that contains much theosophy (πολλῆς φιλοσοφίας; so Cnemon: θεολογίαν). He states elsewhere that the Pythagorean Cronius has been very successful in disclosing the underlying meaning of Homer's verse. His *On the Cave of the Nymphs* opens with the words, Ὅτι ποτὲ αἰνίττεται Ὁμήρῳ τὸ ἐν Ἰθάκῃ ἄντρον; and he refers later to Cronius' view that, as in the exchange between Calasiris and Cnemon, it is evident not only to τοῖς σοφοῖς but to τοῖς ἰδιώταις that the poet has used allegory (ἀλληγορεῖν) and riddles (αἰνίττεσθαι) (3).[29]

To sum up, before proceeding to new matters for consideration, Calasiris' allegorical interpretation of Homer at 3.12.2–3 reveals many of the hallmarks of the philosophical patterns of *explication de texte*. The impetus to such interpretation derives from the concept of ὁ σοφὸς Ὅμηρος. Two corollaries of this assumption, given the apparent τερατολογία of wise Homer, are (1) that Homer made use of enigmas and riddles and (2) that only the intelligent are capable of discerning what he has intentionally made obscure. The general public and the profane must remain oblivious of ἡ θεολογία enshrined in the poet's verses. Heliodorus has compressed all these principles of allegorical literary interpretation, formulated above all by Porphyry and Proclus, into a short, engaging exchange between a self-professed *sophos* and a self-confessed member of *hoi polloi*.

We turn now to Book 9 of the *Aethiopica*, which relates at length the siege of the Persian troops stationed at Syene by the Ethiopian forces. A lull in the hostilities occurs when the native inhabitants of Syene and the Ethiopians take part in festivities to commemorate the beginning of the rising of the Nile. Heliodorus likewise pauses to describe certain Egyptian beliefs.

[29] The earlier references to *On the Styx* (above, note 25) are II, p. 14, line 14; and I, p. 429, lines 3–7. There is the intriguing possibility that Cronius is the addressee of Lucian's *Peregr.*, which was discussed earlier. At *Antr.* 21–22 Cronius is associated with Numenius and the two *theologoi* are later brought into the company of Plato. See also above, note 1. On the theory that certain poets such as Homer and Hesiod disguise their theosophic messages with a protective layer of myth see Procl. (above, note 24) I, p. 74, lines 16–20 (cf. Plat. *Prot.* 316e); Macr. *Somn. Scip.* 1.11; Olymp. *In Grg.* 218.10 (cf. Plat. *Prot.* 316d); Clem. Al. *Strom.* 5.4.19.3, ed. O. Stählin. See also below, note 51.

These beliefs seem to be subject to two degrees of refinement. First, there is the body of beliefs that have the widest appeal:

> Καὶ ταυτὶ μὲν δημοσιεύουσι (9.9.4),

and:

> Καὶ ταυτὶ μὲν ὁ πολὺς λεώς. (9.9.3)

For the initiated, however, the rise in the Nile enacts the myth of Isis and Osiris:

> Πρὸς δὲ τοὺς μύστας Ἶσιν τὴν γῆν καὶ Ὄσιριν τὸν Νεῖλον καταγγέλλουσι. (9.9.4)

Once Heliodorus mounts to this higher level of hermeneutics, he is likely to have derived his information from a philosophical tradition. Cf. Porphyry, Ὄσιρίς ἐστιν ὁ Νεῖλος, . . . Ἶσις ἡ Αἰγυπτία ἐστὶν γῆ.[30] This view is something of a commonplace (e.g., Plut. *Mor.* 363d), and I should not be tempted to single out Heliodorus and Porphyry if they both did not include additional related matters. Porphyry describes a statue at Elephantiné that has a ram's head and goat's horns to symbolize the conjunction of the sun and the moon in Aries. He adds that throughout Egypt cattle are sacrificed to the sun and the moon.[31] In Heliodorus' account, the sacrifice of a bull and the worship of the sun and moon play an important role in Book 10. He mentions Elephantiné (9.6, 7, 11, 12) but only as a site in the field of battle. There is then a small nucleus of related material that suggests that Heliodorus and Porphyry shared a common source of such ideas. They seem to be passing in review the wonders of Egypt; and as we shall soon see, it is altogether consistent with Heliodorus' practices to suppose that his knowledge of Egypt is based on books rather than autopsy.

Heliodorus then expresses his authorial view (οἶμαι) on the subject of Isiac hermeneutics:

> . . . φυσικῶν τινῶν . . . ἀνδρῶν καὶ θεολόγων πρὸς μὲν τοὺς βεβήλους τὰς ἐγκατεσπαρμένας τούτοις ὑπονοίας μὴ παραγυμνούντων, ἀλλ' ἐν εἴδει μύθου προκατηχούντων, τοὺς δὲ ἐποπτικωτέρους καὶ ἀνακτόρων ἐντὸς τῇ πυρφόρῳ τῶν ὄντων λαμπάδι φανότερον τελούντων.
>
> Τοῦτό τοι καὶ ἡμῖν εὐμένεια μὲν εἴη τῶν εἰρημένων, τὰ μυστικώτερα δὲ ἀρρήτῳ σιγῇ τετιμήσθω. (9.9.5–9.10.1)

> . . . with natural scientists and theologians not revealing to the profane the underlying meaning implanted in them, but

[30] Porphyry, *De Cultu Simulacrorum*, *apud* Eusebius, *PE* 3.11.51, ed. K. Mras, *Eusebius Werke* (Berlin 1954) I, p. 144 (= Migne, *PG* 21.207–8).

[31] *Ibid.* 3.12.1–6, pp. 144–45 (= Migne, *PG* 21.210–11).

> offering comfort in the form of a fable, consecrating the higher rank of initiates within the temple, however, more brightly with the fire-bearing lamp of the truth.
>
> May what I have just said cause no religious offence [for] the mysteries must be honoured with ineffably holy silence.[32]

This passage also represents a compendium of philosophical principles of allegorical interpretation: appeasement of the public at large (ὁ πολὺς λεώς, δημοσιεύουσι, εἶδει μύθου προκατηχούντων);[33] distinction between the βεβήλους (see above, p. 157) and the μύστας; and, finally, the "underlying" (ὑπονοίας) meaning "implanted" within the text (see above, p. 155).[34]

The part ascribed to theologians in philosophical speculation on the composition of the universe extends throughout the recorded history of Greek thought. Heliodorus' formulation of the process (τοῦ εἶναι καὶ ζῆν ἀνθρώπους τὴν ὑγρᾶς τε καὶ ξηρᾶς οὐσίας σύνοδον αἰτίαν μάλιστα νομίζουσι . . . , 9.9.4) is nonetheless exemplified by Porphyry's interpretation of the Homeric grotto as representing the stone, earth and moisture of the universe (*Antr.* 5, 7, 9 [Ὅτι μὲν οὖν σύμβολον κόσμου τὰ ἄντρα καὶ τῶν ἐγκοσμίων δυνάμεων ἐτίθεντο οἱ θεολόγοι], 13–14 and 21 ff.).

The reference to the theories of Egyptian philosophers of nature (φυσικῶν τινῶν) brings us still more into the ambit of Platonist allegorizing and back to one of my points of departure—"Egyptianness." Part of Iamblichus' opening chapter on Egyptian symbolism is worth quoting at some length:

> First, I want to explain to you the theology of the Egyptians. By imitating universal nature and divine creation through symbols, they manifest representations of mystic, hidden and obscure ideas; just so has Nature by means of visible forms somehow formed an impression of unclear words, and just so has divine creation inscribed the underlying truth of ideas with visible representations. (*Myst.* 7.1, pp. 249.12–250.7)

[32] LSJ s.v. προκατηχέω suggest (1) "soothe beforehand with sounds, Cels. ap. Orig. *Cels.* 3.13" and (2) "instruct beforehand, Hld. 9.9." In view of the paternalizing attitude that we have seen associated with the principles of allegorical interpretation, something like "soothe" or my "offers comfort" seems the more appropriate translation of the verb in Heliodorus.

[33] On "appeasement" cf. Porph. *Antr.* 4: ψυχαγωγία. Cf. also Procl. (above, note 24) II, p. 108: the mind is both intellectual and imaginative. Therefore, mythical representations of the truth appeal to it. That myths have an influence on the masses is proved by initiation rites, which use myths "in order to embrace the ineffable truth about the gods." Cf. also Clem. Al. *Strom.* 5.4.24.1: ἡ ποιητικὴ ψυχαγωγία; and Strabo 10.3.9, p. 467c.

[34] Note that Heliodorus has used the verb ἐγκατασπείρω at both 3.12.3 and 9.9.5. The "Index vocabulorum memorabilium" of Casel (above, note 24) is useful for tracing the use of such words as δημοσιεύειν and βέβηλος; Buffière (above, note 24) 45–65 is a good guide to such words as ὑπόνοια and ἀλληγορία.

Before leaving the passage in Book 9 it should be mentioned that attention was long ago called to its source in Philo's *On the Life of Moses* 2.195.[35] Fortunately for my case, the Alexandrian Jewish exegete is firmly established as a receptacle of "stoicized Platonism."[36]

The Egyptian practice of giving concrete form to intangible concepts that we have just seen explained in Iamblichus has affinities to Calasiris' allegorical interpretation of Homer. We left Calasiris expounding on the ability of the sage to solve Homer's riddles and to recognize divine presence. He explains that the gods are recognizable by their manner of staring intensely and by their unhindered motion through the air, without separating their feet or placing one before the other (3.13.2). He adds:

> Διὸ δὴ καὶ τὰ ἀγάλματα τῶν θεῶν Αἰγύπτιοι τὼ πόδε ζευγνύοντες καὶ ὥσπερ ἑνοῦντες ἱστᾶσιν. ἃ δὴ καὶ Ὅμηρος εἰδώς, ἅτε Αἰγύπτιος καὶ τὴν ἱερὰν παίδευσιν ἐκδιδαχθείς, συμβολικῶς, τοῖς ἔπεσιν ἐναπέθετο τοῖς δυναμένοις συνιέναι γνωρίζειν καταλιπών, . . . εἰπών, ἐπὶ δὲ τοῦ Ποσειδῶνος τὸ "ἴχνια γὰρ μετόπιοθε ποδῶν ἠδὲ κνημάων / ῥεῖ' ἔγνων ἀπιόντος," οἷον ῥέοντος ἐν τῇ πορείᾳ. (3.13.3; cf. 3.12.2)

We have already encountered some of the philosophical elements in this passage: the Egyptian practice of symbolically representing intangible religious concepts and the distinction between those capable of searching out the hidden religious significance and either the ignorant or the profane. Calasiris' statement about the fabrication of mimetic statues of the gods is an explicit instance of what is implied by Iamblichus (above, p. 159).

Porphyry wrote a work entitled *On the Cult of Statues*, parts of which are preserved in Eusebius' *Praeparatio Evangelica* 3.7–13.[37] The work opens with the Orphic injunction to the βέβηλοι (whom we have often encountered), Φθέγξομαι οἷς θέμις ἐστί, θύρας δ' ἐπίθεσθε βέβηλοι[38] As is

[35] G. Lumbroso, *Arch. Pap.* 4 (1907–1908) 66. Morgan (above, note 23) 85 adds that Stephanus, s.v. ἀντίμιμος, had previously seen the parallel. However, that entry may be the result of the Dindorf brothers' revision of Stephanus, since I have not been able to find this parallel stated in the (undated) sixteenth- or seventeenth-century edition of Stephanus available to me. Morgan 85 and 87 emphasizes the joint use of the rare words θεοπλαστεῖν (Hld. 9.9.3; not found before Philo), σεμνηγορεῖν (*ibid.*; frequent in Philo but not found again before Heliodorus), and νέφωσις (*ibid.*).

[36] Dillon (above, note 1) 143. See also J. Pépin, "Remarques sur la théorie de l'exégèse allégorique chez Philon," in *Philon d'Alexandrie* (Paris 1967) 137–67.

[37] The title is in fact derived from Eusebius' designation. I have consulted the critical edition of Mras (above, note 30) (= Migne, *PG* 21.206–208). On Porphyry (along with Plotinus) as allegorist, see Porph. *Plot.* 15, in Plot. *Enneads*, ed. R. Volkmann: when at a gathering of Platonists one of them accused Porphyry of formulating a far-fetched allegorical interpretation of ὁ ἱερὸς γάμος, Plotinus came to his defence, saying that he was simultaneously a poet, philosopher and hierophant.

[38] Proclus, too, speaks of the βέβηλοι being denied access to those things to which they have no θέμις: see above, note 24 and related text. Other instances of the Orphic formula

to be expected of the author of *On the Cave of the Nymphs*, Porphyry speculates on the symbolic value of the material composition of statues (e.g., ivory = the luminous quality of divinity), and he equates the appearance of statues with the activities of deities. Like Calasiris in the passage just quoted, Porphyry acknowledges the authority of Egyptian practice:

> Τὸν δημιουργόν, ὃν Κνὴφ οἱ Αἰγύπτιοι προσαγορεύουσιν, ἀνθρωποειδῆ, τὴν δὲ χροιὰν ἐκ κυανοῦ μέλανος ἔχοντα, . . . ὅτι λόγος δυσεύρετος καὶ ἐγκεκρυμένος καὶ οὐ φανός.[39]

Porphyry's description of symbolic statues of the Egyptian god Φθᾶ is still closer to Calasiris' representation of the Egyptian practice of joining the feet of the gods (3.13.3), Ἀνθρωποειδές ἐστιν ἄγαλμα, τοὺς μὲν πόδας συμβεβηκότας ἔχον (*PE* 3.11.47). Again (cf. above, notes 30–31 and related text), Heliodorus has covered the same ground as Porphyry and has made use of the traditional Platonist fascination with Egypt to add another touch to the philosophical decor of the *Aethiopica*.

The following examples of theosophic thought in the *Aethiopica* centre on the principles of *manteia* as formulated by Calasiris. He is concerned to distinguish between the two kinds of Egyptian theosophy and in developing his views advances the kinds of arguments that Iamblichus puts forth in Book 3 of *On Egyptian Mysteries* to distinguish between theurgy and magic. I have already noted how Homer's Egyptian heritage is claimed by Calasiris to be the source of the poet's probing insight into arcane religious matters (see above, pp. 144 and 157–60). And we have seen that the Egyptian sage is acutely aware of a negative prejudice against Egyptian hocus-pocus (see above, p. 145). It is at this point that we pick up the story again. After expounding on Homer's Egyptian birth and becoming the butt of Cnemon's ironic acknowledgement of Homer's Egyptian "mysteriousness" (3.13–15), Calasiris resumes the story of the hero and heroine, recounting Theagenes' appeal for aid in his love-affair because of the mistaken assumption that Egyptian prophets specialized in love-philtres (3.16).

Calasiris seizes the opportunity to disabuse Cnemon of any such idea:

> Ἡ μὲν γάρ τις ἐστὶ δημώδης [sc. σοφία] καὶ ὡς ἄν τις εἴποι χαμαὶ ἐρχομένη, εἰδώλων θεράπαινα καὶ περὶ σώματα νεκρῶν εἱλουμένη, βοτάναις προστετηκυῖα . . . (3.16.3)

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can be traced through the *index verborum* of O. Kern, *Orphicorum Fragmenta* (Berlin 1922). See G. E. R. Lloyd, *Magic, Reason and Experience* (Cambridge 1979) 41, note 163, for the use of the same formula in the Hippocratic *Law*.

[39] *PE* 3.11.45, p. 143. Calasiris also speaks of the human appearance (cf. Porphyry's ἀνθρωποειδῆ) of gods and daemons: θεοὶ καὶ δαίμονες . . . εἰς ἀνθρώπους δὲ ἐπὶ πλεῖστον ἑαυτοὺς εἰδοποιοῦσι (3.13.1).

Likewise, Iamblichus discounts the use of images by erring theurgists:

> Εἰ δὲ καὶ ὡς θεοῖς [sc. θαυματοποιία] προσέχει τοῖς εἰδώλοις τούτοις, οὔτε λόγῳ ῥητὸν οὔτε ἔργῳ φορητὸν ἔσται τὸ ἄτοπον. (3.29, pp. 172.17–173.2)

Just as Calasiris discredits the use of corpses in order to gain divine truth (περὶ σώματα νεκρῶν εἰλουμένη), so Iamblichus denies that there is any certainty about identifying divine truth with a manufactured image of a god:

> Τί οὖν ἀγαθὸν γένοιτο ἂν ὕλης βλαστάνον καὶ τῶν περὶ τὴν ὕλην καὶ ἐν τοῖς σώμασιν ὑλικῶν καὶ σωματοειδῶν δυνάμεων; (3.28, p. 168.6–8)

Popular superstition is pictured by Calasiris as being engrossed with (magic) plants, . . . βοτάναις προστετηκυῖα. Iamblichus rebuts the concrete evidence of his opponent (probably Porphyry) (δείγματα ἀπὸ τῶν ἔργων ἐναργῆ [3.37, p. 166.16]) that mantic powers come from within the medium:

> Τὸ γὰρ λίθους καὶ βοτάνας φέρειν τοὺς καλουμένους, δεσμεῖν τε ἱεροὺς τινας δεσμοὺς καὶ λύειν τούτους, . . . πάντα δὴ ταῦτα ἔξωθεν τὴν ἐπίπνοιαν γίγνεσθαι διασημαίνει. (3.27, pp. 166.16–167.3)[40]

We saw earlier (see above, note 15 and related text) that Iamblichus, like Calasiris, was concerned about disruptions caused by ἀντίθεοι. Calasiris brands the cheated expectations of false religious practice as φαντασίας τῶν μὴ ὄντων ὡς ὄντων (3.16.3). For Iamblichus, the theurgist who puts his confidence in false images is without divine grace and therefore lacks direct access to the truth:

> Οὔτε ἔχει χώραν εἰς ἣν δέξεται αὐτὴν τὰ κατεχόμενα ὑπὸ τῶν σκιοειδῶν φαντασμάτων. σκιαῖς οὖν συνέσται πολλαῖς ἀπὸ τῆς ἀληθείας ἡ τοιάδε τῶν φαντασμάτων θαυματουργία. (3.29, p. 173.4–8)[41]

Ultimately, Calasiris' views and those of Iamblichus on foreseeing the future are bound to differ, because Calasiris is defending astrology rather

[40] I hesitate to disagree with the authority of Dodds (above, note 15) 298 with note 26. He takes the stones and plants to be the "objective traces of their visit which the 'gods' leave behind," citing Pi. *O.* 13.65 ff., and Paus. 10.38.3. However, the golden bridle brought by Athena in Pindar and the sealed tablet left by Asclepius seem to be altogether different from the stones, plants, religious spells (ἱερούς τινας δεσμούς: see LSJ s.v. "δεσμός 5") and opening and closing doors mentioned by Iamblichus. Dodds himself, 292, emphasizes the importance of stones and plants in the theurgists' rites (add Iamb. *Myst.* 5.23, p. 233.11–16). Accordingly, Dodds, followed by des Places in the Budé edition, takes τοὺς καλουμένους to be passive rather than middle. At 4.3, p. 185.15, Iamblichus distinguishes between suppliant and invoked deity thus: καλοῦν ἢ καλούμενον.

[41] Cf. 3.28, p. 167.13–14, Διὰ τί γὰρ ἄν τις εἴδωλα ἀντὶ τῶν ὄντως ὄντων ἀνταλλάξαιτο;

than theurgy. Indeed, Iamblichus, in rebutting his opponent, seems to deny the very thing that Calasiris endorses. Calasiris' wisdom looks up to the heavens, being a

> θεῶν συνόμιλος καὶ φύσεως κρειττόνων μέτοχος, ἄστρων κίνησιν ἐρευνῶσα καὶ μελλόντων πρόγνωσιν κερδαίνουσα. (3.16.4)

To judge by Iamblichus' representation of the mistaken practices of the theurgists, they seem to have combined astrology with the conventional use of images of the gods in order to gain knowledge of the future (3.30, p. 173.9–19).[42]

Calasiris' catechism of 3.16 is enacted at the end of Book 6, where he and his ward Chariclea arrive at a battle field in the course of their search for Theagenes. They encounter there an Egyptian crone who postpones their request to be guided to the village to which Theagenes has gone with the plea that she first be allowed to perform certain religious rites in honour of her son who was killed in the fighting (6.13.6). These turn out, to Calasiris' horror, to be necromantic rites (6.14). Chariclea nonetheless urges that they draw closer to the scene of necromancy in the hope of gaining from the reanimated corpse of the crone's dead son some word of Theagenes' immediate fate (6.14.7). Calasiris then explains to her the distinction between popular religion and high-minded theosophy as he did earlier (3.16) on the occasion of Theagenes' supposedly incorrect inference about Egyptian religion. He employs the same words on both occasions. Ἡ [δημώδης] μαντεία (6.14.6) involves for τοῖς βεβήλοις crawling about on the ground among corpses, . . . περὶ . . . σώματα νεκρῶν εἱλουμένοις (6.14.7). Previously, he pictured ἡ δημώδης σοφία as περὶ σώματα νεκρῶν εἱλουμένη (3.16.3).

For true prophets like Calasiris, τὸ μαντικόν derives ἐκ θυσιῶν ἐννόμων καὶ εὐχῶν καθαρῶν (6.14.7). This attitude to communion with the gods is also evident in the Gymnosophists with whom Calasiris is supposed to have studied. Book 10 of the *Aethiopica* is a notoriously artificially contrived cliff-hanger, with both Theagenes and Chariclea facing imminent sacrifice because of her modest reluctance to disclose her betrothal to him. As the sacrificial axe is poised to fall on Theagenes and King Hydaspes urges the Gymnosophists to begin the sacrifice, their leader, Sisimithres, objects that blood sacrifices are abhorrent to the gods:

[42] Cf. 3.28, p. 169.1–4 and p. 170.3–10. In the latter passage, practices such as those recommended by Calasiris are dismissed as magic (τεχνικῶς). C. Zinten, *RhM* 108 (1965) 92 with note 75, cites Heliodorus to illustrate Iamblichus' distinction between false theurgy and his own preferred methods: cf. ἡ . . . δημώδης [σοφία] . . . περὶ αὐτὴν . . . πταίουσα (Hld. 3.16.3) with ἡ ἄπταιστος ἀλήθεια (*Myst.* 3.31, p. 179.8).

> Ἀλλ' ἡμεῖς μὲν εἰς τὸν νεὼν μεταστησόμεθα, θυσίαν οὕτως ἔκθεσμον τὴν δι' ἀνθρώπων οὔτε αὐτοὶ δοκιμάζοντες οὔτε προσίεσθαι τὸ θεῖον νομίζοντες (ὡς εἴθε γε ἦν καὶ τὰς διὰ τῶν ἄλλων ζώων θυσίας κεκωλῦσθαι) μόναις ταῖς δι' εὐχῶν καὶ ἀρωμάτων καθ' ἡμέτερον νόον ἀρκουμένους. (10.9.6)

Given the religious and philosophical syncretism of the Imperial period, it is not surprising that these beliefs were shared by Gymnosophists, Pythagoreans and Neoplatonists. Indeed, in a passage that has often been cited in support of the view that Heliodorus modeled parts of his romance on Philostratus' biography of Apollonius of Tyana, Apollonius explains his Pythagorean aversion to blood sacrifices with reference to the fact that Pythagoras himself adopted the practice from the model of the Gymnosophists.[43]

Although Iamblichus opted in favour of blood-sacrifices during the course of the debate that occupied the attention "of all those who are, so to speak, educated and those who have had no experience of liberal education," his teacher Porphyry had found himself in sympathy with the Pythagorean outlook on blood-sacrifices. And it appears that the issue was of some importance in Platonist circles, for Porphyry pledges himself to religious silence except on matters that some Platonists (*τῶν Πλατωνικῶν τινές*) have discussed openly.[44]

Thus although Calasiris' insistence on the important role of prayer and the need for proper sacrificial ritual cannot be ascribed to any one school of philosophy (indeed, members of the same school such as Iamblichus and Porphyry disagreed among themselves), his attitude is nonetheless compatible with the interest accorded the subjects by Platonists and is consistent with his characterization as a sage and theosophist voicing the ideals of the Academy and of closely related schools of philosophy during the Imperial period.

III
Conclusions

First, I should like to state emphatically my disagreement with Geffcken's view that "the tale is a work of Neoplatonist propaganda."[45] This may seem contradictory, since I have been concerned to give

[43] Philostr. *VA* 8.7. For the inference that Heliodorus followed Philostratus closely see Rohde (above, note 1) 440, note 1.

[44] Iamb. *Myst.* 5.1, p. 199.6–8, a reference that I owe to A. D. Nock (ed.), *Sallustius: Concerning the Gods and the Universe* (1926; repr. Hildesheim 1966) lxxxv. For Porphyry's attitude see *Abst.* 2.36, ed. A. Nauck. The Gymnosophist in Heliodorus adds that the intended sacrifice will not in his opinion take place as he infers from certain divine signs and the halo of light illuminating the intended victims (10.9.7); for light as a mark of divine presence and favour cf. Iamb. *Myst.* 3.6, p. 112.12–13, and see Dodds (above, note 15) 298–99.

[45] Geffcken (above, note 1) 84–85.

substance to some of his assertions of Neoplatonic parallels and have recorded my indebtedness to his leads. Instead, I see the philosophical component as literary embellishment, as decorative overlay rather than as thematic underpinning, in the same category as the numerous allusions to Homer and Euripides. For instance, it seems to me to be black humour or a "sick" joke to have portrayed Calasiris solemnly pronouncing that ἡ δημώδης σοφία "trips over itself" (αὐτὴ περὶ αὑτὴν τὰ πολλὰ πταίουσα, 3.16.3) and then to portray the representative of "popular wisdom," the Egyptian crone of Book 6, stumbling in her mindless frenzy on to an upright spear and thereby killing herself (6.15.5). In this instance, Heliodorus has intentionally undercut any claim to serious philosophical intentions that the episode might otherwise embody.

This kind of sardonic irony is a consistent feature of the *Aethiopica*, expressing itself in the jokes made at the expense of the crafty Egyptian spokesman for philosophical ideals, as for instance when even the gullible Cnemon senses that he is being led up the garden path by the old *poseur* (2.24.2) or when Chariclea wryly acquiesces in his self-confessed humbug (4.5.3–4). Similarly, only the ignorant would be fooled by Calasiris' interpretation of ῥεῖ' as "flowing" rather than "easily" (3.13.3), by his preposterous claim of Homer's Egyptian birth and by his outrageous etymological explanation of the significance of Homer's name (3.14). His portrayal at this point verges on parody of theosophists and philosophical allegorists. The "sacred books" in which he claims to have found evidence for the existence of the evil eye are no more sacred than Plutarch's *Moralia* (Hld. 3.8.1; *Mor.* 681). Again, any reasonably well-read person would see Calasiris' portrayal for exactly what Heliodorus intended it to be—a sardonic characterization.

The most conclusive example of Heliodorus' willingness to sacrifice philosophical coherence to the needs of telling a gripping story occurs in Book 10, where consistency so often plays a second fiddle to contrived suspense. The Pythagorean injunction against blood-sacrifices adopted by Imperial Platonists and voiced emphatically by the Gymnosophist Sisimithres (10.9.6–7) is ignored in the subsequent development of the plot after it has served to achieve the "hair's breadth" rescue of Theagenes. Indeed, the Ethiopian paradigm of saintly propriety grants that religious principles must give way to political expediency, "A king must indulge the uncritical passions of the mob" (10.9.7). Finally, as Morgan has pointed out, Heliodorus cannot have been unaware of the hostile attitude to Egyptian religion in the passage that he appropriated from Philo and that accords so badly with the pretence of Egyptian holiness upheld elsewhere in the story (9.9.3).[46]

[46] Morgan (above, note 23) 85. See above, note 23 and related text. Philo, *On the Life of Moses* 2.193, attributes ἀσέβεια and ἀθεότης to the Egyptians. W. Capelle, "Zwei Quellen

To return specifically to the issue of characterization, the explanation of Calasiris' puzzling portrayal is not that Heliodorus has failed to create either a plausible holy man or an artistically coherent dissimulator, but rather that he has modeled this very engaging embodiment of both roles on a type familiar in life and literature from the time of Homer. He has overlooked no opportunity to include details that contribute to the picture of a plausible sage. For instance, his name would evoke for readers of Herodotus (2.81) the καλασίρις said by the historian to have been worn by initiates into Egyptian mystery religions and by Pythagoreans because of the injunction against wearing wool. Did Heliodorus intend in this way to link his crafty Isiac priest to the ambivalent reputation of Pythagoras (see above, note 17 and related text)? Or consider the portrayal of his protegée Chariclea. It includes the virtually formulaic assertion of the heroine's incomparable beauty that is found in other romances (2.33). But she is also credited with intelligence and has mastered her new language so well that she is able to overcome her foster-father in debates (*ibid.*). Furthermore, she has kept the company of learned men (*ibid.*).[47] These qualities, so unexpected in a romance of adventure, may well take their impetus from the fact that "the company of women in the shared pursuit of philosophy was characteristic of the Neoplatonists, who followed the Pythagorean traditions and liked to see women in their midst."[48]

I would also like to suggest that Heliodorus' familiarity with Platonist allegorical interpretation has played a part in the design of the *Aethiopica*. If that is so, then the *Aethiopica* and Synesius' the *Egyptians* are the only two works of classical antiquity known to me that have in a sense made Platonist literary principles their subject rather than being themselves the subject of Platonist allegorical interpretations.[49]

I have in mind the statement of Proclus that I quoted earlier (see above, note 24 and related text) to the effect that marvelous fictional tales entice the intelligent to search for their hidden meaning.

The Platonizing Christian bishop Synesius gives vivid expression to this principle:

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des Heliodor," *RhM* 96 (1953) 166–80, has argued that Heliodorus' reliance on secondary sources for ethnographical excursuses shows that he was a rhetorician striving only to achieve emotional impact rather than informative consistency.

[47] Chariclea also enjoys divine favour (1.20; 8.9.15 and 17); her primacy over her mate Theagenes may be intended to reflect her greater religious understanding and convictions (8.11.5–11, 9.2.2 and 9.24). J. Hani, *BAGB* (1978) 268–73, emphasizes her piety and purity, concluding that her experiences embody a parable of initiation into the rites of Helios. For Heiserman (above, note 3) 195, Chariclea "has too much character to be the emblem of anything."

[48] Geffcken (above, note 1) 71, who cites Porphyry's *To Marcella*, ed. W. Pötsch.

[49] For Neoplatonic principles of literary interpretation see Coulter (above, note 24).

> The legend is Egyptian. The Egyptians are remarkable for their wisdom. Perhaps, therefore, this, which is only a legend, might signify, enigmatically, something more than a legend, for the very reason that it is Egyptian.[50]

This notion that there is more to a story than meets the eye is the quality that Calasiris and Cnemon attribute to the "Egyptian" Homer (see above, pp. 144) and that Heliodorus attributes to the Egyptians in a passage that he has borrowed directly from Philo (see above, pp. 160).[51]

In a more general way, the expectation that the reader's continued patience will be gratified by imminent but unforseen advances in the story characterizes Heliodorus' narrative technique. He maintains the reader's interest by keeping him in a state of τοῦ θαυμάζειν καὶ ἀπορεῖν, as Plutarch put it (see note 51). Thus, we puzzle with Calasiris over the mysterious workings of Destiny (2.36 and 4.4–5). Similarly, Chariclea urges a "wait-and-see" attitude to the "events whose beginnings the divine power from the outset laid down in a complex way" (9.24.4). And the Gymnosophist Sisimithres, as the wondrous events begin to unfold at Syene, waits "for the revelations to be disclosed with certainty by divine will" (10.37.3).

Admittedly, this sense of expectation is a form of suspense, which is not unique to Heliodorus among ancient writers. However, he develops and sustains it to a greater degree than any other literary artist of antiquity. It is not just a matter of withholding information, as Sheherazade did for 1,001 nights. Rather, Heliodorus, like Synesius, by formulating the principle at an early stage in the narrative (3.12–13) conditions the reader to anticipate that even the most apparently insignificant events have a significance that is part of some still unclear transcending goal. This is the principle on which philosophical interpretation of supposedly enigmatic literature is formulated. The philosophical pose that Helidorus provided for Calasiris may have predisposed him to apply this principle in the design of the *Aethiopica*.

[50] *The Egyptians, or On Providence* 89a–b, ed. N. Terzaghi; trans. FitzGerald (above, note 26) 275.

[51] Cf. Jul. *Or.* 5.170a–b; Porph. *Antr.* 3; Sallust. 3 (above, note 44). See further S. R. C. Lilla, *Clement of Alexandria* (Oxford 1971) 145–46. See also the "Index vocabulorum memorabilium" of Casel (above, note 24) s.v. ζητεῖν and its cognates, especially the extract quoted (p. 92) from Plutarch's *De E apud Delphos* 2.385c: Ἐπεὶ δὲ τοῦ φιλοσοφεῖν . . . τὸ ζητεῖν <ἀρχή, τοῦ δὲ ζητεῖν> τὸ θαυμάζειν καὶ ἀπορεῖν . . . ; and its model in Pl. *Tht.* 155d, where Hesiod's Thaumas is interpreted "allegorically" as θαῦμα. See also above, note 29.