

## THE DREAM OF CHARIKLES (4.14.2): INTERTEXTUALITY AND IRONY IN THE ETHIOPIAN STORY OF HELIODORUS

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### ABSTRACT

There are strong but previously unnoticed intertextual links between the dream of Charikles in Heliodorus (4.14.2), the portent of the eagle in Achilles Tatius (2.12.1-3), and the dream of Penelope in Homer (*Od.* 19.535-69). The allusion to Achilles Tatius' *Leukippe and Kleitophon* may have alerted Heliodorus' readers to the approach of an important turning-point in the plot, but it is the Homeric link that is the primary focus. The dream of Penelope provides moral underpinning for marriage in the *Aithiopika* and helps to underline the complex ironies in Heliodorus' narrative at this crucial turning-point in the plot.

In the Budé edition of Heliodorus' *Aithiopika*, Rattenbury's note (Vol. II, vi) to Maillon's translation (Vol. II, 24 n. 3) raises a question, which remains unanswered, about the connection between the dream of Charikles (4.14.2) and the famous and much-discussed ὕπναρ of Penelope in the *Odyssey* (19.535-69).<sup>1</sup> On the surface there does not appear to be a strong resemblance between the two accounts;<sup>2</sup> nevertheless, in this article I argue that the connection should be accepted and that an awareness of this intertext adds greatly to the reader's appreciation of the subtle irony in Heliodorus'

<sup>1</sup> 'Est-ce là un souvenir d'Homère, *Odyssée* XIX.538 où Pénélope en songe voit un aigle qui représente Ulysse? Ce n'est pas sûr.'

<sup>2</sup> Surprisingly little is made of Charikles' dream by Suzanne MacAlister, *Dreams and Suicides*.

*the Ancient Novel* (Princeton 1989) 103-04, discusses the narratological function of the dream at greater length, but without reference to Homer; J.J. Winkler, 'The mendacity of Kalasiris and the narrative strategy of Heliodorus' *Aithiopika*', *YCLS* 27 (1982) 93-158 = S. Swain (ed.), *Oxford Readings in the Greek Novel* (Oxford 1999) 286-350, deals with the connection between Ethiopia and Hades in the dream only; F. Weinstock, 'De somniorum visionumque in amatoriis Graecorum vi atque usu', *Eos* 35 (1934) 49, suggests that the dream expresses the fears of a lover that he would lose, or be separated from his beloved.



narrative at this point.

Charikles' dream may be briefly summarised as follows: Charikles, the high priest of Apollo at Delphi, intends to marry his adopted daughter Charikleia to his nephew, Alkamenes. However, she unexpectedly falls ill. Her sickness is at first interpreted as the result of the evil eye by a visiting Egyptian priest, Kalasiris, but later as love-sickness (not, as it turns out, for Alkamenes) by the more scientific doctor, Akesinos. Kalasiris then discovers that Charikleia is in fact an Ethiopian princess whom he had earlier promised to reunite with her mother in that distant land. At this point, Charikles informs him that he has had a dream in which an eagle, released from the hand of Apollo, had swooped down, snatched his daughter from his arms, and disappeared into a remote part of the earth full of dark and shadowy phantoms:

Τί δὲ οὐ μέλλω, τῆς φιλτάτης μοι τὸν βίον τάχα  
πρότερον μεταστησομένης ἢ πρὸς γάμον, ὡς φῆς,  
συναφθησομένης, εἴ τι δεῖ προσέχειν ὄνειρασι τοῖς  
τε ἄλλοις καὶ οἷς τῆς παρηκούσης ἐξεδειματώθην  
νυκτός, καθ' ἣν ἀετὸν ὤμην ἐκ χειρὸς ἀφεθέντα τοῦ  
Πυθίου καὶ ἀθρόον καταπτάντα τό τε θυγάτριον ἐκ  
κόλπων, οἴμοι, τῶν ἐμῶν ἀναρπάσαντα γῆς ἐπ'  
ἔσχατόν τι πέρας οἴχεσθαι φέροντα, ζοφώδεσί τισιν  
εἰδώλοις καὶ σκιώδεσι πλήθον, καὶ τέλος οὐδὲ  
γνῶναι ὅ τι ποτὲ καὶ δράσειε, τοῦ μεσεύοντος  
ἀπείρου διαστήματος συνεκδραμεῖν τῇ πτήσει τὴν  
θέαν ἐνεδρεύσαντος;

(Hld. 4.14.2)

Charikles interprets the dream to signify that his daughter was on the point of death. In order to allay his fears, Kalasiris suggests instead that the dream portended the marriage of his daughter.

In the *Odyssey*, on the other hand, Penelope confides in the disguised Odysseus that she was uncertain whether or not she should remarry and that she had had a dream, which she asks him to interpret, in which an eagle killed her twenty geese.

χῆνές μοι κατὰ οἶκον ἐείκοσι πυρὸν ἔδουσιν  
ἐξ ὕδατος, καὶ τέ σφιν ἰαίνομαι εἰσορόωσα·  
ἐλθῶν δ' ἐξ ὄρεος μέγας αἰετὸς ἀγκυλοχήλης  
πᾶσι κατ' αὐχένας ἦξε καὶ ἔκτανεν· οἱ δ' ἐκέχυντο  
ἄθροοι ἐν μεγάροισ', ὁ δ' ἐς αἰθέρα δῖαν ἀέρθη.  
(*Od.* 19.536-40)

In her account, the eagle returned and spoke to her to allay her fears, explaining that the dream (ὄναρ) was in fact a vision (ὑπαρ) and that he represented her husband, Odysseus, and the geese stood for the suitors. She then awoke to find her geese unharmed. The disguised Odysseus expresses surprise that she had found the dream difficult to construe, since her husband Odysseus had interpreted it for her in the dream. Penelope remains sceptical, however, and explains to him that not all dreams can be relied on; true dreams emanate from a gate of horn and false ones from a gate of ivory.<sup>3</sup> She informs him that she will soon be separated from her husband, as she intends to hold the tournament of axes on the next day, after which the first successful suitor would marry her.<sup>4</sup>

Superficially, therefore, the dreams are quite dissimilar. The strongest point of resemblance – the eagle – featured frequently in dreams and portents

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<sup>3</sup> For the allusion to the gates of horn and ivory, see P.C. Miller, *Dreams in Late Antiquity* (Princeton 1994) 15-17; R.G.A. van Lieshout, *Greeks on Dreams* (Utrecht 1980) 38-39; A. Amory, 'The gates of horn and ivory', *YCIS* 20 (1966) 3-57; E.L. Highbarger, *The Gates of Dreams* (Baltimore 1940). The most important texts on the theme are: cf. Plato, *Charm.* 173a; Soph. *El.* 645; *AP* 7.42; Verg. *Aen.* 6.893-98 (most famously); Hor. *Carm.* 3.27.41; Prop. 5.7.87; Luc. *Somn.* 6; *VH* 2.32; Macrob. *Somn.* 1.3.20; Tert. *De Anima* 46; Philostr. *Imag.* 3.3.3.1-3; Bab. *Fab.* 30.8; Julian, *Ep.* 17; Nonn. *Dion.* 34.90; 44.53.

<sup>4</sup> The literature on Penelope's dream is very extensive. The most recent discussion is by Louise Pratt, 'Odyssey 19.535-50: on the interpretation of dreams and signs in Homer', *CP* 89.2 (1994) 147-52, who views the dream as a bird-sign indicating that Penelope's 20 years of waiting for the return of Odysseus are over; the geese are symbolic of marital fidelity. For the Freudian interpretation that Penelope has a secret regard for the suitors, see A.V. Rankin, 'Penelope's dreams in Books 19 and 20 of the *Odyssey*', *Helikon* 2 (1962) 617-24; M.A. Katz, *Penelope's Renown: Meaning and Indeterminacy in the Odyssey* (Princeton 1991) 146; G. Devereux, 'Penelope's character', *Psychoanalytic Quarterly* 26 (1957) 381-82; and E.R. Dodds, *The Greeks and the Irrational* (Berkeley/Los Angeles 1951) 123 n. 21. This view is contested by A.H.M. Kessels, *Studies on the Dream in Greek Literature* (Utrecht 1978) 91-110, who argues that the dream should be considered a literary creation and an integral part of the narrative of the last books of the poem – the dream is an omen that strengthens Odysseus' resolve to reclaim his home; cf. also in this vein, W.S. Messer, *The Dream in Homer and Greek*

in antiquity.<sup>5</sup> In the collection of dreams compiled by Artemidorus, for example, an eagle is said to indicate a powerful threat (ἀετός ἀπελὼν ἀνδρὸς δυνατοῦ ἀπειλὴν προσημαίνει, 2.20). Again in Achilles Tatius (2.12.1-3), the marriage of Kleitophon to his half-sister, Kalligone, is put off because of a portent in which an eagle snatches sacrificial meat from an altar.<sup>6</sup> This omen foreshadows an actual event – the bride-theft of Kalligone by Kallisthenes, a young man from Byzantium who mistakes her for Leukippe. All this is very similar to what transpires in Heliodorus.<sup>7</sup> The vocabulary used by both authors is close, although to some extent unavoidable: ἀετός ἄνωθεν καταπτάς ἀρπάζει τὸ ἱερεῖον (Achilles Tatius 2.12.2); ἀετὸν ὄμην ἐκ χειρὸς ἀφεθέντα τοῦ Πυθίου καὶ ἀθρόον καταπτάντα τὸ τε θυγάτριον ἐκ κόλπων, οἴμοι, τῶν ἐμῶν ἀναρπάσαντα γῆς

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*Tragedy* (New York 1918) 32. J.J. Winkler, *Constraints of Desire. The Anthropology of Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece* (New York/London 1990) 153, regards the dream as a fiction by which Penelope communicates with the beggar; see also P.W. Harsh, 'Penelope and Odysseus in *Odyssey* XIX', *AJPh* 71 (1950) 1-21, who considers the dream to be 'an exciting duel of indirectness [between Penelope and the beggar], subtle and brilliant in its execution.' In my view, Penelope's sorrow at the death of the geese arises from her despair at the futility of her sacrifice of so many years of her life; her chances of being reunited with her husband appear to be unlikely. For the harshness of a widow's lot in ancient Greece, cf. W.K. Lacey, *The Family in Classical Greece* (London 1968) 81 n. 200, 108-09.

<sup>5</sup> In the present passage, the image of the eagle is chosen, according to D. Koraes, 'Ἡλιοδώρου Αἰθιοπικῶν βιβλία δέκα (Paris 1804-1806) *ad loc.*, to suggest that the kidnapping of Charikleia is imminent because the Greek word for eagle, ἀετός, meant 'first year' (α = 1 + ἐτός). Cf. Artemidorus 2.20, Σημαίνει ὁ αἰετός καὶ τὸν ἐνεστῶτα ἐνιαυτὸν ἔστι γὰρ τὸ ὄνομα αὐτοῦ γραφὲν οὐδὲν ἄλλο, ἢ πρῶτον ἔτος. Given Heliodorus' propensity for numerology, this is not entirely fantastic.

<sup>6</sup> For the literary function of the dream, see Bartsch (note 2) 86-87, who does not notice the link with Heliodorus.

<sup>7</sup> On the relationship between Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, see D.B. Durham, 'Parody in Achilles Tatius', *CP* 33.1 (1938) 1-19, who assumes that Achilles was parodying Heliodorus (rather than the other way around); P. Neimke, *Quaestiones Heliodorae* (Diss. Halle 1889) – a study of the striking similarities between Heliodorus' romance and that of Achilles Tatius. I assume here that Heliodorus wrote in the 4th century and Achilles Tatius in the 3rd. For the fourth-century date of the *Aithiopika*, see most recently J.R. Morgan, 'Heliodorus' in G.L. Schmeling (ed.), *The Novel in the Ancient World* (Leiden 1996) 417-56, esp. 417-21. In my view, therefore, Heliodorus was clearly aware of Achilles' novel and even followed the sequence and themes of his romantic plot, but needed to distance himself from his predecessor's eroticism and parody of the romance genre, in view of the greater moral earnestness of his own work. I intend to discuss the relationship between Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius more fully in a subsequent publication.

ἐπ' ἔσχατόν τι πέρας οἴχεσθαι φέροντα (Hld. 4.14.1).<sup>8</sup> Moreover, in Heliodorus, too, there is an incident of bride-theft in which Charikleia is abducted by Theagenes as a prelude to their elopement to Ethiopia with Kalasiris, and the narrative of events in Delphi shows a number of resemblances to the abductions of Kalligone and Leukippe in Achilles Tatius.<sup>9</sup> No doubt Heliodorus' contemporary readers would have noticed the intertextual relationship. If so, they would have been alerted to the coming resolution of Charikleia's love problems by means of a violent abduction. They would also notice Kleitophon's cynical attitude towards the divine portents – he deems the eagle the king of birds because its action causes a delay in the preparations for his marriage to Kalligone and gives him a chance to develop his plans to seduce Leukippe. This puts readers in a sceptical frame of mind for reading the Heliodorus passage and alerts them to the possibility of extended irony in the narrative.

Nevertheless, there are a number of reasons why it is plausible that many of Heliodorus' readers would have had Penelope's dream primarily in mind here. Firstly, allusions to Homer, and particularly to the *Odyssey*, are very plentiful in Heliodorus and intertextual links between the epic and novel are always to be expected.<sup>10</sup> Secondly, Heliodorus has deviated from Achilles Tatius precisely in giving Charikles a premonition of the future in a dream rather than as a portent, thus pointing the reader's attention to his famous Homeric model. Thirdly, the dream of Charikles, like that of Penelope, is introduced into the narrative from outside the chronological context of the plot. In fact, it has been argued that Charikles could not have dreamt this dream in the time available to him.<sup>11</sup> Earlier in the day, Charikles had greeted Kalasiris happily with the news that Charikleia had fallen in love, according to the opinion of the doctor Akesinos (4.7.1); at midday (περὶ πλήθουσιν ἀγοράν), he reported that she had reacted badly to

<sup>8</sup> On the terminology of bride abduction, see J. Evans-Grubbs, 'Abduction marriage in Antiquity: a law of Constantine (CTh IX. 24. 1) and its social context', *JRS* 79 (1989) 59-83, esp. 67-71.

<sup>9</sup> For bride-theft in Heliodorus, see now Donald Lateiner, 'Abduction marriage in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*', *GRBS* 38.4 (1997) 409-39. This article only appeared in 2000.

<sup>10</sup> See Morgan (note 7) 436-37; G.N. Sandy, *Heliodorus* (Boston 1982) 83-89; R.W. Garson, 'Notes on some Homeric echoes in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*', *Acta Classica* 18 (1975) 137-40; E. Feuilletré, *Études sur les Éthiopiennes d'Héliodore: contribution à la connaissance du roman grec* (Paris 1966) 105-14; C.W. Keyes, 'The structure of Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*', *Studies in Philology* 19 (1922) 42-51.

<sup>11</sup> Cf. V. Hefti, *Zur Erzählungstechnik in Heliodors Aethiopica* (Vienna 1950) 79.

being introduced to Alkamenes (4.7.10). Only a little while later, after Kalasiris had discovered the truth about Charikleia's origins, he told the Egyptian priest of his ominous dream, although he said that it had come to him during the night (τῆς παρηκούσης ... νυκτός, 4.14.2). It is very likely that Heliodorus has made this narratological error through following his Homeric model, in which the dream of Penelope is similarly not tied to the strict chronology of the narrative and takes place at an unspecific time of anxiety and troubled nights (*Od.* 19.512-17). Both dreams are to some extent imposed on the narrative to aid its development: in the *Odyssey* the incident alerts Odysseus to Penelope's state of mind and propels him into action, and in the *Aithiopika* Kalasiris is stirred into accelerating his plans to escape by becoming conscious of the intuitive premonitions of Charikles.

On close investigation, the two passages do in fact appear to be very similar. Both dreams concern marriage, but in both the marriage is overshadowed by sadness and the dreamers are dejected: Charikles is πρὸς ὑπερβολὴν περίλυπον καὶ ὅλης κατηφείας ἀνάπλεων (4.14.1), while Penelope is described as οἴκτρ' ὀλοφυρομένην (*Od.* 19.543). The dreamers both interpret their dreams negatively: Charikles believes that the dream presages the death of his daughter (the shadows stand for the afterlife; cf. 1.3.1); Penelope laments the apparent futility of her twenty years of fidelity to her absent husband and fears a bleak future as an unmarried old woman. The dreams concern the loss of something dearly cherished, in the case of Charikles, his daughter;<sup>12</sup> in that of Penelope, the loss of her husband, coupled with the possibility that she would not be able to remarry and retain her status in her home.<sup>13</sup> Both dreamers are sceptical about their dreams: Charikles says εἴ τι δεῖ προσέχειν ὄνειρασι (4.14.2) and Penelope ὄνειροι ἀμήχανοι ἀκριτόμυθοι ἢ γίγνοντ' (19.560-61). Penelope expounds the well-known doctrine of the gates of horn and ivory, and concludes that her dream must have come through the gate of ivory and that it was therefore untrustworthy. Moreover, in both dreams the interpreters also play a role in the dream. In Homer, the eagle actually becomes Odysseus and assures Penelope that he will return and kill the suitors – a prophecy that is later fulfilled. In the *Ethiopian Story*, Kalasiris takes on the role of

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<sup>12</sup> The love of Charikles for his foster-daughter is clear from his lament on her disappearance (4.19.9). He had earlier lost his biological daughter in a fire on her wedding-night (2.29.4).

<sup>13</sup> Discussed above (note 4).

the dream-eagle, when he assists Theagenes and Charikleia to elope. However, Odysseus and Kalasiris are also deceitful interpreters who supply positive interpretations for the dreams: Kalasiris has disguised his true intentions, which are to assist Charikleia and Theagenes to elope from Delphi, in accordance with the oracle of Apollo and the mandate of Persinna; Odysseus is disguised as a beggar and conceals the details of his plans from his wife. The reader or audience suspects (and the re-reader knows) that in fact the dreamers' interpretations are false and that the apparently false interpretation is true: Charikles' fear that his daughter will die is false, but it is true that she will marry; Penelope's premonitions are unfounded and Odysseus does return and kill the suitors. Both dreams foreshadow the future and, while Penelope's dream does not shape the narrative, as did that of Agamemnon in the *Iliad* (2.1-34), which precipitates the disastrous assembly in which the Greek leader tests the will of his troops, nevertheless it does create atmosphere and prepares the reader for further developments in the plot. Similarly, the dream of Charikles is closely followed by the elopement of the two lovers from Delphi. The words which refer to the immense intervening distance (τοῦ μεσεύοντος ἀπείρου διαστήματος, 4.14.2) between Charikles and his daughter suggest an extremely remote country, such as Ethiopia where the novel ends.

It may also be worth noting that both dreams are essentially allegorical in nature. Messer notes<sup>14</sup> that Penelope's dream is the first in European literature for which an allegorical interpretation is provided, but argues that the return of the eagle to expound the dream is a reversion to the more typical Homeric dream, which is normally objective, external and personal (cf., for example, the dream of Agamemnon: *Il.* 2.1-34). The dream of Charikles is even more susceptible to allegorical reading on a number of levels: it could foretell Charikleia's death, her intended marriage with Alkamenes, her elopement with Theagenes, or a spiritual journey (in which the eagle of Apollo that leads her to a distant and physically unobservable land represents philosophy, Charikleia represents the soul, and the distant land represents the enlightened kingdom of the sun).<sup>15</sup>

<sup>14</sup> Messer (note 4) 30-46, esp. 34.

<sup>15</sup> On the allegorical interpretation of the *Aithiopika*, see R. Merkelbach, *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike* (Munich/Berlin 1962) 234-98; Sandy (note 10) 50-56.

It seems unlikely, therefore, that Heliodorus' readers would have missed the intertextual allusion to the dream of Penelope and they may well have been more aware of it than of the passage in Achilles Tatius. I turn now to consider the literary function of the link.

Above all, the dream of Penelope draws attention to her fidelity to her absent husband and to her chaste marriage.<sup>16</sup> Her despondency over the apparent futility of her twenty years of waiting for Odysseus provides a strong contrast with the circumstances under which Kalligone and later Leukippe were abducted in Achilles Tatius. There is a strong element of farce in the way Callisthenes, a young man from Byzantium, impetuously abducts Kalligone in mistake for Leukippe, thus putting an end to Hippias' marital plans for his son. Kleitophon was never in favour of marrying his step-sister and was in any case more strongly attracted to Leukippe; eventually the couple elope after being discovered in bed together by her mother (2.23.5-6). In Heliodorus the abduction of Charikleia by Theagenes ruins Charikles' plans to marry her to Alkamenes, but the deed is carried out in far greater earnest and for very different motives. Kalasiris' aim is to reunite Charikleia with her mother in Ethiopia so that she can reclaim her rightful royal status, and Theagenes is made to swear an oath to respect her chastity until they are married (4.18.5-6).<sup>17</sup> The Homeric intertext serves a very important function in elevating the moral tone of the abduction of Charikleia and distinguishing it from the more erotic and comic narrative of Achilles Tatius.<sup>18</sup>

An awareness of the Homeric intertext also deepens the reader's appreciation of the irony of Charikles' dream. In the Homeric dream, Penelope's cleverness and mistrustfulness cause her to disbelieve a dream which is, in fact, soon to come true. Further irony lies in the fact that the disguised Odysseus tells Penelope that she should trust the eagle's words, since they were the words of Odysseus himself. Similarly, in Heliodorus the ironies are complex and may be broken down as follows:<sup>19</sup> (1) Charikles'

<sup>16</sup> See Pratt (note 4) 151: 'Penelope's geese might be taken as symbols of her marital fidelity.'

<sup>17</sup> See S. Goldhill, *Foucault's Virginity* (Cambridge) 118-19.

<sup>18</sup> For Achilles Tatius, see H. Morales, 'The taming of the view: natural curiosities in *Leukippe and Kleitophon*', *GCN* 6 (1995) 39-50; M. Laplace, *Études sur le roman d'Achille Tatius, Leucippé et Clitophon* (Diss. Paris 1988).

<sup>19</sup> Cf. J.R. Morgan, *A Commentary on the Ninth and Tenth Books of the Aithiopika of Heliodoros* (Oxford 1979) at 9.25.1, who points out that Heliodorus uses the dream of Charikles to give ironic depth to his narrative.



interpretation of the dream is incorrect and Kalasiris is right to point out the irony in the priest of Apollo being unable to interpret his own dreams correctly. (2) Kalasiris' interpretation of the dream is ironically ambiguous: he is aware that Charikles will think that the dream signified that he would give Charikleia in marriage to Alkamenes, whereas both he and the reader know that Kalasiris intends to bring about the marriage of Charikleia to Theagenes. (3) If the dream is taken to refer to the elopement of Theagenes and Charikleia to Ethiopia, it signifies what, as far as Charikles is concerned, is the equivalent of his daughter's death (cf. 4.19.9), so that Kalasiris' criticism is ironically false.<sup>20</sup> (4) On the allegorical level, the journey of Charikleia may be viewed as a spiritual journey of enlightenment,<sup>21</sup> but ironically here it is portrayed as a journey towards darkness and death. (5) Finally, if the dream can be read as a cipher of the *Ethiopian Story*, a further level of metadiegetic irony can be observed, since Kalasiris, who is the mainspring of the events in Delphi, gives an ambiguous interpretation of the dream that obscures the way the plot actually unfolds.<sup>22</sup> Kalasiris' actions here are consonant with the pessimistic view of dreams elsewhere in the *Ethiopian Story*: Kalasiris, for example, says: *χρησιμοὶ γὰρ καὶ ὄνειροι τὰ πολλὰ τοῖς τέλεσι κρίνονται* (2.36.2; cf. also 3.11.5 and 3.12.1); Heliodoros comments on Thyamis' interpretation of a dream: *Καὶ τὸ μὲν ὄναρ τοῦτον ἔφραζε τὸν τρόπον οὕτως αὐτῷ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας ἐξηγουμένης*

<sup>20</sup> It is significant that the god Apollo, whom Charikles serves, directs the elopement of Charikles' daughter in the dream, thus confirming Kalasiris' earlier dream (3.11.5) and the oracle of the Delphic priestess (2.35.5). Heliodoros has specifically sign-posted this interpretation by referring to the 'flight' of the eagle in words which suggest elopement (4.14.2: *συνεκδρομεῖν*). Kalasiris' interpretation of the dream is therefore clearly proleptic and anticipates the unfolding of the plot. Kalasiris' own comment on his earlier dream (*μὴ ὄναρ ἦν ἢ ὄψις ἀλλ' ὕπαρ*) clearly echo Penelope's words directly (*Od.* 19.547: *οὐκ ὄναρ, ἀλλ' ὕπαρ ἐσθλόν*). The words are unusual in Homer and the similarity in expression between the two passages strongly suggests that Heliodoros was very familiar with Penelope's dream. I am indebted to an anonymous reader for reminding me of the importance of this point.

<sup>21</sup> Note 14; see also T. Szepessy, 'Die *Aithiopika* des Heliodoros und der griechische sophistische Liebesroman', *AAntHung* 5 (1957) 241-59, esp. 252-54.

<sup>22</sup> Bartsch (note 2) 103-04 observes that it is Kalasiris' false interpretation of the dream that leads Charikles to relax his guard, thinking that the dream portended the marriage of his daughter to Alkamenes. He even supplies Charikleia with her birth tokens, which finally convince Kalasiris that Charikleia is the daughter of Persinna, who had asked him to bring her back to Ethiopia, and that he has a duty to ensure that she returns to her parents' kingdom. Charikleia is kidnapped that night and her journey to Ethiopia begins.

(1.19.1); and finally Charikleia tells Theagenes: ἡ συνήθειά σε τῶν δυστυχημάτων πάντα πρὸς τὸ φαυλότατον νοεῖν τε καὶ εἰκάζειν παρεσκεύασε, φιλεῖ γὰρ ἄνθρωπος πρὸς τὰ συμπίπτοντα τρέπειν τὴν γνώμην (8.11.5).<sup>23</sup> Such pervasive irony at the very least suggests a scepticism in the romance about the ability of humans, including priests, to determine the will of the gods.<sup>24</sup> In the case of Charikles, this is particularly true; of all the priestly characters in the romance he is least able to foresee how events will unfold.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, Heliodorus makes creative and original use of traditional epic material in his romance. The dream of Charikles recalls Penelope's dream and of necessity its context – her sorrow at the apparent waste of twenty years of her life in which she had upheld the sanctity of her marriage to Odysseus. This recollection serves to accentuate the serious implications of the abduction of Charikleia, for which the law prescribed the penalty of death, as Kalasiris reminds Theagenes (4.6.5). Without the underlying Homeric intertext the elopement of the young couple would lack the earnest sense of purpose that distinguishes their undertaking from that of Leukippe and Kleitophon, despite the superficial resemblance between the flight of the two pairs of lovers (the prevention of a wrong marriage and the facilitation of the right one). As it is the couple affirm their intention to remain chaste until Charikleia should regain her kingdom, and that, if this should prove to be impossible, Theagenes should only marry her with her full consent (4.18.5-6). Moreover, when both passages are read alongside one another, the ironies inherent in the interaction between the dreamers and their more worldly and sophisticated advisors are more sharply delineated.

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<sup>23</sup> There is a later parallel in the *Ethiopian Story* to the pessimism of Charikles, interpreted more optimistically by Kalasiris, in the dream of Theagenes (8.11), which he takes as a bad omen but which Charikleia views more sanguinely. Cf. also the dream of Thyamis concerning Charikleia, which he interprets over-optimistically at first, and then over-pessimistically (1.18.5; 1.30.4). Homeric dreams are often deceitful (*Il.* 2.56-71; 5.148-51; 10.496-97, but cf. *contra* 4.795-841). In Philostratos (VA 1.23) Apollonios similarly gives a more sanguine interpretation to a dream of fish beached by dolphins, which Damis thought fearful.

<sup>24</sup> The question of the religious interpretation of the work has been discussed by Morgan (note 7) 446-54, to which should be added K. Dowden, 'Heliodoros: serious intentions', *CQ* 46.1 (1996) 267-86, who argues for divine guidance in the affairs of the hero and heroine.

<sup>25</sup> On this point see Szepessy (note 21) 252-53.