

Shakespeare and Heliodorus

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The object of this study is to examine the relationship between Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* and the *Aithiopika* of Heliodorus, a complex romance composed in late Antiquity which was widely admired in Shakespeare's age. It argues that, while an indirect Heliodoran influence was exerted upon *The Winter's Tale* through Greene's novels, the direct influence of the *Aithiopika* also shows itself, most notably in the substitution of the tragic conclusion of the play's chief source, Greene's *Pandosto*, with a joyous outcome heralded by the appearance of a work of art (albeit a fictional one).

The important role played by the Perseid in the *Aithiopika* is considered and it is argued that ancient and Renaissance treatments, in literature and art, of Danaë's impregnation by the 'shower of gold' provide a key to understanding how the Renaissance would have interpreted Heliodorus' novel.

The phenomenon of maternal impression employed by Heliodorus and by Tasso in *Gerusalemme liberata* is discussed as is the presence of the motif of imaginative interference in reproduction in other examples drawn from the genre of Accused Queen tales.

This study concludes that both the *Aithiopika* and *The Winter's Tale* explore the same idea, that the creation of a new life in a mother's body is analogous to the mind receiving a powerful visual 'impression'. The plot, and subplots, of the *Aithiopika* elaborate this central idea, and the instances of seeing and pregnancy which dominate *The Winter's Tale* can also be seen to be aspects of a single theme of conception.

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Fig. 1. (Frontispiece) Giulio Pippi called Giulio Romano: 'Perseus hovering with drawn sword above the Monster with Andromeda chained to the rock'. Pen, brown ink and wash. 275 x 191 cm. After *The Catalogue of The Ellesmere Collection*, Part 2. London: Sotheby & Co., 1972. Plate 67 (p. 138).

Introduction

The object of this study is to examine the relationship between Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* and the *Aithiopika* or *Ethiopian History* of Heliodorus, a complex prose romance composed in late Antiquity which was widely admired in Shakespeare's age. I will argue that both these works explore the same idea, that the creation of a new life in a mother's body is analogous to the mind receiving a powerful visual 'impression', because both these processes involve disorganised matter (in the womb or in the mind) taking form from outside. The plot, and subplots, of the *Aithiopika* elaborate this central idea, and the instances of seeing and pregnancy which dominate *The Winter's Tale* can also be seen to be aspects of a single theme of conception.

An indirect Heliodoran influence was exerted upon *The Winter's Tale* through Greene's novels, but I believe the direct influence of the *Aithiopika* also shows itself, most notably in the substitution of the tragic conclusion of the play's chief source, Greene's *Pandosto*, with a joyous outcome heralded by the appearance of a work of art (albeit a fictional one).

Heliodorus' novel suggests that the process of conception allows the acts of creation which have taken place and still take place in the macrocosm, both the creation of the world and the infusion of life into the earth by the sun, to be continued in the human microcosm. Hence, the element of vegetation myth in *The Winter's Tale* might also be seen to form part of a single Heliodoran vision.

Tasso saw the story of Charikleia's conception in the *Aithiopika* as a variation upon that of Perseus and combined elements drawn from the myth of Perseus and from Heliodorus' novel in his *Gerusalemme liberata*. I think he was right to see Danaë's impregnation by the 'shower of gold', and the Perseid as a whole, as playing an

important part in the *Aithiopika*. I will therefore discuss ancient and Renaissance treatments of this myth in literature and art in order to show that it has a particular affinity with many Accused Queen tales.

The Winter's Tale ends when Hermione's 'statue' comes to life before the amazed 'lookers-on', while the dénouement of the *Aithiopika* features a painting of Andromeda which is brought before the Ethiopian court in order to prove that the King's long lost heir can truly be said to be this portrait 'brought to life'. Heliodorus' description of the general rejoicing which attends this scene in which 'sorrow and mirth' and other 'very contrarye things [were made to] agree' moved Stanley Wells to suggest that it 'could be paralleled from a number of Shakespeare's plays, [and that the passage] might indeed almost serve as an epigraph to the last plays' ('Shakespeare and Romance' in *Stratford-upon-Avon Studies 8: Later Shakespeare*, 1966, repr. in *Shakespeare's Later Comedies*, ed. D. J. Palmer, Harmondsworth, Penguin Books 1971, p. 120. I have quoted this passage from the *Aithiopika* [10.38] below in J. R. Morgan's modern translation on p. 73, and in Thomas Underdowne's Elizabethan translation on pp. 302-3). Wells indicates several points of likeness between the *Aithiopika* and *Cymbeline*, a connection that has often been commented upon since and was usefully described by Carol Gesner in *Shakespeare and the Greek Romance* (Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1970).

It is a departure to argue that Shakespeare recognised the Greek romances (and related Mediaeval romances) as containing strong unifying themes and ideas. In the past the assumption has been that, if ideas were to be found in the romances, they were of only the most banal and un-Shakespearean kind, and that Shakespeare employed these novels merely as a treasury of exciting and potentially pathos-laden motifs, such as

shipwrecks, oracles and the exile of infants. So, Gesner's view was that the Greek romances constituted 'a rather inconsequential literature of escape' which Shakespeare 'utilized and lifted to new dimensions' (p. 140), while Samuel Lee Wolff, in his still invaluable study *The Greek Romance in Elizabethan Prose Fiction* (1912), was damning, arguing that the governing idea of Heliodorus' novel is the presentation of literary 'spectacle' purely for the sake of 'effect', a weakness indicative of the decadence of the genre. Wolff stated: 'One and all they [the Romance authors] subject the spirit to the sense; one and all they minister to the lust and pride of the eye; one and all they rest in a world of sound and show, - sunk in matter, and "bound upon the Wheel of Things"' (Wolff, p. 191). However, I find that some of the features Wolff identified, and then dismissed as flaws, are in fact clear pointers toward the novel's true inspiration, which is very different from that which he suggests.

The above remarks do not, of course, sum up the entire story of the appreciation of Shakespeare's use of the Romance inheritance. I will touch only briefly upon *Pericles*, which Shakespeare based upon *Apollonius of Tyre*, a romance surviving in Latin, but probably Greek in origin. Although *Pericles* suffered neglect for many years, its peculiar power and appeal are now recognised, and I hope that some of what I say here may strike the reader as also having some bearing upon that play.¹

The first chapter of this study contains a brief summary of the *Aithiopika's* plot and an account of the novel's history and fortunes. It shows that the *Aithiopika* enjoyed direct imitation in Elizabethan romances, and varying degrees of intertextuality with many other works. The second chapter explains the pattern common to the interwoven tales of the *Aithiopika* and relates this pattern to romances of the Accused Queen genre and to the myth of Danaë; both Classical and later views of Danaë are explored in the

third chapter. The next chapter examines the nature and accounts of maternal impression; this phenomenon is placed within its historical context, and its appearances in the works of Shakespeare and other authors are discussed. The fifth chapter discusses the role played by seeing in the *Aithiopika* itself, while the sixth chapter relates this material to Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, Greene's novels *Pandosto* and *Menaphon* and to the anonymous play *The Thracian Wonder*. The final chapter discusses *The Winter's Tale* itself.

In studying Heliodorus I have found several articles by the distinguished translator and critic of the *Aithiopika*, J. R. Morgan valuable, particularly 'The *Aithiopika* of Heliodorus: Narrative as Riddle' (in *Greek Fiction, The Greek Novel in Context*. Eds: J. R. Morgan and Richard Stoneman, London: Routledge, 1994, pp. 97-113). I must also mention Ken Dowden's article 'Heliodoros: Serious Intentions' (*Classical Quarterly* 46, i, pp. 267-85). Shadi Bartsch's recent book *Decoding the Ancient Novel, The Reader and the Role of Description in Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1989) discusses spectacle as an important stylistic feature of the text, but does not relate this to maternal impression or to the larger significance of seeing in the tale. Similarly, these aspects are not discussed by Margaret Anne Doody in her ambitious and provocative book *The True Story of the Novel* (London: Harper and Collins, 1997 [Rutgers University Press, 1996]). Doody's compendious work attempts to demonstrate a far greater degree of continuity between the ancient novel and modern literature than has previously been admitted. I am certainly at one with her when she says that the *Aithiopika* 'cries out for more interpretation than it has ever had', although she adds somewhat discouragingly 'This is a novel that absorbs interpretation, an hermeneutic sponge' (Doody, p. 105).² Michael J. Anderson does

address the theme of vision in the course of his recent article ‘The ΣΩΦΡΟΣΥΝΗ [Chastity] of Persinna and the Romantic Strategy of Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*’ (in *Classical Philology* 92, 1997, pp. 303-322). I believe he is right to link Charikleia’s conception, the lovers’ mutual seeing in Delphi and Kalasiris’ speech on the evil eye. Indeed, he observes that ‘Interpreted in line with Heliodorus’ philosophy of vision and ερως [eros], Persinna’s experience may be regarded as an instance of Platonic conception in the presence of beauty’ (M. J. Anderson, 1997, p. 319). Anderson argues that this strand of the novel constitutes a romantic intrigue in which chastity triumphs, but I would go further and suggest that ‘Platonic conception’ unifies the entire work and includes the role of the sun itself as the father of all living things.³

Relatively few authors have discussed comparisons drawn between Heliodorus and Shakespeare in any depth. In addition to Carol Gesner’s work, Donald V. Stump has argued that Shakespeare may well have followed Heliodorus in his use of the Aristotelian concept of *hamartia* (tragic error) (in *Hamartia; Essays in Honor of John M. Crossett*, eds. Stump, Aristi, Gerson and Stump. New York, NY: Edwin Mellon Press, 1983, pp. 226-31). Thomas McAlindon charts some of the territory lying between the *Aithiopika* and *The Winter’s Tale* in his article ‘The Mediaeval Assimilation of Greek Romance: a Chapter in the History of a Narrative Type’ (in *Research in English and American Literature* 3, 1985, pp. 23-56). McAlindon also uses the studies of Mediaeval Accused Queen tales made by Margaret Schlauch which I have found most useful.⁴ Although he does not discuss Shakespeare, Gerald Sandy’s work on the reception of the *Aithiopika* in the late Renaissance has provided much useful information (in Gerald N. Sandy: *Heliodorus*, Boston, MA: Twayne, 1982, pp. 95-124, and ‘The Heritage of the Ancient Greek Novel in Britain and France’ in *The Novel in the Ancient World*, ed. Gareth

Schmeling, Leiden: Brill, 1996, pp. 735-773). Among the most perceptive recent articles on this topic is Walter Stephens' 'Tasso's Heliodorus and the World of Romance' (in *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, ed. James Tatum. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1994, pp. 67- 87), which proves that the study of Renaissance imitation of the *Aithiopika* can reveal as much about Heliodorus as it does about later authors.

In addressing *The Winter's Tale* itself, I have found B. J. Sokol's book *Art and Illusion in the Winter's Tale* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1994) particularly helpful. Sokol discusses Leontes' sudden revulsion from Hermione in terms of the psychological condition known as 'Couvade syndrome' - a distressing form of sympathetic pregnancy. Maurice Hunt in a recent article ('The Labor of *The Winter's Tale*' (in *The Winter's Tale, Critical Essays*. Ed. Maurice Hunt, New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1995, pp. 335-60), treats Leontes' 'conception' of Hermione's guilt as a rival pregnancy to that of his wife. This tallies with what I have to say to an extent, but then the arguments diverge. More pertinent is Inga-Stina Ewbank's lecture 'Shakespeare's Liars' (*Proceedings of the British Academy* 69, 1983, pp. 137-168) which discusses Leontes' fall in the light of Montaigne's essay 'Of the force of the Imagination' and addresses the larger issue of the role of the 'transforming imagination' in Shakespeare's plays. John Erskine Hankins' excellent *Backgrounds of Shakespeare's Thought* (Hassocks: The Harvester Press, 1978) has supplied me with a great deal of information. I believe that Hankins was correct in his analysis of Leontes' difficult 'Affection' speech and will further support what he has to say.

In view of the important part played by works of visual art in the *Aithiopika* and *The Winter's Tale*, and remembering that intertextuality can extend to all of the arts, I have discussed a number of Renaissance works of art alongside the many works of

literature. I would have liked to have been able to include two paintings which were described in a nineteenth century literary history:

Two of the most striking incidents that occur in the work of Heliodorus have been finely delineated by Raphael, in separate paintings, in which he was assisted by Julio Romano. In one he has seized the moment when Theagenes and Chariclea meet in the temple of Delphos, and Chariclea presents Theagenes with a torch to kindle the sacrifice. In the other he has chosen for his subject the capture of the Tyrian ship, in which Calasiris was conducting Theagenes and Chariclea to the coast of Sicily. The vessel is supposed to have already struck to the pirates, and Chariclea is exhibited, by the light of the moon, in a suppliant posture, imploring Trachinus that she might not be separated from her lover and Calasiris.

John Dunlop: *The History of Fiction*, 4th ed. (London:

Longman, Brown, Green and Longmans, 1845), p. 24.

Wolfgang Stechow was unable to trace these works and makes the point that, if they existed, they 'must have been made from a source which antedates the first printed edition [of the *Aithiopika*]' (see 'Heliodorus' *Aethiopica* in Art' in *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 16, 1953, pp. 144-52). This suggests that they were, unfortunately, no more than phantoms born of misidentification. If these works did exist they would stand as further Renaissance interpretations of Heliodorus. But the literary works we do have show that, far from the *Aithiopika* presenting the authors of Renaissance romance with a store of disorganised matter awaiting form, it was seen to carry a coherent meaning and that this remarkable novel stamped itself upon the imagination of Shakespeare's age.

Chapter One

Heliodorus and the Renaissance

‘What Schole-boy, what apprentice knows not
Heliodorus?’, Joseph Hall in 1620.

1. The *Aithiopika*

When, at the climax of *Twelfth Night*, Duke Orsino likens himself to an ‘Egyptian thief’, it would be a rare audience today that would pick up the reference to the *Aithiopika* or *Ethiopian History* of Heliodorus:

Why should I not, had I the heart to do it,
Like to th’Egyptian thief at the point of death,
Kill what I love? - a savage jealousy,
That sometime savours nobly

Twelfth Night, V, i, 115-8.¹

Very near the beginning of the *Aithiopika*, the heroine, Charikleia, is captured and hidden in a cave by Thyamis, an Egyptian bandit chief. When it appears his encampment might fall to royal troops, Thyamis rushes to the cave, sword in hand, meaning to kill her, for as the narrator observes ‘Once embarked upon a course of action, the heart of the savage brooks no turning back. And when a barbarian loses all hope of his own preservation, he will usually kill everything he loves before he dies’ (*An Ethiopian Story*, trans. J. R. Morgan, 1.30).² He slays a girl he finds there, though, fortunately for Charikleia, mistakes the identity of his victim in the darkness.

Heliodorus’ novel is the longest surviving example of the Hellenistic Romance. It is also one of the latest, probably having been written in the fourth century AD. The plot

and the manner of its telling are governed by a striking thematic unity, for all the complexity of a design laced with digressions and tales within tales. Apart from displaying a considerable degree of literary sophistication, the *Aithiopika* contains enough exotic detail and suspenseful incident, one would have thought, to guarantee its popularity in any age. Thomas Underdowne's translation, the first complete translation in English, probably appeared in 1569 and was popular enough to have been reprinted four times before Shakespeare's death (see Wolff, p. 238, n. 5). The novel was taken as one of the sources of Robert Greene's prose romance *Pandosto, or the Triumph of Time* (1588), which in turn became the chief source of Shakespeare's *The Winter's Tale* (1610).³ Although the *Aithiopika* may have suffered undue neglect in recent times, there is a good deal of evidence to show that Orsino's outburst would not have seemed a bafflingly obscure reference to either the courtiers who witnessed the first night of *Twelfth Night*, or the mass of the audience at the Globe itself.

It is in *The Winter's Tale* that the most telling links between the ancient and the Elizabethan (or here Jacobean) romance can be discovered. Admittedly, it would be wrong to assume as a matter of course that Greene's sources would have any great relevance for Shakespeare's own use of *Pandosto*. Source-hunting at a level two steps removed from the professed object of one's interest might indeed appear a sterile pursuit, somewhat resembling the labours of von Schliemann who dug through Priam's city in his search for Homer's Troy. That said, there is evidence beyond Orsino's outburst to suggest that Shakespeare did have a continuing interest in the *Aithiopika* which predated, and was quite independent of, his use of Greene. Moreover, Heliodorus' novel is a curious and skilful work, expressing a peculiar form of genius and containing much that

finds an echo in the Renaissance. A grasp of how this novel may have been understood by Elizabethan writers illuminates far more than might at first seem likely.

Literary influence may take many forms. Evidence that a later author has borrowed some of the circumstances of a plot, echoed names, or drawn a sketchy likeness of the details found in a particular intrigue, reveals very little by itself. In such cases sources may be employed merely as a convenient starting point for something new. At a more nebulous level one might look for an attempt to recreate an atmosphere or sensation found in an earlier work. What is of genuine practical use to the critic is evidence that a particular idea has been adopted in a later work, or a particular dynamic recreated, in an act of conscious imitation: an act which would bestow a form of kinship upon two different works, perhaps separated by hundreds of years. The idea found in the ancestor work which dictates why certain details must be so, or why the action must take a certain form, can be seen to govern the development of the descendant also, creating a surface likeness signalling the presence of a deeper affinity.

Heliodorus' place among the many works Elizabethan romancers called upon has long been recognised.⁴ What has not been emphasised is the possibility that Heliodorus' 'classic' status in the late Renaissance as the ancient romance novelist *par excellence* led his Elizabethan admirers to look for more in his text than the ready-made building blocks of numerous romance plots.

Orsino's speech is the most explicit Shakespearean reference to the *Aithiopika*. However, it is in Shakespeare's own Romances, particularly *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale*, where Heliodorus' influence most clearly shows itself, especially so in the adoption of Heliodorus' distinctive pattern of plotting. The purpose of this chapter is not to discuss these instances in detail, but to prepare the ground for an examination of

Heliodoran elements in *The Winter's Tale* by concentrating upon some of what might be termed the circumstantial connections between this elusive author and Shakespeare's own time.

Before proceeding any further I will outline the plot of the *Aithiopika*, something which must of necessity be done in some detail. The novel is divided into ten books. It begins *in medias res* with the bulk of the first five books taken up with descriptions of the action leading up to the opening scene. Here I have unravelled the narrative into a roughly chronological form.

The chief action of the novel concerns the adventures of Charikleia, the daughter of King Hydaspes and Queen Persinna of Ethiopia. While the royal couple are black, their daughter is born white. At the moment of conception the Queen had looked at a portrait of the white and naked Andromeda, who was once a princess of Ethiopia herself, and from this, the Queen later deduces, the image of Andromeda became imprinted upon her child. She is convinced that her daughter will be thought illegitimate, and rather than allow herself and the infant to be killed, she has the child smuggled out of the palace. Hydaspes is told that the child was born dead, and that his kingdom remains without an heir. The baby is exposed, but she has with her jewellery from the royal treasury and a ribbon tied around her upon which her mother had written an explanation of the child's origins. Somewhat like Achilles' vulnerable heel, Charikleia has a distinctive mole upon her arm which her whiteness did not reach.

A Gymnosophist sage named Sisimithres rescues the child and when she has reached seventh year he presents her to a visiting Greek named Charikles. Charikles had recently lost his own wife and daughter. His daughter was killed in a mysterious fire and her mother died of grief soon afterwards (2.29). Persinna's child is named Charikleia by

her adoptive father. After seventeen years, Charikles has become high priest of Apollo at Delphi, and Charikleia, her near divine beauty having reached maturity, is now a priestess of Artemis. Against Charikles' wishes, Charikleia falls in love with a Thessalian named Theagenes. Theagenes also has illustrious forebears; he is a direct descendant of Achilles. The couple fell in love 'at first sight' during a procession in honour of Achilles' mother and son, Thetis and Neoptolemos, in a scene that is one of the novel's great descriptive set pieces. As the procession is getting under way the oracle reveals Charikleia's destined return to Ethiopia, though the crowd are too distracted to notice (2.35), and those who do hear do not understand. The oracle refers to Charikleia as the 'One who starts in grace and ends in glory', her name being made up of *charis* (grace) and *kleos* (glory) (2.35). Charikleia suffers so acutely from love sickness that Charikles asks a visiting Egyptian priest named Kalasiris if he can discover what is wrong with her. Kalasiris has travelled from Memphis in Egypt, where he was high-priest of Isis, having been charged by Persinna to find and return her lost child. He acquires the account of Charikleia's origins the Queen left with the child, and brings the lovers together, all the while deceiving Charikles. Under Kalasiris' guidance the couple elope from Delphi, and flee across the Mediterranean, leaving Charikles distraught. However, the party falls into the hands of Tyrian Pirates, whose captain decides to marry Charikleia. After landing near the Nile delta, the prisoners turn the tables on their captors, and Charikleia, dressed as Diana in her priestess's robes, disposes of most of the crew with her bow. Theagenes is injured fighting a brutish pirate named Peloros, and Kalasiris is separated from the lovers.

This is the mid-point of the tale at which the novel actually commences. As dawn breaks, Charikleia and the wounded Theagenes are found upon the shore by Egyptian bandits who take them back to their camp. Like others before him, the bandits' leader

Thyamis is so struck by Charikleia's beauty that he immediately declares his intention of marrying her.

While held prisoner, Charikleia and Theagenes meet Knemon, an Athenian who has fled his city after being framed as a would-be parricide (the story he tells can be considered a novella in its own right). Knemon's lustful step-mother Demainete, stung by his rejection of her, so arranged matters that Knemon was discovered standing over his father's bed sword in hand. His father immediately assumed that he meant to kill him and Knemon had to flee Athens. Demainete's maid Thisbe, who had played a central role in the plot to discredit Knemon, then betrayed her mistress who in despair killed herself. Thisbe then sailed for Egypt with Knemon in pursuit. He had hoped to bring her back so that she could tell her story and appease Demainete's relatives, but, on arriving, he was captured by the bandits (2.9). Unbeknownst to Knemon, Thisbe is also held prisoner in Thyamis' camp, and she is the girl mistakenly killed in the cave in Charikleia's place by the 'noble' bandit when the camp is attacked by troops of the Persian Satrap.

Charikleia and Theagenes escape the carnage, but are later captured by the Persians and separated. Knemon, who has met Kalasiris, stays with him at the home of a rich merchant named Nausikles. Here Knemon learns Charikleia's history from Kalasiris, and then is amazed and horrified to hear that Thisbe is alive and staying under the same roof. Rushing to the slave's room to confront her he discovers that it is actually Charikleia. It was Nausikles who had brought Thisbe to Egypt, and while out searching for her he had tricked the Persians (on seeing the beauty of their captive) into believing that Charikleia was his missing slave. Knemon does not return home to Greece before marrying Nausikles' daughter. Meanwhile, Charikleia and Kalasiris, having disguised themselves as beggars, travel south toward Memphis. While crossing a battlefield at night

they witness a witch raising her son from among the fallen (6.14). Realising she has been observed, the witch tries to catch her unwanted audience, but trips and impales herself on a spear. When Charikleia and Kalasiris reach Memphis they find that Theagenes has already arrived with Thyamis. Thyamis had rescued Theagenes and is revealed to be Kalasiris' exiled son (6.9). Forgetting that she is disguised, Charikleia runs to embrace Theagenes, but not recognising her, he strikes her across the head.

Kalasiris had intended Thyamis to inherit the position of high priest in Memphis. His other son, Petosiris, usurped the title and drove Thyamis into exile. One reason Kalasiris gives for having left Egypt to search for Charikleia is that he wished to be spared the sight of his sons fighting one another. The two brothers fight before the city walls and Thyamis defeats, and then forgives, his brother. Having seen his sons reconciled, Kalasiris dies.

Charikleia and Theagenes are now thrown into prison by Arsake, the wife of the city's Persian Satrap Oroondates. She intends to seduce Theagenes while her husband is absent from the city. Theagenes resists both her wiles and her threats of torture (against all the odds Charikleia and Theagenes manage to preserve their chastity throughout the novel). While they are in prison both have dreams in which Kalasiris appears and makes cryptic predictions of their escape (8.11). Arsake eventually tries to burn Charikleia on a pyre. This also fails as Charikleia is protected by a mysterious gem, part of the Ethiopian royal treasure, and remains untouched by the flames. When Arsake's plots are revealed she commits suicide.

War has broken out between Persia and Ethiopia. Charikleia and Theagenes are to be taken to Oroondates, but are captured by Hydaspes' allies. A pitched battle won by the Ethiopians, and the siege Hydaspes lays around the city of Syene, are both described

in great detail (Book 9). After Hydaspes wins a decisive victory he magnanimously makes his peace with Oroondates. Like Thyamis, he defeats and then forgives his enemies. Charikleia and Theagenes are taken south to Meroe the capital of Ethiopia. Here Charikleia is brought before her own parents as a suitable candidate for human sacrifice and undergoes an ordeal by fire to prove her chastity. Although the King, for reasons that he does not fully understand, is reluctant to allow her to be killed, Charikleia's fate appears sealed. Only after a very considerable delay does she reveal her true identity. Even then a number of proofs are required before the King accepts her as his daughter. To much adulation from the onlookers, the portrait of Andromeda itself is produced so that a comparison can be made. However, Hydaspes still feels compelled by his duty to the nation to sacrifice his daughter. Sisimithres, who is now high priest of Ethiopia, persuades Hydaspes that, in guiding Charikleia's adventures, the gods were indicating their desire that human sacrifice should be ended, and the King happily spares his daughter. Charikles, who has arrived at the Ethiopian court searching for his lost ward, suddenly appears and is quickly reconciled with her. The novel ends with Charikleia's marriage to Theagenes, and the couple being crowned priest of the Sun and priestess of the Moon.

The novel's impressive *in medias res* opening takes the form of an extended description of a static tableau. Charikleia is discovered upon the Egyptian shore, surrounded by the dead bodies of pirates, and, at her feet, lies Theagenes who seems to be upon the point of death. Thyamis' men stumble upon this striking scene, which is described purely from their viewpoint. The bandits are temporarily mystified by what they see, and the reader with them. This tactic of presenting the reader with a spectacle which is, at least initially, slightly baffling is repeated throughout the novel.⁵

Heliodorus shows a pronounced liking for detailed descriptions of appearances (coupled with a taste both for pseudo-scientific and historical digressions). Samuel Lee Wolff, in *The Greek Romance in Elizabethan Prose Fiction* (1912), usefully coined the expression 'pathetic optics' to describe Heliodorus' distinctive narrative technique (although Wolff deems it not so much a technique as a 'mannerism' [p. 177]):

Not content....with telling how a thing looks, [Heliodorus] tells also how the people who look at it look, how they open and close their eyes, shift their gaze from one point to another, and are affected in appearance by what they see.

Wolff, p.177.

A further manifestation of this strategy of presenting action as spectacle is found in the repeated likening of events to those of a drama. For example, the opening tableau we are told has been staged by a deity for the bandits to witness: so they stand 'on the mountainside like the audience in a theatre, unable to comprehend the scene' (1.1, trans. Morgan). At the very end of the novel Sisimithres hails the revelation that Theagenes and Charikleia are betrothed as 'a theatrical climax' arranged by the gods (10.39).

Although the abundance of narrators (and, in at least two cases, of a narrative within a narrative) may give the impression of an over-complex structure, Heliodorus creates and sustains suspense through deploying his material with exemplary skill. For instance, Kalasiris acts as narrator for the action which leads up to the novel's starting point, and describes to Knemon that part of the story which can usefully be referred to as the Delphi episode (2.24 - 5.1). Kalasiris' narration incorporates Charikles' account of his own unhappy life and Persinna's confession written upon the ribbon. Knemon tells his own story to Charikleia and Theagenes after they arrive in Thyamis' camp (thus delaying any explanation of the opening tableau and adding to the reader's curiosity).

The novel is in fact made up of four complementary tales. The main plot is that concerning Charikleia, her parents and her love for Theagenes. The three secondary narratives are the story of Kalasiris and his sons, that of Charikleia's guardian Charikles, and the story of Knemon. All of these stories explore the same central theme of relations between parents and children, and all follow the same distinctive pattern. In fact, each of these four tales bears a very precise resemblance to its fellows; the identical elements are present in each. This highly schematised format is effectively disguised by the colourful surface of the narrative, but is, I think, something that the reader is intended to sense, if not immediately recognise.

While Heliodorus' novel has much in common with other surviving romances, at the same time he clearly aspires toward the elevated tone of the epic. References to, and imitations of, Homer become a running motif in the novel. So Heliodorus carefully places conspicuous Homeric tags throughout the text, for example having Kalasiris invoke the 'rosy-fingered Dawn' in a key description of Charikleia (3.4). Kalasiris is also given a curious speech in which he argues that Homer was an Egyptian from Thebes (3.14). The fight between Thyamis and Petosiris, during which Thyamis chases his brother around the walls of Memphis, restages the fight between Achilles and Hector (7.6), though Petosiris is not up to his role. The *in medias res* strategy itself invokes the Homeric world, suggesting that Charikleia's journey home is another *Odyssey*. These references have a role to play in the thematic structure of the novel, though Charikleia's own story derives not primarily from Homer, but from the myth of Perseus and Andromeda. For, not only does Charikleia resemble Andromeda exactly as she appears in the painting, but her adventures also resemble those of her ancestor.

The account of Charikleia's unusual origin, as written by her mother, reads as follows in Underdowne's translation:

My daughter, the Sunne being Author of our stocke, is witnessse, that for no misdeede, have I caste thee foorth, and concealed thee from thy father Hidaspes sighte....The greatest of all our Goddes, are the Sunne and Bacchus: The noblest nexte to these, are Perseus, Andromeda, and Memnon after them. Those, who have by succession edified, and finished the Kinges pallace, have portraited there many thinges that they did, as for the dwelling houses, and Galleries, they have set diverse Images, and noble actes of theirs in them: but all the bedde chambers are garnished with pictures, containinge the love of Perseus, and Andromeda, in one of them. After Hidaspes had bene married to mee tenne yeeres, and wee had never a childe, we happened to rest after dinner in the summer, for that we were heavy a sleepe, at which time your father had to do with mee, swearing that by a dreame hee was commaunded so to do, and I by and by perceived my selfe with childe. All the time after untill I was delivered, was kepte holy, and sacrifices of thankes giving were offered to the Goddes, for that the king hoped to have one nowe to succede him in his kingdome. But thou werste borne white, which couler is strange amonge the Aethiopians : I knewe the reason, because I looked upon the picture of Andromeda naked, while my husband had to do with me (for then he [Perseus] first brought her from the rocke, had by mishappe ingendred presently a thing like to her) yet I determined to ridde my selfe of shamefull death (counting it certaine that thy couler woulde procure me to be accused of adulterie, and that none woulde beleewe mee, when I told them the cause) and to

commit thee to the unstableness of fortune, which is a great deale rather to be wished, then present death, or to be called a bastard.

An Æthiopian Historie of Heliodorus,

trans. Underdowne, 1587 ed. (4.8), p. 54.⁶

It is of great importance to the sense of the novel that Andromeda is Charikleia's direct ancestor, although Underdowne's text is misleading here. The lines are translated in J. R. Morgan's recent edition as 'Our line descends from the Sun and Dionysos among gods and from Perseus and Andromeda and from Memnon too among heroes' (*Aithiopika*, 4.8). Underdowne states this information clearly when it is repeated in Book Ten (10.6, see Saintsbury ed. p. 255).

Heliodorus, no doubt, had many versions of the myth of Perseus and Andromeda to draw upon, possibly including some not known to us today. Euripides' famous *Andromeda* exists now only as fragments. Perhaps the best known version of the myth is that found in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (IV, 604-803 and V, 1-250). The plot of the *Aithiopika* depends upon the Ethiopian princess Andromeda being white, while her descendants are, like the illustrious Memnon, black, and this is an anomaly in the logic of Heliodorus' tale. It is interesting to note that in Ovid's *Ars Amatoria* (I, 53 and II, 643-4) and *Heroides* (XV, 35-40) the implication is that Andromeda herself is black. The anomaly of Andromeda's whiteness is one that Heliodorus leaves unresolved.⁷

The convention that Andromeda's colour was white most probably derives from the comparison found in Euripides between the heroine and a statue ('She seemed like a statue protruding from the rock', *Andromeda*, frag. 125, tr. Judith M. Barringer).⁸

Perseus flying past the coast of Ethiopia, saw what he took to be a statue among the rocks, but, discovering it to be a living woman, fell in love with her. This image may not

have originated with Euripides, but he gave it prominence in his dramatisation of the legend. The particular appeal of the conceit lies in Andromeda's transformation from rock to life, complementing the transformation from life to stone worked by the head of Medusa which Perseus carries. This idea was repeated by Ovid, who likens Andromeda to a marble statue in the *Metamorphoses* (*Metamorphoses*, IV, 675). While the marble might conceivably have been coloured, or even painted, it is the image of a white marble statue which suggests itself. Charikleia, as one would expect if her life is to mirror that of Andromeda, is also at one point in her adventures mistaken for a statue, and is compared to one on two more occasions (1.7, 2.33 and 10.9).

A key difference between a myth and the plot of a romance is that, in the former, the gods and immortals participate in the action in person, while in a romance, the gods demonstrate their intentions by guiding events from a distance. They speak through oracles and show themselves only in visions, or in exceptional moments in the persons of mortals. Wolff identifies such moments of 'hieratic epiphany' as the summit of Heliodorus' narrative ambition (Wolff, pp. 179-83). In these scenes a character is transfigured as a deity becomes momentarily visible in them. Obvious instances of this convention are Charikleia's appearance before the crowds on the temple steps in Delphi, and her emergence, unscathed, from the pyre Arsake had built for her. It is not that Charikleia, when she is dressed as Artemis, acts out the part of the goddess, but that, at these moments, she can genuinely be identified with the goddess. Similarly, Charikleia is not simply to be mistaken for Andromeda, but in a mysterious way, is Andromeda. Even to be mistaken for the statue of a goddess in Heliodorus' Romance is an event loaded with meaning. These moments of 'epiphany' which punctuate and finally crown the

narrative can be likened to the climactic moment of wonder towards which the Elizabethan romances so often strive.

In his role as narrator, Heliodorus does not go out of his way to underline the providential scheme of his novel. In fact, he supplies alternative or partial explanations for all that takes place, adopting a position not unlike that of Dostoyevsky's reporter narrators. Heliodorus takes care to supply a feasible scientific explanation of why Charikleia should be identified with Andromeda. The curious medical phenomenon which allows Andromeda's appearance to be reproduced in Charikleia would have been familiar to both ancient and Renaissance readers, and is usually referred to today as 'maternal impression' or, in honour of the use Heliodorus made of it, as the 'Andromeda effect'. The belief that a child might be influenced in the womb by sensations or sights that impress themselves upon the mother's imagination, often with alarming results, remained in common currency from ancient times up to the eighteenth century and even beyond. There are a number of classical descriptions of maternal impression that Heliodorus may have known, and in the many Renaissance accounts of the subject the *Aithiopika* itself can often be found cited among the same sources.

Heliodorus' novel would therefore have been recognised by an Elizabethan audience as representing two distinct genres. It was perhaps the most successful, if not the most typical, of the surviving romances. At the same time it could have been considered as an extended fictionalised example of the maternal impression anecdotes familiar from medical and natural histories, and from anthologies of marvels. In considering Heliodorus' impact upon the Elizabethans it is best, for the sake of clarity, to keep separate, as far as possible, the history of Heliodorus' novel and the history of the numerous discussions of maternal impression. However, these two currents, literary and

scientific, can be seen to meet in the work of several Renaissance authors, nowhere to more telling effect than in *The Winter's Tale* itself.

2. The History and Influence of the *Aithiopika*

All that is known with any certainty of Heliodorus himself is the brief declaration which serves as an epilogue to his only known work: 'So concludes the *Aithiopika*, the story of Theagenes and Charikleia, the work of a Phoenician from the city of Emesa, one of the clan of Descendants of the Sun, Theodosios's son, Heliodorus' (10.41). Only recently has a critical consensus been reached on dating the novel. It had been widely assumed that Achilles Tatius' *Leucippe and Clitophon*, which dates from the end of the second century AD, represented a satirical imitation of the *Aithiopika*, but it is now agreed that Heliodorus' chaste novel was the later work (see *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, ed. B. P. Reardon, p. 352).

Heliodorus' home city of Emesa was situated on the banks of the Orontes in Syria and was well known in the Roman world as a centre of a cult of the sun. The local name for the god was taken by another of the city's famous sons, Elagabalus or Heliogabalus, whose notorious reign as Emperor of Rome ended in AD 222. More credit was taken no doubt from Emesa's claim to be the birthplace of Julia Domna the wife of Emperor Septimius Severus (who ruled from AD 193-211). Julia was the daughter of the high-priest of the Sun-god (a hereditary position, like that held by Kalasiris in Memphis). Her husband attempted to establish a religion of the sun throughout the empire, while Julia herself commissioned Philostratus to write his romance-like life of the pagan 'saint' Apollonius of Tyana. By the time Heliodorus was probably writing any local characteristics of Syrian Baal-Elagabalus worship would have diminished in importance

beside the influence of a loosely organised neo-Platonic religious outlook in which the sun also played a significant role.

An oft repeated story tells how Heliodorus, having converted to Christianity in later life, was appointed Bishop of Tricca in Thessaly. As the fame of his novel spread, he was given the choice of either renouncing his book or his position, upon which he immediately resigned the see. This story can only be traced to the fourteenth century Byzantine writer Nicephorus Callistus, and while the details are almost certainly the result of later embroidering, it may be that the anecdote actually describes, by way of metaphor, a dispute typical of the age, concerning attempts at marrying together Christianity and Helios-worship.⁹

There is some evidence to suggest that Heliodorus had read the *Life of Moses* by Philo Judaeus, a connection which may give an insight into his thinking.¹⁰ Philo was a Hellenistic Jew who lived in Alexandria during the reign of Caligula (visiting Rome in AD 40). He was also a neo-Platonist and much of his writing paraphrases the books of Moses in the light of Greek philosophy, using allegorical interpretation to bring these traditions together. Philo has also been described by W. B. Hunter as ‘undoubtedly the most important conveyer of Platonism to the earliest Christian movement’.¹¹

The fifth century church historian Sokrates does identify Heliodorus as the bishop who enforced celibacy for the priesthood in Thessaly. In the ninth century, Photius, the patriarch of Constantinople, mentioned Heliodorus in his *Bibliotheca*, but adds no further biographical information. The eleventh century author Georgius Cedrenus names Heliodorus as bishop of Tricca during the reign of Theodosius the Great (Emperor of the East from AD 379-95 [see Sandy, p.3]), the Christian emperor who finally banished pagan worship from both halves of the empire. One should perhaps be suspicious of the

repetition in Cedrenus' testimony of the name Theodosios from Heliodorus' own declaration (unless Heliodorus is saying that he is a subject of Theodosios), but, if true, this would make Heliodorus the contemporary of Macrobius, author of the widely read neo-Platonic commentary on Cicero's *Somnium Scipionis*, and of Saint Augustine.

Some mention should be made of Heliodorus' Greek style, which has enjoyed a mixed reception. Gerald Sandy compares the praise the eleventh-century Byzantine philosopher Michael Psellos paid to Heliodorus' 'lexical inventiveness' and the criticism he received from German critics in the late nineteenth-century (Sandy, 1982, p.79). Erwin Rohde, for instance, complained of "'lifeless, unhappy imitations" of poetic language' (Sandy, p. 78). Certainly Heliodorus favours extended conceits, 'harsh metaphors' and newly coined words, and may occasionally nod, but Sandy feels his writing is comparable to that of Philostratus and Lucian, and that it attains a 'very high standard of stylistic achievement' (Sandy, 1982, p. 79).

The *Aithiopika* shares some elements with *Leucippe and Clitophon* and others with the very different romance *The Story of King Apollonius of Tyre*, the source (via Gower and others) of Shakespeare's *Pericles* (1609). Indeed, it could be argued that the *Aithiopika* is, like *Pericles*, a tale in which the child can be seen in one sense to 'beget' its own parent (*Pericles*, V, i, 195, ed. F. D. Hoeniger). While Achilles Tatius' novel seems close in spirit to the world of Petronius, *Apollonius* is more akin to the stories and legends of the saints found in *The Golden Legend*, and was immensely popular in the Middle Ages in a Christianised form. If *Apollonius* had a single author his or her identity remains unknown. The versions of *Apollonius* known to Shakespeare were derived from fifth or sixth century Latin versions, but various details, such as the value and names of coins, suggest that the story originated in Greek at the same time as *Leucippe and*

Clitophon, and so predates the *Aithiopika*.¹² It is possible that Heliodorus' multiple plots were conceived under the influence of *Apollonius*. However, the *Aithiopika* has a sophistication lacking in the earliest known texts of *Apollonius*, quite literally so, for Heliodorus' work very much reflects the techniques and preoccupations of the literary movement known as the Second Sophistic, which, through poetry and rhetoric, sought to assert a Hellenic identity in a world dominated by Rome.¹³

After enjoying popularity and imitation in the Byzantine world, where the Greek Romance enjoyed a renaissance in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, it appears that the *Aithiopika* fell into obscurity and was lost to literature for several centuries until, in the course of the sack of Buda by Ottoman armies in 1525, a manuscript was rescued from the library of king Matthias Corvinus of Hungary. After publication of the Greek text in Basel in 1534, a host of translations quickly appeared across the continent, its reputation quickly growing to be little less than that of the finest surviving works from the ancient world. The Italian humanist Julius Caesar Scaliger, in his widely read *Poetices libri septum* (1561), placed Heliodorus on a level with Virgil and recommended that his novel 'should be very carefully read by the epic poet and that he should set it before him as his most excellent model'.¹⁴

A French translation by Jacques Amyot, was published in 1547, being the first foray into print of an important figure in the history of literary translation. It was reissued no less than sixteen times before the end of the century. In his preface Amyot evaluates the virtues of *L'Histoire Aethiopique* in the light of principles derived from Horace, who had praised Homer's use of the *in medias res* design. Amyot followed the success of his Heliodorus with a translation of Longus' *Daphnis and Chloe* (1559), a distinguished and influential translation of all of Plutarch's *Lives* (1559) and the complete *Moralia* (1572)

which was much admired by Montaigne. Sir Thomas North's English *Plutarch's Lives* (1578) is a translation, not of the Greek, but of Amyot's French text.¹⁵

Amyot's labours found their way to the French stage in plays of Shakespeare's near contemporary, the workmanlike and prolific Alexandre Hardy (c. 1570-1632). Hardy adapted *L'Histoire Ethiopique* as a sequence of no fewer than eight tragicomedies commencing with the elopement from Delphi. Hardy's *Coriolan* (pre 1600?), taken from Amyot's Plutarch, predates Shakespeare's by a number of years and was the first tragedy known to have been written upon this subject. Hardy's works are difficult to date with any accuracy. His career probably began at the very end of the sixteenth century, and the folio of selected plays which appeared in 1623 names the *Théagene et Cariclée* cycle as among the 'bouillons de sa jeunesse'.¹⁶

Cervantes' Romance *Persiles y Sigismunda* (published posthumously in 1617), is an elaborate imitation both of the *Aithiopika* and of *Leucippe and Clitophon*. Alban Forcione, in his study of this, Cervantes' last, curious work, makes the important point that the rediscovery of Heliodorus' novel took place the year prior to the appearance in 1526 of Pazzi's influential translation of Aristotle's *Poetics*.¹⁷ Forcione argues that, in the debate over the failings of the popular chivalric romances triggered by the rise of Aristotelian criticism, Heliodorus was seen as successfully uniting the easy appeal of Romance with Aristotle's formal guidelines.

Those theorists who embraced classical models had also to account for the undoubted success of Ariosto's highly sophisticated, and from the Aristotelian viewpoint highly incorrect, chivalric romance *Orlando Furioso*, first published in 1516. Ariosto completed *Orlando* nine years before the Basel edition of the *Aithiopika*, and so, if this was the first appearance in modern times of Heliodorus' novel, he could have had no

direct knowledge of it in the years in which his poem took shape. Although the poem was revised for the third edition of 1532, there is nothing to show a new and specifically Heliodoran influence. It is curious then that a number of striking points of similarity between *Orlando* and the *Aithiopika* were present from the outset. Ariosto, like Heliodorus, redrafts the story of Perseus and Andromeda (in Ruggiero's and Marfisa's childhood and in the key episode of Ruggiero's rescue of Angelica), though, it must be said, often in an ironic light.¹⁸ *Orlando* features numerous examples of *ekphrasis*, the classical tradition of painting in language which is also central to Heliodorus' scheme and to the literature of the Second Sophistic. It is not inconceivable that the same channels that brought Byzantine learning to northern Italy also brought variants of the classical romances, and that such influences played a part in Ariosto's elaborate reshaping of the legend of Roland (in which he follows his own preoccupations rather than those of Boiardo whose project he had inherited).¹⁹ Ariosto naturally employed Ovid in his Perseus episodes, but also had key texts of the Second Sophistic, such as Philostratos the Elder's *Imagines*, to hand in the Este library in Ferrara. The happy result of this coincidental likeness, if coincidence it is, was that minds attuned to appreciating the subtleties of Ariosto's poem provided a ready readership for Heliodorus' novel. Later readers may well have been quite unaware that a direct descent from Heliodorus to Ariosto was lacking. Shakespeare probably read Harington's 1591 translation of Ariosto, although there is some evidence to suggest that he that he had read the original as well.²⁰

It is against this background that Tasso incorporated motifs taken from Heliodorus into his own hybrid chivalric romance *Gerusalemme liberata* (1581). Tasso had probably read the Italian translation of the *Aithiopika* by Leonardo Ghini published in 1556.

The marvellous conception of Tasso's female knight Clorinda is clearly modelled upon that of Charikleia, which, as Tasso recognised, is in turn derived from the story of Perseus' mother Danaë. Clorinda, whose parents are black, derives her character from a painting of St. George (a saint whose story echoes that of Perseus) and her white appearance from the maiden he is shown rescuing. In an important article discussing Tasso's use of Heliodorus, Walter Stephens also mentions that Tasso revealed in a letter dating from 1575 that he had attempted to imitate Heliodorus' intricate plot construction when writing the story of his heroine Erminia.²¹

A more direct borrowing from Heliodorus can be found in a lively, though somewhat less elevated chivalric tale, Book XX of *Amadis de Gaule* by Mambrino Roseo (before 1581). Writing in Italian, Roseo contributed six volumes to the popular saga, all of which were translated into French, sometimes in multiple versions. John J. O'Connor (in *Amadis de Gaule and its Influence on Elizabethan Literature*), has demonstrated how the story of Arlanges and Sestiliane in Book XX adheres closely to the outline of Heliodorus' plot.²²

A significant Renaissance addition to Heliodoran literature is a summary of the novel with an extensive commentary which was published in Frankfurt in 1584 (the preface is dated 1583). This was the *Æthiopicæ Helidori Historie Epitome* of Martinus Crusius, professor of Latin and Greek at Tübingen. Crusius praises the novel as 'scholarly', 'eloquent' and 'delightful', and categorises it as a 'Tragicomædia'.²³ What is particularly revealing is that Crusius provides numerous passages from other works for comparison with Heliodorus. Most of these are classical texts, ranging from Homer, Æschylus and Aristotle to Ovid, Achilles Tatius and the later Byzantine romance *Hysmine and Hysminias*. Among contemporary works Crusius turns to the Chivalric

epic. He cites *Amadis de Gaule* and Boiardo, but most frequently quotes Ariosto, citing some thirty-eight passages in all, more than three times as many as he quotes from Achilles Tatius.

In England, a much abridged translation of Heliodorus by James Sanford appeared in London in 1567 as an addition to a version of the mediaeval anthology known as *The Amorous and Tragical Tales of Plutarch*.²⁴ Sanford's 'Historie of Chariclia and Theagenes' is in fact the Delphi episode retold in twenty-eight pages and presented, with a somewhat perfunctory resolution, as a tale complete in itself (it does not, therefore, include the description of the 'Egyptian thief' alluded to in *Twelfth Night*). Thomas Underdowne's complete text followed two years later. This is an accomplished piece of work, though not without some flaws. Underdowne, who produced a noteworthy translation of Ovid's *Ibis* in the same year, worked from a Latin version of Heliodorus which had been produced by the Pole Stanislaus Warszewiczki in 1551.²⁵ F. A. Wright, who edited and revised Underdowne's work in 1928, pointed out that the important detail of Charikleia's mole, which appears 'like a ring of ebony staining the ivory of her arm' (10.15), had become in Underdowne's rendition 'a mole, much like the strakes that Elephants have' (Saintsbury ed., pp. 263-4).²⁶ In his disarming 'note to the reader' which appeared in the 1587 edition, Underdowne does not discuss the novel in the light of classical authors or literary theory, but seeks only to defend the book from those who feel the times demand 'notable examples of godly christian life, [rather than] the most honest (as I take this to be) historie of love' (Saintsbury ed., p. 5). Underdowne's book was reissued in 1605 and again in the following year. That the *Aethiopian Historie* found a ready audience beyond literary circles is reflected in a

comment made by Joseph Hall in 1620; ‘What Schole-boy, what apprentice knows not Heliodorus?’.²⁷

A play based upon the *Aithiopika* was presented at court in 1572-3, though little is known of this aside from a reference in the Revels accounts to ‘spears for the play of Cariclia’ and ‘An awlter for Theagines’ (see Wolff, p. 238n). Although this is the only mention of a play in English explicitly based upon Heliodorus dating from before the middle of the seventeenth century, in 1582 the playwright *manqué* Stephen Gosson complained, in his diatribe against the theatre *Plays Confuted in Five Actions*, that ‘the *Æthiopian historie*’ had ‘beene thoroughly ransackt, to furnish the Playehouses in London’.²⁸ Perhaps one can read into the word ‘ransackt’ a suggestion not of straightforward adaptation, but of the theft by dramatists of motifs or situations from the novel.

Although it probably post-dates Gosson’s comment, *The Thracian Wonder*, a play attributed to Webster and Rowley when first published in 1661 (though almost certainly not by them), contains a Heliodoran element. One thread of this intricately plotted romance features the love of the lost prince of Sicily, or more strictly speaking, the lost son of the lost prince of Sicily, for Lillia Guida, the daughter of the King of Africa. She is described as a ‘white moor’ in both the text and again in the stage directions (*Thracian Wonder*, V, ii, ed. Dyce, pp. 249 and 250). That the stage directions should distinguish her in this way does suggest that her appearance is different from that of her father. Up to the final act of the play she is simply called ‘fair’, and no explanation is ever offered for her anomalous appearance. The reliance of the main part of the play upon Greene’s *Menaphon* (1589), a novel which is itself deeply indebted to Heliodorus, coupled with a general likeness to Greene’s dramatisation of *Orlando Furioso* (1594),

has led commentators to speculate that the author of *Pandosto* may have played some part in its composition.²⁹

Away from the stage, it is possible to see the influence of Heliodorus in the *in medias res* opening of Spenser's *The Faerie Queene* (1596). C. S. Lewis notes that 'This method - the immediate presentation of a figure already in action - was not....the method of Spenser's predecessors and contemporaries. He had perhaps no perfect model of it except in Heliodorus'.³⁰ It is also true that Spenser's Belpheobe, who is born after her mother has been impregnated by the rays of the sun and who is brought up an ardent follower of Diana, bears a resemblance to Charikleia.³¹

Sir Philip Sidney cites *The Ethiopian History* in the *Apologie for Poetrie* (pub. 1595) as an example of the 'absolute heroical poem', in spite of its being 'writ in prose', and praises its author for 'his sugared invention of that picture of love in Theagenes and Chariclea'.³² A number of important parallels can be found between the *Aithiopika* and Sidney's *Arcadia*, both in structure and incident. Indeed Sidney was dubbed by his contemporary Maréchal the 'Héliodore d'Angleterre' (Sandy, 1982, p 104). Sidney's praise was both echoed by Francis Meres in his *Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasury* (1598), and turned back upon its maker: 'Heliodorus writ in prose his sugred invention of that picture in love Theagenes and Cariclea....so Sir Philip Sidney writ his immortal poem *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia* in Prose; and yet our finest Poet' (this same volume contains what is perhaps the first published praise of Shakespeare's writings, and includes the well-known reference to his 'sugred sonnets').³³

Heliodorus' novel is the only ancient romance to begin *in medias res* and it has been suggested, by Victor Stretkowicz, that Sidney adopted this strategy in imitation of the *Aithiopika*, rather than *The Aeneid* or *The Odyssey*. Stretkowicz also argues that

when Sidney came to 'restructure and revise' the *Arcadia* in the years before his death in 1586, he did so with reference to the comments found in Amyot's preface.³⁴ The value for the reputation of *Aithiopika* in Britain of Sidney's imprimatur, coupled with evidence of imitation in the *Arcadia*, would of course have been enormous.

A reader familiar with either work would have recognised at once the likeness between the opening scene of Heliodorus' novel and that of *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*. In Sidney's novel shepherds and fishermen on a coast observe evidence of a shipwreck. The wounded Theagenes has become the near-drowned Musidorus, while Charikleia is the somewhat androgynous Pyrokles. Pyrokles' beauteous appearance amazes the fishermen

and their amazement [bred] such a superstition that (assuredly thinking it was some God begotten between Neptune and Venus that had made all this terrible slaughter), as they went under sail by him, held up their hands and made their prayers.

The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia

(Book 1, chap. 1, ed. M. Evans, pp. 66-7).³⁵

Having survived the danger of drowning, Pyrokles is immediately captured by pirates while his friend looks on helplessly. In the *Aithiopika* Theagenes and Charikleia, having survived the fight with the Tyrian pirates, are immediately captured by bandits, while Kalasiris, we later discover, looked on from afar. After his rescue Musidorus supplies even sympathetic strangers with an alias, both for himself and Pyrokles, just as Theagenes and Charikleia mislead even Knemon as to who they really are (*Arcadia* book 1, chap. 2, *Aithiopika*, 1.26).

Wolff identifies three episodes from the *Arcadia* as containing material derived from Heliodorus. One is the captivity of Pyrokles and Philoclea (*Arcadia*, book 3, chap. 22), where the situation echoes Charikleia's and Theagenes' captivity at the hands of the lustful Arsake (*Aithiopika*, book 7). Others, with more specific reference, are the first episode of the 'Paphlagonica' (*Arcadia*, book 2, chap. 10) which employs the story of Kalasiris and his two sons, and the episode of Plangus and Andromana, which is based upon the story of Knemon and his wicked step-mother (*Aithiopika*, Book 1, *Arcadia*, book 2, chap. 25).³⁶

It is interesting that all three of these episodes from the *Arcadia* also have Shakespearean descendants. It is likely that Sidney's Pyrokles lent his name to Shakespeare's Pericles (see Muir, 1977, p. 254). Pyrokles' adventures combine the trials of Charikleia and Theagenes with those of King Apollonius. More importantly, it has also been suggested that both the tale of the blind King of Paphlagonia, and the story of Plangus are sources for the Gloucester subplot in *King Lear* (see Wolff, p. 366). The innocent Plangus is, like Knemon, discovered standing over his father sword in hand. Shakespeare has Edmund deceive Gloucester by telling him that he found the 'parricidal' Edgar with his sword already drawn (*King Lear*, II, i, 37).

In 1591, Abraham Fraunce, a member of Sidney's circle, published a translation of the opening scene of the *Aithiopika* put into English hexameters. He included this in the third part of his *The Countess of Pembroke's Yvychurch*. The echo of the passage quoted earlier from the *Arcadia* can be heard in such lines as

But, notwithstanding for a time they stood thus amazed,

* * * *

But, good God, what a sight, what a strange sight, yea, what a sweet sight,

And yet a woeful sight, to the thieves unlookt-for appeared?

There was a maide soe made, as men would thinck her a Goddesse,

There was a sweete-fac't maide, that sate on a rocke by the sea-shore,

The Beginning of Heliodorus his Æthiopolical History (lines 39, 43-6).³⁷

This is probably the work Ben Jonson had in mind when he told William Drummond that 'Abraham Fraunce in his English hexameters was a fool'.³⁸ Jonson himself owned a copy of the 1587 edition of Underdowne's translation, and cites Heliodorus in *The New Inn* (1629) and *The Sad Shepherd* (pub. 1640), in both cases as one of a list of authors including Achilles Tatius (and in *The New Inn*, Sidney) who write about, or are prized by, lovers.³⁹

Passing references to Charikleia and Theagenes, as a well known pattern for lovers, can also be found in Robert Greene's *Mamillia* (1583) and Thomas Lodge's *History of Robert, Second Duke of Normandy* (1591).⁴⁰ The characters of Brian Melbanke's prose romance *Philotimus: The Warre betwixt Nature and Fortune* (1583) not only act out incidents modelled after Heliodorus, but are repeatedly made to invoke the comparison while they do it. It might be argued that this is an imitation of Heliodorus' own strategy of imitating and discussing Homer in the same text, though such sophistication seems beyond Melbanke's disorganised narrative. Gerald Sandy points out that 'Melbanke's inclusion of material from the *Aethiopica* without explanatory comment seems to presuppose on his part an anticipated readership that would recognise the source of the characters' (Sandy, 1982, p.106).

Before looking briefly at circumstantial connections between Heliodorus and texts employed by Shakespeare in the composition of *The Winter's Tale*, it is worth returning to Amyot's readership and considering a reference to Heliodorus found in

another text known to Shakespeare, Montaigne's essay 'Of the Affection of Fathers to Their Children' (*Essayes*, Book II, chapter 8). Having discussed 'the simple occasion of loving our children, because we have begotten them, for which we call them our other selves', Montaigne goes on

It seemes there is another production comming from us, and which is of no lesse recommendation and consequence. For what we engender by the minde, the fruits of our courage, sufficiencie, or spirit, are brought forth by a far more noble part, than the corporall and are more our owne. We are both father and mother together in this generation...

Essayes, Book 2, chap. 8, trans. John Florio, pp. 353-4.

By which he means books and other works of art (in addition to invoking Plato's 'children of the imagination' described in the *Symposium*). Montaigne continues this metaphor to the end of the essay in an extended coda listing classical figures who appeared to value their books and achievements above living children. First among Montaigne's examples of 'the mutuall friendship of fathers toward their children' is Heliodorus:

that good Bishop of *Tricea*, [who] loved rather to lose the dignity, profit and devotion of so venerable a Prelateship, than to for-goe his daughter, a young woman to this day commended for hir beautie, but haply somewhat more curiously and wantonly pranked-up than beseemed the daughter of a churchman and a Bishop, and of over amorous behaviour.

Essayes, trans. Florio, p. 354.⁴¹

The aptness and wit of Montaigne's reference here lies both in the implied comparison to the climax of the *Aithiopika*, which comes when king Hydaspes narrowly avoids burning

his own daughter, and in Charikleia's being a child who was indeed engendered in the mind. She was born from the mind of Heliodorus himself, and within the narrative, is formed after her mother's mental impression of the painting of Andromeda. Montaigne's other joke is that churchmen choose to forgo both physical parenthood, and, usually, all but the most austere forms of literary parenthood. Although the *Aithiopika* contains its share of exoticism, the love of Charikleia and Theagenes is in fact a model of seamliness. Montaigne concludes the passage by accusing Pygmalion of incest when the sculptor become the lover of the statue that he had formed and which had been imbued with life by the gods in response to its parent's 'raging importunity'. However, it is clear that for Montaigne both Charikleia and Pygmalion's spouse are, in their different ways, living works of art.

3. Greene, Sabie and Shakespeare

For the purposes of this study, the most important examples of Heliodoran imitation in English prose are Greene's romances *Pandosto, or the Triumph of Time* (1588) and *Menaphon* (1589), both of which followed close on the heels of the 1587 edition of Underdowne's translation of the *Aithiopika*. When writing in the romance genre Greene also made much use of Longus and of *Leucippe and Clitophon* (although his death in 1592 preceded the publication of the first English translation of Achilles Tatius by at least five years). However, in Greene's two short novels we see most clearly a conscious attempt to produce tales which are analogous to those of Heliodorus. While the earlier of these two novels ends in the tragic, and seemingly un-Heliodoran, judgement of time upon Pandosto, in *Menaphon*, Greene sets out to reproduce the sense of joyous 'wonder' expressed in the climactic epiphany of the *Aithiopika*.

Those aspects of Greene's reworking of Heliodorus in *Pandosto* which cast the greatest light upon *The Winter's Tale* will be discussed at length below, but it is useful at this stage to point out some of the similarities identified by Wolff between *Pandosto* and the *Aithiopika*. These include Greene's use of the Delphic Oracle, and his attempt to make the reading of the oracle 'a Heliodoran scene' conveying a 'sense of monumental background and spectacle' (Wolff, p. 421). This scene, in which Pandosto's Queen, Bellaria is wrongly condemned for adultery, shows the 'vindication of chastity by public trial' (p. 420), and is, according to Wolff, 'especially reminiscent of [Heliodorus'] dénouement' (p. 422). Wolff also finds a likeness in jealousy being the 'moving force' of both plots:

It is to forestall the King's probable suspicion about the about the parentage of Chariclea that the Queen exposes her....In 'Pandosto' the King's actual suspicion of Fawnia's parentage occasions her exposure....the commitment of her to Fortune, the addition of tokens which the mother hopes may be of use to identify the child if found, the agonized speech by the mother when her child is exposed, - all these, even to verbal similarities, are parallel in Heliodorus and in Greene.

Wolff, p. 425.

'The shipwreck of lovers upon a hostile shore' features in both the *Aithiopika* and *Pandosto*, although Wolff makes the point that it appears in a number of other romances as well (*Leucippe and Clitophon* for example). The 'moment of last suspense' in the *Aithiopika*, in *Pandosto* (and in *Menaphon*), have a close similarity. In each case a 'princess once exposed is restored to her father the King, who, not recognising her as his daughter, orders her to be put to death' (Wolff, p. 426).

The chief dissimilarities between his ancient model and Greene's novel are the tragic conclusion, and the absence of a work of art among the props (unless one takes the 'famous Sepulchre' of Bellaria and Garinter as suggesting the presence of funerary statuary (*Pandosto*, ed. Bullough, p. 172)). Greene's novel ends with Pandosto's suicide, following the revelation of the incestuous nature of his desire for his daughter Fawnia. It was Shakespeare who, in adapting *Pandosto*, once again focused attention upon a work of art, and also restored the spirit of Heliodorus' dénouement.

Less familiar than *Pandosto*, *Menaphon* represents an intriguing extension of Greene's Heliodoran oeuvre. The bulk of the novel, which is set in Arcadia, is a pastoral romance reminiscent of Longus and Sidney, while the central premise of the plot is loosely modelled after the story of Argentile and Curan from book four of William Warner's *Albion's England* (1586).⁴² Many motifs also recur from *Pandosto* (including a king's incestuous pursuit of his own long-lost daughter), this time coupled with a bold, but not altogether successful, attempt to reproduce Heliodorus' narrative technique.

Wolff lists nine major similarities between *Menaphon* and *The Ethiopian History*, including the 'paradoxical oracle', the 'exposure' and 'shipwreck of [the] King's daughter', and the heroine's quickness in creating a false identity for herself (Wolff, pp. 444-5).⁴³ He also cites Greene's very obvious adoption of Heliodoran 'pathetic optics', complaining that this is 'almost overdone' (Wolff, p. 419n). As an example he quotes the meeting of Princess Sephestia and her husband Maximius at the shepherd's feast, where both are in their impenetrable rustic disguises as the shepherdess Samela and shepherd Melicertus, a scene much more like Shakespeare's Bohemian 'sheep shearing' (*WT*, IV, iv) than any in *Pandosto*:

Whiles thus there was banding of such lookes, as euerie one imported as much as an *impreso*, Samela, willing to see the fashion of these countrey yong frowes, cast her eyes abroad, and in viewing euerie face, at last her eyes glanced on the lookes of Melicertus; whose countenance resembled so vnto her dead Lord, that as a woman astonied she stood staring on his face, but ashamed to gaze vppon a stranger, she made restraint of her looks, and so taking her eye from one particular object, she sent it abroad...

Menaphon (ed. Harrison, p. 51).⁴⁴

While Sephestia/Samela, who has been made 'mistres of the Feast', is 'astonied' by what she sees, the unfortunate Menaphon, who also loves her, is 'amidst all this gazing...infected with a jealous furie'. 'Astonied' is an early form of 'astonished', which means to appear to be turned to stone by amazement, a meaning so careful a user of language as Greene certainly intended. One can add to Wolff's observations, the description of the shepherds seeing Sephestia whose 'eyes gave such a shine, and her face such a brightnesse that they stood gazing on this Goddesse' (*Menaphon*, p. 50) which confirms the likeness between this Princess's appearance at the shepherds' feast and Charikleia's both before the uncomprehending bandits on the shore, and upon the temple steps in Delphi (1.1 and 3.4). Charikleia's 'shining godlike eyes', are evident even in her infancy and strike Charikles when he is first given charge of the child (2.31).

Like Charikleia, Sephestia is also a lost heir whose destiny is the subject of a Delphic oracle, and it is Greene's use of the oracle which leads to Wolff's major complaint over the structure of *Menaphon*; he sees the lack of any credible motivation in what takes place. Wolff believes that the oracle in *Menaphon*, like that in *Pandosto*, is an attempt to imitate Heliodorus, but 'Whereas in *Pandosto* the oracle brings about a real

peripeteia in *Menaphon* Wolff is unable to detect anything more than a 'pseudo-structural' connection between the fulfilment of the conditions set down and the return of the king's lost daughter (p. 424).

Although there are complicating factors, it is clear that a useful comparison can be drawn between *The Thracian Wonder* as a theatrical adaptation of Greene's *Menaphon*, and *The Winter's Tale* as an adaptation of *Pandosto*. Greene's elaborate 'pathetic optics' are, of course, absent from the stage adaptation of *Menaphon*. Dramatisation renders redundant (or conversely, one could say fulfils) a strategy intended to create on the page an experience very like witnessing the action in a theatre. But the adapter(s) do introduce a Heliodoran element by replacing Greene's Thessalian Princess Olympia with the white African princess Lillia Guida. This anomalous child is a figure whose mere presence signals to the audience the tale's Hellenistic origins.

A consequence of the play's abandoning the pseudo *in medias res* design of *Menaphon* is the need to glide over the gap of sixteen years necessary for the lost infant to grow to maturity. The stage adapter's solution is to have a chorus excuse the absence of the missing years in a speech cut short by the entrance of Time carrying an hour-glass, which he sets down upon the stage before exiting (*The Thracian Wonder*, I, iii). Geoffrey Bullough does not discount the possibility that this interlude may have suggested Time's appearance in *The Winter's Tale* (Bullough, vol. VIII, p, 142).

Francis Sabie's two-part blank verse poem *The Fisherman's Tale and Flora's Fortune* (1595) is a loose adaptation of *Pandosto* that predates Shakespeare's and which moves Greene's tale still closer to Heliodorus. Sabie uses 'pathetic optics' in the mutual gazing of his lovers and, unlike Greene, adopts the Heliodoran techniques of recounting a tale within a tale and of beginning his narrative *in medias res*.⁴⁵

The first part of the poem mirrors the Dorastus - Fawnia pastoral episode with the shepherdess Flora, who is a disguised Princess, being wooed by a disguised Lord, while *Flora's Fortune* details the origins of Flora, who, we learn, was exiled as an infant, her Pandosto-like father being King of Greece. After her mother was falsely accused of adultery, Flora had been born in prison, and as in Greene's novel, her mother died in spite of having been exonerated by an oracle. The child is placed in a tiny boat and floats to Arcadia where she is found and adopted by a shepherd, Thirsus, and grows to maturity. The Lord Cassander woos her, but when the lovers attempt to elope they are forced to take Thirsus with them and are then shipwrecked and separated. Flora and Thirsus find their way to Palemon's court where she is pursued by Dryano, the son of the courtier who had accused her mother many years before. Similarly repulsed he denounces her as a traitor, but she is saved at the last moment from being burnt when Thirsus produces the identifying tokens left with her when she was exposed. Father and daughter are reunited, and Cassander and Flora are married. F. W. Moorman suggested (in the first Arden edition of *The Winter's Tale*, Methuen, 1912, 2nd ed. 1922, pp. xv-xxiii) that *The Fisherman's Tale* presents an interesting parallel to *The Winter's Tale*, and E. A. J. Honigmann later indicated a number of echoes of Sabie's poem in the detail and language of the play.⁴⁶ Comparing *Pandosto* and Sabie's poem, Moorman observed that while the pastoral element in both tales was drawn from Longus' *Daphne and Chloe*, in 'the adventures of the two lovers after their escape in the boat, the model of Greene, and still more that of Sabie ...would seem to be, notLongus, but the more popular romance[s] of adventure by land and sea' namely the *Aithiopika* and *Leucippe and Clitophon* (Moorman, p. xxi). As examples of this influence Moorman mentions 'the shipwreck and separation of the lovers...the attempt made by Dryano to rob Flora of her honour during

her lover's absence, the hair-breadth escapes from violent death, the discovery of Flora's identity, and the final reunion of the lovers' (p. xxi). To this can be added Flora's and Thirsus' visit to 'Apollo's church' on the isle of Delos where they were shipwrecked. The oracle, speaking with a 'thundering' voice sends them to Arcadia, but tells 'Old Thirsus, wise Apollo pittie thee, / One of his prophets henceforth thou shalt be' (Moorman, p. xvii), thus confirming the foster-father's likeness to Charikles.

Turning briefly to Shakespeare's own works, *Cymbeline*, the play whose composition most probably immediately preceded that of *The Winter's Tale*, has been most frequently identified by commentators as showing Heliodorus' influence. E. M. W. Tillyard suggested that the play's use of passages of first person narration stemmed either from Underdowne's translation, or from the *Arcadia* which is itself modelled after Heliodorus.⁴⁷ Stanley Wells, in *Shakespeare, a Dramatic Life*, points out that 'many incidents in [the *Aithiopika*] anticipate *Cymbeline*'.⁴⁸ In the final scene of *Cymbeline*, Wells argues, Shakespeare was aiming for the tone of Heliodorus' extended final scene, where 'the cruel slaughters looked for every moment were turned to holy sacrifice' (*Aithiopika*, 10.38). J. M. Nosworthy, in the Arden edition of *Cymbeline*, cites the hymn to Thetis sung in Delphi (*Aithiopika*, 3.1-4), as a possible source for Posthumus' vision of Jupiter (*Cymbeline*, IV, iv.).⁴⁹ Carol Gesner, in *Shakespeare and the Greek Romance* (1970), writes that *Cymbeline* 'was probably influenced by the *Aethiopica* and was perhaps even a conscious imitation of that romance' (p. 98). Among the many similarities she finds between the two works is *Cymbeline*'s surprising acceptance of Roman claims, which she likens to the olive branch generously proffered by the Ethiopian King Hydaspes to the defeated Oroondates at the conclusion of the *Aithiopika*. The description given by Iachimo of Imogen's bedchamber is a striking *ekphrasis* in the

manner of those beloved of Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius, and the blow the disguised Charikleia receives from her beloved (7.7) prefigures the unsettling moment when Posthumus strikes Imogen (*Cymbeline*, V, v, 227).⁵⁰ Underdowne's translation, by adding the detail that Charikleia was 'belike beblacked', injects a dubious irony into the incident not found in other versions: 'He seeing her fowle face, (belike beblacked) and her apparrall vile, and all torne....cast her off, and put her away, and at length gave her a blowe on the eare' (*An Aethiopian History*, Saintsbury ed. p. 174 [7.7]). The motif of the mistaken blow appears in *Pericles* also, where Pericles 'pushes back' (as the Arden editor's stage direction puts it) his lost daughter Marina in the moments before he discovers who she is (*Pericles*, V, i, 85).⁵¹ Here Shakespeare is following *Apollonius of Tyre*; in the romance Apollonius gives his daughter a bloody nose (*The Story of Apollonius King of Tyre*, 44). However, it is likely that Shakespeare included the motif in his second romance, *Cymbeline*, knowing that such an incident appears in more than one Greek original.

The direct points of comparison, which suggest that Shakespeare had Heliodorus very much in mind when composing *Cymbeline*, are also complemented by an indirect link. Imogen's wanderings through Wales, her lost brothers' discovery of her sleeping, and her own discovery of the disguised body of Cloten, all echo the adventures of Erminia in that part of *Gerusalemme liberata* where Tasso, by his own admission, set out to imitate Heliodorus. Shakespeare had very probably read Edward Fairfax's translation of Tasso, published in 1600 as *Godfrey of Bulloigne*. The combined use of this material is either a curious coincidence, or else we may surmise that Shakespeare had recognised in Clorinda's story, if not also in Erminia's peregrinations, the likenesses between Tasso's poem and the *Aithiopika*.

Imogen's story does not quite follow that of Shakespeare's other romance heroines Marina, Perdita and Miranda, who, like Charikleia, are all lost as infants only to return as marriageable women (Miranda differs again in that she is an heir who is lost in company with her father). Imogen's absence from court begins in adulthood and lasts a matter of weeks. However, her brothers' fortunes do follow the general pattern; they are the true heirs to the throne kidnapped as infants and returned as adults. So *Pericles* and *The Winter's Tale* present the 'lost heir' pattern upon the stage in its entirety, while *Cymbeline* and *The Tempest* begin *in medias res* and include a first person description of the original scene of loss.

The particular story of loss and return at the heart of the *Aithiopika* is shadowed closely in *The Winter's Tale*.⁵² Hermione is accused of giving birth to an illegitimate child, while Queen Persinna fears such an accusation. Both infants are exposed, with a parcel of royal treasures and tokens, and grow up in a distant land across the sea. In both stories the King is left without an heir, although her return is predicted by Apollo's oracle. This is followed by the adventures of the lost daughter, whose royalty is hidden. Both Perdita and Charikleia, having reached maturity, are forced to elope from their adoptive homes, and return to the place of their birth. In the final section of the tale father and child are reunited, and there is also a reconciliation with a pursuing father (with Charikles in the *Aithiopika* and with Polixenes in *The Winter's Tale*). The resolution of both tales comes about through a work of art being displayed; a work of art which comes, or is seen to have come, to life. In the play this artwork is a painted statue of Hermione, which then proves to be Hermione herself, and in Heliodorus' dénouement, it is the royal daughter Charikleia who is proved to be a living painting. Indeed Shakespeare's Paulina, who has the living Hermione in hiding, tells the repentant Leontes

that she will provide him with a new wife only if she is ‘As like Hermione as is her picture’ (*WT*, V, i, 74).⁵³

Heliodorus’ tale turns upon twinned encounters with Andromeda’s picture, while *The Winter’s Tale* charts the course between two moments in which Leontes sees Hermione. In the first of these Leontes sees a false image of Hermione as an adulteress in his mind’s eye, and in the second he sees her ‘statue’ and remembers her as virtuous. In the plot of the *Aithiopika* the first important moment of seeing comes when Queen Persinna sees the painting of Andromeda at the moment of Charikleia’s conception, while in the final spectacle the painting is brought before the whole court so that the mature Charikleia might be compared with the image of her ancestor and her legitimacy established (10.15). The Ethiopian high-priest Sisimithres tells the doubting King Hydaspes

[‘]...the picture is at hand, looke up on Andromeda, who is as wel expressed in the maide, as in the picture without any difference [’]. This said, the officers brought the image....and when they set it by Cariclia, there was such a shoute among the people....that for joy they wist not what to doe. So that Hydaspes also could not distrust any longer, but stoode (a great while, what for joy and woondering) still and styrred not.

Aithiopika, 10.15 (trans. Underdowne, ed. Saintsbury, p. 263).

The likeness between Hydaspes standing transfixed before the painting of Andromeda, and Leontes ‘mock’d with art’ (*WT*, V, iii, 68) as he stands before the statue of Hermione is also a very striking one.

The purpose behind collecting these many references and likenesses to Heliodorus’ novel has been two-fold. A full account of the reception of the *Aithiopika* in

the late Renaissance would merit a book to itself, but I hope to have shown here that the widespread acknowledgement of the novel's qualities more than justifies an examination of its particular impact upon Shakespeare's Romances. At the same time I hope to have provided enough background from which to argue that the matter of Heliodorus' novel would have been looked upon as carrying within it a meaning it was worth a wise author pursuing.

Chapter Two

Twinned-Impressions and Accused Queens

1. The 'Twinned-Impression' Plot

The preceding review has, I hope, provided a sense of Heliodorus' place in the Elizabethan literary landscape. Given the Elizabethan enthusiasm for the Romance genre it is all too easy to identify a vast number of correspondences between any number of works, and quickly drown in details. The many authors mentioned previously may all have had a differing understanding of, and use for, the common inheritance of material they drew upon. Likenesses between names, locations and incidents contribute nothing in themselves toward the interpretation of any work. What I hope to show in due course is that the *Aithiopika* and *The Winter's Tale* should be thought of as belonging to the same family of tales, that Heliodorus' novel stands out as the most sophisticated and profound expression of this tradition prior to *The Winter's Tale* itself, and that the two share a number of distinctive concerns.

In this chapter I will first focus upon the pattern found in each of Heliodorus' four plots, and then examine briefly some of the Mediaeval analogues concerning Accused Queens whose place as precursors of *Pandosto* and *The Winter's Tale* has long been recognised. Although the nature of the relationship between the mediaeval romances and the Greek novels is difficult to determine, Heliodorus' novel would have presented Renaissance authors with a model of Classical form in the Accused Queen genre and, therefore, with a way of reworking the mediaeval tales with a new sophistication and confidence.

J. R. Morgan (in his article 'Narrative Doublets in Heliodorus' *Aithiopika*' [1998])

recently suggested that Heliodorus employs a number of symmetries and repetitions in his plotting and of doubling among his various characters.¹ The complexities of plotting in the *Aithiopika* are a *tour de force*, and its subtleties are developed with an almost mathematical control. The intention of this strict patterning is, I think, to present an image of divine order hidden within a variegated multiplicity of incident, and also to define progressively a central governing idea through the repetition of analogous episodes.

I believe the principles of ‘twinning’ and of symmetry supply the basic dynamic of Heliodorus’ novel through the twinning of complementary moments of seeing. Each of the plots can be seen to chart the course from one striking moment of crisis, which stamps a deep but mistaken impression upon a character’s imagination and throws into doubt a child’s loyalty or legitimacy, to a second moment which corrects the error and sets them free. I will call this pattern a Twinned-impression plot. The similarity of this term to maternal impression is intentional, and the full connotations of ‘impression’ will become clearer after the phenomenon of maternal impression has been discussed in Chapter four (it is worth noting that Robert Greene uses the word ‘impression’ at a key moment in *Pandosto*, as we shall see below).

The two appearances of Andromeda’s painting stand at the beginning and end of Charikleia’s adventures, and, as Walter Stephens puts it, by the time the portrait makes its second appearance, ‘the reader...has long since noticed that Chariclea’s endless predicaments mirror those of Andromeda, the archetypal “damsel in distress”’ (Stephens, p.77).²

Stephens, referring to Bakhtin’s theory of what he calls the ‘chronotope’ of ‘Greek adventure time’, envisages the design of the *Aithiopika* as following Charikleia’s

journey 'from biological father through foster fathers and back again' (p. 75).³ He identifies her curious circular mole, her ribbon, cincture and magical 'pantarbe' ring as symbols of the circular path she is destined from birth to follow. Stephens quotes Bakhtin's view that

passage through this world [of adventure-time] 'takes place in an extratemporal hiatus between two moments of biographical time' and 'leaves no trace' on the individual, but merely affirms 'the identity between what had been at the beginning and what is at the end.' 'There is no potential for evolution, for growth, for change....nothing....is destroyed, remade, changed or created anew'

Stephens, p. 70.

This idea is repeated in Stephens' own observation (he admits the anachronism of the numeral) that

the mark on Chariclea's skin is the cipher zero. It externalises the cancellation of the entire interval between Persinna's first recognition that her infant bears the white 'mark of Andromeda' and her recognition of a grown daughter's tokens of 'blackness', and it negates the period of wanderings and travails that constitutes most of Chariclea's life

Stephens, p. 72.

Certainly neither Charikleia nor Theagenes strike the reader as obvious examples of characters who undergo great psychological development. They remain relatively static. And, while Charikleia makes a lively and attractive heroine, the occasions on which she does take the initiative seem secondary to those on which she is the victim, or instrument, of higher forces. Heliodorus does not intend the reader to look for psychological 'change' in his heroine, but to find instead a quality that marks her out as already, to

some extent, beyond the realm of change. Such change as Charikleia undergoes is chiefly physical (and her progress geographical) as her likeness to Andromeda grows until it reaches the point of perfect likeness upon the altar in Ethiopia.

Both Charikleia and Theagenes are to be identified at key moments with immortals in moments of hieratic epiphany. At the same time both are mortal, often making mistakes and misunderstanding the course of events, blaming chance, or indeed the gods for their misfortunes. However, when circumstances demand, both protagonists become somewhat more than their mortal selves and understand very well what they must do. Whether their transfiguration is indicative of 'growth' is debatable. It is not necessarily the case though that a 'circular' romance plot must militate against psychological growth for all those who take part. The effect upon those who encounter, or simply see, Charikleia is often dramatic.

If the emphasis is shifted from the need to establish the nature of Charikleia's inheritance (and the repetition of situations which do just that) to the experience of others who witness her adventures at first hand, a quite different scheme emerges. Instead of marking two near identical moments, or indeed the same point upon a circle, the two appearances of the painting of Andromeda can be seen to stand at each end of a progression. These two spectacles do not simply reflect one another: the first sets a problem which the second resolves. These spectacles are set far apart, but the incidents which lie between these two points, rather than being merely spun out until the reader has been entertained enough, mark recognisable and necessary stages on the path towards resolution.

Persinna believes that the moment in which she saw the portrait has given Charikleia the appearance of illegitimacy. Seventeen years later, in the second answering

moment of vision, Hydaspes and the waiting crowds recognise that Charikleia's appearance in fact expresses a legitimacy which transcends ordinary expectations. If we look only at the simple pattern common to Heliodorus' four plots, we find that each depends upon two acts of perception, the one triggering and the other resolving a parental crisis. These are the chief components not only of the main plot, but also of each of the three subplots. In each of the other tales a parent's act of seeing also leads to a serious estrangement between a father and child, the chief difference being that, in the subplots, it is the father himself, rather than his wife, who 'sees' at the outset and whose immediate assumptions are acted upon.

While the extraordinary circumstances of Charikleia's conception may appear to be unique, all the plots begin with an act of perception which is in some way analogous to this event. Knemon's father, Aristippos, awakes to see his son standing over him sword in hand and mistakes Knemon's loyal intentions (1.12). Charikles traces the death of his daughter and his succeeding misfortunes to his having entered the temple of Apollo at the wrong moment and having seen 'that which ought not to be seen' (4.19), although he does not compound this error by describing what it was he did see. Kalasiris' experience is slightly different because, as a holy man, he sees far more than most mortals. He has twin reasons for accepting Persinna's commission and banishing himself from Egypt. In both cases it not so much something he has seen, as something he does not wish to see. Kalasiris wishes to escape the near irresistible attentions of a courtesan, Rhodopis, who '[trailed] a net of sensuality....from her eyes', but first and foremost, he wishes 'to spare a father's eyes the spectacle of his sons' fratricide' (2.25).

Each of these examples represents a misunderstanding which is later resolved by a second act of seeing. Aristippos takes his son's place in what amounts to a re-enactment

of the original scene, while later in Egypt, Knemon sees Thisbe, who was the instrument of his downfall and whom he has seen killed, resurrected in the spotless form of Charikleia. Charikles bursts in upon the dénouement in Meroe and is finally reconciled to Charikleia's marriage and her return to her true parents. Even Kalasiris had failed to foresee events correctly. He cannot escape seeing his sons fight, but before he dies he witnesses Thyamis forgiving, rather than killing, his brother.

A further similarity between the plots is that each can only be brought to a happy conclusion after an interval of some time (in Charikleia's and Charikles' stories this is an interval of many years) and a journey across the Mediterranean from Greece to Egypt.⁴ In fulfilling these requirements the subplots shadow the course of Charikleia's destiny, echoing the time needed for her likeness to mature, and for her journey back from exile. Each of the plots is divided in half by the sea voyage which separates the two crucial encounters. The (sometimes unequal) halves of each tale are further differentiated by their mode of narration. The first part is described in the first person by one of the protagonists, while the second part is described by the third person narrator. In the first part the reader hears how events appeared to one of those taking part, whilst in the second they are shown what happens as the threat of disaster is averted, families reunited and happiness restored. And here Heliodorus has matched the manner in which the tale is told to the subject matter. The first 'act of seeing' is subjective and reflects the limited understanding of the witness. It is not simply chance that they should be struck in this way, rather it makes manifest a latent self-centredness. The final spectacle brings a perspective outside the self which restores order. It is not necessary for all the protagonists from any particular tale to be present on this second occasion, only for the disruptive act of cognition to be finally answered with an act of recognition, in fact with

a recognition scene. Persinna, Knemon, Charikles and Kalasiris all describe an initial act of seeing, while they, and the reader, are later shown how this is resolved. It is clearly of crucial importance to Heliodorus' scheme that the reader shares with the protagonists in witnessing the conclusion as though they too were seeing it with their own eyes.

There are numerous differences between these tales, for example Kalasiris' and Knemon's stories are concluded over a much shorter time scale than the other two tales, Charikles recalls his experiences before embarking for Africa and Charikleia refuses to recall anything (she makes her journey to and back from Delphi as though on behalf of her mother, and her mother's written testimony supplies the inset first person narrative in her tale), but such variation as does occur is just that: variation within the same species.

Apollonius of Tyre itself follows and perhaps, if it is indeed an early text, did much to establish this form of Romance, although I hope to show that the impressions pattern evolved from a particular way of understanding the legend of Danaë and Perseus. Apollonius' adventures are triggered by his seeing the meaning of a riddle and feeling revulsion in the presence of incest, and are ended by his recognising his lost daughter. The action of *Apollonius of Tyre* takes a straightforward chronological course. However, Heliodorus' *in medias res* opening and first person narratives do not indicate that the plot of his novel is different in kind from *Apollonius*. Heliodorus acknowledges and employs the Homeric connotations of the *in medias res* strategy (the arrangement of first and third person narratives clearly shows the influence of the *Odyssey*).⁵ However, I think his decision to 'begin in the middle' represents also a refinement of the inherent characteristics of the Twinned-impression design as found in *Apollonius*. Purely in terms of overall structure the difference between the two ancient novels, *Apollonius* and the

Aithiopika, is the same as that between *Pericles* and *Cymbeline*, or between *The Winter's Tale* and *The Tempest* (or that between *Pandosto* and *Menaphon*).

Elements of the *Apollonius* story appear in what must be one of Shakespeare's earliest plays, *The Comedy of Errors* (1589?) and again in the very much later *Pericles*, indicating a continuing interest in the matter of this tale.⁶ The question of the primacy in the ancient world of *Apollonius* (which Shakespeare knew from Gower and others) or of Heliodorus (also published in its entirety in English before Shakespeare's earliest known literary work) would have been of no concern to Shakespeare. However, what he could not have failed to notice was that Heliodorus presents four radical variations on the *Apollonius* plot, and these variations may strike today's reader as being not unlike Shakespeare's own four late Romances, but as if interwoven with one another.

The initial plot trigger in the tales of the *Aithiopika* is always an act of seeing which in some way affects the imagination. In each case the parent, usually the father, believes that they understand almost immediately what has, or will, take place and acts accordingly. In the only apparent exception to this rule, it is the mother Persinna who sees the painting and later believes that Hydaspes will have her and the baby killed, and judging from his reactions in the final scene, she was probably right. Although this tale would appear not to follow the pattern I have described, I think the vital first assumption in the pattern (the incorrect assumption which threatens catastrophe) is not Persinna's own, but the one which she knows in her heart Hydaspes will make. So, in the main plot also, one can say that it is the father's way of seeing that is crucial. The gods have arranged their plot of loss and return in order to alter Hydaspes' vision of his role as a father, both of his own child and as *Pater Patriae*, father of the Ethiopian nation. Persinna's conception is physical and has an appearance of illegitimacy which in the end

proves her fidelity. The father on the other hand, in this and all of the other stories, labours under a (mis)conception which is finally proved to be illegitimate.

The *Aithiopika* features numerous other significant occasions for seeing, in addition to the key twinned spectacles required to begin and end the Twinned-impressions pattern. These moments either push events forward, or if misinterpreted, can suggest a premature and tragic conclusion. They include visions, dreams, public spectacles such as victory parades and the Pythian Games, elaborate descriptions of works of art and curious sights almost all of which are designed to prompt attempts at understanding in both characters and readers.⁷ The details of a dream or riddling oracle may require painstaking consideration if they are to be understood correctly. Such attempts must often be made in the absence of necessary information, and will usually fail. In fact it seems that the function of such puzzles is as much to indicate the limitations of mortal understanding as it is to reveal a particular truth.

The second major spectacle in Charikleia's story comes in Delphi when Charikleia and Theagenes fall in love at first sight, even as the oracle describes Charikleia's destiny. The oracle is not yet understood, and this 'epiphany' is only the prelude to the couple's flight from the city and their journey across the sea. In Knemon's tale this component takes the form of an illusory conclusion to his suffering when the bed-trick arranged by Thisbe clears his name, but does not in fact end his story. For Charikles it comes after Charikleia's flight, when he wrongly deduces the cause of his unhappiness and determines to follow her. In Kalasiris' tale the old priest's encounter with the dangerously seductive eyes of Rhodopis prompts him to accept Persinna's mission. He later sees Charikleia and Theagenes in their full glory in Delphi and his discovery of

Persinna's confession sets his course back toward Egypt (this passage also contains the vital description of maternal impression).

The fathers who allow themselves to be deceived by visual evidence make their initial disastrous assumptions because what they see wakens an anxiety that is already present within them. The irrational fear of a child's or wife's betrayal colours and distorts the father's understanding so that he is unable to see the truth. The final impressive spectacle in the sequence, the vision which cures this misunderstanding, does not bypass the analytical faculties, but rather the faculties function in perfect alignment so that the new 'form' received from outside is not corrupted as it travels to the heart.

The final scene of recognition should inspire wonder, and this is clearly what Hydaspes experiences. Without wishing to address the complexities of defining wonder in the full context of Classical and Renaissance theorising, I propose that astonishment or amazement in their benign form were seen to bring some insight into the ways of Providence. Hydaspes' 'wonder' (10.15), if it is to answer Persinna's original encounter with the painting, must be an experience of the same essential character.⁸ In the final impression a sense of rightness, which combines the contraries of joy and sadness, is found to be the true opposite of the parent's original anxiety. It is the presence of wonder which indicates that whatever monster was hidden within the parent has been conquered and that a change of heart has taken place.

That each of the stories featured in the *Aithiopika* should depend upon acts of seeing places Wolff's 'pathetic optics' in a new light (as defined above, see p. 23). What he identifies as a weakness in Heliodorus' technique is, in fact, an extension of the matter of the tales themselves.

As an example of the way in which the Twinned-impression plot functions, Knemon's tale is useful because the patterning takes a straightforward form. The events of the first half of the story which take place in Athens are only properly exorcised after Knemon reaches Egypt, with two acts of seeing, a greater and a lesser, having occurred in each locale. This relative simplicity, coupled with the tale concluding itself within the first half of the novel, suggests that it was partly introduced so as to provide a point of comparison with the more complex elaboration that follows, with the characters of Knemon and Thisbe conceived as counterparts to Theagenes and Charikleia (as J. R. Morgan has suggested).⁹ Certainly the wicked step-mother Demainete presents a striking contrast to Persinna. Demainete is precisely the scheming betrayer and stamp of wife that events prove Persinna not to be. While Persinna resorts to the deception of telling Hydaspes that their child was born dead in order to preserve the infant, the first of Demainete's deceptions is to tell Knemon's father that Knemon, out of jealous spite, caused her to miscarry by kicking her. She hopes to rob Aristippos of his true heir Knemon, through the fiction that Knemon had robbed the elderly father of a new child. Persinna hopes, by sending Kalasiris to Greece that (against the odds) father and child will be brought together. She can be seen to represent faithfulness and fertility, while Demainete, on the other hand, exhibits only a self-interested sterility that forces parents and children apart.

The symmetry of Knemon's story expresses the essential character of the Twinned-impression plot, although it does depart from the norm in having the father Aristippos disappear from the tale half-way through. Knemon himself must see an answer to his own predicament in the home of a second father, and replace the attraction he feels for Thisbe with love for a bride.

An emphasis upon seeing features throughout Knemon's tale. Demainete contrives visual evidence of Knemon's guilt by sending him to his father's bedside with a drawn sword, and just in case this was not enough to convince Aristippos, she jumps in with a fine piece of ironic villainy, telling him 'I said he would attack you if he had the chance. I saw the look in his eye, and I knew what he was thinking' (1.12 tr. Morgan, Underdowne misattributes this speech). With the death of the evil step-mother who schemed against Knemon, we are reminded that Justice may 'delay her reprisals long, but on the truly wicked her eye falls keen' (1.14).

Thisbe's bed-trick, which leads to Demainete's suicide, very neatly reverses the circumstances of the earlier deception and is stage-managed using a practised Athenian intriguer's wealth of experience. On this second occasion Demainete believes she has taken the place of the exiled Knemon's (fictional) lover whom he has secretly returned to Athens to meet, only for Thisbe to lead in her husband Aristippos. This is an appropriate means of hoisting the scheming step-mother on her own petard. However, it does not provide the advance in understanding which prompts wonder and which would allow Knemon to progress beyond the master / slave relations he imagines for himself and Thisbe. Taking up the theatrical imagery employed by the third person narrator, Knemon calls his story 'an Attic tragedy' (2.11). He believes the 'tragedy' has ended in Athens, only to find that Providence has appended a romance featuring a sea voyage and the remarkable coincidences which lead to Thisbe's death and his marriage to Nausikles' daughter. Knemon is quite happy to finish half-way, having organised his story into a tale containing two moments of vision, only for it to be revealed that it actually contains four, and, as the reader soon discovers, is one of four similar tales.

The Platonic overtones of the scene in the cave where Thisbe's body is

discovered are intentional. Plato's story of the cave in the *Republic* (VII) employs seeing as a metaphor for understanding, and failures in understanding express themselves as failures to see correctly. This is a comment upon the extent to which Knemon's understanding has always remained limited. He is used to seeing by his own dim light and does not recognise that what took place in the darkness of the cave was the ordained outcome of all that went before in Greece.

In the cave Knemon finds himself standing for a second time over a body which is disguised by the gloom. In the first bed-trick the body proved to be, not that of Demainete's lover, but his father. Here he discovers that it belongs not to Charikleia, but to Thisbe (2.5). This is the story's third spectacle. In her pocket Thisbe is carrying a letter in which she professes her own love for Knemon, a detail which allows her a posthumous moment of pathos. However, we see that the darkness, required for her own previous deceptions, has cost her her life. Knemon's story does not conclude here. Thisbe's death, like the bed-trick which it follows in the symmetrical arrangement of events, provides a false ending. The original scene in Aristippos' bedroom is only finally answered in Nausikles' house, a second household where Thisbe has been employed. Here Knemon, as he listens to Kalasiris describing Theagenes and Charikleia, receives a powerful visual impression of them. He is then overcome by anxiety when he hears the name of Thisbe mentioned and is told that she is living under the same roof. He runs to find his resurrected nemesis and discovers, instead of the licentious and unlucky slave, Charikleia the paragon of chastity. It is this unexpected metamorphosis, which frees Knemon from the past and allows his marriage to Nausikles' daughter. For him this is a moment of epiphany.

As was mentioned in the previous chapter, the Gloucester, Edmund and Edgar subplot in *King Lear* has Heliodoran roots via Sidney's *Arcadia*. Shakespeare's characters are closer to Sidney's than they are to Kalasiris and his sons, or to Knemon and his father. However, Gloucester's story is also an example of the Twinned-impression plot. The old father Gloucester progresses from displaying a blindness to his sons' true natures at the beginning of the play, to seeing the truth after he has been physically blinded. Edgar is, like Knemon and Sidney's Plangus, apparently caught red-handed in an act of parricidal villainy. Edmund describes how his half-brother 'stood he in the dark, his sharp sword out, / Mumbling of wicked charms' (*King Lear*, II, i, 37-38).¹⁰ Gloucester does not actually see Edgar standing thus; the way having been prepared with a forged letter, Edmund's words create an impression which fixes itself in his mind.

Edgar later finds a pattern in his father's suffering when he matches the 'darkness' at Edmund's conception with the dark act of blinding which followed the adult Edmund's return:

The Gods are just, and of our pleasant vices
Make instruments to plague us;
The dark and vicious place where thee he got
Cost him his eyes.

King Lear, V, iii, 169-72.

These two events occur on either side of Edmund's nine years spent out of the country and voyage back (*KL*, I, i, 31). Gloucester's final moment of seeing, described by Edgar, when all is explained to him, places him at a point not beyond feeling but "Twixt two extremes of passion, joy and grief" (*KL*, V, iii, 197), a moment very like the joining of

contraries in Heliodorus' dénouement when 'sorrow and mirth', 'teares and laughter' meet (trans. Underdowne, Saintsbury ed. p. 281), a marriage of emotions which proves fatal to Gloucester, but allows him a 'smiling' death.

The Gloucester subplot echoes elements from two of Heliodorus' subplots, Demainete's trickery and the good and bad sons of Kalasiris. It is natural to suppose therefore that the main plot of *King Lear* may in some way echo either the main plot of the *Aithiopika*, or follow a similar pattern of plotting. I will return to this play in a later chapter.

So far I have identified the necessary components of Heliodorus' plots as being two complementary acts of seeing, separated by a number of deceptive or half-fulfilled advances in understanding. There is also a sea voyage and an interruption of events allowing for the passage of time. These elements are also found in the myth of Danaë and Perseus which shapes Charikleia's story. The Greek Perseus travels to the coast of Africa where he rescues Andromeda, and where the stare of the Medusa is complemented by the hero's loving gaze which seems to bring the heroine to life. These adventures are framed by incidents showing the separation of parents and children. I will discuss the Perseid in greater detail in the following chapter. However, its presence behind the action points to the last common element in the design, a typology drawn from myth or literature which does not simply act as a comment upon the story, but actually forms the story after itself.

As regards the main plot it is to be expected that, if the characters of the novel are indeed actors in a drama written by the gods, this drama will be modelled after earlier tales in which the gods and immortals played a more visible role. Kalasiris both speaks of Homer and is forced to watch his own sons re-enact an episode from the *Iliad*. The specific typology of Charikles' experiences is more difficult to identify.¹¹ Knemon's own

attempt to better explain his experiences by likening them to a stage drama and, when he tells his tale, by giving them a literary form, fails to contain all there is in his story (1.8). It breaks out from the forms of tragedy in the same way that it continues beyond the confines of his subjective narration. Knemon cannot believe that Thisbe loved him, and suspects that she intended to launch a further plot against him which would constitute a second tragedy 'this time with an Egyptian setting' (2.11). The identity of the first tragedy is revealed when Demainete recklessly compares herself to Phaedra by calling Knemon her 'Hippolytos' (1.10). In time she duly shares Phaedra's fate.

The role of typology in the four plots of the *Aithiopika* is related to the device of separating the tales into halves. The shift in perspective between the first inset half which is narrated in the first person, and the second half, which is told in the third person, not only signals a character's progression from a limited to a less self-centred outlook, but also suggests that this advance is bound up with the process of attempting to organise one's experience as a narrative. Telling is itself a stage in understanding. Knemon's view of the literary models to which his experience might be likened may not match those apparent to the reader, but nevertheless does represent an attempt at understanding which is finally rewarded. On the other hand, the static 'heroic' characters, Charikleia and Theagenes, do not tell their own stories, and when invited to do so they lie or prevaricate. Others tell stories about themselves in which Charikleia and Theagenes appear, or, in Knemon's case, a tale which is addressed to them. As they already embody an ideal of heroic selflessness, the protagonists do not need to be placed in a position where they will learn by speaking about themselves to others. Charikleia and Theagenes act as catalysts in the lives of those around them. When called upon to do so, they act in

accordance with divine wishes and quite unselfconsciously invite identification with immortals.

Examining further the design of Heliodorus' novel, we see that not only does he juggle four plots but, as one stands back from the detail of the *Aithiopika*, it becomes clear that Heliodorus' multiple plots taken together form a larger unified scheme. This scheme follows the same pattern as each of its constituent parts, but, of course, in a still more elaborate form. The opening *ekphrasis* of Charikleia discovered upon the rocky coast is the initial spectacle presented to the reader, who, though unable at this point to understand the full significance of the scene, receives a vivid impression which implants the desire to continue and discover the explanation. For the time being the various deceptive explanations which follow cannot but increase the reader's confusion. The moment of initial bafflement facing the reader at the beginning of the novel is, I think, analogous to the moment in which the father forms a mistaken impression in each of the subplots, and to the moment in which Persinna sees Andromeda and conceives Charikleia. It is in the first half of the novel that the numerous first person narratives occur, and, only after the half-way point and the description of the sea journey to Africa, are matters fully unravelled. Kalasiris' account of the fight on the shore (5.33), which he observed from a cliff top nearby, comes at the near exact centre of the novel and allows us to see the opening tableau again, this time from a new perspective. It is from this point that Heliodorus himself takes up the bulk of the narration, as it were, unaided.

Given that even Heliodorus' impartial narrator's voice quickly becomes a recognisable character whose comments are also designed to suggest a limited perspective, the reader is made all the more aware of those passages of pure visual description where he becomes transparent, reporting simply what is to be seen. Such

passages signal themselves as spectacles which transcend any explanation likely to be divulged directly to the reader. Heliodorus' tactic of periodically removing himself from the narration and giving way to pure description has been labelled by J. R. Morgan a 'recessive authorial stance'.¹² In the summary of the *Aithiopika* given in the previous chapter the *in medias res* design was flattened out, with the material given in the first person narration written upon Charikleia's ribbon lifted out and placed before the actual opening of the novel. This simplification disguised the way in which the novel, as it is actually laid out, follows the same pattern as each of the plots. The novel is what it describes. The construction of this scheme is a virtuoso performance, with the monumental final scene presenting a spectacle that at last provides the counterbalance to the mystifications of the opening tableau, and unites the reader's experience of the novel with that of the characters whose stories they have followed.

Implicit in this entire pattern is an analogy drawn between seeing and understanding, an analogy common today in such expressions as 'the way I see it' or 'now I see'. If the parent at first mistakes what they see, this is an expression of their inability to understand. As we find in Gloucester's story, the eyes themselves may have to be circumvented and the understanding thrown into confusion, with characters, and even the audience, plunged into metaphorical darkness, before a new vision can be discovered.

Heliodorus develops the Twinned-impression plot with particular and subtle ends in view. The question remains as to whether his Elizabethan imitators were aware of this structure, and sought to reproduce this structure from an informed or naive position. I think Greene did comprehend the purpose of the tool he chose, but was unable to articulate this understanding in a new and fully integrated work without anomalies and unevenness. Shakespeare saw with equal clarity the purposes embodied in Heliodorus'

plot and, his facility being the greater, he was able to re-employ the form as if it were second nature.

Greene's *Pandosto* does closely follow the Twinned-impression design, and is organised around four key moments in which Pandosto is struck by what he sees. The first of these occurs when the King sees his wife in the company of his childhood friend. This spectacle triggers hidden anxieties which cause an estrangement not only between the adults present, but between father and child. Pandosto imagines what has taken place and believes his, as yet unborn, child to be illegitimate, and this mistake causes him to lose his young son also. Pandosto's conception of his wife's guilt grows slowly within him mirroring the development of their child, and comes to fruition in his 'franticke passion' of 'causelesse Jealousie' (ed. Bullough, pp. 159, 157). This is followed by Queen Bellaria being exonerated by the oracle and her death and that of her son Garinter. Witnessing this tragic spectacle has a powerful effect upon Pandosto: 'This sodaine sight so appalled the Kings Sences, that he sancke from his seat in a swound' (p. 171). The third spectacle follows after many years (and the Princess's return voyage to the land of her birth) when Pandosto sees the fully grown Fawnia's 'singular perfection'. He was 'amased' and 'stood halfe astonished, viewing her beauty' (p. 192). Although Pandosto 'sought by reason, and wisdome to suppress this franticke affection, yet he could take no rest, the beautie of Fawnia had made such a deepe impression in his heart' (p. 193). The final impression in the sequence of four is Pandosto's realisation that Fawnia is his daughter and that his pursuit of her was incestuous, a realisation that leads to his 'melancholie fit' and suicide (p. 199).

Both of Pandosto's misconceptions are envious responses to other true conceptions. Pandosto's jealousy, which 'bred' misery within him, is contrasted with

Bellaria's pregnancy, while his infatuation with Fawnia is contrasted with (and literally echoes) Fawnia's and Dorastus' love. Dorastus 'gazed' upon Fawnia who 'fired his fancie' (p. 178) and caused a 'franticke affection' (p. 179) to take hold of him. This gazing has a mutual effect; 'the beautie of Dorastus had made such a deepe impression in her [Fawnia's] heart, as it could not be worne out without cracking' (p.183). Pandosto's errors bring their own punishments, firstly the death of his wife and child, and later, unbearable melancholy, but the final crisis can also be seen to answer his original misconception and complete the sequence which began many years earlier. When Fawnia's true identity is revealed Pandosto, in a 'sodaine passion', sheds tears and 'breathed himselfe a while in this newe joy' (*Pandosto*, ed. Bullough p. 198). This second 'passion' answers the first sudden 'passion' which doomed his wife, and the joining of tears and joy recalls Heliodorus' dénouement:

a perfect harmony of diametric opposites: joy and sorrow combined; tears mingled with laughter; the most hideous horror transformed to celebration; those who wept also laughed; those who have grieved also rejoiced; they found those whom they had not sought and lost those whom they thought to have found.

Aithiopika, 10.38, trans. Morgan.

However, by insisting upon 'closing up' 'the Comedie with [the] Tragicall stratageme' of Pandosto's death, Greene has brought his readers to a very different meeting of contraries.

2. Accused Queens and *Esmoreit, Son to the King of Sicily*

It would be premature to attempt to define the particular connection between the *Aithiopika* and *The Winter's Tale* in any more detail at this point without taking some

note of the many popular Romance tales which appeared in the intervening centuries and which contributed something to Shakespeare's plot. It is interesting to find that many of these tales can also be seen to be variations upon the Heliodoran Twinned-impressions pattern.

This particular family of tales is commonly known as Accused Queen or Calumniated Wife tales, and feature heroines who are the victims either of the schemes of malign mothers-in-law or deceived husbands, spurned lovers or, commonly, of the incestuous designs of their fathers. They are unjustly accused of infidelity (like Hermione), of giving birth to animals or monsters, or of infanticide and even cannibalism. As a result the Queen suffers imprisonment, or exposure in a forest or commonly exposure at sea in a tiny boat.

The original accusation against the Queen often results from a powerful visual or imaginative impression which strikes her husband or father, and, as in Heliodorus' novel, this often hinges upon a pregnancy and the apparent illegitimacy or monstrousness of a child, or upon an act of disobedience which seemingly denies the rights and authority of a father. The tales usually conclude with a recognition scene featuring the miraculous reunion of long scattered families and the reappearance of long lost royal infants.

This genre of tale was usefully examined by Margaret Schlauch in her book *Chaucer's Constance and Accused Queens* (New York, 1927) where she compared numerous Accused Queen *märchen*, mediaeval romances and plays all of whose heroines experience ordeals similar to that of Constance, the widely-travelled and much persecuted protagonist of Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*.¹³ The anthropological flavour of Schlauch's study reflects the fact that she was very much working in the tradition of J. G. Frazer and E. S. Hartland, author of the compendious survey of 'Danaë' folk-tales,

The Legend of Perseus (London, 1894). Although neither Hartland nor Schlauch mention Heliodorus it is obvious that the tales they collected have a great deal in common with the *Aithiopika*.¹⁴ Persinna is not an Accused Queen only because she acts quickly after the birth of her anomalous child to avoid an accusation, but the narrative which results is very similar to that which recurs in the mediaeval tales.

For Hartland and Schlauch the story of Danaë was not the original Accused Queen *märchen*, but merely one among many examples. Danaë, impregnated by Zeus in the form of a shower of gold, was believed by her royal father, Acrisius, to have born the child who would displace him and so he sealed mother and the infant Perseus in a chest and threw them into the sea.¹⁵ This myth is connected to Heliodorus' narrative through the figure of Andromeda. Not only is Perseus' bride Hydaspes' and Charikleia's ancestor, but the conception of Charikleia, in which Persinna sees the portrait and is impregnated with the qualities of Andromeda, can be likened, I believe, to the conception of Perseus.

It is tempting to attempt to trace 'on the ground' connections between the mediaeval romances and Greek romance, but the evidence is incomplete and this is not the place to probe this matter fully, beyond pointing out some useful and intriguing resemblances. It may be that stories such as that of Constance represent the weaving together of an evolving tradition of folk-tales and local myths with the half-remembered matter of earlier, highly sophisticated literary treatments of the Danaë story into a fabric which is now quite impossible to unpick. The important point would be to see mediaeval and Classical sources not as representing rival claims upon the late Renaissance romancers, but rather that these two groups of tales were used in unison. The popularity of mediaeval romance would have meant that the *Aithiopika*, upon its rediscovery, was recognised and understood as a much more sophisticated and subtle example of the

familiar Accused Queen tale. Indeed the reappearance of Heliodorus in 1526 can be thought of as resembling someone awaking from a sleep lasting several centuries to be greeted by their own distant, but still recognisable, descendants.

Of the many mediaeval analogues of *Pandosto* which occupy the ground between the Greek Romance and the Renaissance, the one which can be said to bear the closest relation to *The Winter's Tale* is a late mediaeval play surviving in high Dutch called *Esmoreit, Son to the King of Sicily*.¹⁶ A possible connection between *Esmoreit* and *Pandosto* was first suggested at the turn of the century by the German scholar Karl Fries.¹⁷ It was discussed by Schlauch and more recently by Leo Salingar in *Shakespeare and the Traditions of Comedy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1974, pp. 47-50). As Salingar suggests, the link must be treated with some circumspection, but it does raise a number of interesting points.

To summarise the plot briefly, the eponymous hero of *Esmoreit* is born the son of the King of Sicily and his Queen, the daughter of the King of Hungary. The king's nephew, Robbrecht, envious of the infant who will inherit the realm, abducts the child and then accuses the mother of having killed him. The King, convinced of his wife's guilt, has her imprisoned. Fortunately for the infant, he is purchased from Robbrecht, who had intended to strangle him, by Master Platus, the astrologer to the King of Damascus. Platus had travelled from Damascus to Sicily after explaining to his master that he had foreseen the birth of a child in the west who would gain the crown of Damascus and marry the King's daughter, Damiette. While Damiette is only told that Esmoreit is a foundling, she is told to bring him up believing that he is the King's own son. The King intends by this that Esmoreit will refrain from seizing the crown by force, and from marrying a woman he believes is his own sister. After eighteen years have passed,

Damiette herself has fallen in love with the prince. Esmoreit, overhearing her laments, learns their true relationship and the couple declare their love. However, Esmoreit refuses to marry her until he has discovered his true parentage. All he has to help him is the embroidered swaddling band Damiette has carefully preserved. Tying this across his forehead, he sets out, and, naturally enough, is next seen in Sicily wandering by the prison which houses his mother. The Queen, leaning out of her cell window, immediately recognises the band on which she had sewn the arms of Sicily (with one quarter showing those of Hungary), and they are reunited. The King asks the Queen's forgiveness, while Robbrecht, much discomfited by Esmoreit's reappearance, is forced to welcome him cheerfully. Damiette, who has heard nothing from Esmoreit, decides to search for him. She asks Platus to accompany her, and disguised as pilgrims, they travel to Sicily. Damiette is begging for alms, saying that she and her companion are pilgrims who have been robbed by bandits, when Esmoreit recognises her voice. The King and Queen embrace Damiette while Platus recognises Robbrecht as the man who sold him the child. As the stage direction explains 'Here they hang Robert [Robbrecht]' (Ayres ed. p. 56), and the play concludes with happiness assured.

The text is quite short and the staging required is far from sophisticated. The stage was apparently divided down the middle into the two kingdoms of Sicily and Damascus. At one point this arrangement enables Damiette to start a speech on one side of the Mediterranean and end it on the other (Ayres ed., p. 49). Salingar implies a general likeness between this genre of play and that penned by Peter Quince in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (Salingar, 1974, pp. 67-71).¹⁸ While any subtlety of characterisation or exposition is lacking, the likeness of the bare plot to that of *Pandosto* is undeniable. There are also similarities to the *Aithiopika*, and while these are motifs shared by many of

the tales which make up the genre, they are worth noting. Esmoreit's swaddling band, embroidered by his royal mother, is much like Charikleia's ribbon which was written upon by Persinna, and then, after many years, recognised by her. Charikleia's journey with Kalasiris, when both disguise themselves as beggars, corresponds to Damiette setting out in company with Platus, both disguised as pilgrims who beg for alms. Neither Theagenes nor Esmoreit is able to see through the disguise. But each recognises their beloved by what she says, or just by her voice. Platus himself sets out from Damascus to search for the infant Esmoreit, having been commanded by the king to do so on the strength of Platus' astrological predictions. In the *Aithiopika* Kalasiris decides to leave Africa having deduced that his misfortunes there are the result of the baleful influence of the planet Saturn, and takes up the Queen's commission to search for her lost child (2.24). Platus' prediction also corresponds to the oracle in the Danaë myth which puts King Acrisius in fear of his life.

Salingar's opinion of the probable origins of *Esmoreit* is that it was 'Possibly.... influenced by some Byzantine (ultimately, hellenistic) romance' (p. 48). He concludes his discussion by admitting that

it is almost impossible that either Shakespeare or Greene could have heard of *Esmoreit* itself; and if, as seems much more likely, Greene knew some variant form of the old play, he changed it considerably. But the differences between *Pandosto* and *Esmoreit* are consistent with his general policy as a writer, and not at all inconsistent with the assumption that he knew *Esmoreit* indirectly.

Salingar, 1974, p. 49.

Two of the immediately noticeable, and one would have thought specific, likenesses between *Esmoreit* and *Pandosto* are slightly deceptive. That the action of *Esmoreit* is

chiefly staged in Sicily is not evidence of a direct link to *Pandosto*, but is a common feature of the genre. Schlauch lists twelve similar romances where some part of the action takes place in Sicily (see Schlauch, 1927, p. 119). Greene has Bohemia as Pandosto's Kingdom and Sicily as that of Egistus, while Shakespeare reverses the locations. Sicily was a traditional Arcadian setting and has a special resonance in *The Winter's Tale* as the scene of Proserpine's abduction.¹⁹ I think that its popularity in this genre also owes something to its being the home of St. Lucy, a connection which will become clearer in due course. That Hermione is the daughter of the Emperor of Russia, and not of the King of Hungary still provides a noteworthy parallel between the two plays (*WT*, III, ii, 119). In *Pandosto* it is the wife of Egistus rather than Bellaria who boasts this exalted descent (Bullough, p. 164). However, Accused Queens often prove to be of imperial blood. Chaucer's Constance is the daughter of the Emperor of Rome. The heroine of *La Manekine* is a daughter of the King of Hungary, and in another version of the same tale (collected in Jansen Enekel's *Weltchronik*) has metamorphosed into the offspring of the King of Russia. There is a certain piquancy in having the accused princess as the possessor of a more elevated form of royalty than those who persecute her (particularly so when she persists in keeping her lineage secret). Constance is first persecuted by the mother of the Sultan she has married and then by the mother of her second husband, the King of Northumberland, who knows nothing of her true identity. The victim of such injustice can invoke a higher authority than her husband, and, even in her silence, embodies (like Hermione) an untouchable authority.

Salinger suggests that Shakespeare was explicitly invoking these mediaeval romances when, in *The Winter's Tale*, characters are made to allude to 'old romances and old plays' (p. 52). As Rogero (the Second Gentleman) reports of Perdita's return to

Sicily: 'This news, which is called true, is so like an old tale that the verity of it is in strong suspicion' (*WT*, V, ii, 27-9). The title itself signals that the play will be a *märchen* of sorts, and yet this is a member of the Accused Queen family of tales in which the characters can also allude to that tradition as though it was something only too well-known. This playful literary self-consciousness is of a piece with the conceit of Hermione's statue actually being the person it represents and helps prepare the way for that epiphany, a scene to which Paulina adds the caveat 'Were it but told you, [it] should be hooted at / Like an old tale' (*WT*, V, iii, 116-7).

The Queen of Sicily in *Esmoreit* does not resemble Danaë in the straightforward way that some other heroines in the tradition do, but there are veiled similarities. Both are imprisoned, although Danaë's imprisonment comes before the birth of her child, not after it. In prison Danaë sees the 'shower of gold', while the Queen, looking from her prison window, sees the coat of arms of Sicily emblazoned upon her child's forehead, incidents which, as we shall see, are more alike than at first appears to be the case. The reasons given for their persecution seem less alike. Danaë is accused of conceiving a child against the wishes of her father, and therefore of being in some way a party to parricide, while the Queen of Sicily is accused by the villainous Robbrecht of infanticide. However, in many of these tales the crises which send the romance heroine into the wood or out to sea in a frail craft can be shown to be very much alike, and to hinge upon a parent turning in upon themselves to the point of rejecting the very idea of reproduction. The incestuous desires of the father and the destructive pride of the jealous mother-in-law or nephew spring from the same cause. This will be discussed further in due course, but it is worth noting here some of the variants of the unjust accusation made in the mediaeval tales.

As Schlauch points out, accusations of infidelity, as found in *The Winter's Tale*, are relatively uncommon. Quite often we find a heroine is first driven away from court by her incestuous father, as in the Flemish poem *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople* (composed before 1448) or in one of the original versions of the folk-tale preserved by the brothers Grimm as *Die Mädchen ohne Hände*.²⁰ In the middle sections of the Flemish tale Hélène also becomes the victim of a jealous mother-in-law. Hélène, who is the daughter of the Emperor of Byzantium and a Roman Emperor's grand-daughter, is shipwrecked on the English coast, and marries King Henry. He is away at war when she gives birth to twins, and the King's mother substitutes the letter giving news of this so that the king is told that it was a monstrous birth. The King's humane instructions are then substituted with a demand for his family to be burned.²¹ They are actually set adrift at sea in a 'rudderless boat', a reprieve due to the intervention of the Duke of Gloucester whose own daughter had volunteered to be burned in the Queen's place.

Chaucer's Constance suffers from the schemes of two mothers-in-law and a Robbrecht-like accuser. Like Hélène she is also accused by her English mother-in-law in a forged letter of giving birth to a monster:

The lettre spak the queene delivered was
Of so horrible a feendly creature
That in the castel noon so hardy was
That any while dorste ther endure.

The Man of Law's Tale, in Chaucer: *Works*. Ed. F. N. Robinson,
2nd ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1966), lines 750-53.

Other young Queens are accused of giving birth to puppies (in *Theseus de Cologne*) or to snakes by mothers-in-law who substitute dead creatures for the royal children. Some

attempt to discredit the Queen by employing a strategy very much like that used by the wicked step-mother Demainete against Knemon. In the French romance *Florent et Octavian*, the Queen, having given birth to twins, is accused by her royal mother-in-law of infidelity. The mother-in-law then ‘bribes a youth to lie beside her in Octavian’s place while the young mother is asleep. Octavian, convinced by the sight, kills the youth and sends his wife and children into exile’ (Schlauch, 1927, p. 87). This is representative of many similar episodes in other tales.

The motif of the monstrous or animal birth forms another link to the *Aithiopika*. While it is the accusation of infidelity Heliodorus’ Persinna wishes to avoid, this threat has arisen through her giving birth to a child who was formed in a way that was thought to produce monstrous births. Leaving aside the particulars of Charikleia’s conception, it is important to note how these later stories depend also upon an initial impression to set the story in motion, whether this is a visual impression like the one organised to deceive Emperor Octavian, or that experienced by a husband when he is shown the creature to which, he has been told, his wife gave birth.

A particular moment of seeing can also trigger the incestuous passion of a royal father. Several widowed kings fall in love by looking at their daughter’s hands. In *La Comtesse d’Anjou* by Jehan Maillart (1316) this occurs during a game of chess. In the romance *De Alixandre, Roy de Hongrie* the daughter, discovering the effect they have, has her hands cut off and presented to the king (this was a common response in such tales, see Schlauch, 1927, pp. 68-72). More relevant for any study of *Pandosto* and *The Winter’s Tale* are those kings who become infatuated with a daughter who has grown to resemble their own dead wife. Schlauch describes how in the thirteenth century Bavarian romance *Mai und Beafloer*

the father's inconsolable grief for his Queen prepares the way for his unnatural passion for his daughter years later. The author is careful to explain that Beafloer was reared away from her father's sight, so that her sudden appearance before him in complete adult beauty and resemblance to her mother makes plausible his change of feeling.

Schlauch, 1927, p. 71.

The daughter's beauty presents the king with deceptive visual evidence of his wife's resurrection in a new body. In a number of these tales the King has promised his dying wife that he will marry only her exact double (in *La Manekine* and the fourteenth century play known as the *Columpanarium*), in others this promise is extracted from a king by his barons (see Schlauch, 1927, p. 70). In all these texts such promises lead to disaster, and a knowledge of this tradition casts a different light upon the oath Leontes swears that he will not marry again unless he finds 'another, / As like Hermione as is her picture' (*WT*, V, i, 74-5). In *Pandosto*, Greene uses the incest motif drawn from the traditional Accused Queen tales to punish a false accusation. The King who has unjustly accused his wife of infidelity becomes, after many years, the king who desires his own daughter.

Although I have referred here to a number of similar romances I am not suggesting that one can find a distant source for *The Winter's Tale* simply by dipping into any one of them. My intention has been to show that, throughout the genre, one can detect a particular structure. Further, I am not suggesting that these tales show evidence of firsthand knowledge of Heliodorus' novel. The possibility of a conscious tradition stretching unbroken from the Greek Romances through the mediaeval tales to the late Renaissance is probably illusory. The continuity between these works might prove, at best, to be a loose and fluid descent in which many points of reference had already been

lost, some forever and some only temporarily. However, among the constant factors found in the many tales which contributed something to *The Winter's Tale* (and to *King Lear* and *Cymbeline* also) is the theme of conception, and this is expressed through a design which begins with a father receiving a false impression and ends with its distant, healing twin.

Chapter Three

The Danaë Romance

1. The Perseid

Many different literary and mythological references figure in the *Aithiopika* and several shape the action in important ways. Among these is the well-known myth of Danaë and Perseus, or the 'Perseid'. In this chapter I will examine versions of this myth, which Tasso clearly associated with the *Aithiopika*, and offer a view of it which I think throws light upon Heliodorus' novel and later romances. I believe Tasso was right to identify Persinna with Danaë and hope to show, in due course, how Danaë receiving the golden shower and a mother forming her child after a painting can be thought of as analogous events.

It is also possible to find echoes of the story of Danaë in many of the mediaeval Accused Queen tales mentioned in the previous chapter. However, the mediaeval authors were free to devise their own variations upon a theme without underscoring any indebtedness to Classical sources and there was no need to single out Danaë as a precursor of later heroines (particularly so when many of the ancient models familiar to later times remained lost or little known). As a result these later romances often come close to the narratives of hagiography (Chaucer's Constance is a good example).

With the Renaissance came both a greater self-consciousness in the use of the Romance tradition and a desire to reach back to the best in Classical models, not simply through quotation and allusion, but by rediscovering the full sophistication of the past. Romances were again dependent upon myth, and these myths were viewed, as they were

in late Antiquity, with the eye of neo-Platonism, although Renaissance neo-Platonism was clearly not the same as that known to Heliodorus.

References to the story of Danaë abound in numerous Renaissance novels, plays, paintings and sculptures. *Orlando Furioso* and the *The Faerie Queene* feature significant retellings which signal themselves as such.¹ Artists who depicted Perseus or his mother include Titian, Correggio, Cellini and Giulio Romano himself (see figs. 1, 9 and 10. Titian's depictions of Danaë are discussed below, see pp. 236-9).² Numerous interpretations of elements of the story were put forward by mythographers and in the commentaries upon Ovid which appeared in an unbroken stream from late Antiquity to the Late Renaissance. It is to these critics have usually turned when considering what any particular author or artist may have been intending his audience to infer from his use of the myth. However, it was seldom considered as a coherent whole in these texts and in many, as we shall see, Danaë herself can be seen to have fallen into disrepute.

The Perseid contains many ingredients which would later be thought of as belonging to Romance; the rescue of a helpless maiden from a ravening monster, unlikely quests achieved, and an infant once exposed who returns after many years to claim a royal inheritance. No doubt such incidents often recur in later Romances for no better reason than that they carry the potential for entertaining suspense, or even on the principle that they were always among the staple incidents any Romance was expected to include. But, while some reincarnations of Danaë and Perseus may be evidence of nothing more than habit, this was far from always being the case.

Ovid's use of the myth can be seen to exploit an idea that unifies the different elements of the story. Indeed the conceit of having Andromeda seen as a statue that comes to life is a central part of his interpretation of the traditional material. This

depends upon elaborating a contrast between the gaze of the Gorgon which petrifies her victims and that of Perseus which enlivens the despairing maiden.

The story of Perseus' conception in a 'shower of gold', his slaying of the Gorgon Medusa and his rescue of Andromeda are among the best known of ancient myths. Nevertheless, it is useful here to rehearse some of the other details from the story which are not quite so familiar, because the details of the Perseid can also be recognised as providing the machinery of Charikleia's adventures, sometimes in surprisingly specific ways.

The legend of Perseus clearly gathered to itself elements taken from many different places as it was retold down the centuries, and would at no point have had what might be thought an authentic and definitive form. Each ancient poet who treated the subject would have emphasised or altered different parts of the tale, just as the different centres in which Perseus was worshipped would have emphasised local aspects of his cult. However, much of the basic story does seem to have been constant from a very early time. Jocelyn M. Woodward (in *Perseus*, Cambridge, 1937) sets out some of the earliest versions of the story and notes that an anonymous Greek commentary upon Apollonius Rhodius' *Argonautica* gives a detailed résumé of the legend drawn from the treatise on mythology by Pherecydes, a work now lost, which was probably written as early as the first half of the fifth century BC (*Frag. Hist. Graec.* I. 75-6).³

Woodward argues that it would be 'a mistake to read a deep moral interpretation into the tale. It is not the Greek way. To the Greeks the Perseus legend was no more than a fine story about one of their heroes...who was particularly active in clearing the world of strange and dangerous monsters' (Woodward, p. 4). While for the early Greeks this may have been true, among the Hellenistic Greeks and for all those writing after

Ovid, attitudes would have been very different. In either case there is an important difference between reading an inappropriate allegory into the tale, and recognising a thematic structure which gives the story weight and unity, and may even have provided its *raison d'être*.

Two versions which can be taken as representative of the most popular forms are Pherecydes', as the earliest, and that included in Apollodorus' *The Library*, which, as Woodward suggests, perhaps draws upon further passages from Pherecydes now lost. Pherecydes apparently told how King Acrisius of Argos consulted the oracle (presumably the Pythian oracle in Delphi) to learn whether he would ever have a son, and was instead told that his daughter Danaë would bear a son who would kill his grandfather. In a futile attempt to escape this fate, he imprisoned Danaë in an underground cell lined with bronze (according to Apollodorus this prison was a tower made from brass [*The Library*, II, iv]). Here Danaë was impregnated by Zeus, who visited her in the form of a shower of gold. When Acrisius discovered that Danaë had given birth, he had her nurse killed and refused to believe his daughter's claim that the child's father was Zeus himself (Apollodorus mentions that some other writers state that Acrisius' brother Proetus had seduced his niece). Acrisius shut mother and child in a tiny ark and put them out to sea. Luckily they were rescued when they reached the island of Seriphos by the fisherman Dictys who caught the chest in his net. Perseus grew up in Dictys' house, but Danaë was seen by the fisherman's brother Polydectes, the king of the island, who at once determined to possess her. It was Polydectes who tricked Perseus into undertaking the quest for Medusa's head. Perseus visited the cave of the three Graeae, under the guidance of Athena and Hermes, and extorted from them the information he needed to defeat the Gorgon by snatching the single eye and tooth the three sisters shared.

Following their advice, he collected from the nymphs a cap of invisibility, a sickle, winged sandals and a shield polished so brightly that he could use it as a mirror and so avoid the Gorgon's fatal petrifying gaze. He flew to the Gorgons' lair and decapitated Medusa (with, as some sources have it, Pegasus being born from her blood [see Hesiod: *Theogony*, 273-286]). At this point Ovid describes how Perseus visited Atlas' realm. The giant, remembering an ominous prophecy, attacked him, but Perseus produced the Gorgon's head, transformed him into a mountain and claimed the golden fruit of his orchard (*Metamorphoses*, IV, 621-662).

Pherecydes' account of Andromeda's rescue is not reported, but she did figure in his version of the story. Turning to Apollodorus for this episode, he describes how Perseus, while flying back to Seriphos, passed the coast of Ethiopia and saw Andromeda chained to the rocks below as a sea-monster's prey (*The Library*, II, iv, 3). Andromeda was the child of King Cepheus of Ethiopia and his wife Cassiopeia. Cassiopeia had foolishly boasted that she was more beautiful than the Nereids and, outraged, they caused Poseidon to send a monster to ravage the land. Ammon (the Ethiopian deity identified with Zeus) predicted that deliverance would come through sacrificing Cassiopeia's daughter, and 'Cepheus was compelled by the Ethiopians' to bind her to the rock (*The Library*, II, iv, 3). Perseus fell in love with Andromeda at first sight, and rescued her in return for her hand in marriage, slaying the monster with his sickle. As was mentioned above, the important versions of the myth by Euripides and by Ovid include the detail of Perseus at first mistaking Andromeda for a statue. It was while resting upon the seashore after this adventure that Perseus put down the Gorgon's head and inadvertently created coral (*Metamorphoses*, IV, 743-53).

Cepheus' brother Phineus had been betrothed to Andromeda and plotted against Perseus, though Perseus used the Gorgon's head against these conspirators and created a gallery of statues (according to Ovid this was not until after a lengthy and particularly bloody fight). On returning to Seriphos he dealt with Polydectes and his followers in the same way. Having then travelled to Argos, the city he had left as a new-born infant, Perseus found that his grandfather, Acrisius, had fled to Larissa. Perseus followed him and effected a reconciliation, but paused before returning home to compete in the games and accidentally killed Acrisius with a discus. Apollodorus adds that Perseus, not wishing to gain by this mischance, then exchanged with Proetus' son the crown of Argos for that of Tiryns.

A significant variant of the tale is to be found in Hyginus' *Fabulae* (LXIII).

According to Hyginus, after Danaë and Perseus had been rescued from the sea by Dictys, King Polydectes married Danaë and had Perseus brought up in the temple of Minerva,

When Acrisius discovered they were staying at Polydectes' court, he started out to get them, but at his arrival Polydectes interceded for them, and Perseus swore an oath to his grandfather that he would never kill him. When Acrisius was detained there by a storm, Polydectes died, and at his funeral games the wind blew a discus from Perseus' hand at Acrisius' head which killed him. Thus what he did not do by his own will was accomplished by the gods.

The Myths of Hyginus, trans. and ed. Mary Grant,

(Lawrence: University of Kansas Press, 1960) p. 64.

This tale is presented specifically as that of Danaë, and Hyginus does include the familiar story of Perseus and the Gorgon in his entry for Andromeda and in his *Poetic Astronomy*

(II, 9). Hyginus was probably writing after the time of Ovid and his sources for this entry are unknown.

An interesting detail which hints at versions of the story which have been lost appears in Pliny's description of works of art in his *Natural History* (XXXV, xl, 139) where he refers to a painting by Artemon showing 'Danaë admired by the Robbers'. Art historian Alessandro Parronchi has suggested that this showed Danaë with the infant Perseus after they had been washed ashore on Seriphos.⁴ Parronchi argues that Pliny's reference and Hyginus' fable together provided Giorgione with the subject for his enigmatic *Tempesta* (c. 1530), which, he suggests, might be retitled *Danaë in Seriphos* (see fig. 2). The flash of lightning (Jupiter's attribute) in Giorgione's painting could therefore be seen as an allusion to Perseus' conception.

Before examining later views of the Perseid, which often focused only on one part of the tale, it is necessary to consider how, in the light of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, the myth might be seen to work as a coherent whole.

Just as the myth features pairs of good and bad brothers, we also find paired incidents featuring good and bad ways of seeing, the most obvious example of this being the petrifying gaze of the Medusa which Perseus escapes, and his then seeing Andromeda and mistaking her for a statue. The potency of Medusa's gaze continues even after her head has been cut from her body. As she represents the forces of death, it is of course appropriate that her dead eyes should retain their power. The enlivening look of the lover who sees the object of his sudden affection come to life represents a power equal to the lethal stare of the monster. Ovid describes how, as Perseus neared the coast of Ethiopia, he discovered Andromeda:

Whom to a rock by both the arms when fastened he had seen,



Fig. 2. Giorgione : 'La Tempesta' (1503/4?), 78 x 72 cm, Venice Accademia.

After Linda Murray: *The High Renaissance and Mannerism*. London: Thames and Hudson Ltd., 1967, repr. 1993, plate 76 (p. 76).

He would have thought of marble stone she had some image been,
But that her tresses to and fro the whisking wind did blow,
And trickling tears warm from her eyes adown her cheeks did flow.

Book 4, 671-675 (trans. Golding).⁵

This is the 1565 translation by Arthur Golding which Shakespeare knew. Leonard Barkan, in his study of the *Metamorphoses* (*The Gods Made Flesh*, New Haven, 1986), describes this conceit as being

one of the great Ovidian images of fixity: Andromeda bound to the stone is, in effect, transformed into stone. The transformation is in part deathly and in part beautiful; deathly because she is helplessly frozen, and beautiful because as stone she is a work of art and quite distinct from the *duras cautes* to which she is bound. To complete the picture, Ovid shows us that life, equated with motion, still flickers within the girl. The motion of her hair and tears contrasts with the maiden's stoniness, but that stoniness is clearly taking over her personality as well as her body because at first Perseus is able to pry no response from her. Eventually Perseus succeeds, however, in bringing her to speech and motion; and it is this coaxing into life that reveals the hero's worthiness to free her from her stony condition and to wed her.

Leonard Barkan: *The Gods Made Flesh* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1986), p. 53.

We can assume that Heliodorus knew Ovid's poem, and would have recognised its subtleties, but it is also highly likely that both authors drew upon the same traditions. It is interesting that Ovid should not feel it necessary for Perseus to petrify the sea monster with the Medusa's head, which might seem the obvious form for the story to take. This is

because the metamorphosis which gives the episode its place in the tale is that of Andromeda herself.

Ovid retells the story of Perseus as only a small part of his own long poem. Barkan argues that, in the *Metamorphoses*, Ovid sets up a contrast between Perseus and Narcissus, by showing Perseus skilfully employing mirrorlike surfaces against his enemies, whereas Narcissus was captured and destroyed when he saw his own reflection in a pool of water. Perseus' shield becomes a mirror in which he watches the Gorgons, and he also later uses the sea as a mirror when swooping down upon the sea-monster, causing a reflection which distracts the creature. As Barkan puts it:

Gazing into the mirror is still....a dangerous act - it is in a sense the Medusa's weapon, since she freezes the image of every beholder - but the hero never gazes into his own reflection, instead wielding the mirror and turning it against others.

So the fate of Narcissus has been overturned.

The Gods Made Flesh, p. 54.

If Medusa represents for Ovid a form of narcissism, this is what the true lover escapes through seeing someone who causes them to forget themselves. Perseus' seeing Andromeda demonstrates his freedom to love someone other than himself. It represents the escape from self-centredness, and this suggests that Ovid has allowed the comparison with Narcissus to usurp in importance the Acrisius episodes in his version of the fable because both characters represent a similar threat of sterility.

If this Ovidian view of Perseus' adventures is applied to the whole myth in its traditional form, I think that a similar contrast between sterile 'fixity' and an outward looking fertility can be found in the events which occur at very beginning of the tale,

between the dangerous misapprehension that takes hold of Perseus' grandfather, Acrisius, and Danaë's impregnation by the fertile 'shower of gold'.

The original act of seeing in the Perseid is Acrisius being confronted with the oracle and seeing a meaning of his own making. He misunderstands the oracle, because he assumes that it is telling him that he will be murdered by his descendant, and he deduces that this child must be a monster if it is to turn upon its own revered ancestor. Acrisius makes futile attempts to escape the prophecy, but the oracle demands trust and acquiescence from its hearers, not interpretation. It expresses a Providential understanding he cannot grasp. The imprisonment of his daughter is a doomed attempt to halt change. Acrisius cannot in the end escape natural processes of renewal and cannot prevent Danaë from conceiving. The central episodes of the myth, the quest for the Gorgon's head and the rescue of Andromeda, supply the knowledge needed to understand the role of Acrisius in the framing material and recognise that he embodies a blighting influence opposed to fertility.

A similar contrast can be found in Perseus' and Phineus' seeing which expresses the understanding from which their intentions spring. Perseus acts in accordance with the wishes of Providence, while Phineus understands in a way that leads to petrification and so is shown that which turns him to stone. This does not mean that Perseus would have been able to interpret the oracle (he does after all kill his Grandfather, albeit accidentally). The conscious calculation of forthcoming events is not the key. What is required is that the hero looks away from himself, and that he looks with love upon an object his gaze will then enliven. And it is because Providence looks upon Perseus in this way that he is saved from the ocean and finds a bride whom he can in turn save from the sea-monster. The story concludes in Larissa with a reconciliation and Acrisius' death, a death which

finally makes plain the oracle's meaning and rounds off the pattern by allowing a glimpse of the processes of Providence.

Understanding the myth as revealing a Providential scheme, in which a vision that petrifies is supplanted by that which gives life, suggests in turn that the enlivening vision Perseus enjoys is, in fact, Providence itself. And this provides a meaning for the episode in the Graeae's cave. Perseus is given the information he needs to complete his task by seizing their eye. The commonly given origin of these three sisters is that they are the daughters of Ceto and Phorcys, a sea-deity, and so were sisters to the three Gorgons. Robert Graves suggested that their existence might actually derive from a misreading of an image depicting Hermes being handed the eye of the three Fates, that is 'the gift of perception'.⁶ I think that the Graeae would have been recognised as in some way substituting for the Fates, and that, by seizing their eye, Perseus shows himself to be acting, and seeing, with the benefit of divine knowledge and the blessing of Providence.

Perseus' behaviour is virtuous and conspicuously selfless. He puts his own self at risk in order to rescue his mother from Polydectes and Andromeda from the monster. He looks away from himself, while by contrast Acrisius only looks toward his self as the source of understanding, and thus alienates himself from Providence. It is Acrisius' own self-centredness (which we can take to have existed before the oracle speaks) that distorts his relationship with his child and with the world around him. The oracle merely offers a gauge of the extent to which he has lost sight of Providence.

Acrisius does not need to understand Providence in a controlled, rational way, only to acquiesce in the general process it has ordained, whereby a new generation always succeeds the old. Acrisius has replaced Providence with his self and has made natural succession appear strange and threatening, even monstrous. His daughter

promises the continuation of his line, but this would mean surrendering her to a stranger, something which would mean an end to his own rule. So Acrisius understands the presence of a grandson in the palace as a rebellion against his authority, and acts accordingly. Perseus is ordained to be the king's successor, but he cannot be Acrisius himself.

This pattern may apply to any family. If the child is allowed autonomy, this must admit the possibility that it will in time supplant the parent. The loving parent adapts to allow for this, but those who are unable to change themselves, or will not, seek to deny the inevitable. This is perhaps the danger which also threatens the other family in the Perseid, the royal house of Ethiopia.

If an unnatural form of self-preservation motivates the royal parents in the tale, an acceptable suitor for the daughter's hand must needs be as much like the self, that is, as much like the father Cepheus, as possible. A close relative would, naturally, be preferred, and this is why Cepheus has agreed to his daughter marrying his own brother Phineus. The father, faced by the imagined threat of a new generation, by the impending loss of his marriageable daughter to a stranger, attempts to halt the possibility of change by fixing the *status quo*. Such a process could, rightly, be represented as one of petrification. The power accorded to the monstrous Gorgons is thus wielded by others wishing either to prevent the appearance of further generations, or to perpetuate their influence over their children in a way that becomes selfish and unnatural.

King Cepheus regarded his daughter in a way similar to that in which Acrisius controlled Danaë before he exiled her. Acrisius too has a mysterious and ill-intentioned brother in some variants of the tale. It would not be reading too much into this detail to suggest that these brothers are no more than surrogates for the fathers' own selves and

act out their own malign desires. This would be one reason why Cepheus is sometimes shown the Gorgon's head in company with his brother. These rulers represent an outlook in which all alteration is opposed, and which suffers inevitable defeat by having its own forces turned against itself. The malign desire in question here is the perpetuation and aggrandisement of the self. Incest, which features openly in many Accused queen tales, represents only one potential manifestation of this desire, albeit a particularly powerful one. Cassiopeia also exhibits such inward-looking tendencies. The failure of these royal parents to see correctly creates the form of the trial Providence frames for them.

It may be that when the gaze of Perseus turns Andromeda back from stone to flesh she is also freed from the dangers of narcissism. The circumstances which led to Andromeda's sacrifice suggest the presence of narcissism. We are given her mother Cassiopeia's boast as the cause of her predicament; according to Hyginus, Cassiopeia compared Andromeda's beauty to that of Poseidon's daughters (Hyginus: *Fabulae*, LXIV), but Ovid and most other authors agree with Apollodorus that Cassiopeia actually boasted of her own beauty (*The Library*, II, iv, 3). We can take it, I think, that in Hyginus' version, Cassiopeia took pride in Andromeda as a creature whose beauty reflects back only upon her as a mother rather than upon a divine creator. In either case the result of her sacrilegious vanity is that Andromeda is placed upon the rock where she is petrified quite simply from fear. Perseus' mistaken impression that she is a statue does not originate in him, but results from what Andromeda's parents have done to her. Cassiopeia's narcissism is only one expression of the self-absorption characterising all those who see in the wrong way. Perhaps even Andromeda herself, in that she must be coaxed into life, is delivered from her own self-absorption.

In the event, the threat of the sea-monster evaporates with the arrival of Perseus and the maiden is married rather than devoured. This outcome was known, and intended, by Ammon (or Zeus, Perseus' father), when he prophesied redemption through Andromeda's sacrifice. The reason the arrival of the true son-in-law should take such a curious form is that Cassiopeia and Cepheus were willing to sacrifice their daughter to their own pride by denying her to anyone who might one day succeed and supplant them. Andromeda was to remain married to the same generation as themselves, as it were, pushing the inheritance of the kingdom sideways. The appearance of the monster might then be seen as part of a Providential scheme to rescue Ethiopia itself from dynastic stagnation. The royal parents' decision to bow to the will of the people and of Ammon, by giving up Andromeda for sacrifice, would then represent their submission to forces outside their control and a Providence beyond their understanding.

The ultimate example in Classical myth of the denial of succession is found in the image of Kronos swallowing his own children to prevent them from supplanting him, in an act of cosmic cannibalism which continues until he is outwitted by Perseus' father Zeus (it was, significantly, the 'eye of Kronos' that sees and casts unhappiness upon Kalasiris [2.24]).⁷

The conception of Perseus in a 'shower of gold' may still appear a slightly mysterious nuance, and further exploration is required before its full significance can be made clear, but it is apparent that Danaë's pregnancy complements Acrisius' failure to see correctly, and can therefore be interpreted as a form of correct seeing and of correct understanding. The analogy between seeing and understanding has already be highlighted, and here the second analogy, that between understanding and physical conception also comes into play. Danaë acquiesces in the Providential scheme, and her

passive role counters Acrisius' active, but misguided, attempts at understanding. He cannot believe that his own eventual displacement has divine sanction. Danaë understands Zeus, and her conception counters her father's misconception. The pun on mental and physical 'conception' exists in Latin (in the uses of *concipio*) and describes a physical likeness between the two processes which was believed to transcend wordplay.⁸ It is very likely that Heliodorus would have thought of the matter contained within the womb as actually receiving a form (taking on an image) in the moment of conception in the same way that the imagination receives an image seen by the eye. In fact, one can extend the series of analogies by allowing physical conception to be equated directly with seeing. These are the ideas expressed in Persinna's seeing the portrait of Andromeda, and indicate, somewhat paradoxically, that the Ethiopian Queen Persinna is not to be identified with Andromeda's Ethiopian mother, vain Cassiopeia, but with the sympathetic figure of Danaë.

As we have seen from the plot patterns outlined in the previous chapter, seeing is a central concern of Heliodorus' novel and features throughout the *Perseid* also. In fact, we can say that the *Aithiopika* is founded upon the idea that this ancient adventure in which vision played so crucial a role has, through a new act of seeing, set in motion a new tale, and that by choosing a painting showing the rescue of Andromeda as the source of Charikleia's complexion, Heliodorus was choosing a scene in which Andromeda herself is already shown as an artwork that comes to life. I hope it will become clear, in due course, that the same contrast Ovid draws between the two opposed ways of seeing can be drawn between the misapprehensions of the anxious fathers and the faithfulness of their wives in the Accused Queen tales, and also between the 'twinned' impressions which begin and end the plots of the *Aithiopika* and many later Danaë romances. In the

Aithiopika we find a succession of fathers who feel themselves threatened or betrayed by ‘parricidal’ offspring and themselves threaten to sacrifice their own children, and, as in the myth, Providence guides and protects the child cast out by the misguided royal father.

I have been using the perhaps anachronistic term ‘Providence’, rather than the ‘gods’, to describe the divine forces which inspire the oracle and shape the action of the tale. What is meant by Providence here is that power which takes the fatherly role in the cosmos which should be filled by the royal father on earth. In fact, just as in the Perseid Providence is opposed to the infertility enforced by Acrisius, it can be seen to represent a higher form of fatherhood in the *Aithiopika* also, which takes precedence over the dictates of the ruling king and ensures his legitimate successor is not prevented from claiming the throne.

The idea that Providence represents the true fatherly power of the Divine and can overrule the claims of mortal parents is particularly useful for understanding the role of maternal impression in the *Aithiopika*, and also in other Romance plots where there is interference in the processes of reproduction, as we shall see in the following chapter. But it is useful to quote here a passage from the Middle-Platonic theologian Philo Judaeus, whose works, it appears, Heliodorus knew, which may clarify both the role of Providence and of the royal father in these tales. In one of the surviving fragments of his book *De Providentia*, Philo describes Providence as the expression of divine fatherhood:

there is no form of address with which a king can be more appropriately be saluted than the name of father; for what, in human relationships, parents are to children, that also sovereigns are to their states, and God towards the world, having adapted these two most beautiful things by the unchangeable laws of

nature, by an indissoluble union, namely the authority of the leader with the anxious care of a relation.

De Providentia (fragment II), 3, trans. Yonge, p. 748.⁹

He does not mean simply that God has the authority of a parent, but that Providence is the process of fathering new and discrete beings and things. And this is the result of God looking away from himself and creating and contemplating the world in a single glance. Philo considered that Greek philosophy contained truths that were ultimately derived from Mosaic revelation. And it is certainly possible that myth might have been interpreted in the same way by those who followed him.

Heliiodorus clearly hints that myths should be interpreted as the bearers of ancient philosophical and religious truths and, I think, took a syncretic view of these stories, in which a number of differing traditions could be seen as referring to a larger truth. He says of the story of Osiris and the dragon Typhon

There is, I imagine, a school of natural philosophers and theologians who do not disclose the meaning embedded in these stories to laymen but simply give them preliminary instruction in the form of a myth. But those who have reached the higher grades of the mysteries they initiate into clear knowledge in the privacy of the holy shrine, in the light cast by the blazing torch of truth

Aithiopika, 9.9.

For those later pagans who saw the ancient myths as describing, under many guises, the actions and attributes of one god who could be identified with the Sun (as detailed by Macrobius in the *Saturnalia*), Zeus, as the seducer of Danaë, would not be simply lustful Jove, but the fertile power that infuses life into the earth. It would be proper to depict an individual who opposes this power as an arbitrary king who fell into conflict with his own

family, betraying, through self-centredness, the twin roles of father and ruler. That it should be the Pythian oracle of Apollo which either baffles the king, or exposes his failings, is very much to the point, in that Apollo would not simply represent divine understanding, but was also synonymous with the Sun. It would be proper also to show the denial of Providence as a denial that Zeus had fathered the King's successor, and to have the King attempt to perpetuate his rule to the detriment of his own people. One could say that such a King would well express the attitude Philo condemns when describing those who 'look upon the world as an addition to themselves' instead of looking upon themselves as an addition to the world (see *Quod Deus Immutabilis Sit* [*The Unchangeableness of God*] 19, trans. Yonge, p. 159).

Ovid places the rescue of Andromeda at the centre of his retelling of the Perseid. This scene appears in the *Aithiopika* as the portrait of Andromeda, and perhaps in a disguised form in the aftermath of the fight on the beach, and it recurs in *Gerusalemme liberata* also in the form of a painting, this time of Saint George. However, if the emphasis is placed upon the outer sections of the tale, Perseus' dragon slaying adventuring and Andromeda's transformation can be considered primarily as reflecting upon the role of Acrisius. The Gorgon episode is then not only reduced in importance, but might be omitted altogether or be substituted with other material. So Hyginus' fable of Danaë, with Acrisius' pursuit of his daughter, as we have seen, omits the central episodes (although it is too brief to suggest complex planning, Hyginus may have drawn upon a more sophisticated source). Acrisius' story can be seen as the first Twinned-impression plot, and when seen in this light, the resemblance between the myth and the plots of *Pandosto* and *The Winter's Tale* becomes immediately more apparent.

Shakespeare's and Greene's Romances follow the Twinned-impression pattern with a single narrative, while Heliodorus interlaces four narratives together in order to create a single larger scheme which is contrived in such a way that it can still be seen to follow the same design as each of its parts. By considering the myth of Danaë, the original model for this pattern, as a story concerned with expressing a view of Providence, we can begin to understand the motive behind the pursuit of such complexity. When the balance and order of Heliodorus' wonderfully elaborated design is comprehended, it can be seen to communicate some sense of an organised creation in which designs of even greater complexity multiply to infinity - an image of a Providentially ordered universe.

2. The Myth of Danaë and Later Romance

Of the various post-Classical works which attempted to draw a moral from the myth of Danaë and Perseus among the best known and most influential during the Renaissance were Fulgentius' *Mythologiae* (probably written at the beginning of the sixth century AD), the mediaeval *Ovid Moralisé* (early fourteenth century), Pierre Bersuire's *Ovidius moralizatus* (c1340-2) and Boccaccio's *de Genealogia Deorum*.

The accustomed procedure of such works was not to attempt an interpretation of the entire story as described above, but to break it into pieces. Episodes from the tale were treated in isolation, and usually taken as embodying concepts which were not then thought of as having any particular bearing on any other part of fable. Most attempted to reconcile elements of the myth with Christian orthodoxy by way of allegory.

Perseus defeating the Medusa is, for followers of Fulgentius, plainly virtue defeating vice. Perseus proved himself the son of Jove by acting virtuously, and it follows

that all those who act virtuously are the sons of Jove.¹⁰ According to Bersuire, Perseus' rescue of Andromeda represents Christ's descent in the incarnation to rescue the soul made forfeit by Eve's wish for divinity. Views such as these were no doubt influenced partly by interpretations of the story of Saint George as told in *The Golden Legend*.¹¹

However, Danaë's character was the subject of starkly contrasting views. Ovid mentions Acrisius' refusal to recognise Perseus' divine parentage in tandem with his having forbidden Bacchus to enter Argos, as both being decisions the King came to regret (*Metamorphoses* IV 607-616). Later in the poem Danaë is included among women 'pictured' by Arachne who were 'tricked' or 'cheated' by Jove (*Met.* VI, 113), and Ovid observes that the water which turns to gold at King Midas' touch 'could cheat a Danaë' (*Met.* XI, 117). Yet the French Mediaeval verse *Ovide Moralisé* (c.1325) and Bersuire associated Danaë with the Virgin Mary, and the Franciscan John Ridewell in *Fulgentius Metaforalis* (c.1450) characterised her as a personification of modesty.¹²

William S. Heckscher, reviewing a number of sources, argues that the most widely held view of Danaë was that she personified *Avaritia* and quotes Fulgentius himself as saying that 'imbre aureto correpta...non pluvia sed pecunia'.¹³ Horace had humorously rationalised the story in his Odes where the shower of gold is simply a demonstration of how money can open any door, thus reducing Danaë to no more than a prostitute (Horace: *Odes*, 3.16). This was Augustine's opinion also (see *De Civitate Dei*, VIII, xiii), and Boccaccio continued the tradition saying that in Danaë we see 'woman, the greediest of all beasts' (in *De casibus illustratum*, tr. Heckscher [Heckscher p. 172]). In the *Genealogia Deorum* Boccaccio recalls a scene from Terence's *Eunuch* (III, v, 35-43):

Sinner that I am....I am not like young Cherea, in Terence, who by looking at a picture of Jove falling in a shower of gold from the roof to the lap of Danaë, was inflamed to the desire of a similar misdeed

Boccaccio: *Genealogia deorum*, XV (trans. Charles G. Osgood).¹⁴

Shakespeare's Romeo also thinks of the shower as a bribe and asserts that Rosaline will not 'ope her lap to saint-seducing gold' (*Romeo and Juliet*, I, i, 212). Indeed, the seduction of Danaë was dramatised in these terms in Thomas Heywood's *The Golden Age* (1610). Taken in isolation the 'golden shower' works well as an emblematic scene of greed, but this interpretation is of no use in understanding the Perseid as a unity. When this is attempted Danaë appears to represent the very opposite of *avaritia*.

For the sixteenth century reader Classical sources were often filtered through such popular reference works as Thomas Cooper's *Thesaurus Linguae Romanae et Britannicae* (1565) and Charles Stephanus' *Dictionarium* (1530, a revision of Torrentinus' *Elucidarius* and revised many times after this date). These works were often reliant upon those of previous commentators, such as Fulgentius, Natalis Comes and Boccaccio, and cited them as authorities. Thomas Cooper's entry for Danaë reads

The daughter of Acrisius, king of Argives, on to whom (beynge closed in a stronge towre) Jupiter came in the forme of a showre of golden rayne in at the house toppe, and gatte on hir Perseus, who was afterward a valient knight. He gave that name first to the country of Persia. By this fable is signified, that Jupiter sent treasure plainly to Danae, and also to them that had the keypinge of hir. Wherewith they being corrupted, suffered Jupiter to enter into the towre, and accomlishe his pleasure. The fable declareth the force of money and gifts in

[the] assaulting of chastitie

Thomas Cooper: *Thesaurus*, London 1565 (pages unnumbered).

An avaricious Danaë bribed with money is clearly very far from the chaste heroines of Romance. In order to discover a view of the story closer to that of the *Ovide Moralisé*, that she is a modest and chaste mother, one must look at texts, like the *Aithiopika* itself, where the name of Danaë may not itself appear, but the idea at the heart of her story has been repeated.

In his *Preface to Paradise Lost*, C. S. Lewis coined the phrases ‘Primary Epic’ and ‘Secondary Epic’ to differentiate between those works of the ‘heroic age’, such as Homer or *Beowulf*, and later works which took them as models.¹⁵ Virgil’s *Aeneid* stands first among examples of the Secondary Epic, while Tasso and Milton were also writing Secondary Epics in a much later age.

The Perseid might usefully be thought of as a ‘Primary Romance’. Like Homer’s epics it constitutes primary material which later works consciously hark back to. The *Aithiopika* can be seen as modelling itself after the myth in a way analogous to that in which Virgil fashioned his Secondary Epic after those of Homer. Indeed, one can think of Heliodorus as the Virgil of Romance, and of Greene and Shakespeare as standing beyond Heliodorus in the way that Tasso and Milton stand beyond Virgil.

All such schemes are artificial in that almost all of these works relate to one another in some way. Tasso’s epic is a Secondary Romance also, and drew directly upon Heliodorus, while Heliodorus invokes Homer on numerous occasions. But it provides a useful template. What I am discussing here is a tradition of Danaë narratives, rather than a general history of the Romance, but just as Homeric elements constantly recur in later epics, Perseus seems to reappear in the major Romances (or in the Romance strands

woven into hybrid epics). The motifs which appear most often in narratives belonging to this tradition are the unjust imprisonment or casting out in a tiny boat of a king's daughter who is either pregnant or a nursing mother, and the rescue from a ravening monster of a maiden who, like Andromeda, is compared to a statue.

As primary treatments of the myth we can include all those dating from the Classical period which present the tale directly with Perseus and Danaë appearing in person, such as the versions of the story reported by mythographers like Pherecydes, and poetic treatments of the myth such as the exquisite 'Lament of Danaë' composed by Simonides (frag. 37) and Euripides' lost *Andromeda*. The later retellings by Ovid can also be placed in this group, although, in the sophistication of Ovid's description of Andromeda's rescue and the elaborate context in which the fable appears in the *Metamorphoses*, we have perhaps already moved some way toward Heliodorus' own treatment of the story. The poem by Simonides was no doubt of great importance in the development of Danaë tales, but has survived only as a fragment of twenty-eight lines recorded by Dionysius of Halicarnassus (I have quoted this in full below, see p. 113).

A contemporary of Aeschylus, Simonides is himself an almost mythical figure. It was claimed that he invented the art of memory and was the first poet to accept payment for his work. He is also credited with conceiving the formula 'painting is mute poetry and poetry a speaking picture'. It is perhaps significant that Shakespeare departed from his sources in giving the name Simonides to the father of Thaisa in *Pericles* (Thaisa does undergo a Danaë-like ordeal, for having just given birth, she is shut in a coffin and thrown into the sea).¹⁶ The primary treatments of the Danaë story were followed in late antiquity by the *Aithiopika*, which can be termed a Secondary Romance and which defines itself against the original myths. Bridging the gap between Danaë Romances of

the ancient world and those of the Renaissance stand the mediaeval tales typified by *Esmoreit* and Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale*. While many of these later tales appear at times naive, they contain motifs which can be interpreted as legitimate and clever variations upon episodes from earlier more sophisticated members of the tradition.¹⁷

An Accused Queen folk-tale found in several places and forms throughout Italy, was recently retold by Italo Calvino under the title *The Daughter of the Sun*, in which a King's daughter, on account of an astrologer's prediction, is imprisoned in a tower and then impregnated, not in a shower of gold, but by the Sun.¹⁸ Edwin Sidney Hartland's compendious *The Legend of Perseus* (1894) contains the following brief summary of what is nearly the same 'favourite *märchen* [from] Italy and Sicily':

As told in Sicily, a king unblest with issue summons a wizard, to inquire of him whether his queen will have a babe or not. The wizard replies that she will have a daughter, who in her fourteenth year will be impregnated by the sun. The child is accordingly born, and shut up with her nurse in a tower where the sun cannot penetrate. One day the little maiden finds a pointed bone in her food; and with its aid she scratches the wall of the tower until she scrapes a hole in it. Through this hole the sun shines on her and fulfils the prediction. A daughter is born in due course and exposed, but found by a king's son, who ultimately falls in love with her, and weds her after learning of what ancestry she comes.

E. S. Hartland: *The Legend of Perseus* (1894), vol. I, pp. 98-99.¹⁹

In Calvino's version the exposed infant is found by a second king and brought up with his own son who later marries her after she has proved her royal descent. She does this by employing her solar inheritance to survive the flames of a burning oven which then consumes her rival for the Prince's hand, a fable which is reminiscent of Charikleia

herself repeatedly surviving immolation while causing the flames of love to ignite in those who see her.²⁰ It is also interesting to find that a comparison between the Virgin Mary and Danaë made by the Dominican Franciscus de Retza in his *Defensorium Inviolatae Virginitatis Marie*, published in Basel in *circa* 1490, is accompanied by a woodcut showing Danaë leaning from a tower window while being showered with the beams of a sun with human features (see fig. 3).²¹ A similar illustration appeared in a fifteenth century German *blochbuch*, where Jupiter more resembles a crescent moon, while the accompanying text directs the reader to the reference to Danaë in Augustine's *De Civitate Dei* (see fig. 4). Although in the folk-tales the analogies between seeing, understanding and conceiving are not promoted in a sophisticated, or perhaps even in a conscious way, the substitution of a beam of sunlight for the shower of gold signals the survival of the idea at the very core of the genre. A sophisticated Hellenistic audience as much as a mediaeval or Renaissance one, would have recognised this substitution as a natural change to make, for gold had long been thought of as a solar metal, while in mediaeval tradition the colour gold was associated with God the Father.

With Ariosto's use of the story in *Orlando Furioso*, which looked back to that of Ovid, the Danaë narrative entered a new phase of sophistication. This period also saw the rediscovery of Heliodorus, and later the appearance of *Gerusalemme liberata* and *The Faerie Queene*, both Renaissance chivalric epics where Danaë-like plots feature prominently, and also the popular *Amadis de Gaule* cycle (where imprisoned princesses proliferate).

The motif of Danaë's voyage figures briefly in *Orlando Furioso*. Ruggiero and his twin sister Marfisa learn that, before their births, their father was murdered by his



Fig. 3. 'Danaë', woodcut in Franciscus de Retza: *Defensorium Inviolatae Virginitatis Marie*, Basel, 1490. After *The Art Bulletin* LX, 1978, p. 45. Copyright New York Public Library, Spencer Collection.

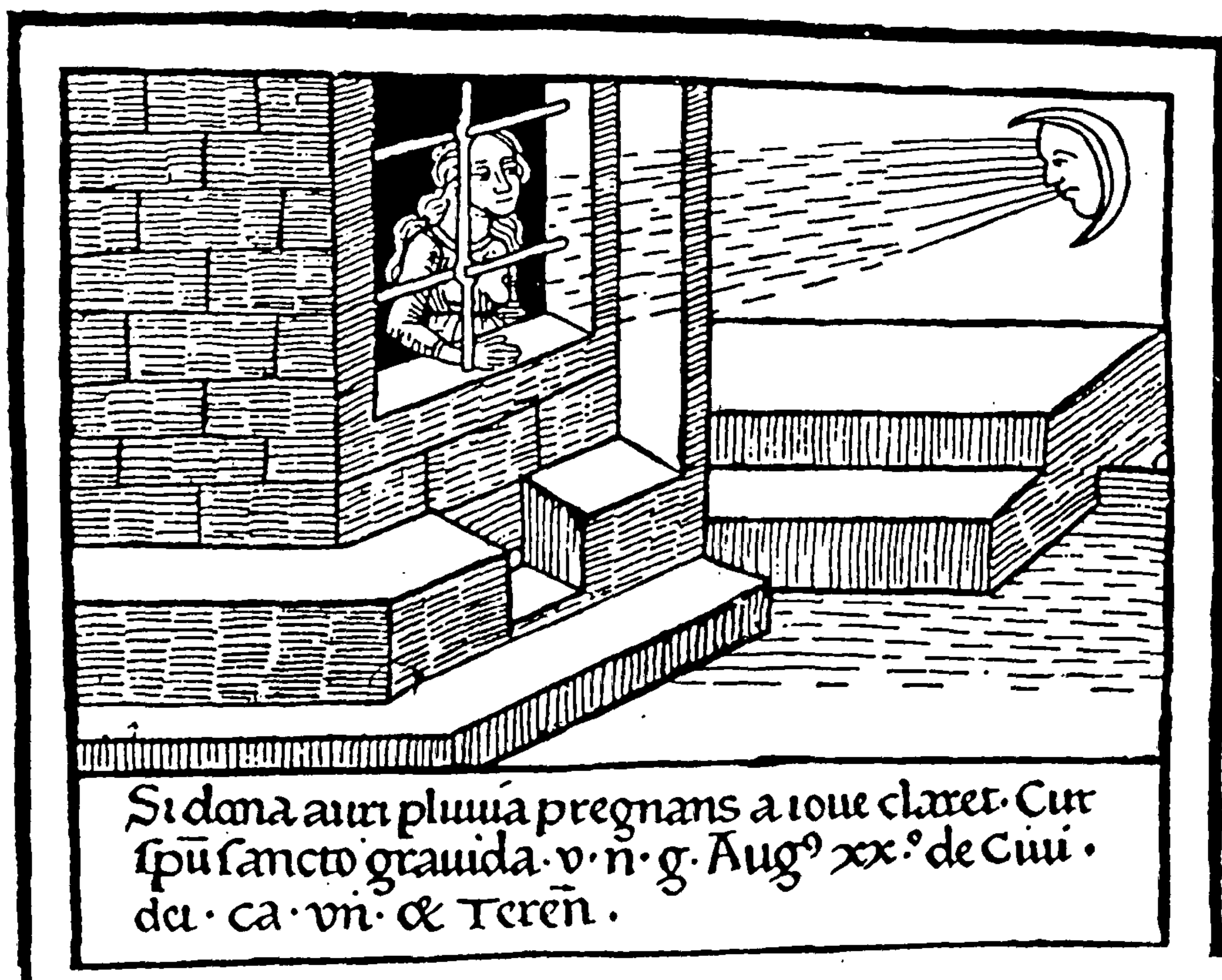


Fig. 4. 'Danaë', woodcut in *Defensorium Virginitatus Mariae*, pub. Johannes Eysenhut, Ratisbon, 1471. Copyright the Courtauld Institute, London.

wicked brothers-in-law, who then took their mother Galaciella and

Thay put your mother in a stierelesse boat
Who was as then of you twayne great with child,
And in the Ocean wide they let her float
There to be starv'd or drowned in waters wilde,
But loe how fortune holpe the lucklesse lote
And ear you yet were borne upon you smilde,
For why against all hope or expectation
Your mother made a happie navigation,

Orlando Furioso, XXXVI, 60-1

(trans. Harington, XXXVI, 59).²²

This detail shows the Danaë figure Galaciella as the wholly innocent victim of injustice and is used to further underline Ruggiero's identity as a new Perseus.²³

The traditional motif of the frail craft (or 'rudderless boat') reappears in Greene's *Pandosto* as the boat in which Fawnia is set adrift and again in *Menaphon* where Princess Sephestia and her new-born son are placed in a tiny ship which breaks itself against an Arcadian promontory. In *Pandosto* I think we can see the author reaching back to a time before the voyage of Constance to the primary material of the Perseid.²⁴ The words spoken by Danaë to her child in Simonides' ancient poem are echoed by the distraught Queen Bellaria when her husband orders Fawnia's exposure. The complete surviving text of 'Danaë's lament' runs:

When in the intricately carved chest the blasts of wind and the troubled water
prostrated her in fear, with streaming cheeks she put her loving arm about
Perseus and said, 'My child, what suffering is mine! But you sleep, and with

babyish heart slumber in the dismal boat with its brazen bolts, sent forth in the unlit night and dark blue murk. You pay no attention to the deep spray above your hair as the wave passes by nor to the sound of the wind, lying in your purple blanket, a lovely face. If this danger were danger to you, why, you would turn your tiny ear to my words. Sleep, my baby, I tell you: and let the sea sleep, and let our vast trouble sleep. Let some change of heart appear from you, father Zeus. If anything in my prayer is audacious or unjust, pardon me’.

Trans. David A. Campbell.²⁵

In Greene’s novel we read that Pandosto ‘caused a little cock-boate to be provided, wherein he meant to put the babe’ and then

Bellariafell downe in a swoound, so that all thought she had bin dead, yet at last being come to her selfe, she cried and scriched out in this wise.

Alas, sweete infortunate babe,....Shall the seas be thy harbour, and the harde boat thy cradle? Shall thy tender Mouth, in steede of sweete kisses, be nipped with bitter stormes? Shalt thou have the whistling windes for thy Lullabie, and the salt sea fome in steede of sweet milke? Alas, what destinies would assigne such hard hap? What father would be so cruell? Or what gods will not revenge such rigor? Let me kisse thy lips (sweet Infant) and wet thy tender cheekes with my teares, and put this chaine about thy little necke, that if fortune save thee, it may helpe to succour thee. Thus, since thou must goe to surge in the gastfull seas, with a sorrowful kisse I bid thee farewell, and pray the Gods thou mayst fare well

Greene: *Pandosto, The Triumph of Time*, ed. Bullough
(vol. VIII, pp. 166-67).

Although precise quotation is avoided, the similarity between these set piece speeches is marked. Even without this specific likeness the circumstances clearly signal to the reader that they should think of Bellaria as the inheritor of Danaë's grief. Sabie retains this speech almost intact in the second part of *The Fisherman's Tale*. In Sabie's poem, after Flora is born into her mother's cell, King Palemon tells the gaoler to 'take the bastard brat, / Throw't in a boat, and let it flote on seas' (1595 ed., BL: C40.e.68). Interestingly, Bullough gives 'box' for 'boat' here (this may be a slip, or he may have seen an alternative printing).²⁶ It is interesting that an engraving by the sixteenth century artist Giorgio Ghisi, believed to depict Danaë and Perseus, shows the heroine seated in a small rowing boat rather than a sealed chest (see fig. 5, p. 115).

Turning to a second key motif in the Perseid, that of the statue-like maiden, this also can be related to the legacy of Simonides, this time as father of the 'speaking picture' tradition. The habit of later writers of including in their narratives descriptions of works of art is one way in which primary material can be included in a new work, and suggests to the reader that the unfolding adventure will in some way shadow the earlier tale. The device is employed by Virgil, when Aeneas, having arrived in Carthage, sees a series of frescos showing the fall of Troy (*Aeneid*, I, 440-500). This scene recalls Homer in both subject and form, for it describes Homeric subject matter in the frescoes and echoes the famous *ekphrasis* of the shield of Achilles found in the *Iliad* (Book 18). The elaborate description of a painting showing the abduction of Europa found at the beginning of Achilles Tatius' romance *Leucippe and Clitophon* plays a similar role, giving Clitophon the opportunity to relate his own tale of love and to compare its subject with his own beloved Leucippe. Both Aeneas and Clitophon, in different ways, find in temple paintings narratives which give shape to their own experiences, but in these



Fig. 5. Giorgio Ghisi called Giorgio Mantoano (born 1520, died 1582): 'Acrisius, Danaë and Perseus' (?). Engraving. Copyright The Warburg Institute, London.

scenes the reader is also shown material which the stories then re-enact in a way which implies a mysterious and Providential influence. *Leucippe and Clitophon* also includes lengthy *ekphrases* of paintings showing the rescue of Andromeda, the sufferings of Prometheus and the story of Philomela (*Leucippe*, 3.7-8, 5.3). The painting of Andromeda seen by Clitophon is set up by the postern door of the temple of Zeus at Pelusium (near the Pelusaic mouth of the Nile) and is signed by the artist 'Evanthes':

In the picture of Andromeda, there was a hollow in the rock of about the size of the maiden, but it was of a sort that would indicate that it was not artificially made, but natural, for the painter had made its surface rough, just as nature had fashioned it. She rested within its embrace, and while, if one gazed upon her beauty, one would compare her to a newly carven statue, anybody seeing the chains and the approaching beast would think the rock a hastily contrived tomb. Upon her face was a mixture of beauty and fear; fear sat upon her cheeks, and beauty shone from her eyes. Even so, the pallor of her cheeks was not utterly without colour, but there was a gentle flush upon them; nor was the flower of beauty in her eyes without care, but was rather to be compared to violets that have just begun to fade....the arms of spotless white verging towards the livid, and the fingers white with the pallor of death. Thus was she bound, waiting for her fate, adorned for a bridal as one who was to be the bride of the King of Death.

Achilles Tattius: *Leucippe and Clitophon*, III, 7 (trans. S. Gaselee).²⁷

The narrator goes on to describe the fearsome sea-monster and Perseus descending from the sky with the Gorgon's head in one hand and a sickle in the other. As 'bride of the King of Death' Andromeda is being likened to Persephone. The details of her virginal

whiteness combined with the blush of fading violets, a flower associated with Persephone by Ovid, add to the comparison (*Met.*, V, 392).

The painting of Andromeda which features in the *Aithiopika* depicts the moment after the death of the sea-monster rather than the moment before its death. Heliodorus' innovation is to present the portrait only in a dramatised form. He does not need to describe the painting of Andromeda Persinna sees, because the action of the novel can be said to do this. Even the dénouement does not include a formal description of the painting. Instead, the novel begins with a vivid yet veiled re-enactment of this primary scene and continues with a number of half-disguised references to the myth.

The sculpture motif also appears in Ariosto's epic. Daniel Javitch has argued that it was almost certainly Ariosto's intention to 'rescue Andromeda from the allegorisers' by presenting the rescue of Angelica (*Orlando Furioso*, X) in such a way that it defies 'solemn' or even consistent interpretation.²⁸ The passage certainly contains burlesque elements, and serves to highlight the element of playfulness in Ovid's own rendition. Although he succeeds in rescuing the maiden, the heroic knight Ruggiero manages only to stun the creature and then attempts to molest Angelica, being prevented from doing so by the awkwardness of his armour, and by his quarry vanishing with the help of a magic ring. The scene of rescue is repeated soon after, this time with greater decorum, when Orlando himself saves Olympia (canto XI).

As successors to Andromeda, the twin sacrificial victims Angelica and Olympia are both subject in their nakedness to comparison with sculpture. When describing Ruggiero's first sight of Angelica, Ariosto follows Ovid closely:

Rogero at first had surely thought

She was some image made of allablaster

Or of white marble curiously wrought
To shew the skilfull hand of some great master,
But viewing nearer he was quickly taught
She had some parts that were not made of plaster,
Both that her eyes did shed such wofull tears
And that the wind did wave her golden hears.

Orlando Furioso, X, 96 (trans. Harington [X, 82]).

Here Harington's Elizabethan translation preserves Ariosto's wit, while perhaps losing some of his grace.²⁹ The description of Olympia elaborates the image at greater length by likening her also to paintings of goddesses. First she turns away from Orlando 'in the same pose in which Diana is captured in sculptures and paintings when she is bathing in a spring and throws water in Acteon's face' (XI, 58, tr. Waldman). When he has brought her down from the rock, the assembled company can see that her 'ivory' limbs 'seemed the work of Phidias or an even finer hand' (XI, 69):

Had she been at Crotona when Zeuxis set to work on the portrait destined for the chapel of Juno and assembled such a number of lovely nude women, meaning to borrow from each one a different part in order to compose one beauty to perfection, he would not have needed to look beyond Olympia, for in every part of her sheer perfection resided

Orlando Furioso, XI, 71(trans. Waldman).

Angelica and Olympia had been kidnapped separately by pirates and taken to Ebuda, 'the Isle of Tears', to be sacrificed to the Orc. Marianne Shapiro is right to point out (in *Ariosto's Poetics*) that, behind the Ebuda episode, lies a 'reminiscence' of the banishment of Danaë and Perseus (see Shapiro, p. 108). These attempted human sacrifices are the

penalty demanded by the sea-god Proteus who had once loved the daughter of the island's King. One day the princess escaped her nurses while playing on the shore and Proteus, finding her alone, 'caught her in an embrace and left her pregnant' (VIII, 52). On learning of this the King had her killed even though she carried the god's child. The citizens of Ebuda were instructed by an oracle that the only way to stop Proteus' minions ravaging the kingdom was to provide the sea-deity with another bride. Rather than being appeased, Proteus sent a sea-monster to devour all that were offered up (VIII, 52-60).

The story of Ebuda's King does seem to contain the idea of the threat of an unjust ruler bringing stagnation to his realm, and the rescue of 'alabaster' Angelica can be taken as a direct imitation of Ovid. There is a difference though in the extended *ekphrasis* of Olympia's beauty in that, even after she has been rescued, she is compared to a statue appearing the work of a 'finer hand than Phidias'. This shows that, whilst an artist must necessarily create a static image, it does not follow that they must always see with the petrifying gaze of Medusa. Charikleia is delivered on several occasions from those who mistake her for a statue, but finds her true home through identification with a painting. The answer to this apparent contradiction is that the division must be made not between art and life, but between good and bad seeing. The true artist is capable of seeing in a way that is in accordance with Providence, and therefore is able to produce images capable of curing those who see in the wrong way.

The elaborate *ekphrasis* of Olympia's beauty, with its references to the visual arts, belongs to the tradition of the 'speaking picture'. Philostratus' *Imagines* is an extended exercise in this mode, and his description of Andromeda (who is 'fair of skin') is relatively straightforward (*Imagines*, I, 29).³⁰ Achilles Tatius' portrait of Andromeda is a *tour de force* in that it is a poetic description of a (probably entirely fictional) painting

of someone who is so skilfully depicted that one might mistake her for a statue, a conceit which is both a literary reference and one that helps the viewer, and therefore the reader, to understand Andromeda's story and her emotions. The comparison between different arts became a major preoccupation of the Renaissance and works of art which also draw upon the Perseid, such as Cellini's bronze *Perseus* and Titian's series of paintings of Danaë (c. 1549-55), have been interpreted as playing a significant part in the lively *paragone* debate over the supremacy of either sculpture or painting.³¹ B. J. Sokol has argued that the role played in *The Winter's Tale* by Julio Romano, who is credited with having combined painting and sculpture in his (entirely fictional) depiction of Hermione, refers to this tradition.³²

I have said that Heliodorus does not describe the painting of Andromeda because his novel does this already and we can see that his text is a 'speaking picture'. The opening tableau of the *Aithiopika* resembles the exact moment in the myth depicted in the painting seen by Persinna, namely that of Andromeda's rescue. Charikleia stands upon a rock on the coast of Africa. Theagenes, who is lying at her feet, has been wounded in single combat with the most reckless of the pirates, Peloros. This name translates as 'monstrous' (*Aithiopika*, 5.30) and he can therefore be taken as acting the part of the sea-monster.³³ Martinus Crusius, writing in 1583, had no doubt that the opening scene of the *Aithiopika* refers to the rescue of Andromeda, and the texts he cites to accompany this passage are Ovid's description of Andromeda and Angelica's rescue in canto ten of *Orlando Furioso* (Crusius: *Epitome*, p. 24).³⁴

Charikleia is at first mistaken by the arriving bandits for a goddess, Artemis or Isis, but she is soon also mistaken for a statue. As the bandits carry Charikleia toward their village those who see the procession approaching 'thought that their comrades

must have looted a holy place, a temple full of gold; had they carried off the priestess too, they wondered, or was this girl the statue of the goddess, a living statue? Poor fools!' (1.7). The statue thought of here is not likely to have been an unadorned piece of white marble, but might well have been dressed in the habit of the divinity and to have been painted.

This passage gives a good idea of the sophisticated texture of Heliodorus' narrative. The likeness to Andromeda is not commented upon and the reader is required to make the link. The comment 'Poor fools!' might be thought to mean that the villagers must be particularly backward to mistake a living girl for a statue, though of course this was Perseus' error, and as is later revealed, Charikleia is a living work of art. Or perhaps the villagers are simply deceived in their expectations of wealth. Charikleia is a priestess and Charikles calls her 'the most sacred treasure' of Pythian Apollo's temple (4.19), though he does not mean the kind of wealth the villagers suspect their comrades of having stolen. Underdowne renders this passage as

when they considered the multitude of the spoyles that they had wonne, and saw the beautie of the maide to be so heavenly a thing, they gessed that their companions had robbed some church, and that they had brought away the Priest of the Goddes, or rather the lively picture of the Goddesse her selfe. And thus they conjectured by the maide, because they knewe not what had beene done.

Aithiopika, 1.7 (trans. Underdowne, Saintsbury ed. p. 13).

For Elizabethans 'picture' could mean painting or statue (in *The Winter's Tale* Hermione's statue is referred to as the 'Queen's picture' [*WT*, V, ii, 168]). The words 'church' and 'temple' were also more interchangeable than they are today. They would

have been foolish villagers indeed to have mistaken Charikleia for an altarpiece, but the idea of a painted religious statue would have been a familiar image.

Heliodorus' first description of Charikleia is an extended, static spectacle and a true *ekphrasis*, but he continues after this point to weave in many less immediately striking dramatisations of details from the story of Perseus. This is done in a way that might seem strangely schematic when spelt out, but works in its context because the points of resemblance are never laboured and are merely left to be picked up by the alert reader.³⁵ The re-creation of such incidents and the slow unfolding of the general pattern, reveal by stages the tale's antecedents and Charikleia's. Her coming to life in the opening scene re-creates Andromeda's own animation beneath Perseus' gaze, while the reader's coming to understanding mimics the same process. However, by using the word 'mimic' I do not wish to imply that there are two separate ideas being discussed; I think Heliodorus intends the reader to understand that there is actually only one process involved, but this will become clearer after an examination of the curious process Heliodorus presents as being responsible for Charikleia's anomalous appearance.

Chapter Four

Maternal Impression and the Power of the Eye

1. Maternal Impression

As we have seen, the plot of *Aithiopika* is set in motion by a very curious and striking event; Queen Persinna transfers the likeness of Andromeda from a painting she sees to the daughter she has conceived. While this is the novel's prime example of remarkable seeing, Persinna's predicament would have appeared far from singular to ancient readers, or indeed to the Elizabethans. In fact, it would have been identified, not as being necessarily miraculous, but as a particularly striking instance of a recognised natural phenomenon. The mechanism which, it was believed, made possible such a transferral of characteristics is now known as maternal impression, or the Andromeda effect, although neither of these terms would have been used during the Renaissance. For instance, in his *Epitome* Crusius simply refers to 'imaginatio mulieris', 'feminine imagination' (*Epitome*, p. 123).

While the appearance in the *Aithiopika* remains one of the most widely cited examples of maternal impression, numerous similar examples are to be found in ancient and Renaissance medical texts, in popular Elizabethan books of wonders and in the vast literature generated by the Renaissance's great interest in monsters of all kinds. The Andromeda effect was generally understood as constituting a rebellion by the female element in conception against the order imposed upon it by the male, resulting in monstrosity and deviation from type. This rebellion against, or resistance to, order might be a conscious act, or might result from that falling away from the ideal which is inherent in material creation. I hope to show that there is a certain irony in the conception of

Charikleia being repeatedly used as an archetypal instance of this phenomenon when, on one level at least, a rebellion against order is precisely what the incident described by Heliodorus does not represent. But, in order to better understand how an Elizabethan reader may have reacted to Heliodorus' novel, it is necessary first to survey the many discussions of maternal impression, ancient and modern, this being a topic both of fascination and deep concern in Shakespeare's time.

The origins of a belief in maternal impression lie partly in such folk beliefs as the evil eye and partly in those surrounding pregnancy and the appearance of birthmarks, which found a place in the writings which constitute the origins of ancient embryology. Extreme difficulties in understanding the processes and inconsistencies of inheritance gave rise to all manner of speculation concerning such questions as why a child might closely resemble one parent and not the other, or, resembling neither, seem the exact image of a grandparent or a still more distant relative.

In a most useful article setting out a history of maternal impression M. D. Reeve takes Empedocles, who probably lived in the fifth century BC, as his starting point.¹ As cited by Aetius, author of the *Sixteen Books on Medicine* who was writing some thousand years later, Empedocles mentioned that women may fall in love with paintings and give birth to children resembling them. And so, from early on, the idea that a painting might provide the impetus to trigger maternal impression was established.

Aristotle's theories of embryology, particularly as presented in *De generatione animalium*, lie behind most later thinking on reproduction up to, and well beyond, the acceptance of Harvey's ideas in the mid-seventeenth century.² Indeed, for the well-read Elizabethan, the *Aithiopika* could have been seen to connect with Aristotle's legacy both as a literary theorist and as the dominant authority in Renaissance embryology. Aristotle

revised and organised the earlier Hippocratic theories in the light of his own observations and developed a scheme in which conception is envisaged as a conflict between the 'hot' active male matter and the female 'cold', passive matter, between elements characterised as 'strong' and 'weak', but most importantly, as the meeting of form and matter, a meeting of opposites which is of great importance in much of Aristotle's thought. The male endows the disorganised matter provided by the female with form. As C. S. Lewis pointed out '*mater* interpreted philosophically implies *materia*' (*Spenser's Images of Life*, p. 51).³ Aristotle, probably echoing a comment in Plato's *Timaeus* (69a), sometimes uses the word *hyle* to mean fertile matter, which also means 'wood' or 'forest'. This material was often identified with blood, and just as blood was known to set and clot, it was thought that it was necessary for the matter to be moist to receive an impression. Heat was thought to prevent it from setting. Hence Ovid explains in his description of the creation that 'when moisture and heat [*calor*] unite, life is conceived, and from these two sources all living things spring' (*Metamorphoses*, I, 432-3).⁴

The offspring therefore, will always represent a compromise between the male organising element and the material shaped by it. Deformities and departures from type Aristotle saw as arising from the failure of the male element to master all the female material. Hence his famous suggestion that 'a child unlike its parents is in a sense a monstrosity....because....nature has deviated from the generic pattern' (see *De generatione animalium*, 767b7-8).⁵ Aristotle does not mention maternal impression *per se*, but this is the context in which others saw it occurring. The task of the male element to order the material of the child might, it was thought, be completed by whatever filled the mother's imagination at the moment of conception.

On the important premise that like should beget like, Aristotle sets up the exact replication of the father as an ideal for reproduction. Of course, in the world as it is, this scheme is so far from being fulfilled that the very mechanism of reproduction demands a female who must depart radically from such a norm. Aristotle does make a distinction between females as necessary departures from the norm, and monstrosities who are formed by accident and serve no purpose in nature. In fact, based upon everyday experience, a child that resembled a parent exactly might be regarded as as much a prodigy as one that displayed extreme differences.

Many Classical and Early Modern descriptions of maternal impression present it as being as much a demonstration of the dangerous and powerful working of the imagination as an explanation of deformities. In Montaigne's *Essays* (Book 1, chap. 20), Thomas Burton's *Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621) and the influential *Des monstres et prodiges* (1573) by the French physician Ambroise Paré, the phenomenon is in each case discussed in a chapter set aside to treat 'the Power of the Imagination'. The Renaissance concept of the imagination was also largely derived from Aristotle. In his psychology he had assigned to it the role of forming pictures from the impressions delivered to the common sense by the five senses, pictures which were then presented to the judgement. As he states in *De Anima*, 'the soul never thinks without a mental picture' (432a, 17).⁶ Aquinas reaffirmed and expanded this view in his commentary on Aristotle and in *De Potentiis Animae*. Aquinas identified an ambiguity in Aristotle's use of the word 'phantasia', and sought to clarify matters by distinguishing between passive and active imagination. He characterised fantasy as conjuring up a constant stream of 'phantasmata', the images presented to the judgement, in a completely disordered fashion, while the imagination proceeds in a more logical way and is able to combine

stored images in acts of mental creation. There are two important points to emphasise here. Firstly, that maternal impression, while considered one of a number of causes of abnormality in children, also provided Renaissance authors with a very striking example of the possible disruption caused by the imagination in all areas of life. Secondly, that it would seem plausible that the mother's imagination should compete with the masculine element in conception if they are both taken as being designed to perform the same task, that of organising disordered matter, be it physical matter or disordered sense impressions. However, this active, organising imagination is only one aspect of the whole faculty. There is also passive imagination, 'fancy' or 'fantasia', more akin to the female matter, ready to receive as a picture the form of external objects.⁷ Maternal impression was usually thought of as being the product of fancy, with the female matter in the womb being analogous to, and physically connected with, the 'matter' of the mind. While this is probably defining the process more precisely than was often the case in Renaissance accounts, which often contain contradictions, it makes plain the underlying framework.

In her full length study of maternal impression, *Monstrous Imagination* (Harvard, 1993), Marie-Hélène Huet argues that in Renaissance reports of cases of maternal impression 'imagination' was usually considered to be synonymous with desire.⁸ Therefore, she suggests, 'Monstrous births were understood as warnings and public testimony; they were thought to be "demonstrations" of the mother's unfulfilled desires. The monster was then seen as a visible image of the mother's hidden passions' (Huet, p. 6). The appearance of a child unlike its mother's husband might point to adultery, or betray purely imaginary infidelities. Huet also observes that another stimulus to the imagination besides desire was surprise or terror.

A birthmark would be understood as a very small example of the same principle which was at work in the wholesale changes wrought by maternal impression. In Renaissance collections of wonders one finds birthmarks explained as resulting from an unusual desire, and taking the likeness of fruits or other objects of a mother's cravings. In the popular collection *A Thousand Notable Things of Sundry Sortes* (1579) by the Puritan novelist and paradoxologist Thomas Lupton, we find that an expectant mother's surprising encounter with a hare is blamed for giving her child a harelip, the mark being a result of her shock.⁹

So, under the Aristotelian scheme, if a mother's imagination, or 'fantasia' (the word Aetius uses), did intervene to form the child, this would mean the defeat of the male 'forming' element in reproduction and would bring with it the danger of deformities. While the human father has still played a minor part by setting the process of gestation in motion - what Joseph Needham calls in his description of Aristotelian embryology 'releasing the master lever' (*A History of Embryology*, p. 55) - it was open to doubt as to whether this in itself constitutes fatherhood.¹⁰ Because the process of inheritance has been radically altered, the child might certainly be considered as not properly his. It must also be classed as monstrous, no matter the beauty of the object or creature that caught the mother's imagination.

If one considers Charikleia's position in such a scheme, there is clearly an irony in Heliodorus making his paragon of beauty and virtue appear a monster through this biological technicality, and at the same time, through her inheritance of Andromeda's qualities and destiny, the maiden who was set before a different order of monster as a meal.

The question of the legitimacy of children believed to have been affected by maternal impression remained the subject of discussion well beyond Shakespeare's time. This was not purely a philosophical debate, it had serious practical implications for legal inheritance. If there is evidence to be seen in the child's appearance that the process of 'forming' has been disrupted, one might ask whether it is possible that this disruption could be limited to the appearance? If it is not possible for the appearance to be formed separately from what might be called the essential nature of an individual, might an unexpected appearance express the incorporation of aberrant qualities throughout the child's mental and physical make-up? This question seems never to have been properly settled in the legal and medical discussions of the phenomenon.

Charikleia inherits not only Andromeda's appearance, but her history, and for all the reader can tell, her disposition also. Inheriting a complexion is not the same as inheriting the circumstances of another's life. Heliodorus intends the reader to recognise that Charikleia has inherited the true 'form' of Andromeda, and therefore that the painting of Andromeda presents the viewer with, not merely an appearance, but the actual person.

Considered as the straightforward inheritance of an anomalous appearance, Charikleia's conception resembles a well-known legal example used in ancient and Renaissance discussions of legitimacy. M. D. Reeve suggests that, regarding the acceptable limits of difference between parent and child 'the severest test that anyone in Antiquity could think of seems not surprisingly to have been the birth of a black child....to a white mother and her white husband' (Reeve, p. 83). He detects the possible origin of Heliodorus' tale in just such a circumstance set out as a legal problem, possibly by Quintilian in a text now lost, where an innocent wife is accused of adultery. This

became a stock example in discussions of physical inheritance, sometimes presented as an example taken from the career of Hippocrates, and either featuring the Andromeda effect as the explanation of the anomalous birth, or sometimes being used to illustrate the way in which inherited characteristics can skip generations.

Plutarch repeats the anecdote of the woman charged with adultery in *De Sera Numinis Vindicta* or *Divine Vengeance* (part of the *Moralia* [VII, 563]), in a simple form where characteristics of a child born to a Roman couple have been unexpectedly inherited from a forgotten Ethiopian ancestor.¹¹ Heliodorus certainly seems to have known at least one of the works gathered together in Plutarch's *Moralia*. In Delphi, Kalasiris is given a long speech on the evil eye which repeats Plutarch's own discussion in the *Table Talk* (*Aithiopika*, 3.7-8, *Table Talk*, V, question 7).¹²

If it is true that the references made in *Othello* to cannibals and the marvellous races were drawn from Book Seven of the elder Pliny's *Natural History*, written in the first century AD, (*Othello*, I, iii, 139-45, *Natural History*, VII, ii, 9-13), then Shakespeare would also have found there, in addition to a description of the effects of the evil eye, an unsensational examination of instances of maternal impression.¹³ Pliny observes that:

Cases of likeness are indeed an extremely wide subject, and one which includes the belief that a great many accidental circumstances are influential - recollections of sights and sounds and actual sense-impressions received at the time of conception. Also a thought flitting across the mind of either parent is supposed to produce likeness or to cause a combination of features

Natural History, Book VII, 52 (trans. H. Rackham).

While these texts were well known in Shakespeare's time, by far the most widely

discussed example of maternal impression to have reached the Renaissance from the ancient world was not classical but biblical. This is the story of Jacob's lambs found in Genesis (chapters 30-1).

Shakespeare has Shylock recount to Antonio the story of how Jacob, who as payment for acting as his father-in-law Laban's shepherd had been promised all the spotted lambs born in the flock, increased his wages to what he thought was his due by pre-determining the colour of the lambs in the following way, as Shylock explains:

when the work of generation was
Between these woolly breeders in the act,
The skilful shepherd pill'd me certain wands,
And in the doing of the deed of kind
He stuck them up before the fulsome ewes,
Who then conceiving did in eaning time
Fall parti-coloured lambs, and those were Jacob's.

The Merchant of Venice, I, iii, 77-83.¹⁴

The ewes reproduced the patterns of the mottled sticks in their offspring. Biblical commentators, including Philo Judaeus, Jerome, Augustine and Erasmus all pondered the significance of Jacob's inspired husbandry.¹⁵ An angel, identified as Christ in the Geneva Bible (1560), appearing in a dream, showed Jacob what to do, as the patriarch later explains to Laban's daughters (Genesis, chap. 31). Argument usually centred on whether what was revealed to Jacob was a hitherto unknown natural phenomenon which he was encouraged to employ, or whether Jacob had participated in something that was miraculous. While we do not know if Heliodorus did indeed become a bishop, it is very likely that he was familiar with Genesis. Philo uses the episode of Jacob's spotted lambs

to speak at length of 'variegation' in nature as something desired by God (*On Dreams*, I, xxxiv, 196 - xxxviii, 221).

The great upsurge of interest in paradoxology and the study of monsters which took place throughout Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, saw the publication of many collections of, and commentaries upon, classical natural history, and these often contain lists of classical, and more recent, examples showing the perils of maternal impression. The rediscovery of Heliodorus' novel provided another typical example which, when shorn of its context, was added to the list. The authors of Renaissance collections of marvels, and of the more serious medical texts, were happy to place Charikleia's birth alongside the story of Jacob's lambs and variations upon Quintilian's legal problem.

Although slightly beyond Shakespeare's time, Thomas Burton includes Charikleia's conception among his examples of maternal impression cited in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621), alongside Jacob and a widely quoted anecdote probably derived from Soranus of Ephesus, a physician living in the second century AD (*Gynaecology*, 1.39):

Jacob the patriarch, by force of imagination, made pecked lambs, laying pecked rods before his sheep. Persina, that Ethiopian queen in Heliodorus, by seeing the picture of Perseus and Andromeda, instead of a blackamoor, was brought to bed of a fair white child. In imitation of whom, belike, an hard-favoured fellow in Greece, because he and his wife were both deformed, to get a good brood of children, *elegantissimas imagines in thalamo collocavit*, etc., hung the fairest pictures he could buy for money in his chamber, 'that his wife, by frequent sight

of them, might conceive and bear such children.’

Robert Burton: *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, 1621 (Part 1, section 2, member 3, subsection 2).¹⁶

Burton knew the Greek Romances intimately. His brother William had written the 1597 translation of Achilles Tatius, and Thomas mentions Heliodorus no less than fourteen times in the course of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*.¹⁷ Burton, convinced that ‘depraved phantasy’ causes pregnant women to ‘imprint [the] stamp’ of their cravings upon their children, continues his catalogue of maternal impression cases with examples and advice taken from the Spanish humanist Juan Luis (Ludovicus) Vives (1493-1540) and John Bale. He also quotes from *De Miraculis Occultis Naturæ* (1559) by the Dutch surgeon Levinus Lemnius (*De Miraculis*, book 4, chapter 7): ‘If a woman (saith Lemnius) at the time of her conception, think of another man present or absent, the child will be like him’ (*Anatomy of Melancholy*, I, ii, 3, 2). When Crusius comes to Persinna’s description of maternal impression in his *Epitome* of Heliodorus he quotes the same chapter from Lemnius and a passage from Galen.¹⁸

Ambroise Paré’s encyclopaedic study of monstrosity *Des Monstres et prodiges* was first published in 1573, and is fully illustrated with anecdotes taken from classical and contemporary sources complemented with many taken from his own wide medical experience. Paré is an important figure in the history of surgery and a major contributor to the interest in monsters which marked his period. In the chapter entitled ‘An Example of Monsters that are Created Through the Imagination’, he cites a number of popular examples. Paré begins by observing that:

The ancients.... have taught of other causes for monstrous children and have referred them to the ardent and obstinate imagination [impression] that the

mother might receive at the moment she conceived - through some object, or fantastic dream - of certain nocturnal visions that the man or woman have at the hour of conception. This is even verified by the by the authority of Moses (Chap.30 [of Genesis])...

After recounting the story of Jacob's lambs, he continues:

Whether true or not, Heliodorus (book 10, of his history of Ethiopia) writes that Persina, the Queen of Ethiopia, conceived by King Hidustes - both of them being Ethiopians - a daughter who was white and this [occurred] because of the appearance of the beautiful Andromeda that she summoned up in her imagination, for she had a painting before her eyes during the embraces from which she became pregnant.

Damascene, a serious author, attests to having seen a girl as furry as a bear, whom the mother had bred thus deformed and hideous, for having looked too intensely at the image of Saint John [the Baptist] dressed in skins, along with his [own] body hair and beard, which picture was attached to the foot of her bed while she was conceiving.

For a similar reason Hippocrates saved a princess accused of adultery, because she had given birth to a child as black as a Moor, her husband and she both having white skin; which woman was absolved upon Hippocrates' persuasion that it was [caused by] the portrait of the Moor, similar to the child, which was customarily attached to the bed.

Ambroise Paré: *On Monsters and Marvels*, trans. Janis L. Pallister

(Chicago: University of Chicago Press), pp. 38-9.

In addition to citing Heliodorus directly alongside Moses, Paré includes here the well-

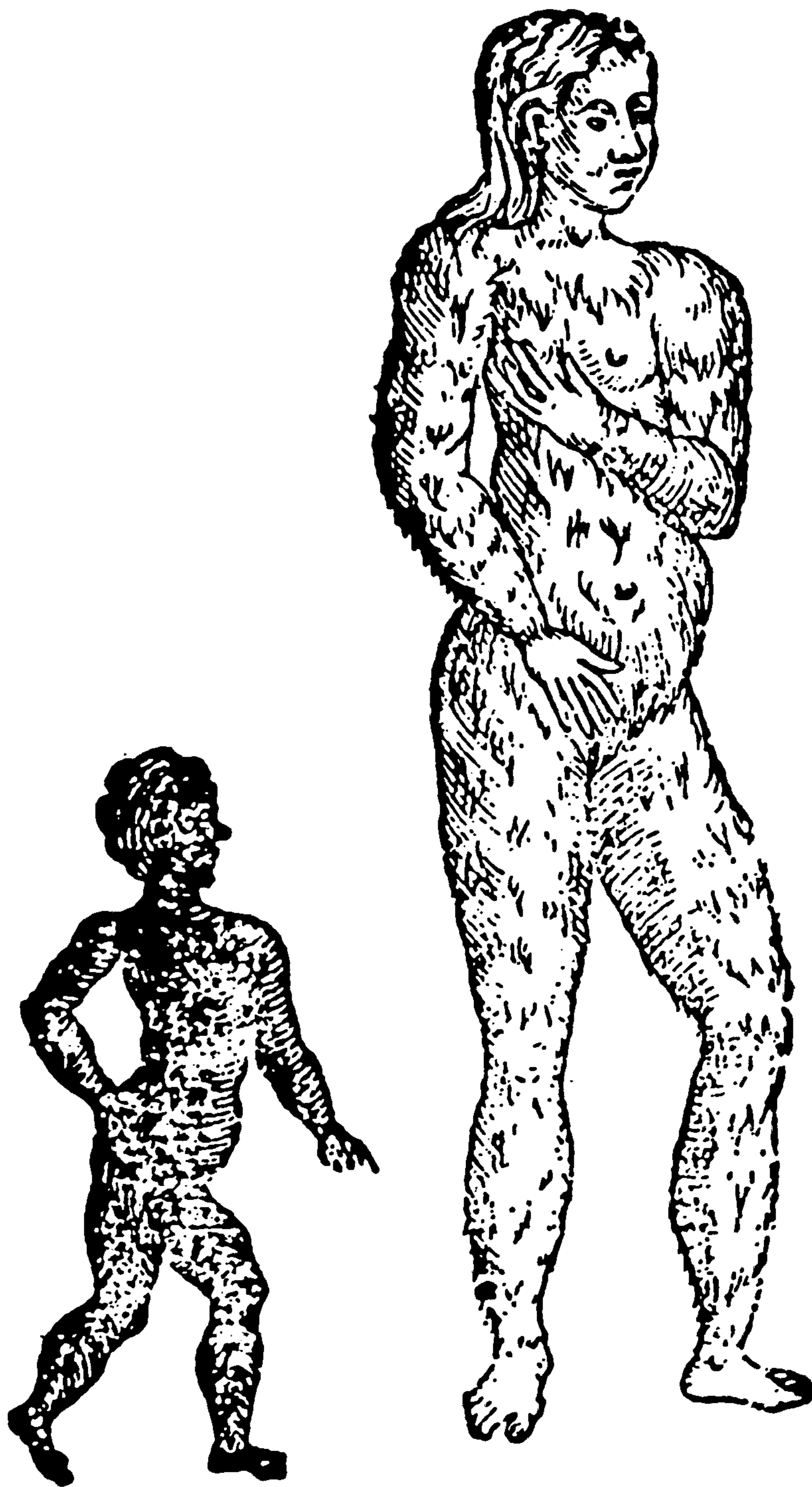


Fig. 6. Illustration reproduced in Ambroise Paré: *Des Monstres et prodiges* (c. 1573)

showing “Two figures, one of a furry girl, and the other of a child that was black because of the imagination of their parents” (After Pallister ed., p. 39).

known example of the furry girl, whom Montaigne also mentions and identifies as coming from Pisa. The final example in the list simply reshapes the same story as another version of Quintilian's anecdote.¹⁹

Paré warns his readers that any experience of 'powerful imagination' or 'vehement appetite' on the part of a pregnant mother might leave its mark upon the child, the embryo being like 'soft wax' 'ready to receive any form' (p. 54). Paré's general warning is that women 'in the hour of conception' should 'not be forced to look at or imagine monstrous things' (p. 40). After this time the child has been formed and no harm can be done. He also produces an illustration showing 'Two figures, one of a furry girl, and the other of a child that was black because of the imagination of their parents' (Pallister ed., p. 39, see above, fig. 6, p. 135). Paré was accused over his choice of illustrations of only adding to the perils facing expectant mothers, who might possibly come across his book and reproduce within themselves the monsters shown there, to which the author replied curtly that he did 'not write for women at all' (Pallister, p. 55). Clearly a husband who left such books lying around had only himself to blame for the consequences.

While imagination can make a legitimate child appear illegitimate, and perhaps actually take on illegitimacy, by a logical extension of the same theory it can also lend an illegitimate child the appearance of legitimacy. Thomas More's epigram 'To Sabinus' (1520) describes a father whose wife has already presented him with four children who look nothing like him, and now a fifth who resembles him very closely. The first four children he spurns completely, while doting upon his new son:

....yet weighty scholars who direct all their efforts at uncovering the secret effects of nature - weighty scholars, I say, tell us that whatever image dominates the

mother's mind when the child is begotten, secretly in some mysterious way imposes accurate and indelible traces of itself upon the seed....When your wife conceived the four children she was quite unconcerned about you because you were so many miles away. That is why she bore children who do not resemble you. But this son, of all your children, looks like you because at his conception his mother was very much concerned about you and had you completely on her mind; she was worried for fear you, Sabinus, might inconveniently arrive on the scene...

Epigrammata, no. 205 (trans. Miller et al).²⁰

Later in the century, the lawyer Henry Swinburne, in his *A Briefe Treatise of Testaments and Last Willes* (1590, repr. 1600), includes the stories of the 'Ethiopian' baby (employing Quintilian's anecdote in what was probably its original role as an example used in legal discussions of legitimacy) and those of the 'Hairy Girl' and Jacob's sheep to argue that the likeness, or lack of likeness, between a child and its legitimate parent provides only a dubious reason for ruling against a child's legitimacy given that mother's imagination can play so crucial a role.²¹ Wishing always to rule to the child's benefit, Swinburne implies that appearance can be separated from an essential legitimacy, or at least that one should for legal purposes assume it to be possible that a legitimate child might possess an illegitimate appearance. Interestingly, he supplements his argument by rephrasing More's epigram and pointing out that it is perfectly possible for the child of an adulteress to resemble her legal husband. While a sense of fun often surfaces in Swinburne's choice of examples, he clearly believed that maternal impression was a reality the Civil Law should take into account.

We can now see that Paulina's insistence in *The Winter's Tale* upon the resemblance between the infant Perdita and Leontes need not have carried the same weight of self-evident truth for a deeply jealous Elizabethan husband that it does for a modern audience.²²

Among the *Thousand Notable Things* collected by Thomas Lupton is a particularly elaborate version of the Quintilian anecdote. Noting that 'imagination is of mervailous force in the time of generation' he describes how

A certaine noble matron in the parts of Spaine, had a strong imagination of a great Ethiopian, painted in her chamber, with other, in the act of generation. Which Lady afterward was delivered of a boy, like to the great Ethiopian painted, before named. Which child being borne, every one beleaved, that she had layne with some one of the slaves of the Saracens. For that the child was like none of his parents. Whereupon the ministers of justice, with consent of her husband, and other, did decree, that she should be burned after the moneth end. But before the ministration of this justice or execution, certain wise men were called whereof one desired, that he might see the place where the child was begot: which when he had seene, he considered, that that generation was by the strength of the imaginative virtue. And then he said that that great Ethiopian was the father of the child. Bringing forth for the confirmation thereof, that place of the Bible, where Jacob put speckled rods before the sheep: by which imagination the ewes brought forth speckled lambs, which when he had spoken: the Lady was delivered from burning.

Thomas Lupton: *A Thousand Notable Things of Sundry Sortes* (1601 ed.), Book 6, no. 82.

Lupton's book was first published in 1579 and was reprinted many times. It is certainly possible that a voracious Elizabethan reader would have noticed a family likeness between the trial of Lupton's Spanish matron and the experiences of the Ethiopian Queen Persinna or even a likeness with other accused queens of Romance.

It is not likely that Lupton considered the niceties of his tale in the light of Aristotelian theories of conception, and when seen in the context of its period, it could be interpreted as containing an element of propaganda, not to mention subversive humour. That it is set in Spain was probably enough to alert his readership. If Huet is right in saying that maternal impression was thought of as betraying the 'shameful desires' of mothers, then perhaps the reader is intended to assume that the woman had from the outset desired her Saracen slave and not her husband. She may only be guilty of indulging her imagination, or perhaps the Wise Man's learning has merely provided a cloak for actual adultery.

Shakespeare himself certainly knew the popular wonder books and broadsheets, and may have known Lupton's collection. J. H. P. Pafford, in the Arden Edition of *The Winter's Tale*, cites Lupton's *A Thousand Notable Things* as a possible source for Perdita's description of the marigold (*WT*, IV, iv, 105-6, Pafford p. 95n). Shakespeare lampoons the 'wonder book' genre in *The Winter's Tale* by having Autolycus offer to sing 'to a very doleful tune, how a usurer's wife was brought to bed of twenty money-bags at a burden, and how she longed to eat adders' heads and toad carbonadoed' (*WT*, IV, iv, 263-6). It would not be an exaggeration to say that this ballad is only slightly more far-fetched than many of Lupton's wonders. Autolycus' tale can be interpreted as playing with the idea of a form of 'paternal impression' which creates an unnatural likeness between the father's offspring and that which is closest to his heart. Or

alternatively, the usurer's wife may have revealed, involuntarily, that she thinks only of her husband's money and nothing of his self. In either case, by embracing usury the husband can be said to have brought this punishment upon himself. That such tales appear in print is enough to convince the rustic Mopsa of their truth, though it must be said that this one stretches even her credulity. Autolycus' ballad, by using the bizarre image of bags of coins and therefore casting the wife as a form of mint, makes manifest the idea of procreation as the stamping of form upon formless material, an image which is almost a Shakespearean commonplace. At the same time, the anecdote is a curious parody of the myth of Danaë, where fertile coins rain from heaven, with the usurer and his wife both representing *avaritia*.

A number of factors may have fuelled the appetite of the late Renaissance for accounts of the marvellous and the monstrous. In their important article 'Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in 16th and 17th Century France and England' (1981), Katherine Park and Lorraine J. Daston argue that it was the Reformation (and, one can add to this, the earlier wars in Italy) which sparked a fascination with prodigies of all kinds.²³ Monstrous births or marvellous visions were understood either as prophetic, or as sympathetic, manifestations of religious and political upheavals. Indeed, alongside sincere reports of such phenomena much satirical propaganda appeared framed as teratology. As the period progressed, the authors suggest, this interest became part of a larger curiosity about the natural world, and about classical learning, which was then incorporated into the growing realm of Baconian science. They consider Lupton and the authors of the many other similar volumes to have written chiefly for 'pleasure reading' (Daston and Park, p. 37), unlike those more rigorous observers, both classical and modern, whose works they ransacked.

Marie-Hélène Huet argues that fear of maternal impression also played a part in Reformation iconoclasm (pp. 27-31). She makes the point that much of this wrath was vented against images of the Virgin Mary, who was often depicted as pregnant, and suggests that an analogy was felt to exist between the 'usurpation' of the father's role in conception and the supposed usurpation of the God the Father's position in the church by Mary and popular saints. At the same time, this 'usurpation' would be seen by reformist opinion as reflecting the usurpation of the role of the word by the image in worship (or, more specifically, by the 'strange power of icons' [Huet, p. 27]). This is an intriguing and useful idea, although it would be wrong to stress this motive for outbreaks of iconoclasm above wanton destructiveness and a simplistic likening of Christian images to pagan idols. What is clear is that many Renaissance accounts of maternal impression cannot be read as straightforward science. Many are tainted by misogyny and no doubt were written in a vein similar to modern sensational journalism, being intended to shock and amuse and be forgotten almost immediately. But they may also express a wider paranoia concerning attacks upon the mental and even bodily integrity of the individual (or that of a spouse) made through the imagination. Tales of monstrous offspring might also have touched in some way upon a general anxiety concerning relations between parent and child, an anxiety of which *King Lear* itself is an exploration. Encountering examples of extreme physical difference, or of an estrangement between generations, may have fascinated, and served as a release for, a society troubled by questions surrounding the freedoms and duties of children. In the case of physical difference the interruption of inheritance might be appreciated at a glance, while in the moral sphere, matters of inheritance are all the more unsettling for being the more easily hidden. Such concerns may not have figured among the motives of writers such as Paré, but the texts themselves

may have spoken to other emotions in their readers. Of course, to consider the widespread publication of tales of prodigious births as reflecting a disruption within society, is to treat such reports and representations as being forms of sympathetic portent appearing in print rather than in fact.

For the present study the most important aspect of the way in which maternal impression was traditionally pictured is that it represented a rejection of the true form in favour of self-centred, illegitimate visions; that it was, in a way, incestuous. At the same time, this process presupposes a mechanism which lays the adult mind open to transforming impressions which might work as radical a change upon the 'wax' of the heart, as they could upon the unborn child.

2. Form, Matter and the Power of the Eye

If we consider what the likeness between the process of perception and process of reproductive conception was actually believed to be, it becomes clear that imaginative interference in pregnancy is only a small (and non-essential) part of a much larger system of ideas.

We can already see why the term 'maternal impression' was adopted in later times. The material in the womb was commonly envisaged as being like 'soft wax', ready to be stamped with form, the impression it receives being that of the husband's qualities. But the metaphor of impressing is also commonly used to describe other reactions to sensory perception. We speak today of a particularly impressive spectacle, or of setting out to make an 'impression'. The faculty ready to receive such impressions through the senses is the imagination or fantasy. And so the likeness between the imagination and the womb is clear; both await order, and an idea can be likened to a child. In the *Theaetetus*

Plato uses the image of 'soft wax' to describe the receptiveness of the 'heart' to the impressions transmitted by the senses:

When a person's mental wax is deep, plentiful, smooth and worked to the right consistency, then whatever enters by means of the senses and makes marks on the 'heart' (Homer's word hints at the heart's similarity to wax)...anyway, people whose wax is like that get marks imprinted which are clean and of sufficient depth to last a long time

Theaetetus, 194c, trans. Robin Waterfield.²⁴

The pun which seems momentarily to distract Socrates here depends, as Robin Waterfield notes in his recent translation, upon *ker*, a 'Homeric word for "heart", the seat of the emotions and even of the understanding,...the Greek for "wax" is *keros*' (Waterfield, p.104n). As we have seen, Fawnia's beauty makes a 'deepe impression' upon Pandosto's 'heart' (Bullough, p. 193). The idea of a father stamping 'soft wax' with form is repeated by Shakespeare's Theseus when he tells Hermia that her father should be to her

as a god:

One that compos'd your beauties, yea, and one

To whom you are but as a form in wax

By him imprinted

A Midsummer Night's Dream, I, i, 47-50.²⁵

Aristotle also uses the same image of soft wax in *De Anima*, when he says 'we should not inquire then whether the soul and body are one thing, any more than whether the wax and its imprint are' (*De Anima* [II, i, 412b], trans. Hugh Lawson-Tancred (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1986, p. 157).

What it is that strikes the eye in this way are beams of light. In Shakespeare's time the ancient idea persisted that the eye did not simply collect light from outside the body, but actually projected its own beam of vision. Like the imagination it feeds, the eye has both active and passive aspects, and is able to transmit as well as to receive images. On account of this active role, sight was considered a more noble, indeed more spiritual sense than the other four. In his discussion of Elizabethan theories of sight John Erskine Hankins draws attention to the terminology used by Aquinas in *De Natura Luminis* and in his commentary on *De Anima*, to describe this phenomenon: 'what enters the eye is an image or "intention" of the object perceivedmade possible by means of light, more subtle and less grossly physical than the action of the other sense organs' (Hankins, 1978, p. 87).²⁶ Hankins identifies this as the species of 'intention' Leontes speaks of even as his 'madness' comes upon him : 'Affection! Thy intention stabs the centre' (*WT*, I, ii, 138) (this difficult passage will be discussed more fully in a later place). In the *Purgatorio* Dante describes 'intentions' ('tragge intenzione') striking 'impressions' into the wax of the heart when he has Virgil explain the nature of perception. Virgil is made to observe that 'not every imprint is good, although the wax be good' (see *Purgatorio*, XVIII, 19-39, trans. Singleton, p. 191).²⁷

In the *Saturnalia*, Macrobius has Eustathius describe the 'beam of vision' projected by the eye as light. Light from an external source is still required for us to see because the human beam is not strong enough to function unaided, but it is the same substance:

The pupil of the eye, whichever way you turn it, sends out its own innate ray of light in a straight line; if that emanation, which belongs to the eyes from which it

flows, finds light in the air that surrounds us, it passes straight through that light until it meets an object

Saturnalia, Book VII, chap. 14, trans. Davies.²⁸

This echoes a passage from Plato's *Timaeus* where Timaeus explains that of all the human organs the gods

first contrived the eyes to give light....So much of fire as would not burn, but gave a gentle light, they formed into a substance akin to the light of everyday life; and the pure fire which is within us and related thereto they made flow through the eyes in a stream smooth and dense....When the light of day surrounds the stream of vision, then like falls upon like, and they coalesce, and one body is formed by natural affinity in the line of vision, wherever the light that falls from within meets with an external object.

Timaeus, trans. Jowett, 45 b-c 33 (repr. London: Sphere Books, 1970).

And so the world is suffused in light from the sun (the 'fire that does not burn'), which supplies inanimate objects with an image that can be reflected towards and mingle with the ray sent out by a human eye. The familiar principle at work here is that the human microcosm should reflect the cosmic macrocosm, with Man being thought of as possessing, to a limited degree, the same power as the sun itself.

Plato expresses a similar view in *The Republic*, but in this work the subject takes on a mystical colouring as the metaphor of seeing as understanding is elaborated in a passage which includes the famous image of the cave (*Republic*, VI, 507-11, VII, 514-19). For Plato the sun represents the 'Good', and the interaction between the sun and the world is modelled after that between the Good and creation. The sun shedding its beams

thus supplies a visible image of other creative interactions between God and the world which are more difficult to apprehend.

Plato has Socrates explain to Glaucon that ‘of all the organs of sense the eye is most like the sun’ and that ‘the power which the eye possesses is a sort of effluence which is dispensed from the sun’ (508b). This leads Socrates to ask

Then the sun is not sight, but the author of sight who is recognised by sight?

True he [Glaucon] said.

And this, you must understand, is he whom I call the child of the good, whom the good begat in his own likeness, to be in the visible world, in relation to sight and the things of sight, what the good is in the intellectual world in relation to mind and the things of the mind....you know....that the eyes, when a person directs them towards objects on which the light of day is no longer shining, but the moon and stars only, see dimly, and are nearly blind; they seem to have no clearness of vision in them?....But when they are directed towards objects on which the sun shines, they see clearly and there is sight in them?

Certainly [he said].

And the soul is like the eye: when resting upon that on which truth and being shine, the soul perceives and understands.

Republic, 508, b-d, trans. Jowett, pp. 290-1.

This is the variety of belief C. S Lewis called ‘sacramentalism or symbolism’: ‘Symbolism comes to us from Greece. It makes its first appearance in European thought with the dialogues of Plato. The Sun is the copy of the Good. Time is the moving image of eternity. All visible things exist just in so far as they succeed in imitating the Forms’ (*The Allegory of Love*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, corr. ed. 1938, p. 45). Thus, moving

from the visible realm to the eternal realm of forms (or ideas) is an ascent as one moves from seeing the visible to understanding the invisible. But, seeing and understanding as processes have a true likeness, and as we shall see, these Platonic themes have a major role to play in the construction of Heliodorus' highly organised novel.

In his discussion of the story of Jacob's sheep in *On Dreams* I, Philo uses the image of the sun not only to represent God 'impregnating the female soul' with the light of understanding, but also virtuous and 'tender' souls impregnating one another. Jacob, 'looking with the eye of his mind' understands that 'right reason' impregnates the 'fertile soul' so that it becomes the parent of 'a male offspring, while variegated, ring-straked, and speckled' (*On Dreams* I, xxxiv). Philo goes on to explain that

the first-born offspring of the soul which has received the sacred seed, is purely white; being like light in which there is no obscurity, and like the most brilliant radiance: like the unclouded beam which might proceed from the rays of the sun in fine weather at mid-day. Again, by the statement that some are variegated, what is meant is, not that the flocks are marked by such a multiform and various spottedness as to resemble the unclean leprosy, and which is an emblem of a life unsteady and tossed about in any direction by reason of the fickleness of the mind, but only that they have marks drawn in regular lines and different characters, shaped and impressed with all kinds of well approved forms, the peculiarities of which, being multiplied together and combined properly, will produce a musical harmony

On Dreams, I, xxxiv, trans. Yonge, ed. Scholer, p. 383.

Plato's soul which 'perceives and understands' becomes, in Philo's view, pregnant with divine truth. In fact, it is possible that Heliodorus, in addition to the *Life of Moses*, had

also read Philo's exegesis of the story of Jacob's lambs and thought of this passage when ceating the white, 'first-born' Charikleia, a heroine whose colourful adventures, when 'combined properly' in the understanding, 'produce a musical harmony' (*On Dreams I*, xxxiv, 202, p. 383). We can also see that the myth of Danaë lends itself to an interpretation in line with Philo's neo-Platonic outlook. While Acrisius fails to understand the sun-god's oracle, his daughter's pregnancy results from an acceptance of divine wishes and of divine order when she sees the shower of gold, or the god manifest himself as pure light, and this too is an act of fertile understanding.

That the church fathers pictured the creation as the meeting of form and matter was a part of the church's inheritance from Plato and Aristotle. In a study of Milton's attitude toward these sometimes conflicting traditions J. H. Adamson argues that Aristotle disagreed with his master Plato by maintaining that

the universe of form and matter had eternally existed. This theory made possible an attractive and reasonable theory of evil: the combination of form and matter was always imperfect; all that was chaotic or painful in the universe could be ascribed to that fact....

Bright Essence (eds. W. B. Hunter, C. A. Patrides and J. H.

Adamson, Salt Lake City: University of Utah Press, 1971), p. 82.

He goes on to say that

This attractive theory was rejected by Philo Judaeus, however. A passionate monotheist, he could not conceivably admit that anything existed outside of God and coeternally with him. Plato, he believed, had been instructed by the Mosaic teachings and had correctly taught that the universe was created in time. Philo

differed from Plato in affirming that God created not only the forms but also the *prima materia* which, together with the forms, made up the universe.

Bright Essence, p. 82.

As a particularly striking example of the way in which the image of the creator personified as the all-seeing sun found a place in the Christian tradition, there exists a remarkable depiction of the creation by the sixteenth century artist Lorenzo Lotto. In the early 1520's Lotto designed a series of marquetry panels for the choir stalls of the basilica of St. Maria Maggiore in Bergamo. Each stall was to have a decorative panel and a protective cover. The panel depicting the creation has a conventional bearded God standing above the newly formed Adam and backed by the spheres into which the universe has been divided. However, the cover is a far more unusual work. It shows the blackness of space bearing the words 'Magnum Chaos' surrounding the golden fiery circle of creation which contains a series of concentric rings. And at the centre of these rings stands an enormous eye with hands and feet, the hands opened wide as though creating and embracing creation in the same moment (in a gesture which also prefigures the crucifixion) (See fig. 7, p. 150). This is the divine eye which creates as it sees, organising chaotic matter with its beam of understanding. And if we say that this emblem-like design is striking or impressive, we can see that it is intended to produce an effect upon the viewer which is analogous to the act of creation itself. Therefore, one can say that the design continues the creation it depicts and is, in a way, the thing it depicts.

In the *Faerie Queene* Spenser describes how Una, who personifies his notion of the ideal church, unveiling herself 'Her angels face / As the great eye of heauen shyned bright, / And made a sunshine in the shadie place' (*Faerie Queene*, I, iii, 4). Una is not the source of the light, but like the moon, she reflects the light. Of course, the image of



Fig. 7. Lorenzo Lotto: 'The Creation' (1524-31), marquetry panel in the convent of St. Maria Maggiore, Bergamo. After Fernando Noris: *Les marqueteries de Lorenzo Lotto; Un itinéraire entre Bible et alchimie*. N. p.: Ferrari Editrice, n. d., p. 31.

the 'eye of heaven' is a commonplace, but this is not to say that it is not also a metaphor with a profound meaning.

While in the first part of this chapter Aristotle's ideas of form and matter were discussed in the narrow sense of their application to physical conception it is clear that this should be thought of as employing in the intimate sphere a process applicable to the cosmos as a whole. The combination of form and matter was understood to be the constant principle in all types of creation, from that of the universe, to that of a child or indeed any individual act of understanding. For, in all successful attempts at understanding, anything that was disordered has found a form. The separate powers of conception found in the microcosm reflect the unified power of creation exercised on a cosmic scale by God. The basic building block of creation, which multiplies itself like a fractal or like Heliodorus' plots, is creation itself.

3. *King Lear* and Maternal Impression in Romance

So far in this chapter I have discussed the history of maternal impression as it appears in medical texts and have also outlined the idea's philosophical background. In this section I will argue that interference in reproduction remained a recurring motif in the Accused Queen tales up to Shakespeare's time. However, in these tales we see the balance of the maternal impression anecdotes reversed. In many Romance tales, and in the *Aithiopika* itself, imaginative interference does take place at the birth of a royal child, but the mother is eventually proved innocent of any betrayal, while it is the imagination of her husband (or mother-in-law) that is shown to be at fault. And importantly for understanding the role of art in *The Winter's Tale*, we also find in these stories, alongside an accused queen being exonerated, that art and literature are also exonerated of the traditional accusation

made against them of being purveyors of dubious influences. But before examining Romance tales I shall look briefly at *King Lear*, a play like *The Winter's Tale*, where maternal impression is invoked to help define the failure of a king who 'bastardises' his own children.

Shakespeare's knowledge of maternal impression was first discussed (to the best of my knowledge) by James Black, as part of a paper given in 1979 on Shakespeare as a teratologist.²⁹ In addition to examining the various monsters encountered in *A Midsummer Night's Dream* and in *King Lear*, Black draws attention to Shakespeare's habit of applying the image of 'stamping' or 'printing' to conception, quoting the final line of Sonnet 11: 'Thou shouldst print more, not let that copy die'.

Pondering the image of Bottom in the arms of Titania, Black observes 'Fancy is bred in the eye....Shylock knows, of course, about "breeding in the eye": we remember his extended account of how Jacob was supposed to have influenced the generating of Laban's flocks' (Black, p. 54). As we have seen, in Shakespeare's time 'fancy' and 'imagination' shared almost the same meaning.

Black draws attention to Oberon's final speech in *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, where he promises the married couples

And the blots of Nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand:
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious, such as are
Despised in nativity,
Shall upon their children be.

A Midsummer Night's Dream, V, i, 395-400 (ed. Brooks).

It is worth adding that, as was mentioned above, harelips resulting from maternal impression have their own entry in Lupton's *Thousand Notable Things* (book 2, no. 6), and two further entries cover other 'prodigious' marks (book 2, no. 24, and book 8, no. 7). Black further remarks, quite rightly, that in *King Lear*, such moral 'monsters' as 'Goneril, Regan and Edmund all *look* beautiful and undeformed....The marks prodigious are all within, yet the blots of nature's hand clearly exist in these issue' (Black's italics, p.60), and, he argues, the play is much concerned with the 'begetting of monsters'. He quotes Edgar's judgement on his father's fate, spoken to his treacherous half-brother 'The dark and vicious place where thee he got /Cost him his eyes' (*KL*, V, iii, 171-2) as a variation upon the idea of pre-natal 'stamping'.³⁰

Black's discussion of *King Lear* is particularly pertinent and culminates in the thought that, while Lear may protest that 'they cannot touch me for coining' (*King Lear*, IV, iv, 83), he is forced to recognise that he did indeed 'stamp' or 'coin' Goneril's and Regan's 'centaurlike' natures; 'Lear....is on his way to the conclusion which Prospero will draw from the contemplation of *his* monster [Caliban]: "This thing of darkness I / Acknowledge mine" (*The Tempest*, V, i, 275-6)' (Black's Italics). As we have seen, the image of 'stamping' perfectly expresses the Aristotelian view of conception, that of form being given to shapeless matter. The theme of 'coining' also figures prominently in *Measure for Measure*, where Isabella laments of her own sex: 'call us ten times frail; / For we are soft as our complexions are, / And credulous to false prints' (*Measure for Measure*, II, iv, 127-9). It also reappears, in *Cymbeline*, when Iachimo's ekphrastic description of Imogen's bedchamber confirms in Posthumus' mind the accusation of adultery against her. Posthumus' disordered outburst of rage and disgust is similar to Leontes' reaction to the supposed visual evidence of Hermione's betrayal:

Is there no way for men to be, but women
Must be half-workers? We are all bastards,
And that most venerable man, which I
Did call my father, was I know not where
When I was stamp'd. Some coiner with his tools
Made me a counterfeit: yet my mother seem'd
The Dian of that time

Cymbeline, ed. J. M. Nosworthy, II, iv, 153-59.

In the second chapter I suggested that Gloucester's story was a Twinned-impression plot modelled after Heliodorus' Knemon sub-plot and the story of Kalasiris' two sons. The sub-plot progresses from Gloucester's seeing Edgar, in his mind's eye, with a drawn sword, to the point when, having lost his sight, Gloucester is able to see the reality of his offspring clearly. If we also recognise this as making up the second half of an *in medias res* plot, the initial act of seeing in Gloucester's story can be taken as the pre-natal 'stamping' of Edmund with 'darkness' before the play begins. It was the failure of Gloucester to see correctly which made the 'bastard' seem legitimate, and his legitimate offspring appear both to embody betrayal and to deserve the title 'monster' (*KL*, I, ii, 91).

Both the plots of *King Lear* feature the metaphor, so important to Heliodorus, of seeing as understanding. Early in the play Gloucester also employs its twin, the metaphor of physical conception as understanding. When Gloucester, with misplaced and unseemly pride, introduces Edmund to Kent in the opening exchange of the play, he says:

Glou.: His breeding, Sir, hath been my charge: I have so often blush'd to
acknowledge him, that now I am braz'd to't.

Kent : I cannot conceive you.

Glou.: Sir, this young fellow's mother could; whereupon she grew round-womb'd, and, had indeed, Sir, a son

King Lear, ed. Muir, I, i, 8-13.

It is not fortuitous that this idea should be placed so prominently when it is the interaction of these two metaphors which governs much of the play's action.

Lear himself is consumed with an anxiety which centres on the question of the acceptable limits of difference between parent and child and it is this anxiety which triggers his irrational behaviour and sets in motion his downfall. This is another tale which revolves around the unjust estrangement of a royal daughter from her father. Lear's original request that Cordelia speak is repeated on the other side of her sea journey and return, and each time he receives the same answer. It is the way in which Lear misinterprets the appearance of Cordelia's original behaviour, in a context he has himself staged with the intention of producing a particular effect or impression, which leads him to disown her.

The opening scene of the play is an attempt to create an impression which goes very wrong. Lear attempts (like Acrisius) to cheat death. He orchestrates his own departure from kingship in a way that will allow his rule to continue, and contrives a spectacle which will identify him as the sole focus of his daughters' obedience, thus reinforcing his legitimacy as monarch. This can be seen to threaten a form of veiled incest, in as much as he is usurping what belongs by right to their husbands (as Cordelia points out). Lear is instead reduced to a *de facto* accusation of bastardy against Cordelia, and creates only the impression of a complete loss of control. By defining Cordelia's duty

in a way that is narrow and unreasonable, Lear is forced by his own obstinacy to accuse her of rejecting her patrimony.

Cordelia and Edgar are thought by their fathers, wrongly, to have forfeited their legitimacy through a moral fault, while the illegitimate Edmund gains legitimacy through shaping a false appearance of moral correctness. The true son, Edgar, is at first taken in by Edmund just as his father was, and ironically, this gullibility shows that he had inherited that part of his father's nature.³¹ Likewise, what seems to Lear to be Cordelia's unnatural rebellion is later revealed to be a legitimate expression of family likeness. The play ends with the recognition of her having expressed a legitimacy which far outstrips her father's original conception of what a child's duty should be.

Both Leo Salingar and Maynard Mack have argued that *King Lear* is related to the mediaeval romance.³² In the earlier play *The True Chronicle History of King Leir* (1594?), with its happy ending, the connection is quite clear. Shakespeare's Cordelia is an Accused Queen who is sent into exile because of a false appearance of monstrosity. While an understanding of the ideas surrounding maternal impression reveals how a mother's imaginative apprehension was believed to cause signs of physical illegitimacy, it is a natural extension of this idea to suppose that the imagination of a self-centred father might attempt to stamp a form of spurious post-natal illegitimacy upon their child; seeing a bastardy that is not there. Lear does this to Cordelia in the name of the 'sacred radiance of the Sun' and then transforms himself into a wrathful 'Dragon' (*KL*, I, i, 108, 121). One can say that Cordelia's resistance to her father is like that shown by the selfish mothers towards their husbands in the maternal impression anecdotes. But whereas they resist the correct forming influence, this situation has been transposed to become instead

a legitimate and admirable resistance to misguided paternal influence. It is Cordelia who stands for legitimacy.

Shakespeare himself deals in spectacles calculated to impress themselves upon the viewer. What could stamp a deeper impression upon the imagination than the spectacle of the blinding of Gloucester (of seeing him lose the ability to see)? The playwright must deal in the language of impressions. Certainly the play does not underestimate the power of spectacle, and it is worth noting that Leontes' story resembles that of Lear in more than just his sudden rage.

The stage was widely identified at the time as a source of potentially dangerous imaginative influence. For instance Henry Swinburne includes in his *Briefe Treatise of Testaments* an example of maternal impression taken from Vives (Swinburne, p. 163) which gives a stage performance as the source of a troublesome image, and again illustrates the difficulties of separating satirical anecdotes from factual reports. Vives tells how a child was conceived by a couple living in Brabant while the husband was still wearing the costume of a devil he had earlier put on to dance in a 'publicke plaie or spectacle'. The infant was duly born not only with the appearance of the devil, but also immediately leapt up and began to dance in a devilish way. It is interesting that here the child is shown as inheriting not only the adopted appearance of the father, but the inclination to dance, as, presumably, his wife had earlier seen the father do.

What is most interesting about this striking, yet preposterous, example is that it extends the questioning surrounding religious pictures to include 'publicke plaies' as a source of striking images. Vives himself was a distinguished scholar, an associate of Erasmus, More and Budé, and an opponent of Luther.³³ However, English Protestants

found the Erasmian flavour of his writing congenial, and his strong attack upon imaginative literature prefigures later Puritan assaults. Vives' attitude to the arts is founded upon a Platonic suspicion of feigning, coupled to an equally Platonic conception of the semi-divine possibilities of the human mind. His book of instruction for bringing up young women correctly, *De institutione feminae christianae* (1523), includes loud denunciations of popular Romances. The story of the devilish child would clearly have appealed to him as a satirical demonstration of the dangers of stirring up the feminine imagination in the wrong way, while reminding readers of the inherent power of that faculty. For Vives, fictions are not only lies, but a 'sweet poison', particularly romances describing love affairs.³⁴

That fictions are lies is the familiar Platonic criticism levelled at art which, it is held, cannot rise above attempts at portraying visible reality, while this is itself merely the *similitudo* of the realm of ideas. Art, viewed in this way, only moves the viewer further from the light into the region of darkness where forms become ever harder to discern.³⁵ But, if we accept that Heliodorus too was likely to have held neo-Platonist views, his own work of art would seem a dubious undertaking, and certainly may have appeared so in later times. For the *Aithiopika* is a romance which glorifies love and the trials of lovers, and whose central character is a portrait of a portrait.

What I think we find in Heliodorus is an attempt to circumvent the traditional Platonic criticism of the deceptions of art by constructing a narrative which itself contains a 'light' which may guide those 'blinking' in the darkness, just as the shining presence of Charikleia herself serves to re-educate her father. The birth of Charikleia can be seen as a sign made necessary by the father's own loss of understanding, and the narrative of her adventures itself, far from being a directionless journey in the dark, is itself guided by the

light. In the same way, we are to deduce, the painting of Andromeda contained the true 'form' of that heroine and was able to transfer to her a legitimate identity.

Vives himself would no doubt have joined with Thomas More in opposing iconoclasm, and would not have banished a correct form of art, that is one that communicates an understanding of Providence, for the influence upon the imagination created by such a work could only be beneficial.

While Charikleia's conception is a textbook case of maternal impression, the mediaeval romances consistently include similar, though not identical incidents. An approximation of Persinna's predicament appears in the story of Queen Alidoyne from *Theseus of Cologne* in which (in Schlauch's summary)

King Floridas of Cologne is summoned one day to the castle window by his wife Alidoyne. She has just seen a woman go by with a child 'nain et bossu et le plus contrefait et le plus malforme que onques dieu crea sur terre'. She laughs mockingly and remarks that such offspring must be the result of infidelity. God is angry, and sends her in punishment a child as ugly as the one she had derided

Schlauch, 1927, p. 125.

This leads to the Queen being accused of infidelity with the court dwarf.³⁶ Here the audience is not prompted, as they are in the *Aithiopika*, to discover divine intervention in the child's conception, for the intervention is quite explicit. Yet we can still say that an impression was transferred through the Queen's eyes to her child. While she is innocent of adultery, she is actually punished for her failure to look at the deformed child with compassion. In Chaucer's *Man of Law's Tale* the motif of imaginative interference takes a different form. Constance's child possesses a true form, while her husband the King is told in a forged letter, written by his mother Donegild, that she gave birth to a monster.

The King writes in reply that the child should be kept 'be it foul or feir' and 'This lettre he seleth' (*The Man of Law's Tale*, 764, 768). Presumably this seal is then attached by Donegild to a false order that Constance and her child be put out to sea in a tiny boat, because when the King returns the constable who carried out the order is able to show him his own seal upon the letter (line 882). The setting of the King's wax seal upon the letter reflects the idea of stamping the child's form in the soft wax of the womb. And by tampering with the letter and attaching the seal to a falsehood, Queen Donegild becomes the deceiving mother whose self-centredness interferes in conception. It is she who gives birth to monsters, albeit purely fictional ones. As it is, her description of mother and child fails to stamp itself upon the King's imagination in the way that the visual evidence employed by other mothers-in-law in other tales does, creating the need for a second forgery. The idea of illicit 'stamping' appears in a clearer form in *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople*. In this tale, when the King goes to war he leaves his wife in the keeping of the Duke of Gloucester, but as Schlauch describes

The mother-in-law visits Hélène long enough to have a counterfeit seal made.

With this she seals the substituted letters which she gives to the drunken messenger. The Chaplain who writes from her dictation the accusation of a monstrous birth, protests against the lie. She silences him with money, and, when the letter is written, cuts his throat.

Schlauch, 1927, p. 121.

It is possible that it is more than coincidence that this plan should first be put into operation under the roof of a Duke of Gloucester. As a Queen whose power has faded when she is displaced by a new generation, the royal mother-in-law occupies a role not unlike that Lear defines for himself. The counterfeit seal is the illegitimate stamp of form

given by maternal impression, but again, as in the *Aithiopika*, the royal child's form proves true.

In *Esmoreit* the accusation made against the Queen was that of killing her own child, an act which in other tales was often extended to include cannibalism. These are crimes which express as graphically as incest the idea of turning in on oneself. In the play Robbrecht's forgery is purely verbal, but the impression it creates does receive a visual answer when the Queen sees Esmoreit from her prison window. Here the motif of sealing reappears in the coat of arms of Sicily which she embroidered and which her son wears upon his forehead, this being the 'seal' of the Queen's fidelity.

Now we can see how it is that the scene in which the Queen of Sicily looks from her window and enjoys the moment of recognition which sets her free might be compared with mediaeval illustrations showing Danaë looking from the window of her tower and herself being looked upon and impregnated by the sun. When the 'rain of gold' is taken to be sunlight Danaë is excused the label of avariciousness, but where the rain is depicted, as it usually is, in the form of actual coins there can also be something more than mere greed at work. A coin can stand for something more than monetary value, it is the stamp of the King's 'form' into gold. Whether the stamp impresses a portrait of the monarch or a concise image of inherited authority, such as the coat of arms or royal seal, the process can be used as both a symbol of the stamping of form upon matter in the private realm and of the presence of an organising power in the public sphere. As such, the coin is allowed a greater dignity, being not merely an easily exchangeable economic token and still less something to be loved for itself, but a symbol of the divine power which binds society together. When we consider what the true value of coins might be, we can see why Zeus might have manifested himself in this shape. Those who see only

bribery and corruption in the fable might be seeing in the wrong way, for the materialisation of golden coins, the sovereign metal stamped with form, actually expresses what has taken place within Danaë.

This coupling of the private and public roles of the royal father is an expression of the universal applicability of the idea of the marriage of form and matter. In *King Lear* the King's struggle to discover the form he has given his family in his own 'coining' (not a counterfeit, but a true expression of himself) is matched by his struggle to stamp his imprimatur as *Pater Patriae* upon a nation all too ready to rebel against form. And, as we shall see, the nature of the monarch's fatherly power plays a major part in the *Aithiopika*.

Varieties of maternal impression also figure strongly in the Renaissance chivalric epic, often taking the form of a prophetic birthmark, a noble inversion of the blemishes and blots thought to result from sudden shocks and uncontrolled longings. Of the many heroes of the *Amadis* cycle there are few, if any, whose births are not accompanied by extraordinary events or do not bear upon their bodies some remarkable sign foretelling their destiny. It is almost as though the authors who contributed to the cycle were in competition to devise the most arresting devices to imprint upon each nascent protagonist. The birthmark belonging to Amadis de Grèce (Amadis de Gaula's great-grandson) was perhaps the best known, taking the form of a burning sword bearing mysterious white lettering. This message is deciphered years later by a magician as giving details of his royal parentage. The fame of this Amadis as the 'Knight of the Burning Sword', and the Iberian romances as an entire genre, were lampooned by Francis Beaumont in *The Knight of the Burning Pestle* (1610?). Early on in the tales the son of Amadis de Gaule, Esplandin is born with both his name written upon him in white and the initials of his future wife given in red (Book II, written by Garci Ordonez Montalvo,

pub. 1508), though most extraordinary perhaps is the birthmark belonging to Silves, the son of Amadis de Grèce and Princess Finistée.

Book XI of the cycle, written in Italian by Mambrino Roseo da Fabriano (before 1559), tells how Silves' parents were shipwrecked on a desert island. Princess Finistée had long nurtured a love for Amadis, and, while he does not return her feelings, he treats her honourably. After some time Finistée discovers a peculiar tree on the island which bears a fruit which she innocently brings to Amadis 'Comme Eue la pomme á Adam' (*Amadis de Gaule*, XI, lxxvii, 128 [O'Connor, p. 93]). This fruit has the twin properties of rendering the eater intensely amorous and at the same time forgetful. In the course of a month the couple consume the entire crop, and are then at a complete loss to explain the signs of Finistée's pregnancy. Among the suggestions they put forward are that the fruit makes one swell up, that she has been made pregnant by the sea-breeze and that the child was conceived solely through Finistée's imagination, which, as Amadis gallantly explains 'les medicens dient causer d'estranges et prodigieux effetz en nature' ('doctors say causes strange and prodigious effects in nature', trans. O'Connor, p. 276), although no doctor appears to have gone as far as saying that human imagination alone could be responsible for conception. When the child is born he is found to have inherited his father's sword-shaped birthmark and also has some mysterious writing imprinted upon his chest. When the message has been translated, again with the aid of a magician, it is found to read 'Silues Du Desert, Filz D' Amadis De Grece Et De Finistée, Sans Vice ny offence De L'Vn Ne De L'Autre' (*Amadis*, XI, lxxxix, 136 [O'Connor, p. 257]). While the suggestion that Silves' conception may be the expression of his mother's powerful imagination carries with it the implication that the child is the fruit of her unfulfilled desire for Amadis, the reader knows that Silves is Amadis' child and that this line of

reasoning is unnecessary. What is significant about this tale is that Roseo has prompted the reader to recall precedents recorded by doctors, but unlike the marks described in ‘factual’ reports, the birthmark in the form of text written upon Silves does not betray a mother’s shameful desires, but, on the contrary, spells out her innocence.

As John J. O’Connor points out, in *Amadis de Gaule and its Influence on Elizabethan Literature* (1970), these birthmarks serve a practical purpose in a sometimes chaotic narrative cycle which features numerous exposed infants, disguised suitors and startling recognitions. They play the same role as Odysseus’ scar which identifies him to his aged nurse, and like Ariosto’s use of the story of the frail craft in Ruggiero’s pre-natal experiences, identify the hero as a new Perseus. They indicate an openness to extra-parental influences of a kind which render the child not less than fully human, but in some way more than human.³⁷

The *Amadis* cycle was singled out for particular criticism by Vives and one should not search among its intrigues for a complex Platonic subtext. However, it is worth noting the persistent reappearance of Danaë-like heroines, and of heroes who bear upon their bodies the marks of Providential approval. It is possible that the continuation of this pattern not only gave form to the genre, but perhaps also a sense of legitimacy.

A far more sophisticated use of the motif is found in *Gerusalemme liberata* (completed in 1575) where Tasso’s elaborate reworking of the story of Danaë can be taken as an interpretation of the *Aithiopika* itself, while at the same time engaging with topical disputes.

As has already been mentioned, the story of Tasso’s heroine Clorinda is directly inspired by that of Charikleia. Clorinda is also a white daughter born to a black King and Queen of Ethiopia, her complexion having been derived from a painting. Tasso departs

from his source in that, where Persinna transferred only the qualities of the sacrificial victim Andromeda to Charikleia, Clorinda's mother, having prayed during every day of her pregnancy before a picture of Saint George, transfers to her daughter both the whiteness of the Princess he delivered from the dragon, and the martial prowess of the Saint himself. According to Voragine's *The Golden Legend* the Princess was Libyan, yet Tasso describes her as white and blushing (*Gerusalemme liberata* XII, 23).

Tasso's narrative fully exploits the likenesses between the stories of Charikleia, Danaë and Perseus, and Saint George, combining elements from all three. Following his Romance model he begins Clorinda's story *in medias res* with the heroine rescuing the Christian couple Sofronia and Olindo from a Saracen pyre (*GL*, II). The Saracen ruler of Jerusalem, wishing to end the power of the Christians living within the walls, had been advised by a magician (who, perhaps significantly, is an apostate) that he must destroy a particular statue of the Virgin kept hidden in the city. The 'idoll' (*Godfrey of Bulloigne*, II, 6, 1), as the magician calls it, having been seized, it then miraculously escapes this act of iconoclasm by vanishing during the night. Thinking that the Christians have stolen it back, the King decides to kill them all. But the maiden Sofronia, in order to save her people, lies and confesses that she took it (II, 21-3) and is condemned to be burnt, along with her admirer Olindo. Clorinda appears just as the pyre has been lit. She is moved by Sofronia's plight and successfully bargains with the King, offering to fight with his armies in the coming battles with the crusaders in return for the couple's lives. Thus, the last minute rescue from the fire which ends Charikleia's adventures, is now employed by Tasso as the starting point for those of Clorinda.

Although her own parents were Christians, Clorinda had been exposed as a child and was brought up by a Saracen. She remains in ignorance of her origins until shortly

before her death. Clorinda's inheritance is kept concealed from the reader also until book twelve, but one can see in retrospect that the inborn influence of Saint George ensured that she could not leave Sofronia and Olindo to their fate. Walter Stephens notes that this episode presents a 'kind of double *mise en abîme*: Clorinda rescues a virgin who is accused of rescuing *the* Virgin (who may be operating through Sofronia to rescue the Christian community of Jerusalem)': Clorinda is therefore 'the "Saint George" who rescues the "white virgin"' (Stephens, p. 79, original italics).³⁸

Similarly, we can see that, while Clorinda has derived her knightly prowess via a painting and is able through this inheritance to rescue a maiden, Sofronia herself has felt forced to sacrifice her own life by, in effect, also taking the place of a work of art. By choosing to identify herself with the lost statue and climb upon the pyre in its place, Sofronia prompts Clorinda also to assert an identification between herself and the painted image in her past. This is an identification of which Clorinda herself, and the reader, are as yet unaware, but her actions here set in motion the chain of events which leads to the discovery of her origins. Tasso thus implies a likeness between the power of the painting to form Clorinda, the Queen of Ethiopia's child, and that of the consecrated image of the Virgin to protect the Christian community in Jerusalem, and gives both works of art an active role to play in the Providential scheme of his poem.

Stephens observes that the rescue of Sofronia at the beginning of Clorinda's story, echoes Heliodorus' placing a veiled representation of the rescue of Andromeda at the beginning of the *Aithiopika*, and one can add to this that it also incorporates the motif of the confusion made between maiden and statue. As we have seen, a similar incident is found in the *Aithiopika* when the bandit villagers mistake Charikleia for a stolen temple statue. At this point in his translation of Heliodorus, Underdowne, by having the villagers

refer to a 'lively image' taken from 'a church', manages (intentionally or not) to invoke Tasso.

The first readers of *Gerusalemme liberata* would have needed little prompting to detect the likeness between the 'pagans' who sacrilegiously attack the image of the Virgin and the iconoclasts among their contemporaries. Such active images are conceived of in quite another way to that in which the reformers viewed devotional art. When compared with the secular maternal impression anecdotes, Clorinda's birth appears to be not unlike the oft-repeated story of the 'furry girl' of Pisa, the difference being that, in that anecdote, there is no one, as it were, on the other side of the painting, except perhaps the painter. The image merely bounces back the desires projected towards it, or (worse still) projects the content of another human (the painter's) imagination. For Tasso, works of religious art do not stand outside the relationship between man and God, but take their place between the two.

Having said this, Tasso does allow for Clorinda's birth to be interpreted as an expression of her mother's desires. Maternal impression in *Gerusalemme liberata*, as in the *Aithiopika*, is employed as a tool of Providence, but the process itself is not explicitly presented as miraculous. What is important to recognise is that, unlike the attitude displayed by many of the teratologists, Heliodorus and Tasso allow for the mother's desire to be good, and to be a higher good than the demand for the simple replication of the father enshrined in narrow interpretations of Aristotelian theory. Indeed, demanding the perfect replication of a human father as the end of reproduction often appears in Romance tales to be merely a symptom of self-centredness and imbalance. This reflects the belief that true form originates in the divine, and it is to this authority that the wife of an unjust husband can appeal. Rather than insisting that where the human father is denied

catastrophe must follow, more complex possibilities are allowed, built upon the assurance that, where a desire is good, Providence will provide for the outcome also to be good.

Clorinda's mother perhaps desired to give birth to a Christian hero like Saint George. She is herself an innocent in need of a champion. Her own husband, King Senapo of Ethiopia, suffers from an unreasoning and groundless jealousy concerning her, and has her imprisoned in a chamber decorated with 'goodly purtraites', where she eventually conceives and gives birth to their daughter. This is a judgement upon the King, for, if he had not shut his wife away his child would no doubt have resembled him and would not have been exposed.

The captivity of Clorinda's mother, and her daughter's remarkable conception, links her to those many other imprisoned mothers-to-be who were consciously modelled after Danaë by their creators. Edward Fairfax's English translation of Tasso (1600) describes how the Queen of Ethiopia was shut away while

The fire of loue and frost of iealousie
Her husbands troubled soule alike torment,
The tide of fond suspicion flowed hie,
The foe to loue and plague to sweet content,
He mew'd her vp from sight of mortall eie.
Nor day he would his beames on her had bent

Gerusalemme liberata XII, 22 (tr. Fairfax as *Godfrey of Bulloigne*, 1600, Bk. XII, 22).³⁹

This experience of incarceration also leaves an internal mark upon Clorinda. At her first appearance we are told that the female knight pursues her endeavours 'in broad fields'

hating 'chambers, closets, [and] secret mewes' (*Godfrey of Bulloigne*, II, 39), a claustrophobia which was obviously impressed upon her in the womb.

Before the painted image of the 'champion bold...' Clorinda's mother 'plain'd, she mourn'd, she wept, she sigh'd, she praid' (*GB*, XII, 23). She certainly did not look upon the image in a way that could be thought 'shameful'. In another reminiscence of the story of Danaë, the infant Clorinda is smuggled out in 'a little chest' (*GB*, XII, 29). Before she parts with her child, the Queen asks the Saint: 'Thou heau'nly souldier which deliu' red hast / That sacred virgin from the serpent old' to protect her child and then collapses dead (*GB*, XII, 28).

Tasso's Ethiopian Queen is the victim of her husband's unreasoning and seemingly motiveless jealousy. King Senapo has fallen into darkness and, having lost sight of reality, believes only his own depraved phantasy. As the king who keeps an expectant mother imprisoned, he can be likened to Acrisius, and, as the husband of the woman, he can be compared with Hydaspes, Pandosto and Leontes. Senapo might 'mew up' his wife 'from mortall eye', but it is his own mortal eye, his own limited understanding, that rules him. As his jealousy shuts out true understanding, it also shuts out the 'beams of day'. In the original, Tasso describes the sunlight as coming from 'occhi del cielo' (*Gl.* XII, 22), the 'eye of heaven'. Tasso's reworking of the Danaë story is reminiscent of the Italian *märchen* *The Daughter of the Sun*, whose mother was also shut away from the light. More importantly Tasso has followed the example of Heliodorus in combining the story of Danaë with a maternal impression anecdote in such a way that the reader is shown that it is the father, and not the mother, who has rejected an ordained 'form'. The gender roles of the popular reports of maternal impression have again been reversed. It is the Acrisius figure, King Senapo, who has rejected the form,

the 'intention', projected on to him by the divine father and replaced this with deformed imaginings, notably his insane jealousy. The royal husband has shut out the light, but it shines through the painting and falls upon the Queen. In receiving an impression from the picture, his wife has turned to a higher, and wholly legitimate, source of form for her child. This may be a rebellion against a particular mortal, but it is not a rebellion against the source of all 'forms' (and so she resembles the imperial daughters of Romance who can invoke a higher kingship in the faces of the petty royalty who persecute them).

I think this was how Tasso saw the story of Hydaspes and Persinna. Hydaspes is a descendant of, and high-priest of the sun, yet we find that the influence of the sun, that is of Providence, has been blocked out. Hydaspes does not fall so far as Senapo, but the divine, intending to correct the King's seeing, projects a legitimate form on to his daughter through a work of art. It is as though the father has absented himself. The very mechanism of imaginative impression which was thought to threaten the communication of correct form provides instead the opportunity for the misguided father to be bypassed, and, what is more, art itself, also thought to be the source of rival dangerous influences, is employed as a perfect transparent medium for divine intentions.

A useful comparison can be drawn here with an actual altarpiece which reproduces another story from Voragine, Lorenzo Lotto's striking depiction of the trial of St. Lucy (completed in 1532). This can be seen as a sophisticated Renaissance reworking of mediaeval material: the story of the martyr as it appears in *The Golden Legend*, and of the motif of light shining upon a persecuted woman whose example can enlighten others.⁴⁰ In fact, the painting might be thought of as a companion piece to the 'creation' panel described previously. Saint Lucy was Sicilian having been born and martyred in Syracuse, and the tale chiefly concerns her stout defence of herself before her

Roman accusers. When he learns that Lucy has converted and given away her inheritance to the poor, her fiancé hands her over to the consul, who, when he cannot defeat her in argument, orders her to be sent to a brothel to be abused to death. When a thousand men and oxen cannot move her from the court he accuses her of ‘witchery’ and attempts to burn her and then drown her in boiling oil where she stands, before she is finally silenced by being stabbed through the neck.

It is interesting that, in *The Winter's Tale*, the trial of Hermione, the Queen of Sicily, for adultery takes on the colouring of a trial for heresy while in *The Golden Legend* that of the virgin Lucy, on trial for being a Christian and disobeying the Emperor's laws, becomes almost a trial for adultery.⁴¹ The consul accuses the saint of squandering ‘your patrimony with seducers, and so you talk like a whore’. She replies ‘As for my patrimony, I have put it in a safe place, and never have had anything to do with any seducers of the body or of the mind’ (trans. Ryan, p. 28). ‘Patrimony’ here refers not only to her financial inheritance, but her pagan spiritual inheritance, the ‘form’ she has inherited from her father and the ‘form’ her would-be husband wishes her to take. Hermione is accused of ‘high treason’ as well as being an adulteress (*WT*, III, ii, 13-14), while Lucy's betrayal of her legal *pater* Caesar, is coupled with the implied betrayal of her natural father and putative husband by disposing of her inheritance. These stories are alike because both concern women who are chaste, but who are accused of betraying fatherhood in its several forms. Like Hermione, Lucy is able to appeal above the heads of those present to a higher judge and father, and stand as the receptor of grace which flows from above. The way in which she becomes miraculously rooted to the spot expresses her active resistance (like that shown by Cordelia) to ‘seduction’, that is, to the wrong

influence. She will not be moved by words or by one thousand oxen. Jacobus de Voragine prefaces the Saint's story by explaining that

Lucy comes from *lux*, which means light. Light is beautiful to look upon: for as Ambrose says, it is the nature of light that all grace is in its appearance. Light also radiates without being soiled; no matter how unclean may be the places where its beams penetrate

The Golden Legend, trans. William Granger Ryan, p. 27.

The significance of Lucy's name led to her being given as her special attributes in devotional paintings a lamp and a pair of eyes, and she became the patroness of those suffering from diseases of the eye.⁴² The theme of light makes St. Lucy's life particularly suitable as a subject for the visual arts and Lotto attempts to convey the full drama of the story in a way that was a remarkable departure for the time (see fig. 8, p. 173).⁴³

Crowned with her bridal wreath Lucy becomes almost an accused Queen and a mother. Lotto organised the composition around a complex play of colours and of light and shadow, and this is more than a form of visual pun, it is a living analogy. The painting shows the triumph of light and can, therefore, be thought of as a work art that is the thing it depicts. The Roman consul is shown seated above the level of St. Lucy's head, but while she is brightly lit, he is left in shadow. A small child who is looking on is moved to run from his surrogate mother, a black maid, to embrace Lucy, as if her espousal of Christ has imbued her with maternal qualities without compromising her virginity. While the guards attempt to drag her away, she remains immovable and points past the Consul upwards to the dove of the Holy Spirit who hovers above and apart from her judge. The painting thus vividly portrays a telling disparity between the petty authority of the king or husband who sits in judgement, and the radiant splendour of his prisoner. The accused



Fig. 8. Lorenzo Lotto: 'St. Lucy' altarpiece (1532), main panel, 243 x 237 cm. Jesi, Pinacoteca Comunale. After Peter Humphrey: *Lorenzo Lotto*. New Haven CT: Yale University Press, 1997, p. 114.

Queen Hermione's appeal to an emperor (her father) makes Leontes' power seem small, while St. Lucy appeals to a power that renders even an emperor powerless. A work such as this may well have been in Tasso's mind when he placed the portrait of Saint George in the Ethiopian Queen's bedroom, and can perhaps tell us something also of how he interpreted the role of Andromeda's painting in Heliodorus' novel.

Before discussing in more detail the role of seeing and of the sun in the *Aithiopika* itself, it is worth noting that against the general background of interest in maternal impression it is more than probable that late Renaissance readers of the *Aithiopika* would have examined the circumstances of Charikleia's birth for evidence of Persinna's unfulfilled desires. Her admission that 'Hidaspes had bene married to mee tenne yeeres, and wee had never a childe' and the elaborate state preparations for the birth suggest a pervasive anxiety at the royal couple's failure to produce an heir. The reader can imagine the Queen looking anxiously, if not enviously, at the portraits of the heroes of the royal line and desiring to add to their number. But again, this could not be called a shameful desire, nor does Charikleia's circular birthmark, which is superimposed upon her whiteness, betray a slip. While the image of Andromeda was placed in the royal living quarters rather than a temple, it may well have been receptive to an unspoken prayer.

Chapter Five

Seeing Andromeda in the *Aithiopika*

1. The *Pater Patriae* and the Qualities of the Sun

In the previous chapter I suggested that Tasso's jealous King Senapo of Ethiopia, by attempting to shut out the forming beams of the 'eye of heaven', imitated the fault usually committed by the mother in cases of maternal impression. Although maternal impression played a decisive part in his daughter Clorinda's conception she was legitimate because the influences brought to bear upon the Queen bypassed her erring husband and travelled directly from the source of all form. Tasso took this idea directly from Heliodorus whose Ethiopian King Hydaspes can also be seen to have fallen. Hydaspes does not shut his wife away in a tower, but he does shut out the influence of the Sun from the Sun's own kingdom by mistaking the nature of his temporal and religious authority.

In the same way that Heliodorus' characters lament the vicissitudes of fortune while the reader is intended to recognise the guiding hand of Providence in their adventures, so they also speak of 'the gods' when we can deduce that the author himself considered there to be only one god. This god is either the sun itself, or an unseen god who fulfils a role in the moral realm analogous to that played by the sun in nature, one that has created visible nature as an image of the invisible realm.¹ As we have seen, for Plato and the neo-Platonic tradition 'the Good' is represented by the sun as the source of light, and light is synonymous with understanding (as intellectual enlightenment) (*Republic*, 508-35). The sun is the 'eye of heaven' which sees, but also creates and organises what it sees. As twin expressions of divine love it gives out heat which in the

correct amount is necessary for fertility and it projects light to see by. As was quoted above, in *The Republic* Socrates is made to describe the sun as ‘the child....whom the good begat in his own likeness, to be in the visible world, in relation to sight and the things of sight, what the good is in the intellectual world in relation to mind and the things of mind’ (*The Republic*, 508b, trans. Jowett, pp. 290-1).² We can also see how these ideas might have been married to existing traditions of sun-worship in attempts to create an all embracing religion of the sun. Such a system would also have been able to absorb the worship of particular Olympian deities, once it was shown that they too were aspects of the sun. Macrobius’ *Saturnalia*, one of the masterpieces of syncretism from late antiquity, contains an extended discussion in which the various gods and a large number of myths are all rationalised as relating to qualities of the sun (chapters 17-23). Among much else Macrobius explains that

The inhabitants of Camirus, who inhabit an island sacred to the sun, sacrifice to Apollo ‘the Ever-begotten and Ever-begetting’ (Ἀειγενετης), because the sun always comes into being at its rising and is itself the source of all life by its gifts of fertilisation, warmth, growth, nourishment and increase.

Macrobius: *Saturnalia*, 1.17.35 (trans. P. V. Davies, p. 120).

The fertilising aspect of the sun’s fatherly power plays an important role in *The Winter’s Tale* and will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter, but we might recall the opening tableau of Heliodorus’ novel as in some way being a moment of begetting. The sun gives the tale its beginning by casting light upon the mouth of the Nile and upon Charikleia. The first words are ‘The smile of daybreak was just beginning to brighten the sky, the sunlight to catch the hilltops...’ (1.1). Macrobius further defines the nature of the sun by saying

Apollo has been called 'Father of the People,' not as worshipped according to the particular religious usage of a single race or state but as the generating cause of all things, since the sun, by drying up moisture, is the universal cause of generation - in the words of Orpheus:

Having the mind and wise council of a father
and it is for this reason that we also call Janus 'Father' and worship the sun
under that name.

Macrobius: *Saturnalia*, 1.17.42.

Here we see the desire to place the sun above particular names and customs, as a focus of worship that would bind together the disparate peoples of the Roman Empire. The sun is *Pater Patriae* of all nations and peoples. And, if the Sun and Moon are taken to be the pinnacle of the visible hierarchy into which creation has been organised then it follows that, within particular nations, it is the monarch who plays a role analogous to that of the sun and represents the organising, fertile principle, dispensing justice and understanding to his people.

King Hydaspes has been born to play this role in a hierarchy of such representatives of 'the Good'. Hydaspes is both a descendant of the sun and high-priest of the sun, and his consort Persinna naturally takes her place as high-priestess of the moon.

Using the logic of this model we can say that, as the sun is the source and model of all fatherhood, all fathers possess a fertile sun-like power. The same idea can be applied to the artistic process. Artists are also fathers of a kind, in that they create by imposing form upon material. And, adopting a Platonic outlook, one can say that, if their art is to have any true value, the process of organising must employ a form which

ultimately emanates from the Good. If it does not then the created work will remain in the sphere of lies. As the sun is in heaven so must the father be in conception, the king must be to the nation, and the artist must be to his material. What makes a good king or father is the same quality that makes a good artist.

Heliodorus' novel is an expression of such ideas in that all parts of its construction are dependent upon the single metaphor of light as divine understanding impregnating the matter of existence. This idea sits at the centre like the sun, and both the subject matter and (to an extent) the literary technique of the *Aithiopika* take their form from it. The use of *ekphrases*, the 'hieratic epiphany' and 'pathetic optics' are all living parts of this single conception. Even the various digressions, so often the object of critical scorn, can be found to have a thematic and structural connection with the whole.

We have seen that the plots of the *Aithiopika* are arranged around two moments of seeing. The first of these involves the failure of a father to see, that is to understand correctly. It follows that this failure must result from the separation of the father from the source of understanding of which the sun is the symbol. He falls, as it were, into the realm of spiritual blindness. This was what happened to King Acrisius, Danaë's father, who did not of course realise that by spurning the child of Zeus he had separated himself from the source of his authority, and indeed he was determined to uphold his own mistaken interpretations of Apollo's oracle and of the succeeding events. In this way he was in fact setting himself up as a rival sun and steering 'by his own lights'.

In the earlier discussion of the nature of sight we saw that Plato held the eye to have been given 'So much of fire as would not burn' in order that it might project its own beam of 'gentle light' (*Timaeus*, 45 b-c). Similarly, the soul has its own powers of understanding, and, because these are weak in themselves, they need to be surrounded by

divine understanding in order to operate reliably, in the same way that the eye's beam of light is surrounded by the sun's light.

The sun consists of fire, which, combining heat and light, spreads fertile warmth (Shakespeare has Prince Florizel describe Apollo as 'the fire-rob'd god, / Golden Apollo' [*WT*, IV, iv, 29-30]). The danger posed by the father who has become a rival sun is that his 'beams', by which I mean the way in which he expresses his understanding, must become a dangerous fire which will threaten to burn up the innocent.

By transposing the relationship between Acrisius and his daughter into one between a king and his wife Heliodorus has altered the Danaë story to the form we find in *Gerusalemme liberata* and in *The Winter's Tale*. The conception of Charikleia is marvellous, if not quite as brazenly so as that of Perseus. Persinna exposes her own child because she thinks Hydaspes will not believe that it is not the result of adultery, while Acrisius exposes his daughter and grandson because he will not accept that Zeus is the father of the child. Lest it be thought that likening Hydaspes and Persinna to Acrisius and Danaë, rather than to King Cepheus and Queen Cassiopeia of Ethiopia, contradicts the premise of Charikleia inheriting the role of Andromeda, a similar comparison, at least between Acrisius and Cepheus is already implicit in the Perseid. Nevertheless, it may seem strange to bracket Hydaspes with Acrisius. For while the latter is associated with destructive Gorgon-like seeing, Hydaspes is a sympathetic figure, a just and magnanimous ruler much loved by his subjects. However, for Providence to intervene in the fathering of his child in this way, Hydaspes too must have become cut off from the sun's beneficent light and have failed in his role as 'father of the nation'.

The high-priest Sisimithres is in no doubt that the gods have organised Charikleia's adventures in order to bring to an end the practice of human sacrifice in

Ethiopia. He recommends (in Underdowne's translation) that all present should 'suffer divine miracles to sinke in our mindes, and be healpers of their will' (10.39, Saintsbury ed., p. 281). It clearly was part of the divine plan to contrive events so that Hydaspes should find himself required to sacrifice his own daughter, rather than the children of his enemies. In the event, even his acknowledging Charikleia's identity is not enough to stop Hydaspes burning her upon the altar. Hydaspes' remarkable resolve does not stem from hard-heartedness, but from what seems an excess of nobility. He tells his assembled people that

so all-surpassing is my devotion to you and the land of my birth that, without a second thought for either the continuation of my line or the joy of being called father....I am resolved to sacrifice her to the gods for your sake. I see your tears; I see your perfectly natural emotions....And yet I have no choice: though possibly you may prefer me not to, I must obey the law of our fathers and put the interests of the nation above my own.

Aithiopika, 10.16 (trans. Morgan).

In the end the will of the people prevails. They tell Hydaspes 'we acknowledge you for our good king, acknowledge your selfe to be a father....you that are the father of the people abrode, be father in your own house' (10.18, trans. Underdowne, p.266).³ The people's pleading neatly reverses the situation in the story of Andromeda, where the subjects of Cepheus compel the unwilling King to sacrifice his daughter. The way in which this plea is worded may suggest that Hydaspes has two tasks, that of being the father of the nation and that of being father to a family, and that he has concentrated on the one at the expense of the other. The truth is these are only the different sides of one task, that of substituting on earth for the divine in heaven, by imposing form upon the

nation. The separation between his public and private roles, made manifest in the most dramatic terms at the sacrificial altar, reveals that Hydaspes has lost his way.

Even after he has been persuaded to spare Charikleia, Hydaspes still intends to sacrifice Theagenes. In a moment that betrays the fact that he is the direct descendant of Cepheus, he immediately decides to marry Charikleia to his nephew Meroebos. Indeed, he invokes his ancestors as he announces this and remains quite oblivious to the irony, telling Meroebos: 'Our ancestral gods and heroes, founders of our race, have discovered a daughter for us and, it seems, a bride for you!' (trans. Morgan, 10.24). Meroebos is no Phineus though, and blushes at the suggestion.

The image of human sacrifice, and particularly that of a king prepared to sacrifice his own child, suggests an atavistic return to the days of Kronos before the rule of Zeus. And the ethos of that primeval age is reflected also in Acrisius' misinterpretation of the prophecy describing the birth of his eventual successor. Acrisius' desire to prevent his own demise was given dramatic expression in the gaze of the Gorgon which fixes life as it is, allowing no further change. Such anxieties may seem quite alien to Hydaspes, but he does identify himself closely with a fixed ideal of Ethiopian tradition, a tradition of which child sacrifice is a part.

Human sacrifice takes more than one form in Ethiopia. Hydaspes' respect for the 'law of our fathers', over and above the life of his own child and the wishes of his sorrowing wife, expresses the way in which he has almost erased his own human self in a total identification with his royal inheritance. His noble ideals allow Hydaspes to show himself as just and selfless at some moments, but leave him also quite unable to accommodate the individual human selves of those he loves. To suffer from a such blind spot is not what it is to be a ruler who truly works in accordance with Providence,

because Providence does take account of the life of each individual. Events force Hydaspes to acknowledge his own human feelings for his child as he conducts her to the sacrifice: 'he laid hold of Charikleia and made as if to lead her towards the altars and the fire that burned on them, though the fire of sorrow that smoldered in his own heart was hotter than any altar fire' (10.17, trans. Morgan). He is forced to accept Charikleia as his own, even though she has every appearance of being someone else's child.

That maternal impression played a major part in Charikleia's conception would appear to have denied Hydaspes his role as father. The notion of his being too rigidly bound by 'the laws of our fathers' is corrected through Persinna's giving birth to a child that does not appear to be his. And this reflects upon the Aristotelian ideal of the perfect replication of the father in reproduction, which might be interpreted in a naive way as demanding the replication of a particular individual, when what really matters is that only that form desired by the divine is reproduced. Because Hydaspes has mistaken what this inheritance actually means, he is shown a child that appears to be a stranger, only for it to be revealed much later that it has inherited from an ancestor in a way which is exact to an almost supernatural degree. Hydaspes has clung too closely to his idea of his true inheritance, but has made what was best in this inheritance, as represented by Andromeda, strange to himself. We can now see why Heliodorus chose to use the phrase *hoi physantes* meaning 'parents' to mean instead 'children'. Charikleia, as a second Andromeda, is both the ancestor and the child of Hydaspes; she is both begotten by him and begets him because he is educated through her and is taught to see correctly once again when she brings him 'light' to see by. A divine power acting through Charikleia has bestowed the gift of a parent upon him by reordering his character, melting his *ker* (the

‘soft wax’ of his heart) so that it may be restamped and he becomes like one newly conceived.

Hydaspes as ‘father of the nation’ is in Latin the *pater patriae*, a phrase which echoes the Greek *pater patris* (*patris* meaning ‘fatherland’). To Platonists such etymological likenesses as between ‘father’ and ‘nation’ would not be thought of as incidental, but as communicating an important idea. The phrase encapsulates what Philo called the ‘indissoluble union’ between ‘the authority of the leader with the anxious care of a relation’ (see above, p. 101-2).

The story of Oedipus, which shares with that of Perseus a Delphic prophecy and an exposed infant, places an emphasis upon the mysterious link between the health of the monarch (moral or otherwise) and the health of the nation. The hidden guilt of Oedipus expresses itself in the plague that afflicts all Thebes. The failure of Hydaspes and Persinna to produce an heir before, or after, the conception of Charikleia and the circumstances that make it necessary for her then to be given up, should also be seen not merely as a personal misfortune, but as an indication of some fault in Hydaspes’ otherwise laudable character and policy. He has sacrificed his own humanity and his power to create, denying himself to a point far beyond that which is wanted by either his people or the Divine. This imbalance distorts his role as representative of the sun, because if he is to be genuinely like the sun, he must be creative.

Although Hydaspes’ thinking has lost contact with Providence, he does not make the mistake of forgetting his own mortality and putting himself in the gods’ place. He still thinks of himself as beneath the divine, as he reminds the people of Syene. After he captures their city by manipulating the flow of the Nile, the priests hail his arrival as the ‘epiphany of...our god and saviour’. In reply Hydaspes tells them ‘that their compliments

ought to fall short of blasphemy' and retires to his tent (9.22). This scene comes at the end of a series of seeming digressions which describe the divine nature of the Nile, and also of the land of Egypt, and how the sun at the summer solstice sits directly above the city. Heliodorus' self-aware technique certainly encompasses the inclusion of relevant material under the guise of its being unnecessary detail added for its own sake, and here we learn that the priests of Syene identify the Nile with Horos, the son of Isis and Osiris, and name the river 'Lord of all Egypt, Saviour of the South, Father and Creator of the North' (9.22).⁴ It would seem natural that Egyptians should give the Nile a title resembling that of 'Father of the nation' as they were entirely dependent upon its fertility. Hydaspes is not simply refusing to be treated as a god, but is refusing worship that he claims should be rightly accorded to 'Ethiopia', which he tells the Syeneans is the source of the Nile and the 'mother' of their gods. The logic in the assigning of the roles of father and mother rests upon considering the sun and the landscape as taking the roles of male and female in the work of conception.

It is also significant that Hydaspes should be shown specifically denying that his entry into the city is a true epiphany. This incident marks a step towards his final acceptance of the authority of Providence. His denial of his own divinity helps prepare the way for the true epiphany of Charikleia's return. She is handed over to him as a prisoner after the fall of Syene, but as yet he has no idea who she is (though he does recognise her from a dream he has had: 'an image generated by the soul' [9.25]).

Merkelbach suggests that Hydaspes' strategy for capturing the city of Syene by building and then breaking open a dam relates to the Egyptian feast of the 'Rising of the Nile' (Merkelbach, pp. 281-2). Hydaspes' victory occurs on Midsummer's day and 'so that the reader does not miss the mystical meaning of the whole episode Heliodorus says

that coincidentally the feast of the Rising of the Nile falls on this day, the highest feast of the Egyptians which took place at the summer solstice (naturally a feast of Helios)' (Merkelbach, p. 282, my own translation). The feast marks the victory of the sun god Horos over his enemy the dragon Typhon (or Seth), while Isis waits for his safe return (Morgan points out that this passage in Heliodorus (9.9) is taken 'in great part verbatim' from Philo's *Life of Moses* [*Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, p. 543n]). The dragon attempts to hold the water back from the parched earth, and with his defeat, symbolised by the breaking of the dam, the land is made fertile. Hydaspes therefore can be seen as fulfilling the solar, dragon slaying, role, but he does not glory in the part.

Interestingly, Hydaspes' tactics on the battlefield also have a thematic significance and are presented as a victory over living statues, or rather over men who have turned themselves into statues by donning metal armour. The Persian cavalrymen 'encased' in armour look 'just like [men] of steel or a hammer-worked statue come to life' (9.15). Hydaspes' Ethiopians defeat them by firing so many arrows that 'it seemed as dense as a cloud blotting out the sun' and by aiming particularly 'at their enemies' eyes'. The dying horsemen fall to the ground 'with the arrows protruding from their eyes like the twin pipes of a double flute' (9.18). The imagery of light and seeing here perhaps also points toward a battle against fixity and blindness that Hydaspes must later fight within himself.

Charikleia's foster father Charikles, as high-priest of Apollo in Delphi, also holds an official position in which he must substitute for the sun. When he suddenly appears in the dénouement to claim Charikleia, Charikles wants Theagenes condemned for eloping with her because, as he tells Hydaspes and Persinna 'you might with justice consider yourselves the victims of this sacrilege, for he has desecrated the person and the holy precinct of Apollo, who is one and the same as the Sun, the god of your fathers' (10.36).

But the direct identification of the self with an offended deity, and one's own desires with those of Apollo, is exactly the state of mind from which the novel's fathers must learn to separate themselves.

Apollo had long been identified as a sun-deity. He was also god of harmony and the arts, and of the oracle at Delphi and twin brother of the moon goddess Artemis. Unlike the other two fathers, Kalasiris is high-priest of Isis, also a moon deity. In fact, the same syncretic outlook which places the sun behind all of the male gods featured in the novel, also marries together Isis and Artemis as the female moon, the sun's sister-cum-consort. Charikleia spends much of the action dressed as Artemis, so the moon clearly plays an important role in novel. It is not that Heliodorus thinks of there being more than one deity, but that the moon represents the matter which receives the sun's light. Where those whose function it is to represent the sun fall short, the moon offers a way in which the sun's light may be brought to bear by indirect means upon its recalcitrant subjects.

One threat posed by the misguided father is that he will fix time at a certain moment and not allow change or succession to proceed. The other danger is that the quality of fiery, solar understanding will become a destructive power. It is not surprising then, that in so strictly organised a novel, we find the chief threat to Charikleia comes from attempts to burn her alive. Fortunately, she proves to be impervious to fire, for each time the threat is made Providence so arranges events that she is given the protection she needs. She escapes when the bandits' island is set alight (2.1), and from Arsake's attempt to burn her on a pyre before the walls of Memphis (8.9). When she reaches Ethiopia, Charikleia stands 'for some time' upon a gridiron in a test of her chastity (10.9). Her success in that test only brings the threat of immolation at the hands of her own father. In each case she is saved by a factor which on each successive occasion moves closer to the

essence of her identity. She is saved from the fire on the island because Thyamis, who is quite misled as to who she is, has hidden her in the cave. She is protected upon Arsake's pyre by the Pantarbe ring hidden with her as a child. and upon the gridiron by her virginity. Finally, she is saved from her father's altar by the revelation of who she actually is and the recognition that Providence has guided her home.

Both fathers, Hydaspes and Charikles, each dedicated to Apollo, are associated with the immolation of daughters. Charikles' own daughter died in a mysterious fire upon her wedding night, and fire can consume a child as well as any monster. The contrast between using fire to light torches for a wedding, or for a funeral, is made three times in the novel. When Theagenes thinks Charikleia has been burned alive on the island he laments 'Fire has consumed you; no wedding torches did heaven light for you, but these flames instead' (2.1). Charikles, describing his daughter's death, observes that 'the same torches that had shone so brightly at her nuptials served to light the pyre at her funeral' (2.29). And, as he takes her to the sacrifice, Hydaspes tells Charikleia

Come with your father: he has not been able to robe you in a bridal gown; it is not to marriage torches and a bridal chamber that he has brought you, but it is for sacrifice that he adorns you now, and the torches he lights are not those of the wedding ceremony but those that burn on the altar of sacrifice.

Aithiopika, 10.16.

This contrast makes plain the opposition between the two kinds of fire, one fertile and one destructive, which express two ways of seeing.

The lustful Arsake (who is genuinely villainous, unlike Charikles and Hydaspes) is associated with similar threats. As Charikleia stands among the flames of the pyre Asake has built for her we find the same 'bridal' image:

The flames flowed around her rather than licking against her; they caused her no harm but drew back wherever she moved towards them, serving merely to encircle her in splendor and present a vision of her standing in radiant beauty in a frame of light, like a bride in a chamber of flame

Aithiopika, 8.9, trans. Morgan.⁵

The flames in which Arsake attempts to destroy her rival begin to burn within herself. We are told that when she is tormented in the night by her immoderate and self-centred desire for Theagenes, there was ‘a light burning in [her] room whose flame, as it were, shared in the fire of her love’ (7.9). Unlike Hydaspes and the goddesslike Charikleia, Arsake has quite openly, as was the Persian custom, claimed a godlike status for herself. She expects her subjects to prostrate themselves before her. As Morgan notes: ‘It was customary for Persians to prostrate themselves (*proskynein*) before their rulers. The Greeks, however, reserved this gesture of respect for their gods and regarded with horror what they interpreted as divine honors being paid to a living man’ (*Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, p. 504n).

The pyre built by Arsake represents the negative form of passionate fire, and the potential is there in all physical love to run a similar destructive course. Chaste Charikleia is at first wary even of being left alone with Theagenes, for as she says ‘The flames of his passion burn higher, I think, when he sees his beloved defenceless, with none to protect her’ (4.18). Likewise, seeing Theagenes has the effect of kindling up a flame within Charikleia. When he triumphs at the Pythian Games

Charikleia was now utterly vanquished, even more a slave to her passion than before, after seeing Theagenes a second time. For when lovers look one another in the eye, their ardor is reawakened; the sight rekindles their hearts and fuels

the flames of love.

Aithiopika, 4.4, trans. Morgan.

There may be nothing remarkably original in Kalasiris' observation here. In fact it seems so common a thought that one hardly notices it, but it gains considerably in significance once the thematic context is recognised. Here he is echoing a passage from Plutarch's *Moralia* (which he also quotes from liberally in his speech on the evil eye):

only those unacquainted with love itself could, in my judgement, be astonished at the natural phenomenon that takes place when Median naptha catches fire at a distance from a flame. The glances of the beautiful kindle fire, even when returned from a great distance, in the souls of the amorous.

Moralia, V. 7, 681c.⁶

The fire which burns in the lovers' eyes is clearly intense, but this is a fire which does not destroy what it burns. This is the true flame which should accompany marriage, because love, which is a form of understanding, when centred outside itself and upon its correct object is only creative.

The climax of the procession in honour of Neoptolemos comes when Charikleia hands Theagenes a torch which becomes a symbol of their love and the password they choose to identify themselves by. After Theagenes strikes the disguised Charikleia, she asks him

'O Pythian....have you forgotten the torch?' Her words pierced Theagenes' heart like an arrow.....He gazed hard at Charikleia and was dazzled by the brilliance of her eyes, as if by a shaft of sunlight shining out between the clouds.

Aithiopika, 7.7.

Charikleia's love, because it is chaste, is not at odds with her Providential role; it too expresses her exalted nature. Kalasiris describes the moment of 'hieratic epiphany' when Charikleia appears before the people of Delphi dressed as Diana, and says that 'as she was that day the light in her eyes shone brighter than any torch' (3.4). Such shining eyes are an attribute of Homer's Athena in the *Odyssey* when she materialises to intervene Providentially in the action. Kalasiris tells Knemon that Apollo and Artemis appeared to him one night and entrusted Theagenes and Charikleia to him, and that, when gods descend to earth, the 'wise' may recognise them 'firstly by their eyes, which have an extraordinary intensity and never blink' (3.13).

In Heliodorus' thematic system this fertile fire belonging to love and, therefore, to the sun-like centre of understanding, is also the spirit which animates any art expressing the truth. This link is made explicit in the curious incident where Kalasiris buys Charikleia's freedom from the merchant Nausikles with a precious royal ring left with her by Persinna. In an elaborate deception, Kalasiris pretends to pluck the jewel from a fire lit upon an altar where sacrifices are to be made to Hermes (5.13). This is followed by an extended *ekphrasis* describing the ring's stone and its wondrous decoration (5.13-14).

The practical reason why Kalasiris cannot simply hand Nausikles the ring is that he wishes to keep secret Charikleia's identity and the source of the royal treasures. When Nausikles sees the ring he immediately realises that it is worth as much as his entire fortune. Kalasiris' flamboyant gesture of pretending to produce the gem from the fire is a piece of theatre which might seem to express the slightly off-centre aspect of his character. He has often been taken to be a portrait of the archetypal pagan 'saint' who is also more than one part the cynical 'charlatan' Charikles later accuses him of being (10.36).⁷ Kalasiris first tells Nausikles not to mock the ceremony and then 'while

pronouncing the invocation...drew - or pretended to draw - from the altar fire what he had had in his hand all along'. He tells Nausikles that the ring is the price of Charikleia's release 'which the gods convey to you by way of me' (5.13). Such a deception might appear to be running the risk of incurring divine displeasure, but can be excused on several grounds. Kalasiris believes that Charikleia's journey is made under the gods' protection, and therefore the treasures have been provided for just such situations. All he says, therefore, is technically true, but is put into a context which will open the eyes of the earthbound Nausikles. Also, the scene is staged within the temple of Hermes, the patron of tricksters, a divinity who far from being offended by such conjuring, would take a positive delight in it.

That the ring is both presented as having been taken from the sacrificial fire and is given to Nausikles in return for Charikleia, suggests that it is a suitable object to be substituted for Charikleia, or that the ring is somehow like Charikleia. So the extended *ekphrasis* describing the ring which follows may be intended primarily to tell the reader something about Charikleia herself, and the artistry used to create the ring also tells us something about the novel itself.⁸

The ring, inset with amber, bears an amethyst 'As big in circumference as a maiden's eye' (5.13). This stone is Ethiopian in origin and engraved with a pastoral scene showing a shepherd standing on a rock piping to his sheep, and it too sends out a beam like that from the maiden Charikleia's eyes. We are told that

from the heart of an Ethiopian amethyst blazes a pure radiance, fresh as springtime. If you held one and turned it in your hands, it would throw off a shaft of golden light that did not dazzle the eye with its harshness but illuminated it

with its brilliance.

Aithiopika, 5.13.

Heliodorus explains that the light and colour of these stones are superior to amethysts from either Iberia or Britain, and Reinhold Merkelbach has suggested that this is because they originate in the east where the rising sun is stronger than the setting sun which shines upon western climes (see Merkelbach, 1962, pp. 265-6). I think it is intended to remind us also of Ethiopia's being a favourite nation of the sun, and that the stone shares its origin with Charikleia. Underdowne's translation emphasises the message that the light of the amethyst can heal the eyes: 'he casteth forth a golden beame, which doth not hurte or dimme the sight but maketh it much better and clearer' (Saintsbury ed., p. 128).

The ring is presented as a masterpiece of the jeweller's craft, and the artistry of the piece lies in its exploiting and displaying the qualities inherent in the stone. But, as the passage does not describe any gem that actually existed but a jewel devised by Heliodorus himself to fulfil a role in his own heliocentric narrative, the artistry is entirely literary. Gems containing the light of the sun are a material particularly suited to a form of art in which artifice and reality are curiously blended. The sheep appear to have 'golden fleeces', but 'this was no beauty of art's devising, for art had merely highlighted on their backs the natural blush of the amethyst' (Morgan, 5.14). This leads to a fine conceit. The lambs 'cavorting' and 'frolicking' around the shepherd revel 'in the sunshine of the amethyst's brilliance', and so they are depicted as enjoying the sun, and are actually bathed in the sun's light contained in the stone. Underdowne's literal version states that the lambs 'skipped in the flame of the Amethyst, as if they had beene in the sunne' (Saintsbury ed., p. 129). In fact some lambs seem on the point of leaping out of the picture:

The oldest and boldest of them presented the illusion of wanting to leap out through the setting of the stone but of being prevented from doing so by the jeweller's art, which had set the collet of the ring like a fence of gold to enclose both them and the rock.

Aithiopika, 5.14, tr. Morgan.

Which leads to the final twist in the passage:

The rock was real rock, no illusion, for the artist had left one corner of the stone unworked, using reality to produce the effect he wanted: he could see no point in using the subtlety of his art to represent a stone on a stone!

Aithiopika, 5.14.

This is a detail which is reminiscent of Achilles Tatius' description of the rock in the painting of Andromeda which the artist had made 'rough, just as nature had fashioned it' (*Leucippe*, 3.7). The *ekphrasis* ends on this triumphant note, at a point where art and the object depicted have become one. This also has the quality of divine artistry, for reality is the matter Providence has moulded. Likewise we can say that when Charikleia appears in Meroe, she is a depiction of Andromeda, but is no illusion. She is no less Hydaspes' and Persinna's true daughter for having Andromeda's fate depicted in her own person, and has no less freedom to act as she sees fit.

Nausikles admires the way in which, having been rescued from the flames, 'the fire still burns' in the stone (5.15). Through using the qualities of the stone the artist has produced a work which, in a mysterious way, can be said to be alive. This is the art which draws upon the source of all understanding and, containing the divine spark, is not to be identified with the cold marble statuary which represents an end to change. And this resolves the paradox that, while Andromeda is rescued from appearing to be a statue,

Charikleia is saved by establishing her likeness to a painting. The difference between the two forms of art is the same as that between mortal and divine understanding. It is the difference between a flawed understanding which threatens to burn up the object of its passion, and the ray of light which brings fertility.⁹

Certainly, the painting of Andromeda that Persinna saw must have sent out a 'golden beam' of sunlight which reached her womb (and at that moment Charikleia 'began in grace'). When Charikleia is forced to walk upon a gridiron in the dénouement, in order to prove her virginity and therefore her suitability as a sacrifice to the Moon goddess, she produces

her Delphic robe, woven with gold thread and embroidered with rays, and put it on. She let her hair fall free, ran forward like one possessed, and sprang on to the gridiron, where she stood for some time without taking any hurt, her beauty blazing with a new and dazzling radiance as she stood conspicuous upon her lofty pedestal; in her magnificent robe she seemed more like an image of a goddess than a mortal woman. A thrill of wonder ran through the crowd, who in unison made the heavens resound with their cry, wordless and unmeaning, but expressive of their astonishment

Aithiopika, 10.9.

Underdowne's translation of this particular passage cannot be said to bring out very clearly the idea that Charikleia herself is 'ablaze' with the sun's beauty, nor that she is like an 'image upon a pedestal', but this spectacle is quickly followed by the comparison between Charikleia and the painting and so the point is made.¹⁰

Charikleia's robe is that of the priestess of Diana, while Hydaspes' role as sun-king is complemented by Persinna's as Moon priestess. In fact, Persinna proves to

possess a moon-like chastity (chastity being defined here as fidelity) while Hydaspes' own sunlike authority falls into doubt. The role of the moon in the *Aithiopika* suggests a pattern that can be applied to other romances also. Where the king fails to project the correct forms and actually blocks out the light, the sun's beams must reach the Earth by being reflected from the moon. The ends of Providence are achieved by a circuitous and more time consuming route, via a series of chaste receptors. This perhaps explains the anomalous whiteness of the Ethiopian princess Andromeda; she must be like the moon and receive the gaze of Perseus, but, within Heliodorus' narrative, her moon-like whiteness reflects the sun's organising beams to Persinna's eye and thence to her womb. Hence, the presence of female protagonists in this class of romance; where the King is blind to divine wishes the emphasis must be thrown on to the feminine side.

The Moon also has a particular link with Ethiopia. Ben Jonson in *The Masque of Blacknesse* (1605) has Niger hail the moon as 'Great *Æthiopia*, Goddess of our shore' (line 226). He provides a gloss in which he explains that 'The Aethiopians worshipd the Moone by that surname' (eds. Herford and Simpson, vol. VII, p. 176) and refers the reader to Stephanus' dictionary. In the *Aithiopika*, the main focus of the story does not fall upon the Sun-king, but upon a female protagonist, who, by following a circuitous route, brings light to the king. Therefore Heliodorus' romance is not like the epics of Homer, a primary work, but it is a secondary, reflected work. Unlike the poet who could look directly at the sun (because he was blind), Heliodorus writes an 'Æthiopian' (that is a lunar) history upon which, like the amethyst, the sun has shone.

2. Charikles and Charikleia

The procession in honour of Neoptolemos is the novel's most striking *ekphrasis* after the opening scene and provides a spectacle to delight the eye, having first ravished the ear.

The scene is prefaced by the pronouncement by the oracle of the lovers' destiny and culminates in Charikleia and Theagenes seeing one another upon the steps of the temple.

This elaborate piece of public theatre is witnessed by three audiences; the people of Delphi who were actually present, by Knemon, who sees via Kalasiris' powers of description, and by the reader.

Heliodorus presents the scene in accordance with his practice of 'pathetic optics', carefully indicating where each pair of eyes is directed, what they saw and how both the observers, and the observed reacted. The beauty of the hymn to Thetis was such that, as Kalasiris puts it, 'one's ears charmed one's eyes to be blind to what they saw' (3.3). With the arrival of Theagenes among his Thessalian companions 'Every eye was turned towards their captain....it was as if a flash of lightning had cast all they had seen before into darkness, so radiant he was in our eyes' (3.3). Charikleia, dressed for her role as the presiding priestess, the 'acolyte of Artemis', outshines even this paragon

But when the rosy-fingered Dawn, the child of morning, appeared (as Homer would say), when from the temple of Artemis rode forth my wise and beautiful Charikleia, then we realised that even Theagenes could be eclipsed, but eclipsed only in such measure as perfect female beauty is lovelier than the fairest of men.

Aithiopika, 3.4.

Gerald Sandy notes that, at the moment Charikleia and Theagenes fall in love, Heliodorus makes a pun on '*heôrôn*' (they looked) and '*êrôn*' (they loved) (Sandy, 1982, p. 128n).

The couple are seen by the crowd, but they can only really see one another: ‘all the while they gazed hard into one another’s eyes, as if calling to mind a previous acquaintance or meeting’ (3.5). This observation, with its echo of Plato’s *Phaedrus*, reminds us that the lover’s gaze unifies seeing and understanding at a level that is beyond the everyday.¹¹ Indeed, the entire passage is reminiscent of the description in Plato’s dialogue of the experience of a lover seeing true beauty. The beloved becomes ‘the image of a god’. And, as the lover gazes ‘there is a sort of reaction, and the shudder passes into an unusual heat and perspiration;as he receives the effluence of beauty through the eyes’ (*Phaedrus*, 251a-b, tr Jowett, p. 268).

The meeting outside the temple is identified by Wolff as a prime example of the ‘hieratic epiphany’ (see Wolff, p. 191). While for his part Theagenes embodies the virtues of his distant relative, the semi-divine Achilles, he has some Perseus-like qualities also (2.34). The procession itself is staged to honour the memory of Neoptolemos, Achilles’ son and husband of Menelaus’ daughter Hermione (the story of his death at the hands of the people of Delphi forms the basis of Euripides’ *Andromache*). Charikleia is dressed as Artemis the moon-goddess, and eclipses Theagenes. Although it is not mentioned, Achilles was the bitter enemy of Charikleia’s ancestor, the black Ethiopian king Memnon (4.8), who was the son of Eos, the ‘rosy-fingered’ goddess of the dawn (Theagenes and Charikleia’s love is, therefore, a joining of contraries).¹² The presences whose dim reflection the reader catches here should be considered divine in origin, but, the couple who are thus transfigured in the eyes of the onlookers and inspire in them religious love, are transfigured in each other’s eyes by a sanctified romantic love.

This *ekphrasis* brings a remarkable response from the listening Knemon. When the passage reaches its climax with the reference to Charikleia's 'torch-like' eyes, Knemon suddenly interrupts, taking Kalasiris by surprise:

'It's them!' exclaimed Knemon 'It's Charikleia and Theagenes!'

'Where are they? In the gods' name, show them to me!' implored Kalasiris, supposing that Knemon could actually see them.

'They are not here, Father,' replied Knemon, 'but your description portrayed them so vividly, so exactly as I know them from my own experience, that they seemed to be before my eyes'

'I doubt,' said Kalasiris, 'that you have seen them as Greece and the sun gazed upon them that day...'

Aithiopika, 3.4.

Despite Kalasiris' doubts, as we have seen, it is possible for Knemon's momentary vision to contain a quality found also in the experience of 'love at first sight' enjoyed by Charikleia and Theagenes. The art of Kalasiris' narration conveys the striking nature of his subject and communicates an extraordinarily vivid impression of the couple to Knemon's visual imagination. The form of the description matches the ceremony itself, as it builds towards the appearance of Charikleia on the temple steps, and the overall effect carries something of the same meaning and power. This moment is analogous to that in which the beam of sunlight shines from the heart of the carved amethyst. It makes explicit, in a new and telling way, that aspect of the epiphany in which art is found to have come to life, and it is also one further variation upon Persinna's seeing Andromeda.

The wonder experienced at this spectacle by the people of Delphi, by Kalasiris and, at one remove by Knemon, is sharply contrasted with the reaction of Charikles. The

larger significance seems lost upon him and he sees it all in quite a different way. Taking a parent's pride in his (adoptive) daughter he comments to Kalasiris 'Did you see her, my pride and joy, and Delphi's too....?' And then adds, 'Did she not add a certain luster to the ceremony?' (3.6, trans. Morgan). Kalasiris tells him to 'mind his words'. Charikles implies that it is not Charikleia who gains by becoming the vessel in which the deity appears, but the mortal, his own daughter, who graces the divine occasion. He not only misinterprets, but actually reverses the significance of the epiphany. As Kalasiris hints, Charikles' words might be considered an act of hubris inviting future discomfiture, and they parallel the boast of Cassiopia which invoked divine anger. Here, the perfect beauty of Andromeda, as seen in Charikleia, has led her guardian to forget the role of the gods upon this auspicious day. Once we have recognised that it is Charikleia's destiny that she must re-enact the experience of Andromeda, it seems destined also that this oversight should occur.

Kalasiris, who is always careful of what he says to Charikles and knows that, to an extent, he must lead him on if he is to rescue Charikleia, tells Charikles that she was 'the crowning glory, the real jewel of the pageant' (3.6) (and as we have seen, Ethiopian jewels emit a divine light). Underdowne, correctly translating the Greek *ophthalmos*, has Kalasiris tell him that Charikleia's appearance was acknowledged by the crowd as 'the principall shewe yea and the very eye of the pompe' (Saintsbury ed., p. 82).

After Charikleia has fled from Delphi, Charikles laments that he has lost the 'light of his life' (4.19). The point is that he has looked too much to this light and has forgotten its origin. This has left him unable to interpret events correctly, a particularly serious failing, one would have thought, in a priest of Apollo. Charikles not only fails to interpret correctly the procession or the signs of Charikleia's love, but also is unable to interpret

the important ribbon bearing Persinna's message which is now in his possession. He is even prepared to believe that the text revealing Charikleia's exalted ancestry might contain some sorcery that is blighting her spirit. Persinna's 'embroidery' (4.5, trans. Morgan, p. 427) employs the royal Ethiopian variant of Egyptian Hieratic symbols and I think represents the way in which the Persinna faithfully wrote the character of the child after the wishes of the Sun-god (it is therefore very like the embroidered bandage Esmoreit wears displaying the royal badge of Sicily). Kalasiris' reaction to Persinna's text is to marvel 'at the subtlety of their [the gods'] governance' (4.9).

The scene on the temple steps reveals Charikleia as a favourite of the gods, as someone of near divine stature, Charikles sees only a triumph which reflects back upon himself. The ribbon reveals Charikleia's royal descent, a tale in which Kalasiris immediately perceives 'the hand of the gods' (4.9) while Charikles sees only a hidden threat. In an ideal world there would be no division between seeing and understanding, and for the lovers seeing one another, there is not. Part of the significance of the 'hieratic epiphany' is that a direct and spontaneous link is made between the spectacle observed and a sense of Providential order, an order which otherwise could only become apparent over a long period of time.

Even Charikles' understanding of a divinely sent vision is awry. His interpretation of the dream he has prophesying Charikleia's future, that it presages her imminent return to Ethiopia, is quite mistaken, being entirely coloured by his own forebodings, despite the presence of Apollo in the vision:

I dreamed that an eagle, released from the hand of Pythian Apollo, suddenly swooped down and, alas, snatched my poor daughter from my arms and flew off with her to one of the world's remotest extremities, a place teeming with dark

and shadowy phantoms. I do not know what he did to her in the end, for my vision was obstructed from keeping pace with the bird's flight by the immensity of space between us.

Aithiopika, 4.14.

That he fails to see far enough may, of course, be the vision's primary message, Charikles is not alone in the novel in being baffled by such revelations. Others, even the protagonists, seem unable to arrive at definitive interpretations for revelations and prophecies, though Charikles appears to actively work against them in a way other characters do not. The divinely inspired vision, of which Heliodorus makes great use, is itself an extraordinary form of sight. As Charikles later confesses in relation to this particular dream, he has a particular reason for fearing the interventions of the god he serves. And his explanation again centres upon an act of seeing.

If we consider the complementary ideas of benign and malign seeing, contained in the myth of Perseus, we would expect that the way in which the doting parent sees their child would be akin to that of a devotee seeing a god, or the lover seeing the beloved. That is, it should be closer to Perseus seeing Andromeda come to life than the Gorgon seeing her victim. For all his evident pride in her, Charikles' feelings upon witnessing the transfiguration of Charikleia seem both limited and distorting. He misunderstands what Charikleia's destiny is and, because he attempts to turn his misunderstanding into reality, the way in which he sees her becomes harmful to her.

Charikles' feelings, when he first took Charikleia into his care, are, in his own account, touchingly open: 'I tended her with much love, and in my heart felt deep gratitude to the gods. From that day forward I thought of her, and spoke of her, as my own daughter' (2.32). And she responded in kind. As Charikles puts it, in Underdowne's

translation, she ‘quickly perceived my good will toward her, and did embrace me as if I had been her father’ (2.32, ed. Saintsbury, p. 70). And we can assume Charikleia to have divined his character correctly with her own special vision: ‘even at so tender an age, there was something special, something godlike, about the light in the baby’s eyes, so piercing yet so enchanting was the gaze she turned on me as I examined her’ (2.31, trans. Morgan). Yet there is still a way in which he acts against the interests of his ‘nearest and dearest’ without wishing to. Even at a very early stage of his guardianship Charikles is uneasy, and this is because he is unable to separate Charikleia from the daughter he lost. As he explains, after the child was handed over to him

I decided not to tarry at Katadoupoi, lest some supernatural malevolence should once again rob me of a daughter. I sailed down the Nile to the sea, where I... embarked for home. And now the child lives here with me: she is my daughter, she bears my name and is the mainstay of my life

Aithiopika, 2.33.

Charikles’ early anxiety is echoed in his present note of possessiveness. With time, his anxiety has been fuelled by the suppressed knowledge that Charikleia’s destiny lies far away. It is understandable that, when Charikles has already suffered the loss of his own wife and daughter, he should cling to Charikleia in his anxiety, even at the cost of denying who she actually is. While she remains with him he is able to describe his past (in terms which echo Knemon’s use of theatrical imagery) as a ‘domestic tragedy’ which has turned out to have a happy ending (2.29). However, a complication has already arisen that threatens to reveal the deceptive nature of his happiness.

The new ‘torment’ of Charikles’ life ‘the source of a pain that will not heal’ (2.33) is Charikleia’s renunciation of marriage. She praises only virginity, calling it in

Underdowne's translation 'immaculate, unspotted, and uncorrupted' (Saintsbury ed., p. 71, or in Morgan's translation 'unstained' [3.33]). Charikleia does eventually accept marriage and embrace fertility, tacitly acknowledging that this does not necessarily involve 'staining' (as her own conception did not involve illicit 'staining'), but at this point in the tale she is right to resist. Charikles implores Kalasiris to induce Charikleia to 'acknowledge her own nature' (3.33), by marrying as he wishes. He begs Kalasiris not to allow his (foster) daughter to die and leave him 'cheated of my heart's desire' (4.7), meaning the proposed match with his nephew (a wish that is echoed in Hydaspes' desire to marry her to Meroebos). Kalasiris tells Charikleia that they need to get away from Delphi 'before you are compelled to submit to something distasteful - for Charikles has set his heart upon marrying you to Alkamenes' (4.13). And perhaps something 'distasteful' would have been recognised in the priest of Apollo marrying off, much against her wishes, the high priestess of Artemis, even seeking to have 'an Egyptian spell' (2.33) cast upon her to bring this about. Charikles has defined Charikleia's nature to his own requirements; after all, he has named her after himself.

One would have supposed that, if his sole motivation as a jealous father was to keep her safely, particularly at the time that her beauty reaches maturity, he would be content that she remain the acolyte of the virgin goddess Artemis, and would be reluctant to see her married at all. The thought of his encouraging a rival for Charikleia's affections seems slightly strange, though the rival he has in mind clearly does not sound particularly outstanding: 'I had hoped to marry her to my sister's son, a pleasant young man with nice manners and a civil tongue' (2.33). Faint praise indeed. Charikles has decided in favour of Alkamenes, because he is both a close relative and a non-entity.

When he is shown the child by Sisimithres the gymnosophist, Charikles' first impression of the seven year old was that 'she seemed nearly of an age to be married, such is the impression of increased stature given by surpassing beauty' (2.30), which is a very odd thing to say. While Charikleia's beauty does, no doubt, possess this mysterious quality, it is curious that he should immediately see her in this light. The reason he does so lies in his own unhappy past. Thinking of Charikleia as 'his own', is less the acceptance by Charikles of someone strange to him than the direct identification of Charikleia with his own lost daughter. We do not learn the name of the other daughter, but it is certainly possible that she would also have been called Charikleia. It is useful here to examine Charikles' account of the full circumstances of his daughter's death

She reached the age to be wedded, and of the many who sought her hand I gave her in marriage to the one whom I adjudged the best. But on the very night that she first lay with her husband, my poor child's life ended. A fire broke out in her chamber - whether heaven-sent or deliberately started I cannot say - and before the wedding anthem was finished, it modulated into a funeral dirge; she was borne from her marriage bed to her place of eternal rest; the same torches that shone so brightly at her nuptials served to light the pyre at her funeral. But malevolent Fate was planning a second act to my tragedy: the child's mother, broken by her death, was also taken from me

Aithiopika, 2.29.

This girl's unexplained and fiery death certainly invites speculation. Again one might suppose that this remarkable and traumatic event would make Charikles anxious that Charikleia should not marry, lest some similar catastrophe should overtake her. That elsewhere in the novel consuming fire should be linked with a lack of chastity and

chastity itself with Charikleia's being impervious to fire, makes it all the more odd that the disastrous blaze should have engulfed a lawful wedding night. Responsibility for this must perhaps fall upon Charikles himself. His understanding has become destructive, though to understand fully what happened we must pursue Charikles' identification of Charikleia with the dead girl.

Charikleia, who was sent away from Ethiopia because of her uncanny identification with her ancestor Andromeda, is sent back there by her need to escape identification with the dead daughter of Charikles. Charikleia's flight from Delphi can also be seen as yet another escape from burning, in that she is rescued from becoming the 'Charikleia' who was burned to death. The Ethiopian Charikleia is to be resurrected as the daughter of Hydaspes, and not Charikles. Like Charikles, Kalasiris also calls Charikleia 'my own'. Apollo and Artemis appear to him in a dream and tell him to think of Charikleia and Theagenes as his own children (3.11). In return, she calls him 'father' (a title proper to his priestly status and employed by Knemon and others), yet Kalasiris dedicates himself to returning her to her true parents. Charikles has a fixed idea of Charikleia's future, subsumed among his own relations, but he also wishes to break the spell of the past by successfully re-enacting the disastrous wedding. This is why her refusal to marry causes him such 'torment'.

Having arrived at the 'marriageable age' of seventeen, Charikleia has reached the point where she should marry in order to fulfil the resurrection of Charikles' lost daughter. But this is also the age at which, having reached the point of absolute similarity with the image of Andromeda, her adventures in the image of those of her ancestress must begin. These are adventures which must, with more than simply a pleasing irony, include a planned marriage to a close relative. Seeing his daughter in Charikleia, excludes

Charikles from seeing Andromeda in her, or that he is already playing a part in another, larger re-enactment which has condemned him to lose Charikleia (though he is also destined to find her again if he did but know it).

It would be natural that Charikles would wish to see his house survive. When the lovers have flown he makes an impassioned address to the people of Delphi, saying that 'Charikleia was my life, my hope, the continuation of my line' while in truth, such a continuation is only possible through Alkamenes. When Charikles, following Kalasiris' advice, presents his nephew to Charikleia, the outcome is not all he would have hoped for, as he explains:

I took Alkamenes to see her, as you suggested, and presented him to her looking his best. But it was as if she had seen the Gorgon's head or something even more horrible. With a piercing scream she averted her eyes to the other side of the room and fastened her hands around her neck like a noose, threatening and swearing to do away with herself unless we went away instantly.

Aithiopika, 4.7.

The unwanted suitor, likened to the Gorgon, is credited with a near fatal appearance that stifles Charikleia. In Underdowne's translation the harmful effects observed on this occasion become almost mutual; 'We wente from her in lesse while then she spake the words: for what should we do, seeinge so fearfull a sight?' (Saintsbury, p. 101).

Alkamenes so horrifies Charikleia that her transformation, horrifying in itself, forces the others to retreat, rather than see her in such a state.

Alkamenes is not left cringing for all eternity to look upon, as was Phineus, but the glance of the Gorgon is the ultimate example of the projected beam of sight that dries

up and poisons whatever it falls upon, and Charikles has placed himself upon the side of the Gorgon. Describing Charikleia's life in Delphi he tells Kalasiris that

in physical beauty she is so superior to all other women that all eyes, Greek and foreign alike, turn towards her, and wherever she appears in the temples, colonnades, and squares, she is like a statue of ideal beauty that draws all eyes and hearts to itself.

Aithiopika, 2.33.

At this point Underdowne has 'shee turned all mens mindes, and countenances unto her, as if shee had bene the Image of some God lately framed' (Saintsbury ed., p. 71). In likening her to a statue Charikles, of course, echoes the reaction of the bandit villagers at the very beginning of the novel. Charikles does not see a living image of Andromeda, he sees a daughter who has come to resemble an 'ideal' statue, and whom he wishes to resemble (in other ways) his lost daughter. He wishes to kindle up this lost life, but this desire is the very thing that threatens both parent and child with petrification. If Charikles were able to admit that Charikleia were not his own, he would have progressed. Instead he feels compelled to 'put right' what took place in the past, and the only reason for this can be that he does feel some unacknowledged responsibility for the death. If it were possible to lay this ghost, he might be freed to progress beyond this fixed point. If it is correct to understand Charikles as standing on the side of the forces of petrification, it would be symptomatic of this that he should remain fixed in his own unhappy predicament, perpetually anticipating the repetition of past events and still seeing in the wrong way. The motif of a parent desiring to resurrect a lost child, even at the risk of contravening divine laws, is repeated in the curious episode of the witch of Bessa. The

witch brings her dead son back to life by using sinister Egyptian magic and suffers immediate punishment.¹³

Struggling to apportion blame for his unhappiness, Charikles denounces fate before the entire populace saying ‘once again, with fiendish subtlety, it has chosen the cruelest time to make me its plaything, not at a random moment, but from her very bridal chamber, more or less, when her forthcoming marriage had just been made public to you all’ (5.19, trans. Morgan). Thus he makes the identification between the two girls explicit, but ascribes the responsibility for conceiving this to the ‘fiendish subtlety’ of fortune, rather than to himself. When confronted with the reality of Charikleia’s disappearance he produces a further explanation, though again, the extent of his own admitted culpability seems negligible:

I see now that this is a punishment imposed by the gods’ wrath: once I entered the inner shrine before the proper time, and my eyes beheld that which it is a sin to behold; on that day Apollo foretold that this would come to pass, that in requital for seeing that which ought not to be seen I should be deprived of the sight of that which I loved most.

Aithiopika, 4.19.

Charikles is quick to seize upon an example of unfortunate seeing that would seem to account for what has befallen him, but, typically, he is unable to discover how he may have been at fault.

The incident he chooses may in itself appear to be pure accident. Charikles imagines himself to be punished for something that was not his fault, and therefore, one would have thought, punished unjustly, though it is not for him to say so in as many words. No one could say that he intended to offend the god. He was simply unlucky to

have entered the temple when he did, except that, in such a centre of portent and prophecy as Delphi, bad luck hardly seems an acceptable explanation. Charikles knows that having witnessed this mysterious spectacle has a great significance, which may have further consequences for him. It is possible that this incident was arranged by Providence, in order to show Charikles how he has gone astray in allowing unacknowledged desires, or unacknowledged guilt, to warp his understanding of others. Seeing 'what he was not supposed to see' on this occasion reflects his mistaking what there was to be seen on other occasions. The mysterious object in the temple may have been a representation of the god in human form that it was permitted for him to see at another time, even something he saw everyday. The true import of what was revealed lies in its being something which cannot be named. It is significant that the parent whose first daughter was consumed by fire on her wedding night, an event which lies at the heart of some unresolved anxiety, should blame the loss of a second child upon his seeing something which he is constrained from either naming or describing. Particularly so if it is implied that the child's death involved something that can be related elsewhere in the novel to illicit desire (as represented by the uncontrolled flames). This raises the possibility that Charikles is guilty of a veiled incestuous interest. His choice of a close relation as Charikleia's prospective husband might support such a suggestion. However, I think his crime should be seen only as analogous to incest because it involves a turning in on oneself and the sacrificing of others to one's own needs. As is true of Acrisius and Cepheus the real threat is of keeping one's child jealously for oneself and therefore of falling into an opposition to new life. This is a vice which might in other parents find its expression in incest. Charikles can also be compared to those distraught, widowed kings in the mediaeval tales who, seeing their wives resurrected in their daughters, then wish to

marry them, but his jealousy is closer to that of Shakespearean fathers such as Brabantio or Portia's dead father, than to the lust of Antiochus in *Pericles*.

At the end of the novel the abolition of human sacrifice, which ends the threat of future parents sacrificing their children, is immediately preceded by Charikles' sudden arrival at Hydaspes' court. Certainly, he does not seem to have gained any great insight on his journey to Ethiopia. Arriving at the most fortuitous of moments, he denounces Theagenes as a kidnapper, and Kalasiris as a 'charlatan' (10.35-36). Then, at the high point of the ensuing 'pandemonium', Charikleia races 'like a maenad' in her madness towards Charikles, falls at his feet and makes a strange admission:

'Father,' she said, 'to you I owe as much reverence as to those who gave me birth. I am a wicked parricide; punish me as you please; ignore any attempts to excuse my misdeeds by ascribing them to the will of the gods, to their governance of human life!'

Aithiopika, 10.38.

The reader knows that all that has gone before adds up to nothing if not an attempt to ascribe Charikleia's 'misdeeds' to the governance of the gods. It is her genuine, and spontaneous, plea for forgiveness, which finally brings about the plot's long withheld resolution. The sting is drawn from the parent's anger at his 'offspring's' apparent betrayal and from the veiled threat of infanticide, by the child's own confession of murderous intent. We know that the crime Charikleia admits to has no reality, although her words do reveal the unease the child also feels at separating herself from the parent. Charikleia's admission of guilt, which in fact acts as a gauge of her innocence, destroys the foundation of Charikles' unspoken fear of the child who would betray him and become a party to 'parricide'. This echoes Knemon's story where the accusation of

attempted parricide is likewise false (and behind this lies the story of Perseus). The possibility of Charikleia even contemplating the betrayal she confesses to, is revealed as implausible and illusory. We are not shown Charikles' reaction, but next see him with Persinna, Charikleia and Sisimithries, climbing into a chariot drawn by white oxen (10.41), and joining the general rejoicing.

Charikles' attempt to cast Charikleia as the dead bride and the repeated linking of bridal and funerary imagery suggests a further identity for Charikleia. In *Leucippe and Clitophon*, Achilles Tatius identified Andromeda with Persephone as the 'bride of the King of Death' (3.7). Charikleia too is identified with Persephone when Theagenes attempts to interpret a dream he has had while languishing in Arsake's dungeon. In the dream the dead Kalasiris appeared to him and said

To morrow shalt thou with the maide

escape Arsaces band:

And soone be brought with her into

the Aethiopian land.

Aithiopika, 8.11, tr. Underdowne (p. 216).

And Theagenes, who has resigned himself to death, interprets this (in Underdowne's translation) as

....the land of Aethiopia seemeth to be that which is under the ground. With the maid, that is to dwell with Proserpina. And the escapinge of Arsaces band, to be a departure of the soule from the body

Aithiopika, 8.11, tr. Underdowne (p. 216).

As Morgan points out 'Persephone was known as Kore, 'the Maiden'; this is the same word for 'maiden' as that used in the first line of Theagenes' dream prophecy and

facilitates his misinterpretation' (*Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, p. 529n). In *The Winter's Tale* Perdita will likewise be associated with Persephone. Theagenes' mistaken interpretation does contain a grain of truth. As a lost daughter, Charikleia apparently 'returns from Hades', though this return is not that Charikles had looked for.

3. The Evil Eye

In the past Kalasiris' long speech on the evil eye has usually been viewed as amusing 'pseudo-science' introduced purely as part of his plan to fool Charikles, or as a prime example of those indulgent digressions which have only injured the reputation of the ancient romances.¹⁴ But once we understand the part played by various forms of seeing in the *Aithiopika* this speech immediately takes on a new relevance and interest.

J. R. Morgan has rightly argued that Heliodorus shows a particular liking for riddles, and that the narrative itself may be a riddle of sorts.¹⁵ The inclusion of apparently extraneous passages might also constitute a form of riddle, setting the reader the task of finding a connection between this unwonted information and more pressing matters. Its curious discussion of Homer's origins, for example, reflects the prominence given in the text to Homeric resonances and to the figure of Homer himself, the blind artist who allows his audience to see.

After Charikles has asked him to cure Charikleia, and he has examined the patient, Kalasiris regales Charikles with a verbose account of the causes and manifestations of the evil eye which he identifies as the probable explanation of her sickness. One function served by introducing the concept of the evil eye at this particular point is to prepare the way for the tale of Charikleia's birth which we hear soon afterwards. No formal connection is made between the two, but the reader may well

wonder how Persinna's experience of extraordinary seeing may relate to the scientific view of what are related phenomena as expounded by Kalasiris.

The inclusion of quite so much detail in Kalasiris' speech does become comic (because it appears impossible that it should be at all useful), and so the scene complements his humorous performance of a cure over the sick Charikleia (4.5), which, as Yoryis Yatromanolakis and J. R. Morgan have pointed out, is an imitation of popular spells used to counter the evil eye.¹⁶ This outpouring of information may also serve to prevent Charikles from noticing that Kalasiris is not actually passing on any mystically wise secrets, or at least is not doing so in the way that Charikles expects. In fact, there is nothing revealed here that was not widely known and believed, and much of the passage's content remained the currency of medical and popular belief into the Renaissance and beyond. The entire speech itself bears a very close resemblance to a discussion of the evil eye found in Plutarch's *Moralia*.¹⁷ Kalasiris knows that he cannot fob off the priest of Pythian Apollo at Delphi with palpable foolishness, nor does he wish to do so. He may set out to mislead Charikles, but he does so in a very particular way, choosing sight as his theme in order to direct Charikles' thoughts in a direction helpful to the distressed guardian.

Kalasiris knows all of Charikleia's background (4.12), and therefore knows that mysterious powers of seeing have already played a part in her story. In fact, he believes that they have played a part in his own past. As has already been noted, one of the reasons Kalasiris gave for fleeing from Egypt was his need to escape the eyes of the courtesan Rhodopis, and he attributes the arrival of his misery to 'the eye of Kronos' lighting upon his house (2.24). Kronos can be identified as Saturn, but he was also the god who ate his own children and thus tried to prevent the world coming into being.¹⁸

This is the influence that opposes the sun, the 'eye of heaven'. Kalasiris' turn of phrase places him as the object of a divine glance that has the power to blight his life. Kalasiris begins his lecture thus:

We are completely enveloped in air, which permeates our bodies by way of our eyes, nose, respiratory tract, and other channels, bringing with it, as it enters, various properties from outside, thus engendering in those who take it in an effect corresponding to the properties it introduces. Thus, when a man looks maliciously upon beauty, he imbues the air around him with the quality of malevolence, and disperses his own breath, charged as it is with spite, towards his neighbour.

Aithiopika, 3.8, trans. Morgan.

As an example of how this process works he cites its exact opposite, 'love at first sight':

Conclusive proof of my point is furnished by the genesis of love, which originates from visually perceived objects, which, if you will excuse the metaphor, shoot arrows of passion, swifter than the wind, into the soul by way of the eyes. This is perfectly logical, because of all our channels of perception, sight is the least static and contains the most heat, and so is more receptive of such emanations; for the spirit which animates it is akin to fire, and so it is well suited to absorb the transient and unstable impressions of love.

Aithiopika, 3.8.

It is worth noting that sight is described as a process involving heat, and that it leaves 'impressions' upon the mind. He then goes on to detail other examples from the natural world: the plover who can cure jaundice simply by looking at the sufferer and so involuntarily drawing the sickness into itself, and the 'serpent called the basilisk, whose

mere breath and regard are sufficient to wither and cause serious damage to anything that crosses its path' (3.8). He concludes by drawing the following lesson:

So if some people have a malignant effect even upon their nearest and dearest, we should not be surprised: they are congenitally malevolent, and the effect they have is the result not of volition but of an innate characteristic.

Aithiopika, 3.8.

Kalasis waves the actual explanation of Charikleia's complaint under Charikles' nose, even as he deceives him. He substitutes the 'love at first sight' the reader has witnessed, with the idea of a 'malign' form of seeing. Under the general scheme Kalasis expounds here, the influences passed and received by sight can originate in that which is seen, or in that which sees, and can be benign or harmful, curing or causing disease, infusing with life or shrivelling and destroying. The familiar image of the beloved's eyes inspiring love by shooting forth the arrows of Eros, which naturally also enter through the eye (like the arrows which slew the Persian horsemen), finds complementary opposites in the naturalistic image of the plover drawing a harmful influence to itself, or in the more exotic example of the basilisk blighting all it looks upon (a creature whose infectious glance is mentioned in both *Cymbeline* and *The Winter's Tale*).

It has been suggested by Yoryis Yatromanolakos, in a study which seeks to place Kalasis' speech in its historical setting, that this passage is woven into the structure of the Delphi episode through other references to twin concepts familiar to the ancient mind, of *baskania*, the 'deep-rooted irrational notion that one can be harmed by the jealousy and envy of someone else' (Yatromanolakos, 1988, p. 197) (which persists in many folk-beliefs particularly that of the evil eye), and of the related idea of *phthonos*, or 'divine envy'.¹⁹ He points out that the Gorgon boss upon the shield Theagenes carries in

the procession and Charikleia's serpent cincture are both talismans traditionally thought to guard against the evil eye, and that the couple fight an 'optical duel' upon meeting, the eyes of each having a curious quality. One can add that the Gorgon boss also identifies Theagenes as the successor to Perseus come to claim his bride.

Underdowne underlines the identification of the effects of the evil eye as a form of witchcraft by adding the marginal note 'Calasiris proveth by divers reasons that there is witching' (1587 ed., p. 43). But he translates the final sentence of Kalasiris' speech on the evil eye as '...it is no marvell if some doe bewitche such as they holde most deare, and wishe best unto; for seeing that they be envious by nature, they doo not what they would, but what by nature they are appointed' (Saintsbury ed., p. 84). By 'envious' here I think we are intended to think of envy as meaning jealousy, not only in the sense of envying what others have, as someone perhaps seeing the beauty of another might envy them, but also in the sense of keeping something jealously for oneself. In this second sense, Charikles, who is not 'malign' by nature, is 'envious' of Charikleia, in that he attempts to keep her as his own, as someone without an autonomous existence. And he was perhaps 'jealous' of his own daughter in the same way, while consciously wishing only the best for her. Having Charikles choose his daughter's husband, when set beside the idealised love of Charikleia and Theagenes, reveals an undue reluctance to allow her to separate herself from his influence, even though it should be said that taking such responsibilities upon himself would have seemed far from unusual at the time.

Kalasiris describes to Knemon how he was at first moved to tears by Charikles' story. If we accept this sympathy as genuine, it does make it unlikely that he should depart leaving the father utterly bereft without attempting to aid him in some way. In the speech he presents a distant reflection of Plato's metaphor of 'the Good' and 'the eye of

heaven' in order to provide some clue as to the source of Charikles' unhappiness. We can be sure that the protean Kalasiris would not be above shedding crocodile tears when it suited him to do so, but I think Kalasiris is sorry for Charikles because he understands him, and is the more sorry for knowing that the best way he can help him is to do all he can to frustrate Charikles' plans and dispatch Charikleia to Ethiopia as quickly as possible.

The science described is by no means at odds with the poetry of the tale, but complements Platonic doctrines. And it is science that would have been familiar to Renaissance readers. It was Heliodorus' reliance upon Plutarch's *Moralia* in this passage which most probably became the *raison d'être* behind James Sanford's Elizabethan translation of the Delphi episode, which was annexed to the much earlier anthology known as *The Amorous and Tragical Tales of Plutarch* (1567).

Sanford presents the story of Charikleia's elopement as an entirely self-contained anecdote. In effect, he does what Knemon does in book One, that is, present half a tale (one eighth of the novel's pattern) as complete in itself. Everything else has vanished, including all references to Charikleia's birth and to Persinna's ribbon and treasures. Charikleia has become Charikles' true and only offspring. Paradoxically, rather than denying the fragment its distinguishing qualities, this reshaping focuses attention upon the binding thematic content of the original, albeit in simplified form, and Charikles' accidental seeing in the temple has now become the key revelation of the episode.

When, in Sanford's translation, Charikles' anguish has roused all Delphi in pursuit of the fleeing lovers, he confesses that the cause of his unhappiness is that 'as I untimely entred the sanctified place, I saw things which wer not to be seene. The god forshewed me for that cause I should be deprived of such things which I hold most deare' (Sanford,

p. 25). In the course of Charikles' lament Sanford translates a pleasing image Underdowne later overlooked: 'Chariclia my onely solace, and that I maye so say my ancor. And the tempeste which invaded me, dyd break this ancor, and carried it awaye' (Sanford, p. 26 [*Aithiopika*, 4.19]). But then the story is suddenly truncated with the author's brief assurance that Kalasiris 'by his skil and persuasion' won all parties over, purchasing 'a perpetuall quietnesse to them of Delphos'; a conclusion which is undeniably lame (p. 27-8). However, this awkwardness also serves to direct attention toward Charikles' confession as the true climax and rounds off the tale. In this version of the story the reader is prompted to recognise that Apollo arranged Charikleia's love at first sight as an appropriate response to Charikles having fallen through the eye. So, even in this shortened form, the Twinned-impressions design is preserved, and, when Charikles at last sees (that is understands) the cause of his unhappiness, it is as though the spell is broken, his punishment ends and a reconciliation with his daughter follows without further ado.

Chapter Six

Enlivened seeing and the Story of Danaë in Spenser, Greene and *The Thracian Wonder*

1. The Sun's 'fruitful ray'

I have already noted in passing that C. S. Lewis identified Heliodorus as the influence behind the *in medias res* opening of Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, commenting that Spenser 'had perhaps no perfect model of it except in Heliodorus' (Lewis, 1954, p. 389). In fact, the similarity between the openings of the two works extends beyond the choice of technique, to that of subject matter. In the figures of the Redcrosse knight and the maiden of 'royall lynage' (*Faerie Queene*, I, i, 5) who accompanies him (and who is, we are told, 'whiter' than the snow white ass she rides upon [*FQ*, I, i, 4]), we are intended to recognise Saint George and the princess he rescues, but we can also see the Perseus-like Theagenes and his white Andromeda, Charikleia. Given that the scene of the knight rescuing his lady is such a commonplace, a likeness is not necessarily significant, but one could argue that Spenser did have a specific reference to the *Aithiopika* in mind and that this betrays an interest in the larger design of Heliodorus' novel as a journey from mystification and error to understanding and wonder.

I have suggested that the opening scene of the *Aithiopika* presents a spectacle both puzzling and arresting, which is intended to impress itself upon the reader's mind, and that this narrative strategy reflects the processes at work in other forms of conception. We have seen that Charikleia's birth is just such a puzzling conception, caused by a visual impression made upon her mother's imagination which simultaneously reproduces itself as an impression made upon the matter in her womb. The puzzles set

for the reader and for the characters by these two dissimilar but analogous beginnings are finally solved together in a second wonder-inducing vision which comes at the end of the book, just as the errors into which the novel's misguided father figures had fallen were also corrected. We have seen that Heliodorus developed this narrative design from a particular view of the story of Perseus and of his mother Danaë, who can be thought of as receiving the imprint of 'the Good', or of the divine light, which her father had lost. We also find that the beginning of the novel invokes the beginning of all life when the sun's light infused the earth's matter and seeing and conceiving were synonymous.

Heliodorus commences his narrative by showing the aftermath of the battle in which Theagenes slew the 'monstrous' pirate Peloros (saving the actual description of this fight for later in the novel), while Spenser shows the fight between Redcrosse and the monster Errorr at the beginning of his epic. Spenser sets his scene not by the sea, but in a wood where Redcrosse and Una have been forced to shelter, for

The day with cloudes was suddeine ouercast,
 And angry *Ioue* an hideous storme of raine
 Did poure into his Lemans lap so fast,
 That euery wight to shrowd it did constrain

FQ, I, i, 6.¹

This is clearly a reference to Danaë. Apollodorus describes in *The Library* how Jove took 'the shape of a stream of gold which poured through the roof into Danaë's lap' (*The Library*, II, iv, tr. J. G. Frazer). However, a key element has been inverted here. Jove's 'Leman' is the earth, but the heavens are not pouring a 'shower of gold' into her lap, but rain and not even welcome rain, but a 'hideous storme'. The use of rain as a sign of Jove's anger is no doubt intended to remind the reader also of Noah's flood.

Heavenly light has been withheld. The trees are so tall where Redcrosse and Una shelter that they 'heauen's light did hide' (I, i, 7). The darkness, Una warns the knight, 'breedes dreadefull doubts - Oft fire is without smoke / And perill without show'. One safeguard against this is that 'Vertue gives her selfe light' to combat the darkness (I, i, 12). Like that of Charikleia and Theagenes, the true identity of Redcrosse as Saint George is also kept dark in the opening episode of the tale, but we are told that he is 'full of fire' and his armour gives off 'a litle glooming light', and it is by this light he fights with Errour in her den (I, i, 14). Errour hates the light and breeds like 'doubt' in the darkness, devouring her own children which creep into her mouth to escape from the light (and they in turn devour her after her death). Her adversary Redcrosse is likened during the fight to a lion, a creature traditionally associated with the sun (I, i, 17). The use of imagery in the struggle between light and darkness here is straightforward, and derives from the Platonic scheme. What is more unexpected is Spenser's introduction of an exotic comparison between the half-formed creatures brought up in Errour's vomit and those found living in the fecund mud of the Nile:

As when old father *Nilus* gins to swell
 With timely pride aboue the *Aegyptian* vale,
 His fattie waves do fertile slime outwell,
 And ouerflow each plaine and lowly dale:
 But when his later spring gins to auale,
 Huge heapes of mudd he leaues, wherein there breed
 Ten thousand kindes of creatures, partly male
 And partly female of his fruitfull seed;

Such vgly monstrous shapes elsewhere may no man reed.

FQ, I, i, 21.

Some of these ‘deformed monsters’ are ‘black as inke’, and as Errour is filled with books and papers their inkyness reflects a satirical point (*FQ*, I, i, 20, 22). However, after Errour’s head has been cut off ‘cole black bloud’ still gushes forth (*FQ*, I, i, 24). This detail points toward a source for the episode being Ovid’s description in the *Metamorphoses* of the death of the monster Python.²

The *Metamorphoses* opens with a description of the creation followed by an account of the flood (very like the biblical flood) survived by Deucalion and his wife Pyrrha. The manner in which the earth is repopulated with humankind after this flood in accordance with the advice of Themis’ oracle has been suggested by François Laroque as providing a ‘striking analogy with the miraculous restoration of [Shakespeare’s] Hermione’ and that echoes of Golding’s translation of Ovid suggest that Shakespeare had the story of Deucalion and Pyrrha in mind rather than that of Pygmalion.³ Deucalion and Pyrrha must throw behind them the ‘bones’ of mother earth, meaning stones, and these are then transformed into living people:

Even like to marble images new-drawne and roughly wrought
Before the carver by his art to purpose hath them brought.
Such parts of them where any juice or moisture did abound
Or else were earthy, turned to flesh...

* * * * *

The part that was a veyne before, doth still his name retaine

Metamorphoses I, 483-6, 488, trans. Golding, (ed. Thornton).

Of the various forms of animal life

the earth spontaneously produced these of divers kinds; after that old moisture remaining from the flood had grown warm from the rays of the sun, the slime of the wet marshes swelled with heat, and the fertile seeds of life, nourished in that life-giving soil, as in a mother's womb, grew and in time and took on some special form. So when the seven-mouthed Nile has receded from the drenched fields....and the fresh slime has been heated by the sun's rays, farmers as they turn over the lumps of earth find many animate things; and among these some, but now begun, are upon the very verge of life, some are unfinished and lacking in their proper parts, and oft-times in the same body one part is alive and the other still nothing but raw earth.

Ovid: *Metamorphoses*, trans. F. J. Miller (I, 416-29).

The 'fresh slime' is 'sidere limus' (*Met.* I, 424) - mud glittering with sun's qualities. It seems very likely that this passage was the immediate source of Spenser's 'Nile mud'.⁴ Ovid continues to speak about conception in the Aristotelian terms we have already encountered: '....though fire and water are naturally at enmity, still heat and moisture produce all things, and this inharmonious harmony is fitted to the growth of life' (*Met.* I, 432-3). Whereas Ovid had used the word *calor* for fertile heat in the previous lines, here he uses *ignis* for 'fire'. 'Inharmonious harmony' translates from 'discors concordia', which describes the conflict of opposing elements pictured in Aristotle's embryology, but it is also the concept of the marriage of opposites familiar to the Renaissance as an important mark of creativity.

Ovid's reference suggests that the fertile climatic conditions once covering almost the whole world could still be found around the Nile. The birth of crocodiles in the Nile was a favoured example for the many Classical authors who testified to the power of the

sun to engender the spontaneous appearance of living creatures. In Hydaspes' conversation with the priests of Syene Heliodorus himself alludes to the heat of the sun hatching the eggs of crocodiles around the Nile:

the Grecians call it Nylus, and telleth them the course of the yeere, by flowing in Summer and ebbing in Autumne, and the flowers which growe in it in the spring time, and the broode of the Crocodiles, and said that Nylus was nothing els but the yere.

Athiopika, 9.22, trans. Underdowne (pp. 243).

In *Antony and Cleopatra* Shakespeare has Lepidus describe how 'Your serpent of Egypt is bred now of your mud by the operation of your sun, so is your crocodile' (*Antony and Cleopatra*, II, vii, 26-7).⁵ And Antony, surely also echoing Ovid, refers to sunlight as 'the fire / That quickens Nilus' slime' (*AC*, I, iii, 68-9). The serpent that bites Cleopatra was no doubt bred in this way. Cleopatra herself as the 'serpent of old Nile' (*AC*, I, v, 25) shares also in the quality of physical earthiness infused with a solar essence. Among the authorities who supported a belief in spontaneous generation caused by sunlight, and mention the Nile as being endowed with particular sun-infused fertility, were Diodorus Siculus in the *Historical Library* and Strabo who maintained that women drinking Nile water were more likely to conceive and cites Aristotle in support of this.⁶

In accordance with the same general principle, the sun was thought to generate maggots in decaying matter, as Hamlet reminds Polonius: 'For if the sun breed maggots in a dead dog, being a good kissing carrion...' (*Hamlet*, II, ii, 181-2). Of course such base issue was not considered to reflect back upon the sun as the 'great father of generation'. The character of the offspring was rather seen as resulting entirely from the nature of the matter involved. Harold Jenkins explains in his commentary on this passage

from *Hamlet* that ‘if the sun’s procreative power produced foul and corrupt forms of life, corruption was not in the sun, but in that from which the sun bred’ (*Hamlet*, Arden ed., 1982, p. 466). Hamlet’s further ‘antic’ advice to Polonius is that he should not let Ophelia ‘walk i’th’sun’ for ‘Conception is a blessing, but as your daughter may conceive - friend, look to’t’ (*Hamlet*, II, ii, 184-6).

Diodorus Siculus states that ‘the Ethiopians...were the first of all men....[for] those who dwell beneath the noon-day sun were, in all likelihood, the first to be generated by the earth’ (*Diod. Sicul. Lib. 3*, trans. C. H. Oldfather, Loeb edition, London: 1935, pp. 89-91), information which is cited in Jonson’s notes to his *Masque of Blacknesse* (ed. Herford and Simpson, vol. VII, Oxford: 1941, p.173).

Mother earth, like other mothers, can bring forth monsters which insufficiently reflect the qualities of the father. According to Ovid, from the mud revealed by the receding waters of Deucalion’s flood grew many new creatures, including the fearsome Python, an enormous serpent who terrorised the world until it was slain by Apollo:

This monster the god of the glittering bow destroyed....crushing him with countless darts, well nigh emptying his quiver, till the creature’s poisonous blood flowed from the black wounds. And, that the fame of his deed might not perish through lapse of time, he instituted sacred games whose contests throngs beheld, called Pythian from the name of the serpent he had overthrown.

Metamorphoses. I, 441- 47.

Whatever else Spenser’s *Errour* may signify, her appearance harks back to this archetypal dragon who is black within and is slain by the forces of light - by Apollo’s sunbeam darts. The Python represents the tendency in nature to regress, for one creature to attempt to wipe out all others. Apollo’s victory over the monster repeats the process of creation

itself, both the original creation of the world and the creation of life in the womb. After the initial victory of the first creation, light must continually reconquer recalcitrant matter in a Providential process, righting error and defeating monstrosity. For what is 'Error' but misconception?

While *The Faerie Queene*, like the *Aithiopika*, appears to 'begin in the middle', it begins also with the earliest beginning, with creation itself. By slaying Poseidon's monster Perseus slew the force that was pulling Andromeda towards petrification, and so repeated Apollo's victory over matter, which itself repeated even earlier conflicts. Theagenes too defeats a monster, the pirate Peloros, actually fighting him at one of the seven mouths of the Nile.⁷ And Theagenes is the reigning Pythian victor, having won the palm under Charikleia's eyes at the Pythian Games in Delphi (*Aithiopika*, 4.1-4), the games founded to celebrate Apollo's victory and his winning control of the oracle.

Peloros' credentials as an enemy of Charikleia, the 'bringer of light' (2.4), are quickly established when we are shown his reaction to seeing Charikleia in her full splendour dressed as Artemis. His is an entirely selfish, avaricious response. The ship's cabin is transformed into another nuptial bedroom where destructive flames are kindled up:

he saw Charikleia with a crown of laurel on her head, refulgent in her gown of golden weave (she had dressed herself in her sacred robe from Delphi.....) everything around her was radiantly beautiful, creating the illusion of a nuptial bedroom. At the sight of her he was, of course, consumed by a fire of passion; desire and jealousy flooded over him, and the instant he rejoined us it was clear from the look on his face that there was madness in his heart

Aithiopika, 5. 31, trans. Morgan.

His nature is particularly slimy. When the rays of light shining through Charikleia strike him, only regressive monstrosity is bred, and so it is fitting that his body should be left to sink back into the Nile mud. This example of reductive seeing is analogous to Charikles seeing Charikleia as his own daughter and as a statue. It is a form of seeing which threatens to consume and destroy the beauty it falls upon, and, through failing to recognise the source and meaning of this beauty, mistakes its real value.

Heliodorus' choice of name for his brutish Peloros also makes it possible to relate Theagenes' fight with the 'monstrous' pirate to the primal conflicts in which the world was thought to have been brought into being. Hesiod's *Theogony* is one of the earliest descriptions of Greek beliefs, possibly contemporary with the *Iliad*. It recounts a creation story in which the world, Gaia, having appeared after the time of complete chaos, creates and is then impregnated by the sky, Ouranos (Uranus). She then gives birth to new gods, including Kronos. Ouranos, the first father, 'hated' his children and took pleasure in thrusting them back into their mother earth (*Theogony*, 156-61). Gaia 'groaned' from her burden and formed a 'crafty' and 'evil' plan. She arms her son Kronos with a sickle and, when Ouranos approaches, he reaches out and castrates his father (*Theogony*, 162-212). Gaia is described by Hesiod as 'pelore' (*Theogony*, 173). In his study of Hesiod, Robert Lamberton explains that words deriving from *pelor* may mean 'huge', 'monstrous' or 'prodigious', and that

In Homer, these words may refer to that which is large or awe-inspiring but not specifically monstrous. In Hesiod, however, the *pelor* group is never used for things that are simply large. Aside from Gaia, adjectival forms describe the snake portion of Ekhidna and the sickle used to castrate Ouranos. The nouns refer

exclusively to monsters, specifically Typhoeus (twice), Ekhidna, and the Gorgon.

Gaia pelore then is not simply big, not simply huge - she is monstrous

*Hesiod, p. 72.*⁸

Typhoeus is the giant with a hundred snakelike heads, Gaia's last child whom she sends to fight with Zeus himself (*Theogony*, 822-880). Hesiod has Typhon as the son of Typhoeus, though these were more often thought of as different names for the same creature.

Lamberton describes the pairing of Ouranos and Gaia as that between a father who displays 'enormous jealousy of the potential power of his offspring' and a mother whose instincts are both 'grotesque and vicious' (*Hesiod, p. 75*). 'Terrible' Kronos completes this original family (*Theogony*, 137). Gaia is perhaps the original of all those monstrous royal mothers who scheme against their sons' new young queens. It is clear that the victory of Zeus over this ancient order represents not the unnatural rebellion of a child against his father (Kronos), but the end of an inward-looking, selfish age. Zeus escapes his father Kronos when a stone is substituted for the infant god, as it were separating himself from inanimate matter. Interestingly, although Heliodorus does not mention it, Pausanias says this stone was preserved in Delphi next to the temple of Apollo and near to the grave of Neopteleomos.⁹

The defeat of Typhoeus by Zeus is the first in a constant series of struggles to prevent matter successfully resisting order and returning to a state of petrification, this battle can easily be equated with Perseus' defeat of the sea monster and with the triumph of Horos over the dragon Typhon or Seth celebrated in the feast of the rising of the Nile which marked the refertilisation of the Nile mud by the resurgent waters, a struggle re-enacted by Hydaspes (*Aithiopika*, Book IX).

Gaia's huge or snaky children, who fight with Zeus and Apollo, are the first examples of maternal impression. They are fantastic deformations born to a world of matter whose ultimate fantasy is to bear no fruit at all, but only to remain alone. Hence we can see that petrification and 'snaky' monstrosity are linked. Ovid mentions that as Perseus flew over the African desert, where drops of blood fell from the Gorgon's severed head snakes were spontaneously generated.

In order to summon up such Classical precursors Spenser invokes the well-known properties of Nile mud, among other details, during Redcrosse's battle with black-blooded Error. In much the same way, Milton echoes Hesiod in likening Satan, grown to 'monstrous size', to Typhon in Book One of *Paradise Lost* (PL, 197-201) and, in the family relationship of Satan, Sin and Death in Book Two. Milton's epic begins in the middle, but begins also by summoning up classical images of the very beginning of creation. Milton does not mention Nile mud at this point, but the image does occur in Book Ten and is associated with the rebellious angel's habit of regressing into serpentine form:

still greatest he the midst,
Now dragon grown, larger than whom the sun
Engendered in the Pythian vale on slime,
Huge Python, and his power no less he seemed

Paradise Lost, X, 528-31.¹⁰

Beyond the fact that it is deprived of sunlight, we have not yet a full explanation of why the fight between Saint George (Redcrosse) and Error should take place in a wood, and this leads back to Aristotle's idea of calling matter *hyle* which also means forest. Here we might think at once of the openings of two other epics. Dante's journey begins in the

‘selva oscura’ - ‘dark wood’ (*Inferno*, I, 2). Dante’s guide Virgil, has Aeneas visit the ‘antiquam silvam’ in Book Six of the *Aeneid* in search of the ‘golden bough’ (*Aen.*, VI, 179, ed. Fairclough), and also describes how Aeneas, at the very beginning of the epic, having landed on the coast of Africa, hides his ships under the ‘over-arching groves’ (*Aen.*, I, 310-1). In the wood Aeneas meets his mother Venus whom, because of her huntress’s costume, he at first mistakes for Diana (*Aen.*, I, 314-25). William Nelson, in *The Poetry of Edmund Spenser* (Columbia, 1963), examining the Virgilian influence upon the opening of Spenser’s poem, observed that

The fourth century scholar Servius, first of Vergil’s commentators, explicates the word *silva* in *Aeneid* 1.314 as equivalent to the Greek $\upsilon\lambda\eta$ [*hyle*], and like $\upsilon\lambda\eta$ double in meaning: forest, specifically a wild, uncultivated forest; and the chaos of elements out of which everything is created....In Renaissance times his definition of *silva* enters the dictionaries, and [Thomas] Cooper defines the word not only as ‘wood’ but also as ‘store of matter digested together’....The reference to ‘hyle,’....linked the *Aeneid* with Platonic tradition...The Vergilian forest so becomes a figure variously signifying the material stuff upon which divine ideas are impressed, the activities of this world, the passions of the body, the earthly or fleshly aspect of human life

William Nelson: *The Poetry of Edmund Spenser*, p. 159.¹¹

Both Saint George and Aeneas encounter mothers in the wood, though of very different kinds. And so we can say that Spenser’s dark wood is very much like the mouth of the Nile because both present a ‘store of [disorganised] matter’.¹²

A useful link can also be made here with *Orlando Furioso*. Orlando’s madness is triggered when he sees Angelica’s and Medor’s names carved upon the trunks of trees.

The letters and love-knots are ‘so many nails with which Love pierced and wounded his heart’ (*Orlando Furioso*, XXIII, 103, trans. Waldman). The carvings in the wood represent the lovers’ *silva* marked by the impression of the beloved, while for Orlando they cancel the form his heart had taken leaving him mad. He had already wandered for two days through a ‘trackless wood’ before making this discovery (XXIII, 100), and after he has fallen into a frenzy, he attacks the trees, uprooting ‘age-old timber’ with his bare hands ‘as though [the pines and oaks] were so many celery stalks’ (XXIII, 135). The narrator observes that madness ‘is like a great forest into which those who venture must perforce lose their way’ (XXIV, 2).¹³

Spenser’s intensely visual presentation of Errour’s fecund filthiness is calculated to create an ‘impression’. While the beauty and mystery of Heliodorus’ opening tableau creates the desire for explanation so that it might be understood, Spenser’s word-picture demands a new image to clean the mind and blank out what has been seen. This new impression comes in Book Three, subtitled ‘Of Chastitie’, in the shape of the miraculous conception of the twin heroines Belpheobe and Amoret. The mother of the twins, named Chrysogone, is impregnated by a beam of sunlight:

wondrously they were begot, and bred
 Through influence of th’heauens fruitfull ray,
 As it in antique bookes is mentioned.
 It was vpon a Sommers shynie day,
 When *Titan* faire his beames did display,

The Fairie Queene, Book III, vi, 6.

Having bathed in a fountain to allay the heat of the sun (Titan), Chrysogone falls asleep upon a grassy bank:

the whiles a gentle slombring swowne
Vpon her fell all naked bare displayd;
The sunne-beames bright vpon her body playd,
Being through former bathing mollifide,
And pierst into her wombe, where they embayd
With so sweet sence and secret power vnspide,
That in her pregnant flesh they shortly fructifide.

Miraculous may seeme to him, that reades
So straunge ensample of conception;
But reason teacheth that the fruitfull seedes
Of all things liuing, through impression
Of the sunbeames in moyst complexion,
Doe life conceiue and quickned are by kynd:
So after Nilus invndation,
Infinite shapes of creatures men do fynd,
Informed in the mud, on which the Sunne hath shynd.

Great father he of generation
is rightly cald, th'author of life and light;
And his faire sister for creation
Ministreth matter fit, which tempred right
With heate and humour, breedes the liuing wight.

FQ, III, vi, 7-9.

Here the combination of heat and moisture necessary for conception in Aristotle's scheme allow the sunbeam to make an impression upon the 'moist' and 'mollified' matter. The repetition of the Nile mud motif also recalls the opening of the poem.

Earlier I suggested a likeness between Belpheobe and Charikleia in that both are conceived in a marvellous way and both grow up dedicated to the service of Diana, excelling in the use of the bow. There may also be an echo in both children having been conceived during a siesta on a hot summer's afternoon (although Chrysogone is of course unconscious while Persinna clearly was not). While both authors have supplied a explanation that would seem to account for, in one instance, marvellous inheritance, and in the other marvellous generation, circumstances also indicate the intervention of Providence. In both cases the mother is innocent yet fears disgrace and is quickly parted from her infant. Much like Princess Finistée in *Amadis*, Spenser's Chrysogone is soon astonished 'to see her belly so upblone' (*FQ*, III, vi, 9). The 'strange conception' of the twins is accompanied by a second conception, Chrysogone's understanding of how the event will be seen by others: 'Whereof conceiuing shame and foule disgrace, / Albe her guiltlesse conscience her cleard, / She fled' (*FQ*, III, vi, 10).

It is difficult to think that any of Spenser's readers would have seen Belpheobe's and Amoret's conception as the happy outcome of accident, rather than recognising at once a clear intention behind the sun's working. Spenser's is not a universe in which accidents occur. The poem is, of course, unfinished and its final design must remain a matter of conjecture, but it seems likely that Belpheobe's conception was the beginning of a series of events which would have corrected 'error' and culminated in a final purifying spectacle concluding the epic.

All the reader is told about Chrysogone is that she is the daughter of the 'faerie' Amphisa (*FQ*, III, vi, 4). Chrysogone's name can be translated literally as 'gold-birth', and just as the appearance of Errour was preceded by an allusion to the story of Danaë, this points toward the conception of Belpheobe and Amoret being a re-enactment of the appearance of Zeus in Danaë's bedchamber. We are also told of Belpheobe that

Her berth was of the wombe of Morning dew,
And her conception of the ioyous Prime,
And all her whole creation did her shew,
Pure and vnspotted from all loathly crime,
That is ingenerate in fleshly slime.

FQ, III, vi, 3.

Whereas the reference to Danaë in Book One involved light being withdrawn by an angry God, Belpheobe's 'unspotted' nature results from the perfect infusion of divine form into matter. We have already seen a sunbeam substituted for the 'golden shower' in the folk-tale *The Daughter of the Sun* and in a Platonic interpretation of the Perseid it would be a natural step to take. This is the same lively beam of sunlight which shone from the carved Ethiopian amethyst Kalasiris chose from among from Charikleia's treasures, the jewel which in Underdowne's translation 'casteth forth a golden beame' (*Aithiopika*, 5.13, Underdowne, p.128).

The story of Chrysogone is, like that of Persinna, a variant of the story of Danaë which reaches behind the particular circumstances of the original to reproduce the principle at work in the myth.¹⁴ This veiled depiction of Danaë not only relates back to the beginning of the poem, but is also followed later in the book 'Of Chastitie' by a contrasting presentation of the story shown in a sumptuous tapestry hanging in the

House of Busirane, the dwelling of unchaste Malecasta.¹⁵ In the tapestry Danaë is included in a series of designs showing the loves of Jove:

Soone after that into a golden showre
Him selfe he chaung'd faire *Danae* to vew,
And through the roofe of her strong brasen towre
Did raine into her lap an hony dew,
The whiles her foolish garde, that little knew
Of such deceit, kept th'yron dore fast bard,
And watcht, that none should enter nor issew;
Vaine was the watch, and bootlesse all the ward,
Whenas the God to golden hew him selfe transfard.

Fairie Queene, III, xi, 31.

These tapestries are the subject of an extended *ekphrasis*, but the reader is warned at the outset to be on their guard: the golden thread in the pictures shines 'unwillingly; / Like a discoloured Snake' (*FQ*, III, xi, 28). This is a picture which fails to depict the enlightened aspect of the myth expressed in Belpheobe's conception. The scenes which adorn the castle work on one alluring level only and are not the poem's last word on the myths they treat. Malecasta's realm, peopled by courtly lovers, is one in which looking and being looked at count for a great deal. Jove's transformation enables him primarily to view Danaë, who is now also displayed to those who view the tapestry. The story no longer centres upon Danaë receiving an impression by seeing and understanding what she sees (that is understanding that she must acquiesce in what she knows is beyond human understanding), but instead concerns her being seen by mortal viewers who are invited to take on a godlike power of observing without necessarily being observed. The 'hidden

snare' is that, while the eye is invited to look, what it is shown is only a surface and such superficiality, in time, infects the viewer also (*FQ*, III, xi, 28).

Of course, Chrysogone herself is also 'display'd' as the object of divine looking, and is the subject of an innocent *ekphrasis*; a picture woven from words. She cannot be said to understand what has taken place. She remains unconscious of the entire process of her children's creation and of their identity, and even sleeps through their birth and subsequent abduction. Circumstances enforce this inhuman degree of passivity upon her (and she is after all not a human, but a 'faerie') and this presents the reader with an experience that is set beyond the mortal sphere.¹⁶ The entire process is rarefied to a point that it resembles the loveless transactions of Malecasta's castle. Spenser's human lovers will need to find a mean between the refined and the debased which can include both human and divine wishes, and Belpheobe will in due course find that, like Charikleia, she must leave the virginal pursuits of Diana to consort with a human spouse.

In concocting the decorations for the House of Busirane Spenser may have had both classical and contemporary models in mind. Tapestries depicting Europa, Danaë and other objects of Jove's attentions recall those produced by Arachne in her weaving competition with Minerva described by Ovid (*Met.*, VI). Arachne's presumption leads to her being transformed into a spider, a tale which suggests that Malecasta herself is cast as the spider into whose web others have wandered.

The metamorphoses of Jupiter were of course a popular subject for all the visual arts, and, if Italianate tastes are being questioned in this sequence, Spenser may even have known of the existence of the several depictions of Danaë painted by Titian, including the *Danaë and the Shower of Gold* (1554, see fig. 9 [p. 238]) produced for Philip II of Spain. This work complemented others by the artist in Philip's collection,

including the Ovidian *Rape of Europa* (1559-62) and *Venus and Adonis* (both subjects found among Malecasta's tapestries [III, xi, 30, III, i, 34-8]). Indeed, as Rona Goffen observes in her recent book *Titian's Women* (Yale, 1997, p. 269), Titian chose in the *Europa* to reproduce in paint Ovid's *ekphrasis* of Arachne's tapestry weaving, and in Danaë he chose another of Arachne's subjects (incidentally Titian's *Europa* also brings into reality the painting described in the extended opening *ekphrasis* of *Leucippe and Clitophon* [1.1]) (*Met.* VI, 103-28). The details of Spenser's tapestry of Danaë match Ovid's tale and Horace's reductive poem, rather than any particular painting, yet it is interesting to find that Titian incorporates into his painting of the 'seduction' of Danaë the very contrast between fertile and sterile seeing expressed in Spenser's two treatments of the subject in Book Three of the *Faerie Queene*.

In what is probably the earliest of the four paintings a reclining Danaë receives the shower of coins watched by a cupid (c. 1546), while in the later versions, Danaë is accompanied by a gaunt and repulsive maid who is perhaps also her gaoler. The figure of the maid might be taken as revealing the true nature of 'avaricious' Danaë, but, as Goffen points out, in the 1554 *Danaë*:

the two women do not collaborate as harlot and procuress. On the contrary, the maid is presented as Danaë's opposite, both physically and morally: while Danaë sees her lover in the shower that she welcomes in her lap....the hag sees only gold that she seeks to catch in her apron.

Rona Goffen: *Titian's Women*, p. 129.¹⁷

Indeed it is the maid who matches the description of *Avaritia* given by Cesare Ripa later in the century in his influential catalogue of visual imagery, the *Iconologia* (1593), that 'she should be represented by a barefoot elderly woman, pale and thin, with a melancholy

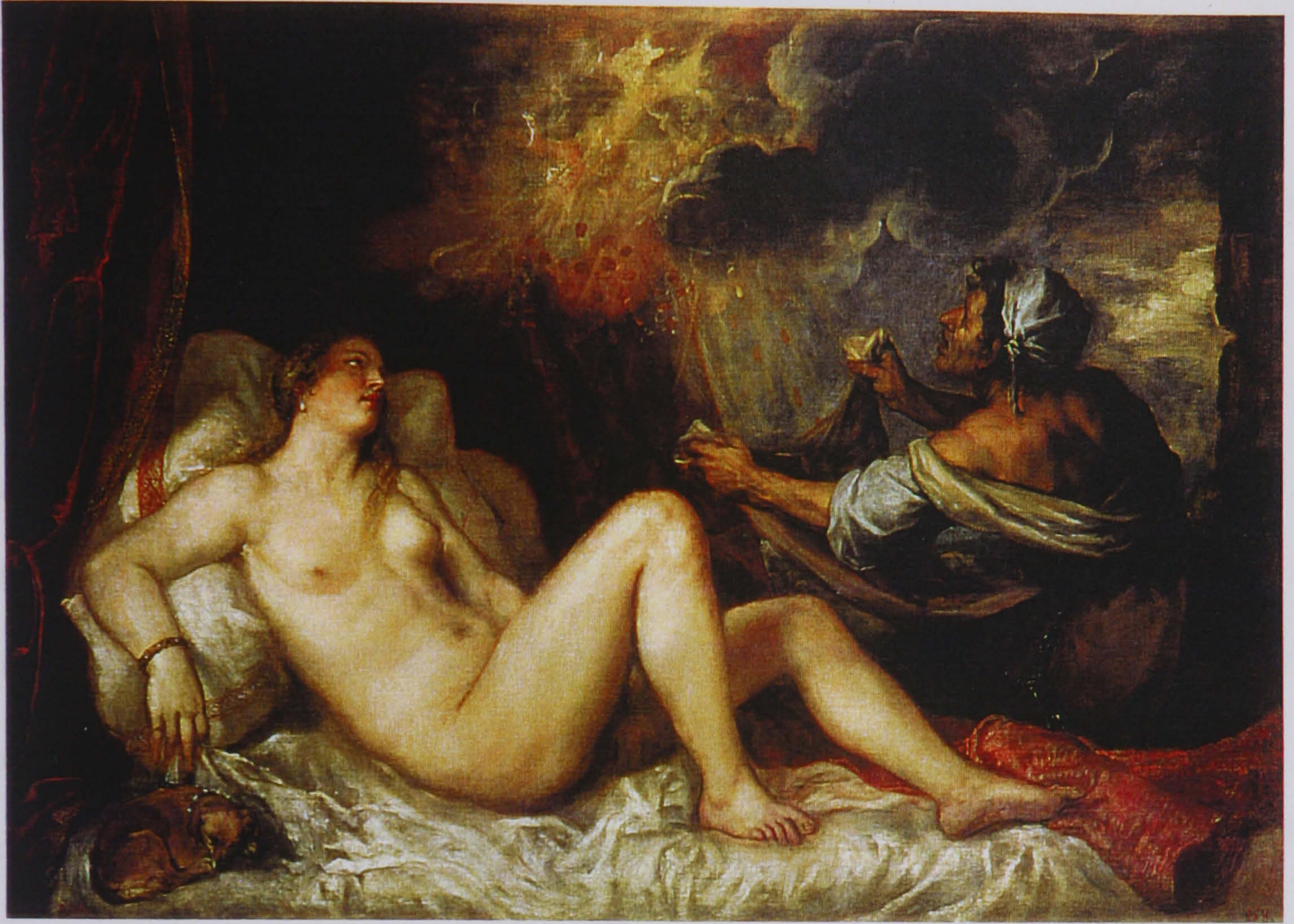


Fig. 9. Titian: 'Danaë' (1553-4), 129 x 180. Prado, Madrid. After Filippo Pedrocco:

Titian. Florence: Scala, 1993, plate 77 (p. 54).

expression, wearing ragged clothing and holding a purse' (Kahr, 1978, p. 46n).¹⁸

Although we cannot see the maid's feet she is dressed in rags and uses her apron as an improvised purse, while her expression is one of pure greed. Titian's painting shows us the two opposing ways of seeing which we find at the beginning and end of the Twinned-impression pattern, but next to one another. The implicit message of the canvas is 'evil to him who evil thinks'.

The opposition between the two ways of seeing we have already found expressed in the *Aithiopika* and in Tasso's epic is enshrined in Titian's series of Danaës. The maid sees only money where Danaë sees the god, just as Peloros sees only the object of his lust where others can see the goddess Artemis herself. Titian has superimposed the shower of golden coins upon an image familiar from Heliodorus, that of the sun breaking through dark clouds. He is showing what the true value of coins might be. As was noted previously (in chapter four) the golden coin can be taken as expressing pure matter stamped with divine form. While sculpture might be thought the better suited medium for expressing the marriage of form and matter, Titian is able to do this using light and colour alone, and as we saw in Lotto's *St. Lucy* altarpiece, the role of light in the composition expresses the role of light in the tale.¹⁹ One can also say that as a depiction of the moment of conception that in turn impresses itself upon imagination of the viewer, Titian's Ovidian scene is the thing it depicts.

The references in Spenser's text to 'fruitfulness', particularly the likening of Chysogone's pregnancy to the action of 'fruitfull seeds', underline an element of agricultural myth in the Danaë story. Hesiod's marriage of the sky, Ouranos, and the earth, Gaia, signifies on one level the earth receiving sunlight and rain from the heavens. Spenser's description of angry Jove battering his Lemnians with a storm evokes the

antagonism between Ouranos and Gaia. The beam of sunlight sent to impregnate Chrysogone requires no rain to accompany it as it strikes when she is bathing, while Ovid's 'golden shower' combines rain and light and casts Danaë as a reformed Gaia, or even as Ceres herself. This pattern is also of a piece with the assigning of the male and female roles in conception to the Nile (infused with the qualities of the sun) and land of Egypt as found in book nine of the *Aithiopika*.

Writing in the first half of the eighteenth century Vico rediscovered this agricultural interpretation when he identified the 'poetic gold' spoken of in myths with grain, saying that 'the gold coins which kings give their queen consorts among the other solemnities of their nuptials' must represent an abundance of grain, and that 'It was in a shower of this gold that Jove must have appeared to Danaë locked in her tower (which must have been a granary), to signify the abundance of this solemnity' (*Scienza nuova*, II, 548).²⁰ If a link can be made between Danaë, prototype of the accused Queens of romance, and Ceres this would be of significance to *The Winter's Tale* because of the implied likeness between Perdita and Ceres' daughter Proserpine.

There appears at first to be a contradiction in identifying Danaë and Persinna with both fertile Ceres, whom it would seem natural to associate with the Earth, and chaste Diana, the Moon. Spenser separates the roles of Belpheobe's unconscious mother impregnated by the sun and her foster parent, the moon goddess Diana, but earth and moon can be thought of as performing the same role, in the same way that Persinna can be both Moon priestess and mother. We have already noted that Charikleia can be identified as both the 'dead girl' Persephone and a follower of the huntress Diana (and at times Diana herself). In Macrobius' description of the different aspects of the sun he writes that

Hence Vergil, too, knowing that Liber Pater is the sun and Ceres the moon, (the one by its gentle warmth at night, the other by its heat by day) together control the richness of the soil and the ripening of the crops, says: '[You bright splendors of the World, most glorious, who guide the passage of the gliding year through the heavens, Liber and kindly Ceres] as surely as by your bounty the earth exchanged the Chaonian acorn for the rich ear of corn'.

Macrobius: *Saturnalia* I, xviii, incorp. Virgil: *Georgics* I, 5-8,
trans. Davies, p. 132.

As the ideal heavenly receptor of the sun's rays the moon continues the work of the sun, in a slightly different, but complementary way. As the production of crops is the task the sun wishes of the earth, this, in the world of matter, is its chastity. In the same way the mother in the tales proves her chastity to be a quality which resides in her faithfulness, and not in unchanging sterility. In *The Winter's Tale*, Hermione embodies fertile chastity while Perdita is associated with flowers and with Proserpine.

When Perdita returns to Sicily, Leontes is told that Florizel is accompanied by a maiden who is 'the most peerless piece of earth.../ That e'er the sun shone bright on' (*WT*, V, i, 94-5). Editors who comment on these lines pick out 'piece'. Both Frank Kermode and Stephen Orgel refer to its use in *The Tempest*: 'Thy mother was a piece of virtue, and / She said thou wast my daughter' (*The Tempest*, I, ii, 56-7). Kermode defines 'piece' as 'perfect specimen', 'masterpiece', adding 'Virtue here, of course, is "chastity"' (*The Tempest*, ed. Frank Kermode, The Arden Shakespeare, London: Methuen, 1954). Leontes uses 'piece' to mean 'masterpiece' shortly afterwards: 'O, royal piece! / There's magic in thy majesty' (*WT*, V, iii, 38-9). What is meant here is that Perdita is a 'masterpiece' of flesh (as her mother will seem a masterpiece of stone), and the reference

to the sun is equivalent to saying that she is the 'most beautiful under the sun'. But it is also possible that the sun is thought of here as having played a more active role in giving form to the earthy matter, and that it then shone through royal Leontes himself.

2. The Sun and Enlivened Seeing in *Menaphon*, *The Thracian Wonder* and *Pandosto*

So far in this chapter I have concentrated upon the role played by the sun as the creator of life in a number of works which are not primarily Accused Queen narratives, in order to show that the subtext of Heliodorus' novel relating to the agricultural cycle, and redolent of the mystery religions, would have been clearly visible to the Renaissance reader. Here, narrowing the focus somewhat, I will briefly discuss Greene's prose romance *Menaphon* (1589), the novel with which he followed *Pandosto*, and will isolate themes that link this work both back to Heliodorus and forward to *The Winter's Tale*. These include particularly the presentation of a King as the *Pater Patriae* who, in falling from grace, turns away from the sun.

Uncertainty as to the date and authorship of the novel's dramatised incarnation *The Thracian Wonder* means that some caution should be exercised in making comparisons between it and *The Winter's Tale*.²¹ A date in the fifteen-nineties and some involvement by Greene himself seem likely and, while there are significant plot differences with *Menaphon*, the structure and inspiration remain very similar.²²

The premise of the tale is that King Democles of Arcadia (who becomes Pheander of Thrace in the play) exiles his daughter Sephestia when he discovers that she had secretly married a noble, Maximius, and bore him a son later named Pleusidippus. The outraged father places his daughter, her sympathetic uncle and the new born infant in

a small boat and sends it out to sea in the certain hope that they would all drown. Like Pandosto's Bellaria, Democles' own Queen dies from grief as a result of losing her child. However, instead of drowning, the exiles are simply washed ashore again out of sight of the city and each other, and live in pastoral disguises until the conditions laid down by Apollo's riddling oracle come about and allow their return. In the meantime Sephestia and Maximius meet and love one another for the resemblance that each bears to the other's 'drowned' spouse, while remaining in ignorance of the other's true identity.

Democles' attempt to rid himself of his own descendants quite literally rebounds upon him because he is attempting something beyond his power, to stop time itself and fix the current order. This repeats the futile efforts of Acrisius to prevent Danaë conceiving and those of the King of Sicily in the folk tale *The Daughter of the Sun* to keep out the sun's impregnating beams. Democles also finds he cannot banish the sun as it breaks through in the eyes and faces of his lost family. Sephestia's voyage, made in a tiny unseaworthy boat, is modelled after Danaë's voyage to Seriphos, casting her father in the role of Acrisius and her child Pleusidippus as a new Perseus. If it had not already occurred to his readers, Greene signals this correspondence when the youthful Pleusidippus, unable to suppress his 'Eagle minded' inclinations, likens himself to 'stout Perseus' (p. 80). The myth is also present in *The Thracian Wonder*. The play opens with the angered King Pheander rushing onto the stage and denouncing his daughter, asking:

Is't possible a lady of her birth
Should stain her royal race with beastly lust,
And mix the blood of kings with a base issue?
Was it for this you were so long mew'd up

Within your private chamber?

The Thracian Wonder (ed. Dyce), I, i, 11-15.

That the banished Princess (here named Ariadne) was ‘so long mew’d up’ underlines the resemblance her surreptitious confinement bears to that of Danaë in her tower. The phrase also echoes Fairfax’s translation of Tasso in which he described how King Senapo of Ethiopia imprisoned his wife: ‘He mew’d her up from sight of mortall eie, / Nor day he would his beames on her had bent’ (*Godfrey of Bulloigne*, 1600, Bk. XII, 22, 5-7). The image of the ‘staining’ of royal blood recurs in *The Thracian Wonder* when Pheander tells his daughter and her husband

These hands should sacrifice your guilty souls,

And with your bloods wash the foul stain off

Our royal house.

As for the brat, his brains shall be dash’d out

TW, I, i, p. 153.²³

The paradox of washing clean a ‘stain’ with a bloody sacrifice also rebounds against the tyrant: his precipitate actions lead to an outbreak of plague, a foreign invasion and civil war. Ariadne laments that ‘Had his high rage but suffer’d me to speak, / I could have [made] my chastity as clear / As is the unspotted lamb of innocence’ (*TW*, I, i, p. 156). The comparable scene of Sephestia’s being accused is not described in *Menaphon*, but there is an echo in the play of Bellaria’s stout defence of herself:

I hope my patience shall make fortune blushe, and my unspotted life shall staine
spightful discredit. For although lying Report hath sought to appeach mine
honor...I say Egistus is honest, and hope my selfe to be found without spot’

Pandosto, ed. Bullough, pp. 170-1.

Here the paradox is reversed as the envious will themselves be stained with the Queen's 'spotlessness'. In Shakespeare's romance a courtier is moved to tell Leontes that Hermione: 'is spotless / I' th' eyes of heaven' (*The Winter's Tale*, II, i, 131-2). The disguised Princess Ariadne later describes her own innocent actions in an ironic light:

The King could not in justice pardon it;
'Twas a disgrace to him, shame to her sex,
Dishonour to herself, and progeny:
What greater infamy unto a king,
Than for to blot his name with bastardy?

TW, IV, i, p. 217, ed. Dyce.

The king has 'blotted' and 'stained' his own name with his own actions which result from his imagining the 'blot' upon his family. Bellaria also told her accuser: 'one Moale stayneth a whole face, and what is once spotted with Infamy can hardly be worne out with time' (*Pandosto*, p. 165). These phantom blemishes remain where only reputation is seen rather than the truth, but this image also suggests the moles and blemishes caused by selfish imagination in cases of maternal impression. King Pheander believes that Ariadne has rebelled against her patrimony, but she has been true to her husband. It is the King's own false imagination that stamps the blemish of illegitimacy upon the legitimate child. Ariadne's son Eusanius (the Pleusidippus character) later complains that he

shall bear the brand
Of bastard by his birth; be dispossess'd
of all inheritance due to the seed
That's sown in holy wedlock

TW, IV, i, p. 218.

Branding is also an image of conception in that it is the stamping of form into soft matter, though a brutal one compared with that of minting legitimate coinage. It is this subtext which I think accounts for the presence in the play of the anomalous 'white moor' Lillia Guida. Eusanius is kidnapped while still an infant by his uncle, Sophos, and taken to Africa where he is brought up by King Alcade and is loved by his daughter Lillia Guida. In an added complication Sophos, who is an entirely sympathetic character, has no idea as to the identity of the child he 'Found sporting in the plains' (*Thracian Wonder*, V, ii, p. 256). This episode mirrors Pleusiddippus' sojourn at the court of Thessaly (or Esmoreit's in Damascus) and features events which recapitulate in some way the experiences of the hero's parents. The African King Alcade is presented as a noble ruler and trustworthy ally with no interest in menacing 'Christendom' (*TW*, III, iii, p. 204). He would be happy for his daughter to marry Sophos, but her choice of the 'bastard' Eusanius brings about one of the sudden transformations common to the genre's seemingly reasonable fathers when they see evidence of betrayal. A courtier points out the couple to him saying

Their motions, gestures, looks, and conference,
 I have observ'd, and watch'd with jealous eyes,
 And find 'em all corrupt. 'Lack! my liege,
 Behold before your face their amorous fire
 Breaks forth into bright flames; is't not apparent?

TW, III, iii, p. 206.

Pleading for the life of his foster-child (and nephew) Eusanius, Sophos tells the King 'let not false surmise, / Suspect, and jealousy, beget belief / To wrong your princely thoughts' pointing to the power of jealousy to 'beget' monstrous imaginings, and he

betrays the Heliodoran background to the scene when he says 'to my hands / He did commit his life....Let him not lose it at a holy altar' (*TW*, III, iii, p. 208). There had not been any hint previously that Alcade had anything more in mind than executing him as a common criminal. Although Lillia Guida's love for Eusanius is condemned as a betrayal of her patrimony, she presents her boldness in defending Eusanius as proof of her descent from Alcade

Pardon me, princely father,
It is your spirit speaks; I am your own,
And by that privilege become your suitor.

TW, III, iii, p. 205.

Her anomalous colour is a visible sign of her innocence, but her reputation can be 'blotted' by those who interpret what they see enviously. Sophos tells the King 'Thy daughter's chaste, a royal spotless princess' (*TW*, II, i, p. 171).

A clear parallel can be drawn between this scene of exile and the earlier exile of Eusanius and his mother. Alcade unjustly condemns the love of Eusanius and Lillia Guida just as Pheander had condemned that of Eusanius' parents, Ariadne and the Prince of Sicily. In both cases a prince whose royal status is hidden woos a princess only to be banished by her outraged father. Pheander sees the stain of bastardy upon himself and his daughter, an accusation which is itself illegitimate. Lillia Guida already appears to be stained in a way which separates her from her father, but this only expresses her purity, while the appearance of betrayal detected in her actions likewise proves to be deceptive.

Lillia Guida's striking appearance presents the audience with a visual puzzle, and this is of a piece with the larger design of the play which moves from King Pheander's mistaken seeing and banishment of his family to the explanation of the equally puzzling

oracle of Pythian Apollo. The oracle is discovered to be a description of the 'strange device' (*TW*, V, ii, p. 254) upon the shields carried by his son-in-law and grandson, and so to involve meanings encoded in visual form which demand explanation. Pheander's interpretation of the badge which shows 'Neptune riding upon the waves' (*TW*, V, ii, p. 254) as depicting how the family 'being wrack'd at sea, / Which Neptune from his waves cast up again' is straightforward, but he adds that the painted sea shows how the knights'

equal valour neither ebbs nor tides,
But makes a stand, striving for victory:
Their shields proclaim as much, whose figure is
Neptune commanding of the rugged waves

TW, V, ii, p. 256-7.

This deduction demonstrates the return of his interpretative powers which have been lacking since the beginning of the play. Pheander misinterpreted his daughter's actions, and later misinterpreted the oracle as suggesting he should marry his own daughter so that he would beget an heir. The interpretation of the visual puzzle at the same time explains the oracle, and indicates that the shield's device is an *impresa*. The *impresa* (which translates as 'enterprise') was a particular genre of chivalric emblem in which the device is linked with an allusive phrase or verse; in *The Thracian Wonder* and in Greene's novel this verse is the oracle itself. *Imprese* abound in Sidney's *New Arcadia* and in Shakespeare's *Pericles*, indeed Shakespeare is also known to have created at least one for an actual tournament (See Sokol, 1994, pp. 20-1). That the King should be cured and a sense of wonder be summoned up by the presentation of such a device signals that his original fall consisted in misinterpreting visual evidence and receiving a mistaken impression. This theme is very much a part of Greene's original conception and, in

Menaphon itself, is elaborated in the use (or overuse in Wolff's view) of Heliodoran 'pathetic optics'.

The action of *The Thracian Wonder* is arranged in a similar form to that of *The Winter's Tale* with a gap of many years (and Time himself appearing on stage) dividing scenes of a King's mistaken seeing from those of reconciliation and forgiveness. The action of *Menaphon* itself follows a pattern much closer to that of the *Aithiopika*. The novel begins with a very brief introduction purporting to be based upon historical record, but one which withholds as much as it reveals. This describes how King Democles, 'coveting to be counted *Pater Patriae*', sent two lords to Apollo's oracle in Delphi hoping to find an explanation of the 'noysome pestilence' gripping the land, only to receive a riddling reply (*Menaphon*, p. 21). What is not made clear is that this plague results from the King's attempted execution of Princess Sephestia (in *The Thracian Wonder* the 'infection' is correctly interpreted by Sophos as a punishment visited upon the 'smiling tyrant' Pheander and his realm [*TW*, II, ii, p. 169]). The novel's manner of narration then alters completely with an extended and florid description of the Arcadian landscape and of the tiny boat being washed ashore. This mysterious spectacle staged upon a near deserted coast, is seen only by a single baffled, but awe-struck witness, Menaphon the shepherd, and is clearly a direct imitation of the opening tableau of the *Aithiopika*.²⁴ It serves as the first spectacle in a Twinned-impression pattern and, like Charikleia's first appearance, it is a spectacle intended to seize the reader's interest and stand at one end of the reader's progress from mystification to the final answering spectacle where all misunderstandings are set right. The description ends with Menaphon gazing upon Sephestia. He 'stood staring still on Sephestias face, which shee perceiuing, flashed out such a blush from her alablaster cheeks that they lookt like the ruddie gates of

the Morning: this sweete bashfulnesse amazing Menaphon' (p. 34). This is not only an example of 'pathetic optics' but echoes also the description of Charikleia bathed in the dawn's light as she is discovered upon the shore of Egypt and as she appears upon the steps of the temple in Delphi blushing with the beauty of the 'rosy fingered dawn'.

Greene's use of 'pathetic optics' is no mere affectation, but an essential part of the novel's thematic structure, and, if the use of this device at times seems overdone, one can say this is precisely because Greene wishes to draw attention to the technique. It is clear that, as in the *Aithiopika*, the reader, like the characters, is made the witness of puzzling and, at the same time, potentially transforming spectacles. An example of Greene's use of 'pathetic optics' in describing the shepherd's feast (a true *tour de force*) has already been quoted in the opening chapter (see above, p. 46), but it is important to note that he makes a connection between this lengthy catalogue of meaningful looks and the visual puzzles found elsewhere in the text:

Whiles thus there was banding of such lookes, as everie one imported as much as an *impreso*, Samela [Sephestia] willing to see the fashion of these countrey yong frowes, cast her eyes abroad, and in viewing euerie face, at last her eyes glaunced on the lookes of Melicertus [Maximius]; whose countenance resembled so vnto her dead Lord, that as a woman astonied she stood staring on his face, but ashamed to gaze upon a stranger, she made restraint of her looks, and so taking her eye from one particular obiect, she sent it abroad...

Menaphon, ed. Harrison, p. 51.

The arrival of Sephestia upon the Arcadian coast is also that of revenging Time and postponed change in the lives of those who thought themselves immune. Arcadia's perceived pastoral timelessness has become distorted and stagnant. Menaphon himself,

who was formally 'as deepe an enemie to fancie, as Narcissus was to affection' (p. 24), conceives a vehement passion for Sephestia which is as disruptive of his life as the vehemence of Democles' reaction to the sight of his grandson and eventual successor is to the state. Both are unbalanced reactions resulting from an existing antipathy to what should be thought natural signs of change. Menaphon finds himself 'infected with a jealous furie' and this resembles the 'jealous fury' of Democles which spreads 'infection' through the land.

King Democles falls from fulfilling the role of '*Pater Patriae*' to acting as a destructive tyrant and lustfully pursuing his own daughter, for, though ignorant of her true identity, he is not blind to her appearance, and tyranny is like incest in that the monarch abuses that to which he should be a father. Although, like Oedipus, Democles is at first moved by pity for his plague-ridden subjects' sufferings, his noble outlook quickly degenerates to the point that he seems 'another Heliogabalus' (p. 82). Among the many crimes of Heliodorus' fellow citizen of Emesa was to make himself the sun, which is tantamount to blocking out the rays of the actual sun. However, while the King makes futile efforts to prevent time from advancing and Providence from shaping events, the Princess and her family manifest the signs of Apollo's favour. When Sephestia appears at the Shepherd's festival 'her eyes gaue such a shine, and her face such brightnesse, that [the company] stood gazing on this Goddesse' (p. 50), and Sephestia, adopting a 'superfine' manner, addresses the disguised Maximus as 'Arcadies Apollo, whose brightnesse draws euerie eye to turne as the Heliotropian doth after her load' (p. 58). The image of Heliotropic flowers recurs in the garden scene where King Agenor of Thessaly (who fills the role taken by Alcade in *The Thracian Wonder*) reveals himself as another

King whose distorted relations with his family can be thought of as resulting from his attempt to supplant Apollo.

Pleusidippus' experiences in Thessaly feature their own instances of enlivened seeing. He is stolen from the coast of Arcadia not by an uncle, but by a pirate chief who is struck by the child's appearance:

When gazing on his face as wanton Ioue gazed on Phrygian Ganimedè in the fields of Ida, hee [Pleusidippus] exhaled into his [the Pirate's] eyes such [a] deepe impression of his perfection, as that his thought neuer thirsted so much after any pray, as this pretie Pleusidippus possession

Menaphon, p.66.

Although a notorious cut-throat, the pirate wins a complete pardon from King Agenor simply by presenting the child to the king. Pleusidippus arrives at court at a most opportune moment. The King and Queen are conducting a graceful, but also a somewhat sinister debate, inspired by the dependence of flowers upon the sun, which is taken by the King to be a metaphor for the absolute dependence of a wife upon her husband. And here we find mentioned a mixture of stained and heliotropic flowers very similar to that mentioned by Perdita (*The Winter's Tale*, IV, iv).

King Agenor maintains that 'each man's wife ought euerie way to be the image of her husband' (p. 68), and just as the Marigold follows the sun, she should imitate his every mood and 'shut vp her dores, and solemnise continuall night' in his absence, waiting for his return to 'vnsealeth her silence'. His Queen, Eriphilia, reacts by saying that 'if all flowers...affoord such influence of eloquence to our aduerse orators, Ile exempt them all from my smell, for feare they be all planted to poyson'. However, when she continues in this vein by warning Agenor that he had better guard against exchanging

'his rose for a nettle' (meaning, of course, his angering her), there is a Leontes-like edge to his reply: 'If I do....it is no more, but my gardeners shall plucke it vp by the rootes, and throw it ouer the wal as a weed' (p. 69). The Queen then picks out a 'purple flower...in forme like a hyacinth...so cunningly dropped with bloud, as if Nature had intermedled with the Heralds arte to emblazon a bleeding heart. It is the flower....which Poets doo faigne Venus dying Adonis to be turnd'. Declaring that she does not think it possible Nature should give a boy 'a face in despite of women so faire', at that very moment 'as if Fortune meant to present her fancie with his desired felicitie' the argument is halted by the young 'Perseus' Pleusidippus being brought in. His perfection impresses itself upon the royal couple as it did even upon the hardened pirate. The Queen exclaims that it was as though 'the Sunne had lefte his bower to beguile their eyes with a borrowed shape', and was in 'extasie, seeing her eyes to dazle with the reflexe of his beautie' while Agenor had to be revived from a 'trance, wherein the present wonder had inwrapt him' (p. 70). Pleusidippus is a sun that both husband and wife must look toward. In a faint echo of the role of astrology in *Esmoreit*, King Agenor becomes so enamoured of the child that he is said to 'calculate his Natiuitie, and measure his birth' by Pleusidippus' beauty, and decides to make the child heir to his throne and husband to his daughter (the outcome the King of Damascus in the mediaeval play already knew would come about) (*Menaphon*, p. 70).

Pleusidippus inherits his 'shining' appearance from his mother who, as we have seen, 'lightens' the Shepherd's feast. His journey back to Arcadia is triggered by his seeing a portrait of his own mother, 'the Arcadian shepheardesse', brought to the court by a traveller. In an argument as to which nation boasts 'the most accomplisht Dames' the stranger maintains that

bee it no disgrace for the Moone to stoope to the Sunne, for the starres to giue
place when Titan appeares; then ... I make Apollos Arcadie beauties Meridian
....Our Arcadian Nimphs are faire and beautifull, though not begotten of the Suns
bright rayes; whose eyes vant loues armorie to the viewe, whose angelical faces
are to the obscure earth in steed of a Firmament: viewe but this counterfeite (and
therewithall hee shewed the picture of Samela) and see if it be not of force to
draw the Sunne from his spheare or the Moone from hir circle to gaze as the one
did on the beautie of Daphne

Menaphon, p. 78-9.

Although 'not begotten of the Suns bright rayes' the 'radiant glory' of Sephestia's beauty leaves her son 'a man alreadie installed in eternitie' (p. 79) and the youth will now not rest until he has seen her. It is interesting to note that this painting, like the portrait of Andromeda in the *Aithiopika*, is not described in detail as a work of art *per se*, but instead features as a transparent vehicle through which the sun's rays reach and impress themselves upon a particular viewer. The phrase 'not begotten of the Suns bright rayes' is the traveller's allusion to the 'fair shepherdess's' supposedly humble origin (he is after all in royal company). The reader knows that this proviso is unnecessary. Although Sephestia was not conceived in the same manner as Spenser's Belpheobe, the sun keeps her unspotted. Her 'shining' beauty expresses not only her own exalted parentage, but, above this, her role as a virtuous Danaë and as the bearer of Apollo's light.

The effect the painting has in rousing Pleusidippus and in pushing the plot forward can be contrasted with the reaction of his father Maximius to a depiction of Sephestia in verse. Doron's description of the fair shepherdess, described by Maximius as being like Paris 'painting' Helen, prompts him to exclaim

Me thinkes the *Idea* of her person represents it selfe an object to my fantasie, and that I see in the discouerie of her excellence, the rare beauties of: and with that he broke off abruptlie with such a deepe sigh....sitting as the *Lapithes* when they gazed on *Medusa*

Menaphon, p. 46 (original italics).

Unable to recognise that Sephestia is Samela he remains fixed, but it is just such a Heliodoran work of art, one that presents the 'idea' of an individual to the viewer's fancy which leads to Pleusidippus' return and thus brings about Maximius' release.

When Pleusidippus returns to Arcadia, Greene manages to contrive a remarkable situation in which a long lost wife is wooed simultaneously by the husband she believes is dead, her father who believes he killed them both, and her son stolen in infancy some sixteen years previously, none of whom recognise her, or one another. This demonstrates a certain delight in the forms of romance and, whilst it is difficult for such a *coup de théâtre* not to suggest a hint of farce, there is a greater purpose here. This wondrous construction is even more striking upon the stage, where the characters are all closeted together, each in disguise, with father and son as rivals for the mother and the grandfather intriguing against them both (*Thracian Wonder*, IV, i). The scene presents a vision of a perverse anti-family in which all relationships are distorted or reversed. As in *Pandosto* incest is a real threat here, though its eventual unmasking does not have the tragic consequences described in the earlier novel. King Democles' grotesque wooing of his own daughter and attempted murder of his heirs are the results of his opposition to the natural process of succession and his attempts to reassert his own youthfulness in defiance of Time. This suppression of fatherly affection demands a wonder as a cure because it is itself wondrous in its monstrosity, but this sudden recognition is prepared

for slowly by Time and this process takes on the character of Agricultural myth, particularly so in *The Thracian Wonder*. When Ariadne appears as the Shepherd's Queen at the festival she takes the role of Spring in casting out a comic shepherd dressed as 'old Janus' or 'Janevere', who wears a 'white beard and hair' (*TW*, II, ii, p. 182). He unmask himself with the words

Though loath to leave the presence
Of such a lovely queen;
Whose beauty, like the sun,
Melts all my frost away;
And now, instead of winter,
Behold a youthful May.

The Thracian Wonder, II, ii, p. 183.

There is no animosity between January and the Shepherds' Queen, she will 'bid [him] welcome as befits [his] years' when the time comes for his return. This gracious act of succession presents a telling contrast to Pheander's stagnant reign. Indeed, his rejection of his grandchild and his dubious rejuvenation in pursuit of his daughter, constitute a monstrous attempt to prevent new life from deposing him and prove disastrous for his realm.

The Winter's Tale emphasises seasonal imagery in a way similar to *The Thracian Wonder*, but not found in *Pandosto*. However, Greene does link the events of *Pandosto* to larger processes of conception when he identifies the King's sudden fall as occurring because 'Fortune envious of such happy successe, willing to shewe some signe of her inconstancie, turned her wheele, and darkned [Pandosto and Bellaria's] bright sunne of prosperitie, with the mistie cloudes of mishap and misery' (p. 157). Fortune resists the

fertile, organising vision of Apollo, and Pandosto himself becomes her accomplice by favouring his own imaginings over the truth of the visible world. Pandosto turns in on himself and impregnates his own mind, becoming 'the breeder of his [own] miserie' and 'secrete displeasures' (*Pandosto*, ed. Bullough, pp. 156, 159), just as he later threatens to impregnate that person who is closest to being himself, his own daughter.

Pandosto had attempted to halt time, but time defeats him with the same inevitability that the sun defeated the futile attempts of the folk-tale King to block up every crack through which its beams might touch his daughter. In the same way, Acrisius' attempt to hide Danaë high in a tower (or deep under the earth in a womb-like cell) and Senapo's attempt to hide his wife from the 'eye of heaven' also failed.

Pandosto supplies the main plot of *The Winter's Tale* and also contains many of the key themes and ideas of the play, albeit often in an undeveloped form. However, *Pandosto* did not exist in a vacuum. Much of its content is very obviously derived from Heliodorus and elsewhere, and much is also shared by *Menaphon* and *The Thracian Wonder*. When he came to adapt *Pandosto* Shakespeare did so by working within this tradition and, as Carol Gesner has suggested, looked back to Heliodorus himself (see above chap. 1, note 51). To draw an appropriate analogy, *The Winter's Tale* can be thought of as the child of *Pandosto* in the same way that Charikleia is the child of Hydaspes; higher forces have intervened to create the likeness of a distinguished ancestor.

In this chapter we have seen how the great processes found in the macrocosm through which life is infused in the earth, and organised after a design, are incorporated into the scheme of the epic (and of Ovid's poem). The grand and elevated narratives of the genre invoke the very beginning of time to show how the gods or Providence shape

order from chaos, in the same way that, in the epic tales themselves, these forces will cause renewal and understanding to spring from the matter of history. We have also seen that this vision lies at the heart of the more intimate genre of Romance tales to which the *Aithiopika* and *Pandosto* belong. Now we will see how Shakespeare developed these ideas in *The Winter's Tale* itself, the work which crowns this tradition.

Chapter Seven

Seeing and Conceiving in *The Winter's Tale*

'Here's such ado to make no stain a stain
As passes colouring', *The Winter's Tale*, II, ii, 19-20.

1. Affection and Infection

In the previous chapters I have tried to show that there are several paths that can be followed from Heliodorus' novel to *The Winter's Tale*. Shakespeare would have had direct knowledge of the *Aithiopika* and would also have recognised the conscious use of the novel in Greene's romances and in Tasso's chivalric epic. Shakespeare repeatedly invokes memories of 'old tales' in his play, suggesting a likeness between what is seen on stage and, not so much the Greek Romances, as the well-known Mediaeval Accused Queen tales and plays (*WT*, V, iii, 116-17). These tales also articulate the idea at the heart of the myth of Danaë and can be seen to belong to a tradition possibly first crystallised by Heliodorus himself.

It is not my object here to set up a battle for primacy between competing sources or to assign the origin of various motifs to different works, but to show that the influence of Heliodorus manifests itself in *The Winter's Tale* through the linking together of seeing and pregnancy. These concerns become, not so much the twin themes of the play, as the single theme of conception which is explored and elaborated in a variety of ways culminating in the appearance of Hermione's 'statue'.

F. D. Hoeniger rightly stated in his important article 'The Meaning of *The Winter's Tale*' (*University of Toronto Quarterly* XX, i, 1950, pp. 11-26) that

The god of *The Winter's Tale* is Apollo, the sun god....Leontes, however, is in the state of winter, when the sun temporarily disappears, and for this reason does not obey him. But this disobedience to the sun god means nothing short of rejection of creation itself...(p. 20).

We have seen this 'disobedience' before in Tasso's *Senapo*. What it means is that Leontes not only turns against fertility in the form of his pregnant wife, but also refuses to see the world that the beams of the sun illumine, preferring to see pictures that he has coloured and lit himself in his 'mind's eye'. Leontes favours an untruth of his own making over the truth Apollo reveals, and, like Acrisius before him, he becomes a father who seizes hold of the false appearance of disgrace and rejects the truth of a perfect conception.

Leontes' seeing is at fault and he suffers at the hands of his own powerful imagination just as an expectant mother was believed to do. He is guilty, like the selfish mothers of the maternal impression anecdotes, of looking to the wrong source for 'form', looking into his own self, to his imagination, for shocking visual evidence which confirms his deepest anxieties. Although this does not fix actual birthmarks upon his daughter, his accusations instead project moral 'blemishes' upon her and upon his wife. Paulina rightly identifies Leontes' 'jealousies' as 'fancies' (*WT*, III, ii, 181-2, and as 'weak-hing'd fancy' at II, iii, 118). As we have seen, 'Phantasy' was identified (by Robert Burton among many others) as the source of unwanted impressions which 'stamped' birthmarks and deformations upon a newly conceived child.

Identifying sight as a major theme of *The Winter's Tale*, B. J. Sokol, in his book *Art and Illusion in 'The Winter's Tale'* (1994), pointed out that

The play's overall concern with vision is reflected in the distribution of the word 'eye[s]', which has two distinct peaks near the start and end. In the peak near the beginning these words cluster mainly in relation to erroneous and distorted perceptions, and near the end they cluster again mainly in relation to clarified sight.

B. J. Sokol: *Art and Illusion in 'The Winter's Tale'*, p. 18.¹

That the play should progress from malign to curative seeing clearly suggests the presence of Heliodorus' Twinned-impression design, and perhaps should remind the audience also that Sicily is the island of Saint Lucy, the patroness of those whose vision requires healing.²

In the moment of seeing that begins this pattern, Leontes impregnates his own imagination by stamping it with a form of his own making. Unlike the union of opposites in which Perdita was conceived, Leontes' only brings forth 'issue' that negates fertility.³ As has been shown earlier, it is not merely fortuitous that an analogy can be drawn between the processes of seeing and conceiving, for they are actually the same process in which form and matter are brought together.

M. M. Mahood drew attention to a number of key ideas, words and recurring 'puns' which feature as unifying markers in the play in her very useful chapter on *The Winter's Tale* in *Shakespeare's Wordplay* (Methuen, 1957).⁴ Among the words she identifies is 'issue', employed by Shakespeare to mean both 'offspring' and the 'outcome' of events.⁵ This usage echoes the unifying idea of Heliodorus' romance, in that events result from moments of mental conception in the same way that children result from physical conception. Other recurring features she notes include the frequent mentions of eyes, seeing, and of 'infection', both moral and physical.

'Issue' makes its first appearance in Leontes' bitter words to his son 'I / Play too; but so disgrac'd a part, whose issue / Will hiss me to my grave' (*WT*, I, ii, 187-89). We can see in the compacted meanings of Leontes' words the use of theatrical metaphor familiar from Heliodorus, a strand which runs throughout the play.

The precise moment that the matter, or *hyle*, of Leontes' rebellious imagination originally took an incorrect form comes just prior to the King's 'affection' speech, a passage which has become notorious for the difficulties it poses:

Affection! thy intention stabs the centre:
Thou dost make possible things not so held,
Communicat'st with dreams; - how can this be?-
With what's unreal thou coactive art,
And fellow'st nothing: then 'tis very credent
Thou mayst co-join with something; and thou dost,
(And that beyond commission) and I find it,
(And that to the infection of my brains
And hard'ning of my brows).

WT, I, ii, 138-46.⁶

Leontes' experience of seeing Hermione and Polixenes together is akin to Heliodorus' Aristippos seeing Knemon standing over him with a sword, Gloucester picturing Edgar in a similar act of betrayal, or Lear affronted by Cordelia's 'nothing', and is the first impression in a Heliodoran Twinned-impression plot, that is the story of a father's journey from a misconception which expresses his own failings to a moment of wonder and recognition.

The speech is best understood as the King's description of his own mental processes in which he employs a number of Aristotelian terms. John Erskine Hankins very usefully analysed these terms in his book *Backgrounds of Shakespeare's Thought* (pp. 98-100), and it will be helpful to quote him at some length:

Affection....refers to Leontes's own mind, not to the friendly conduct of Polixenes and Hermione. Its basic meaning is 'a state of mind' or 'an inclination of the mind'....Affection is stimulated to action by the images from phantasy and imagination unchecked by reason or judgement. Its action in the soul is essentially that which responds to a too vivid imagination.⁷

Intention is the term used by Aquinas, Albertus Magnus, and Ficino for an image presented to the mind by the apprehensive senses. Aquinas lists a first intention and a second intention. The first intention is the actual image presented by the external senses to the common sense. The second intention is the image formed by the phantasy or imagination on the basis of the first intention. Thus in Theseus's line, 'How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear,' the first intention or actual image is a bush; the second intention or imagined image is a bear. When the type of intention is not specified, the second or imagined image is nearly always meant, as it is in Leontes's speech.

Center refers to Leontes's own soul or heart....Leontes uses metaphorically the image of being stabbed to the heart; he is wounded by the 'intention' or picture of guilty lovers, which his 'affection' causes him to see in his wife and friend.

Communicat'st....is a formal term in psychology, used in its original sense of 'impart, share, hold in common'....Aquinas writes, 'With friends and brothers,

a man ought to have trust and a communication of things,' stressing the idea of sharing. He also uses the term in expressing the relationship of the spiritual form to the material body....and of lower bodies to heavenly bodies. Albertus Magnus thinks that in 'true' dreams the imagination receives impulses from heavenly powers and that these are 'communicated' back to the common sense to be presented again to the mind.⁸

Co-join repeats the action of affection in imagining unreal images. Since affection can do this, it can certainly cojoin with a real image of a real thing, a 'some thing' as distinguished from the 'no thing' of phantasies and dreams. This 'some thing' is the physical presence of Hermione and Polixenes holding hands. *Co-join* is the same as Aquinas's *conjungere*. In *De Unitate Intellectus* Aquinas states that Aristotle sought to 'cojoin' those things that are of the intellect with those things that are of the sense. Intellect functions by 'cojoining' with the phantasm presented to it.

Infection is [a term denoting] the action of a lover's eyebeam upon the eye and soul of the beloved. Leontes metaphorically speaks of his brain as being infected by his view of Hermione and Polixenes when he really means that his mind has been infected by the intention of 'guilty lovers' formed in his imagination.⁹

Hankins, pp. 98-100 (original italics).¹⁰

It is important to note that the King's speech is triggered by the false image of an illicit joining whilst it is itself an illicit joining (of the intellect and 'nothing'). What has occurred is an act of perception and of mental conception. Leontes is, therefore, quite correct in using Aristotelian terms in his attempt to describe this process, because the

process itself is Aristotelian. What is actually before Leontes is the innocent image of Hermione and Polixenes, but, his anxieties having been aroused, his fantasy (his mind's eye) summons, up against his volition, the shocking and unwanted image of Perdita's conception in which Leontes sees himself as playing no part. He then feels compelled to assert the truth of the form that the soft matter of his heart has accepted. When Camillo informs Polixenes of Leontes' delusion he says that Leontes 'thinks, nay, with all confidence he swears, / As he had seen't' that Polixenes has 'touch'd' Hermione 'forbiddenly' (*WT*, I, ii, 414-7).

We have already seen how, for Dante, an 'intention' can impress itself upon the 'wax' of the mind (see above p. 144).¹¹ Leontes is able to recognise this process taking place, but is not able to prevent it. It is as though the Clown were to see Autolycus' hand taking his money and yet still be fooled and forget what he has seen. Leontes' speech is a strained attempt to describe the progress of the subjective misapprehensions of a 'too vivid' imagination, and represents the last flickering of his objectivity. Indeed, the disparities he claims to have discovered between the behaviour and motives of those around him, between Polixenes' polished courtliness and his supposed actions away from Leontes' sight, appear instead in the conjunction of Leontes' own elevated choice of words and the irrational fear which has overtaken him.

Leontes' use of the word 'Affection' is an echo of *Pandosto* where Greene referred to the 'deepe impression' made by Fawnia's beauty causing the King's 'franticke affection' as it had that of Dorastus (*Pandosto*, ed. Bullough, p. 193, 179). Leontes also has received an 'impression' that has left him 'affected'. Greene's Menaphon too, formally an enemy of 'fancie' and 'affection', is 'infected with a jealous furie' through seeing Sephestia and Maximius (*Menaphon*, pp. 24, 51).

The word 'affection' is used again by Shakespeare when Florizel repudiates his inheritance from his father in favour of a new 'form' received from Perdita. Camillo's reaction to Florizel's unrestrained profession of his love for Perdita is to observe somewhat dryly, 'This shows a sound affection' (*WT*, IV, iv, 380), using 'affection' to mean love of a genuine and benign and not lustful kind. At the same time, the word contains the idea that the object of love 'affects', that is, seizes and reorders the mind of the lover. It is, therefore, particularly applicable to 'love at first sight'. Florizel vows 'From my succession wipe me, father; I / am heir to my affection', and he determines in future to be advised by his 'fancy' (*WT*, IV, iv, 481-3), indicating that 'affection', awoken by a powerful impression, has the power to re-order qualities once ordered by a parent. What matters is whether the influence which stimulates this process is good or bad. Florizel's seeing Perdita is a very different form of 'affection' from Leontes seeing his own imaginings. The royal party's eagerness to visit Paulina's gallery is described as displaying 'all greediness of affection' (*WT*, V, ii, 101-2), that is, they are filled with the anticipation of being 'affected' by something they will see.¹²

Greene's use of 'impression' in his description of Pandosto seeing his daughter is ironic, the child stamps an impression upon the father who had once stamped her. His use of 'affection' may well be an echo of Underdowne's translation of Heliodorus. 'Affection' is used by Underdowne in such a way as to exploit the double sense of 'love' and 'influence'. The spectacular appearance of Charikleia and Theagenes on the steps of the temple in Delphi impresses itself upon each of them so that they fall deeply in love, but 'Afterward as though they were ashamed of that they did, they blushed: within a while after, when this affection, as I thinke, had griped their hartes, they became pale....sixe hundered countenaunces appered in their faces in shorte time, and the

chaunginge of all kinde of colour' (Underdowne, p. 81) (bearing in mind Charikleia's origins, an alteration in colour due to something which she has seen has a particular significance). Charikles, despairing of interesting Charikleia in his nephew, laments 'I would to God that she might once feele what affection and love meaneth' (Underdowne, p. 84), little realising that her apparent sickness is caused by just this. In fact, an opposition is set up between 'affection' as the result of love and benign influence and 'infection' caused by malign seeing. We have seen in Kalasiris' speech on the evil eye in the *Aithiopika* that diseases can be spread and caught through seeing. He tells Charikles that 'sighte is capable of most mutations, andit must needes receive such infections as are about it' (tr. Underdowne, p. 83).

Leontes recognises that his 'brains' have become 'infected' through seeing an 'abhorrd' image, and believes, wrongly, that this image has an objective truth. While 'infection' does specifically imply the reception of images, it also means of course, the passing on of a disease or a blighting influence. This is not so much a double meaning as the same meaning shown in different aspects.

Leontes imagines that he has received from outside a blighting influence and, with a painful irony, he identifies Mamillius as having caught the same 'sickness' (*WT*, II, iii, 11) in the same way:

Conceiving the dishonour of his mother!
He straight declin'd, droop'd, took it deeply,
Fasten'd and fix'd the shame on't in himself,
Threw off his spirit, his appetite, his sleep,
And downright languish'd.

WT, II, iii, 13-17.

The word 'droop'd' links Mamillius with the other flower-children Florizel and Perdita, who, being hardier than him, survive the winter. While Leontes feels he must show strength in rooting out the causes of disease, Mamillius (called a 'kernel' and a 'squash' [*WT*, I, ii, 159-60]) shows that he is too 'tender' (*WT*, III, ii, 196) to resist the force of influence.¹³ Leontes has not progressed from the idea that his child should be an extension of his own self, and he projects into Mamillius an exact likeness of mind and of opinion.¹⁴ The 'conception' of Hermione's 'dishonour' has 'fix'd' itself in Leontes' heart, and has left him languishing and sleepless (*WT*, I, ii, 454-5 and II, iii, 12-16). He does not realise that he has given Mamillius this 'sickness' and that it results from the shock at the rupture between the child's parents.

References to disease spread through the play, but opinions on the source of the 'infection' differ. Both Camillo and Paulina identify Leontes as in some way 'diseased'; hence Paulina's attempts to 'purge' his humour with 'medicinal' words (*WT*, I, ii, 297, II, iii, 38,37). Like King Democles in *Menaphon*, King Pheander in *The Thracian Wonder*, or indeed Oedipus, Leontes is faced with curing a diseased state, when the sickness emanates from his own self.¹⁵ While others can see this, he fixes the blame elsewhere: 'were my wife's liver / Infected, as her life, she would not live / The running of one glass' (*WT*, I, ii, 304-6).

After Polixenes has noted the sudden 'alteration' in the 'complexions' of his friends, Camillo tells him

There is a sickness
Which puts some of us in distemper, but
I cannot name the disease, and it is caught
Of you, that yet are well.

To which Polixenes replies:

How caught of me?

Make me not sighted like the basilisk.

I have look'd on thousands, who have sped the better

By my regard, but kill'd none so

WT, I, ii, 384-90.

By saying that Polixenes is 'well' Camillo means that he is both as yet untroubled and innocent. As Polixenes fortuitously guesses, it is through seeing him that Leontes has become 'distempered'.¹⁶

As was noted earlier, the basilisk features in the *Aithiopika*. Kalasiris tells Charikles, whose seeing was dangerous even to those he loved, of 'the serpent Basiliscus, [which] with his onelie breath and looke, doeth drye up and corrupte all that it passeth by' (Underdowne, p. 84). Heliodorus uses this example as a gorgon-like opposite to the fertile seeing embodied in affectionate seeing. Kalasiris is quite clear that envious seeing creates an infected atmosphere:

[It] doth ingrafte a like infection in them who have received it. For which cause when a man has envyously looked upon any excellent thing, foorthwith he hath filled the ayre with that pestilent qualitie

Aithiopika, 3.8 (trans. Underdowne, p. 83, this passage is quoted above in Morgan's translation, see p. 214).

The 'pestilence' created by Leontes' envious seeing can be contrasted with Cleomenes' description of Delphos: 'The climate's delicate, the air most sweet, / Fertile the isle' (*WT*, III, i, 1-2). Air clear of infection is necessary for fertility and this climate seems to be generated by the presence of the oracle. It is as if the isle is bathed in the sun-god's

understanding, while the contaminated air which hangs over Sicily, the fog of suspicion, clearly signals a period of sterility.

Leontes' anxieties stem from a belief similar to that expressed by his 'twin' Polixenes in his speech describing the two kings' innocent childhood. Polixenes suggests that maturity brings 'temptations' (*WT*, I, ii, 77) which are the essence of Adam's crime, an opinion which condemns procreation as being the perpetuation of fallen matter, rather than seeing it as an ordained repetition of the process of creation. Hermione's reaction ('Grace to boot!' [*WT*, I, ii, 80]) shows her, as yet amused, aversion to such thinking. However, the 'three crabbed months' (*WT*, I, ii, 102) that, many years before, Leontes waited for her acceptance of his suit have fixed themselves in his heart and are now remembered not as a prudent and educative pause in the face of his fiery impatience, but as a 'coldness' which indicated her incipient rebelliousness. His sudden conviction that his wife is not to be trusted and his children are not enough like him can be likened also to Acrisius' fear of his own heir, because both kings mistakenly believe that the succession of their generation by the next, and, by extension, the desires that bring new generations into being, must involve an unnatural rebellion against their own authority. In fact, it is the fear that he will be deceived and supplanted that places Leontes in rebellion against fertility and divine wishes, and against the source of his legitimacy as ruler. In the face of this Hermione must appeal, like Persinna, Saint Lucy and Tasso's Ethiopian Queen to a source of 'light' that is above her husband and her judge. The 'light' Saint Lucy represents was taken to be synonymous with 'grace', and a pointed contrast is made throughout the play between Hermione's 'grace' and Leontes' 'disgrace', where 'grace' should be understood as an expression of heavenly influence or approval.

When Leontes, in a state of mounting paranoia, examines the shape of his son's nose in the hope of seeing a likeness to himself, he is acting out the anxieties of the self-centred father who demands exact replication. Mamillius' nose is 'a copy out of' his father's, while others had playfully observed that father and son were 'Almost as like as eggs' (*WT*, I, ii, 122, 130). As Leontes' need grows from a misunderstanding of his own place in creation, he misses the proof that the child possesses an inheritance which, like that of Charikleia, is more than skin deep. Mamillius has inherited his father's powers of 'conception' and, as a part of this, a liking for imagining unsettling tales. Hermione encourages her son to exercise (harmlessly) his 'powerful imagination': 'do your best / To fright me with your sprites: you're powerful at it' (*WT*, II, i, 27-8). She recognises, indeed takes delight in, the likeness between Mamillius and Leontes, and tries to draw Polixenes out so that he will describe the young Leontes' 'waggishness', expecting to hear, no doubt, of a child much like her son (*WT*, I, ii, 60-2, 65-6). At her trial Hermione tells her husband: 'The bug which you would fright me with, I seek' (*WT*, III, ii, 92). Having retreated into himself and regressed momentarily to his childhood, Leontes is behaving like a child, while Hermione, who wished earlier to hear of his childish behaviour, experiences the full force of his resurgent immaturity. Paulina correctly sees the cause of Mamillius' death:

honourable thoughts

(Thoughts high for one so tender) cleft the heart

That could conceive a gross and foolish sire

Blemish'd his gracious dam

WT, III, ii, 195-8.

* * * *

You do remember

This stain upon her?

Post.: Ay, and it doth confirm

Another stain, as big as hell can hold

Cymbeline, II, iv, 134-6, 138-40.

Imogen's 'stain' is a pleasing detail of her beauty and as such is legitimate, but in now becoming a 'blot' upon her, it gains a new and spurious source of legitimacy in Posthumus' eyes as confirmation of a supposed moral 'stain'. Before, the 'stain' was 'A mole cinque-spotted: like the crimson drops / I' th' bottom of a cowslip' (*Cymbeline*, II, ii, 38-9) - a natural spot like those which appear upon the flowers in Ovid's tales of metamorphosis as signs of the sympathies which run throughout creation. Now, it is as though Imogen's graceful nature and demeanour count for nothing against the evidence supplied by the redefinition of a tiny 'blemish'. This disparity corresponds to that found when the apparent worthlessness of Iachimo as a witness is set against all Posthumus knows of his wife. Iachimo has painted a stain upon her and inverted the use Romance usually makes of legitimate moles (and of jewellery) as signs that prompt recognition and reunite scattered families. Here they are used to drive husband and wife apart. Leontes follows Posthumus not only in placing his trust in ephemeral visions, but also in insisting upon a likeness between interior and exterior at a moment when he has lost all means of judging the truth of appearances. Leontes believes that his vision of Hermione's adultery must be true, and therefore that her 'graceful' appearance must be deceptive.

While tiny phenomena like Imogen's mole, or Hermione and Polixenes holding hands, can convey decisive influences, or have meanings read into them so that they seem

to do so, they exist as fragments of the patterning of variegated nature brought into being by the earth receiving the 'intentions' of the sun. Leontes wilfully turns his eyes from the harmony of the macrocosm to the turmoil of his own microcosm and focuses upon the minute signs that those who are less short-sighted have missed. He sees the 'spider in the cup' and uses this example to show how a cuckold might live happily in ignorance (a happiness that mirrors the pseudo-Eden of childhood described by Polixenes):

There may be in the cup
A spider steep'd, and one may drink, depart,
And yet partake no venom (for his knowledge
Is not infected); but if one present
Th' abhorr'd ingredient to his eye, make known
How he hath drunk, he cracks his gorge, his sides,
With violent hefts. I have drunk, and seen the spider.

WT, II, i, 39-45.

Leontes has already identified himself as the possessor of 'infected' knowledge, by which he means the unhappy knowledge of another's 'infection'. The scenario he describes here is reminiscent of several concerning 'powerful imagination' recounted by Montaigne in his essay 'Of the Force of Imagination', the essay in which he discusses maternal impression (*Essayes*, trans. Florio, book 1, chap. 20).¹⁸ Montaigne describes actual fatalities caused by the imagination, including that of a woman who was told as a joke by a friend, whose home she had dined at, that she had eaten baked cat, whereupon the Gentlewoman 'apprehended such horror, that falling into a violent ague and distemper of her stomacke, she could by no meanes be recovered' (p. 71). The woman had formed so strong an impression that protestations of the truth proved to be of no use. Montaigne

places this unhappy tale after an anecdote concerning a woman who had mistakenly convinced herself that she had swallowed a pin, and was saved by 'a skilful man', who deemed it to be 'a fantasie conceived....by eating of some gretty peece of bread', and cleverly fooled her into thinking that she had safely thrown it up (p. 70). The lesson to be drawn here is that the imagination is a part of the self, but sometimes acts destructively against the self. In these cases the best, and perhaps only, treatment is to turn the imagination back against itself, by creating a new impression upon the mind of equal or greater power. This principle could be seen as the basis of the Twinned-impression cure that is used upon Leontes.

In the same way that he looks into his own imagination for a picture of the truth, Leontes embraces the idea that the truth lies within or beneath other surfaces and blinds himself to the truth of those surfaces which genuinely express what is within. He mistakenly believes that his quality of vision has suddenly increased and that his new knowledge, although painful, is a blessing - 'how blest am I' (*WT*, II, i, 36), as though by distorting and magnifying minute details of behaviour he is now enjoying the gift of an Olympian perspective. In fact, he has given a special warrant to the impression that struck him and prizes as a blessing precisely that which bars him from receiving 'grace'. His 'I am angling now, / Though you perceive me not how I give line' (*WT*, I, ii, 180-1) places him above those whose dull perceptions put them at his mercy, even in another element to them. What Leontes thinks they have failed to perceive is that he is now acting as duplicitously as they have acted towards him. Leontes' conviction that he can detect discrepancies between interior content and exterior appearance by seeing beneath the surface makes his vision murderously superficial. Only resistance to Apollo's influence allows such discrepancies to proliferate, and this can be found as often in the

one who looks and then attempts to judge by appearances, as in the person being judged. He jokes sourly that Hermione ‘mistook’ Polixenes for himself, as though her moral vision had grown unaccountably dim (*WT*, II, i, 81-2). Paulina credits Leontes with the destructive, fiery seeing which Heliodorus presented as the weapon of the enemies of Apollo: ‘a devil / Would have shed water out of fire’ (*WT*, III, ii, 192-3), meaning, as Pafford explains, that it: ‘would have shed tears from his eyes of flame’ (p. 64n).

Rather than be seen to be acting in a play of another’s devising and making himself the object of ‘hissing’ and derision, Leontes retreats into an interior space insulated from the influence of others, where he can enjoy the dubious comforts of absolute suspicion.¹⁹ Leontes’ supposed enlightenment does not come from above, but from within, and by turning in on himself, he transforms himself from *pater patriae* to tyrant. He complains to Camillo that if, instead of ‘mindless’ slaves, he

Had servants true about me, that bare eyes
To see alike mine honour as their profits,
Their own particular thrifts, they would do that
Which should undo more doing

WT, I, ii, 309-312.

Having located truth in his own self-interested seeing, Leontes suggests that, if his interest also governed others’ seeing, ‘infection’ would be rooted out. His servants should be self-interested, but enlightened enough to recognise their interests in his own.

He would have eyes everywhere borne by those

who may’st see

Plainly as heaven sees earth and earth sees heaven,

How I am gall’d

How I am gall'd

WT, I, ii, 314-6.

His reference to divine seeing parodies the fertile bond between the *pater patriae* and the realm, while the idea of surrounding himself with those who see for him mirrors his desire to see himself replicated exactly in his children, that is, to see himself everywhere. A similar claim to universal solar seeing is hinted at when Polixenes, also addressing Camillo, tells him: 'I have eyes under my service' [to watch Florizel] (*WT*, IV, ii, 36), and, when Polixenes later appears in Sicily, Perdita laments: 'The heaven sets spies upon us' (Perdita is, like Charikleia, prone to mistake Apollo's intentions for the vicissitudes of fortune, but she is also gracious enough to remain receptive to his wishes) (*WT*, V, i, 202).

At her arraignment Hermione calls upon divine seeing in a moment that defines Leontes' separation from the source of his authority, and therefore, the loss of his legitimacy as ruler:

if powers divine

Behold our human actions (as they do),

I doubt not then but innocence shall make

False accusation blush, and tyranny

Tremble at patience

WT, III, ii, 28-32.

Divine powers not only behold, but correctly understand, what they see, and divine understanding must involve the projection of organising fatherly grace on to receptive innocence. This is implied when Hermione couples this appeal with an invocation to her own 'watching' father, the Emperor of Russia: 'O that he were alive, and here beholding

/ His daughter's trial!...with eyes / Of pity not revenge!' (*WT*, III, i, 120-3). As was the case in *The Man of Law's Tale*, where Constance's imperial blood eclipsed in inherited authority that of her royal accusers, this reminder of Hermione's parentage makes Sicilia seem a petty kingship and reflects the way in which Leontes' powers dwindle to nothing beneath those of Apollo.

The trial should produce 'gracious issue', but the 'ord'ring' of the 'matter' is corrupted by Leontes (*WT*, II, i, 169-70). The law is a sphere, like parenthood, in which the King must eschew self-interest and become the transparent vessel of a power greater than himself. Leontes is not a tyrant while his authority still flows from above, but he then sacrifices the impartiality of the just ruler to his personal anxiety and, allowing his imagination to interfere, replaces the process of law with the certainty of his own seeing. So, for him, 'Camillo's flight' and Hermione's and Polixenes'

familiarity,

(Which was as gross as ever touch'd conjecture,
That lack'd sight only, nought for approbation
But only seeing, all other circumstances
Made up to th' deed) doth push on this proceeding.

WT, II, i, 174, 175-9.

Pafford glosses this passage as 'their public intimacy, which was as gross as any that ever verified a suspicion which lacked nothing but the witness of sight itself, nothing for full proof except actually seeing [the adultery committed]...' (Pafford, p. 39). What Leontes has not seen with his own eyes, he has seen in his imagination.

A further familiar motif from the mediaeval tales is the misuse of the royal seal to provide misleading evidence of a monstrous birth. In *The Winter's Tale* the rivalry is

between the deceptive seal that Leontes has stamped upon his own mind and that which Apollo sets upon the world. The oracle brought back from Delphi was ‘by Apollo’s great divine seal’d up’, and Dion expresses the hope that, when it is opened, then ‘gracious be the issue’ (*WT*, III, i, 19, 22) as though the handing down of the oracle was indeed a conception. While Cymbeline’s Queen ‘coins’ plans to deceive her husband, Hermione attempts to stamp an image that will reform Leontes. She asks the court to ‘behold’ her, but knows her words will be ‘received’ by the King as ‘falsehood’ (*WT*, III, ii, 37, 27, 26). Paulina’s first suggestion is that the King’s ‘lunes’ might be righted with a new vision, ‘the sight’ of the newly born Perdita (*WT*, II, ii, 29, 40). Hermione’s lady-in-waiting, Emilia welcomes this, saying:

your free undertaking cannot miss

A thriving issue

* * * *

I’ll presently

Acquaint the queen of your most noble offer,

Who but to-day hammer’d of this design

WT, II, ii, 44-5, 47-9.

This ‘hammering’ out a plan to impress a new image upon Leontes’ heart reflects how, Leontes having become a receptor, the women must take up stamping. As a mother of three daughters, who dominates her husband, Paulina is very close to the wicked step-mothers of romance. However, the King having deceived himself, Shakespeare introduces the character of Paulina so that she may employ the royal seal in the right cause. At the end of the play her ‘hammering’ has brought forth the desired issue, but it is Apollo’s wish that sixteen years should elapse from her first attempt. Emilia’s belief

that the plan 'cannot miss' is one of several references to archery, as though Paulina, through the babe, will shoot an 'intention' at Leontes' 'centre' which will then bring forth better issue.

Leontes possesses a particularly fertile imagination, or one could say particularly impressionable *hyle*, although he protests:

Dost think I am so muddy, so unsettled,
To appoint myself in this vexation; sully
The purity and whiteness of my sheets,
(Which to preserve is sleep, which being spotted
Is goads, thorns, nettles, tails of wasps)

WT, I, ii, 325-9.

He is indeed 'muddy' and has, through seeing incorrectly, imagined Hermione's purity to have become 'spotted'. Self-interested eyes, in attempting to project their own understanding on to creation, project only blots and blemishes because they are not in harmony with the divine and must interfere with the ordained form. Polixenes later argues that there is legitimacy in the spots bred into flowers, an idea Perdita rejects. There is clearly no legitimacy to the spottedness Leontes imputes to his wife. Indeed, as was mentioned in the previous chapter, his obstinacy moves one courtier to exclaim: '...the queen is spotless / I' th' eyes of heaven' (*WT*, II, i, 131-2). When Camillo attempts to persuade Leontes that, in return for his agreeing to bestow a 'lasting wink' upon Polixenes, Hermione should be spared, Leontes tells him: 'I'll give no blemish to her honour, none' (*WT*, I, ii, 317, 340-1). In the same way that Leontes inverts the process of receiving blessings by believing that images (forms) originating within himself have instead been sent by heaven, he denies Hermione's 'gracefulness'. If we take 'grace' to

be the tangible expression of divine harmony in an individual who is receptive to the correct influences, then Hermione's 'graceful' nature testifies to her willingness to be 'formed' in the right way, but her virtue is far from being merely passive. Her pregnancy testifies to her receptivity, while her steadfastness before Leontes' accusations reveals a complementary, active resistance to false persuasions.

Paulina's request to the 'goddess', which is not so much a prayer as a well-crafted jab at Leontes, helps define feminine active virtue as opposed to illegitimate maternal impression:

good goddess Nature, which hast made it
So like to him that got it, if thou hast
The ordering of the mind too, 'mongst all colours,
No yellow in't

WT, II, iii, 103-6.

The goddess is good because the matter has taken the father's pattern of qualities (thought of as 'colours') faithfully, and yet Paulina also suggests that it would be legitimate for the mother to intervene and cancel the transference of 'Yellow', the colour of jealousy. It is not, therefore, an unwarranted interference in her view for feminine nature to resist accepting an unnatural stain (which should be purged from the father) rather than allow it to be perpetuated in the offspring.

Paulina, echoing Leontes' reference to 'dyeing', calls the accusations against Hermione 'such ado to make no stain a stain / As passes colouring' (*WT*, II, ii, 19). In the *Aithiopika*, Charikleia's colour appears to be a 'stain' upon her mother in that it would seem to point toward adultery, and at a higher level, upon the child herself in that her colour seems to be applied to her from without via maternal impression. But the

child's colour is found to be legitimate, because her form was communicated directly to her mother by the sun-god.

Standing before Leontes with Perdita in her arms Paulina invokes, but only repeats in part, an 'old proverb': 'It is yours; / And, we might lay th' old proverb to your charge, / So like you 'tis the worse' (*WT*, II, iii, 95-7). The full version of this was found by Howard Staunton (*Plays*, 1858-60), in Sir Thomas Overbury's *A Sargeant* (1614): 'The devil calls him his white son; he is so like him that he is the worst for it'.²⁰ If the complexion of the devil is black and his 'white son' is like him, it is a likeness in deeds rather than in appearance. Paulina accuses Leontes, by implication, of being the devil because he is morally stained; his deeds are 'black', while his child is 'unspotted'.

This tableau, with Paulina holding a newly born child before the king and his ministers, a child whose 'whiteness' makes it seem an anomalous birth beside the 'blackness' of their father, recalls Heliodorus and the maternal impression anecdote formulated by Quintilian. This first meeting of father and daughter is revised years later when Perdita returns to Sicily and adopts the Heliodoran persona of a white African princess, the daughter of 'King Smalus of Libya' (in Greene, Fawnia is claimed to be from Padua [ed. Bullough, p.192]) (*WT*, V, i, 156-9). The audience has already learned that Perdita has inherited her mother's 'white hands', the whiteness of which Florizel compares to that of an 'Ethiopian's tooth' (*WT*, IV, iv, 365). Florizel elaborates the charade by describing a very different parting to Leontes' rejection of his child, and a different measure of gauging a child's legitimacy: the 'warlike' Smalus' 'tears proclaim'd [her] his' (*WT*, V, i, 159). It is possible to see in Florizel's fictional mission to Libya to win a bride, an echo of not only Eusanius' sojourn in Africa and Heliodorus' Mediterranean journeys, but also of Perseus' flight to Joppa.

Paulina employs an image of conception as the stamping or imprinting of a 'stain' on waiting matter when she holds up the infant Perdita and says: 'Behold, my lords, / Although the print be little, the whole matter / And copy of the father' (*WT*, II, iii, 97-99). Writing supplies a useful image of the marriage form and matter, in that the ink itself has no meaning without the paper (and can also 'blot'), while the actual process of printing adds a new variation on the analogy of stamping. Persinna testified to her own fidelity by writing upon Charikleia's bandages, while in the mediaeval tales the mother-in-law's deceptive letters were hand written and accompanied with a stamped seal.

Autolycus can now deceive in print, or at least can pass on as true published deceptions. His tale of the Usurer's wife concerns the printing of children and coins, as well as being itself an example of false printing. A shower of coins impregnates a woman with a human child in the story of Danaë, but a human couple should not produce a bag of coins. Divine ordering has been disrupted by the intrusion of selfish desire, thus causing a monstrous birth.²¹ Because he has impregnated (imprinted or 'stabbed') himself, Leontes' mental conception can also be thought of as usury because it has produced something from itself, or rather it has produced a 'nothing' which seems to Leontes to be something. The same image of printing as conception is employed by Leontes when he first sees Florizel:

Your mother was most true to wedlock, prince:

For she did print your royal father off,

Conceiving you. Were I but twenty-one,

Your father's image is so hit in you,

His very air,

WT, V, i, 123-7.

There is an obvious irony in Leontes recognising Florizel as replicating his father when Florizel, in just rebellion against his father, has cast off his patrimony. Florizel is now ‘performing’ ‘something wildly’ as Leontes remembers Polixenes doing (*WT*, V, i, 128-9), and so his rebellion, like Mamillius’ ‘conceiving’, confirms his inheritance in an unexpected way. Leontes’ comment upon the exact likeness of father and son may appear at first to be a return to the time in which he falsely ‘publish’d’ Hermione’s guilt (*WT*, II, i, 98) and judged legitimacy only in naive terms of passive agreement and complete identity. The test comes not when Leontes reacts to another man’s child, but when he sees his own.

Early audiences of *The Winter’s Tale* conversant with Greene, might well have expected to witness the tragic outcome of *Pandosto*.²² Indeed, were Perdita to be given a marked resemblance to Hermione on stage, it would then seem that having Paulina extract the promise from Leontes that he will not marry unless a woman ‘As like Hermione as is her picture, / Affront his eye’ (*WT*, V, i, 74-5) is intended to pave the way for precisely this turn of events. Paulina’s steward comments on ‘the majesty of the creature in the resemblance of the mother’ (‘creature’ emphasising Hermione’s role as joint maker) (*WT*, V, ii, 36-7), and it may be that, in spite of Paulina’s doomed attempts to convince Leontes that the infant Perdita resembles him, the mature Perdita and the younger Hermione would have been ‘as like as eggs’. However, Leontes has, with Paulina’s help, learned to resist certain impressions. The image of Hermione cannot be separated now from the memory of her virtues, and so he remains loyal to the image he sullied: ‘I thought of her, / Even as these looks I made’ (*WT*, V, i, 226-7). Those who see Perdita’s beauty, like those who see Charikleia’s, are struck by its divine quality, and when Leontes sees Perdita he exclaims ‘goddess!’ (*WT*, V, i, 130). However, his joking

comments to Florizel make clear that he also feels a strong human attraction. Leontes' resistance to this dangerous impression demonstrates that he will now prove receptive to the form that will be projected by the 'statue'. While filled with a sense of irreparable loss he still recognises the appearance of the couple as a vision that 'begets wonder' (*WT*, V, i, 132), signalling that his mind is once again fertile and alive to those spectacles that contain an intimation of the divine. The wonder, as yet withheld from Leontes and Paulina, is that Perdita's likeness to Hermione is not a mere surface, but expresses the actual 'form' of Hermione.

Leontes as 'father of the nation' should project the form upon the land that Apollo wishes it should take, but this also requires him to be receptive to divine intentions and resistant to misleading persuasions. In the intimate realm, Hermione embodies these latter virtues. Her openness is an active quality. She is receptive to grace and (after, it seems, some initial reluctance) to Leontes' love, but steadfastly resists her husband's attempt to project a new and false character upon her in her trial. She does not love him the less for this: once she has opened her 'white hand' to Leontes, she is his 'for ever' (*WT*, I, ii, 103-5). This form cannot be erased, just as the parentage of her children cannot be altered once they have been conceived. However, she has kept apart from Leontes until he has cast off the mistaken form his heart accepted and has recognised that as his 'deeds were black' (*WT*, III, ii, 171-2), so the 'blemishes' which loomed so large were his own:

Whilst I remember

Her, and her virtues, I cannot forget

My blemishes in them, and so still think of

The wrong I did myself: which was so much,

That heirless it hath made my kingdom, and
Destroy'd the sweet'st companion that e'er man
Bred his hopes out of.

WT, V, i, 6-11.

3. Hermione's Statue

While the first half of the play concerns Leontes' attempts to 'blacken' Hermione by projecting the stain of adultery on to her, and that of illegitimacy on to their children, the second half shows the power from which all legitimacy flows, reasserting itself. This power is pictured as the sun, as it is in the *Aithiopika*, but this image is part of a conception of Providence that is wholly compatible with Christianity. The sun can, of course, remove colour from objects by bleaching them, but it also creates colour both by lighting the world and by infusing the earth with fertile warmth so that the variegated realm of nature comes into being. This second process is the sun's active vision and counteracts the negative, infertile seeing characterised by Leontes which is associated with winter, the time in which the world seems to turn in upon itself. 'The white sheet bleaching on the hedge' which Autolycus steals (*WT*, IV, iii, 5), presents a contrast to the 'sheets' that Leontes has muddied with his accusations (*WT*, I, ii, 327). The sun does restore Hermione and bleach away the stain that has been attached to Perdita, but it does this by allowing the legitimate colour within them to show itself: the 'red blood' within (*WT*, IV, iii, 4). When Paulina tells Leontes that Hermione is dead, she challenges him by saying

if you can bring

Tincture, or lustre in her lip, her eye,

Heat outwardly or breath within, I'll serve you

As I would do the gods

WT, III, ii, 204-7.

When Leontes had taken to himself the power to shape light and colour before his own mind's eye and regarded this creation as objective reality, asserting the truth of this false vision in a court of law, he parodied the true power of 'the gods' to bring colour from within and to infuse heat through the eye.

Florizel seals his oath to Perdita by swearing by 'all the sun sees, or / The close earth wombs' (*WT*, IV, iv, 490-1). G. Wilson Knight, commenting on this line, wrote that

The sun....is thought as 'seeing'; it is the 'eye' of heaven of Sonnet xviii. The sun is constantly revered throughout *The Winter's Tale*, either directly (as in 'welkin eye' etc.) or 'the fire-rob'd god, golden Apollo'....and his oracle.

G. Wilson Knight: *The Crown of Life*, London: Methuen, 1948 (Oxford, 1947), p.110.

The same disregard for anachronism that allows the fame of 'Julio Romano' to have spread to ancient Sicily shows itself in the placing of Apollo's oracle side by side with English 'Whitsun pastorals' (*WT*, IV, iv, 134). However, such anomalies aside, the play does contain a religious seriousness similar to that found in Heliodorus. The oracle is presented as the heart of an organised classical religion. Perdita swears by Jove and 'the Fates' and by the goddess often invoked in the pages of the *Aithiopika*, 'lady Fortune' (*WT*, IV, iv, 15, 20, 51). Florizel, in less reverential mood, briefly recounts the metamorphoses of Jupiter and Neptune before identifying himself with 'Golden Apollo' who transformed himself to appear 'a poor humble swain, / As I seem now' (*WT*, IV, iv, 25-31). While a monotheistic scheme lies behind the action, the characters themselves,

like those of Heliodorus, react in terms of their own local faith to the world around them. There is a real connection between the story of Proserpine and that of Perdita, but this grows from the fact that Ceres, or as she is named by Paulina, the 'good goddess Nature', is no more (or less) than a personification of matter that has shown itself properly receptive to organising light, and so is that which, metaphorically speaking, returns the affectionate gaze of heaven.

While the characters of the play think of themselves as always beneath the 'beholding' eye of Apollo, it is allowed that other heavenly bodies also exert a limited influence through their own looking. When she has failed to move Leontes, Hermione tells herself

some ill planet reigns:

I must be patient till the heavens look

With an aspect more favourable

WT, II, i, 105-7.

At the moment she says this Leontes himself is reigning in tyrannical fashion as a rival to Apollo, but Providence works so that, in time, his rebellion is subsumed into a greater pattern. In the same way the lesser planetary lights are only temporary rivals to the sun and are subsumed into the greater light when daylight comes. The moon is also credited with its own influence. Its power over the sea is used by Camillo to describe the way in which he believes the planetary or astral influences have altered Leontes, when he tells Polixenes

Swear his thought over

By each particular star in heaven, and

By all their influences; you may as well

Forbid the sea for to obey the moon,

WT, I, ii, 424-7.

Both Hermione and Camillo, while echoing Paulina's accusation that the King is a 'lunatic' (*WT*, II, ii, 29), look upwards and attempt to relate Leontes' delusions to larger cosmic designs, even as the King himself looks 'into the cup', focusing upon small, almost insignificant signs. The inference behind 'lunatic' here is simply that King Leontes should be looking to the sun for guidance, but instead is looking to something with no light of its own, the role of which is to act as a receptor.

The influence of the moon is not necessarily bad. As was mentioned earlier, Macrobius suggested that the moon might be thought of as Ceres, the feminine receptor of the sun's intentions, warming the crops by night with reflected light. There may therefore be an irony here, particularly in Paulina's identifying Leontes as being ruled by a feminine influence, when it has fallen to women to attempt to exert a correcting influence over the king. Similarly, in the *Aithiopika*, as was stated earlier, the sun's influence, blocked out by Hydaspes, was instead reflected via a series of females from the white moon-like Andromeda to the Priestess of the moon Persinna and then to the priestess of Diana, Charikleia, before reaching and reforming the Ethiopian king.

The moon's control over the sea was believed to derive from their having similarly cold, watery natures, but the connection between the two would still be made by looking, that is by light passing between the two bodies. This same relationship is later invoked by the Shepherd when he describes Florizel gazing upon Perdita:

He says he loves my daughter:

I think so too; for never gaz'd the moon

Upon the water as he'll stand and read

As 'twere my daughter' s eyes

WT, IV, iv, 173-176.

In accordance with the general pattern of images from the earlier 'tragic' acts being repeated and revised in the 'comic' portion of the play, 'lunacy' is redefined as the moon looking upon the sea with the affectionate gaze of a lover and 'reading' form there. Just as the sea is governed by the moon's seeing and is pulled toward it, Perdita and Florizel are attracted. This suggests that the Shepherd has observed a particularly chaste form of 'gazing', and of wooing. However, the gaze of the sun can breed new life in matter, and Florizel's listing the loves of the gods and likening himself to Apollo at the sheep-shearing suggests that he, like Perdita, finds his nature altered and that his passion has become more heated.

Although Polixenes is a more deliberate, indeed unimaginative, character compared with Leontes, the Bohemian scenes show the true nature of the 'twinning' between the two kings; so Polixenes reveals himself as a father whose blighting vision disenfranchises his children and sends the heroine hurrying back to the country of her birth. Leontes attempted to usurp Apollo's power by creating his own visible reality and his own standard of legal truth, and Polixenes trespasses upon Apollo's rights in similar ways. He attempts to impose his own 'insight' into Perdita's character upon reality, threatening to scratch her beauty so that her face would match what he takes to be a marred interior (*WT*, IV, iv, 426-42). B. J. Sokol points out that the flowers Perdita gives to Polixenes and Camillo, 'rosemary, and rue' (*WT*, IV, iv, 74), are 'both herbs of the sun according to Nicholas Culpeper, and therefore [have] virtues to clear dim eyesight' (Sokol, 1994, p. 134), and it is as one with an impaired moral vision that Polixenes should be seen in his exchanges with Perdita.

Polixenes' role in the pastoral scenes repeats that of Leontes in the opening acts. Circumstances make this plain enough, as Perdita and his own son must flee his anger. He can see Perdita's beauty, but cannot see, in the absence of royal trappings, that her gracefulness singles her out as a desirable bride for his son. The accusation of conscious deception is again levelled at someone who is 'artless' (Perdita), while the commendation of legitimacy he reserves for the patently artificial.

The theme of dyeing and staining recurs in Perdita's rejection of 'carnations and streak'd gillyvors, / Which some call nature's bastards' (*WT*, IV, iv, 82-3). It may seem at first that Perdita is echoing her father in roundly casting out spotted 'bastards' from her garden, but it is actually Polixenes who takes his twin's part, while Perdita follows Hermione in refusing to acquiesce before the flawed persuasions of others. Perdita, 'pranked up' so that she appears to be the goddess Flora, identifies the 'streakiness' of the flowers as resulting from 'an art which, in their piedness, shares / With great creating nature' (*WT*, IV, iv, 87-8).²³ The 'art' of grafting is a further example of conscious interference in the process of breeding. Polixenes' explanation that it makes 'conceive a bark of baser kind' links it with other forms of conception which figure in the play (*WT*, IV, iv, 94).

While the 'art' 'shares' with nature the power to infuse variegation into flowers that were plain before, Perdita does not believe that the result is legitimate and likens it to the use of cosmetics, that is to colour which has been applied from outside. She will not

set one slip of them,

No more than, were I painted, I would wish

This youth should say 'twere well, and only therefore

Desire to breed by me

WT, IV, iv, 100-3.

The exchange elaborates the contrast between colours which are painted on and those that show themselves from within and this theme is developed further as the scene continues. The precocious Mamillius had already learned that it is considered more fashionable and, therefore, more attractive, for women to have 'black brows', even if painted on, although he is as yet immune to their charms (*WT*, II, i, 5-11). In its context this must appear the ironic inclusion of a case of voluntary blackening, but, as the action progresses, weightier issues attach themselves to the topic. The art of Julio Romano is presented, in its apparent perfection, as involving the application of colour to a (stony) woman's face.

If the antithesis of art and nature implicit here is founded upon the notion of nature being created by divine understanding infusing itself in matter, while 'art' is the projection of human understanding on to matter, we can see that, in broad Aristotelian terms, Polixenes is correct in saying that 'The art itself is nature' (*WT*, IV, iv, 97).²⁴ All 'art' is nature in as much as humanity is a part of nature and its activity exists within nature. But admitting this does not mean that all that human understanding projects is legitimate.

It was Leontes' 'nature' that his impetuous (and impressionable) character leaves him susceptible to jealous rage. In time his error is subsumed into a larger pattern, but this does not bring Mamillius back to life, nor does it give his earlier belief the warrant of legitimacy. Polixenes corrects himself from saying that grafting is 'mending' nature, to saying that it merely 'changes' nature. His idea of art is the addition of ornament so that the subject is made more eye-catching. The process remains at the level of imaginative

interference in nature and creates patterns akin to birthmarks. For nature to be ‘mended’ by ‘art’, the artist’s own understanding must supply in some way that which is lacking, and this can only be derived from the divine source of understanding.

Breeding hybrid flowers is as harmless and trivial as blackening brows, although, in her role as Flora, Perdita cannot allow Polixenes’ argument to pass, and the exchange provides a context for the following action in which further varieties of staining come into play. The second of the mythical personae attached to Perdita in the sheep-shearing scene, that of Proserpine at the moment of her abduction, is also to be identified with the raising of plants from the soil and with the colouring of flowers (*WT*, IV, iv, 116).

Perdita’s description of the rape of Proserpine as she gathers white and purple flowers summons up Ovid’s tales of the staining of flowers and, as has often been suggested, perhaps articulates her own apprehension in the presence of her suitor. What is seen instead of an abduction is a chaste ‘staining’ as the lovers bring colour to each other’s cheeks. Florizel tells Perdita ‘let’s be red with mirth’, while the Shepherd asks her to ‘quench your blushes’ so that she might properly welcome their guests (*WT*, IV, iv, 54, 67). Perdita warns Florizel

Your praises are too large: but that your youth,
And the true blood which peeps fairly through’t,
Do plainly give you out an unstain’d shepherd,
With wisdom I might fear, my Doricles,
You woo’d me the false way.

WT, IV, iv, 147-151.

This is a way of expressing and, at the same time, defusing her reservations, of asking him to be true to that appearance of ardent and genuine affection, that is, to the blushing

appearance of blood in the cheek 'which is no stain'. Seeing Perdita leads Camillo to declare that he will now live only by 'gazing' (*WT*, IV, iv, 110) and, as her appearance stirs his memory, it impregnates him so that (as Richard Proudfoot notes) he 'conceives' his 'longing' for Sicilia.²⁵ Camillo notes that Florizel

tells her something

That makes her blood look out: good sooth, she is

The queen of curds and cream.

WT, IV, iv, 159-161.

This blameless colouring and blushing subverts Polixenes' elegy for a time before the appearance of 'stronger blood' and before Hermione 'crossed' before Leontes' 'eyes' (*WT*, I, ii, 73, 79). Hermione was certainly alive to just how sentimental and shallow the picture of innocence he painted actually was, and the new spectacle of Perdita's beauty confirms that, when Leontes first saw Hermione, he did not fall.

Perdita's resemblance to her mother shows itself not only in her face, but also in her caution and apprehensiveness before Florizel's wooing. The description Perdita gives of the heliotropic marigold 'that goes to bed wi' th' sun / And with him rises, weeping' (*WT*, IV, iv, 105-6) is tinged with a warning. Hermione too was resistant until she was certain (although this hesitancy was turned in Leontes' mind from a sign of active virtue to that of a propensity for rebellion). Perdita's half-anxious, half-desiring state of mind expresses itself in her attitude toward her 'borrowed flaunts' (*WT*, IV, iv, 23). Her costume makes her feel self-conscious but, at the same time, it helps her to forget herself as she warms and unbends: 'this robe of mine / Does change my disposition' (*WT*, IV, iv, 133-34), although the change is not only toward an unwonted flirtatiousness. The audience knows that her 'queening it' reveals a truth about her origin she does not know

herself, and, in her flower speeches, her 'disposition' appears to be of a piece with the divinities of nature. Although keenly aware that she is 'goddess-like prank'd up' there is nothing calculating (or cosmetic) in her behaviour. Her awkward modesty and self-awareness is the reverse of Leontes' self-consciousness when he felt he was the butt of every joke with all eyes upon him. Her appearance at the festival is closer to that of Charikleia in her moments of 'hieratic epiphany', when she become a vehicle for forces greater than herself while feeling no unseemly and intrusive pride.

Hermione had hoped that, at her trial, 'innocence [would] make / False accusation blush' (*WT*, III, ii, 30-31), but instead she must wait sixteen years before Leontes sees the blood in the cheek of her 'statue'. 'Blushing' is a recurrent motif in the *Aithiopika* and extends the novel's theme of alterations in colour and complexion which result from what is seen, and therefore the infusion of light into the world. Charikleia, suffused with the colour of the 'rosy dawn', 'blushed' before Theagenes at the temple and later 'waxed redde' when she finds her 'affection' has been detected by Kalasiris (trans. Underdowne, p. 81, 105).²⁶ The unnamed artist who carved the lambs upon Charikleia's amethyst ring 'highlighted on their backs the natural blush of the amethyst' (Morgan, 5.14). Underdowne describes how the gem 'shyning with his rednesse' upon the lamb's backs gave them golden fleeces (p. 129). The amethyst casts 'forth [the] golden beame' of the sun, and stones originating in Ethiopia are infused with the 'sun's heate [and] waxe perfecte redde' (p. 128). Charikleia's 'blushing' repeats that of Andromeda when Perseus sees her and finds that she is not carved from marble (as if his gaze had infused her with life and colour). The triumph of the amethyst's carver was to create living art, and this was done by using the sun's light trapped within the stone. The artist works with nature, even leaving a part of the stone untouched, and this skilful work

is an elaboration of the gem's own nature, not merely ornamentation applied from outside. Heliodorus, as we have seen, identifies this ring with Ethiopia and with Charikleia herself who is the 'bearer of light' and a living work of art. His point is that the same light which animates the artistic process animates and shapes life within the earth and within the womb. The intrusion of either self-centred imagination or calculating human consciousness can disrupt such processes and create monstrosity, for the artist, as much as for the king or parent. Fertility depends upon parents not setting up a rival light, but in allowing what is already present to operate. It is this model, I think, that Shakespeare had in mind when he radically altered the conclusion of *Pandosto*, as though looking above Greene to find the true Heliodoran inheritance of the Accused Queen tales.

The presentation of Hermione as a statue is a spectacle conceived as the inverse twin of Leontes' original mistaken seeing. It is as a work of art that she appears because Leontes' original fallen mental picture was also a work of art, but one in which divine understanding played no part. Beholding the 'statue', his strong powers of 'fancy' are again aroused so that his heart can receive a new form. Paulina had taken on the role of protecting Leontes from new 'affections', but now knowingly undermines her own authority by telling him 'No longer shall you gaze on't, lest your fancy / May think anon it moves' (*WT*, V, iii, 60-1). This, naturally enough, makes him wish to gaze the more. The first effect Romano's statue appears to have is to petrify the viewer. Leontes exclaims

does not the stone rebuke me

For being more stone than it? O royal piece!

....[that]

From thy admiring daughter took the spirits,
Standing like stone with thee.

WT, V, iii, 37-8, 41-2.

In Italy an entire genre of poetry existed made up of sonnets and epigrams wittily praising, or damning, public works of art in which it had almost become a commonplace to write of statues so life-like that they appear to live while rendering those who see them statue-like with dumb amazement. This conceit, which has since become known as the ‘Medusa-topos’, was wittily employed by Cellini in his bronze *Perseus*. Placed in the Piazza Signora in Florence in 1554, the hero holds up Medusa’s head and appears to have petrified both the statues flanking him and those citizens who stop to admire the sculptor’s artistry.²⁷ The appearance of this convention in Shakespeare’s play may well relate to the same background which supplied the ‘character’ of Julio Romano and would have been picked up by a knowledgeable audience, although its meaning here is slightly altered. Leontes credits the statue with the power to project transforming visual impressions, and this is the inverse of the petrifying vision he had fixed upon himself. Even Perdita is struck and transformed by the statue, changing from one who was gazed at to a ‘looker-on’ (*WT*, V, iii, 84). Charikleia had refused to marry Theagenes until she had been restored to her parents, and Perdita too, by ‘beholding’ her mother, is allowed to pass beyond her identification with the lost Proserpine, and quell her anxieties at leaving childhood.

Paulina’s steward explains that the statue is ‘newly performed’ by Julio Romano, by which is meant that it has been painted with life-like colours, with a double meaning suggesting a theatrical ‘performance’ (*WT*, V, ii, 95). Leontes’ impatience to touch the statue therefore threatens him with ‘staining’: ‘The ruddiness upon her lip is wet; / You’ll

restored to life beneath the gaze of Perseus, and at the same time, to the presentation of the painting depicting Andromeda's rescue before King Hydaspes and his court.

It would be wrong to suppose that Hermione's re-animation represents the triumph of nature over art, or that the fiction of the 'statue' being high art has been introduced here only to be left behind. Shakespeare continues to insist that the process of enlivening the stone is art, even that it is a form of 'lawful magic': 'If this be magic, let it be an art / Lawful as eating' (*WT*, V, iii, 110-11). Paulina calls upon her audience to 'awake [their] faith' (*WT*, V, iii, 95), and faith implies receptivity, a willingness to suspend suspicion at the correct moment. We are also warned that the scene she presents would 'be hooted at / Like an old tale' (*WT*, V, iii, 116-17) by an audience so minded, in the same way that Paulina's steward warned that the account of Perdita's return might be disbelieved. It is implied that such tales, be they classical myths, mediaeval romances or the tales of the *Golden Legend*, demand, in their seeming naiveté, an innocence of response if their effect is to be felt and their legitimacy recognised. The play itself warns that its dénouement may appear 'monstrous to...human reason':

For has not the divine Apollo said,
Is't not the tenor of his Oracle,
That King Leontes shall not have an heir,
Till his lost child be found? which, that it shall,
Is all as monstrous to our human reason
As my Antigonus to break his grave
And come again to me;

WT, V, i, 37-43.

By blocking out Apollo's justice and attempting to condemn Hermione's 'holy looking' (*WT*, V, iii, 148) as a monstrous rebellion, Leontes himself created the circumstances in which Perdita's recovery must appear so unlikely as to be 'monstrous' (or even inartistic). The apparent 'monstrousness' of Perdita's return is the result and fulfilment of Apollo's forming influence.

In the *Aithiopika* Charikleia's colour made her seem literally to be 'monstrous', but Hydaspes, encouraged to have faith that Providence has planned her journey, sees that her colour is not a blemish but a sign of divine favour towards his nation. The moments between Hydaspes seeing the painting of Andromeda and acknowledging Charikleia as his child, and his then acknowledging the role of 'the gods' in her adventures so that human sacrifice can end, are those in which his faith allows him to leap from believing her appearance to be the result of mortal interference, that is as no more than a staining birthmark, to then accepting that it possesses legitimacy as the true 'form' of Andromeda. This belief, as we have seen, credits the painting of Andromeda with a particular power. Charikleia, by reliving Andromeda's experiences has inherited from the painting Andromeda's 'form', a quality which can only be lived out and expressed through time, and this is possible because the painting itself is more than an appearance. It communicates the intentions of the divine realm of forms. Art has mended Hydaspes' vision as it does that of Leontes because it is an art which draws its meaning from the true source of 'form'. It therefore presents his imagination with 'something' as opposed to 'nothing'.

Shakespeare prepares for the appearance of Romano's statue by having Leontes' courtiers indulge a sophisticated taste for Heliodoran 'pathetic optics'. The First

Gentleman describes the multiple reunion as a scene in which looking was itself looked upon by the court:

.....they seemed almost, with staring on one another, to tear the cases of their eyes: there was speech in their dumbness, language in their very gesture; they looked as they had heard of a world ransomed, or one destroyed: a notable passion of wonder appeared in them; but the wisest beholder, that knew no more but seeing, could not say if th'importance were joy or sorrow; but in the extremity of the one it must needs be.

WT, V, ii, 12-19.

Paulina's steward continues the conversation in the same vein and even seems to exaggerate the technique. Despite saying that words could not do justice to the spectacle, he assures his audience that 'that which you hear you'll swear you see' (*WT*, V, ii, 31-2) (this is reminiscent of the response Kalasiris' description of Charikleia and Theagenes drew from Knemon [see above p. 198]). The Steward's description of Paulina's reaction, although derived from a proverb, does conjure up a slightly ludicrous picture: 'O, the noble combat that 'twixt joy and sorrow was fought in Paulina! She had one eye declined for the loss of her husband, another elevated that the Oracle was fulfilled' (*WT*, V, ii, 72-6). This very pointed use of pathetic optics, I think, summons up the shade of Greene as much as that of Heliodorus, and, within the play, is a sideswipe at those in the court who wavered while Paulina remained firm. The imaginations of Cleomenes and Dion were 'caught' by the isle of Delphos, but they later (admittedly after many years) argue for Leontes' remarriage against the tenor of the oracle (*WT*, III, i, 4). The courtiers enjoy the wonder of the moment and recount events with an affected turn of phrase, but their understanding stops at the surface of things. Their eye is easily 'caught' by 'pretty

touches' and, their perceptions being shallow, whatever form their imaginations hold must, as Paulina tells the poet, 'Give way to what's seen now' (*WT*, V, ii, 81 and i, 98). Paulina's steward, who must be aware of her deception, speaks of the spectacle causing those 'most marble' to 'change colour', and promises the further spectacle of Romano's masterpiece (*WT*, V, ii, 89).

Shakespeare will transcend his Elizabethan source both by restoring Heliodorus' 'comic' ending and by creating a spectacle of transformation and rebirth before the lookers-on in the theatre. The repetition of the idea that, in the experience of 'wonder', 'joy and sorrow' are 'co-joined', recalls Heliodorus' final scene where, having witnessed the reunion of their royal family, the citizens of Meroe

were styrred to understand the trueth of inspiration of the Gods, whose will it was that this should fall out woonderfully, as in a Comedie. Surely they made very contrarye things agree, and joyned sorrow and mirth, teares and laughter together, and turned fearefull, and terrible things into a joyful banquette in the ende, many that weapt beganne to laugh, and such as were sorrowfull to rejoyce, when they founde that they sought not for, and lost that they hoped to finde, and to be shorte, the cruell slaughters which were looked for every momente, were turned into holy sacrifice.

Aithiopika, 10.38, 39 (trans. Underdowne, Saintsbury ed. p. 281).

Making the 'contraries' of joy and sorrow 'agree' is a marriage of opposites, the *concordia discors*. This together with the reunion of parent and child and marriage of hero and heroine, provides an image of the marriage of form and matter. This is a conclusion very different from the marriage of 'Comedie' with a 'Tragicall stratageme' (p. 199) which ends *Pandosto*. Those who look for the 'cruel (self) slaughter' of the

King at the conclusion of Shakespeare's tale will instead find themselves witness to 'holy' rejoicing. J. R. Morgan's modern translation of Heliodorus more accurately renders the description of this sudden reversal as 'the offering of human blood, which all had expected to see, was transformed into a sacrifice free of all stain' (trans. Morgan, p. 586), and this also refers to Charikleia's colour which proved not to be a 'stain'.

What is performed in Paulina's 'chapel' elicits a similar reaction of 'amazement' and wonder from its audience (*WT*, V, iii, 86). Imaginative art can mend nature when it draws upon the true source of 'form', and then colours that are painted on correspond to living colours within the subject. Hermione is discovered to have remained unstained by life and by art. Paulina creates a stage spectacle that is 'living art' capable of impressing a new form upon the *pater patriae*, Leontes. Leontes' earlier moment of imaginative self-pollination had stamped him with a mental picture of his wife's guilt in an act of conception which showed him, not so much usurping a creativity proper to the female, as displaying a self-centredness of which both sexes are capable. At the same time the play depicts both sexes as capable of projecting, as well as receiving, form. Leontes' original seeing indicated a loss of understanding and it is to be expected therefore, that his new belief must be inexplicable to those around him, and that the language he uses to describe his experience in the 'affection' speech must be puzzling to the audience, because he is talking to, and looking into, himself. Providence ensures that understanding is re-established and fertility restored, and, if this process echoes the pattern of the seasons and follows the pattern of human growth from infancy to maturity, this is because these are the 'variegated' patterns which have been ordained, and which the sun shining upon the earth produces. It is right that this process of 'mending' finds its summation in a work of art that, like the painting of Andromeda and Charikleia's ring, contains and

directs Apollo's beam. Whilst the royal father's understanding was once at odds with the new life conceived in his wife's womb, now it proves receptive to stamping by fertile light. In the same way that Heliodorus' novel describes 'impressive' spectacles and leads the reader from puzzlement towards a transformation wrought by art, Shakespeare, working to the same end, impresses his audience by creating a Heliodoran spectacle upon the stage.



Fig. 10. Giulio Pippi called Giulio Romano: 'Andromeda'. Pen and ink, 27.3 x 16.1 cm.

Amburgo, Kunsthalle, inv. 21349. After *Giulio Romano*. Eds. Ernst H. Gombrich et al. Milan: Electa, 1989, p. 429.

Notes

Introduction

1. Although he does not discuss the ancient text as such, Alexander Leggatt, in a recent article, finds a pattern in *Pericles* which is similar in some respects to that I have suggested is present in Heliodorus and *The Winter's Tale*. See 'The Shadow of Antioch: Sexuality in *Pericles, Prince of Tyre*' (in *Parallel Lives: Spanish and English National Drama 1580-1680*, eds. Louise and Peter Fothergill-Payne, Lewisburg, PA: Bucknell University Press, 1991, pp. 167-79).
2. I think Margaret Doody is correct when she argues that exogamy is one theme of the *Aithiopika* (Doody, p. 104). When discussing the convention of 'inset paintings' in the Romances she also observes, in a comment which is particularly relevant to this study, that 'We talk of being "affected" by paintings, but the *Aithiopika's* Persinna shows the extreme degree to which a viewer may be "affected," forced to incarnate the image' (p. 389).
3. For other recent re-evaluations of the significance of Charikleia's colour and of her being 'formed' by an artwork see John Hilton's 'An Ethiopian Paradox: Heliodorus' *Aithiopika* 4.8', and Tim Whitmarsh's 'The Birth of a Prodigy: Heliodorus and the Genealogy of Hellenism', both in *Studies in Heliodorus*, ed. Richard Hunter (Cambridge: Cambridge Philological Society, supplementary vol. 21, 1998), pp. 79-92 and 93-124.
4. See Margaret Schlauch: *Chaucer's Constance and Accused Queens* (New York: New York University Press, 1927), and *Antecedents of the English Novel 1400-1600* (Warsaw: PNW, 1963).

Chapter One: Heliodorus and the Renaissance

1. *Twelfth Night*, eds. J. M. Lothian and T. W. Craik (The Arden Shakespeare, London: Methuen, 1975). The editors identify this passage as a reference to the *Aithiopika* (p. 137n).

2. Heliodorus: 'An Ethiopian Story', trans. J. R. Morgan, in *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, ed. B. P. Reardon (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1989), p. 377. Underdowne's Elizabethan translation, expanding the passage, renders this as

Surely a barbarous nature cannot easily be withdrawen, or turned from that, that he hath once determined. And if the barbarous people be once in despaire of their owne safetie, they have a custome to kill all those by whome they set much, and whose companie they desire after death, or els would keepe them from the violence and wrong of their enemies.

An Aethiopian History, trans. Thomas Underdowne, ed. George Saintsbury (London: Simpkin, Marshall, Hamilton, Kent and Co., Ltd., n.d.), pp. 37-8.

3. See Samuel Lee Wolff: *The Greek Romances in Elizabethan Prose Fiction* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1912), pp. 420-3.

4. E. M. W. Tillyard wrote in 1938 that behind Shakespeare's late comedies, and those of Beaumont and Fletcher which might have exerted an influence over them, lay 'a stock of romantic incident, the common property of the early Jacobean age. This stock was partly medieval and partly classical, a fantastic medley of those medieval romances....which had remained popular and of the late Greek romances'. Sidney's *Arcadia*, he points out, was 'highly esteemed by the learned [among Sidney's contemporaries] as a true prose epic on the model of Heliodorus's *Ethiopica*' *Shakespeare's Last Plays* (London: Chatto and Windus, 1938, repr. London: The Athlone Press, 1983), pp. 10-11.

5. These strategies are usefully discussed by J. R. Morgan in his article 'The *Aithiopika* of Heliodoros; Narrative as Riddle' in *Greek Fiction: The Greek Novel in Context*, eds. J. R. Morgan and Richard Stoneman (London: Routledge, 1994), pp. 97-113.

6. Heliodorus: *An Aethiopian Historie, written in Greeke no Lesse Wittie than Pleasaunt*, Englished by Thomas Underdowne. London, Francis Coldocke, 1587 (first pub. 1569?) (BL: 1074 b.34. STC: 13043).

7. For an interesting study of this topic see Elizabeth McGrath: 'The Black Andromeda', in *The Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 55, 1992, pp. 1-18.

8. See Barringer, Judith M.: *Divine Escorts: Nereids in Archaic and Classical Greek Art*. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press, 1995, p. 112n.

9. Robert Burton, who repeats the tale, cites Nicephoros as his source. See *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, eds. Floyd Dell and Paul Jordan-Smith (New York: Tudor Publishing Co., 1955), p. 614 ('Apologia', Part. 3, Sect. I, Memb. I, Subs. I).

10. See J. R. Morgan: 'A Commentary on the Ninth and Tenth Books of the *Aithiopica* of Heliodorus' (D.Phil. unpub. diss., Oxford University, 1978, cited in Sandy, 1982, p. 133n). Morgan identifies the opening paragraph of book 9.9 as taken 'in great part verbatim, from a passage in the *Life of Moses* (2.195)' (in Reardon, 1989, p. 543n).

11. W. B. Hunter in *Bright Essence: Studies in Milton's Theology*. eds. W. B. Hunter, C. A. Patrides and J. H. Adamson (Salt Lake City, UT: University of Utah Press, 1971), p. 38.

12. See Gerald Sandy in *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, ed. Reardon, pp. 736-7. David Konstan suggests that, in spite of the evidence of Greek coin denominations mentioned in the text, 'it is economical to treat *Apollonius* as a distinctly Latin narrative' (Konstan, 1994, p.181). For his arguments see 'Apollonius, King of Tyre and the Greek Novel' in *The Search for the Ancient Novel*, ed. James Tatum (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), pp. 173-182.

13. Graham Anderson discusses Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius as Sophistic novelists in *The Second Sophistic: A Cultural Phenomenon in the Roman Empire* (London: Routledge, 1993), pp. 156-68.

14. Quoted by Geoffrey Shepherd in *Sir Philip Sidney: An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), p.165.

15. A brief review of Amyot's career and influence can be found in *The French Renaissance in England* by Sir Sidney Lee (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1910), pp. 151-9. See also Gerald Sandy 'The Heritage of the Ancient Greek Novel in France and Britain' in *The Novel in the Ancient World*, ed. Gareth Schmeling (Leiden: Brill, 1996), p. 735-73.

16. See Lee, pp. 414-5. Details of Hardy's adaptations of Heliodorus are given by Eugene Rigal in *Alexandre Hardy et le theatre Francais* (Paris: Hachette et Cie, 1889), pp. 437-42, and in M. Oeftering, *Heliodor und seine Bedeutung fur die Litteratur*, (Berlin: Emil Ferber, 1901), pp. 137-49. Rigal favours a date for the cycle of between

1593 and 1601. A rival dramatic adaptation by Octave-César Ganetay can be dated to 1609. In view of the popularity of Heliodorus in France, it is interesting to note that *Pandosto* was also translated into French, by Louis Regnault in 1615, and enjoyed considerable success. Hardy, having thoroughly ransacked the *Aithiopika*, adapted it for the stage. Hardy's *Pandoste ou la Princesse malheureuse* is again difficult to date and survives only as a scenario. See Rigal, pp. 545-9.

17. Alban K. Forcione: *Cervantes, Aristotle and the Persiles* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1970). See also Leo Salingar 'Don Quixote as Prose Epic' in *Forum for Modern Language Studies* 2, 1966, repr. in *Dramatic Form in Shakespeare and the Jacobean* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 236-253. Salingar finds a Heliodoran influence in *Don Quixote* in the episodes concerning Cardenio and Dorothea, and the Captive and his brother, see Salingar, 1986, p. 245. Salingar also points out that Dorothea takes the role of Princess Micomiconia, Queen of 'Micomicon and Ethiopia' in a 'burlesque' romance designed to deceive Quixote (*Don Quixote*, I, 29).

18. For a discussion of Ariosto and the Perseid see Marianne Shapiro: *The Poetics of Ariosto* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1988), pp.102-122.

19. Sandy records that when Amyot travelled with the French ambassador to Venice in 1548-51 he scoured the libraries of Venice and Rome 'discovering there uncollated manuscripts of Diodorus, Longus and Heliodorus' (Sandy, 1996, p. 744).

20. See Kenneth Muir: *The Sources of Shakespeare's Plays* (London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1977), p.183.

21. See Walter Stephens 'Tasso's Heliodorus and the World of Romance' in *The Search for the Ancient Novel* (ed. James Tatum. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press, 1994), pp. 67-87. Stephens points out that Saint George is 'the Christian Perseus' (p. 73), and that in Jacobus of Voraigne's *Golden Legend* 'the story of Saint George and the maiden is like that of Heliodorus, the celebration of the end of human sacrifice' (p. 84n).

22. The dating of Roseo's volumes is problematic. The French translation of Book XX by Gabriel Chappuys appeared in 1581. See John J. O'Connor: *Amadis de Gaule and its Influence on Elizabethan Literature* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1970) p. 18 and pp. 242-245 for a detailed comparison of the two plots.

23. Crusius' book is discussed by Margaret Anne Doody in *The True Story of the Novel* (pp. 244-6). Doody points out that Crusius found Charikleia's elopement objectionable, in that it did not show the respect proper to her father (Charikles). The full title is *Martini Crusii: Æthiopicæ Helidori Historie Epitome cum Observationibus Ejusdem. Omne tulit punctum qui miscuit utile dulci. Ejusdem de parentibus suis narratio* (Frankfurt, 1584, BL: 1074.b.15). Crusius also published an edition of Melancthon's *De Rhetorica* (1574) and produced a commentary on the *Iliad* (1612), he edited the Homeric Hymns, the *Corpus Scriptorum Historæ Byzantinæ*. His work on Heliodorus pre-dates the publication of Tasso's *Gerusalemme liberata*.

24. 'The Historie of Chariclia and Theagenes' in *The Amorous and Tragical Tales of Plutarch*, trans. J[ames] Sanford (London, Henrie Bynneman for Leonard Maylarde, 1567, BL: 244.b.3. STC: 20072).

25. Underdowne also translated Boccaccio's popular Romance tale 'Titus and Gysippus' (*Decameron*, Book X, viii). Issued in 1591, this now appears to be lost. See Gesner, pp. 31 and 171.

26. Heliodorus: *An Aethiopian Romance*. Translated by Thomas Underdowne, revised and partly rewritten by F. A. Wright (London: George Routledge and Sons Ltd. 1928), p. 5.

27. Quoted by Sandy (Sandy, 1982, p. 107), from D. Bush, *English Literature in the Earlier Seventeenth Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1945), p. 53.

28. The full passage runs 'I may boldly say because it I have seen it, that the *Palace of Pleasure*, the *Golden Ass*, the *Aethiopian History*, *Amadis of France*, the *Round Table*, bawdy Comedies in Latin, French, Italian, and Spanish, have been thoroughly ransacked to furnish the playhouses in London.', S. Gosson: *Plays Confuted in Five Actions*, in *Roxburghe Library*, ed. W. C. Hazlitt, pp. 188-9, quoted in E. C. Pettet: *Shakespeare and the Romance Tradition* (London: Staples Press Ltd., 1949). Also quoted in Sandy, 1982, p. 103.

29. For the text of *The Thracian Wonder* see *The Works of John Webster*, ed. Alexander Dyce (London: 1830, vol. 4, this edition does not include line numbers). The possibility of Robert Greene being responsible for the play is discussed by O. L. Hatcher in 'Sources and Authorship of *The Thracian Wonder*' in *Modern Language Notes* 23, Jan. 1908. The likeness of the sub-plot to Heliodorus' novel was noted by Anthony

Gerard Barthelemy in *Black Face, Maligned Race* (Baton Rouge, LA: Louisiana University Press, 1987), pp. 147-148n.

30. See C. S. Lewis: *English Literature in the 16th Century* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1954), p. 389.

31. Spenser's possible familiarity with Heliodorus was discussed by Merritt Y. Hughes in his article 'Spenser's Debt to the Greek Romances' (*Modern Philology* 23 pp. 67-76 [1925]). Hughes concludes that *The Faerie Queene* shared little with the ancient authors that was not an Elizabethan literary commonplace. He suggests the story of Pastorella as being closest to the romances (she is exposed as an infant, see Book VI, xii, 9), but does not consider Belpheobe's or Britomart's stories. C. S. Lewis asserts that the description of Isis worship in book VI canto vii of Spenser's epic is taken from the *Aithiopika*. Although he does not cite a passage, he is probably thinking of 7.8 (C. S. Lewis; *Spenser's Images of Life*, ed. Alastair Fowler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967), p. 99. Sandy, paraphrasing Wolff and Hughes notes that 'The influence of Heliodorus on the *Faerie Queene* is otherwise restricted to incidental details in the pastoral cantos of book 6, such as Pastorella's confinement to a cave (VI, xi, 42), the riddling prophecy (VI, iv, 32) and the public testing of Florimel's propriety (VI, viii, 38-51); and there is the detail of the priesthood of Isis and the strong emphasis on chastity in the story of Britomart in book 3' (Sandy, 1982, p. 105).

32. Sir Philip Sidney: *An Apology for Poetry*, ed. Geoffrey Shepherd (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1973), p.103, lines 23-5.

33. Francis Meres: *Palladis Tamia, Wits Treasury* (1598), in *Elizabethan Critical Essays*, ed. Gregory Smith, (2 vols. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1904), vol. 2, pp. 315-6.

34. Victor Skretkowicz, Jr.: 'Sidney and Amyot: Heliodorus in the Structure and Ethos of the *New Arcadia*' in *Review of English Studies*, vol. 27 (1976), pp. 170-74.

35. Sir Philip Sidney, *The Countess of Pembroke's Arcadia*, ed. Maurice Evans (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd. 1977).

36. See Wolff, pp. 312-3. For Shakespeare's use of this material see also Geoffrey Bullough: *Narrative and Dramatic Sources of Shakespeare* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1973), Vol. 7, pp. 402-8.

37. Abraham Fraunce: *The Countess of Pembrokes Yvychurch. Conteyning...The Beginning of Heliodorus his Aethiopical Historie* (London: T. Orwyn for W. Ponsonby, 1591, BL: 80.a.28).

38. 'Conversations with Drummond'(1, line 40), in *The Oxford Authors; Ben Jonson*, ed. Ian Donaldson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1985), p.596.

39. See David Mcpherson: 'Ben Jonson's Library and Marginalia', in *Studies in Philology*, LXXI (Texts and Studies, 1974), pp. 1-106. The reference in *The New Inn*, occurs at III, ii, 204 (ed. Herford and Simpson, vol. 6, 1938, p. 457), and in *The Sad Shepherd* at I, v, 96 (ed. Herford and Simpson, vol. 7, 1941, p. 20). D. Heyward Brock, in *A Ben Jonson Companion* (Bloomington, IN: Indiana UP, 1983), states that: 'The poem "An Oracle of Heliodorus", a loose paraphrase from the second book of the *Aethiopica*, is sometimes ascribed to Jonson but probably was not written by him' (p. 121).

40. C. S. Lewis found a 'closeness' between Lodge's *A Margarite of America* (1596) and Heliodorus (Lewis, 1954, p. 424). The first tale in Barnabe Rich's book *Rich's Farewell to the Militarie Profession* (1581), 'Sappho Duke of Mantua' also appears to bear a debt to Heliodorus (this likeness is noted in Paul Salzman: *English Prose Fiction, 1558-1700* [Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985]).

41. In the original passage Montaigne describes Heliodorus' 'daughter' as 'bien gentille, mais à l'aventure pourtant un peu trop curieusement et mollement goderonée pour fille ecclesiastique et sacerdotale, et de trop amoureuse façon' (*Essais*, ed. P. Villey and V.-L. Saulnier Vol. I, Paris, 1978, p. 400).

42. In Warner's poem a Danish princess rejects a suitor forced upon her by a scheming uncle, not knowing that he is in fact a disguised prince. Both then flee separately from court and live as shepherds, only to meet again and, without recognising one other's true identity, fall in love. In his edition of a slightly earlier work by Warner, his *Pan his Syrinx* (1584), Wallace A. Bacon suggests that the structuring of this complex Romance was greatly influenced by that of Heliodorus' novel (*William Warner's Syrinx*, ed. Wallace A. Bacon (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1950), pp. lxxii-lxxviii).

43. Wolff also cites a close verbal parallel between Pleusidippus' remorse as his unrecognised parents go to the pyre and Persinna's admiration of Charikleia as a prospective sacrifice (Wolff, p. 428).

44. Robert Greene: *Menaphon, Camilla's alarum to slumbering Euphues, in his melancholie Cell at Silexedra* and Thomas Lodge: *A Margarite of America*, ed. G. B. Harrison (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1927).

45. See below chap. 7, note 25, p. 339.

46. See E. A. J. Honigmann: 'Secondary Sources of *The Winter's Tale*' in *Philological Quarterly* XXXIV, 1, January 1955, pp. 27-38.

47. See E. M. W. Tillyard: *Shakespeare's Last Plays* (London: Chatto and Windus 1938, repr. Athlone Press, 1983), pp. 11, 71-2.

48. See Stanley Wells: *Shakespeare, A Dramatic Life* (London: Sinclair-Stevenson, 1994), pp.358-9.

49. *Cymbeline*. Ed. J. M. Nosworthy (London: Methuen, The Arden Shakespeare, 1955), p.197.

50. See *Cymbeline*. Ed. Richard Hosley (New York, NY: Signet Classics, 1968, repr. in a combined ed. with *Pericles* and *The Two Noble Kinsmen* in 1986), pp. xxx-xxxi. Reinhold Merkelbach suggests that the recurring motif of the blow re-enacts a moment from ancient mystery ritual. See Reinhold Merkelbach: *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike* (Munich: C. H. Beck'sche, 1962), p. 272.

51. See *Pericles*. Ed. F. D. Hoeniger (The Arden Shakespeare, London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1963), p. 143n.

52. Carol Gesner suggests that 'Since there is clear evidence that Shakespeare had studied the *Aethiopica* before writing *Cymbeline*, it seems possible that he recognised the Greek romance in the background of *Pandosto*, and thus selected it for the foundation of his play'(Gesner, 1970, p. 122) and further: 'Shakespeare developed *The Winter's Tale* out of Greek romance materials, and where he deviated from his major source, *Pandosto*, he deviated in the direction of other Greek romances' (p. 123).

53. *The Winter's Tale*, ed. J. H. P. Pafford (The Arden Shakespeare, London: Methuen and Co. Ltd., 1963). All quotations are from this edition.

Chapter Two: Twinned-Impressions and Accused Queens

1. See 'Narrative Doublets in Heliodorus' *Aithiopika*', in Hunter, 1998, pp. 60-78.

2. Reinhold Merkelbach, who argues that the *Aithiopika* expresses the teachings of the ancient mystery religions, notes that 'Charikleia is from the start a new Andromeda. Just as Andromeda was chained to a rock and delivered to the sea monster and then freed by Perseus....so was the captive human soul saved by God' (Merkelbach, 1962, p. 237 [my own translation]). This echoes mediaeval interpretations of the story of Andromeda's rescue and relates to Merkelbach's view of the novel as the story of the initiate's journey through apparent death in the realm of matter to a final reunion with a divine father. He does not discuss the relevance of Andromeda to the text in any further detail.

3. The 'chronotope' of 'Greek adventure-time' is outlined in M. M. Bakhtin: *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, ed. M. Holquist, trans. C. Emerson and M. Holquist (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1981), pp. 86-110. See Stephens, pp. 70-3.

4. Merkelbach sees the journey toward Ethiopia as the journey of the soul back to the realm of its origin, 'the land of the sun', with only the initiates Charikleia and Theagenes able to reach this goal. See Merkelbach, 1962, pp. 268-9.

5. This structure is a variation upon that of the *Odyssey*, where the first half contains first person narratives and the half way point in the epic is reached when Odysseus wakes upon the shore of Ithaca. See M. J. Anderson, 1997, pp. 305-6.

6. See Salinger, 1974, pp. 62-7.

7. The use of dreams and prophecies is well analysed by Shadi Bartsch in *Decoding the Ancient Novel; The Reader and the Role of Description in Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1989), see especially p. 93.

8. 'Wonder' is a central concept in Aristotle's *Poetics*, and is intimately connected with Elizabethan ideas of the 'marvellous'. A recent discussion of the role of 'wonder' in Elizabethan literature, and in Shakespeare's last plays in particular, can be found in *Shakespeare and the Theatre of Wonder* by T. G. Bishop (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

9. See J. R. Morgan: 'The Story of Knemon in Heliodorus' *Aithiopika* in *The Journal of Hellenic Studies* 109, 1989, pp. 99-113.

10. *King Lear*, ed. Kenneth Muir (The Arden Shakespeare, London: Methuen), 1972.

11. Margaret Anne Doody observes that 'In regaining a daughter, Charikles the depressed resembles Apollonius' (*The True Story of the Novel*, p. 95).

12. See J. R. Morgan 'History, Romance and Realism in the *Aithiopika* of Heliodorus' in *Classical Antiquity* 1, no. 2 (1982), pp. 221-65. See also Bartsch, pp. 112-115. I think it may be possible to forge an analogy between Heliodorus' own periodic 'transparency' and those moments in which Charikleia's 'divinity' becomes 'transparent'.

13. The tale of Constance also appears, alongside a retelling of *Apollonius*, in Gower's *Confessio Amantis*.

14. Schlauch does not discuss *The Winter's Tale* at any length. She attempts to arrange a rough chronology for 'Danaë' folk-tales using the form taken by the accusation to assign them a place in her scheme. See Schlauch, 1927, p. 56-8.

15. Schlauch describes how, in the romance *Theseus de Cologne*, the Emperor of Rome keeps his daughter closely guarded from all suitors, having become 'a typical Danaë's father' (p. 127).

16. The English translation by H. M. Ayres rendered the full title as *An Ingenious Play of Esmoreit, the King's Son of Sicily* (The Hague: Martius Nijhoff, 1924). The original text is given in *Vier Middeleeuwse Spelen*, ed. L. J. J. Olivier (Amsterdam: J. M. Meulenhoff, 1952).

17. See Karl Fries: 'Quellenstudien zu Shakespeare's *Wintermaerchen*', in *Neue Jahrbuecher fuer das Klassische Altertum Geschichte und Deutsche Litteratur and fuer Paedagogik*, VI, 1900, pp. 557-65. Greene's possible knowledge of *Esmoreit* is also discussed in *Robert Greene et ses romains* by Rene Pruvost (Paris: Société d'Édition 'Les Belles Lettres', 1938), pp. 293-4.

18. Salinger quotes at length Sidney's amusing description of 'a typical popular play of the moment' (circa 1581) (Salinger, 1974, p. 73), which would appear to be a ramshackle romance, in more than one aspect of the supposed plot, curiously reminiscent of *The Thracian Wonder*: 'of time they are much more liberal, for ordinary it is that two

young Princes fall in love. After many traverses, she is got with child, delivered of a fair boy, he is lost, groweth a man, falls in love, and is ready to get another child, and all this in two hours' space' (see *Apology for Poetry*, ed. Shepherd, p. 134, lines 26-30).

'Traverses' refers to crossing the stage, divided like that of *Esmoreit*, into 'Asia of the one side, and Afric of the other' (p. 134, lines 14-5).

19. Ovid places his description of the scene in Sicily and Perdita recalls the story (*Metamorphoses* V, 497-542, *WT*: IV, iv, 116-8).

20. John M. Ellis, in *One Fairy Story Too Many*, (Chicago IL: University of Chicago Press, 1983, pp. 77-8) demonstrates how the Grimms expunged the incest motif from their retelling at the expense of the tale's logic.

21. I am reliant here upon the summary of *La Belle Hélène de Constantinople* provided by Schlauch (see Schlauch, 1927, p. 120).

Chapter Three: The Danaë Romance

1. For a discussion of Ariosto's use of the Perseus myth see Marianne Shapiro: *The Poetics of Ariosto* (Detroit, MI: Wayne State University Press, 1988), p. 104-119.

2. Giulio Romano produced a number of drawings showing Perseus and Andromeda, see *Catalogue of The Ellesmere Collection*. Part 2. London: Sotheby & Co., 1972, p. 429, and Philp Pouncey and J. A. Gere, *Italian Drawings in the British Museum; Raphael and his Circle* (London: British Museum, 1962), p. 65.

3. See Jocelyn M. Woodward: *Perseus, a Study in Greek Art and Legend* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1937).

4. See Alessandro Parronchi: *Giorgione e Raffaello* (n. p., Massimiliano Boni Editore, 1989), pp. 37-43.

5. From Ovid: *Selected Works*. Eds. J. C. and M. J. Thornton (London: J. M. Dent, 1939), p. 211. The original passage reads

quam simul ad duras religatam bracchia cautes
vidit Abantiades, nisi quod levis aura capillos
moverat et tepido manabant lumina fletu,

marmoreum ratus esset opus

Ovid: *Metamorphoses*. Trans. and ed. Frank Justus Miller (Loeb Library Series, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1946), pp. 224-6.

6. See Robert Graves: *The Greek Myths* (revd. ed. 2 vols., Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1960), vol. 1 p. 245, and *The White Goddess* (enlgd. ed. London: Faber and Faber, 1961), pp. 229-30. Graves is fond of postulating such 'misreadings'. He suggests that the Acrisius story is 'extraneous' to Perseus' other adventures (*Greek Myths*, vol. 1, p. 245).

7. Northrop Frye suggests a likeness between Acrisius, Kronos and the threatening father of the Constance tales. See his *Anatomy of Criticism*, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, pbk. ed. 1971 (first pub. 1957), p. 199.

8. Chaucer uses the word 'conceive' in both senses. See 'The Monk's Tale' line 3075, 'The Parson's Tale' lines 575-580, and *Troilus and Criseyde*, book 5, line 1598.

9. Philo of Alexandria: *The Works of Philo*, trans. C. D. Yonge (1854) New Edition, ed. David M. Scholer (n.p.: Hendrikson), 1993.

10. Bacon, on the other hand, in *De Sapientia Veterum* (1609) (published as *The Wisdome of the Ancients* in 1619) attempted a rationalisation which treats the story purely as an illustration of civil virtue. For Bacon, who addresses only the defeat of Medusa and does not mention Danaë, Perseus exemplifies the virtues of a military leader. His Perseus wisely seizes the Graeae's eye, which Bacon takes as signifying the watchfulness of traitors, before going on to achieve victory.

11. James Nohrnberg (in *The Analogy of the Faerie Queene*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1976), explains that the prose *Ovid Moralisé* interprets 'Perseus as Christ, Andromeda as Eve, the sea-monster as the gulf of hell, the espoused bride as Holy Church, and the marriage feast as paradise. This is naturally rather close to the allegory of Spenser's Saint George, since Saint George is the Christian Perseus' (p. 140).

12. See Daniel Javitch: 'Rescuing Ovid from the Allegorizers: The Liberation of Angelica' in *Ariosto 1974 in America*, ed. Aldo Scaglione (Ravenna: Longo Editore, 1974), pp. 85-98. For a discussion of various Mediaeval views of Danaë see also Salvatore Settis, 'Danaë verso il 1495' in *I Tatti Studies* 1, 1985, pp. 207-237. Settis quotes the following passage from the *Ovide Moralisé*:

Or vous desclairai la merveille
 Dou dieu qui en la tour fermee
 Entra comme pluie doree...
 Par Dané puet estre entendue
 Virginitez de Dieu amee.
 La tour ou elle iest enfermee
 Nous done a entendre la cele
 Dou ventre a la vierge pucele,
 Ou Dieux vault comme pluie en laine
 Descendre, et prendre char humaine,
 et soi joindre a nostre nature.

Ovide Moralisé, ed. de Boer (Amsterdam, 1920), pp. 127ss, vv. 5572 and 5583ss.

13. William S. Heckscher: 'Recorded from Dark Recollection' in *De Artibus Opuscula XL: Essays in honour of Erwin Panofsky* (ed. Millard Meiss [New York, 1961], repr. in W.S. Heckscher, *Art and Literature: Studies in Relationship*, ed. Egon Verheyen, Baden-Baden: Valentin Koerner, 1985), pp. 165-82. Heckscher argues that 'Although the story of Danaë may well have its roots in an agricultural myth, in the eyes of the Roman poets it was above all a tale pointing a moral. They saw in the gold of Jupiter's shower a means by which either King Acrisius' guards were bribed...or the princess' resistance was broken down' (p. 172). He notes that the mediaeval Ovid moralisers Arnulphus Aurelianus, Giovanni di Garlandia and Giovanni del Virgilio all 'more or less distinctly hint at Danaë's avarice' (p. 172n).

14. Boccaccio: *Boccaccio on Poetry (Genealogia deorum gentilium: preface and chaps. 14-15)*, trans. Charles G. Osgood (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1930), p. 127. Heckscher quotes Part II, chap. xxxiii:

....Jovem aurem fluxisse per tegulas intelligendum est auro pudicitiam virginis viciatam, et cum non esset adultero iter permissum per ianuam, clam tectum conscendisse, et exinde se in thalamum virginis dimisisse....

Genealogia deorum gentilium. Ed. V. Romano (Bari, 1951), I, p. 93, Heckscher p. 172n.

15. See C. S. Lewis: *A Preface to Paradise Lost* (London: Oxford University Press), 1942.

16. The name Simonides was also used by Barnabie Rich for the eponymous 'Don Simonides', part of his collection *Rich's Farewell to Militarie Profession* (1565), a work Shakespeare knew.

17. I have already drawn correspondences between the characters of *Esmoreit* and those of the *Aithiopika*, and one can also be drawn between the King of Sicily and his wife and Acrisius and Danaë.

18. See Italo Calvino: *Italian Folktales* (trans. George Martin, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1982 [Harcourt Brace ed. 1980], pp. 269-273). Calvino comments that 'The myth of Danaë is very much alive in Italian folklore and usually serves to introduce the later vicissitudes of the daughter engendered by the Sun' (p. 731n). The chief source used for Calvino's version of this tale is Domenico Comparetti's *Novelline popolari italiane*, (Turin, 1875).

19. Edwin Sidney Hartland: *The Legend of Perseus* (3 vols, London: David Nutt, 1894). Schlauch, mentioning the motif of the beam of sunlight, comments 'how close, this, to the shower of gold in the orthodox classical myth!' (Schlauch, 1927, p. 59).

20. 'The Sun's daughter said, "Excuse me," plunged headlong into the fiery oven, turned around, and stepped back holding a beautiful pie all ready to serve' (Calvino p. 271).

21. Erwin Panofsky translates De Retza as asking 'If Danaë conceived from Jupiter through a golden shower, why should the Virgin not give birth when impregnated by the Holy Spirit?' (*Problems in Titian, Mostly Iconography*, London: Phaidon, 1969, p. 145). Panofsky's discussion of Titian's depictions of Danaë is particularly useful (*Problems*, pp. 139-171, see also below, chap. 6, note 19, and Madlyn Millner Kahr, 'Danaë: Virtuous, Voluptuous, Venal Woman' in *The Art Bulletin* LX, 1978, pp. 43-55).

22. Ludovico Ariosto, *Orlando Furioso*. Trans. Sir John Harington, ed. Robert McNulty (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1972), p. 417. This revelation prevents Ruggiero and Marfisa killing one another and so repeating their uncles' crime, which was 'a kinde of cruell parracide' (trans. Harington, XXXVI, 57, p. 417).

23. Orlando can be identified as the modern Hercules and so his rescue of Olympia can also be equated with that hero's rescue of Hesione, whose story is an analogue to that of Andromeda.

24. Thomas McAlindon argues in his article 'The Medieval Assimilation of Greek Romance: a Chapter in the History of a Narrative Type' (in *Research in English and American Literature* 3, 1985, pp. 23-56) that the motif of the 'rudderless boat' was a mediaeval innovation:

Mary Magdalen, Helen of Constantinople, Emare, [and] Constance,...are all set adrift in a rudderless vessel but carried safely by it to distant lands. Not to be found in the Greek romances, this motif is a medieval contribution to the separation story. It occurs almost exclusively in the adventures of accused princesses and in fact originated in a form of legal punishment practised in the Middle Ages, often against women charged with adultery. Its introduction... was felicitous, for it completely surpassed the traditional and by now all-too-trite kinds of sea marvel as a vivid sign of human helplessness and divine providence. (p. 40-1)

However, he also indicates the possible influence of *Apollonius of Tyre* explaining that the episode of Apollonius' seemingly dead wife being put overboard in her sarcophagus and being carried safely to Ephesus 'may have helped to introduce the rudderless ship to the separation story' (p. 42).

25. *Greek Lyric*, vol. 3. Ed. and trans. David Campbell (Loeb Classical Library, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1991), pp. 437-439.

26. See Bullough, vol. VIII, p. 213. Honigmann gives 'boat' instead of 'box' (p.28), and Flora is laid in a 'wherry [rowing] boate' (Sabie, BL: C40.e.68).

27. Achilles Tattius: *Leucippe and Clitophon*, trans. S. Gaselee (Loeb Classical Library, London: Heinemann, 1984).

28. See Javitch, 1974.

29. The deadpan commentary Harington supplies suggests that the following moral might be drawn from this adventure:

in *Rogeros* travell about the world we may see how commendable it is for a young Gentleman to travell abrode into forraine nations, but yet we may note withall an inconvenience that comes many times with it, to see some *Angelicas*

naked that will tempt men of very stanch government and stayd years to that which they shall after repent (ed. Robert McNulty, p.122).

Orlando Furioso was certainly well-known to Greene, he adapted it for the stage with as much success as might be expected for so unlikely a project, although in fairness the surviving text of his play is probably much corrupted. Greene's adaptation was first performed in 1592. See Charles W. Crupi: *Robert Greene* (Boston, MA: Twayne Publishers, 1986), pp.107-14.

30. See Philostratus: *Imgenes* and Callistratus: *Descriptions*, trans. Arthur Fairbanks (Loeb Classical Library, London: Heinemann, 1931), p. 117. There is also an elaborate description of the rescue in Lucian's *On the Hall*, 22.

31. See Rona Goffen, *Titian's Women* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 223-6.

32. See Sokol, 1994, especially pp. 21-3.

33. Morgan suggests the detail of the combat is 'Intended to recall the killing of Hypsion by Eurypylos in the *Iliad* (5.79ff)' (in *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, p. 471n).

34. 'Andromede vero. Ovid Metamorph. 4. Non sederat vestita in saxo: Sed nuda alligata saxo erat: & Perseus advolans, ut stetit: o, dixit, nonistis digna catenis: sed quibus inter se cupidi iunguntur amantes. Sic Ludovici Ariosto cantu 10 in *Rolando Furioso*, Angelica' (Crusius, *Epitome*, p. 24).

35. See Anderson, 1997, p. 321. Heliodorus is perhaps invoking the Perseus myth in his choice of the name Chemmis for the village where the protagonists rest after their escape from Thyamis (2.18). Whilst there were two Egyptian towns bearing this name, neither was situated in this part of the country. However, according to Herodotus, the Chemmis sited near Neapolis in the district of Thebes was a unique centre for the worship of Perseus, and employed Greek ceremonies and customs, thus making the town an exception to what he considered the Egyptian resistance to all things Greek (*The Histories*. Trans. Aubrey De Selincourt, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, revised ed. 1972, p.162). The inhabitants not only claimed that Perseus' forbears originated in Chemmis, but that Perseus himself paused there prior to catching sight of Andromeda. Apparently the occasional discovery in the locality of a 'sandal....three feet long', discarded by the god, signalled forthcoming prosperity.

Chapter Four: Maternal Impression and the Power of the Eye

1. M. D. Reeve: 'Conceptions' in *Proceedings of the Cambridge Philological Society*, no. 215, 1989, pp. 81-112.
2. William Harvey was the first to describe the role of the egg in mammalian reproduction. Although he had lectured on the subject at a much earlier date his *Exercitationes de generatione animalium* was not published until 1651.
3. C. S. Lewis: *Spenser's Images of Life*, ed. Alastair Fowler (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967).
4. I have quoted this passage at greater length below, see chap. 6.
5. Aristotle: *De generatione Animalium*, trans. and ed. A. L. Peck (London: William Heinemann Ltd., Loeb Classical Library, 1943).
6. Aristotle: *De Anima*, trans. and ed. W. S. Hett (London: William Heinemann Ltd., Loeb Classical Library, 1935).
7. Here I am reliant upon a very useful discussion in John Erskine Hankins' *Backgrounds of Shakespeare's Thought* (Hassocks, Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1978), pp. 90-1.
8. Marie-Hélène Huet: *Monstrous Imagination* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993). The chief concern of Huet's book is the use of Maternal Impression as a metaphor for artistic creation in the Enlightenment and Romantic periods. Her chapter on the 'The Renaissance Monster' omits any mention of the story of the biblical story of Jacob's Lambs.
9. Thomas Lupton: *A Thousand Notable Things of Sundry Sortes* (London: I. Roberts for Edward White, 1601, BL: 7321.bbb.33). Lupton includes in his collection an example of skin colour skipping a generation (Book 1, no. 51).
10. Joseph Needham: *A History of Embryology*, 2nd ed. revd. with the assistance of Arthur Hughes (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1959, p. 55).
11. Plutarch: 'De Sera Numinis Vindicta' in *Moralia*, vol. 7, trans. and ed. Phillip H. De Lacy and Benedict Einarson (London: William Heinemann Ltd., Loeb Classical Library series, 1959, pp. 266-269).
12. Plutarch: 'Table Talk' in *Moralia*, vol. 8, trans. and ed. Paul A. Clement and Herbert B. Hoffleit (Loeb Classical Library, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1969,

question 7), pp. 416-433. Hankins argues that Shakespeare knew Philemon Holland's translation of the *Moralia* (1603), see Hankins, 1978, pp. 14, 84.

13. Pliny: *Natural History*, vol. 2, trans. and ed. H. Rackham (Loeb Classical Library series, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1942). Pliny presents examples of resemblances between individuals from diverse backgrounds, such as that between a consul and an actor, or a famous orator and a gladiator, and also cites the example of a well known boxer Nicaeus, whose appearance reproduced that of his Ethiopian Grandfather, as an illustration of the way in which characteristics can lie dormant and then reappear unexpectedly (VII, 51). For Stephens 'there is a suspicion that this visual resemblance [between Charikleia and Andromeda] is as much natural (genetic) as magical (sympathetic), since Andromeda is also Chariclea's ancestor. In fact, Tasso's commentator Gentili was uncertain whether heredity or sympathetic influence was responsible for the parallel "historical" cases he mentioned' (Stephens, p. 77). For Shakespeare's possible use of Pliny see *Othello*, ed. Kenneth Muir (The New Penguin Shakespeare, Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd., 1968).

14. *The Merchant of Venice*, ed. John Russell Brown (London: Methuen, the Arden Shakespeare, 1955).

15. See Philo: *On Dreams*, I, xxxiv, 196-217 (ed. Scholer, p. 383-4), and St. Augustine: *City of God*, XII, xxv.

16. Robert Burton: *The Anatomy of Melancholy*, intro. Holbrook Jackson (3 vols., London: J. M. Dent and Sons, 1932), I, p. 254.

17. Burton (quoting Melanchthon, who had supplied an approving epistle for Warschewicki's translation of Heliodorus) asks 'Who is not earnestly affected with....some pleasant bewitching discourse, like that of Heliodorus, where quiet pleasure blends with mirth?' (*Anatomy of Melancholy*, Part 2, Sect. 2, Memb. 4, eds. Dell and Jordan-Smith, pp. 454-5 [see Dent ed., II, p. 88]).

18. Crusius and Burton both refer to Book IV, chapter 7 of Lemnius' *De Miraculis Occultis Naturae*. Crusius includes the following:

[In conceptu] Tam efficax enim est imaginandi vis, ut si quando mulier oculos ac cogitationes in rem quampiam defigat: Tota naturae facultas, eaq vis quae formatiomi foetus insistit, concursantibus undi quae humoribus quos habet obsequentes, eo confluit: atq operi persicendo sedulo est intenta

This passage appears on pp. 380-1 of the 1593 Frankfurt edition of Lemnius. The passage from Galen (AD 130-200?) appears in *De Philosophorum Placitis*.

19. Michel de Montaigne: *The Essayes of Montaigne*, trans. John Florio (New York, NY: The Modern Library, 1933), p. 71. M. A. Screech identifies Montaigne's list as 'Standard *exempla* given by Coelius Richerius Rhodiginus, *Antiquae lectiones* (XX, xv)' (Michel de Montaigne: *The Complete Essays*, ed. M. A. Screech. London: Penguin Books 1993 (First pub. by Allen Lane, The Penguin Press 1991), p.118n.

20. Thomas More: *The Complete works of St. Thomas More*, vol. III, part 2, eds. Miller, Bradner, Lynch and Oliver (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1984), pp. 235 and 237.

21. Henry Swinburne: *A Briefe Treatise of Testaments and last Willes*, (London: John Windet, 1590, BL: 515 E1). See pp. 162-4.

22. A short time later, John Sadler's popular *The Sicke Woman's Private Looking-glasse*, published in 1634, warned that 'in the imaginative power at the time of conception' lies such force that 'the children of an adultresse may be like unto her owne husband though begotton by another man' (John Sadler: *The Sicke Womans Private Looking-Glasse*. London: Stephens and Meredith, 1636, chap. 13, quoted in Pallister, p.175).

23. Katherine Park and Lorraine J. Daston: 'Unnatural Conceptions: The Study of Monsters in 16th and 17th Century France and England' in *Past and Present*, no. 92 (1981), pp. 20-54. Speaking specifically of Lupton they state that he 'expanded the power of maternal imagination to cover virtually every eventuality' (p.41).

24. See Plato: *Theaetetus*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1987), pp. 104-5 (194c-195a).

25. *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, ed. Harold F. Brooks (The Arden Shakespeare, London: Methuen & Co. 1979, corr. rpt. 1983).

26. In *De Natura Luminis* we find: 'Immutatio vero spritualis est, secundum quod species recipitur in organo sensus per modum intentionis, et non per modum formae naturalis' (Aquinas, *Opuscula Omnia*, vol. 5, ed. R. P. Petri Mandonnet, Paris: 1927, p. 305).

27. This passage is cited by Hankins (p. 261n). In his commentary on the passage Charles Singleton also cites *Convivio* III, ix, 7. See *The Divine Comedy: Purgatorio*, trans. Charles S. Singleton (Bollingen Series LXXX, Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), pp. 412-13.

28. Macrobius: *The Saturnalia*, trans. and ed. by Perceval Vaughan Davies (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1969), p. 504.

29. James Black: 'The Monster in Shakespeare's Landscape' in *The Elizabethan Theatre* VIII, ed. George Hibbard (London: Macmillan, 1979), pp. 51-68.

30. Black also cites Henry V's saying that his father 'was thinking of civil wars when he got me; therefore was I created with a stubborn outside, with an aspect of iron' (*Henry V*, V, ii, 237-39) (see Black, p. 53).

31. In Sidney's 'Paphlagonica' episode Leonatus forgives his evil brother Plexirtus as Thyamis forgives Petosiris. However, Sidney introduces a further twist in that Plexirtus' repentance is entirely false. The irony, and it is not one that would have been lost upon the author of *King Lear*, is that by allowing himself to be taken in, Leonatus is showing how much he too takes after his father.

32. See Leo Salinger: 'Romance in *King Lear*' first pub. in *English*, Spring 1978 (repr. in Salinger, 1986, pp. 91-106) and Maynard Mack: *King Lear in Our Time* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1965), pp. 41-66.

33. A brief discussion of Vives' role in the age can be found in *The Continental Renaissance 1500-1600*, ed. A. J. Krailsheimer (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971), pp. 442-448.

34. See Forcione, 1970, p. 15.

35. Huet suggests that in cases of maternal impression, such as that of the 'furry girl', the mother's monstrous offspring might be seen as conforming to what Plato, in *The Sophist*, calls 'eikastikan' art; 'reproduction without interpretation'. She contrasts this with the creation of 'appearances' by the artist who interprets what is seen and adds beauty (See Huet, pp. 25-7):

The Platonic artist both uses nature and corrects it by imposing beautiful proportions on what he perceives. The artist's work is inexact on several levels, but the liberties he takes in relation to the viewer's gaze are also proof of his superior talent. His work is made to be seen and admired. If this be art's 'lie,'

then the monster is its terrible truth. The monster is art without interpretation or signature, since the father, the only one who has the right to leave his mark (as he gives his name to the child he engenders), has been erased and supplanted by the image produced by the mother's imagination.

Huet: *Monstrous Imagination*, p. 26.

Perhaps one can say that, in as much as any interpretation contains truth, this is derived from, and belongs to, the divine. Likewise the father's rights also descend from above and, therefore, can be withdrawn from him.

36. The Queen is sentenced to be burned, but escapes. In a situation reminiscent of the flight of Franion/Camillo her disappearance is taken to be an admission of guilt. She is kept in seclusion by a kindly knight. Her son, Theseus, is taken to the forest to be killed, but when he forgives and prays for the King he is miraculously altered and is given the form he should have had. He then returns to court and vindicates his mother.

37. Of course, such influences are also shown to take a negative form. The heroes whom providential sources of influence have exalted often find themselves opposed by monsters who are the product of unnatural lusts and demonic desires. Such monstrous births are presented in the *Amadis* cycle as being either the result of incest or as hybrid children who may even have an animal as a one their parents and prove themselves closer to demons and ferocious animals than to men. One could say that they are, in fact, the monstrous children to which the young Queens of romance are so often falsely accused of having given birth. Book XX (1581?) which, as O'Connor has demonstrated, Roseo modelled closely upon the plot of the *Aithiopika*, features a demonic instance of the phenomenon in the form of a pair of twins born with the faces of dogs and with ten fingers on each hand, their mother having dreamt of a great hound at the moment of their conception (*Amadis de Gaule*, XX, lxxv). See O'Connor, 1970, pp. 242-245, for a detailed comparison of the plots of *The Ethiopian History* and *Amadis de Gaule*, Book XX.

38. Stephens argues that 'In Heliodorus, Chariclea's and Persinna's perfect chastity in the basis for a psychological resemblance masked by physical dissimilarity; likewise in some paradoxical sense, Tasso's white Clorinda symbolizes the "immaculate" chastity of her "brown but beautiful" mother'. Hence 'Chariclea's resemblance to her mother is thus mediated by the represented white maiden: true to the assertions written

on the swathes, she resembles her mother's *mental* "conception" rather than her *physique*' (Stephens' italics) Stephens, p. 77.

39. Tasso, *Godfrey of Bulloigne (Gerusalemme liberata)* trans. Edward Fairfax (1600), eds. Kathleen M. Lea and T. M. Gang (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1981). The original verse reads

N'arde il marito, e de l'amore al foco
ben de la gelosia s'agguaglia il gelo.
Si va in guisa avanzando a poco a poco
nel tormentoso petto il folle zelo
che da ogn'uom la nasconde, e in chiuso loco
vorria celarla a i tanti occhi del cielo.
Ella, saggia ed umil, di cio che piace
al suo signor fa suo diletto e pace.

Gerusalemme Liberata, 12.12 (ed. Lanfranco Caretti, Turin: Einaudi, 1971).

40. See Jacobus de Voragine: *The Golden Legend*, trans. William Granger Ryan (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press 1993), vol. 1, pp. 27-9.

41. *The Golden Legend* was widely read in pre-reformation England, and there are some obvious echoes of such narratives in Shakespeare's play, though as much in the scenes between Leontes and Paulina as in the arraignment scene itself. Leontes accuses Paulina of witchcraft and makes repeated threats of burning, while Paulina retorts 'I care not: / It is an heretic that makes the fire, / Not she which burns in't' (*WT*, II, iii, 113-5), and later lists punishments and tortures associated with martyrdom: 'wheels? racks? fires? what flaying? boiling? / In leads or oils' (*WT*, III, ii, 176-7).

42. The appearance of St. Lucy bearing a pair of eyes led to an embellishment of her story which very much resembles the heroine's loss of her hands in several of the Accused Queen tales. James Hall explains that 'it was said that she impatiently plucked out her eyes and sent them to her lover because he would not cease from praising their beauty' (James Hall: *Hall's Dictionary of Subjects and Symbols in Art*. London: John Murray, revd. ed. 1979, p. 195). Her eyes were then miraculously restored.

43. See Peter Humfrey: *Lorenzo Lotto* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), pp. 114-18.

Chapter Five: Seeing Andromeda in the *Aithiopika*

1. Merkelbach argues that the *Aithiopika* describes in veiled terms the practises of a Helios cult, see Merkelbach, p.234.

2. Plato: *The Republic*, trans. Benjamin Jowett (with L. Campbell, Oxford, 1894, repr. London: Sphere Books, 1970).

3. J. R. Morgan translates the words of the people as ‘No one must slay her whose life [the gods] have saved! You are the father of the people; now be a father in your own house!’ (10.17). Shadi Bartsch argues that this exchange continues a pattern in which spectacle and *actio* triumph over words. See Bartsch, pp. 116-7.

4. The full description of the spectacular procession of Neoptolemos is included in Kalasiris’ narration only at Knemon’s insistence. Likewise the author sometimes provides explanations only after the event, as in the case of the ‘Pantarbe’ gem which saves Charikleia from the pyre.

5. Underdowne says that the flames made way for her so that ‘she was with the lighte that was aboute her, made fayrer, and woondered [at] al the more, by reason of her beautie, so that in a manner she was married in a fiery chamber’ (Saintsbury ed., p. 214).

6. Plutarch: *Moralia*, vol. 8, eds. Paul A. Clement and Herbert B. Hoffleit (Loeb Library Series, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1969).

7. Erwin Rohde noted that ‘The portrayal of Calasiris mixes the marvellous tendencies of the wise holy man with those of the crafty Egyptian’ (Erwin Rohde: *Der griechische Roman und seine Vorläufer*, 4th ed., Hildesheim: Georg Olms, 1960. Quoted in Sandy, 1982, p. 70). See also Merkelbach, 1962, pp. 242-5.

8. Bartsch argues that this *ekphrasis* justifies its presence in that it describes an object (the ring) that ‘is itself responsible for a plot development’ (see Bartsch, 1989, pp. 149-150).

9. It is also the difference between Hydaspes accusing Charikleia of attempting to cast herself as a *deus ex machina* in the dénouement simply as a ploy to delay the sacrifice and the realisation that he too is part of a scene ‘stage managed’ by ‘the gods’ (*Aithiopika*, 10.12, 10.39).

10. Underdowne has

[she] put uppon her the holy garment, that shee brought from Delphi, which shee alway carried in a little fardel about her, wrought with golde, and other costly juelles, and when shee had cast her haire abroad, like one taken with a divine furie, ranne and leapt into the fire, and stode there a great while without harme, and her beauty appeared a great deal more, so that every man looked upon her, and by reason of her stoale thought her more like a Goddesse, than a mortal woman. Thereat was every man amazed, and muttered sore, but nothing they saide plainely and woondered....

Aithiopika, trans. Underdowne, Saintsbury ed. pp. 257-8.

11. Morgan notes that ‘This equation of falling in love with memory derives from Plato’s discussion of love in the *Phaidros*. The whole scene is rich in echoes of Plato’ (*Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, ed. Reardon, 1989, p. 414n).

12. For Achilles’ family history see: Graves, 1960, chap. 81. Heliodorus’ choice of Achilles as model for his, it must be said, far less active hero is of a piece with Heliodorus’ veneration of Homer and underlines Theagenes’ role as a stranger to the Ethiopians. While the fight between Thyamis and Petosiris imitates that of Achilles and Hector, the Homeric original itself echoes the fight before Troy between Achilles and Memnon whose rivalry was described in the lost pre-Homeric epic the *Ethiopsis*.

13. The witch desires to resurrect her lost child, even at the risk of contravening divine laws. And here too ‘sight’ plays a part. Not only is the old woman sent into a mad frenzy when told by her son that she has been observed, but her act itself sends out a poisonous influence which might infect anyone who witnesses it. As Kalasiris explains to Charikleia ‘the mere sight of such things was unclean’ (6.14). Like Kybele, the witch represents an evil form of motherhood.

14. Ken Dowden suggests in ‘Heliodoros: Serious Intentions’ (*Classical Quarterly* 46 [i], pp. 267-285, 1996) that Kalasiris frames his speech on the evil eye as part of a ‘stratagem for the best’ (Dowden, p. 283). Bartsch also provides practical reasons for Kalasiris’ speech (see Bartsch, pp. 154-5). John J. Winkler, whose picture of a ‘playful’ Heliodorus has been influential, argues in his lengthy study ‘The Mendacity of Kalasiris and the narrative strategy of Heliodorus’ *Aithiopica*’ (*Yale Classical Studies* XXVII, Cambridge University Press, 1982, pp. 93-158), that by linking ‘love and first sight’ and the evil eye Heliodorus was attempting to undermine Romance conventions

(see Winkler, p. 128). Michael Anderson writes ‘Although Heliodorus suggests no irreverence in his treatment of the heroine’s anomalous birth, I suspect that, if pressed, our sophisticated author would recognise a similarity between his inventive narrative of Charicleia’s conception and Calasiris’ ingenious theory of the evil-eye. It is a most expedient and artfully crafted fiction’ (M. J. Anderson, 1997, p. 303n).

15. In his article ‘The *Aithiopica* of Heliodorus: Narrative as Riddle’ (in *Greek Fiction, The Greek Novel in Context*, eds. J. R. Morgan and Richard Stoneman (Routledge, London, 1994), Morgan sets out the curious description of the ‘kamelopardalis’ (10.27), which seems to prompt the reader into recognising the beast before the narrator reveals its identity, remarking that the ‘*Aithiopica* is a much more challenging read than any of the other Greek novels, precisely because it is pervaded at every level by the kind of self-conscious game-playing typified by the riddle of the giraffe’ (pp. 99-100).

16. See Yoryis Yatromanolakis: ‘*Baskanos Eros: Love and the Evil-Eye in Heliodorus’ Aethiopica*’, in *The Greek Novel AD 1 -1985*, ed. Roderick Beaton (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1988), pp. 194-204.

17. See Plutarch: *Moralia*, eds. Paul A. Clement and Herbert B. Hoffleit (Loeb Library Series, London: William Heinemann Ltd., 1969), vol. 8, V, 7, 680-3. Morgan has suggested that either Heliodorus used Plutarch here, or that ‘more probably, they share a source’ (in *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, p. 416n).

18. As Morgan explains, the ‘eye of Kronos is a poetic way of describing the planet Saturn, whose malign influence was generally recognised by astrologers’ (in *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*, p. 398n).

19. Yatromanolakis goes as far as saying that Charikleia’s eyes even take on for Theagenes ‘the characteristics of a gorgon’. This he contrasts with the glance of Rhodopis, see Yatromanilakos, p. 199.

Chapter Six: Enlivened Seeing and the Story of Danaë in Spenser, Greene and *The Thracian Wonder*

1. Spenser: *Poetical Works*, ed. J. C. Smith and E. de Selincourt (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1912).

2. This identification is made by Nohrnberg, 1976, p. 143.

3. See François Laroque: 'A New Ovidian Source for the Statue Scene in *The Winter's Tale*', in *Notes and Queries*, June 1984, pp. 215-17. Although Laroque does not mention it, Sabie refers to the story of 'Deucalion and his spouse' twice in *Flora's Fortune*. His courtiers visit Themis' oracle who is addressed as: 'Disclosresse of al hid and unknowne deedes, / Who once did tell Deucalion and his spouse, / How lost mankind should be restord againe' (BL: C40.e.68).

4. W. P. Cumming: 'Ovid as a Source for Spenser's Monster-Spawning Mud Passages' in *Modern Language Notes* XLV, March 1930, pp. 166-8.

5. *Antony and Cleopatra*, ed. M. R. Ridley (Arden Shakespeare, London: Methuen & Co. Ltd, 1954).

6. See Diodorus Siculus: *The Historical Library*, I, vii, and Strabo: *Geography*, XV, i. These passages were identified as possible sources for Spenser by C. W. Lemmi in his article 'Monster-Spawning Nile-mud in Spenser' (in *Modern Language Notes* XLI, April 1926, pp. 234-8).

7. Book Nine of the *Aithiopika* was suggested as a source for Spenser's Nile-mud lore by H. M. Percival in his edition of Book One of the *Faerie Queene* (Macmillan, 1899).

8. Robert Lamberton, *Hesiod* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1988), p. 72-3.

9. See Pausanias: *Guide to Greece*, X, xxiv, 5, trans. Peter Levi (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1971, revised 1979), vol. 2, p. 468.

10. Milton: *Poetical Works*, ed. Douglas Bush (Oxford: Oxford University Press 1966).

11. William Nelson, *The Poetry of Edmund Spenser; A Study* (New York, NY: Columbia University Press, 1963), p. 159. See also p. 218 and 332n, where Nelson explains that

the humanist Christophoro Landino (in *Camaldulenses disputationes*, Strasbourg 1508) commenting on the meaning of that forest on the Carthaginian shore which Aeneas enters....Citing Trismegistus as his authority, he assigns to God the office of father, to the wood or matter that of mother, and to the *anima mundi* the seminal power 'since it is instilled by God into the bosom of the wood'. And this

Spenser says in another way in his tale of the impregnation of Chrysogone

Nelson, p. 218.

12. Macrobius states that when the Arcadians worship the sun as Pan they call him 'the Lord of the $\upsilon\lambda\eta$ [*hyle*]' meaning 'not that he is the lord of the forest but the ruler of all material substance' (*Saturnalia*, I, 22, 2, trans. Perceval, p. 147). Thomas McAlindon (in *Shakespeare's Tragic Cosmos*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1991, pp. 23, 36 and 267n) links the idea of primal '*silva*' with 'the wood' in Chaucer's *Knight's Tale* (this is, perhaps, the same wood near Athens that features in *Midsummer Night's Dream*). Ben Jonson's surviving common-place books were published under the title *Timber, or Discoveries* (pub. 1640-1) because these notes not only supplied the planks from which new vessels might be made, but were also a store of fertile matter which, combined with form, would produce new literary creatures. The text is prefaced with a note on '*Silva*' or '*hyle*'.

13. Orlando's wits are restored after Astolfo brings them back from the moon, a land of 'spacious, empty forests where nymphs were forever hunting game' (XXXIV, 72).

14. Nohrnberg observes that 'The impregnation of Chrysogonee in part reminds us of the story of Danaë, whose tale is told in the tapestry at the house of Busirane, but with Chrysogonee it is the refinement of sexual contact - rather than its ubiquity - that is stressed' (Nohrnberg, 1976, p. 564).

15. The possible sources for this description of Danaë are discussed by Starnes and Talbert (see Starnes and Talbert, pp. 85-6).

16. An interesting discussion of the role of seeing in this episode can be found in Theresa M. Krier's *Gazing on Secret Sights* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1990), pp.137-41. Krier argues that 'the sun, the male viewer in the episode, not only is not present to Chrysogonee's consciousness (a move by which Spenser preserves her candour), but entirely lacks any kind of bad faith in his relation to the woman, because by not assuming human form he also does not assume fully human male volition' (p. 138).

17. In the third Danaë painting Titian mixes roses among the coins and has the maid catch her share of the gold this time in a salver. As Goffen observes, the artist thus 'noisily underscores her venality in contradistinction to Danaë's virtue' (*Titian's Women*, p. 224).

18. This translation from Ripa is taken from Kahr, 1978, p. 46n. Kahr suggests that Ripa's description matches Danaë's maid as she appears in Primaticcio's depiction of Danaë (c. 1540).

19. Erwin Panofsky wrote in *Problems in Titian* (London: Phaidon, 1969) that 'the expression on the blushing face of...*Danaë* is so enraptured and yet so remote that she seems to "die" in the Elizabethan sense of the word', yet 'the atmosphere is one of dark foreboding....and the hideous old nurse....serves not only to set off the youth and beauty of Danaë but also to stress the miraculous nature of an event which in the old woman excites only greed but transforms her young mistress into a chosen vessel destined to give a savior to the world' (p. 150).

20. Vico, *Scienza nuova*, II, 548, 3rd ed. 1744 (*The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, revised ed. 1968, p.193).

21. *The Thracian Wonder* does resemble *The Winter's Tale* in its plot and in its 'Hellenistic' aura. Pafford notes the resemblance in passing and cites Jeanette Marks' *English Pastoral Drama* (London: Methuen, 1908, p. 47-51) as 'exaggerating' the likeness (Pafford, p. xxxvn). Marks writes that 'The plot very strongly resembles that of Greene's *Menaphon*, and Shakespeare's *Winter's Tale*, with a touch of *Pericles*', but apart from briefly summarising the plot of the anonymous play, supplies no details specifically related to Shakespeare. She found *The Thracian Wonder* 'commonplace', 'disjointed' and 'absurd' though possessing a 'vitality' later pastoral dramas lacked. The play's early editor Dyce thought it showed 'a want of taste and judgement' that it was published at all (Dyce, p. 1).

22. A detailed comparison of passages from the two works can be found in J. Le Gay Brereton: 'The Relation of *The Thracian Wonder* to Greene's *Menaphon*' in *Modern Language Review* 2, October 1906, pp. 34-8.

23. Pheander's threats echo Mopsa's initial rejection of Fawnia (*Pandosto*, ed. Bullough, p. 174). Sabie's King Palemon also dismisses his child as a 'bastard brat' (Bullough, p. 213), while Leontes threatens: 'The bastard brains with these my proper hands / Shall I dash out' and asks 'what will you adventure / To save this brat's life?' (*WT*, II, iii, 139- 40,161-2).

24. Arthur F. Kinney (in *Humanist Poetics; Thought, Rhetoric and Fiction in Sixteenth Century England*. Amherst, MA: The University of Massachusetts Press, 1986, pp. 206-8) finds traces of Heliodorus, Achilles Tatius and Longus in *Menaphon* and suggests that 'the hints of incest [are taken] from *Apollonius of Tyre*'. Kinney had earlier described the *Aithiopika* as a narrative that does 'progress' towards a given end: 'The persistent twistings and turnings of events, so openly dependent on Fortune, nevertheless have their providential ordering, too; from a desperate *tableau vivant* of massacre and shipwreck, which begins the romance, to the wedding and admission to priesthood at the close, Heliodorus's romance firmly proceeds from savage chaos through the marvels of paganism to the conditions of spirituality, a structure of narrative analogous to that of theme, which Greene employs in the best of his fictions' (p.195). The shipwreck which begins *Menaphon*, Kinney likens, by implication, to the opening of the *Aithiopika* (see Kinney, pp. 207-8).

Chapter Seven: Seeing and Conceiving in *The Winter's Tale*

1. Sokol also notes that

reports on the visual realm in *The Winter's Tale* frequently reveal more of the reporters' limited or self-deluded capacities than what is 'there' to be seen. Like Gloucester in *King Lear* who 'stumbled when [he thought he] saw', deluded Leontes actually believed that 'all eyes' but his were 'Blind with the pin and web' (*WT*, I, ii, 290-1).

Sokol, 1994, p. 18.

2. Richard Proudfoot (in 'Verbal Reminiscence and the Two-Part Structure of *The Winter's Tale*' in *Shakespeare Survey* 29, 1976, pp. 67-78) has argued that the play's structure depends upon a number of pointed repetitions of motifs and key words, these 'reminiscences' occurring on either side of the sixteen year hiatus. The second half of the play, he writes, recalls and recapitulates the matter of the first, sometimes with 'a quite remarkable minuteness of detail' in a pattern of 'verbal reminiscence' (repr. in Hunt, 1995, p. 281). This would match the larger pattern in which the disruptive moment of seeing at the beginning of the play is recalled and reversed at the end.

3. Maurice Hunt, who has written extensively on this play, addresses the idea of pregnancy in a recent article ('The Labor of *The Winter's Tale*', in *The Winter's Tale, Critical Essays*, ed. Maurice Hunt, New York, NY: Garland Publishing Inc., 1995, pp. 335-60.) both within individual characters and in terms of the 'pregnancy of truth by circumstance' (to paraphrase Paulina's steward [*WT*, V, ii, 31-2]). Hunt's subject is the 'topic of labor' which includes Hermione's giving birth, the labour of Time in 'bringing forth the truth' of Perdita's legitimacy (p. 353), Perdita's 'pastoral labor' (p. 348) and, most notably, Leontes' creation of a 'bastard' identity for her:

In *Cymbeline*, Posthumus Leonatus in his hatred of women wishes that men could beget children without the participation of their co-workers, women. In *The Winter's Tale*, Leontes, suspecting his wife's adultery, works by himself to conceive an issue. The labor takes place wholly in his mind.

Hunt, 1995 p. 335.

Hunt further suggests that 'Leontes' thoughts about breeding between themselves work a kind of birth, ironically an illegitimate one' (p. 336). Leontes bears 'his monstrous birth in his brain' (p. 337), but this conception is corrected before Hermione's statue where he recalls the youthful Hermione (p. 351). Describing the 'Affection' speech, Hunt writes that 'Leontes' poetic speech mirrors the work of conception. In tracing the supposed coupling of Hermione and Polixenes, Leontes' thoughts themselves couple to mold a grotesque child, a monstrous issue' (Hunt, 1995, p. 337). However, he does not refer to maternal impression.

4. See M. M. Mahood: *Shakespeare's Wordplay* (London: Methuen, 1957, repr. 1979), pp. 146-163. Mahood states that 'issue' in a 'positive' sense can mean Mamillius, whose death drives Leontes to a mortified existence; or it can be Leontes' 'action' (a meaning peculiar to Shakespeare) in defying the oracle and so driving Mamillius to his grave. It can also mean the legal issue of Hermione's trial. Perhaps its strongest ironic meaning is 'child', taken negatively...

Shakespeare's Wordplay, p. 150.

5. A number of critics have recently taken up the theme of pregnancy, or 'issue', in the play. Carol Thomas Neely argues (in her book *Broken Nuptials in Shakespeare's Plays*, New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1985) that 'Childbirth is the literal and

symbolic center of the play' and refers to 'the gestation of jealousy in Leontes' "Affection! Thy intention stabs the centre" speech' (Neely, 1985, p. 191).

6. The first folio punctuates the passage thus:

Can thy Dam, may't be
Affection? thy Intention stabs the Center.
Thou do'st make possible things not so held,
Communicat'st with Dreames (how can this be?)
With what's vnreall: thou coactiue art,
And fellow'st nothing. Then 'tis very credent,
Thou may'st co-ioyne with something, and thou do'st,
(And that beyond Commission) and I find it....

First Folio, *WT*, I, ii, 136-43 (quoted in *The Winter's Tale*, ed. Stephen Orgel, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996, pp. 8-9).

7. Thomas Cooper's *Thesaurus* defines 'affection' as 'a disposition or mutation happening to bodie or minde' (quoted in Hallet Smith: 'Leontes' *Affectio*' in *The Shakespeare Quarterly* XIV, Spring 1963, no 2, pp. 163-166). Pafford explains, 'affection': 'had many shades of meaning of which 'lustful passion' was one. It is used only five or six times in the Bible and at least three times it has this sense' (Pafford, p. 166-7). This overtone can be used to advantage by Shakespeare because what is being described can be termed illicit or selfish 'cojoining' in which matter takes form from 'nothing' (that is from itself).

8. Florio uses the term 'communicate' in this sense in his translation of Montaigne's essay 'Of the force of Imagination'. Montaigne makes the point that the powers of the human imagination are shared to some degree by animals. He mentions dogs that pine away with their master's deaths, or struggle in their sleep 'But all this may be referred to the narrow suture of the Spirit and the body, enter-communicating their fortunes one unto another' (*Essayes*, Chap. 20, p. 71).

9. Hankins cites Ficino's commentary on the *Symposium*: 'The eyes emit rays as if through glass windows, and these rays draw with them a "spiritual vapour" of corrupted blood that "infects" the eye of the person beheld.... This ray and dart of spirit enters the eye of the opposite person, descends to the heart, and wounds the heart'

(Hankins, p. 87). Juliet says that she will 'endart' her eye with her mother's consent when looking at Paris (*Romeo and Juliet*, I, iii, 98).

10. Hankins also includes a note on 'commission' as referring to Leontes having 'commissioned' Hermione to request that Polixenes stay, then imagining her to have exceeded his command (Hankins, p. 100). I think it more likely that Leontes is speaking about his own thought processes and 'affections' operating beyond his control.

11. Shakespeare uses 'intention' in the sense used by Aquinas in *The Merry Wives of Windsor* as part of a comically precise, but entirely false, description of a peculiarly powerful form of vision. Falstaff tells how when Meg Page looked at him: 'she did so course o'er my exteriors with such a greedy intention that the appetite of her eye did seeme to scorch me up like a burning-glass!' (*Merry Wives*, I, iii, 61-3), crediting the eyes of the supposedly love-struck woman with the power of a sunbeam concentrated through a magnifying glass.

12. It is worth noting that Ben Jonson, comparing the virtues of fine art and poetry in his *Timber, or Discoveries*, wrote that

Picture is the invention of heaven: the most ancient, most akin to nature. It is itself a silent work, and always of one and the same habit; yet it doth so enter and penetrate the inmost affection - being done by an excellent artificer - as sometimes it o'ercomes the power of speech and oratory

Discoveries (in *Oxford Authors: Ben Jonson*, ed. Ian Donaldson, Oxford, 1985), lines 1537-42.

Interestingly Jonson goes on to list Guilio Romano among the six 'famous Painters in Italy, who were excellent and emulous of the ancients' (lines 1595-6).

13. 'Squash', according to Pafford, means an unripe pea-pod.

14. Stanley Cavell notes Leontes' crediting Mamillius with the ability to 'conceive', see *Disowning Knowledge in Six Plays of Shakespeare* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987), p. 194.

15. The 'plague' in *Menaphon* which is caused by the King's errors appears in *Pandosto* only as a metaphor: 'the infectious soare of Jealousie' (ed. Bullough, p.156).

16. When Posthumus sees Imogen's ring, he tells Iachimo: 'It is a basilisk unto mine eye, / Kills me to look on't' (*Cymbeline*, II, iv, 107-8). Posthumus assumes that eye contact must be made with the basilisk for the poison to act. In fact, it is the poison in

Posthumus' own seeing that harms him, for Iachimo, by working on his victim's imagination, released more than he knew.

17. In addition to Bellaria's likening Pandosto's besmirching her honour to: 'one Moale' staining 'a whole face' (*Pandosto*, Bullough, p. 165, already quoted above), Franion tells himself that 'conscience once stayned with innocent bloud, is alwayes tyed to a guiltie remorse' (p. 161). Sokol discusses the connotations of 'staining' in *The Winter's Tale*, see Sokol, 1994, pp. 76-7.

18: Montaigne describes himself as 'one of those that feele a very great conflict and power of imagination', adding 'All men are shockt therewith, and some overthrowne by it' (Chap. 20. p. 63). The individuals in Montaigne's accounts who suffer at the hands of their own 'fantasy' are sometimes required to resort to humiliating subterfuges in order escape its power. He details several cases of what can be described as psychosomatic symptoms, some of which were cured by placebos. Montaigne himself claims to have cured one newly married friend of impotence by lending him a plate decorated with exotic, but meaningless, symbols and, instructing him to strap it to his stomach. Inga-Stina Ewbank relates Leontes' 'Affection' speech, and specifically the 'hardening' of Leontes' 'brows', to Montaigne's reference in this same essay to the man who 'dreamt of being cuckolded [and] woke up in the morning with horns in his forehead' (Ewbank, 1983, p. 163).

19. Inga-Stina Ewbank (in 'From Narrative to Dramatic Language; *The Winter's Tale* and Its Source' in *Shakespeare and the Sense of Performance*, eds. Thompson, Marvin and Ruth, Newark, DE: University of Delaware Press, 1989, pp. 29-47) observes that

it is also natural for [Leontes] to rewrite what is happening into little plays, which are then given the status of actuality. His confrontation with Hermione in [act two, scene one] largely takes the form of writing a script for the bystanders, including both dialogue and gestures (p. 41).

One can draw a likeness between Leontes as the rebellious *pater patriae* who resists a higher authority, and the character within a play who appoints himself a playwright. In a separate article she also suggests that in the 'Affection' speech Leontes observes something 'very like the action of the creative imagination: making....dreams and "what's unreal" real' ('Shakespeare's Liars', in *Proceedings of the British Academy*, 69, 1983, p.

163). Like Lear, Leontes attempts to create a desired effect through a staged spectacle but, without the underpinning of truth, his theatrical skills fail.

20. Cited in Orgel, 1996, p.136n. Pafford reproduces an allusion to a similar proverb in Beaumont and Fletcher's *The Elder Brother* (1634?): 'Your eldest son, Sir, and your very Image, (but he's so like you that he fares the worse for't)' (*The Elder Brother*, II, i, 12).

21. Hunt believes that 'Even though the "burthen," the issue, may be grotesque (as in the case of the usurer's wife), the child authentically prints off the father - so genuinely in fact that the passive mother delivers moneybags, the exact copy of the maker's avarice!' (Hunt, 1995, p. 355).

22. See Ewbank, 1989, p. 33.

23. Kenneth Muir notes that Sabie's Flora may have suggested the comparison of Perdita to Flora (Muir, 1977, p. 311). At the same time Jonathan Bate is probably right to suggest that, by calling Perdita 'Flora', Florizel is playing on the likeness between the name and his own (*Shakespeare and Ovid*, p. 229). 'Pranked up' was the phrase Florio used in translating Montaigne's humorous description of Heliodorus' novel and its heroine, see above, p. 43 (*WT*, IV, iv, 10).

24. McAlindon notes 'Plato says that "law and also art exist by nature"; in other words...he regards the antithesis of art and nature to be a spurious one, and so anticipates Shakespeare's "The art itself is nature"...Aristotle and Cicero take a similar position: art completes or complements nature; but that process is nature completing itself' (McAlindon, 1991, p. 291n).

25. Camillo persists in drawing blushes from her (*WT*, IV, iv, 582-5). In *The Fisherman's Tale* when Flora and Cassander, both disguised as shepherds, exchange glances

She seeing her so vewed on of me,
Began to change her countenance so sweet,
Even like Aurora when her Phoebus faire
She welcometh, her colour went and came,
Then who had seene her, would have doubtles said,
A goddess she, no mortal wight had bene.
In beauty she did Venus farre surpass:

In modesty Diana she did staine...

Ed. Bullough, VIII, p. 208.

This not only recalls descriptions of 'blushing' goddess-like Charikleia, but is also a use of Heliodoran 'pathetic optics'. The meeting between 'Aurora' and 'Pheobus' which takes place here in the intimate human sphere echoes that which took place in the heavens in the opening lines of the poem, a passage that can be seen as imitating the opening lines of the *Aithiopika*: 'Rose-cheekt Aurora with a sanguine hue, / Her friendlie Phoebus louinglie did greet' (*The Fisherman's Tale*, lines 5-6).

26. Charikleia blushes when she reveals to her father that Theagenes is her 'husband' and, while Underdowne simply mentions that Charikleia's dark-skinned cousin Meroebos 'blushed' (p. 270) when Hydaspes suggests he should marry her, in the original Heliodorus describes how 'the blush...suffused his countenance like a flame licking over soot' (trans. Morgan, 10.24).

27. In case the visual joke had been missed verses by the influential critic Benedetto Varchi and others were published elaborating the point. See John Shearman: *Only Connect ...Art and the Spectator in the Italian Renaissance* (The A. W. Mellon Lectures in the Fine Arts, 1988. Bollingen Series XXXV, Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1992), pp. 54-8.

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