

The Love Story of Charicleia and Theagenes: Calasiris as Non-narrator of Slavery; as Narrator of Slavery; as Clever Slave

John Morgan notes that Heliodorus has contrasted Calasiris' account of the chaste and ideal love of Charicleia and Theagenes with two stories about a carnal and selfish form of love: Cnemon's account of his stepmother Demaenete's illicit desire for him and the external narrator's tale of Arsace's lust for Theagenes [Morgan (1989)]. This paper argues that Heliodorus articulates the contrast between the two forms of love through: 1) narrative strategy; 2) reference to metaphorical slavery to love; 3) reference to a familiar slave stereotype, the clever slave.

Narrative: Unscrupulous slaves, Thisbe and Cybele, help their mistresses pursue and persecute the objects of their desire in the tales of unchaste love. In contrast, enslaved characters play no role in Calasiris' account of how Charicleia and Theagenes fall in love. The priest even circumvents servile participation in this action. He orders, for example, the slaves in attendance on love-sick Charicleia out of the room (4.5.2, πάντες ἔξιτε). He marginalizes slaves to be the merest of functionaries: εἰσδραμῶν τις, τις ἐσπουδασμένος, ἦκων τις. In his non-narration of slaves, Calasiris emphasizes that there is nothing cheap or carnal about the ideal love of the protagonists.

Metaphor: Although he has banished slave characters as actors in the protagonists' love story, Calasiris describes the protagonists themselves as metaphorical slaves of love (cf. 3.10.4; 3.17.3; 3.19.1; 4.4.4) aligning them, paradoxically, with their antagonists, lesser carnal lovers such as Arsace and Trachinus [cf. (Morgan 1998) 65-66]. The characterization of the protagonists as metaphorical slaves of love serves as a reminder that they represent

flesh-and-blood human beings, not Platonic abstractions [cf. Dowden (1996)]. They differ from lesser, carnal lovers not in that they lack desire, but in that they exercise *sophrosyne* [cf. Bird (2017), 200].

Stereotype: Calasiris acts as the love-sick protagonists' go-between and deceives Charicleia's foster-father in a manner worthy of a Plautine *servus callidus* [cf. Sandy (1982a) 68; Paulsen (1992) 188-189]. In brief, he takes on the slave role he had denied to the story's slave characters. Calasiris' assumption of this role is a form of literary homage to New Comedy and novels that feature the machinations of clever slaves, such as *Callirhoe* and *Leucippe and Clitophon*. However, the paradox of pious priest posing as clever slave also addresses one of Heliodorus' key themes, that is, the contradictory nature of the love between Charicleia and Theagenes, which was chaste in practice but carnal in feeling.

#### Bibliography

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