Eos CV 2018
ISSN 0012-7825

INTERTEXTUAL STRATEGIES AND PROBLEMATISING LOVE IN HELIODORUS' *AITHIOPIKA*

by

MAŁGORZATA CIEŚLUK

ABSTRACT: In this study, I focus on the analysis of the intertextual references identified in the seventh book of Heliodorus' *Aithiopika* (VII 9, 5) and Sappho's so-called Hymn to Aphrodite (1 V.). This textual relationship has so far not been considered by scholars, yet both the theme of unrequited love and the roles of the characters, as well as the structural analogy and the lexical parallels, point to the work by Sappho as deliberately exploited inspiration for the passage of Heliodorus' novel discussed here. Then, I consider the role of this intertextual relationship in the context of the broader intertextual system in the *Aithiopika*. This system includes the story of Demainete in the first book of the *Aithiopika* (I 9–17) and Euripides' *Hippolytus*. By comparing the story of Demainete, Arsake, Phaedra and Sappho, we gain a perspective from which the issue of problematising love becomes evident, and the reader is encouraged to a deeper reflection on this problem. This is essential because when analysing the scope and function of the love theme in the plot of the *Aithiopika*, one must conclude that it is surprisingly limited.

Intertextual references, broadly interpreted as quotations, stylisation and various types of references to texts by previous authors[1], constituted permanent elements in the practice of ancient writers. The fact that they are present in the texts of ancient Greek novels is therefore not surprising. In particular, references to the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey* are so numerous and explicit that Giuseppe Zanetto (2014: 400) even wonders whether the borrowing of patterns and situations from the Homeric epic should be regarded as factors defining the novel as a genre[2]. Depending on

[1] The way of understanding the phenomenon of intertextuality remains to some extent an open issue. Following Głowiński (1992: 102) my assumption is that, for a given reference to be considered intertextual, three conditions have to be met. First of all, the relationship between the hypotext and hypertext must be intended by the author. Secondly, the relationship must be consciously addressed to the reader. Finally, it has to constitute the structural or semantic element of the text. A slightly different approach is presented by Morgan, Harrison (2008: 218): viewing the intentionality of the author of the hypertext as a problem of secondary importance, it is the reader's activity that is considered constitutive for the phenomenon of intertextuality. This difference of opinions, however, is of little significance for the following discussion.

[2] Yet another possibility is provided by Zanetto (2014: 401). Following his idea, literary works of the archaic period are not the points of reference for the authors of novels in the strict sense.

the perspective adopted, the function of the aforementioned references may be viewed differently. From the reader's perspective[3], the identification of subsequent elements of the literary collage probably intensified the experience of aesthetic pleasure fundamentally related to the contemplation of a literary work. From the author's perspective, incorporating text into traditional literary works functioning in a given cultural space could elevate the text to the level of genres appreciated by critics at that time[4]. It seems, however, that the encounter between the author and the reader with similar skills of erudition in the intertextual space was at times part of a subtle play of associations. Carefully programmed by the writer, it was aimed at broadening the horizon of interpretation in relation to individual elements of the world presented in the novel.

A passage of Book Seven of the *Aithiopika* by Heliodorus (VII 9, 5) provides an example of an intricate web of references to Euripides' tragedy about Hippolytus and Phaedra, Heliodorus' self-reference to the earlier part of his own novel (I 9–17), and also associations leading to Sappho's so-called *Hymn to Aphrodite* (1 V.)[5]. Scholars have already become interested in the first two of

---

It is rather the archetypal system of images and stories embodied in the archaic epic, which reemerge in the Graeco-Roman Empire in response to new social and intellectual challenges, that constitutes this point of reference. The wide range of allusiveness of all Greek novels is also emphasised by Doulamis (2011: XI f.). In his opinion, this phenomenon is largely due to the conventions characteristic of the Roman period.

[3] In a discussion on intertextuality, one must naturally focus on the implied reader of the novel and the reading skills this reader has. This problem has been a source of controversy for many years – the ongoing discussion was aptly summed up by Hägg 2004; see also Wesseling 1998. Undoubtedly, one should emphasise the evolution of views expressed by scholars. Apart from the image of a "broad" reader, with limited reading skills (Perry 1967: 98 f., 117), an educated reader of novels with the highest social class background is increasingly being presented. Equipped with an extensive personal textual encyclopedia, this reader can successfully detect the intertextual and metaliterary signals and various textual strategies encoded by the author (Holzberg 2006: 55 f.). Wesseling (1998: 75 f.) concludes that in the case of novels by Longus, Tatius, Heliodorus and even Chariton we encounter so-called multi-level writing, as these authors play a game with different types of readers. Given this situation, ancient novels seem to meet the requirements of a specific type of texts, which Eco (2002: 234 f.) refers to as "valuable bestsellers" (*bestseller di qualità*). These texts appeal to a wide range of readers – even if these readers cannot distinguish and understand all of the subtle aesthetic elements incorporated by the author. At the same time, an educated reader with high aesthetic qualifications is able to detect satisfactory, innovative contextual and formal solutions.

[4] Morgan, Harrison (2008: 219) presents the following view: "to us it is clear that this last-born in the litter of classical genres was forever self-consciously labouring to legitimise itself, and that its appropriation of other authors and forms is better understood as the negotiation of the respectable position within a self-validating literary tradition".

[5] The range of potential associations and identifications based on the aforementioned intertextual references is far from exhaustive. For instance, it seems possible to make a connection between the passages of Heliodorus' novel discussed here and a scene from Chariton's novel. In this scene, the Persian king Artaxerxes tells his entrusted eunuch Artaxates about his loving passion for the protagonist, Callirhoe (VI 3, 1–8). Analysing both the nature of the content that is introduced, the system of roles, and the situation of the characters involved (leaving the issue of sex reversal aside), one

the aforementioned textual relationships by suggesting some analyses and interpretations[6]. However, the possibility of a relationship between the scene taking place in Arsake's bedroom and Sappho's poem has not yet been considered. Consequently, no discussion of the implications of this type of relationship has been undertaken[7]. Yet it seems that it may be regarded as an interesting example of the formation of a relationship between an educated reader and Heliodorus' novel. Above all, Sappho's voice is an important element in the palimpsestic structure of the intertextual references. If interpreted correctly, this structure provides for the extension of the interpretation possibilities in the passage of the *Aithiopika* under discussion.

The following discussion will thus focus on the analysis of the references identified in Book Seven of Heliodorus' novel (VII 9, 5) and Sappho's Aphrodite hymn (lines 15–28). In the second part of the discussion, an attempt will be made to demonstrate that these references are part of an intertextual structure strictly programmed by the author. Its primary function is to provoke an educated reader to focus on the issue of love, which is treated relatively superficially in the scheme of the fiction. Before proceeding to the core of the discussion, it seems reasonable to briefly recall the interrelations between passages of Heliodorus' novel and Euripides' tragedy identified so far.

HELIODORUS AND EURIPIDES

The scene under discussion from the *Aithiopika* takes place in Memphis, in the bedroom of the Persian satrap's palace. It is in these surroundings that his wife, Arsake, suffers from her insatiable passion recently ignited at the sight of the beautiful Theagenes. Concerned about her condition, Kybele – her slave/nurse – joins in the action as she tries to discover the cause of Arsake's sickness. As previously mentioned, it is legitimate to make a connection between the plot involving Arsake and Euripides' *Hippolytus*[8]. The similarity of the fictional motif may serve as the basis for the association of both texts: a married woman, involved in a power relationship with a younger man, is passionately in love with him. Rejected by the young men, both Phaedra and Arsake cannot accept their

---

can see parallels when comparing Artaxerxes and Phaedra, Arsake and Sappho on the one hand and Artaxates, Euripides' nurse, Heliodorus' Kybele and Aphrodite in Sappho's song on the other. As no relevant content to the issue of problematising love in the *Aithiopika* is introduced by this reference, this issue will not be engaged with in the present discussion.

[6] See, for instance, Paulsen 1992: 68, 85–88; Morgan 1989: 112; Haynes 2003: 111.

[7] Other intertextual references to Sappho's works in Heliodorus' novel have been identified by Zanetto (2014: 408). The description of Charikleia as she lights up all space around herself like the full moon (III 6, 3), is perceived as an allusion to the famous poem by Sappho about the full moon (fr. 34 L.–P.).

[8] Morgan 1989: 112; Paulsen 1992: 68; Dowden 1996: 278; Dworacki 2000: 229, n. 9.

refusal. Born out of insatiable love passion, their desire for revenge, regardless of any self-destructive consequences, will ultimately lead them to a tragic end. The personal traits of the young men also appear to be similar: their virginity is clearly manifested, and their attitudes towards the emotions declared by Phaedra and Arsake are uncompromising.

Starting with a general association, a closer analogy can be discovered by comparing particular passages of the two texts: the aforementioned passage from the *Aithiopika* (VII 9, 5) and the first epeisodion of the tragedy by Euripides (lines 170–524). The type of characters involved in the plot and the nature of the communicative situation provoke the reader to discover intertextual relationships. The roles of the heroines – the queen and her attentive nurse – are identical: for a long time both Phaedra and Arsake remain silent and avoid telling the truth about the nature of their "sickness"[9]. By asking inquisitive questions, the Nurse and Kybele eventually provoke a confession. The issue of the relationship between these texts, as indicated by the mode of action adopted by both nurses, has not yet been undertaken: they consider spells and magic as the best method to deal with lovesickness. In the tragedy by Euripides, the Nurse concludes (478 f.):

> εἰσὶν δ' ἐπωιδαὶ καὶ λόγοι θελκτήριοι·/
> φανήσεταί τι τῆσδε φάρμακον νόσου
>
> There are incantations, and words that charm:
> something will turn up to cure this love,
> (transl. by D. Kovacs)

However, Kybele talks about using magic to directly affect the object of Arsake's affection (VII 9, 5):

> οὐδεὶς οὕτως ἀδαμάντινος ὡς μὴ τοῖς ἡμετέροις ἁλῶναι θελγήτροις
>
> there is no heart so hard that it is proof against my spells[10].

As illustrated in the passages quoted above, this behaviour involves the use of love magic, indicated by means of similar expressions: the adjective θελκτήριοι in Euripides corresponds to the noun θελγήτροις in the *Aithiopika*. Both are related to the verb θέλγω, whose semantic range is centred on depriving the mind of clarity

---

[9] In the tragedy by Euripides the Nurse refers to the ailment that afflicts her mistress as νόσος, believing that there is suitable medication for the sickness – φάρμακον (*Hipp.* 479). Responding to the promise made by her elderly nurse, who declares that she will win the favour of Theagenes, Arsake from Heliodorus' novel says: Εἰ γὰρ οὕτω ποιήσειας, Κυβέλιον φίλτατον· δυεῖν δι' ἑνός μοι γενήσῃ νόσων ἰατρός, ἐρωτός τε καὶ ζηλοτυπίας (VII 10, 6); Kybele's role in this context is compared to that of a doctor who can cure two diseases simultaneously: love and jealousy. Medical imagery is very common in Greek erotic discourse.

[10] All quotations from the *Aithiopika* are provided following the translation by J.R. Morgan.

and on deception and temptation. The way in which the plot unfolds, both in the tragedy and in the novel, indicates that the anticipated result is to be achieved not by the use of mysterious substances[11] or magic procedures. It is rather the deceptive art of persuasion and the use of "charming" words (λόγοι θελκτήριοι), as well as arguments that may seem impossible to be ignored, that should serve this purpose. As it turns out later, these arguments and the very art of love persuasion in both cases prove to be ineffective and have no impact on the emotions and decisions made by Hippolytus and Theagenes respectively. However, they bring about a deadly threat to the young men – Arsake's passion, in the same way as Phaedra's love, turns into an unbridled desire to punish the objects of their affection.

A reader exploring the maze of intertextual associations realises that the passage of the *Aithiopika* being analysed is not the first one in which Heliodorus refers to the story of Phaedra. The frame of this plot also constitutes the basis for the life story of a secondary character – Knemon. Scholars agree that the relationship between the plot concerning Knemon and Eurypides' tragedy is even clearer than in the story of Arsake and Theagenes[12]. In this case we are dealing with a complete narrative analogy: the story revolves around the stepmother's love for her stepson, his rejection, and then revenge manifested as false accusations against the young man in front of his father. The author clearly aims to focus the attention of every reader on Knemon and the reference to Euripides. The implied audience are not only readers with sophisticated literary knowledge, but also those mainly interested in the primary, literal level of the text. This is manifested by making the heroine, who is in love with her stepson, explicitly call the young man Hippolytus (I 10, 2).

The issue of the possible implications for the interpretation of this dual reference to Eurypides' tragedy will be discussed later in this paper. What needs to be emphasised at this point is only one basic issue. Making a reference to the same text at two different stages of the plot and with regard to two different characters excludes the possibility of any random associations. Moreover, this increases the likelihood of the reference being noticed by the reader of the novel.

---

[11] Although the Nurse claims to have some means by which she can enchant love (φίλτρα μοι θελκτήρια ἔρωτος, lines 509 f.), this narrative line is discontinued. It should be added that among Greek novelists we know of today only Achilles Tatius evokes the motif of winning someone's love through magic substances: an Egyptian soldier, in love with the protagonist, resorts to a trick to give her a love-inducing mixture. However, the dose is too strong, causing the girl's madness, which subsides after she takes an antidote (IV 16 f.). Special love magic, which was allegedly the speciality of women from Thessaly, is mentioned by yet another heroine of Tatius' novel, Melite (V 22, 2 f.). On the basis of Greek magic texts preserved in papyri and tablets, Wypustek (2001: 251) provides a sample list of the ingredients used by the Greeks to prepare magic substances – φίλτρα, enhancing the effects of love spells. These substances include, for instance, a brew from a boiled scarab, boar's bile, Attic honey, and a whole range of plants that are hard to unambiguously identify nowadays.

[12] Morgan (1989: 112), however, notes aptly that the heroine's nurse, who plays such a significant role in Euripides' tragedy, does not appear in the Demainete episode.

HELIODORUS AND SAPPHO

The way in which a reference is made to the *Hippolytus* thus provokes the reader of Heliodorus' novel to closely examine the potential of the intertextual multiple voices echoed in the background of the scene taking place in Arsake's bedroom. Upon careful observation one can capture the subsequent correlations, which relate the passage of the novel under discussion to Sappho's poem. Both the nature of the relationship between the ruler and her nurse/confidante, as well as the structural analogy and the lexical parallels, point to the work by Sappho as deliberately exploited inspiration for the passage of Helidoros under discussion.

The above conclusion can be made by comparing passages from both works. In both cases, the theme (unrequited love) and the nature of the communicative situation between the heroines are very similar. Overcome by passion, the woman (Arsake – Sappho) remains silent as to the object of her affection. However, it is her nurse/assistant (Kybele – Aphrodite), empowered to act directly, who verbalises the true cause of her protégée's suffering. Consequently, she seeks to discover the identity of the person who was the direct cause of the lovesickness and anticipates the further course of events. What is at least puzzling, and even suggests direct reference to Sappho's literary works, is the fact that Heliodorus clearly emphasises Kybele's identity – the slave/nurse of the Persian ruler comes from the island of Lesbos (VII 12, 6)[13].

Much as the theme and the roles of the characters provide clearly identifiable parallels, even after a cursory reading, an analysis of the literal wording of both passages is needed for the discussion of the syntactic and lexical relations. The third person narrator in the *Aithiopika* quotes the following statement made by Kybele (VII 9, 5):

> "Τί ταῦτα", ἔλεγεν, "ὦ δέσποινα; τί σε νέον ἢ καινὸν ἀλγύει πάθος; τίς πάλιν ὀφθεὶς τὴν ἐμὴν διαταράττει τροφίμην; τίς οὕτως ἀλαζὼν καὶ ἔκφρων ὡς τοῦ κατὰ σὲ τοσούτου κάλλους μὴ ἡττῆσθαι μηδὲ εὐδαιμονίαν ἡγεῖσθαι τὴν σὴν ἐράσμιον ὁμιλίαν ἀλλὰ νεῦμα τὸ σὸν καὶ βουλὴν ὑπερφρονεῖν; Ἔξειπε μόνον, ὦ γλυκύτατον ἐμοὶ παιδίον· οὐδεὶς οὕτως ἀδαμάντινος ὡς μὴ τοῖς ἡμετέροις ἁλῶναι θελγήτροις· ἔξειπε καὶ οὐκ ἂν φθάνοις ἀνύουσα τὰ κατὰ γνώμην. Ἔργοις δὲ οἶμαι πολλάκις τὴν πεῖραν εἴληφας".

---

[13] Morgan (1989: 112) also considers Kybele's background as non-accidental, although he treats it generally as a symbol of the heroine's involvement in "immoral" love. The reference to Sappho's literary works is undoubtedly the basis for the association of Lesbos with a negatively perceived form of passion. As the extant references demonstrate, at the time of the creation of Greek novels, an ambiguous aura accompanied the love writings of the poet. Though regarded as brilliant, these poems were viewed as praising love that was not always considered ethical: for instance, the Ovidian Sappho explains that her love of girls from Lesbos was not wicked: "quas hic sine crimine amavi" (Ov. *Her*. 15, 19), nevertheless this type of emotions was the source of infamy: "Lesbides, infamem quae me fecistis amatae" (*ibidem*, 201); for the perception of Sappho's literary works in the first century of the Roman Empire, see Szastyńska-Siemion 1993: 134–142.

> ...she asked: "What is the matter, mistress? What is this new pain that makes you suffer so? Whom has my baby seen that causes her such heartache? Who could be so presumptuous or so deranged as not to capitulate before your beauty or not to consider union in love with you to be very bliss? Who dares disregard your will and pleasure? You have only to tell me, my darling child; there is no heart so hard that it is proof against my spells. You have only to tell me, and you will your heart's desire in an instant. My past achievements have given you proof enough of my abilities, I think".

The poetic persona in Sappho's poem evokes the words of Aphrodite herself (1, 15–28 V.):

> ἤρε᾽ὄττι δηῦτε πέπονθα κὤττι
> δηῦτε κάλημμι
> κὤττι μοι μάλιστα θέλω γένεσθαι
> μαινόλαι θύμωι· τίνα δηῦτε πείθω·]· σάγην ἐς σὰν φιλότατα; τίς σ᾽, ὦ
> Ψάπφ᾽, ἀδικήει
> καὶ γὰρ αἰ φεύγει, ταχέως διώξει,
> αἰ δὲ δῶρα μὴ δέκετ᾽, ἀλλὰ δώσει,
> αἰ δὲ μὴ φίλει, ταχέως φιλήσει
> κωὐκ ἐθέλοισα.
> ἔλθε μοι καὶ νῦν, χαλέπαν δὲ λῦσον
> ἐκ μερίμναν, ὅσσα δὲ μοι τέλεσσαι
> θῦμος ἰμέρρει, τέλεσον, σὺ δ᾽αὔτα
> σύμμαχος ἔσσο.
>
> ...asked what/ was it had troubled me this time, what/ caused me to call once more?/ What could it be that I wished for/ in my unruly heart? "Whom shall I persuade/ back again into your love, Sappho?/ Who does you wrong today?/ If she hides now, she will soon seek;/ if she scorns gifts, she soon will give;/ if she despises, yet will she love/ even reluctantly!"/ Come again, now, release me from/ this inescapable care! Grant/ all that my heart desires and stand/ as comrade-at-arms with me!
>
> (transl. by Pippin Burnett 1983: 245)

Before proceeding to the core of the discussion, two issues that differentiate the narrative situation in the passages under discussion need to be mentioned: the time of the plot and the dependence on higher narrative levels. In the Heliodorus passage, the plot is presented in an uncomplicated manner[14]. Kybele's statement is quoted as direct speech. The reader follows the events from the perspective of an auctorial narrator, who consistently maintains a temporal distance from the plot and reports the events in chronological order. Sappho's poem, on the other hand, is an elaborate, sophisticated game, in which the relationship between the

[14] Looking at the entire novel, however, Heliodorus' method of narration should be viewed at least as complex. Morgan (1989: 99) defines it as hermeneutic in the first five books, and as proairetic in the subsequent ones; Effe (1975: 154) talks about personal and auctorial narration; Swain (1996: 106) describes Heliodorus' narration using the terms "snakes and ladders"; see also Cieśluk 2008: 159 f.

present, the past, and the future[15] remains very close, and their chronological distance is at times suspended. One of the devices that the poet employs to maintain the relevance of the events is changing the way of quoting the words used by the goddess. Aphrodite's statement, as reported speech (lines 15–18), which is subsequently shifted into direct speech (lines 18–24), may produce the illusion of the simultaneity of the time of the narration and the plot for the reader[16]. This eliminates the temporal distance and the course of the action as if it were "before the eyes" of the reader[17]. Much as the competences of the acting subject are attributed to the goddess of love (Aphrodite asks what she should do, whose love to invoke), there is a clear tendency to focus on the perspective of the poetic persona, defined *expressis verbis* as *Sappho*.

Undoubtedly, the aforementioned differences point at the divergent objectives assumed by the poetess and the novelist. However, it seems legitimate to claim that parallels of structure and vocabulary can be observed in both statements. Let us compare the most significant elements that are explicit in the passages quoted above:

Heliodorus	Sappho
ἔλεγεν	ἤρε'
Τί ταῦτα	ὄττι δηὖτε πέπονθα
τί σε νέον ἠκαινὸν ἀλγύει πάθος	κὤττι/ δηὖτε κάλημμι/ κὤττι μοι μάλιστα θέλω γένεσθαι/ μαινόλαι θύμωι
τίς πάλιν ὀφθεὶς τὴν ἐμὴν διαταράττει τροφίμην	τίνα δηὖτε πείθω/ ·]· σάγην ἐς σὰν φιλότατα
τίς οὕτως ἀλαζὼν καὶ ἔκφρων	τίς σ', ὦ/ Ψάπφ', ἀδικήει

[15] In the passage being discussed, Sappho introduces, for instance, verbs that correspond in their grammatical form to the aforementioned temporal dimensions: ἤρε, θέλω, ἀδικήει, φεύγει, διώξει, δώσει, etc. Zieliński (2006: 222) perceives this unity of time as an expression of confidence in the goddess by the poet.

[16] The terms "time of narration" and "time of the plot" are usually used with reference to temporal relations in epic works, and sometimes in drama. However, the originality of Sappho's Aphrodite hymn is attributed, among other things, to the introduction of dramatic (a scene of an epiphany) and narrative (the story of an epiphany) elements into her lyrical passages. Thus there are grounds for the use of the aforementioned terms to express temporal relations in Sappho's poem. The "time of narration" is the time when the poetic persona tells the story of an epiphany, which also refers to the future, whereas the "time of the plot" refers to an epiphany occurring in the past.

[17] The effects of the strategy outlined above are aptly summarised by Burnett (1983: 246 and 253): "somehow the song persuades anyone who listens that he has not only overheard Sappho at prayer but has also – quite illogically – heard Aphrodite's voice as well" and: "The reminding section comes next, and it is here that the poem's own trickery begins, its purpose being to bring a past miracle into the present and to persuade the audience that they are witnessing it". See also Zieliński 2006: 222.

The statements made by both heroines in both cases were introduced using past forms of the verbs, whose meanings (ask/speak) point at the desire to establish verbal contact. These verbs introduce a series of interrogative sentences, starting with a form of the pronoun τίς or τί/ὅτι. The parallel character is also evident in the scope of the questions: first about the nature of the suffering (τί [...] πάθος – ὅττι [...] πέπονθα), and then about the identity of the person whose reluctance should be considered as the cause of anxiety, and therefore of the harm experienced by the heroines (τίς [...] διαταράττει – τίς [...] ἀδικήει). The negative connotation of the term "anxiety" (διαταράττει), and therefore its legitimate use in the category of harm/guilt (ἀδικήει) found in Sappho's work, is expressed by the nicknames defining the object of the emotions, who appears to be overly confident and devoid of reason (τίς οὕτως ἀλαζὼν καὶ ἔκφρων). The essence of guilt is fully explained in the next subordinate consecutive clause: ὡς τοῦ κατὰ σὲ τοσούτου κάλλους μὴ ἡττῆσθαι μηδὲ εὐδαιμονίαν ἡγεῖσθαι τὴν σὴ ἐράσμιον ὁμιλίαν ἀλλὰ νεῦμα τὸ σὸν καὶ βουλὴν ὑπερφρονεῖν. Insensitivity to Arsake's beauty, as well as opposing her will and the rejection of her erotic advances, are unfair. The way the object of Sappho's emotions acts is identical. According to the words of Aphrodite expressed later, the object of her passion runs away (φεύγει), rejects the gifts (δῶρα μὴ δέκετ'), and simply does not love (μὴ φίλει) (lines 21–23)[18]. One also cannot fail to notice the fact that in both texts the nature of these questions is obviously apparent, as both Aphrodite and Kybele know the answers as well as the identity of the new objects of affection of their protégées[19].

Another theme which can be considered analogous in both texts is also introduced by the aforementioned passage. The interlocutors have not the slightest doubt regarding the course of future events and the effectiveness of the methods they adopted:

> Heliodorus: οὐδεὶς οὕτως ἀδαμάντινος ὡς μὴ τοῖς ἡμετέροις ἁλῶναι θελγήτροις
> Sappho: καὶ γὰρ αἰ φεύγει, ταχέως διώξει,/ αἰ δὲ δῶρα μὴ δέκετ', ἀλλὰ δώσει,/ αἰ δὲ μὴ φίλει, ταχέως φιλήσει.

According to Kybele, no man is strong enough to oppose their (Kybele's and Arsake's) actions. Aphrodite, on the other hand, anticipates the outcome of her actions as a radical change in the attitude of the object of the emotions. The object of the emotions, contrary to his past actions, will be the one to make advances, bring gifts and give love. The suggestion to use love magic may also be viewed

---

[18] The meaning of *dike* in the context of principles that govern love relationships is explained by Burnett (1983: 256).

[19] Krischer (1968: 12–14) points to the analogy between Aphrodite's apparent ignorance expressed in Sappho's poem and omissions typical of epic works. These are found in scenes such as the conversation between Achilles and Thetis, when the mother asks her son about the reason for his sadness, even though she is fully aware of what it is; see Zieliński 2006: 219.

in both cases as similarities. Although we find no direct lexical parallels in the words of Aphrodite to the term θελγήτροις used by Kybele, it has often been suggested that the way in which conditional sentences in Sappho's poem are arranged mirrors the structure and character of magic formulas[20]. It also seems that the essence of the magic effect declared by the goddess, as demonstrated above with reference to Heliodorus' novel and Euripides' tragedy, comes down to the irresistible power of persuasion, which is evidenced by the form πείθω found in line 18[21]. The ultimate goal of this peculiar type of persuasion is to fulfill the desires of the women in love: Kybele encourages her mistress to pursue her will (οὐκ ἂν φθάνοις ἀνύουσα τὰ κατὰ γνώμην), whereas Aphrodite concludes that the object of Sappho's emotions will submit to her, even against his will (κωὐκ ἐθέλοισα), thus fulfilling, *mutatis mutandis*, Sappho's will.

Other lexical parallels enhance the impression of the compatibility of these two passages. For instance, the desire of both authors to emphasise the repeatability of the situations encountered by both heroines can be clearly seen. It is for this purpose that Sappho employs the form of the adverb αὖτε 'again, once more' (lines 15, 16, 18) (δηὖτε resulting from the merger with the emphatic particle δή)[22]. A similar context can be found in the words of the poetic persona addressed to the goddess (line 25), asking her to also come with help now – καὶ νῦν. Based on both premises, a conclusion may be implied that this is not an isolated situation. Helidoros achieves a similar effect through the use of the attributes νέον ἢ καινόν to modify the verb πάθος (a new and other emotion) and the adverbs: πάλιν, when Kybele asks who raised Arsake's interest at first sight, and πολλάκις, when she brings up the argument of often being able to deal with similar situations. Confirmation of this aspect of multiplicity is found in the response subsequently given by the heroine (VII 10, 1). Stating that she had been hurt as never before (ὡς οὔπω πρότερον), Arsake expresses her doubts regarding Kybele's ability to provide help that would be as effective as it had been in many similar situations from the past (πολλὰ δὴ πρὸς σοῦ καὶ πολλάκις εὖ παθοῦσα ἐν ὁμοίαις ταῖς χρείαις).

The multiplicity of personal and possessive pronouns found in these short passages also seems not to be coincidental. The forms of the pronoun σύ (σε) and of the possessive pronoun σός (σήν and σόν) are used twice by Kybele. Moreover, to emphasise the bond between her and Arsake, the forms of the possessive pronoun ἐμός (τὴν ἐμὴν [...] τροφίμην; γλυκύτατον ἐμοὶ παιδίον) occur twice. Finally, the possessive pronoun ἡμέτερος (ἡμετέροις θελγήτροις) is introduced to highlight common interests and activities.

---

[20] Burnett (1983: 254 f.) points to the similarity between Sappho's language and the formulas of magic papyri, quoting previous findings on this subject. See also Danielewicz 1999: 124 f. and Zieliński 2006: 212–216, particularly the discussion of the theses by Petropulos (1993).

[21] Similar statements are made, for instance, by Burnett (1983: 255): "Her magic, after all, is a heightened form of persuasion".

[22] See Danielewicz 1999: 131 f.

In Sappho's poem the situation proves to be more complex due to the strategy of using reported and direct speech discussed above. The assignment of pronouns to the poetic persona or the goddess respectively is not as obvious as in the case of the heroines in the passage from Heliodorus' novel. The fact that the forms of the pronoun ἐγώ, used three times, apply to Sappho (μοι – lines 17, 25, 26) does not mean that the forms with the meaning "you" or "your" should refer to the goddess. On the contrary, the forms of the personal pronoun σύ and of the possessive pronoun σός were once again used twice with reference to the poetic persona (σάν, σέ – line 19), and only the form σύ in line 27 points to Aphrodite.

The pronouns frequently used in both texts (seven times in Heliodorus and six times in Sappho) undoubtedly emphasise the bond between the heroines. The way these pronouns are employed by the authors, however, makes it possible to point at subtle differences between the relationships under discussion. Kybele's statement is entirely focused on Arsake, whereas in Sappho's poem there is more partnership in the relationships between the heroines. This is due to the fact that these pronouns emphasise the significance of Aphrodite's actions (σὺ δ'αὔτα/ σύμμαχος ἔσσο – lines 27 f.) as well as the causal nature of the emotional state and desires of the poetic persona.

To conclude this part of the analysis, one should also note that on the syntactic level both passages feature similar rhythm. As stated previously, it is defined by interrogative sentences that prevail in the structure of the first part of these statements, followed by imperative sentences supplemented with the forms of vocatives. In the Aphrodite hymn, imperative forms can be found five times, with three of them occurring in the last stanza: ἔλθε (line 25), τέλεσον (line 27) and ἔσσο (line 28). In this passage there is also a vocative ὦ Ψάπφ' (lines 19 f.). It is also worth noting that in the previous lines the forms of the vocative addressed to the goddess appear three times (lines 1, 2, 3).

In the passage from Heliodorus, as in Sappho's poem, three command forms can be found: the verb ἔξειπε is used twice and we also come across the phrase οὐκ ἂν φθάνοις, whose function can also be attributed to that of an attenuated command. This is accompanied by two forms of the vocative, both referring to Arsake: ὦ δέσποινα, ὦ γλυκύτατον ἐμοὶ παιδίον.

It seems that it is the imperative and exclamatory phrases that contribute to the pleading-beseeching tone shared by both passages. As regards Sappho's poem, this tone appears to be natural. This is due to the fact that the context constituting the background for the entire work is that of a prayer. Though formally sophisticated and incorporating nonreligious content (focused on the poetic persona), the structure of the prayer is fully compliant with that of a religious plea to the gods known from the oldest examples surviving in the text of the *Illiad*[23]. The scene from the *Aithiopika*,

[23] See a comparative analysis of Sappho's song with the passages of the *Iliad*: Diomedes' prayer to Athena, V 115–120 (Cameron 1939: 3; cf. comments by Danielewicz 1999: 123 and

devoid of any religious connotations, also resembles a prayer (as suggested by the aforementioned analogies)[24]. Consequently, the events taking place in the palace bedroom appear to be deeply ironic.

The essence of Heliodorus' strategy involves the shift and the division of the traits and competences of Aphrodite (from Sappho's poem) between the heroines of the novel, with an almost complete elimination of the functions of the poetic persona. This is not clear when looking only from the communicative perspective, since the sender–receiver situation is similar in both cases: Aphrodite and Kybele ask questions and describe the entire situation, whereas Sappho and Arsake remain silent for a while as they are overcome with suffering from unrequited passion. Upon closer analysis, the parallel perception of Arsake and Sappho is superficial, as Arsake manifests definite autonomy in comparison with the traits of the heroine of Sappho's poem. In the context of the entire work, her role is confined to the act of calling and pleading for help from the goddess, who can possibly fulfill Sappho's will at her own discretion (ὅσσα δὲ μοι τέλεσσαι/ θῦμος ἰμέρρει, τέλεσον; lines 26 f.), and assume the role of an ally standing by her side (σὺ δ'αὔτα/ σύμμαχος ἔσσο; lines 27 f.). The situation of the poetic persona is therefore strictly defined. Confined to suffering, Sappho is hurt and remains passive. Although Sappho expresses her will, it is the goddess who is totally in control and able to act effectively.

Arsake, just like Sappho, suffers, and the suffering is the only element that both protagonists share. Unlike her lyrical counterpart, Arsake does not ask for help, but she is the target of Kybele's pleas. Feeling desire, she is also the only person who can satisfy this emotion, while the nurse only makes efforts to convince Arsake to use her own powers. In Sappho's world, on the other hand, the *sine qua non* condition for the fulfillment of the desires expressed by the poetic persona are Aprodite's activities and the power she possesses. The Persian ruler, in the context of the passage under analysis, is definitely the highest authority and relieving her love pain can only be achieved through her will and activity. However, it is not only the possession of causal powers that makes Arsake similar to Aphrodite. Following the description provided by the old nurse, Arsake can be attributed with two basic areas of domination

---

Zieliński 2006: 201) and Achilles' prayer to Thetis, I 352 ff. (Krischer 1968: 12–14; cf. comments by Danielewicz 1999: 123 and Zieliński 2006: 219).

[24] Kybele's statements, in the same way as the statements in Sappho's poem, feature a framework arrangement of exclamatory-imperative forms: the statement begins with the invocatory ὦ δέσποινα, whereas in the final part, related to the plea, we find the following imperative forms: ἔξειπε and οὐκ ἂν φθάνοις. One can venture an opinion that, to a certain extent, the entire statement made by Kybele is constructed in accordance with the scheme of a prayer. This is due to the fact that the use of interrogative phrases in the middle of a sentence can be regarded as a kind of a sanction combined with *hypomnesia*. They indirectly evoke the argument of erotic *dike* – the type of justice which requires the object of affection to accept the offered favours (τίς οὕτως ἀλαζὼν καὶ ἔκφρων ὡς τοῦ κατὰ σὲ τοσούτου κάλλους μὴ ἡττῆσθαι μηδὲ εὐδαιμονίαν ἡγεῖσθαι τὴν σὴν ἐράσμιον ὁμιλίαν). *Hypomnesia* is embodied by suggestions found in the expressions: νέον ἢ καινὸν πάθος, πάλιν and πολλάκις, indicating the repeatability of this type of past love experience.

inseparably related to the goddess: beauty and erotic passion (τίς οὕτως ἀλαζὼν καὶ ἔκφρων ὡς τοῦ κατὰ σὲ τοσούτου κάλλους μὴ ἡττῆσθαι μηδὲ εὐδαιμονίαν ἡγεῖσθαι τὴν σὴν ἐράσμιον ὁμιλίαν).

Thus Heliodorus, adapting the formal style of the passage under discussion from Book 7, provokes the reader to recall the work by Sappho, while reversing the traits and competences of the protagonists. He also abandons the effect of self-ironic distance, which was so spectacularly created by Sappho[25]. Arsake is presented as an imposter of the rank which is attributed to Aphrodite in the poet's song. We are witnessing an attempt to assign a superior role to Arsake in matters of love and beauty. This also applies to the ability to achieve absolute effectiveness with regard to objectives of erotic passion. Travestying the words from Sappho's work, it could be said that Kybele asks Arsake for her to "stand on her own side and be an ally to herself".

Given the context of the communicative system, Kybele plays a role seemingly similar to the function of the poetic persona in the Aphrodite hymn, as she is the person requesting Arsake's help, just as Sappho addresses her pleas to the goddess. However, the newly discovered analogy is deconstructed by the request, thus associating the nurse with Aphrodite. It is Kybele, just like Aphrodite, who asks questions regarding the object of passion and she is convinced, to the same extent, about the effectiveness of possible actions. She openly talks about what is suggested in the statement made by the goddess – the use of love magic. Besides Arsake, the old nurse also somehow "becomes" Aphrodite. However, because of her insistence on the immediate fulfillment of a sexual desire, her role is reduced to that of a procurer, a caricature of the goddess. Thus the motivation of both heroines in Heliodorus' novel is brutally revealed.

This distribution of the functions of the goddess between Arsake and Kybele seems significant enough to be regarded as an interpretive factor – an indicator defining the perspective of the intertextual relationship created by Heliodorus. The reader, who can perceive the allusiveness of the scene in Arsake's bedroom, realises that it is in fact a kind of a distorting mirror for the images and the content found in Sappho's poems. The image of Aphrodite created by Sappho and reflected in this mirror becomes the image of a proud ruler and her accomplice, the procurer, both totally subjected to passion. The outlined caricature is so distinct that consequently both situations can be viewed as opposites. The religious affirmation of divine power, clearly traceable in Sappho's work despite its literary sophistication[26], is contrasted with the prideful belief in the absolute power of will and beauty of the barbarian ruler.

---

[25] Danielewicz 1999: 123.

[26] The complexity of Sappho's songs is convincingly discussed by Burnett (1983: 246): "though it is not an implement of cult, neither is this a purely secular song; instead it is a thing rare among the Greeks, the poetic expression of a personal religious faith".

Taking into account the above conclusions, at least three functions of the analysed intertextual relationship can be identified. Undoubtedly, the negative traits attributed to Arsake, who is a conventional oppositionist for the protagonist in this context, are enhanced[27]. The intertextual relationship also plays a significant role in the broader ideological perspective of Heliodorus' novel. It manifests a clear cultural opposition found in the *Aithiopika* between the barbaric element, with the Persians as its primary embodiment, and the world of Hellenic values ultimately represented by both protagonists[28]. Thirdly, and most importantly, creating the impression of Arsake's divine omnipotence is not insignificant for the reader and the reader's assessment of the situation encountered by the protagonists. The fact that the heroine is immoral, and at the same time almost as powerful as the goddess, undoubtedly makes the situation more dangerous. Consequently, the threat for Charikleia and Theagenes is further exacerbated. Given the above facts, one should thus conclude that Heliodorus uses the intertextual reference as a sophisticated way to create tension and affect the reader's emotions.

It is time to return to the issues mentioned at the beginning of this discussion. We shall consider the role of this intertextual relationship in the broader intertextual system in the *Aithiopika*. This system also includes the story of Demainete in the first book of the *Aithiopika* and the tragedy by Euripides. Of particular interest are the conclusions reached by John Morgan from the analysis of the semantic potential of the Demainete – Arsake – Phaedra system. Morgan (1989:

---

[27] For instance, Haynes (2003: 112) emphasises that Arsake's lack of rationality and the force of her passion translate into a loss of self-control. This is in sharp contrast with the exceptional composure manifested by Charikleia. The opposition of the protagonist and the antagonist is in line with the classification of female characters in Greek novels suggested by Johne (2003: 172). She distinguished four categories of women characters: protagonists, antagonists, close friends, and mothers; similarly Egger (1988: 45). Also Haynes (2003) adopts this classification with minor modifications and views it as one of the ordering criteria for the entire discussion.

[28] Despite the apparent obviousness, the problem of the opposition between the barbarians and the Hellenes, and consequently the meaning of Hellenism in Heliodorus, is undoubtedly more complex. The approach presented by scholars can often be radically different. For instance, Swain (1996: 118), in the analysis of the *Aithiopika*, identifies the traditional, ethnocentric dividing line between "us" and "them", the Greeks and the barbarians. On the other hand, Bowersock (1995: 49 and 53) states the following: "we see the traditional opposition of Greek and barbarian brilliantly turned upside down in the *Aethiopica*" and: "The old standard of Hellenism broke down in the second and third centuries, and in doing so it made way for a new kind of Hellenism, an ecumenical Hellenism that could actually embrace much that was formerly barbaric. Heliodorus is a memorable example of this". Whitmarsh (1998: 124), in turn, adopts a totally different perspective in the analysis of the problem of the "genealogy of Hellenism", placing it in the broad context of various "corrupted" genealogies found in Heliodorus. Focusing on the literary implications of this phenomenon, it is perceived first and foremost as the author's desire to reconfigure and refresh the literary tradition. Despite deep controversies, there is no doubt that, among several nations that appear in the *Aithiopika*, it is the Persians who are in cultural contrast to the Greeks. As rightly noted by Haynes (2003: 140), this contrast is always particularly visible in the case of female characters, this time in Arsake.

112) concludes that the role of the Phaedra motif (and Phaedra is a model character for both of Heliodorus' heroines) is to invite the reader to make a link between both episodes of the *Aithiopika*. However, the aim of this comparison is to create positive anticipation of the dangerous adventure in Arsake's palace. Thus the reader can be confident that, just as in the case of Knemon, the protagonists will also avoid dangers and evil will be punished[29]. The intertextual relationship interpreted in this way would thus provide a positive, emotional counterweight to the tension and uncertainty resulting from the plot getting more complicated. The revealed Sapphic reminiscences yet introduce a new aspect to these deliberations. One can clearly see the emotional dissonance of the reader, who, through the interpretation of the intertextual scheme, becomes entangled in two radically different suggestions for the development of the plot. On the one hand, a happy ending to the adventure in Arsake's palace is suggested by the analogies to the story of Demainete and Knemon. On the other hand, the awareness of the almost divine power of the Persian ruler suggested by the allusions to Sappho's poem channels the reader's emotions in a completely different direction and emphasises the seriousness of the threat and uncertainty as to the happy ending of the story. Taking into account references to the Aphrodite hymn thus leads us to a different conclusion than the one formulated by Morgan. Due to the intertextual relations, the reader is forced, despite the expectations arising from the nature of the genre, to doubt the positive variant of the development of the plot and to admit the possibility of further serious complications, or even the death of one of the protagonists[30]. Thus the novelist implements tactics which keep the reader in a state of permanent tension and uncertainty. The intertextual scheme, instead of calming the reader's emotions down, rather intensifies them.

PROBLEMATISING LOVE

It seems, however, that the scope of the system of references discussed above is even broader, and the premises for its determination are deeply grounded in the ideological scheme. By comparing the story of Demainete, Arsake, Phaedra and Sappho at the same level, we gain a perspective from which the issue of problematising love becomes evident, and the reader is encouraged to a deeper reflection on this problem.

This assumption could be regarded as paradoxical given the fact that the *Aithiopika* is considered as a type of a Greek novel in which explicit erotic

---

[29] Morgan 1989: 107.

[30] The likelihood of the death of the protagonists plays a significant role in the plot of most novels, and it also serves to generate tension and to keep the reader's attention. Undoubtedly, Achilles Tatius is a master in this respect, as he does all he can to make the next "deadly" adventures of his protagonist most probable.

content is one of the factors that define the genre[31]. For this reason, constructing a complex system of intertextual references to further emphasise the obvious, main theme of the story, would constitute thematic redundancy. In such a situation, the role of the intertextual scheme would be limited exclusively to an aesthetic literary game for the educated audience. Upon closer reflection it may be concluded that the possible impression of redundancy in Heliodorus' presentation of love by Heliodorus is due to the reader's presuppositions shaped by literary experience rather than the actual techniques employed by the author. When analysing the scope and function of the love theme in the *Aithiopika*, one must conclude that it is surprisingly limited. This type of thesis, though mentioned previously[32], has not yet been fully investigated in the literature on the subject. Consequently, at least several premises have to be presented in its support.

The love theme is definitely not the most important tool for organising the plot and generating tension. This is mainly evidenced by the significant disparity between the scope of the use of the theme under discussion in individual parts of the novel. Love can be regarded as an important theme for the construction of the plot only in the first five books. Here the story of the meeting and falling in love of the protagonists is presented *ex post* and several situations pose a real threat to the stability of the relationship between Charikleia and Theagenes. However, these soon come to a positive solution. Consequently, the reader's attention focuses on a totally different issue: the main mystery is not whether and when the protagonists will overcome the threats to their love, but how the story will emerge from the maze of additional narrations with a similar theme. The author creates a complex web of intermingling stories. The themes that utterly involve the reader also include: the story of Knemon and Kalasiris, supplemented with smaller narratives about the sad fate of Charikles, love's vicissitudes of Nausikles and Thisbe, and finally the story of Thyamis. Although each of these stories features a love theme, it is clearly marginalised due to the

---

[31] When it comes to formulating a more precise definition of the genre, which includes Heliodorus' novel, we are faced with a terminological *varietas*. Depending on the adopted assumptions, the *Aithiopika* is most frequently classified as an idealising novel – *idealisierender Roman* (as opposed to the comic-realistic novel); see, for instance, Holzberg (2006), although other classifications can also be found. Whitmarsh (2011: 1, n. 1), instead of classifying novels into idealising and comic-realistic ones, introduces the distinction between a romance and a novel. According to the latter concept, Heliodorus' text should be classified as a *romance*, defined as "heterosexual erotic narratives of travel and return", although at the same time it belongs to a broader category of ancient *novel*, also including works that are not focused on erotic themes. Regardless of the approach adopted, scholars emphasise the constitutive significance of the love story for building the action and the ideological message of this type of works; see, for instance, Anderson (1982: 7): "But it is the pair of lovers which forms the central focus of the ideal novels".

[32] This fact is sometimes admitted by scholars in a general way. For instance, Anderson (1982: 37) states that in the *Aithiopika* one finds very little room for the conventional love *topoi* and that Heliodorus is interested in so many other things, thus leaving very few options for *artes amatoriae* available.

aforementioned formal solutions. The reader is effectively distracted by the accumulation of internal narrations, which are used for the consistent delaying of the plot related to the protagonists. In turn, the reader's attention is shifted to the aforementioned reconstruction of the fate of the main characters, particularly to that of the female protagonist[33]. It is only in the final part of Book Five that the process can be regarded as complete.

In Books Six through Nine, the love theme plays an even smaller role. It appears only twice: in the context of Arsake's passion for Theagenes (and Achaimenes' love for Charikleia) and for a short time in the final part of the novel, when her real father, the king of the Ethiopians Hydaspes, has to accept her beloved one. The major part of Book Eight and the entire Book Nine must be viewed as totally independent of the love story.

This surprising "economy", which points to the inferior role of the erotic motif, becomes clearer when we compare the *Aithiopika* with other novels. In the works of Chariton, Xenophon, Longus and Achilles Tatius, the emotions of protagonists constitute the starting point and the target of the plot, and all of the presented content is clearly related to the prevailing love theme. In the first three of the aforementioned texts, the story of the protagonists' emotions not only provides the narrative framework for the entire text, but there is also a clear gradation of its significance in comparison to similar stories related to the secondary characters. The role of the latter stories is definitely episodic. Only in the case of the *Leukippe and Kleitophon* does the author play a sophisticated game with the reader: the protagonist is absent for a longer period of time, which suggests the possibility of her death and consequently the introduction of a new heroine[34]. Much as the plot is complicated, the reader of Tatius' work is not even for a moment in doubt that love is the main organising theme for the entire novel: as such it is problematised *expressis verbis* in the very introduction (I 2, 1–3). Moreover, all of the theoretical deliberations are devoted to this issue, and it is the driving force for the plot and the fundamental reference point for all the actions undertaken by the protagonists. Heliodorus' conscious desire to reduce tension around the love theme is also evidenced by other measures. The author suggests his plan in a direct manner, by excluding deities related to the love theme from the plot: Eros and Aphrodite[35], who are replaced by the trinity

---

[33] The problem of an unambiguous classification of Charikleia and Theagenes as protagonists, encountered by the reader, is also noted by Morgan (1989: 103): "...the reader, passionate for meaning, is less concerned with how the story of Theagenes and Charikleia will end than with how it began, or even who they are". According to the scholar, this effect is fully controlled by the author, whose aim is to sustain the reader's uncertainty and confusion; for this topic, see also Cieśluk 2012a: 326–329.

[34] For the suggestion implied in Tatius' novel that Leukippe can be replaced by the young widow Melite, see Haynes 2003: 104; Whitmarsh 2011: 164; Cieśluk 2012b: 47–53.

[35] Aphrodite and Eros are mentioned only at the beginning of Charikleia and Theagenes' love story, when the heroine's foster father, Charikles, is worried about his daughter: "But Eros and

of Apollo – Isis – Helios[36]. Equally importantly, any possible ethical dilemmas the reader may have related to the evaluation of love passion and the possibility of its inclusion into the practice of social life are quickly dispelled. He uses the character of a wise priest, Kalasiris, for this purpose. Calming down Charikleia, who is terrified by her condition, he assures her that all the dangers that love passion may entail can be channeled through marriage (IV 10, 6). Given this assumption and the heroic character of the protagonists, which is clear from the very outset, the reader is reassured that Charikleia and Theagenes will not give in to their passion prematurely. Consequently, they will remain faithful to each other even if the price is their lives, regardless of the threats that may stand in their way from time to time[37]. However, in other novels, for instance those by Longus and Achilles Tatius, the love theme provides for the possibility of an intense game with social norms. According to these norms, girls are expected to maintain premarital chastity, while men must achieve and deepen their emotional self-control. The reader of these novels follows the subsequent adventures with anxiety and growing curiosity remaining, for the major part of the plot, intrigued as to the behaviour of the protagonists when exposed to erotic pressure. Another ethical dilemma was created with regard to the fate of Callirhoe – a heroine of Chariton's novel, who unintentionally became engaged in a double marriage. It is for the reader to assess whether the decision made by the heroine to choose the young, impetuous first husband instead of the other one – the stable and positively characterised Dionysius – was right. A reader of Heliodorus' novel is completely unfamiliar with any such dilemmas.

Another premise which points to the marginal character of the love theme is the exceptionally superficial treatment of the motif of the protagonists' separation. Charikleia and Theagenes experience most of their adventures together, and they are separated only for a few days. The author only suggests the possibility of long-term separation when Charikleia receives a message about plans to send Theagenes to Persia to the court of the Great King. It seems that this information can be regarded rather as a kind of indirect message on the part of the writer to emphasise his awareness of the applicable literary convention. However, the writer is clearly not

---

Aphrodite and all nuptial revelry she curses to damnation" (II 33, 5); in another section Kalasiris explains to Charikleia that "Love is the greatest of the gods, and stories are told that on occasion he masters even gods" (IV 10, 5); finally Charikleia demands an oath from Theagenes that during the journey he will respect her virginity – the hero takes an oath "by Pythian Apollo, by Artemis, by Aphrodite herself and her Erotes" (IV 18, 5 f.). In the further part of the adventures of the pair the two deities, typical of the novel, no longer play any role; see Alperowitz 1992: 36–38; Polaszek 1998: 146–149; Cieśluk 2008: 164.

[36] Undoubtedly, the role of Helios in the *Aithiopika* is privileged; Heliodorus' strategy, which significantly expands the powers of the sun god, is discussed in detail by Altheim (1942: 13–20); see also Cieśluk 2008: 161–167.

[37] In the same fashion, see Morgan 1989: 108.

interested in putting his protagonists and their love to the test. This is evidenced by the fact that no such situation ever occurs during their separation. A certain analogy to such a solution can only be found in the novel by Longus. Due to the pastoral nature of the novel, the theme of the journey was avoided and thus the fictional role of the separation motif was reduced to the minimum. However, Longus finds his own way to maintain tension around the love theme. Absolutely oblivious to the matters reserved for Aphrodite, the protagonists, with their desires and ignorance, are the primary threat to the moral and ethical order of the world depicted in the novel[38]. In Chariton, Xenophon, and Tatius long-term separation provides for multiple, potentially limitless multiplications of danger, which both protagonists have to face on their own. The final reunion of the couple defines the actual end of their adventures and the entire novel[39].

Thus, the different way in which the love theme is used, indicating its partial marginalisation, should not go unnoticed by the reader of the *Aithiopika*. The love theme is absent from large parts of the text. Whenever Heliodorus focuses on this issue, he avoids creating more profound, long-term tension. This should be considered as a result of well-thought through tactics. It is a kind of suggestion for the reader to view the *Aithiopika* as a literary riddle, with the conventional love theme probably playing an instrumental role. Its role may be to highlight the aesthetic and formal qualities of the text, as well as to provoke the reader to consider other themes, outside the convention of the genre, which could function as "non-erotic" content[40].

This conclusion seems to be in contrast with that reached by John Morgan (1989: 112). Having thoroughly analysed the issue of eroticism in Heliodorus' novel, Morgan concludes that love, presented from a broad philosophical and ethical perspective, is the essence of the text under discussion. In fact, what remains arguable is whether love is the main object of interest for the author of the novel, as suggested by Morgan. It may also be argued that, in line with

---

[38] It should be emphasised that the ignorance and the funny erotic indolence of Daphnis and Chloe were used by the writer not only in the negative context (as a threat); paradoxically, it proved to be beneficial: it protected the protagonists against premature "initiation into the mysteries of Aphrodite", which allowed for the preservation of the main ethical and social pillars of the world presented in Longus' novel; see Cieśluk 2010: 47.

[39] The discussed scheme is fully consistent with the concept of the Greek novel formulated by Mikhail Bakhtin. He defines the texts under discussion as adventure novels of ordeal. Here the function of an organising factor is attributed to the motif of the ordeal, both in terms of the composition and the ideology. This ordeal primarily refers to the virtues and mutual fidelity of the protagonists, while the love theme becomes the axis for the main plot of the novel; see Bakhtin 1981: 87 ff. Adopting this perspective, the uniqueness of the *Aithiopika* is even more clearly emphasised. As has been mentioned previously, two themes are treated marginally by Heliodorus: love and the accompanying ordeal.

[40] This approach is shared by many scholars of Heliodorus, as they identify and reflect upon various issues (for instance, philosophical issues: Sandy 1982b; Dowden 1996; religious or political and religious aspects: Merkelbach 1962; Altheim 1942).

the analysis presented there, its aim is to focus the reader's attention on some other issues. However, it is indisputable that Helidoros presents love in a more profound and original way than his predecessors, for instance, through the use of intertextual references for this purpose.

One may conclude that the erotic theme in the *Aithiopika* is exploited in a surprisingly limited manner. Having reached such a conclusion in view of the aforementioned intertextual context of interpretation, the tactics used by Heliodorus may seem a kind of a paradox (this term in many respects defines the literary world of the *Aithiopika*). In fact, the love theme is only seemingly marginalised. Although the author minimises the role of the love theme in the plot, the meticulous scheme of intertextual references is governed by this very theme. Aphrodite, who is absent from the novel, is introduced through the "back door" by references to the leading, active role played by the goddess in Euripides' tragedy and Sappho's poem. It should be emphasised that the verb "introduce" used above may be understood literally. In fact, in both of the aforementioned works the goddess appears not only as a theme, but directly as a character[41]. Her role is that of an acting subject, an actual holder of the irresistible, omnipotent power, which is the source of unbearable suffering for the women having a love experience. Thus Aphrodite and the issues related to her are shifted by the author from the level of the plot to the level of aesthetic reflection. This is aimed at provoking the reader, in an explicit and sophisticated manner, to problematise the issue of love. The reader should do it independently, through the identification and contemplation of references to works from the literary canon.

In conclusion, it must be noted that the love theme is deprived of its primary role due to its partial exclusion from the plot. However, this does not mean that its role is drastically diminished in the ideological scheme of the text. On the contrary, it seems that this was employed to make the love theme a discursive issue. By gradually discovering the intertextual relations, an educated reader no longer focuses exclusively on the plot of the novel. The reader is inspired to further investigate the unconventional treatment of such a conventional theme.

Intertextuality proves to be an important element in Heliodorus' novel, both at the formal and ideological levels. As demonstrated in the first part of this discussion, references to Euripides' tragedy and Sappho's poem, viewed from the perspective of the relation between the text and the reader, enhance the reader's involvement. This is due to the emotional dissonance generated by uncertainty as to the development of the plot and the fate of the protagonists. Having analysed the topic of the love theme, it may be concluded that the aim of the scheme of intertextual references is to supplement the issue of eroticism. Moreover, it may even reveal its meaning in a broader context. Intertextuality perceived in this

[41] A synthetic discussion on the nature of the epiphany of Aphrodite in Sappho's poem is presented by Danielewicz (1999: 124).

way perfectly blends into the wealth of techniques[42] employed by Heliodorus to motivate the reader to consider various topics, including those outside the erotic themes. Ken Dowden clearly states that readers of Heliodorus' novels are "speculators about the reasons of things"[43]. This comment, made by the scholar in the context of the philosophical and religious implications of the *Aithiopika*, perfectly defines the general image of the reader postulated by the writer.

University of Szczecin

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Alperowitz 1992: M. Alperowitz, *Das Wirken und Walten der Götter im griechischen Roman*, Heidelberg 1992.

Altheim 1942: F. Altheim, *Helios und Heliodor von Emesa*, Amsterdam–Leipzig 1942.

Anderson 1982: G. Anderson, *Eros Sophistes: Ancient Novelists at Play*, Chico 1982.

Bakhtin 1981: M. Bakhtin, *Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel*, in: idem, *The Dialogic Imagination: Four Essays*, transl. by C. Emerson, M. Holquist, ed. by M. Holquist, Austin 1981, pp. 84–258.

Bartsch 1989: S. Bartsch, *Decoding the Ancient Novel: The Reader and the Role of Description in Heliodorus and Achilles Tatius*, Oxford 1989.

Bowersock 1995: G.W. Bowersock, *Fiction as History. Nero to Julian*, Berkeley 1995.

Burnett 1983: A.P. Burnett, *Three Archaic Poets: Archilochus, Alcaeus, Sappho*, London 1983.

Cameron 1939: A. Cameron, *Sappho's Prayer to Aphrodite*, HThR XXXII 1939, pp. 1–17.

Cieśluk 2008: M. Cieśluk, *Bohater i gra przeznaczenia w "Opowieści etiopskiej" Heliodora*, Szczecin 2008.

———— 2010: M. Cieśluk, *Komizm w teorii i praktyce antycznej powieści greckiej*, SPhP XX 2010, 2, pp. 39–53.

———— 2012a: M. Cieśluk, *The Reader in the "Comedy of Errors" of the Ancient Greek Novel*, Eos XCIX 2012, pp. 309–335.

———— 2012b: M. Cieśluk, *Melite, czyli apologia kobiecości w "Opowieści o Leukippe i Klejtofoncie" Achilleusa Tatiosa*, RoczHum LX 2012, 3, pp. 35–63.

Danielewicz 1999: J. Danielewicz, *Liryka grecka*, vol. II: *Melika*, Poznań 1999.

Doulamis 2011: K. Doulamis, *Introduction*, in: idem (ed.), *Echoing Narratives: Studies of Intertextuality in Greek and Roman Prose Fiction*, Groningen 2011, pp. VII–XV.

Dowden 1996: K. Dowden, *Heliodorus: Serious Intentions*, CQ XLVI 1996, pp. 267–285.

---

[42] It may be assumed that the tendency to provide an alternative explanation of the observed phenomena is, for instance, of a similar type; for this topic, see an exhaustive account by Morgan 1982: 229; also Winkler 1982: 122; Dowden 1996: 276 f.; Sandy 1982a: 188. Bartsch (1989: 47) discussed the "hermeneutic activity" in Heliodorus. Anderson (1982: 39) emphasises the significance of the ambiguity in the text by Heliodorus: "sophisticated equivocation is an essential part of his literary texture", noting at the same time: "And he is more interested in contriving his equivocations than in resolving them". Morgan (1988: 99) claims that the author stimulates his reader to consider and understand facts by shifting from the proairetic to the hermeneutic mode of narration.

[43] Dowden 1996: 276. The scholar notices, however, that Heliodorus provides for yet another image of his readers. Those are the readers whose reactions are anticipated by the internal reactions of the audience following, for instance, the events taking place in Meroe in the final part of novel. Dowden defines them as simple and direct, stemming from the limited awareness of a wider process that can be identified in Heliodorus' work; for this topic, see also Bartsch 1989: 79.

Dworacki 2000: S. Dworacki (transl., comm.), Heliodor, *Opowieść etiopska o Theagenesie i Chariklei*, Poznań 2000.
Eco 2002: U. Eco, *Sulla letteratura*, Milano 2002.
Effe 1975: B. Effe, *Entstehung und Funktion "personaler" Erzählweisen in der Erzähllliteratur der Antike*, Poetica VII 1975, pp. 135–157.
Egger 1998: B. Egger, *Zu den Frauenrollen im griechischen Roman. Die Frau als Heldin und Leserin*, in: Hofmann 1998, pp. 33–65.
Głowiński 1992: M. Głowiński, *Poetyka i okolice*, Warszawa 1992.
Haynes 2003: K. Haynes, *Fashioning the Feminine in the Greek Novel*, London–New York 2003.
Hägg 2004: T. Hägg, *Orality, Literacy, and the "Readership" of the Early Greek Novel*, in: L.B. Mortensen, T. Eide (eds.) *Parthenope. Studies in Ancient Greek Fiction (1969–2004)*, Copenhagen 2004, pp. 109–140.
Hofmann 1998: H. Hofmann (ed.), *Groningen Colloquia on the Novel*, vol. I, Groningen 1998.
Holzberg 2006: N. Holzberg, *Der antike Roman. Eine Einührung*, Darmstadt 2006.
Johne 2003: R. Johne, *Women in the Ancient Novel*, in: G. Schmeling (ed.) *The Novel in the Ancient World*, Boston–Leiden 2003, pp. 151–207.
Krischer 1968: T. Krischer, *Sapphos Ode an Aphrodite (Typologische Bemerkungen)*, Hermes XCVI 1968, pp. 1–14.
Merkelbach 1962: R. Merkelbach, *Roman und Mysterium in der Antike*, München 1962.
Morgan 1982: J.R. Morgan, *History, Romance, and Realism in the Aithiopika of Heliodoros*, ClAnt I 1982, pp. 221–265.
———— 1989: J.R. Morgan, *The Story of Knemon in Heliodoros' "Aithiopika"*, JHS CIX 1989, pp. 99–113.
Morgan, Harrison 2008: J.R. Morgan, S. Harrison, *Intertextuality*, in: T. Whitmarsh (ed.), *The Cambridge Companion to the Greek and Roman Novel*, Cambridge 2008, pp. 218–236.
Paulsen 1992: T. Paulsen, *Inszenierung des Schicksals. Tragödie und Komödie im Roman des Heliodor*, Trier 1992.
Perry 1967: B.E. Perry, *The Ancient Romances. A Literary-Historical Account of their Origins*, Berkeley–Los Angeles 1967.
Petropoulos 1993: J.C.B. Petropoulos, *Sappho the Sorceress – Another Look at Fr. 1 (LP)*, ZPE XCVII 1993, pp. 43–56.
Pippin Burnett 1983: A. Pippin Burnett, *Three Archaic Poets: Archilochus, Alcaeus, Sappho*, London 1983.
Polaszek 1998: E. Polaszek, *Realizm i fantastyka w starożytnej powieści greckiej*, Kraków 1998.
Sandy 1982a: G.N. Sandy, *Heliodorus*, Boston 1982.
———— 1982b: G.N. Sandy, *Characterization and Philosophical Decor in Heliodorus' "Aethiopica"*, TAPhA CXII 1982, pp. 141–167.
Swain 1996: S. Swain, *Hellenism and Empire: Language, Classicism and Power in the Greek world, AD 50–250*, Oxford 1996.
Szastyńska-Siemion 1993: A. Szastyńska-Siemion, *Muza z Mityleny. Safona*, Wrocław 1993.
Wesseling 1998: B. Wesseling, *The Audience of the Ancient Novels*, in: Hofmann 1998, pp. 67–79.
Whitmarsh 1998: T. Whitmarsh, *The Birth of a Prodigy: Heliodorus and the Genealogy of Hellenism*, in: R. Hunter (ed.), *Studies in Heliodorus*, Cambridge 1998, pp. 93–124.
———— 2011: T. Whitmarsh, *Narrative and Identity in the Ancient Greek Novel: Returning Romance*, Cambridge 2011.
Winkler 1982: J.J. Winkler, *The Mendacity of Kalasiris and the Narrative Strategy of Heliodoros' Aithiopika*, YClS XXVII 1982, pp. 93–158.
Wypustek 2001: A. Wypustek, *Magia antyczna*, Wrocław 2001.
Zanetto 2014: G. Zanetto, *Greek Novel and Greek Archaic Literature*, in: E. Cueva, S.N. Byrne (eds.), *A Companion to the Ancient Novel*, Malden 2014, pp. 400–410.
Zieliński 2006: K. Zieliński, *Słońce w rozpaczy. Liryka miłosna Safony w aspekcie oralności*, Wrocław 2006.