CHAPTER THIRTY

HELIODORUS

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The length, complexity and technical innovation of Heliodorus' novel make a complete analysis of his treatment of time impossible within the compass of a chapter of this length.¹ What follows is unavoidably partial and selective.

The narration is subsequent. The narrator occasionally writes in the present tense, for instance when giving details of the construction of the armour worn by Persian cataphracts or of the geography of Ethiopia,² but there is no further precision about the supposed date of narration. The dramatic date of the action is established by the inclusion of historical circumstances, but these are not without contradictions. Part of the action depends on the presence of a Persian satrap and his wife in Egypt, which provides a dramatic date between the Persian conquest of Egypt in 525 BCE and the Egyptian campaign of Alexander the Great. This is confirmed by the striking absence of the city of Alexandria from the opening sequences near the mouth of the River Nile. However, the important character Calasiris exiles himself from Memphis after an encounter with the Greek courtesan Rhodopis, who is mentioned by Herodotus in connection with the brother of Sappho, which suggest a date rather earlier in the sixth century BCE.³ Conversely there is a reference to a monument of the Epicureans in Athens, which is several centuries before its time (1.16.5). No recognisable historical events are integrated into the plot, and the action thus cannot be assigned to any particular historical year.

Although Heliodorus does not thematise the passing of the seasons in quite the same way as Longus (→), parts of the plot are nevertheless

¹ A detailed narratological treatment of Heliodorus is offered by Futre Pinheiro 1987; Futre Pinheiro 1998 restates some of her conclusions with special emphasis on time.

² 9.15.1–6; 10.5.1–2.

³ Rhodopis is mentioned at 2.25.1; cf. Hdt. 2.134–135.

dependent on points of the calendar, such as the time of year when navigation is safe; and the events of the military episode in book 9 are carefully synchronised with the annual inundation of the Nile, which is a necessary component of the plot-mechanism.

Order 1: analepsis

The novel is famous for beginning *in medias res*, which results in the most radical separation of fabula and story to be found in any of the Greek novels. Not only are large and important parts of the fabula already in the past when the story begins, to be revealed later through lengthy external completing analepses, mostly actorial but occasionally narratorial; but events within the story itself are often presented anachronically. Again this takes the form of important completing analepses to fill in parts of the plot which have happened, as it were, off-screen, but it is also characteristic of this novel that prolepses of varying range and extension are deployed to guide the narratee's expectations, often in a duplicitous way.

The fabula begins with the conception of the heroine Charicleia in the royal palace of Ethiopia, some eighteen years before the beginning of the story.⁴ Its end-point is provided by one of the novel's prolepses, which looks forward to her passing her life (*sumbiōsetai*) at her beloved's side 'in glorious and royal estate' (6.15.4). The story begins shortly after the protagonists have been shipwrecked near the mouth of the Nile after eloping from Delphi, and concludes just before the celebration of their marriage in the Ethiopian capital Meroe, which is referred to in a future participle in the very last word of the narrative.⁵

Of the parts of the fabula preceding the beginning of the story, Charicleia's conception, birth and exposure are narrated in an embroidered message from her mother Persinna, read by Calasiris and reported by him to Cnemon as an analepsis within an analepsis (4.8.3–6). Her rescue is narrated (in an analepsis within an analepsis within an analepsis) by the Ethiopian ambassador (later identified as the gymnosophist Sisimithres) who hands her over to Charicles in Egypt when she is seven years old; his narrative is reported by Charicles to Calasiris, who reports Charicles' narrative to Cnemon; the whole of this seven years

⁴ 4.8.4. The heroine is seventeen years old at the end of the novel.

⁵ *telesthēsomenōn* (10.41.3).

is narrated, though the period between her rescue and the encounter between the ambassador and Charicles is covered in a single sentence.⁶ The ten-year period from this point until the moment when Charicles tells his story to Calasiris and seeks his help in overcoming his foster-daughter's resistance to marriage is included in Charicles' narrative to Calasiris. Again most of the fabula-time is narrated very quickly.⁷ Finally the much shorter period between Calasiris' first meeting with Charicles and the scene of shipwreck with which the novel begins forms the substance of Calasiris' long and detailed analeptic narrative first to Cnemon alone, and then, in a second instalment, to the company assembled in Nausicles' house.⁸

The previous experiences of the protagonists, however, are not the only parts of the fabula supplied by external completing analepses. It is a feature of Heliodorus' plotting that a number of at first sight unconnected stories turn out to be intimately interwoven and germane to the fabula of the novel. Thus Calasiris tells Cnemon of his own encounter with the Greek courtesan Rhodopis, and his self-imposed exile to avoid sexual temptation, and the prophecy he had received that his two sons would fight one another (2.25.1–6). He initially occludes the first period of his exile, but later reveals to Charicleia that he had visited Ethiopia, met Persinna, and been commissioned to look for her long-lost daughter; in a short doubly inset analepsis Calasiris reports that Persinna told him that she had been searching unsuccessfully for her lost child since its exposure (4.12.1–13.1).⁹

Events in Memphis after Calasiris' disappearance are disclosed gradually. In the first book of the novel, the robber-captain Thyamis reminds his men that he was born the son of the high priest at Memphis, but that the office had been usurped by his younger brother (an actorial completing external analepsis, 1.19.4). When Thyamis' stronghold is attacked by another gang of brigands, there is a narratorial completing analepsis, partly internal, but partly external, explaining that the

⁶ 'So for several years (*ta men oun prōta*) she passed unnoticed, but, as time went by (*tou khronou proiontos*), and she grew into the full blossom of youth, it became clear that her beauty was out of the ordinary' (2.31.3). All translations are from Reardon 1989.

⁷ 'She rapidly acquired Greek; like a vigorous young plant, the bud of her childhood burst rapidly into the flower of youth' (2.33.4).

⁸ 2.24.5–5.1.2; 5.17.1–33.3.

⁹ There are difficulties of interpretation with this part of Calasiris' narrative, which cannot be squared with what he says elsewhere. He may be lying. Cf. *SAGN* 1:534 on this.

attackers have been commissioned by Thyamis' brother, now named for the first time as Petosiris (1.33.2). When Calasiris begins to tell Cnemon his story, he mentions that his elder son is called Thyamis, the first confirmation of the connection between the back-stories of Calasiris and Thyamis (2.25.6). The full story is reserved until the introduction of the Persian princess Arsace, when a long and detailed narratorial external analepsis explains her part in the intrigue: after Calasiris' disappearance she had conceived a passion for Thyamis, which, although unreciprocated, had provided Petosiris with the material to denounce his brother to Arsace's husband, the satrap Oroondates (7.2.1–5). This part of the fabula is thus disclosed more or less in reverse chronological order, the full version being enigmatically withheld until such time as it is necessary for full comprehension of the story.

Charicles tells his own story to Calasiris to explain his presence in Egypt: the death of his daughter in a fire on her wedding-night, and the subsequent death of the mother, drove Charicles to seek solace for his grief in travelling (2.29.2–5). A peculiar further detail is added in his speech to the Delphians after the 'abduction' of Charicleia, which he interprets as a punishment for an incident when he entered the shrine before the proper time and 'beheld that which it is a sin to behold': Apollo had on that occasion foretold that he would lose the sight of that which he loved the most (4.19.3).

Another important element of the earlier part of the fabula is the territorial dispute between Persia and Ethiopia over the frontier and particularly over the possession of the emerald mines. It is this that accounts for the presence of the young Sisimithres in Egypt with the seven-year old Charicleia. The theme re-emerges later in the novel when the emerald mines are the reason for the war that brings Charicleia's father Hydaspes into Egypt.¹⁰

Finally, Cnemon's story, begun in the first book of the novel and completed in the second, accounts for his presence and that of the slave girl Thisbe in Egypt.¹¹ This external actorial analepsis contains subordinate analepses. Cnemon is able to tell from his own experience the story of his stepmother Demaenete's passion for him and the

¹⁰ 2.32.2; 8.1.1–3. This analepsis refers to a long standing dispute, predating the novel's story but not really part of it (heterodiegetic external analepsis).

¹¹ 1.9.1–18.1; 2.8.4–9.5. Not all of Cnemon's story relates germanely to the main plot. On the connections see J.R. Morgan [1989] 1999.

intrigue concocted by Thisbe and Demaenete leading to his conviction for attempted parricide. Subsequent events are conveyed to him first by a friend Charias, who tells him of Thisbe's continuing scheming culminating in the suicide of Demaenete. After Thisbe's dead body is found in Thyamis' secret cave and at first mistaken for Charicleia, Cnemon narrates what took place after the death of Demaenete, culminating in Thisbe's departure from Athens with her lover, an Egyptian merchant named Nausicles.¹² Cnemon narrates all this information directly but at the end supplies its provenance in an account given to him by another acquaintance, Anticles, with whom he has come to Egypt. At this point Cnemon alludes to subsequent adventures, clearly including an account of how he became the captive of Thyamis and his robbers; he promises to return to these at a later time, and duly does so much later when he tells his story to Nausicles, adding the information that

he had faced many dangers and experienced many adventures, finally being captured by buccaneers; but he had managed to escape, only to be captured for a second time as soon as he had set foot in Egypt by the bandits called Herdsmen.¹³ (6.2.4)

The primary narratee still does not have the whole story about Thisbe, however. A letter discovered on her corpse adds the information that for ten days she has been a prisoner of an unnamed robber who is infatuated with her (2.10.1–4). Shortly afterwards the primary narrator fills in more gaps, identifying her robber-lover as Thermouthis, who has already made an appearance in the story, and explaining how 'a few days previously'¹⁴ he had ambushed Nausicles and stolen her. An additional twist comes with Calasiris' revelation that Nausicles' intention was to sell her into Ethiopia as confidante of the queen in the Greek-speaking court there (2.24.3). Thisbe seems never to have been aware of his treachery.

The chronology of these last passages is straightforward, but as we delve back into the early stages of the fabula the temporal relationships of the various strands are impossible to determine with any precision. Some obvious synchronisations are provided where the strands

¹² The name is carefully planted here to confirm that Cnemon knows the name of Nausicles and is thus able to identify him when he appears in the story as the owner of the house in which Calasiris tells Cnemon his story.

¹³ The 'many adventures' are never narrated.

¹⁴ *oligōn prosthen hēmerōn* (2.12.2); obviously identical with the ten days mentioned in Thisbe's letter.

intersect, for example with the transfer of the seven-year-old Charicleia from Sisimithres to Charicles. On the other hand, we are given no indication of the duration of Calasiris' exile. If we accept his account of his visit to Ethiopia as genuine, the implication is that he then made his way directly to Delphi, but he gives no clue as to how long the journey took, nor of how long he was in exile before finding his way to Ethiopia. The logic of the action simply requires a reasonably lengthy absence to accommodate the intrigues over the priesthood at Memphis, Thyamis' flight to the world of outlawry and his rise to become bandit-chief through winning the respect of his men. There is no specific clue as to how deep in the past Cnemon's experiences in Athens lie. Thisbe was stolen from Nausicles ten days before the opening of the text, but we are not told how long she had been in Egypt before then; the logic of the plot suggests that Cnemon had been a member of Thyamis' band for some period before Thisbe was captured, and that, as he came to Egypt in search of her, that she had been in that country for rather longer than he. As for Charicles' strand, we can reason that his natural daughter was of marriageable age before Charicleia was seven years old, and must therefore have been at least ten years her senior. It seems logical to conclude that the birth of Charicles' daughter is the earliest chronological point in the novel, and hence should be regarded as the start of the fabula.¹⁵ Whether it is legitimate to apply such deductive processes to a fictional text whose author seems not to have been much concerned with the question is a different issue. What we can say, however, is that the way in which the separate strands eventually connect with each other, with their relevance becoming apparent in retrospect, underwrites the role of Providence in Heliodorus' world. The birth and early death of Charicles' natural daughter form part of a providential plan for the life of Charicleia, predating even her birth.

The discussion so far has focused on the parts of the fabula preceding the beginning of the story. It is clear that the fabula emerges from the story in a radically anachronic way, quite different from the practice of any of the other novels. However, the presentation of these earlier parts of the fabula through external *actorial* completing analepses conforms, by and large, to a chronological ordering of the story. That is to say that narrative acts by characters in the story are reported by the primary narrator at the moment in the story when those acts are performed.

¹⁵ Unless the mysterious incident in the temple predates even the birth of Charicles' daughter.

Critics have drawn attention to the ‘dramatic’ mode of presentation thus achieved: the complete story is not *told* by the narrator, but allowed to emerge through the natural interaction of the characters in the story.¹⁶

The part of the *fabula* later than the beginning of the story is also presented anachronically. This is partly effected through actorial internal analepses, but the primary narrator himself also offers completing internal analepses. As an example, let us examine the episode in the bandits’ cave. A chronological presentation would run something like this: a rival gang of bandits, who had been driven off by Thyamis and his men from the richly laden ship at the beginning of the novel, and who have been briefed by Thyamis’ brother Petosiris to capture him if possible, attack Thyamis’ stronghold in the hope of recovering the spoils which they had lost. Thyamis tells Cnemon to hide his beloved Charicleia in a secret cave to keep her safe, and orders his right-hand man Thermouthis to bring a sacrificial animal. Cnemon takes Charicleia to the cave, and hides her in its depths. While Cnemon is on his way back to Thyamis, Thermouthis also goes to the cave in order to hide his beloved Thisbe; he leaves her near the cave-mouth. As the battle begins to go against him, Thyamis has second thoughts and decides to kill Charicleia to prevent her falling into the clutches of his enemies. He runs to the cave, encounters Thisbe near the entrance, mistakes her for Charicleia and kills her, dropping his sword near the body. He throws himself into the battle and is captured alive. Thermouthis is wounded in the battle, swims ashore and hides until nightfall. At nightfall, Theagenes and Cnemon go to the cave to release Charicleia, but discover Thisbe’s body and at first mistake it for Charicleia. They realise their mistake, and there is a reunion. Thermouthis returns to the cave and discovers Thisbe’s body.

The chronological sequence is changed in the story. The identity of the attacking bandits and their motivation are revealed only in an internal narratorial analepsis at the point when they take Thyamis alive; this analepsis is the one that also contains information about the back-story of Thyamis and Petosiris, and is thus partly internal and partly external, reversing chronological order:

[*internal*] They were in fact from the same band of brigands who had fled from Thyamis and his men by the Heracleotic mouth of the Nile. Angered at being robbed of other people’s property and resenting the

¹⁶ The fullest treatment remains that of Hefti 1950.

loss of the plunder as much as if it actually belonged to them, they had mustered their comrades who had been left at home and called upon the aid of the surrounding villages, offering a fair and equal division of the spoils they expected to take. Thus they were the leaders of the assault, but their reason for taking Thyamis alive was this. [*external*] He had a younger brother, Petosiris, at Memphis, who had treacherously and in defiance of ancestral usage usurped the office of high priest from Thyamis. Petosiris' inquiries had revealed to him that his elder brother was the leader of a band of outlaws, and he was afraid that Thyamis might one day seize an opportunity to take action against him; besides, he could see that he was generally suspected of having murdered the missing Thyamis. And so he had sent word round the bandit villages, offering cattle and large sums of money as a reward for anyone who brought his brother to him alive. (1.33.1–2)

Thermouthis simply disappears when commanded to fetch a sacrificial animal; only at the point where he returns to the cave to find Thisbe does the narrator analeptically explain how he had shut her in the cave. This analepsis is also the one that contains the information about Thermouthis' capture of Thisbe from Nausicles: it too is partly external and partly internal, this time in chronological sequence:

[*external*] A few days previously, while she had been travelling in the company of Nausicles the merchant, Thermouthis had waylaid them on a narrow road through the foothills and carried her off. [*internal repeating*] In the confusion of the battle that followed the enemy's assault, he had been sent by Thyamis to fetch the victim for sacrifice and [*internal completing*] had taken the chance to put Thisbe where no weapon could touch her, hoping to keep her alive for himself. No one had seen him as he shut her in the cave, but in his frantic haste he had left her close by the entrance. (2.12.2–3)

By this point of course, Theagenes and Thyamis have already found her body and identified it. One effect of postponing the narration of Thermouthis' activities is that the primary narratee, like the characters in the story, is led to believe that it is was Charicleia that Thyamis killed.¹⁷ Her identity is revealed to him only at the moment when it is revealed to the characters. It is the amazement of Theagenes and Charicleia at this turn of events that prompts Cnemon to tell

¹⁷ The narrator carefully tells us that Thyamis' victim spoke to him in Greek before she died, which facilitates the false identification for both Thyamis and the primary narratee. On the other hand, the fact that she is at the mouth of the cave, not in its inner depths where Cnemon left Charicleia is a clue to the primary narratee that the dead woman is not Charicleia; Thyamis does not know whereabouts in the cave Charicleia was left.

the second instalment of his own experiences (an actorial external analepsis, discussed above), in order to explain her presence in Egypt. The narrator's analepsis fills in only the details of which Cnemon himself could not have been aware. Even at this point, the characters do not know who killed Thisbe or why; the primary narratee can easily deduce that Thisbe was the woman killed by Thyamis when he intended to kill Charicleia, but this is not confirmed in the story until Cnemon draws attention to Thyamis' sword (2.14.4).

Similar anachronies, with parts of the fabula supplied by completing internal actorial analepses, occur later in the story also. For example, Theagenes and Charicleia are separated, she being taken away by Nausicles as a replacement, Thisbe and he by the Persian phrourarch Mitranes to be sent to the Great King; Nausicles brings Charicleia back to his house, where she is recognised and reunited with Calasiris. They then set off to try to find Theagenes, but are forestalled by a chance meeting with a friend of Nausicles who tells them:

‘Mitranes is not there at the moment. This very night he went off to fight the Herdsmen who live in the village of Bessa; he had sent some young Greek he had captured to Oroondates in Memphis—to be taken on from there, I suppose, as a gift to the Great King—but the men of Bessa and their newly chosen leader Thyamis mounted a surprise attack and seized the young man, who is now in their possession.’ (6.3.4)

This fills in not only the information about what happened to Theagenes after his separation from Charicleia, but also about the progress of Thyamis, who was last heard of being captured alive by Petosiris' bandits. The 'dramatic' mode of presentation that we noted earlier is obvious again here. The primary narrator does not provide all the information, but it emerges plausibly within the story. We might equally phrase this in terms of focalisation: the events at this point are focalized by Charicleia and Calasiris, and the text presents only what they see and hear. More striking, perhaps, is the casual inclusion of the new information about Thyamis. An important section of his story is simply occluded here. It is not clear whether the men of Bessa are the same group of bandits who captured him; nor, if they are, why they have decided not to shop him to Petosiris; nor, if they are not, how he escaped; nor how he has risen so quickly to become the chieftain of his new associates. More details about the theft of Theagenes are revealed later, when Achaemenes, the son of Arsace's servant Cybele, enters the story. The first item of information about him is when a doorkeeper in the palace mentions that he has gone to buy some eye-ointment (7.14.3).

He enters the story in person a page or so later, and peers through the keyhole of the room where Theagenes and Charicleia are being kept. He immediately falls in love with her but fancies that he recognises Theagenes; as he reflects he realises that he is

‘the man that Mitranes, the commander of guards, gave me the other day to take to Oroondates so as to be sent on to the Great King. Thyamis and the men of Bessa took him from me, and I came within an inch of losing my life—in fact I was the only one of the escort party to get away.’
(7.16.2)

After their encounter with Nausicles’ friend, Charicleia and Calasiris decide to make their way to Bessa to reclaim Theagenes from Thyamis. Just outside the village they come upon a lot of dead bodies, mostly Persian. An old woman tells them what has happened, namely that Mitranes had sent a detachment of troops to Bessa to exact reprisals for the theft of Theagenes, but that they were ambushed by the locals, and that Mitranes and most of his men died. She goes on to say that Thyamis has now decided to mount a surprise attack on Memphis itself before the satrap can prepare a campaign of extermination against Bessa. At this point her analepsis turns to prolepsis, in a play of time-frames that is characteristic of Heliodorus. She brings into play the possibility of Thyamis’ restoration to the priesthood, and mentions a rumour that the satrap is fighting a war against the Ethiopians (6.13.1–5). These two pieces of information look forward to events at Memphis, described in book 7, and to the military narrative of book 9.

Although this ‘dramatic’ use of actorial completing analepses, both internal and external, is a central feature of the novel’s narrative strategy, we should not ignore its use of narratorial analepsis. We have already encountered a few cases of external narratorial analepsis in discussing the parts of the fabula before the story. There are also internal narratorial analepses. The most extended of these comes at the point when Charicleia has been brought back to Nausicles’ house, but Cnemon still believes the woman he has heard lamenting is Thisbe. The narrator begins with a prolepsis of the reversal that is about to take place; we shall return to this. He then backtracks to the moment where Theagenes and Charicleia were left alone on the robbers’ island after the departure of Cnemon and Thermouthis, and devotes several pages to narrating their kisses and conversations, then the arrival of armed men, who turn out to be Mitranes and his soldiers, accompanied by Nausicles, and then the trick by which Nausicles claims Charicleia as Thisbe, while Theagenes is retained by Mitranes (5.4.3–9.2).

The analepsis ends with the text of the letter which Mitrane writes to Oroondates. At that point the narrator returns to Calasiris and Cnemon in Nausicles' house the next morning.

At a basic formal level this is Heliodorus' version of simultaneity and the handling of parallel storylines. From the point when Cnemon and Thermouthis leave the cave, the narrative focus remains on them: Cnemon loses Thermouthis, then meets Calasiris and becomes the narratee of his story. Our narratorial analepsis covers the same day and night. This may explain the apparently untypical use of the primary narrator to make an extended completing analepsis, when the novel usually allows information to emerge within the frame of the action.¹⁸ There are two narrations of the same day and night, both by the primary narrator; the difference is that the first contains substantial embedded narratives, whereas the second is more straightforward. This leads to an extreme disparity of length between the two narratives of the same amount of fabula-time,¹⁹ giving rise to the sense of a substantial backtracking. This is reinforced by the presence of two cross-references within the analepsis. The first part is marked explicitly as a recapitulation of what has already been read:

After Thyamis had fallen into his enemies' hands and become their prisoner, and the island had been set alight and evacuated by the Herdsmen whose home it had been, Cnemon and Thermouthis, Thyamis' henchman, sailed across the lake at dawn on a mission of reconnaissance to discover what the enemy had done with their captain; their adventures have already been narrated.²⁰ (5.4.3; referring to 2.19–20)

The second cross-reference is on the introduction of Mitrane:

So Theagenes and Charicleia were brought before the commander, who was none other than Mitrane, the commander of guards in the service of Oroondates, the Great King's satrap in Egypt, who, as we have seen [*hōs dedēlōtai*], had been paid a great deal of money by Nausicles to come to the island in search of Thisbe. (5.8.2; referring to 2.24)

In this case the reference is not to something said by the primary narrator himself, but to information given by Calasiris to Cnemon.²¹

¹⁸ Cf. *SAGN* 1:529–530.

¹⁹ In Reardon 1989, 57 pages compared to four.

²⁰ *hōs ... eivētai* (5.4.3; the reference is to 2.19–20.)

²¹ There is perhaps a recognition in this that the exposition of the fabula, the plot as a whole, is shared between the primary narrator and his characters, on a more or less equal footing. Similarly, when the issue of the emerald mines is revived, we find a

A final example of narratorial completing analepsis occurs when Charicleia is put on trial for the murder of Cybele, and is worth analysing as an example of the complexity and subtlety with which the novel juggles with its time-frames. First Charicleia does everything she can to get herself condemned to death. The primary narrator explains, in a completing analepsis, that

this was because the previous night in her prison cell, after telling Theagenes all that had happened and hearing in turn of his ordeals, she had made a compact with him to accept voluntarily any death that might be inflicted on them, and so be rid forever of a life without hope, an exile without end, and a fate without pity. (8.9.8)

Her abuse of Arsace duly leads to her conviction, and she is led away to be burned at the stake, only to find that the flames do her no harm. When she is taken back to gaol and discusses this turn of events with Theagenes, she suddenly remembers a dream that she had had in the night, in which Calasiris told her that the jewel pantarbe would provide protection from flames (8.11.2). In other words, we are now given an actorial analepsis of different events within the same night which has already been the subject of a narratorial analepsis. What is more, the actorial analepsis concerns a proleptic dream about events which are by now in the past. What had been proleptic in the night (but then forgotten) functions, for both primary narratee and character, as an analeptic explanation of the events it foretold.²² Theagenes in his turn suddenly recalls his dream of the self-same night, which like Charicleia's consisted of a vision of Calasiris. In this case, however, the proleptic dream is still proleptic, for both character and primary narratee, looking forward to their release from Arsace's prison and arrival in Ethiopia.

Before we turn to prolepsis, a brief word about repeating analepses. Heliodorus' novel in general presumes a high level of concentration on the part of its narratee, and almost perfect recall. Despite the complexity of the story and its presentation, there is little help given in the form of straightforward recapitulations. We have already noted one example above. Another comes in the ninth book, when Oroondates

cross-reference, 'as has already been narrated' (*hōs eirētai*, 8.1.3), which relates to words of Sisimithres spoken to Charicles, and relayed by him to Calasiris, and by Calasiris to Cnemon.

²² We are dealing with the 'recalled prophecy' device; cf. Homer (→) and Longus (→).

has implemented a ruse to escape from the besieged city of Syene and join up with the rest of his army:

For [*gar*] Oroondates had issued instructions for the rest of his army to assemble at Elephantine, but when he observed the Ethiopians bearing down on him unexpectedly, he had been obliged to make a dash for Syene with a few troops; there he had been walled in by the earthworks and compelled to beg for his life; Hydaspes had promised to spare him, but then Oroondates had proved the most treacherous of men: he had arranged for two Persians to cross the water with the Ethiopians and dispatched them ostensibly to canvass opinion at Elephantine as to the conditions on which they would be prepared to make terms with Hydaspes, though in reality their mission was to discover whether they would rather make ready for battle at whatever time he himself might be able to make good his escape. (9.13.2–3)

This recapitulates a section of the narrative which had been told largely from the point of view of Hydaspes, with Oroondates' deceptions emerging either by implication or as the Ethiopian king becomes aware of them. The analepsis restates events with a narratorial omniscience in keeping with the historiographical tone of this military episode, and may thus be viewed as a deliberate stylistic mannerism to position this part of the text generically.

An extensive repeating analepsis which may serve a similar purpose occurs when Cnemon tells his story to Nausicles (6.2.3–4). This is presented in indirect speech, and condenses the whole of his narrative into a few sentences, even maintaining the documentary provenance of parts of it with references to Cnemon's informants, Charias and Anticles. As noted above, a small amount of new information is added at the end. This recapitulation has a limited argument function: the primary narrator goes out of his way to tell us that Nausicles was left in two minds as to whether to come clean about his relationship to Thisbe, but that he decided to say nothing for the time being. His knowledge of Cnemon's past and social standing will motivate the offer of marriage to his daughter that follows a few chapters later, but the details given in the summary lead nowhere. I have argued elsewhere²³ that Cnemon's story stands in thematic antithesis to the main plot, and I suggest that the main reason why the primary narratee should be reminded of it in detail at this moment is to retriangulate Cnemon ethically and bring out the full ethical significance of his withdrawal from the pilgrimage to Ethiopia in favour of marriage to Nausicles' daughter.

²³ J.R. Morgan [1989] 1999.

Finally, the narrator can make rhetorical use of repeating analepsis. A good example occurs when Calasiris finally returns to Memphis just in time to prevent his sons fighting a duel to the death. A selective account of his experiences heightens the sense of an amazing peripeteia:

The father who had beheld his sons engaged in single combat, their swords drawn against one another, who had come within an ace of the misery of having his children die within the sight of the eyes that gave them birth, himself became the agent of peace. He had proved unable to escape destiny's ordinance, but his arrival in the nick of time to witness what had been preordained had brought him happiness. The two sons now had their father restored to them after his ten years of homeless wandering. He had been the cause of a quarrel over the priesthood for which they had been prepared to shed one another's blood, but the very next moment with their own hands they garlanded his head and crowned him with the insignia of his holy office. (7.8.1–2)

Order 2: prolepsis

I will focus on three types of prolepsis: a) narratorial prolepsis; b) significant actorial prolepsis; c) the proleptic apparatus of oracles, prophecies and dreams. A recurrent theme will be the interplay of past and future.

a) The primary narrator makes sparing but effective use of prolepsis. These are all fairly short-term anticipations designed to arouse expectations about the episode that follows. So as Theagenes and Cnemon make their way to the bandit island to release Charicleia from the cave, the narrator says:

Little did he know what sorrows awaited him there. (2.2.2)

The primary narratee knows that Thyamis has returned to kill Charicleia and has run his sword through a Greek-speaking woman. The reference to Theagenes' approaching sorrows activates anxieties that this might have been the heroine, and prepares for a scene of high emotions. The sorrows foretold, however, are mistaken ones: for a few moments Theagenes will believe that the body he finds is that of his beloved, but he will quickly discover the truth.

We have already mentioned the extended narratorial analepsis which fills in the adventures of Theagenes and Charicleia from the point of their separation from Cnemon to the time when Charicleia is brought

to Nausicles house in the guise of Thisbe. The analepsis is preceded by a prolepsis, which it purports to explain:

In a short while Cnemon was going to experience joy, which heaven therefore was now combining with sorrow ... For the woman he had heard lamenting was not Thisbe, but Charicleia! This is what had happened to her ... (5.4.1)

In this case, the prolepsis supplies the knowledge that whatever perils are about to be narrated analeptically, Charicleia has survived them. At the same time it raises an enigma that propels the primary narratee forward into the next section of the story. How has it come about that Charicleia, whom we left in the cave with Theagenes, is alone and masquerading as Thisbe?

As Theagenes and Charicleia enter Arsace's palace, the narrator's prolepsis prepares the way for their ordeals in the ensuing episode. The primary narratee already knows that Arsace has designs on Theagenes, but for the characters her hospitality looks like a change of fortune for the better. The prolepsis makes sure that we grasp the irony, but shrouds the exact nature of the threat and its outcome in ominous imprecision:

But had they had any inkling of the fatal pride that dwelt in the palace and of the harm it would cause them, they surely would never have entered it. Now the fate that presided over the tournament of their destiny had ceased its persecutions for a few hours and smiled on them, but their happiness was to be short-lived, its brief day succeeded by new sorrows that destiny was already preparing. Fate was delivering them like willing captives into the hands of their foe, imprisoning, by a semblance of kindness and hospitality, two young people, strangers in a foreign land and unsuspecting of what lay in store for them. (7.12.1–2)

The final example of narratorial prolepsis occurs when Theagenes and Charicleia are captured by the Ethiopians, mounted on horses and taken off to the Ethiopian king. The tableau that concludes book 8 is interpreted by the narrator, with the benefit of his knowledge of the end of the story, as a prolepsis of their imminent change of status.

The scene was like the preliminary appearance and introduction of the actors in the theatre before the play begins; strangers in a foreign land, prisoners in chains who a moment ago had been haunted by a vision of their own violent death, were now being not so much led as escorted in captive state, guarded by those who were soon to be their subjects. (8.17.5)

Again the comment combines analepsis and prolepsis, emphasising the moment as a hinge of transition between past and future; in this case the prolepsis looks forward, rather vaguely, to a state of affairs that will prevail after the end of the story, when the protagonists are married and ensconced as part of the Ethiopian royal family. Its form is deeply metanarrative, comparing the scene in the story to a proleptic convention in the theatre.²⁴

b) As in the other novels, Heliodorus' characters talk a great deal about the future. In many cases, they combine analepsis and prolepsis, marking the moment as a cusp. For example, when Achaemenes tells Oroondates what has been going on in the palace at Memphis, he follows his account of Theagenes' arrival and Arsace's infatuation with a forecast of what might happen next (8.1.4–8). When explaining his strategy to Charicleia, Theagenes combines analepsis (about how he has frustrated Achaemenes) with prolepsis (about how Achaemenes might react) (7.26.8–10). In lamenting her misfortunes in Arsace's palace, Charicleia modulates from a catalogue of past woes to one of anticipated horrors (7.14.5–8).

The case of actorial prolepsis on which I wish to dwell is, however, of a rather different kind, and demonstrates Heliodorus' metanarrative tendencies. In the ninth book, when Theagenes and Charicleia are being taken to see Hydaspes, the issue arises of whether she should immediately reveal her true identity to her father. Of course, to do so would bring the story to a premature ending, so Charicleia has to be provided with reasons for a strategy of remaining incognito. In considering her strategy she in effect maps out the course of action of the last book of the novel; but the reasons that she gives for postponement read in some ways as a self-justification of the novel's length and complexity:

Great ends can only be achieved by means of equal greatness. A story whose beginnings heaven has made convoluted cannot be quickly resolved. In particular it may be dangerous to reveal abruptly things that the passing years have made obscure, especially when the central figure of our entire story, the key to the whole tangled web of complexity and

²⁴ Telò 1999 argues plausibly that the word *proanaphonēsis*, translated above as 'preliminary appearance', is a technical term of ancient literary criticism. In the Homeric scholia it seems to mean something very like 'prolepsis'. This would give the met-aliterary screw another twist, with Heliodorus effectively designating his prolepsis as prolepsis.

recognition, is missing. I refer of course to my mother, Persinna ... if we let ourselves be carried away by our joy and reveal the truth about ourselves before the time is right, when those who could recognise and corroborate the truth of our story are not present to do so, then we run the risk of unwittingly annoying our hearer ... the one incontrovertible token of recognition is maternal instinct ... let us not deprive ourselves of the one thing that would make all the other tokens convincing.²⁵ (9.24)

This ‘mapping scene’ creates expectations of a recognition scene in which Persinna’s instinctive affinity to her daughter will be of paramount importance, and this is indeed the way it transpires.

c) More than in any of the other novels, Heliodorus’ *Ethiopian Story* is articulated by an apparatus of predictive devices, which demonstrate both divine management of the world and the author’s control of his plot. They also manipulate the primary narratee’s attempts to second-guess the way that the story will proceed.²⁶

Due to the story’s particular temporal structure, the interplay of prolepsis and analepsis takes another form in this respect. We have already examined the scene in Arsace’s dungeon where the protagonists each speak analeptically of a proleptic dream, which refers to events which are already past for both character and primary narratee. Since so much of the fabula is presented through extended actorial analepsis, it is a recurrent trope that proleptic devices are narrated after the events which they predict have already occurred. As a simple example, we may cite the dream of the Phoenician wrestler at 4.16, predicting his victory in the Pythian Games. The Phoenicians tell Calasiris of this dream in a doubly inset analepsis after the victory has been won; it thus serves as analeptic explanation for their presence in Delphi.

In other cases, slightly more complex, we find an actorial analeptic account of a proleptic dream referring to events already in the past for the narrating character but which have not yet appeared in the story. For example, Calasiris narrates to Cnemon a dream he had in Delphi in which Apollo and Artemis entrusted Theagenes and Charicleia to him and commanded him to take them to the land of his birth (3.11). He is already in Egypt by the time he makes his narration, but neither the primary narratee nor the secondary narratee has yet been told of his departure from Delphi.

²⁵ The scene is discussed in more detail in J.R. Morgan 1989: 308–310.

²⁶ Detailed treatment of this in J.R. Morgan 1989.

In yet other cases, an analeptically narrated prolepsis may contain references to some events which have occurred in the time between the original prediction and the moment of narration, but also to events which are still in the future for both narrating character and the primary narratee. An example of this sort is Calasiris' foreknowledge that the courtesan Rhodopis would be the start of his misfortunes, which led him to exile himself from Memphis to avoid sexual temptation. He tells Cnemon of this when he has already returned to Egypt. But the information about Rhodopis is joined with a prediction that his two sons would take up swords against one another, which is not fully fulfilled until Arsace stages their duel in book 7.

Finally there are proleptic visions which refer straightforwardly to events which are in the future for characters and primary narratee alike. A simple example of this is the pronouncement by the gymnosophists that the ceremony of sacrifice to welcome Hydaspes back to Ethiopia after his successful campaign in Egypt will be disrupted by some commotion, the outcome of which will be joyful (104.2).

The 'argument' function of some of these proleptic narratives is interesting. Near the beginning of the novel, Thyamis has a dream:

He was in Memphis, his home-town, and found himself at the temple of Isis, which he dreamed was all ablaze with torchlight; the altars and sacred hearths were drenched with the blood of all kinds of animals; the gates and colonnades were teeming with people, who filled the whole place with a confused babble of chatter. When he went inside the shrine itself, he dreamed the goddess came to him, gave Charicleia into his hands, and said, 'Thyamis, this maiden I deliver to you; you shall have her and not have her; you shall do wrong and slay her, but she shall not be slain'. (1.18.4)

The story foregrounds the issues of interpretation raised by this dream. At first, Thyamis reads it to conform with his own desires, as a prophecy that he would have Charicleia as wife, and inflict the wounds of defloration on her. However, as the battle against the other bandits turns against him, he reinterprets his dream to mean that he would have her but lose her, and would really slay her. Acting on this palpable misinterpretation he goes to kill her, but in fact his victim turns out to be Thisbe instead. Thyamis' two wrong interpretations of the dream lead him to act in a way that brings about its true fulfilment, in a way unforeseen by him.²⁷

²⁷ Discussed at more length by Bartsch 1989: 93–98.

The major prolepsis in the novel is the oracle that Calasiris receives in Delphi, and of which he tells Cnemon near the end of book 2. This oracle provides a predictive armature from which the whole plot is suspended, but it too raises important difficulties of interpretation. It is worth quoting and unpacking this oracle in full:

‘One who starts in grace and ends in glory, another goddess-born:
Of these I bid you have regard, O Delphi!
Leaving my temple here and cleaving Ocean’s swelling tides,
To the black land of the sun will they travel,
Where they will reap the reward of those whose lives are passed in
virtue:
A crown of white on blackening brows.’ (2.35-5)

The Delphic crowd is at a loss to understand any of this, but both Calasiris and the primary narratee quickly see the punning allusions to the names of the protagonists in the opening lines: Charicleia’s name is compounded of *kharis* (‘grace’) and *kleos* (‘glory’), while Theagenes’ name consists of *thea* (‘goddess’) and the suffix *-genēs*, meaning ‘born from’. The third line refers to their elopement from Delphi under Calasiris’ supervision: an event in the past for Calasiris as he narrates, and already known to the primary narratee, as he first encounters the protagonists in the novel’s opening tableau at the mouth of the Nile. The reference to ‘the black land of the sun’ is eventually disambiguated as indicating Ethiopia, which Calasiris discovers to be the land of Charicleia’s birth. For him as he narrates this discovery is already in the past; but neither the primary nor the secondary narratee can understand it until Calasiris releases the information that Charicleia’s parents are black-skinned and the Sun is the principal deity of Meroe. The last two lines of the oracle are still unresolved at the time of Calasiris’ narration; and indeed he dies before their meaning becomes clear. The crown of white refers to the insignia of Ethiopian priesthood with which Charicleia and Theagenes are invested on the very last page of the text, and the ‘blackening brows’ are not to be taken literally but indicate their assimilation into a new Ethiopian identity. However, the story encourages the primary narratee to interpret this oracle in ways that turn out to be incorrect, much as Thyamis was induced to misinterpret his dream. The oracle at first seems to promise a happy ending as a reward for the protagonists’ chastity and piety. But when they get to Ethiopia, they find that it is the custom there to sacrifice virgins in celebration of victory, and the proof of their virtue given by the magic Ethiopian *gridiron* in fact condemns them to death. The

white crown for a moment seems to be the fillet tied round the head of a sacrificial victim, and the blackening brows a reference to the spilling of blood. The long-term prolepsis of the oracle, then, so far from defusing the tension of the plot maintains its unpredictability by allowing for a series of false references before the true one is finally reached.²⁸

Anachrony, in all its aspects, is the hallmark of Heliodorus' novel. The flexibility and sophistication of his technique marks an important advance in the history of Greek narrative, and anticipates that of the modern novel.

Rhythm

The novel falls into two distinct halves, with marked differences in the way they handle duration and rhythm. From the daybreak at the beginning of the novel to the end of book 5, we have five carefully marked day/night units.²⁹ The rhythm of this part of the novel is very expansive. With the exception of the relatively short day that runs from 2.19.3 to 2.20.4, the primary narrative consists in very large part of scenes which play out in, as it were, real time. This is of course a by-product of the anachronic structure discussed above: lengthy embedded narratives in direct speech inevitably extend the narrative time devoted to the days in which they occur. This is particularly striking in the case of the fourth day/night in the novel, which, on Futre Pinheiro's calculation takes up 73 pages of the Greek text, mostly occupied with Calasiris' narrative. The passage of time in this longest single day in any Greek novel is articulated by a series of textual markers: it is midday when Cnemon meets Calasiris (2.21.6); a meal is served when they return to Nausicles' house (2.22.2). By 3.4.9 the sun has set, and in a brief return to the primary narrative lamps are lit. Calasiris continues telling his story through the night: at 4.4.2 'no little part of the night has passed', and Calasiris comments on Cnemon's stamina as narratee. At the beginning of book 5, Calasiris again comments on the passage of time, and proposes a break for sleep; Cnemon only agrees because he has heard the sound of voices, indicating the return of Nausicles. After

²⁸ For detailed discussion of this idea see J.R. Morgan 1989.

²⁹ For details of the time-scheme of the novel see Futre Pinheiro 1998. Successive dawns are registered at 1.1, 19; 2.18, 20; and 5.10.

a miserable few hours for him, in which he is convinced that Thisbe has come back to life and blunders around the house in the dark, the cocks crow at 5.3.2 and (after the narratorial analepsis covering the experiences of Theagenes and Charicleia during the same day) dawn finally breaks at 5.10.1.

In the second half of the novel time begins to pass much more quickly. The amount of text devoted to each day decreases, and although the primary narrative continues to comprise successive days up to 7.19.5 (eleven days from the opening of the novel), thereafter time becomes more subject to ellipsis: for example, at 7.20.1 five or six days pass. From the beginning of book 8 in particular it becomes increasingly hard to plot the action in precise chronological terms, and temporal indicators become less frequent. This pattern is reversed only in the final day of the novel, during which most of the action of book 10 occurs.

Pauses and ellipses

This novel includes rather more descriptive pauses where fabula-time ceases to move than the other novels. In the last book alone, a whole chapter is devoted to a survey of the geography of Meroe (10.5) and to a riddling description of a giraffe (10.27). The ninth book contains a chapter on the festival of the Neiloa and its theological significance, and another of detailed description of the armour of the Persian cataphract cavalry.

Most of the time span of the novel is narrated, some of it in vague phrases denoting the passage of a considerable time. Within this overall structure, the passage of time in certain narrative threads may be occluded. For example, at the end of book 6 Calasiris and Charicleia have an encounter with a necromantic old woman outside Bessa. The action switches to Memphis at the start of the next book, and at 7.6 Calasiris and Charicleia arrive just in time to witness the duel of Thyamis and Petosiris. The latter part of their journey to Memphis has clearly taken place out of shot. There is nothing particularly remarkable about this, but attention must be drawn to a particularly interesting and sophisticated ellipsis. In 10.2 Hydaspes is in Syene and writes a pair of letters to be taken on ahead to Meroe by quick riders, one to the gymnosophists and one to his wife. The text of the letters is followed immediately by their reception and reading. The effect is rather like

a fade in a film, where the writer's voice-over continues as the shot changes to one of the recipient reading the letter. This is an economical device, with the effect of simply eliding the passage of time taken up by the journey from Syene to Meroe, specified by other writers as a matter of a month or more.³⁰

Conclusion

This chapter has concentrated on specific aspects of time in Heliodorus, particularly issues of order, and the effects of anachronies. Within the space available, it has not been possible to catalogue the phenomenon completely, but I hope that enough has been said to indicate that there is a sea-change in complexity and sophistication compared to the other novels. This is clearly a sign of the text's literary ambitions and aspirations. Just as Homer succeeded in telling the story of the whole Trojan War within the formal constraints of a single episode from its tenth year, or in compressing the entire story of Odysseus' return to Ithaca into a short period in the twentieth year of his absence, so Heliodorus tells the whole story of his heroine's seventeen years of life in a narrative which ends a month or so after its opening scene.

³⁰ Hdt. 2.29, 31: certainly known to Heliodorus, who makes intertextual reference to Herodotus on several occasions. Aristides (36.55 K) estimates the journey as taking between four and six months.