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The romance of narrative: Design and desire in the "Odyssey", the "Aithiopika", and "Don Quixote"

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The Romance of Narrative:

Design and Desire in the Odyssey, the Aithiopika, and Don Quixote

by

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Abstract

THE ROMANCE OF NARRATIVE:

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Adviser: Professor Robert Day

The Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote have a surprising set of narrative structures in common: each work falls into two distinct "halves," and each includes a large number of interpolated narratives which appear largely, though not exclusively, in the first half of the text. Both of these features--the bi-partite frames and the large number of interpolated tales--have important implications, both for the narratives as a whole, and for their relationship to the literary mode of romance. This structure imbues each text with a quality of extreme narrative self-consciousness in which part of the subject of the work becomes the nature of narrative itself. It also highlights powerful aspects of a romantic "literary nostalgia" which expresses itself as a fascination with the telling and re-telling of tales, and with the delicate and problematic relationship between narrative versions of events and the events themselves.

This study first examines closely the workings of the bi-partite frame

narratives, especially the ways in which the second half of each text reflects back on its own first half. It then explores several sets of interpolated narratives, examples of which can be located in each text. These narratives--lying tales, dreams, and romantic autobiographies--express various aspects of the romance mode, particularly as defined by N. Frye, including powerful elements of both wish-fulfillment (an idealized future) and nostalgia (an idealized past).

The study concludes with an examination of problems of closure in romance narrative, well exhibited in the varied end(s) of the Odyssey, the Aithiopika, and the Quixote; these problems are caused in part by competing narrative drives within the romance mode which pull the narrative toward final closure and, at the same time, toward endless openness.

Preface and Acknowledgements

This study grows out of all my years of course work and discussion with many friends and faculty at the CUNY Graduate School. Two seminars I took in my first years as a student there, "Experiments In Form" with Professor Robert Day, and "Romance as Genre" with Professor Fred Nichols, particularly helped to foster my curiosity about forms of early narrative and aspects of romance.

The dissertation of a fellow student, now colleague, Rodger Friedman--a narratological examination of poetic copia in classical and Renaissance texts, entitled "So Much Nonsense" (1989)--has acted to a great degree as a model for my own work. My study functions in some ways in apposition to his, filling in and picking up where he left off. While his work traces one of the trajectories of the "epic" voice in Western literary-history (from the Iliad, through Ovid's Metamorphoses, to Ariosto's Orlando Furioso and Rabelais' Gargantua and Pantagruel), my own traces a contrary "romance" voice, beginning with the Odyssey, moving through Heliodoros' late Classical romance, the Aithiopika, and concluding with a work which could easily have been a subject of Friedman's study as well, Cervantes' Don Quixote. My critical approach, which combines reader-response theory with narratology, has also been influenced strongly by Friedman's study.

I have been fortunate in having had the willing ears and helpful advice of faculty from several disciplines at the CUNY Graduate School--in English, Classics, and Comparative Literature--during my years there as a student. My dissertation

director, Professor Robert Day, has been a lively teacher, a scrupulous reader, and a sound professional influence on me for many years. Professor Seth Schein has taught me a great deal about the finest points of scholarship, and his enthusiasm for the study of literature has inspired me since I first worked with him as an undergraduate. Professor Clare Carroll's combination of professional advice and personal support has been absolutely invaluable. I feel lucky to have had these dedicated readers, advisers, and friends.

I would also like to thank Professor Charles Beye, a scholar whose work I admire greatly, who generously read and commented on the entire manuscript as an unofficial reader, and who later joined my committee in time to lend me his special expertise on Homer.

Professor Fred Nichols stands firmly behind the entire project as a teacher, mentor, and friend. I cannot imagine having survived the long road of graduate school without his faithful support and unshakable belief in my ability to persevere and succeed. His warmth, humor, and company have also made the whole endeavor a lot more enjoyable.

Thanks is due, as well, to many friends and family members who have patiently waited for me to arrive: to my wonderful and brilliant fellow travelers, Nancy Berke, Julie Shuchman, and Constance Tagopoulos, who listened, cajoled, and kept the faith as I worked; to Fergal O'Doherty who helped remind me to have fun through two difficult years; to Melissa West who cheered me on with softball, patience, and affection; to Annaclare Van Dalen who helped me find my balance; and

to my passionate, eccentric, and marvelously intelligent family, who each helped in their own way--and who never gave up. Because shared joy is always the best kind, I wish to share with all of these whatever pride and joy there is in this completion.

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For my parents,
who knew everything but Greek--

τὰ φρονέων μνηστῆρσι μεθήμενος εἴσιδ' Ἀθήνην.

Then he who dreamed in the crowd gazed out at Athena.
(Od.1.118--trans., Fitzgerald)

Introduction

This study has developed from two sources of interest. The first consists, simply but not insignificantly, of the pleasure given by the works themselves. The Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote are wonderful stories: they offer intense narrative fun. I was first exposed to the Odyssey as a child when my mother read the newly published Fitzgerald translation aloud to me; it was as good a story then as it has remained through all subsequent readings. I discovered the Aithiopika as a graduate student: I found myself avidly (and guiltily) reading it one day while when I happened upon the Moses Hadas translation (1957) mis-shelved amidst more scholarly works on Alexandrian literature. (How could I resist reading something called An Ethiopian Romance, originally written in the 2nd century A.D. in Atticized Greek, when I was supposed to be studying for a major exam in "serious" classical literature?) I came to the Quixote as a trained reader, but in the early glow of graduate work, my recently acquired interpretive skills not yet jaded by overuse.

My second source of interest in some ways relates to the first, but is also more complex; it grows out of my fascination with, and perplexity about, the literary mode of romance. I use the term "mode" here purposely to recall Northrop Frye's work (although I could have used "mythos" or "genre" interchangeably, as he does). The Odyssey, the Aithiopika, and the Quixote operate in and around the mode of romance

in complex--and perhaps inter-related--ways. My interest in juxtaposing these works is to understand better both sources of interest--the pleasure of the texts and the mode in which they operate--a quest which may in itself prove to be romantic. The "narrative pleasure" which these works afford is not insignificant, because, as readers of romance often remind us, romance is the genre of irresistible allure; romances are often the works we find ourselves thumbing surreptitiously, hoping our scholarly colleagues aren't watching. The nature of this allure has sent many readers searching for the cause of the attraction.

My selection of texts perhaps deserves some explanation. The works I have selected for this study--the Odyssey, the Aithiopika, and Don Quixote--are linked to each other in ways which are neither conventional nor obvious. I hope to show that the construction of each of these fictions reflects a specific relationship to romance, a literary mode which Frye describes in his important and influential study of romance, The Secular Scripture (1975), as "the structural core of all fiction..." He then adds that romance,

> being directly descended from folktale, [it] brings us closer than any other aspect of literature to the sense of fiction, considered as a whole, as the epic of the creature, man's vision of his own life as a quest (15).

It is significant that of the three works in this study concerned with romance, only one is traditionally known as a "romance"--Heliodoros' Aithiopika. This work is one of several surviving examples of the genre of prose fiction known as "Greek romance" which flourished in late antiquity. These prose romances became extremely

popular in Europe when manuscripts surfaced during the Renaissance, and they were quickly translated into the major European literary languages--English, French, Spanish, and Italian.[1] They greatly influenced contemporary critical debate about the virtues of "epic" poetry over romance fiction, and they were studied, read, and imitated by Sidney in England, Rabelais in France, Cervantes in Spain, and Tasso in Italy.[2] Frye (1975) begins his inquiry into the history of Western romance fiction with the group of works which includes the Aithiopika, taking these Greek romances as examples of what he calls "sentimental romance" (3).

My study will follow Frye's example, both in including the Aithiopika, and in leaving out examples of medieval romance. In The Secular Scripture, Frye briefly explains his exclusion of this body of literature from his study, saying: "Medieval romance presents different structural problems, which I shall have to touch very lightly" (3). For Frye's purposes (and mine), the late Classical romances are the foundational works in a literary line which has exemplars spread out consistently over time up to the present. (He reads Tolkein's Lord of the Rings, for example, as a modern exemplar of the romance mythos.) The medieval romances stem, to some

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[1]See A. Forcione (1970): 49-87 for a discussion of the impact of the discovery of the Aithiopika on Renaissance literary-critical debates.

[2]While Ariosto would seem an obvious writer to mention in this list, in fact there is no evidence that he had access to the texts of the Greek Romances. The first edition of the Aithiopika was published in Basle in 1534, two years after the publication of Ariosto's final version of the Orlando Furioso in 1532. On the other hand, Ariosto's great poem, and the critical debate about the valorization of "epic" over "romance" (Tasso vs. Ariosto) which surrounded it, was extremely influential on the Quixote. See Forcione (1970): 11-48.

degree, from a separate literary-historical tradition, and present their own set of critical and historical issues.[3]

The medieval romances, however, do give the entire mode/genre/mythos its name--"romance." While all the terminology for long narrative fiction--"epic," "romance," or "novel"--tends to be used anachronistically (e.g. "ancient romance" and "modern epic"), the term "romance" is one of the most slippery. P. Parker's eloquent disclaimer about her broad use of the term in her study of the mode, Inescapable Romance (1979), is also applicable to my own work:

> The term "romance" is intended here neither as fixed generic prescription nor as abstract transhistorical category. The former is rendered impossible by the poets' own extension of the term beyond its strictly generic meaning...and therefore is invoked only where appropriate.... The latter is invalidated by the changing connotations of the word "romance" in the centuries after Chrétien and his Renaissance successors, and by the discontinuities as well as continuities between the manifestations of a form which historically has had an

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[3]Beer (1970), Ch. 1:

> The romance as a literary kind is often exclusively associated with medieval literature. The medieval romances certainly established a pattern which was the dominant form for fiction until perhaps the beginning of the seventeenth century. But the romance has antecedents far back beyond twelfth-century Europe and a vitality which persisted long after the Middle Ages. The Elizabethans call heavily on Greek romances; the "Western" and science fiction are frequently claimed as modern mutations (4).

> extraordinary resilience, a tendency to turn up, Proteus-like, in a multiplicity of different guises (5).[4]

My study begins with, and highlights, the Odyssey--and this needs some explanation. For several reasons, the grounding of this study in the Odyssey was unavoidable. As Ruth El Saffar reminds us in an essay on Cervantes' relationship to romance (1985), Frye himself divides the critical world into "Iliad" or "Odyssey" critics.[5] Frye, she says, "...counts himself among the latter," and, as she says of herself:

> ...I, who hadn't thought about it in that way, found on reflection that I too am probably an Odyssey critic, which may be why I spent so many years carrying around books by Frye (238).

I must count myself, like El Saffar, as an "Odyssey critic" as well. Odyssey critics, it seems, take a strong interest in romance, a type of literature which, as Frye writes in the foreword to a collection of essays on Renaissance romance,[6] is generally

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[4]R. Cohen, in Afterword to a collection of essays on generic transformation of romance (Brownlee and Brownlee, eds., 1985), discusses the difficulty of using genre classifications in regard to romance, and specifically in terms of Frye's work, which, though important, may be viewed as flawed in this area. He says,

> We can see the difficulties that will arise if we study "romance" as a genre in the manner in which critics have discussed "narrative." When Northrop Frye refers to "romance," he refers to Schiller's two terms--"naive" and "sentimental..." He wants the reader to see "romance" in early and modern times as primarily "prose narrative" of a certain type. But this is not a view of narrative structure...(271).

[5]Frye, A Natural Perspective (1965): 1.

[6]Logan, G. and G. Teskey. eds., 1990.

"consigned to the outer darkness of bedrooms, bus stations, and other places where fiction is actually read with some intensity" (ix). Unlike quixotic readers, however, Odyssey critics work to understand the attractive power of these fictions without succumbing so completely to the world of fantasy, dreams, and wish-fulfillment they alluringly offer that their powers of analysis are lost. Sometimes, they succeed--though, as El Saffar points out later in the same essay:

> Being an Odyssey critic is a tricky thing, it turns out. You have to have that secret hankering for the fantasy stuff, but you have to like to see things wrapped up at the end, to be assured that underneath it all there is a pattern (251).

In many ways, this statement is true of romance itself, a mode which hankers for both fantasy and closure at the same time.

My interest in romance as a mode--as opposed to a "genre"--also helped lead this study backward chronologically to the Odyssey. B. P. Reardon, in a recent study of the Greek romances, refers to the Odyssey as the "fons et origo of romance in antiquity" (15). He goes on to say:

> The Odyssey appears to have all the elements of romance, to set out the coordinates of the genre; it subtends, as it were, all the travel-and-adventure stories in subsequent Greek literature, if not in the whole Western tradition (15).

Reardon's point is not new. David Quint (1985), writing on Renaissance romance, points out that "...[t]he first theorist of the romanzo, Giovanni Pigna, noted its

resemblance to the Odyssey"[7] as early as 1554. The story of the Odyssey is a romance, and ancient romancers used it as a model, Heliodoros perhaps more closely than any other. So close is the relation between Heliodoros' romance and the Odyssey--in form, structure, and design--that my curiosity about the Aithiopika led me unerringly back to its great antecedent. In fact, Heliodoros' romance can fairly be read as a writer's gloss on the Odyssey--a critical reading of Homer's poem couched in the form of prose fiction.

The problems raised by Don Quixote in the context of this study are, like most of the problems raised by Cervantes' great work, both complex and ambiguous. Don Quixote is not an obvious choice for inclusion in a study of romance narrative texts, given its stance as an "anti-romance."[8] Frye (1975), who defines the "novel" as a "realistic displacement of romance" (38), posits Don Quixote as the first and best example of this tendency in Western fiction.[9] However, parody is a form of homage, and, to a rather remarkable extent, Cervantes' Quixote--his "mock-romance" with its mad hero and decidedly unromantic squire wandering through the drab hills and plains of La Mancha--shares many narrative structures and features in common with the Odyssey and the Aithiopika. The fact that Cervantes did not, originally, plan

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[7]Quint (1985): 200, n. 23.

[8]A perhaps more obvious choice would have been Los Trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda (The Trials of Persiles and Sigismunda), Cervantes' serious and self-conscious imitation of the Aithiopika--and his last published work.

[9]"The supreme example of the realistic parody of romance is of course Don Quixote, which signalized the death of one kind of fiction and the birth of another kind" (Frye, 1975: 39).

for Don Quixote to have the narrative structure it has becomes an intriguing point. The unlikely resemblances between the narrative structures of Don Quixote and the other two narratives support my sense that works operating out of the romance mode call for certain narrative structures even when their authors have no intention of providing them. There is, perhaps, a kind of "intertextual romance," a literary nostalgia which operates between texts in a literary tradition, of which the aspect of parody which Frye mentions is a part. In a remark which is equally applicable to any of the texts in this study, J. Parr (1988) says of the Quixote:

> The romance of the [Quixote] is...realized through satire. The joining of past and present is effected within the locus amoenus of [the] text, through expression of the narrative 'wish-fulfillment' implicit in an anatomy that delights in dallying with archaism, while also anticipating--as we can see retrospectively--the texts of today (165).

The methodology of this study is primarily narratological, though this term calls for some refinement. Like many American scholars, I have found the formalist aspects of French narratologie, however productive they may have been in honing the tools and terms of the trade, too rigid for my critical tastes. My own work, though informed by some of the methods developed by Roland Barthes and Gérard Genette, is much more in line with the work of such classicist/narratologists as John Winkler

and John Peradotto,[10] and the eclectic critical method evident in studies such as Peter Brooks' Reading for the Plot (1984). These critics, along with Marthe Robert and others, combine the important elements of reader-response criticism and psychoanalytic insight into their studies of the dynamics of narrative. Brooks puts it nicely in the preface to Reading for the Plot, saying: "...I am more concerned with how narratives work on us, as readers, to create models of understanding, and with why we need and want such shaping orders" (xiii). In looking to the reader as a key to understanding narrative (in assuming, that is, that readers "narrate" both themselves and narratives into existence),[11] it is possible to begin to formulate a "psychodynamics of narrative"--or what Brooks refers to, citing Susan Sontag, as "an erotics of art" (xv). As Brooks states elegantly, human beings are

> ...ceaselessly intertwined with narrative, with the stories that we tell and hear told, those we dream or imagine or would like to tell, all of which are reworked in that story of our own lives that we narrate to ourselves in an

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[10]See S. Schein, "Narratology and Homeric Studies," Poetics Today 12:3 (Fall 1991) for a review of Peradotto's work along with other recent narratological studies of Homer.

[11]Frye (1975), for example, defines the reader of romance (the "romantic reader") as a person who "would need some heroic qualities" (185), and he goes on to say that:

> "...the reader, the mental traveler, is the hero of literature, or at least of what he has read. As we have seen, the message of all romance is de te fabula: the story is about you; and it is the reader who is responsible for the way literature functions, both socially and individually" (186).

episodic, sometimes semi-conscious, but virtually uninterrupted monologue (3).

As S. Friedman points out in a recent article,[12] Lacan's axiom that "the unconscious is structured like a language" can be inverted to suggest that "the text is structured like a psyche" (18). The texts I have chosen to examine--the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote--expose, in their narrative "design and intention,"[13] the subtle interplay of (self)consciousness and narrative which I, like these other scholars, have found so fascinating. The complex relationship of each of these works to the narrative mode of romance, and their self-conscious fixation on narrative itself (produced by constant absorption and interpolation of other narratives), each highlight a critical element which Brooks calls "narrative desire." He defines this term, which he borrows from Freud's notion of Eros, as "...a force including sexual desire but larger and more polymorphous," which "...animates the sense-making process,...and lights us afire when we read" (37). The literary mode of romance, with its powerful drives of nostalgia and wish-fulfillment, provides a particularly fertile ground for the study of this "narrative desire."

I see the Odyssey as a primary source and model for later self-conscious romance fictions, and the illumination of characteristic features of Odyssean narrative is a major focus of this study. Working backwards at times from the later narratives,

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[12]S. Friedman, (1993): 13. The remark is attributed to Julia Kristeva.

[13]P. Brooks' phrase (1984).

I have tried to isolate and explore aspects of the Odyssey's narrative style, texture, form, and design to understand better the special, sometimes peculiar, manifestations of these features in the later works. I have coined the term "Odyssean romance" to describe works which show both a specific set of narrative features and a powerful connection to the literary mode of romance. My analysis will begin with an examination of the overall shape and form of all three texts--which are constructed as two-part narrative frames filled with interpolated stories. I will then explore the ways in which this form, in turn, surfaces a series of narrative issues which both stem from and shed light on the mode of literary romance. These issues include: the complex relationship between the construction of the narrative of personal identity and the construction of all other narratives; the double narrative drives of nostalgia and wish-fulfillment; and significant problems of closure in romance narrative caused by competing forces within the romance mode itself. The definition of these features and issues, and an exploration of their workings in both the frame narratives and the interpolated tales, will form the body of this study.

Part I: The (En)folded Narratives of the Odyssey, the Aithiopika, and Don Quixote

Chapter 1. Two-Part Frames

Cervantes' Don Quixote, though printed in a single volume, is, as most readers know, a work originally written and published in two distinct parts. Part I, published in 1605, is a sequential narrative whose adventures seem to occur essentially at random as the mad hero imitates the wandering courses of the caballeros andantes he has set himself to mimic. The narrative of Part I is interspersed with the interpolated stories of travelers encountered during the wanderings of Don Quixote and Sancho, and it ends with the return of the still-crazy hero to his village--locked in a cage. Part I is an open-ended work, and leaves us with a hero still very much alive, and still very crazy, eager to continue his life of knight-errantry as soon as he can escape the clutches of his worried friends and relatives. Cervantes, in fact, throws out a possibility that this novel, Part I of the Quixote, might not contain the end of the story:

> Finalmente, ellas quedaron confusas, y temerosas de que se habían de ver sin su amo y tío en el mesmo punto que tuviese alguna mejoría, y así fué como ellas se lo imaginaron (I, 70).

> (In fact they were distracted, and frightened that as soon as their master and uncle felt a little better they would find him missing once more. And events fell out as they feared.)[14]

Following the wise custom of romance writers, Cervantes leaves himself the chance to write a sequel to his novel, should it prove to be a success, which, as we now know and Cervantes soon learned, it was. He even throws out clues about the possible contents of the sequel:

> Pero el autor desta historia, puesto que con curiosidad y diligencia ha buscado los hechos que don Quijote hizo en su tercera salida, no ha podido hallar noticia de ellos, á lo menos, por escrituras autenticas; sólo la fama ha guardado, en las memorias de la Mancha, que don Quijote la tercera vez que salió de su casa fué á Zaragoza, donde se halló en unas famosas justas que en aquella ciudad hicieron, y allí le pasaron cosas dignas de su valor y buen entendimiento (I, 70).
>
> (But though the author of this history has anxiously and diligently inquired after Don Quixote's exploits on his third expedition, he has been able to discover no account of them, at least from any authentic documents. Though fame has preserved a tradition in La Mancha that the third time Don Quixote left his home he went to Saragossa, and took part in some famous jousts in that city, and that adventures there befell him worthy of his valor and of his sound intelligence.)

In case we had any doubts about the inevitability of more adventures, the narrator tells us that, indeed, a worm-eaten manuscript has been found, from which he has been able to decipher the epitaphs of the main characters of the Quixote--Don Quixote, Sancho, Dulcinea, and Rocinante. As for the future:

> ...los demás, por estar carcomida la letra, se entregaron á un académico para que por conjeturas los declarase. Tiénese noticia que lo ha hecho, á costa de

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[14]Unless otherwise specified, Spanish quotations are from the Clásicos Castellanos edition, edited and annotated by F. Rodríguez Marín (Madrid, 1941). Translations of Don Quixote are adapted from the translation of J. M. Cohen (Penguin Books, 1985.) References are to part and chapter number.

> muchas vigilias y mucho trabajo, y que tiene intención de sacallos á luz, con esperanza de la tercera salida de don Quijote (I, 70).
>
> (The rest, as the characters were worm-eaten, were entrusted to a university scholar to guess out their meaning. We are informed that he has done so, at the cost of many nights of study and much labour, and that he intends to publish them, which gives us hope of a third expedition of Don Quixote.) [emphasis added]

Cervantes was, apparently, working on the famous "tercera salida" for several years after the publication, and almost immediate success, of Part I of the Quixote, but he had other projects to compete for his time. In 1613, he published his Novelas exemplares, a major work of fiction, and he was also working on what was to be his last published work, Los trabajos de Persiles y Sigismunda, a "Byzantine novel" modeled on Heliodoros' Aithiopika, which was posthumously published in 1617.

In 1614, however, Cervantes received a terrible shock when a spurious and plagiarized "continuation" of his Quixote, entitled Segundo tomo del ingenioso hidalgo don Quixote de la Mancha que contiene su tercera salida: y es la quinta parte de sus aventuras (Second Volume of the Ingenious Hidalgo Don Quixote of La Mancha which Contains his Third Sally and is the Fifth Part of his Adventures), was published under the pseudonym "Alonso Fernández de Avellaneda." To this day, scholars do not know the identity of the author now known simply as "Avellaneda," but it seems clear that he was a bitter rival of Cervantes, and that he had access to at least some of the contents of Cervantes' manuscript of his own Part II. As the most recent translators of Avellaneda's novel into English (1980) point out:

> Whoever he [Avellaneda] was, he somehow seems to have gotten wind of what Cervantes' Part II contained, for he did far more than send Don Quixote and

> Sancho off to Saragossa as Cervantes had written was to be their destination. At times he actually reproduced whole lines seen in Cervantes' forthcoming book with many of the same proverbs and all this verbatim...apparently an even greater bonus to Cervantes' rival was the chance to vilify, insult and otherwise damage Cervantes himself whom he seems to have hated exceedingly, even though he admired his craftsmanship (vi).

It is hard to imagine a more complex intertextual relationship between a series of writings than the one created by Avellaneda's plagiaristic coup, or Cervantes' response to it. Cervantes' original work, Part I of the Quixote, had invited the disaster which now befell the writer, with a twist he could hardly have invented, for the false sequel stole ideas not only from his published manuscript, but from his unpublished one as well. Cervantes, however, was quick to capitalize on this inter-literary fiasco by altering his own version of Part II, which he published in 1615, one year after Avellaneda's sequel. Cervantes' sequel to Part I of the Quixote takes into account and responds to Avellaneda's offending text. Characters in the authentic Cervantine Part II of the Quixote move through a landscape which is awash with a variorum of texts: Cervantes' Part I, the unpublished manuscript of the Cervantine Part II which Avellaneda had copied from, Avellaneda's spurious Part II, and Cervantes' published Part II, altered to include references to all the others. One of the most obvious changes Cervantes made in response to Avellaneda's text was to change his characters' final destination: they go to Barcelona so as to avoid being confused with the false versions of themselves which Avellaneda had sent to

Saragossa, following Cervantes' suggestion at the end of Part I. Cervantes' authentic continuation of Don Quixote also precluded the possibility of any future plagiarism by ending with the vital, and apparently pre-planned, death of his main character, a death certified to the world in a clerk's document drawn up to "...deprive any author [other than Cide Hamete Benengeli] of all excuse for falsely resuscitating him and writing interminable histories of his deeds" (II, 74). Thus it is, as a direct result of this fascinating literary muddle--and because of Cervantes' desire to protect his creation from all future plagiarists--that the Cervantine Don Quixote became a two-part work. The aged Cervantes was ailing and not far from his death as Part II of the Quixote was being published in 1615, and he followed his creation, figuratively, into a closed and never to be re-opened book--by dying.

It is said by readers of the Quixote that if there had been no Avellaneda to write the spurious Part II, Cervantes would have had to invent him, so brilliant, sophisticated, and profound is the novel which grows out of his response to Avellaneda's offending text. Throughout Part II of the Quixote, characters discuss, refute, vilify, and mock the spurious Avellanedan sequel, thereby adding layers of complexity and depth to Cervantes' own work. As Avellaneda's translators have said:

> Avellaneda's contribution to Cervantes' Part II increased still more the excellence of that belated volume, though in a way even Cervantes may not have at first realized. But upon reflection he must have come to understand

> even in the heat of his never diminishing fury, that his attacker had actually led him to material he would not have otherwise utilized (vii).

For all intents and purposes, however, the fact that the Quixote as we have it is a two-part work would seem to be the result of an accident of literary history rather than of a conscious plan on the part of its author. The "open" ending of the original Part I of the Quixote is entirely conventional for the type of romance Cervantes was parodying; and, as is the case with the romances themselves, there is no particular reason to assume a limit on the number of possible sequels, written by a variety of authors over a period of years. Like many parodies, the text Cervantes created behaved very much like the works it poked fun at. Avellaneda's own text remained true to the convention by inviting yet another author to write the story of Don Quixote's fourth sally--a "dare" no one had time to take him up on. For, in order to maintain a modicum of control over a text which, it seems, did not invite it, Cervantes was forced to turn the Quixote into a closed, though bi-partite, work. The open structure of the romances which Cervantes parodied helped lead to the open structure of Part I of the Quixote which, in turn, led to the complex existence of Part II. Cervantes' "anti-romance" recreates what it parodies in both structure and texture.

For whatever reason it came about, however, this structure--a closed narrative diptych containing a large number of interpolated tales--is a significant one for the purposes of this study, for it bears much in common with the structures of both the Odyssey and the Aithiopika. Those who know the Odyssey well, and particularly those who read the poem in its original Greek, often think of that work also as falling

into two parts. One reason for this is to some extent a literary-historical accident, as it is in the case of the Quixote, for the Alexandrian editors responsible for modern divisions of the Homeric poems broke the Iliad and Odyssey into twenty-four books, one for each of the letters of the Greek alphabet. For ease of publication, many editions of both the Iliad and Odyssey are presented in two volumes, the first containing Books 1 through 12, and the second Books 13 through 24.

While the division of the text of the Iliad into volumes containing Books 1-12 and Books 13-24 does not appear narratologically significant, the same division of the Odyssey works completely differently. Here, the division into of the text into two parts--or "halves"--is striking: for the narrative of the Odyssey also breaks into two parts at the near mid-point of the poem, when Odysseus steps onto the soil of his island home in the opening lines of Book 13. The Odyssey's division into two separate halves--even moreso perhaps than is the case with the Quixote--comes to have narrative significance in the overall pattern and design of the work.

The example of the Aithiopika in this context is somewhat less subtle: the Aithiopika is a two-part narrative similar to the Odyssey because Heliodoros closely imitated and absorbed into his romance as many aspects of the Odyssey as he could manage--including its two-part narrative structure. In his narrative, much of the first half is taken up with interpolated stories which provide information necessary both for characters within the text, and for readers outside of the text, to understand the enormously complicated plot. In imitation of his Odyssean model, Heliodoros spends the first half of his narrative setting up the requirements for the plot's resolution, and

the second half carrying them out. His imitation of the Odyssey works in two directions: because his mirror is an informed and clever one, Heliodoros' narrative parody helps to lay bare the structural framework of both works--his own romance and Homer's epic. Conversely, a careful reading of the Odyssey helps a reader appreciate the humor and exuberance of the Aithiopika's parody more fully. The Aithiopika can be effectively read, on one level, as a secondary critical work on the Odyssey; much of its "imitation" actually helps to spotlight aspects of the Odyssey's structure which are more difficult to pick out from within the fluid medium of epic narrative.

The complex, parodic, intertextual relationship which exists between the Odyssey and the Aithiopika is not unlike the one which exists between the Quixote and the romances of chivalry. As we saw in the case of the Quixote, works which parody other works often themselves take on qualities of the works they poke fun at. One of the questions posed in the comparison of these texts concerns the nature of the narrative forces which might have been at work to create the two-part structure in which they ultimately present themselves. Because each of these three texts falls into two distinct halves, a shape is created which allows characters in the second half to take self-conscious account of the existence of the narrative(s) of the first half. In each of these texts, therefore, we see intertextual relationships not only with a variety of texts outside of themselves, but between their own first and second halves as

well.[15] Narrative is so doubled-back on itself in these fictions that a kind of "internal intertextuality" (intra-intertextuality?) is established. My theory is that this "folding" and "enfolding" of narrative within narrative in all three cases may ultimately be connected to the relationship of each work to the literary mode of romance.

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[15]See C. Johnson (1990): "Part I is present in part II much as Amadís and all the other preexisting literature is present in part I, and in the same way, it is subjected to critical inquiry and modification" (87).

Chapter 2. Tales in Frames

As the earliest of the three narratives in this study, and as a foundational work in the development of the narrative mode of romance in the West, the Odyssey lays out structural and generic coordinates for the other two works. A detailed look at the shape and texture of its narrative may help to highlight some of the issues raised by the distinctive narrative structure of each of these three texts: a two-part frame packed with interpolated stories.

On the cover of Frye's Secular Scripture, which is subtitled "A Study of the Structure of Romance," there appears a picture of a nautilus shell, with its familiar spiralling design, each smaller chamber enfolded by a larger, concentric one. Repeating, enfolded, and mirroring designs such as this are often invoked as images to describe the "shape" of romance fiction.[16] Using the Odyssey as a template for the other two works in this study, I would like to examine the ways in which Homer turns his poem into a "spiralling, enfolded, and mirrored" narrative.

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[16]See, for example: P. Parker's (1979) discussion of "error" in romance, esp. pp. 16-31; Frye (1975), esp. Chs. 1 and 6, where he evokes images of romance literature as a primary "mirror" for and about human experience.

From beginning to end, the "story" of the Odyssey is relatively straightforward.[17] The full story is twenty years long--including the ten years of the Trojan War. Odysseus, on his way home from Troy, has been delayed an extra ten years, wandering in uncharted realms; his wife, son, parents, household, and kingdom have languished for all this time without reliable word either of his whereabouts or of his death; young men from local towns, reared in his absence in a morally impoverished and king-less society, rudely court his wife, devour his property, and threaten the life his young son; with the help of his divine patroness, Athena, and his own native wit, Odysseus is eventually able to return to his island home; arriving in disguise in order to plot a way to defeat and punish the suitors, he exposes his identity only gradually to the faithful; with clever planning and divine aid, he is able to kill the suitors and regain his home and kingdom; Zeus and Athena assure the future peace of the island by preventing civil war.

Told in this linear way, the story of the Odyssey is exciting, though not particularly complicated; events follow one another logically and causally. However, as confused first-time readers are particularly aware, this is not the way the Odyssey is, in fact, narrated. The time-frame of the poem is instead exquisitely complicated: the poet creates a narrative which folds back on itself, beginning in the final year of a history which, for the people of Ithaka, has lasted for nearly twenty years, and then

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[17]I use "story" (events in time) as opposed to "discourse" (the narration of those events). These terms are part of the vocabulary of narratologists. See, for example, S. Chatman, Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film (1978), esp. Introduction, pp. 15-42.

moving forward and backward painfully through a series of interpolated narratives which gradually account for the missing time.

The poem opens with a proem which talks about events which have already occurred, taking for granted a familiarity with parts of the which story readers (technically) have yet to experience--such as Odysseus' loss of his companions through their eating of the cattle of Helios. This "introduction" to the poem will make sense, in fact, only after we have read at least the first half of the Odyssey, whose story it alludes to in a fantastically condensed version. L. Slatkin (1989), in an article which sets itself the difficult project of answering the question, "Why is the narrative structure of the Odyssey so complicated?", makes an excellent brief summary of the poem (2-3) which manages to capture with alarming clarity the extraordinary lack of clarity in the Odyssey's storyline.[18] She points out, for example, as just one among many such narrative anomalies, that "...by the time Odysseus rejects the immortality Calypso offers [in Book 5], he has already been to the underworld [in Book 11], has seen death, and has heard Achilles' evaluation of it" (2-3).

Homer further folds the narrative of his poem by including the telling of the ten-year period of Odysseus' wanderings as an inset tale narrated by Odysseus himself. This long interpolated narrative covers the ten years Odysseus has been missing, with most of the details concerning the three most dangerous and exciting

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[18]Page references are to an unpublished typescript. The revised article will be included in: Reading the Odyssey: Selected Interpretive Essays. S. Schein, ed. and intro., 1994 (forthcoming).

years of his ordeal, before he is marooned on Kalypso's island for his seven years of captivity. The story takes the form of a spellbinding flashback, recounted to the Phaiakians in the nineteenth year of his absence from Ithaka, the ninth year of his wanderings. Before Odysseus narrates these stories, the events he describes are virtually unknown to any of the human characters in the text: since all Odysseus' comrades have perished, and he has not seen any other human beings since then, only Menelaos, who has received special knowledge from Proteus, knows of his whereabouts.[19] The full story of his adventures, however, is as yet un-tellable by anyone but Odysseus--or one of the all-seeing gods.

During his "apologue," as this narrative has come to be called, Odysseus relates many of the tales for which the Odyssey is famous: the adventures with Kirke, the Kyklops, the Seirenes, Skylla and Charybdis, and the visit to the Underworld. The other nearly seven years of his absence from Ithaka he accounts for by referring to his long, frustrating imprisonment on Kalypso's island, which has also been described to readers in the proem, and to Telemakhos (and us) by Menelaos in Book 4 (ll.555-60). Little by little, the ten- (or twenty-) year time-gap is filled in with interpolated tales told by a series of narrators, but mostly by the hero himself.

Though they have had news of the events of the ten-year Trojan War through the stories and songs brought back by other returning Greeks, the people of Ithaka are

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[19]Menelaos passes his knowledge of Odysseus' captivity on Kalypso's island on to Telemakhos in Book 3 (ll.555-560) and Telemakhos repeats it to Penelope when he tells her his version of his travels in Book 16 (ll.142-146). Penelope, true to character, does not appear to be impressed by this fourth-hand information, however; she reacts with hopeful skepticism, as she does to all tales about her husband.

missing the one song which will allow them to move forward with their lives--a song which might be called "The Return of Odysseus"--or the Odyssey. As the poem begins, they have, in effect, learned the contents of the "Iliad" and all of the other Nostoi, or "Tales of Return"--except one; they are now waiting, as we are, to learn the contents of one last song.[20] The Odyssey backtracks for most of its first half through the many preceding years, filling in the stories of the returns of other Greek heroes through tales told by one character within the text to another. Large sections of the poem are composed almost entirely of inset narratives: in the first half (Books 1 through 12), the bulk of Books 3 and 4 consist of the reminiscences of Nestor and Menelaos about Odysseus and the Trojan War, narrated in direct address to Telemakhos; Books 9 through 12, which include the legendary tales of Odysseus' wanderings, are narrated in their entirety by Odysseus himself in the court of his Phaiakian hosts. In only five of the first dozen books of the Odyssey, in fact, does anything but storytelling actually occur; one of the principal actions of the poem during its first half is the telling of tales. Much of what action occurs in Part I of the poem either is secondary (narrated within some other narrative), or it is action whose

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[20]In his brilliant essay, "The Odysseys Within the Odyssey," Italo Calvino (1982) says:

> At the beginning of the poem, the story of Telemachus is the search for a story that is not there, the story that will be the Odyssey. Phemius, the bard at the royal palace of Ithaca, already knows the nostoi of the other heroes. Only one is lacking, that of his own king. For this reason Penelope doesn't want to hear him sing any more. Then Telemachus goes off in search of this story among the veterans of the Trojan War. If he finds the story, whether it ends happily or not, Ithaca will emerge from the timeless, lawless, and chaotic situation in which it has been for many years (135).

primary effect is to set other narratives in motion: Telemakhos' journey to Pylos and Sparta in Books 3 and 4, for example, has the effect of setting Nestor's and Menelaos' storytelling in motion; Odysseus' journey from Ogygia to Skheria leads eventually to the four books (Books 9 through 12) of inset tales, as well as to the presentation of the "Song of Ares and Aphrodite" in Book 8 (ll.266-369), and to the telling of other tales of the Trojan War ("The Quarrel of Odysseus and Akhilleus," ll.73-82, and "The Song of the Trojan Horse," ll.492-520).

The poem's storyline splits into two halves at the point when Odysseus reaches the shore of his island in the beginning of the 13th book, more or less the mid-point of the poem. The first 100 lines or so of Book 13 are taken up with Odysseus' leave-taking from his Phaiakian hosts and his enchanted voyage back to Ithaka; he is lifted, sleeping, out of the Phaiakian cutter at 13.117, and placed, finally, on his native soil. The Odyssey's narrative arrives at a climax at this point in Book 13 (the poem has presented Odysseus' main objective as one of making it back to Ithaka), and then proceeds forward in the second half to its conclusion (the difficult task of regaining his place with wife, home, and kingdom). This complex time-structure--besides making the poem extremely difficult for first-time readers to follow--also has powerful effects on the narrative at many levels.

In Part II, Odysseus begins to spin his "Kretan tales,"[21] telling to a disguised Athena, Eumaios, Antinoös,[22] Penelope, and Laertes no less than five different lying versions of the narrative he has already told to the Phaiakians in Books 9 through 12.[23] In addition to Odysseus' Kretan tales, Eumaios also recites a long narrative version of his own life story (15.389-484); Telemakhos, on his return to Ithaka, narrates to his mother the stories of his adventures (17.107-149), and the Homeric narrator interpolates the story of the birth, naming, and coming of age of Odysseus himself (19.392-466).

From the moment of his return to Ithaka, the situation of both the hero and the poem which narrates him into being are profoundly changed. The story is only days away from its crisis (Odysseus' slaying of the suitors and regaining of his wife and home), yet it takes the poet the same number of lines to carry the plot through these few remaining days as it had for him to carry it through the previous nineteen years. The changing relationship between time and words which causes this tremendous slowing down in Part II is a function of important differences in the relationship between narrative and life in the first and second halves of the poem.

For all the characters in the first half of the poem, life has a timeless quality. There is an atmosphere of limbo: many years have passed, and everyone, it seems, is

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[21]So named because they are often set on Krete, or have a Kretan protagonist.

[22]The tale Odysseus spins for Antinoös in Book 17, shortened by his audience's poor attention span, is actually set in Egypt, but is in keeping with the other Kretan tales.

[23]These tales occur at: 13.256-286; 14.192-359; 17.414-444; 19.165-202; 24.265-279.

waiting for some sort of resolution to the mystery of Odysseus' whereabouts. Actions have a repetitive, unresolved air about them: Penelope waits, weaving and un-weaving Laertes' shroud; Telemakhos daydreams about the father he has never seen; old Laertes buries himself in the routine of his farm; the suitors eat an endless, purposeless feast, celebrating no particular occasion (ironically, when they do finally celebrate an event--the feast day of Apollo--their long wait reaches its climax and ends with their deaths); "resourceful" Odysseus sits idle on Ogygia, weeping and staring at the sea. The actions which mark the passage of mortal time are either postponed or put indefinitely on hold: Odysseus can neither perform heroic deeds, nor settle back into a productive peacetime existence; Telemakhos cannot mature into manhood; neither the young suitors nor Penelope can (re)marry. Time is not passing meaningfully: it is as if the human world were being forced to exist by the lazy rules of Olympian time, which for mortals produces a state more hellish than heavenly. For human beings, with their limited youth and life, this "wasting of time" is an agonizing punishment, as the poet reminds us when he describes Odysseus weeping on Ogygia, pouring out his "sweet youth" (glukus aiōn--5.152) along with his tears.

Odysseus remains out of the normal course of time until he sets foot on Ithaka--the mid-point in the two-part construction of the narrative. As he steps back onto Ithaka, he also re-enters the course of normal chronological life experience, and he will eventually bring mortal time back onto the island with him, pushing life on Ithaka back into history. His suspended story, the missing "nostos-song" which has left a void in time for Ithacans, is completed by the Odyssey itself. Ithacans do not yet

know the story which has already been set in motion when Odysseus steps onto his island and restarts the frozen clock, but time moves forward from that moment on.

In narrative terms, the fact that time is moving forward in Part II is expressed at least partly by the significant fact that the second half of the poem contains very little material presented in the confused form of a flashback. In Part I, many of the interpolated narratives function to fill in "missing" chronological pieces of Odysseus' story; in Part II, most of the interpolated narratives are not "necessary" in the way they are in Part I: the plot could move forward without them. This is why some readers of the Odyssey complain about the "slowing of the pace" in the second half of the poem; the tale-telling which occurs in Part II seems, from a narrative perspective, to be a delaying tactic. By slowing down the progress of the exciting (and long-awaited) denouement, the poet forces his audience to pay attention to the action of narrative itself--to the play of tales and tale-telling. He forces us to remain aware of the narrative medium within which he works. Ironically, perhaps, only one interpolated narrative in Part II acts as a true flashback--the story of Odysseus' scar, and of his birth, naming, and coming to manhood, told as an interpolated tale at the moment Odysseus is recognized by his old nurse, Eurykleia (19.392-466). With this re-capitulation of the hero's very birth, no further flashbacks are necessary to "fill in" chronology or character, and, with this notable exception, the second half of the

Odyssey combines action and narrative, time and voice, and allows them to move forward together.[24]

Horace described both the Odyssey and Iliad as beginning "in medias res"--meaning not "in the middle," as these words are commonly mistranslated, but "in the middle of things." Both epics invite us to plunge into a world of pre-existing narrative. With its roots in a tradition of oral formulaic poetry extending back into pre-history, the Odyssey's story is one which has been told and re-told--which, in effect, has already happened before we read it. At the end of the poem's proem, the poet asks the Muse to tell the story "kai hemin"--"even (or "also") to us" (Od.1.10). As Stanford (1974) writes in his commentary on these lines:

> καὶ ἡμῖν : ambiguous: either=the poet and his audience who, according to the conventional view of inspiration assumed in this exordium, are presumed ignorant till the Muse informs them, καὶ implying 'as well as yourself', i.e. 'share your knowledge with us'; or else καὶ means 'as you have told others before us', which some have taken as evidence for pre-homeric poems about O[dysseus]. I now prefer the second view (I, 208-9). [emphasis added]

Both of these interpretations allude to the existence of a "prior" narrative: the words "kai hēmin" imply that the first telling of this story is long buried, hidden in the folds of time, memory, and tellings and re-tellings of the tale. The special kind of intertextuality I have mentioned as being an integral part of the structure of each of

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[24]This interpolated tale, functioning as a flashback in the mind of Eurycleia, provides a special focalization effect.

the texts in this study appears first in the Odyssey's apparent interpolation into itself of other versions of the Odyssey,[25] as well as of other "Songs of Return," the so-called Nostoi, some of which are recited by Nestor and Menelaos in Books 3 and 4. All the tales of the Iliad underlie the Odyssey's narrative as well--including, also, some stories of the Trojan War which do not appear in the Iliad, such as the tale Odysseus tells Eumaios in Book 14 (14.462-506) to encourage him to lend him a warm cloak, the story Menelaos tells of the Trojan Horse (4.271-289), the tale Helen tells of some of Odysseus' clever war-time exploits (4.238-264), and finally, the lengthy description of the funeral of Achilles reported by Agamemnon's ghost in his return appearance during the second Nekuia (24.35-97).

L. Slatkin (1989) helps to elucidate the seemingly paradoxical fact that the term "intertextuality" can be applied--one might argue must be applied--to an oral poem such as the Odyssey in her re-examination of the narratological implications of the oral poet's traditional method of composing by "theme:"

> As the accomplished oral poet regenerates the tradition in which he sings, his use of recognizable themes allows him--indeed, requires him--to situate his song in the context of other narratives on the same subject, within the same genre...The oral poem, therefore, continuously repositions itself with respect to a tradition made up of alternative narrative possibilities... This means that there will inevitably be diverse "versions" and "variants" of a single song

[25]This is one way of viewing the Kretan tales.

> which exist, as it were, in an implicit dialogue with each other (7) [emphasis added].[26]

The narrative texture of the Odyssey is permeated by the sense that all stories are fluid, and that each song, as Slatkin says, "...must necessarily reflect, and participate in, the evolution of possible alternatives to the version it actually presents" (7).

The narrative of the Aithiopika is constructed in much the same way as that of the Odyssey, with a fold down its middle: a tortuous, winding, regressive narrative forms the first half, full of flashbacks and interpolated stories, while the second half progresses forward, using knowledge gained in Part I to propel itself toward the final goal of Part II. As J. R. Morgan (1989) describes it in his essay, "A Sense of the Ending: The Conclusion of Heliodoros' Aithiopika:"

> The impulse of the first half of the [Aithiopika] is primarily hermeneutic: the reader's desire is directed not so much at learning what happens next and how the story ends as at discovering what has already happened and how the story began. By 5.33.3 [the mid-point of the romance] all the enigmas of the mysterious opening have been resolved; from 5.33.4 onwards récit and histoire coincide, and the novel becomes end-directed (303).

The Aithiopika has its own version of the kind of "internal intertextuality" which so distinguishes the narrative texture of the Odyssey. Among the Aithiopika's internal "texts" is a prophecy, revealed in indirect discourse during the first half of

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[26]Slatkin here cites A. B. Lord The Singer of Tales (1960): 100.

the romance (Aith.2.35.5) in a chance conversation between an old man named Kalasiris and a young man named Knemon. The words of this prophesy, which defines the shape and direction of the Aithiopika's narrative, are at first mysterious, but gradually become comprehensible during a complete reading the romance. Heliodoros shapes his narrative around this (previously spoken) prophetic language, though it is difficult both for readers of the romance and for characters within to imagine how it will be enacted. Prophetic speech is deterministic, however, and it predicts the shape of narrative even if it does not prescribe the exact workings of plot. Heliodoros sets himself the task of creating a narrative which will fulfill the words of a prophecy which says:

> Τὴν χάριν ἐν πρώτοις αὐτὰρ κλέος ὕστατ' ἔχουσαν
> φράζεσθ', ὦ Δελφοί, τόν τε θεᾶς γενέτην·
> οἳ νηὸν προλιπόντες ἐμὸν καὶ κῦμα τεμόντες
> ἵξοντ' ἠελίου πρὸς χθόνα κυανέην,
> τῇ περ ἀριστοβίων μέγ' ἀέθλιον ἐξάψονται
> λευκὸν ἐπὶ κροτάφων στέμμα μελαινομένων.
> (Aith.2.35.5)
>
> (One who starts in grace and ends in glory, another goddess-born:/ of these I bid you have regard, O Delphi!/ 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 brows of black.)[27]

The Aithiopika is, in a sense, written "backwards": its incomprehensible end is prophesied at the beginning, and our task as readers (and Heliodoros' as writer) is to imagine--and then create--a text which will match itself to the prophecy. Heliodoros

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[27]Greek quotations from the Aithiopika are from the Budé edition (Paris, 1960). Unless otherwise specified, all English translations of the Aithiopika are adapted from of J. R. Morgan's translation in: Reardon, ed., Collected Ancient Greek Novels, (1989).

must turn a word-game into a coherent narrative. The words of the prophecy provide an artificial device for the author, and a guessing game or treasure hunt for his readers, who expect this sort of entertainment as one of the conventions of Greek romance. Much of the pleasure in this text lies in appreciating Heliodoros' cleverness as he manipulates his complex story so that all the threads fall into sensible patterns. The characters themselves applaud his skill each time they marvel at a story well-told, or at the strange workings of "fortune," a term we suspect may be a pseudonym for the clever author himself. In the Odyssey, on the other hand, Homer tucks the threads of his narrative in, and lets stand the fiction that Odysseus stages his own stories. When we applaud the cleverness of the "man of many turnings," we agree to the illusion of a great character's autonomy. This is an example of a tendency I have noted for Heliodoros' text to help make explicit certain features of the Odyssey which are left implicit in their Homeric context.

The plot Heliodoros concocts to enact the words of the prophecy--that is, the plot of the Aithiopika--is a strange tale, one which is further determined by an internal text. A message, addressed to the infant Charikleia in the second person, is embroidered on the cloth in which she is wrapped by her mother before being abandoned to live out her fate--the workings of which will ultimately produce the "Aithiopika." The contents of this message are translated by Kalasiris from an obscure dialect of Aithiopian hieroglyphics (obscurity within obscurity!), and related to Knemon--and us--during the same interpolated narrative which tells us the words of the prophecy. During the telling of this tale we learn the following: that Charikleia

is the white offspring of black parents, the King and Queen of Aithiopia, Hydaspes and Persinna; at the moment of her conception, her mother, Persinna, having glanced at a painting of the heroine Andromeda, a Greek maiden with fair skin, conceives at that moment a baby who is born white; fearing that King Hydaspes will suspect her of adultery, Persinna sends the child away to be reared in a foreign place, wrapped in a cloth embroidered with the strange story of her origins (Aith.4.8.1-5).

The story of Charikleia's birth which we learn in the first half of the Aithiopika exists, then, already, in an unspoken and unspeakable form: it is a tale embroidered into an ornate cloth, inscribed in a foreign language, embedded in the broken narrative of interrupted discourse, and encoded in the riddle of prophetic language. The first half of the romance is a linguistic treasure hunt where names are puns, stories break off in the middle to be continued by others, and plots and sub-plots intertwine. The narrative seems controlled equally by mad chance and divine determinism, as the weird twists and turns of the story make their inexorable way toward their (predetermined) end.

Much of the first half of the Aithiopika's narrative, like its Odyssean model, is taken up by tale-telling. The longest interpolated tale is one told by Kalasiris to a young Greek named Knemon in the previously mentioned conversation during Books 2 through 5 (Aith.2.21-5.33). This complex internal narrative, which involves several degrees of interpolation, contains a revelation of the outline and direction of the main plot--the story of Charikleia's origins, and of the trials and tribulations of her "odyssey" with Theagenes--and is a parody of Odysseus' long narrative in Odyssey 9

through 12. Kalasiris is an old priest who understands the riddle of the heroine's identity, and who knows what the plot must accomplish in order for the protagonists to fulfill the goals of their prophesied future. The role of Kalasiris in Heliodoros' romance is crucial, for it is he who acts as an internal interpreter and narrator. As J. Winkler (1982) points out, Kalasiris is a "crafty narrator" (93), a stand-in for the author working from inside the text. A skilled manipulator of language, he uses the power of storytelling (and of lying) to ensure the outcome he knows must occur. He plays aspects of Odysseus' role which the Aithiopika's female protagonist, Charikleia, cannot play herself, restricted as she is by both gender and youth. Heliodoros recreates all of Odysseus' significant skills in his romance, but he fractures them, dividing them up among several characters: it is Charikleia who struggles for nostos, while her beloved, Theagenes, performs heroic male deeds; the role of Knemon, the young Greek whose fate integrates the workings of his life into the fulfillment of the Aithiopika's story, is to be an avid and romantic solicitor of tales, while Kalasiris inherits Odysseus' control of language.

As in its Odyssean model, tale-telling begins very early in the Aithiopika's narrative, in Book 1, when Knemon is first thrown together with the hero and heroine, Theagenes and Charikleia. Later, Knemon will also encounter Kalasiris, who has been temporarily separated from his young charges. Both encounters are characterized by intense narrative activity, as Knemon both solicits and produces tales. Winkler (1982) describes Knemon (whose name is etymologically derived from the Greek word "knaō" [κνάω], meaning "to scratch or itch") as "an aggressively

romantic reader" (139). Knemon is addicted, it seems, to narrative in all its forms, though he is a naive audience, easily distracted from everyday reality by the romantic world of a "good story."[28]

The long narrative which Kalasiris relates to Knemon, which takes up most of the action in Books 2 through 5, has much the same function as Odysseus' tales in Odyssey 9 through 12 in that it helps bring the story of the Aithiopika (retrospectively) back to where it began: for Heliodoros, like Homer, also begins his romance in medias res--"in the middle of things." Unlike its Odyssean model, however, the Aithiopika's second half is not marked by the inclusion of a great number of re-told versions of tales already told in Part I. Instead, Part II is taken up almost entirely with travel, battle, and action as Heliodoros reverses the movement of his Homeric model.[29] Odysseus has done nearly all of his geographical traveling by the end of Part I of the Odyssey, actually stepping onto the shore of his small island at the beginning of Book 13, and working his way inward from then on, toward his own bed-chamber. Charikleia and Theagenes, on the other hand, are caught up in the vast and exotic geo-political landscape of the Greco-Roman world in Part II of the Aithiopika; they are cast into the affairs of state of several far-flung North African kingdoms.

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[28]Knemon resembles Don Quixote in this respect.

[29]It has been suggested to me that Heliodoros may be following a Vergilian model in this instance of Homeric borrowing, reversing the course of the Odyssey in his romance as Vergil reverses the two Homeric epics in the Aeneid (Odyssey-Iliad).

The words of the Aithiopika's prophecy are revealed to us in discourse which is indirect by several degrees. We find that the words appear first in an interpolated narrative being told by Kalasiris to Knemon. Kalasiris has heard the prophecy spoken by a priestess, who herself speaks indirectly for the god Apollo. The god, therefore, speaks through the priestess to Kalasiris and an assembled audience, and Kalasiris speaks the words, in turn, to Knemon and, indirectly, to us. The information contained in the prophecy is therefore five times removed by the time it reaches us.

In using this complicated frame, Heliodoros is probably making a playful reference to Odyssey 9, where, while recounting his story to the Phaiakians, Odysseus repeats a prophecy spoken to him by the Kyklops, Polyphemos, whom he has just blinded. The now sightless Kyklops "sees" the meaning in an old prophecy he had heard which predicted both the arrival of a man called "Odysseus" and the fact that this same Odysseus would maim him:

> "ὦ πόποι, ἦ μάλα δή με παλαίφατα θέσφαθ' ἱκάνει.
> ἔσκε τις ἐνθάδε μάντις ἀνὴρ ἠΰς τε μέγας τε,
> Τήλεμος Εὐρυμίδης, ὃς μαντοσύνῃ ἐκέκαστο
> καὶ μαντεύομενος κατεγήρα Κυκλώπεσσιν·
> ὅς μοι ἔφη τάδε πάντα τελευτήσεσθαι ὀπίσσω,
> χειρῶν ἐξ 'Οδυσῆος ἀμαρτήσεσθαι ὀπωπῆς" (Od.9.507-12).
>
> ('Ah now, a prophecy spoken of old is come to completion./ There used to be a man here, great and strong, and a prophet,/ Telemos, Eurymos' son, who for prophecy was pre-eminent/ and grew old as a prophet among the Cyclopes. This man told me/ how all this that has happened now must someday be accomplished,/ and how I must lose the sight of my eye at the hands of Odysseus.)[30]

[30]Unless otherwise indicated, all english quotations from the Odyssey are from the Lattimore translation (New York, 1965).

In the Odyssean example of indirect prophetic speech, the audience is presented, after the fact, with a narrative version of direct prophetic speech which had predicted an action which, at the time the speech is repeated, has already occurred. Like many prophecies, the words were incomprehensible at the time they were originally spoken, but they predicted a "plot"--or action--which did occur, which has already occurred by the time the words are reported indirectly. That is, by the time we hear the prophetic words recalled by Polyphemos and reported second-hand by Odysseus to his Phaiakian hosts, Polyphemos has long-since been blinded, and Odysseus has already served out many years of punishment for this act. The indirect prophesy acts, confusingly, as a look into the "past" at a prediction of a "future"--which has already occurred!

At the time the words of the Aithiopika's prophecy are repeated by Kalasiris to Knemon, however, they have not yet been carried out, and Kalasiris does offer us the means to guess how they will eventually be enacted. Heliodoros loses no opportunity to bring this point home to his readers, comparing our perplexity about the future shape of his narrative to that of the confusion of the crowd of bystanders who are witnesses to the priestess' original speech. As Kalasiris, continuing his narrative to Knemon, points out:

> «Ταῦτα μὲν ὡς ἀνεῖπεν ὁ θεός, ἀμηχανία πλείστη τοὺς περιεστῶτας εἰσεδύετο τὸν χρησμὸν ὅ τι βούλοιτο φράζειν ἀποροῦντας· ἄλλος γὰρ πρὸς ἄλλο τι τὸ λόγιον ἔσπα καὶ ὡς ἕκαστος εἶχε βουλήσεως, οὕτω καὶ ὑπελάμβανεν. Οὕπω δὲ οὐδεὶς τῶν ἀληθῶν ἐφήπτετο, χρησμοὶ γὰρ καὶ ὄνειροι τὰ πολλὰ τοῖς τέλεσι κρίνονται, καὶ ἄλλως οἱ Δελφοὶ πρὸς τὴν πομπὴν ἐπτοημένοι μεγαλοπρεπῶς ἠὐτρεπισμένην ἠπείγοντο, τὰ χρησθέντα πρὸς τὸ ἀκριβὲς ἀνιχνεύειν ἀμελήσαντες» (Aith.2.36.1-2). [emphasis added]

('So spake the god, but the bystanders were completely nonplussed and quite at a loss to explain the meaning of the oracle. They each tried to extract a different interpretation from it; each understood it in a sense that matched his own wishes. As yet not one of them had discovered its real meaning, for by and large the interpretation of dreams and oracles depends on the outcome. In any case, the people of Delphi were in too much of a hurry...no one took the time to investigate exactly what the oracle signified.')

As the second half of the Aithiopika begins, the linguistic riddle of Charikleia's identity has been "solved"--but not resolved, for knowledge has not yet become action. While the first half dramatizes the discovery of a prophetically determined plot, the second half performs its enactment. Charikleia falls into her parents' arms at the conclusion of the Aithiopika much as Odysseus falls into the arms of Penelope, and, as is the case with the Odyssey, the narrative time taken to enact that moment (Part II of the text) is equal in length to the narrative time spent discovering the need to do so (Part I of the text.) Thus, like its Odyssean model, the narrative of the Aithiopika is shaped as a diptych; it is another story fixed in a folded frame. Like the Odyssey again, this romance tale has a question of identity embedded in its core. However, as Kalasiris points out, while the revelation of Charikleia's mysterious birth and parentage helps solve the riddle of the prophecy, it cannot force the plot to reveal the method of its madness. Kalasiris complains:

«Ταῦτα, ὦ Κνήμων, ὡς ἀνέγνων, ἐγνώριζον μὲν καὶ τὴν ἐκ θεῶν οἰκονομίαν ἐθαύμαζον ἡδονῆς δὲ ἅμα καὶ λύπης ἐνεπλήσθην καὶ πάθος τι καινότερον ὑπέστην ὁμοῦ δακρύων καὶ χαίρων, διαχεομένης μὲν τῆς ψυχῆς πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἀγνοουμένων εὕρεσιν καὶ τῶν χρησθέντων ἤδη τὴν ἐπίλυσιν, ἀδημονούσης δὲ πρὸς τὴν τῶν ἐσομένων ἔκβασιν, καὶ τὸν ἀνθρώπινον βίον οἰκτειρούσης ὡς ἄστατόν τι καὶ ἀβέβαιον καὶ ἄλλοτε πρὸσ ἄλλα τρεπόμενον τότε δὲ ὑπερβαλλόντως ἐν ταῖς Χαρικλείας τύχαις γνωριζόμενον·» (Aith.4.9.1) [emphasis added].

> ('On reading this, Knemon, I perceived the hand of the gods and marveled at the subtlety of their governance. I was filled with a mixture of pleasure and sadness...the mystery had been explained...the riddle of the oracle had been solved, but I was sorely troubled about the course the future might take and filled with pity for the life of man, whose instability and insecurity, whose constant changes of direction were made all too manifest in the story of Charikleia.')

There is no shortcut through the Aithiopika: even if one were to flip to the end of the romance and read its conclusion, one would still have no idea how the narrative had arrived there without reading the entire text. As with its Odyssean model, however, knowledge of the Aithiopika's end does not lessen the necessity--or pleasure--of the journey.

The Aithiopika complicates and plays variations on the intense "internal" intertextuality which so marks the Odyssey: for in Heliodoros' romance, the entire complex plot relates itself not only to various internal narratives/texts revealed to readers during the first half of the romance, but also to aspects of the plot and structure of the Odyssey itself, which Heliodoros consciously parodies and incorporates into his narrative at every juncture. The literary flight from the Odyssey to Heliodoros' Aithiopika is a long suspended one, a kind of "narrative odyssey." The literary-historical connection between the two works is direct and solid, as Heliodoros' romantic novel positions itself in a direct line with Homer's romantic epic.[31] The stance his work takes in relation to Homer's poem mirrors to some

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[31]I use B. E. Perry's (1967) paradigm here:

> If we call [the] elemental narrative genre epic, then the best-known varieties of it in the Western world, each of which is the independent creation of a different

(continued...)

degree that of the Odyssey to the Iliad, but it is in other ways closer to the relationship between Cervantes' Don Quixote and the chivalric romances which that text incorporates into itself through parody. For, as the Quixote does for the chivalric romances, so the Aithiopika pays a writer's homage to the Homeric poems, using them as models and foils in a literary relationship full of complex referentiality. Even as modern Homeric scholars demonstrate the remarkable (intertextual) complexity of the relationship between the two Homeric narratives, Heliodoros' romance shows that full "intertextuality" may require a physical--that is a written as opposed to an oral--text in order to be realized.

Heliodoros is a compulsively playful writer whose art is one of literary plenty with little restraint. In his thorough introductory study of the Aithiopika, G. Sandy (1982) settles on the excellent term "baroque" to describe what he calls the "whimsical literary texture" of the Aithiopika (90). He goes on to cite a definition of "baroque" from Highet's The Classical Tradition, one whose imagery may be pertinent to this discussion as well:

> ...from the Spanish barroco, "a large irregular pearl." A regular pearl is a perfect sphere; an irregular pearl is a sphere straining outwards at one point, bulging and almost breaking, but not yet bursting into fragments. Therefore

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[31](...continued)
culture in a different historical era, may be designated as follows: national warrior-epic I (Iliad), romantic epic I (Odyssey), latter-day epic I (Greek romance)... [emphasis added]

See Ch. 2 ("Form Romance in Historical Perspective"), pp.44-95, for a full discussion of his theory of the progression of narrative forms.

"baroque" means "beauty compressed but almost breaking the bounds of control" (90).[32]

The baroque quality in Heliodoran narrative is less evident as "beauty compressed," perhaps, than as a kind of decorative enthusiasm, what Sandy refers to as "senseless excess" (91). The Heliodoran style is rhetorical, hyperbolic, packed and heavily layered with references to epic, tragedy and lyric poetry. Sandy describes "Heliodorus's tendency to add ingredients to...the artistic brew until it threatens to explode in his face" (90). Heliodoros' whimsical tendency to borrow from other texts to embellish his own makes comparative analysis of the Aithiopika tricky. His romance is full of hermeneutic puzzles--puns and multiple intertextual references--many of which seem to have been added simply as literary red-herrings for future generations of literary scholars to ponder.[33]

The narrative restrictions and conventions of orality are no longer an issue for Heliodoros; his is a highly literate world, and the Aithiopika is a text which revels in its "textuality." Heliodoros' romance engulfs and incorporates other texts into itself as the Odyssey's oral narrative incorporates the possibility of other versions of the Odyssey. The Aithiopika both complements and competes with the Homeric poems,

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[32]The reference is from G. Highet (1949): 289.

[33]It is not at all coincidental that Rabelais, a writer known for a similarly "embellished" and "whimsical" style, presents us a picture of Pantagruel, his giant wise fool, sitting sleeping with a Greek text of the Aithiopika open on his lap (Quart Livre, Ch. LXIII).

embedding many aspects of both Odyssean and Iliadic narrative into its own fabric.[34] However, this translation of Odyssean oral narrative into Heliodoran literary narrative involves some fundamental transpositions: Heliodoran narrative, while it imitates and engages with Odyssean narrative, operates very differently, for Heliodoros reads and composes as a writer, as a literate person living in a literate world. His "writerly" reading of the Odyssey sheds light on the ways the genres of narrative fiction develop, both in the ancient world and in their re-emergence in the Renaissance.[35]

Much of the complexity of the narrative structure of the Aithiopika can trace its origin to Heliodoros' imitation, parody, and transposition of aspects of Odyssean narrative. The Aithiopika, then, has interest in this context both in its own right and as a complex literary-historical commentary on Homer's poem. The ways in which Heliodoros imitates Homer are multi-layered, ranging from verbal echoes of Homeric phrases, to staged tableaux reminiscent of famous scenes from the Odyssey, to important structural similarities in the shape and direction of the romance's plot.[36]

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[34]See Sandy, Heliodoros (1982): 84-9, for a more extended discussion of Heliodoros' methods of transposing Homeric material into his work.

[35]I say "re-emergence," because, as B. E. Perry (1967) points out so convincingly in his study of the ancient romances, the so-called emergence of the "modern European novel" in the 18th and 19th centuries is really a re-emergence of an earlier form. In Perry's paradigm Western narrative has gone through two complete cycles, each time producing the "novel," a form he calls "latter-day epic" (46).

[36]For a somewhat outdated, but still useful study of the similarity of plot structure between the Odyssey and Aithiopika, see Keyes (1922). This article reflects old critical notions of "influence" which predate many more recent ideas taken for granted here. Unfortunately, Keyes is highly concerned, as were most critics of his time, with authorial originality; Heliodoros had been accused of being a derivative artist for his "borrowings" from Homer.

There are many ironies in Heliodoros' reading of Homer, as might be expected in a work which often verges on farce, though some of the ironies in Heliodoros' imitation strike me as having their origin in a cultural misreading of the Odyssey: Heliodoros often presents us with a literate and text-based artist's (mis)construction of the Homeric narrative world as he tries to translate narrative strategies from an oral context to a literate one.

Heliodoros reads Homer from the vantage of a creative writer of prose and master of compositional strategies, but he was probably no more familiar with the peculiar subtleties of oral formulaic style than were most writers and critics reading Homer before the 1920s and 1930s, when Milman Parry revolutionized Homeric studies with his insights into the nature of oral formulaic composition. Thus, when Heliodoros "imitates" Homeric narrative structures, he may actually achieve very different narrative strategies; in reading the Odyssey and the Aithiopika against each other, aspects of the structure and strategy of both works can be seen more clearly. This dialogue between the two works, separated as they are both generically and temporally, sometimes reverberates with such fruitful echoes that one can almost envision, as Heliodoros did, that the shade of Odysseus himself actually informed his text and spoke directly to his characters.[37]

A main factor in the strategical differences in the works of Homer and Heliodoros hinges on their audiences' familiarity with the plots of the stories being narrated. This is a crucial aspect of the Odyssey's oral narrative. The Homeric

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[37]Aith.5.22.1-3.

poems are not, strictly speaking, composed of "tellings" of tales, but of "re-tellings"--each of which is a potentially new version or variant of the "original" tale. Homer could generate suspense through skillful manipulation of his narrative, but he was neither interested in, nor tempted to indulge in, surprise.[38] (For an orally tuned audience, a surprise in the known facts of a story signals a mistake rather than an innovation.) This would not have been at all the case for Heliodoros--or any of the Greek romancers, writers who composed in a genre which thrived on surprise, on "cliff-hanger" plots with one strange new event following the next. In a sense, what is traditional and familiar to writers of Heliodoros' school is surprise itself; novelty, for Heliodoros, is a norm.

This important distinction between Homer and most of the writers who follow him, the difference between re-told and newly told tales, completely alters the effect on the audience of many common narrative strategies. Take, for example, the "in medias res" beginning of the Iliad and Odyssey, a narrative feature praised by Horace, and imitated widely throughout later Western narrative. This feature functions entirely differently in written literature than it would have for a Homeric audience. When Homer begins the Odyssey, "Tell me, Muse, of the man of many ways" (Ἄνδρα μοι ἔννεπε, Μοῦσα, πολύτροπον...), contemporary listeners might

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[38]J. Winkler (1982) clarifies the difference between these two devices:

> The two kinds of effect which depend on the careful manipulation of information from author to reader are surprise and suspense, which are differentiated precisely by the degree of information given the reader. Suspense is an effect of knowledge, surprise of ignorance (94).

have guessed that they were to hear a tale of Odysseus before his name was even mentioned; the epithet "polytropos," "of many ways or turnings," could have been enough of a clue to identify him. In any case, the fact that the story begins "in the middle of things" would probably not have been confusing, since his audience would have known with a high degree of certainty what was to come and what had come before, wherever Homer had decided to enter the story of Odysseus' return. A brief reminder of the general outlines of the story, as Homer provides it in the proem, would have oriented them, and they could then focus a high degree of attention on the manner of the telling rather than on the outcome of the plot.[39] This is not so, however, for Heliodoros' audience. For readers of this literary work, whose plot and characters are invented and unfamiliar, the in medias res entry into the Aithiopika is a truly confusing, puzzling, and challenging experience. Many Homeric narrative features, in fact, function in an exactly opposite way when translated into a Heliodoran context.

However, as Slatkin (1989) points out, an orally trained audience listening to often-heard traditional tales might be imagined to have, to a certain degree, the same sort of sophisticated interpretive skills which highly literate people apply to written texts. Members of Homer's audience were almost by definition "rereaders" in the

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[39]The difference between Homer's intended audience and a modern audience is made painfully clear when teaching the Odyssey to a group of students who have never read the poem or heard the story in any form before. For them, the in medias res beginning of the Odyssey is truly a confusing muddle, much like the beginning of the Aithiopika for a first-time reader. I do not think the similarity between these two experiences is coincidental. Modern college students, like the author and readers of the Aithiopika, are the products of a (more or less) literate age.

sense that Roland Barthes asks us to understand when he refers, in a passage from S/Z (1974), to the readings of literary texts as "plural" experiences:

> We must further accept one last freedom: that of reading the text as if it had already been read...Rereading, an operation contrary to the commercial and ideological habits of our society, which would have us "throw away" the story once it has been consumed ("devoured"), so that we can then move on to another story, buy another book, and which is tolerated only in certain marginal categories of readers (children, old people, and professors), rereading is here suggested at the outset, for it alone saves the text from repetition (those who fail to reread are obliged to read the same story everywhere), multiplies it in its variety and plurality: rereading draws the text out of its internal chronology ("this happens before or after that") and the claim which would have us believe that the first reading is a primary, naïve, phenomenal reading which we will only, afterwards, have to "explicate," to intellectualize (as if there were a beginning of reading, as if everything were not already read)... (15-16)[40]

Heliodoros writes for readers and rereaders, and he himself reads (and re-writes) Homer as a writer. Consequently, when he borrows or imitates Homer's narrative devices, he translates them from a highly oral to a highly literate setting, and their effects on his audience cannot possibly be the same. The Aithiopika is, and always

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[40]This passage was brought to my attention by J. Winkler (1986), as he refers to it in making his argument for his narratological reading of Apuleius' The Golden Ass.

has been, a text, meant to be held, studied, reviewed, and reread.[41] As Homer expected members of his audience to be facile in their oral knowledge of the stories of the epic cycle, so Heliodoros would have assumed a strong "literary" facility in his.[42]

As will become apparent when comparing the conclusions of the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote, when Heliodoros borrows Homeric, particularly Odyssean, narrative structures, he often sheds a kaleidoscopic light on already existing narratological quandaries in the Homeric poems themselves.[43] Far from being simple imitation (reflecting merely "influence of the Odyssey upon the plot of the Aethiopica," as one critic has put it),[44] his transposition of Homeric patterns, vocabulary, imagery, and structural features leaves room for much rumination and speculation. There is an unpredictability in Heliodoros' Homeric borrowings which makes them difficult to interpret in the context of the Aithiopika. They are sometimes easier to understand as commentaries on the Homeric texts: Heliodoros' romance

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[41]The ancient romances are an invention of the same Alexandrian and Greco-Roman culture which produced literary scholarship.

[42]Here I take exception to Perry's description of the "intended" readers for the earliest Greek romances: "The serious Greek romance had originated with naive authors who were of small understanding, and whose moral sentiments, like those of Richardson, were narrowly conventional and jejune. They were not addressing themselves to educated readers whose sense for ethical values would be cultivated and discriminating" (117).

I doubt very seriously that any writer would have written with such enormous attention to literary parody and detail if he saw himself as writing for a naive and "jejune" audience. The ancient romances were not close kin to Harlequin Romances--though they may certainly be seen, generically, as distant cousins.

[43]See Conclusion ("Problems of Closure...") below.

[44]Keyes, (1922): 43.

asks to be read as a secondary text, a romance writer's gloss on his oral epic narrative roots. The text of the Aithiopika forms a sort of deconstructed commentary--part serious and part playful--intensely intertextual, woven into and around the parent text(s) with a high degree of pleasure intended for both author and reader(s).

In the case of Don Quixote, the close relationship between narrative shape and the fulfillment of plot which exists in the Aithiopika and Odyssey is hardly to be found, for Cervantes' novel borrows an essential plotlessness from the chivalric romances it parodies. In Part I of the novel, the hero wanders, "literarily" as well as literally, through a landscape from which he absorbs romantic narrative wherever he finds it--from the chivalric oral ballads of the traditional romanceros[45] sung to strangers and fellow travelers,[46] to the romantic, orally narrated tales of

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[45]See A. Sánchez (1991), "Don Quijote, rapsoda del romancero viejo," for a discussion of the use in Don Quixote of the phraseology, linguistic rhythms, themes, and characters or the romanceros. He notes that one scholar (Rodríguez Marín) has even traced the famous opening line (En un lugar de la Mancha...) of the Quixote to the ballad tradition (245).

[46]Examples from the romanceros and pastoral novellas are frequent in the Quixote. In a famous incident at the beginning of Chapter 5 (Part I), toward the unfortunate end of the Knight's first sally, Don Quixote, having been beaten prostrate, pretends to be the "Knight of the Wood." This character from the romancero is familiar, as Cervantes says, "...to children, not unknown to youth, and enjoyed and even believed by old men, though for all that no truer than the miracles of Mahomet." When a neighbor of Don Quixote's, a peasant laborer, sees him lying on the ground and stops to help him, the Knight refuses to give up his pretense, taking on the identity of a series of characters from the romanceros, and even switching genres and ranging into characters from pastoral romances such as Montemayor's Diana. During the ensuing discussion, Cervantes makes it clear that this neighbor, though probably illiterate given his social class, is completely familiar with the names of all the characters from the romanceros

(continued...)

strangers,[47] to manuscripts of romantic tales found locked in trunks,[48] to the texts of the chivalric romances which Don Quixote has ingested and absorbed,[49] to pastoral romances re-enacted by pseudo-shepherds.[50] Both "Don Quixotes"--the character and the text--are steeped in the textual world of romance.[51] Even as Part I of the Quixote claims to struggle against them, the novel remodels romantic narrative in all its various forms, and is molded by them, encapsulates them, and incorporates

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[46](...continued)
which Don Quixote adopts. Their conversation ends with a famous exchange:

> A esto respondió el labrador:
> "Mire vuestra merced, señor, pecador de mí, que yo no soy don Rodrigo de Narváez, ni el Marqués de Mantua, sino Pedro Alonso, su vecino; ni vuestra merced es Valdovinos, ni Albindarráez, sino el honrado del señor Quijana."
> "Yo sé quién soy," respondió don Quijote, "y sé que puedo ser, no sólo los que he dicho, sino todos los doce Pares de Francia, y aun todos los nueve de la Fama, pues á todas las hazañas que ellos todos juntos y cada uno por sí hicieron se acentajarán las mías." (I, 5)
>
> (To which the laborer replied: "Look you, your worship, as I am a sinner, I am not Don Rodrigo de Narvaez, not the Marquis of Mantua, but your neighbor Pedro Alonzo. And your worship is not Baldwin or Abindarraez, but that worthy gentleman Master Quixada."
> "I know who I am," replied Don Quixote, "and I know, too, that I am capable of being not only the characters I have named, but all the Twelve Peers of France and all the Nine Worthies as well, for my exploits are far greater than all the deeds they have done, all together and each by himself.")

[47]The stories of Cardenio, Dorothea, Lucinda, and Fernando, for example, I, 27-36.

[48]The Tale of Foolish Curiosity (El curioso impertinente), I, 33-35.

[49]Particularly his beloved Amadís de Gaul.

[50]The story of Grisóstomo and Marcella, I, 12-14.

[51]Many of these tales are analyzed below. See Ch. 4, "Narrative into Life."

them into itself. Romantic tales are read, discussed, imitated, and actually happening around Don Quixote everywhere he goes in Part I.[52]

The Quixote, however, differs from the Odyssey and Aithiopika in that most of the interpolated tales in Part I are not especially relevant in terms of sequential plot structure. The great number of the tales told and read in Part I do not in any way serve as "flashbacks" necessary to the forward movement of the plot through either time or space. The hero of Part I of the Quixote wanders where chance takes him, with no goal other than to survive until his next adventure. The tales he hears along the way are, ultimately, neither more nor less important than his other, more active, adventures. In this respect, Part I of the Quixote differs quite substantially from the first halves of either the Odyssey or Aithiopika. However, like the stories in the first half of the Odyssey and Aithiopika, the interpolated stories provide an important forum within Don Quixote for a discussion of the art of storytelling. In a text whose controlling mania is narrative fiction in all its forms, this is a subject as important as the requirement for unity of plot. Each of the interpolated stories in Part I offers readers and characters alike an opportunity to explore different aspects of narrative and its interpretation.[53]

Like the Aithiopika, the Quixote does not precisely follow the Odyssey's pattern in actually re-telling the tales of its first half in its second half. It may be easier to see the parallels among these works, however, if we apply El Saffar's (1975)

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[52]See C. Johnson (1990): 71-88.

[53]See R. El Saffar (1975): esp. Ch 1, pp. 15-44.

distinction between the interpolated narratives in Part I of the Quixote and what she calls the "fictional 'dramas'" of Part II. As El Saffar explains, Part II of the Quixote actually "frames" the narrative of Part I, and the awareness of the characters in Part II of the fictional life of the hero of Part I changes everyone's relationship to fictional narrative in all its forms:

> Because of the changed nature of Don Quixote's relation to the world about him, it will be easier in Part II to relate the various interpolated stories to Don Quixote's own adventures. In Part I the creative impulse rested to a large extent in Don Quixote's hands as he enjoyed relative anonymity while seeking out his adventures and stories. The publication and wide divulgation of the story of Don Quixote de la Mancha, however, made Don Quixote famous by Part II and almost universally recognized as the chivalric hero of Cide Hamete's book. The result is that rather than being unaware, or taken by surprise by Don Quixote's madness, the characters whom Don Quixote meets in Part II tend to anticipate and exploit for their own entertainment his credulity...The major fictional authors of Part II have Don Quixote, rather than their own life-stories, as their subject (82).

Part II of the Quixote is "staged," as Don Quixote and Sancho are forced into the roles of puppet-players, performing tricks for knowing spectator-readers. This same shift occurs to a certain degree in the second half of the Odyssey. Each time Odysseus presents a "lying tale," Homer plays with the audience's familiarity with the previous version(s) of the same tale: the audience is allowed to feel that it has some

sense of the course of these vaguely familiar narratives, and therefore over the deceptive show Odysseus stages in the second half of the Odyssey for the delusion of many Ithacan characters, and the suitors as well.

Don Quixote carries the world of chivalric romance along with him as he travels; the shades of his beloved heroes speak to him in his dreams and through his madness. In the Cave of Montesinos, Durandarte himself, the great hero of the ballad of Roncevalles,[54] resuscitated by Don Quixote's literary devotion, rises and speaks again; perhaps not insignificantly, he speaks from within a text (the Quixote) which continues to belabor the out-moded genre which had once made him great (heroic epic and chivalric romance). In Don Quixote's vision of him, however, Durandarte begs for eternal rest (II, 23).[55] So too in the Aithiopika, characters are visited by the shades of their literary predecessors: the ghost of Odysseus visits the dreams of the old priest Kalasiris (the character who serves Heliodoros as a literary and literal narrative guide within his romance). Odysseus' ghost warns Kalasiris that he is fated to re-live some of the more unpleasant aspects of the Odyssey (Aith.5.22.1). We can perhaps take this warning as both a literal and a literary one, for even as this shade of Odysseus sinks back through the text of the Aithiopika into the text of the poem from which he emerged, we hear echoing from the Odyssey the voice of the shade of Agamemnon advising Odysseus on how he too can avoid falling into the wrong text:

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[54]Part of the Roland cycle; Durandarte was a Spanish hero of legend and ballad who fought with Charlemagne.

[55]See Ch. 5 for further discussion of this famous episode

the narrative of the Odyssey (the "Return of Odysseus") must not rehearse the wrong tale and imitate instead the tragic "Return of Agamemnon."

Like those of the Odyssey and Aithiopika, the two-part narrative frame of the Quixote enfolds an entire textual tradition, and it restates, in its folded form, the play of a narrative world constructed of already-told tales. Like the poet of the Odyssey, or the author of the Aithiopika, Cervantes tells a "new" story full of echoes and references to ones which in some version already exist. So Odysseus, lying with Penelope in their royal bed, sings her a new version of the just-sung Odyssey,[56] with the note of Odysseus' bow-string, like the harp of the bard, still ringing in the air. As we reach the end of Part II of the Quixote, the voices of Don Quixote and of Miguel de Cervantes seem to speak from their mutual deathbeds as they fold themselves into a text/tomb barely written and only just read, its ink hardly dry.

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[56]One which omits, for example, some of the more incriminating aspects of the Kirke episode.

Part II: Textual Nostalgia and Wish-Fulfillment

Having looked at some of the effects of these two-part frames full of interpolated tales, we might now phrase our question the other way around and ask, what is their cause? As I have said, the works which comprise this study are linked to each other in ways which are neither conventional nor obvious. It is my sense that the construction of each of these fictions may reveal a great deal about its relationship to the narrative mode of romance. While the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote may or may not be romances, each, certainly, grapples in a fundamental way with the shifting relationships in narrative between truth and fiction, and between narrative and identity, issues in which, I will argue, romance is firmly rooted.

The two specific narrative features I have pointed to here--the interpolated tales and the two-part frame narratives which enclose them--help to make the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote complex and self-conscious works. I suggest that these two narrative features stem, in part, from the same impulse which produces the abundance of interpolated narratives in each work. Both of these features are indicative of the origins of these narratives in the romance mode--a mode marked by powerful and nostalgic longings for an idealized past, be it textual or actual.

The romance mode in literature is marked by two connected, but ultimately conflicting drives: wish-fulfillment, which looks forward into a hoped-for future, and

nostalgia, which looks backward toward a longed-for past. These two drives push the plots of romance texts forward into a future which is defined by distorted memories of an idealized past which may never have been. They also contribute to the contorted shapes of romance narratives, which often seem to be running forward while looking backward, as we have seen in the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote--with the two halves of their narrative frames facing each other like the two halves of a diptych. Frye elucidates the connection between the two conflicting voices of romance in his description of the romance "mythos" in his Anatomy (1957):

> The romance is nearest of all literary forms to the wish-fulfillment dream, and for that reason it has socially a curiously paradoxical role. In every age the ruling social or intellectual class tends to project its ideals in some form of romance, where the virtuous heroes and beautiful heroines represent the ideals and the villains the threats to their ascendancy...Yet there is a genuinely "proletarian" element in romance too which is never satisfied with its various incarnations, and in fact the incarnations themselves indicate that no matter how great a change may take place in society, romance will turn up again, as hungry as ever, looking for new hopes and desires to feed on. The perennially childlike quality of romance is marked by its extraordinarily persistent nostalgia, its search for some kind of imaginative golden age in time or space (186) [emphasis added].

Nostalgia and wish-fulfillment are two of the driving engines of romance, one looking backward, the other forward, and functioning equally in the production of fiction; they push the plot of a romance narrative forward toward its origin.[57]

[57]S. Schein draws my attention here to the two Greek adverbs, πρόσθεν (prosthen) and ὄπισθεν (opisthen), which, like the English words "before" and "after," describe, respectively, that which is spatially "in front of" though temporally "prior," and vice versa. Further lexical analysis of the Odyssey in relation to words which have both temporal and spacial meanings might yield interesting results.

Chapter 3. Textual Nostalgia

The word "nostalgia" is coined from two Greek words which have a prominent place in the Odyssey: nostos, "return home," and algos, "sorrow or suffering." The word nostos is a distinctly Odyssean word, with an ancient and intriguing etymology. In a study of the word's history and its meaning in a Homeric context, D. Frame (1978) points out that nostos is a nominal "...derivative from the verbal root *nes-", whose common form in the Homeric poems is neomai, meaning simply to "go or come" (ix). Frame goes on, surprisingly, to suggest an etymological link between the word nostos and the noun noos, the most common Greek word for "mind." This connection, if it is a true one, would have interesting significance to an understanding of the figure of Odysseus, the polytropos hero whose "many-turnings" are both geographical and intellectual. If Frame's thesis is correct, then Odysseus' project in the Odyssey, his nostos, or quest for his return home, is truly a thought-quest as much as it is a physical journey. The nostos of the hero involves his ability to conceptualize his return as much as it does the physical actions of his stepping onto Ithacan soil, slaying the suitors, and reclaiming his wife and kingdom.

The words nostos and algos ("pain" or "suffering") make their appearance early in the Odyssey, in the opening lines, where the poet tells us of Odysseus' suffering(s) (algea) as he makes his way homeward (noston):

> πολλὰ δ' ὅ γ' ἐν πόντῳ πάθεν ἄλγεα ὃν κατὰ θυμόν,
> ἀρνύμενος ἥν τε ψυχὴν καὶ νόστον ἑταίρων (Od.1.4-5).
>
> (...many the pains he suffered in his spirit on the wide sea,/ struggling for his own life and the homecoming of his companions.)

The compound word "nostalgia" is not a Homeric coinage, and the word did not come into English until the second half of the eighteenth century, entering the language from Latin, relatively close to the onset of the Romantic revolution.[58] The Oxford English Dictionary cites the earliest use of the late Latin term "Nostalgia" in English in the 1770s; the word was used by doctors to describe a form of depression recognized in sailors traveling in the New World. The word, meaning "a painful longing for one's return home," was a medical term for "...A form of melancholia caused by prolonged absence from one's home or country; severe homesickness." The O.E.D. quotes from a sailor's journal:

> The greatest part of them [sc. the ship's company] were now pretty far gone with the longing for home which the Physicians have gone so far as to esteem a disease under the name of Nostalgia (O.E.D., 535).

Though the words algos and nostos appear in the first lines of the Odyssey, laying the poem's groundwork in a sense of "nost-algia," we do not actually "see" the nostalgic hero himself until the beginning of Book 5. It has been noted by many that Book 5 has the feeling of a reprise, as if the poem had two beginnings: in Book 5 as

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[58]Nineteenth century romantics idealized both the states of "nostalgia" and "melancholia" as being indicative of a sweet sensitivity of soul.

in Book 1, there is an initial council of the gods on Olympos, with Athena making the case for Odysseus' need to get on with his life, for his having deserved his nostos at last. Zeus agrees, and sends Hermes with a command for Kalypso to send Odysseus on his way, just as he had sent Athena to Telemakhos in Book 1.

Two passages in Odyssey 5 describe Odysseus sitting on the shore of Ogygia. These are very important descriptions, because they are the first actual glimpses we have of the hero we have heard talked about so much in the first four books of the poem. The pathetic image of Odysseus they portray is striking in its contrast to the energetic portrait painted of him in the stories told by his family and friends thus far in the poem: though known for his resilience and resourcefulness, Odysseus is sitting on the beach of Kalypso's isle, staring disconsolately out onto the sea, as "depressed" as an ancient person can be (before the modern invention of the concept of psychological illness). He is both homesick and weeping.

Though the two passages which describe Odysseus in Book 5 essentially repeat each other, they vary slightly in vocabulary and phrasing. The first is focalized through the omniscient narrator,[59] who explains to the reader why Odysseus is not at home with Kalypso when Hermes arrives to deliver Zeus' message to her that it is time to release him. Odysseus' absence from Kalypso's cave is striking, and

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[59]The term "focalize" comes from the narratological work of M. Bal, who coined the term to allow critics to specify more clearly the "point of view" through which given portions of a narrative are presented. See, for example, her Narratology: Introduction to the Theory of narrative, 1977; also the work of her student, I. de Jong, (Narrators and Focalizers: The Presentation of the Story in the Iliad, 1987), who has done considerable work applying Bal's methodology to the Homeric poems. For a review of de Jong's study and other recent narratological studies of Homer, see S. Schein (1991).

underscores his distaste for domestic life with the goddess. It also allows the poet to build up suspense for his audience, as we learn of the hero's impending release before he does. In this first passage, the word "algos" appears without the word "nostos:"

> οὐδ' ἄρ' Ὀδυσσῆα μεγαλήτορα ἔνδον ἔτετμεν,
> ἀλλ' ὅ γ' ἐπ' ἀκτῆς κλαῖε καθήμενος, ἔνθα πάρος περ,
> δάκρυσι καὶ στοναχῇσι καὶ ἄλγεσι θυμὸν ἐρέχθων
> πόντον ἐπ' ἀτρύγετον δερκέσκετο δάκρυα λείβων (Od.5.81-4).
>
> (Nor did [Hermes] find great-hearted Odysseus within,/ but he was sitting weeping on a promontory, as many times before,/ tearing his heart with tears and groans and sorrows,/ and pouring out tears as he looked out over the barren sea.)

Odysseus is miserable, and obviously "home-sick," though the poet does not actually specify any particular longing or object of desire. The second description of Odysseus, focalized this time through the eyes of Kalypso as she walks down to the beach to deliver Hermes' message, spells out the content of Odysseus' longing much more specifically:

> τὸν δ' ἄρ' ἐπ' ἀκτῆς εὗρε καθήμενον· οὐδέ ποτ' ὄσσε
> δακρυόφιν τέρσοντο, κατείβετο δὲ γλυκὺς αἰὼν
> νόστον ὀδυρομένῳ, ἐπεὶ οὐκέτι ἥνδανε νύμφη.
> ἀλλ' ἦ τοι νύκτας μὲν ἰαύεσκεν καὶ ἀνάγκῃ
> ἐν σπέσσι γλαφυροῖσι παρ' οὐκ ἐθέλων ἐθελούσῃ (Od.5.151-5).
>
> (...and [she] found him sitting on the seashore, and his eyes were never/ wiped dry of tears, and the sweet lifetime was draining out of him,/ as he wept for a way home, since the nymph was no longer pleasing/ to him. By nights he would lie beside her, of necessity,/ in the hollow caverns, against his will, by one who was willing...) [emphasis added]

Odysseus longs for youth (glukun aiōn) and home (noston)--a telling combination, since, as we will see, neither can be fully recovered.

In order to understand the power of nostalgia as both a function of romance, and as a producer of romance, we must look at the deeper meaning of the word. The second meaning of "nostalgia" listed in the O.E.D. represents an important leap of imagination and sentiment, for it implies that there is romantic pleasure and idealization in this melancholic longing for the "home" of one's past:

> Regret or sorrowful longing for the conditions of a past age; regretful or wistful memory or recall of an earlier time (O.E.D., 535) [emphasis added].

This type of nostalgia is not far from daydream and fantasy, important generators of romance, and it helps to connect the double drives of pleasure and pain, desire for and fear of resolution, which form two opposing poles in romance: the mode includes an in-bound longing for the return to origin which nostos implies, and an out-bound need to delay a completion which is both the end of the story and death. Odysseus' longing for home is both passive and active in that it produces the "odyssey" which will in turn become the Odyssey. The poem which describes Odysseus' return will also act one day to transform past sorrows into the future pleasure of storytelling. His romantic nostalgia, literally his "painful desire for his homecoming," is a force which helps to sustain the sense of past, present, and future necessary for fulfilling the poem's plot.

The modern Greek poet George Seferis explores the double pull of Odyssean nostalgia in his poem "O Yurismos tou Xenitemenou" ("The Return of One who Has

Been Away").[60] The modern Greek word "xenitemenos" deserves a commentary in itself: it is derived from the noun "xenos," a fundamental word in Greek culture (ancient and modern) which means "foreigner," "stranger," and "guest-friend," more or less simultaneously. The contemporary sense of the word xenitemenos may also carry the connotation of a Greek native returning from the diaspora. In a sense, the entire Odyssey can be read as a commentary on what happens to people who are xenitemenoi: when one member of a community leaves and then returns, everyone is both alienated and enriched by the experience.

Seferis writes of the idealizing nostalgia of a man returning to his native village after many years abroad, and his poem reads as a gloss on the scene in Odyssey 13, when Odysseus wakes up on the shore of his longed-for island, his eyes so full of sleep and the mist of idealization that he cannot recognize his home. In the Odyssean passage, we read:

> ...Ὁ δ' ἔγρετο δῖος Ὀδυσσεὺς
> εὖδων ἐν γαίῃ πατρωΐῃ, οὐδέ μιν ἔγνω,
> ἤδη δὴν ἀπεών· περὶ γὰρ θεὸς ἠέρα χεῦε
> Παλλὰς Ἀθηναίη, κούρη Διός, ὄφρα μιν αὐτὸν
> ἄγνωστον τεύξειεν ἕκαστά τε μυθήσαιτο,
> μή μιν πρὶν ἄλοχος γνοίη ἀστοί τε φίλοι τε,
> πρὶν πᾶσαν μνηστῆρας ὑπερβασίην ἀποτῖσαι.

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[60]Seferis' most popular English translators, Keeley and Sherrard, mistranslate this title as "The Return of the Exile," which gives the wrong connotation in English. The Greek word for "exile" is ἐξόριστος, while ξενιτεύομαι, the verb from which the participle ξενιτεμένος is derived, simply means "to have been away from home"--literally, to have been a ξένος, a stranger, in someone else's land. It carries with it some of the ancient connotations of the word, which imply that one has received hospitality in a foreign place.

τοὔνεκ' ἄρ' ἀλλοειδέ' ἐφαίνετο πάντα ἄνακτι,
ἀτραπιτοί τε διηνεκέες λιμένες τε πάνορμοι
πέτραι τ' ἠλίβατοι καὶ δένδρεα τηλεθάοντα
(Od.13.187-96.)

(But now great Odysseus wakened/ from sleep in his own fatherland, and he did not know it,/ having been long away, for the goddess, Pallas Athene,/ daughter of Zeus, poured a mist over all, so she could make him/ unrecognizable and explain all the details to him,/ to have his wife not recognize him, nor his townspeople/ and friends, till he punished the suitors for their overbearing oppression./ Therefore to the lord Odysseus she made everything look otherwise/ than it was, the penetrating roads, the harbors where all could/ anchor, the rocks going straight up, and the trees tall growing.)

As he often does, Homer gives a divine explanation for an experience which makes equal sense in modern psychological terms, saying that Athena has "poured a mist" (l.189) around Ithaka, hiding its identity from Odysseus as she will also hide his identity from the Ithacans. Clearly, though, twenty years of absence and change can as effectively explain Odysseus' feeling of alienation and distance as can "divine intervention."

In Seferis' poem also, the traveler's idealizing nostalgia about his past home blurs the joy of his nostos. He struggles to reorient himself in a world which was ample in his childhood, but has now grown so small that he cannot fit himself in:

«Γυρεύω τὸ παλιό μου σπίτι
μὲ τ' ἀψηλὰ τὰ παραθύρια
σκοτεινιασμένα ἀπ' τὸν κισσό
γυρεύω τὴν ἀρχαία κολόνα
ποὺ κοίταζε ὁ θαλασσινός.
Πῶς θὲς νὰ μπῶ σ' αὐτὴ τὴ στάνη;
οἱ στέγες μοῦ ἔρχουνται ὡς τοὺς ὤμους
κι' ὅσο μακριὰ καὶ νὰ κοιτάξω
βλέπω γονατιστοὺς ἀνθρώπους
λὲς κάνουνε τὴν προσευχή τους».

("I'm looking for my old house,
the tall windows
darkened by ivy;
I'm looking for the ancient column
known to sailors.
How can I get into this coop?
The roof comes to my shoulders
and however far I look
I see men on their knees
as though saying their prayers.")[61]

A companion, trying to comfort his bewildered friend, explains:

ἡ νοσταλγία σοῦ ἔχει πλάσει
μιὰ χώρα ἀνύπαρχτη μὲ νόμους
ἔξω ἀπ' τὴ γῆς κι' ἀπ' τοὺς ἀνθρώπους».

(Your nostalgia has created
a non-existent country, with laws
alien to earth and man.)

As the home Seferis' traveler has been longing to return to turns out to be a fiction constructed of memory and story, so we see played out in each of texts in this study the idealizing drive of romantic nostalgia trying to freeze time, to preserve the present in a memory which is old before it is even expressed.

In the second part of the Odyssey, Odysseus must reconstruct an "Odysseus" out of memory and story, for his odyssey has turned him into the subject of a song, and it is only song which can reconstitute him. Romance texts are infused with both kinds of nostalgia, the painful and the pleasurable; they look backward to a dream-time when the voice singing the tale was omniscient, and one could drowse safely into

[61]George Sepheris: Collected Poems (1967): 221-5.

a story of return--curled, perhaps, in the hold of a Phaiakian cutter, "forgetful of all suffering" (Od.13.92).

Frye (1957) locates the dream-world of romantic nostalgia "in time or space," but then goes on to remark that, in literary terms, the romantic "golden age" resides in a world of texts; romantic literature longs for a literary golden age:

> There has never to my knowledge been any period of Gothic English literature, but the list of Gothic revivalists stretches completely across its entire history, from the Beowulf poet to writers of our own day (186).

The nostalgia which appears in romance narratives, then, is to a large degree a literary affliction, and it can express itself in narrative terms as an intensely inward self-referentiality. In the Aithiopika, for example, Charikleia is born a foreigner in her own land, to her own parents, and "textualized" by her mother at birth: wrapped into a woven tale whose meaning she must live out before she can understand it, she struggles to make narrative sense out of her existence. As she does so, she epitomizes the "textual nostalgia" of the romance quest, turning, in her quest for her origins, her "textual" birth into the birth of a text. So, also, Don Quixote's nostalgia for a fictional Golden Age drives him to turn himself into one of the greatest fictions ever made: "Don Quixote." For Alonso Quixano (...or Quixana, or Quesada...), no life outside of a textual one is possible: reading is the only discernible action he performs before deciding to transform himself into a fiction--and, as he learns to his

surprise in Part II, the actions of his life have turned back into text even as he has lived them.

The textual nature of romantic nostalgia is, I suspect, both reflected in and caused by the literary history of the mode, for romantic ages tend to follow--and look back upon--heroic ones. Each of the works which make up this study, the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote can be said to follow, look back towards, and define itself against, a prior literary age.[62] The "primary" narrative genre, to the extent that such a thing can be said to have ever existed, is a type which Perry calls "national warrior epic,"[63] exemplified by the Iliad (or El poema de mio Cid or the Chansons de gestes). These epic cycles, in both cases, come from narrative worlds which extend back into oral history; little which is literary can be found to pre-date them. They represent, in effect, a moment when actions became narratives.

Naive or unwary readers (the Kyklops, Knemon, or Don Quixote, for example) might maintain the illusion that prior to the creation of these texts a world of pure deeds existed--deeds unmediated by the irrevocable passage of (narrative) time. This, however, is a fantasy. More sophisticated readers (ones, perhaps, who have properly read and understood the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote), realize that the act of narrating in itself creates a distance in time and space between the "telling"

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[62]I take the Odyssey in this example to "look back towards" the Iliad--though I realize that some classicists will have trouble with that view. I cannot, however, see the poems as presenting a "simultaneity" in their ethical and world views; the Odyssey, in some narrative sense, does seem to me to endeavor to "enclose" the world of the Iliad.

[63]Cf. n. 24.

and the "thing told." In that space, even if it is only a moment long, something is necessarily lost--youth, spontaneity, accessibility, "truth." The same power which makes us human, the power to describe ourselves and the world around us in language, also condemns us to an awareness of an unbridgeable distance between thought and utterance. Into this "gap" can fall many things, including the distorting intervention of memory (or its loss), the desire for manipulation of the course of narrative, or the failure to control it through the effects of interruption, deflection, or divergence. Romantic literary nostalgia struggles against the linearity of language, especially oral language, which leaves the speaker's mouth as a stream of words and cannot be re-entered without irreparably altering--and thereby losing--it.

The narrative self-consciousness of the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote force readers to remain constantly aware of the distance between life and narrative--a distance which, as we will see, characters within the texts themselves often lose sight of. S. Murnaghan (1987), for example, explains the connection between this inherent "distancing" effect of narrative, and the Odyssey's particular tendency to call attention to itself as narrative:

> The inclusion of representations of song in these climactic episodes of the Odyssey's plot, like the Odyssey's preoccupation generally with poetry and narration, engages an issue basic to all literary representation. Any narrative re-creation of events, like any mimetic work, is necessarily distinct from the events it re-creates. It is later in time, elsewhere in space, and different in form. In the world portrayed by the Homeric epics, this disjunction becomes

> an important concern in the lives of the characters because poetic narrative is the most valued medium for the preservation of kleos, the glorious reputation or fame which is the goal of heroic action (149). [emphasis added]

Part of the romantic fantasy of literary nostalgia includes also the notion that the literature of prior ages was somehow closer to the origin of action--to the "truth"--than the "fallen" literature of the current age. The Odyssey's narrative, for example, longs for and engulfs the tales of the Iliad; the Aithiopika does the same with those of the Odyssey; and the Quixote consumes all the great heroic literature available to it--which includes not only the material of the other two works, but the literature of the chivalric and ballad traditions as well. L. Slatkin (1989) notes the Odyssey's relationship to the prior narrative world of the Iliad as one of the defining features of its project:

> It is in part the Odyssey's relationship to the epic about Troy, as the Odyssey represents it, that returns the poem continually to the issue of narrative. For in the Odyssean world of audiences, every new song must presuppose the existence of songs about Troy--of an Iliad--whose prestige is the narrative ideal (11).

However, even oral epics such as the Iliad, which are imagined to be "primary," often call attention to the ambiguity of their relationship to the writing down of stories through the distancing effect of narrative self-consciousness. The Iliad, for example (Perry's "primary" warrior-epic I), shows us images--however

fleeting--of Helen (Il.3.125-8), Achilles (Il.9.186-8), and Hephaistos (Il.18.483-607) turning life and action into art through weaving, singing, and craftsmanship--the same techniques the Odyssean poet uses to call attention to his narrative craft. Art, it seems, no matter how "primary," is always self-conscious. What one ultimately finds in examining self-reflective romance texts such as these, which quest nostalgically for experience unmediated by narrative, is that the "primal" narrative which these romances long for turns out to be a kind of Derridean trace.

Chapter 4. Narrative into Life

Because narrative and storytelling are time-bound, they are inherently linear activities. This linearity is illustrated concretely in a small children's book (one of my own childhood favorites) called Harold and the Purple Crayon.[64] The protagonist is a boy named Harold, who drags a purple crayon over the blank pages of the small book he inhabits, creating a linear story as he goes along. Sometimes, the events seem accidentally to roll off the end of his crayon as, for example, he inadvertently shrinks himself to the size of a sparrow by walking off into the vanishing point of railroad tracks he has been drawing; sometimes he deliberately controls the course of his narrative, drawing himself into trouble, and then drawing clever escape routes to help himself out of rough spots.

Many of the protagonists in the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote behave like Harold: it seems as if they are dragging their own "purple crayons" behind them as they travel, leaving a trail of narrative in their wakes as they try to instantly convert their actions into story. When movement--or life--stops, so does narrative; inaction is, after all, difficult to describe, particularly since it so often involves isolation. Like Helen in Iliad 3, weaving the events of the Trojan War into the "text" of her tapestry even as it continues around her, many of the characters in these works struggle to

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[64]By Crockett Johnson, 1955.

gain control over their lives by narrating themselves into being. El Saffar, in her important study of the narrative structure and texture of the Quixote (Distance and Control in Don Quixote 1975), compares the project of the Quixote to that of another autobiographical narrator, the protagonist of Sterne's Tristram Shandy; the heroes of both works, she points out, strive to elide the "distance" between narration and life through the creation of narrative itself:

> The ideal situation which both these novels [Tristram Shandy and the Quixote] suggest, but never achieve, would be one in which the writer's time and his character's time coincide. If the writer could actually become the subject about which he writes, there would be no more problems with ordering the work or presenting it truthfully or convincingly (20).

One manifestation of the literary nostalgia in all of the texts in this study is evidenced in the ways in which their narratives are constructed: the strong interplay between two-part frames and interpolated tales brings us back to one of the fundamental problems both of life and of literature--that of translating life into narrative, and, in some important cases, narrative into life. Where characters' "stories" are missing, their identities lack substance as well. As the Odyssey begins, for example, Odysseus is "kalypso"-ed,[65] cut off from the bonds of xenia, unable to visit and share stories. Telemakhos, whose fate programmatically mimics his

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[65]Kalypso's name is related to the Greek word καλύπτω (kaluptō)--"to cover" or "hide." See S. Schein ("Preface," 1990): 38-42, for a discussion of the relationship between the "concealment" of sleep and that of death.

father's, seems never to have had a credible foreign visitor until Athena arrives in disguise. It may be that Penelope has had to do all the entertaining while he was in his boyhood. She, apparently, is avid for visitors, though she has heard enough of their tall tales to make her suspicious, crave them as she may. Her craving for the tales of strangers, though, is not merely a sign of boredom or loneliness, for the entertaining of visitors is part of her responsibility to her lost husband, her household, her son, and her culture. The Odyssean world is created and preserved through shared narrative. Everything of importance must be talked into being. People, pets, golden cups, weapons, even footstools, door-jambs, and beds, have histories, stories of origin, which must be maintained in the memory of someone lest they fade into non-being. Characters who are in tune with themselves, the gods, and the world around them, use language as carefully as they perform sacrifices or observe xenia.

In the Odyssean world, people must travel and receive guests in order to have any share in life at all; staying put leaves one in a timeless limbo barely distinguishable from death. Travelers enrich the narrative lives of their hosts by bringing tales with them, and then they return home with foreign and novel stories to pass on to those who wait. Those who wait provide a goal and audience for the travelers, a safe and hospitable haven for the telling of tales. Those who cannot travel--often women--can sometimes participate in the production of narrative by

weaving domestic tales of their own--such as Penelope does in devising the trick of the web and the contest of the bow.[66]

Travel plays an important part in the Aithiopika's narrative as well. Charikleia's fate, like those of many romance protagonists, is to travel: as with Telemakhos and Odysseus at the opening of the Odyssey, she must move forward in order to set her story into motion--both to become herself, and to assure that there will be an "Aithiopika" to record the accomplishment.

Alonso Quixano, the Spanish gentleman who transforms himself into "Don Quixote," has an identical need to travel in order to re-start the "narrative" of his life, which is as stagnant and boring as the lives of the Ithacans waiting for Odysseus, or that of Odysseus imprisoned on Ogygia--as uninteresting to him as it is to us who read about it. Like Penelope's suitors, his life also has been reduced to a monotonous routine of daily eating:

> Una olla de algo más vaca carnero, salpicón las más noches, duelos y quebrantos los sábados, latajas los viernes, algún palómino de añadidura los domingos, conumíam las tres partes de su hacienda (I, 1).

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[66]N. Felson-Rubin (1987) examines the way in which Penelope can be seen as an active participant in the creation of the Odyssey as well, in addition to her role as a (passive) receiver of heroic narrative:

> Penelope engages in the following actions: she offers words of encouragement and promises to each suitor, devises the trick of the web, appears before the suitors and solicits gifts, dreams, ponders, scolds, weeps and prays, interviews the stranger and tells him her dream, sets up the contest of the bow, eventually entraps her husband into divulging his secret knowledge of their marriage bed, and reunites with him (65).

> (His habitual diet consisted of a stew, more beef than mutton, of hash most nights, boiled bones on Saturdays, lentils on Fridays, and a young pigeon as a Sunday treat; and on this he spent three-quarters of his income.)

For him, too, old stories of past deeds are a psychic staple:

> ...este [sobredicho] hidalgo, los ratos que estaba ocioso (que eran los más del año), se daba á leer libros de caballerías... (I, 1).
>
> (...this gentleman, in the times when he had nothing to do--as was the case for most of the year--gave himself up to the reading of books of knight errantry...)

As they do with Telemakhos, one of Don Quixote's Ithacan counterparts, these old tales exert an influence on the soon-to-be "Don Quixote," as he grows tired of reading the stories of other lives and longs to live his own story, to have "aventuras" (adventures) and perform "hazañas" (deeds) which will be worth talking about, and, better yet, worth writing down. In the highly literate world of the Quixote, only peasants--like Sancho--exist solely on spoken tales. Alonso Quixano wants to become a character in a book, and, by leaving home and setting out on his journey, he succeeds.[67]

Don Quixote's nostalgia for what he imagines to be a world unmediated by narrative leads him into a conundrum, however, for he has misread the romances of chivalry, assuming that their protagonists actually lived lives which were organized as linearly as the mock-epic narratives which describe them. By ignoring the reality of

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[67]Homeric warriors also exhibit this desire to be "textualized," since one of the fundamental values of the Heroic Code is to die in such a way as to be immortalized in heroic poetry. Take, for example, the Thracian warrior Iphidamas, who comes to Troy, as Homer says, "looking for glory from the Achaians" (11.227); though he is slain brutally by Agamemnon, his appearance in the Iliad proves his quest to have been a success.

the powerful authorial consciousness which has mediated between the "deeds" of the heroes and the writer/reader of the words, and by turning his life into (and placing it at the mercy of) narrative, Don Quixote leaves himself open to suffer all the indignities of romantic fiction, with its memory lapses, interruptions, textual lacunae, extraneous interpolations, mendacious storytellers, and undignified inclusiveness. The "wicked enchanters" who haunt his text serve as reminders of the enormous danger and impossibility of his original project: to conflate text with life, and life with text.

The dangers inherent in combining life and narrative are well illustrated in the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote by a distinct group of interpolated stories. These tales, which I will call "romantic autobiographies," are uncorroborated autobiographical narratives which are presented by their narrators as having been lived as "true stories," whose plots, however, are usually much stranger and less plausible than those of the wildest lying tales. They show vividly the pain and difficulty often experienced by those who are forced by circumstances actually to experience the life depicted in romantic tales of adventure and erotic passion. They also blur the fragile boundary maintained in these texts between "fiction" and "truth," between the world of the interpolated tales and that of the frame narrative; they present themselves not as "verisimilar fictions," but as visions of romantic reality lived out, unwillingly, by hapless characters who exist within the larger fictional world of the frame narrative.

A primary locus for this category of tales is the story of his adventures which Odysseus relates to the Phaiakians (and which Homer presents to us) in Books 9

through 12 of the Odyssey. These tales, presented as absolute truth,[68] but uncorroborated by any surviving human, seem exotic by the standards of the epic cycle, and are seen by many to represent an intrusion of "fairy-tale" material into the epic format of the Odyssey.[69] They are not, however, the only strange "true" stories told in the Odyssey. For, after Odysseus has re-told these stories of his adventures to Eumaios (Od.14.199-359) in the transposed "Kretan" version, Eumaios produces his own life tale (Od.15.391-484), an excellent match for the disguise Odysseus is using as a son of royalty fallen on hard times. Eumaios, as he tells it, has actually lived a perfect real-life "romance," complete with a kidnapping by pirates, and a true change of station from royalty to servitude. Eumaios' life story, this "romantic autobiography" whose veracity Homer gives us no reason to doubt, is a "true" story as strange as any fiction (or lie?). This story further muddles the fragile boundary between truth, lie, and fiction as it exists in the Odyssey as a whole, and in life on Ithaka in particular.

The relationship between Eumaios and Odysseus has been an intimate one in the past, for although Eumaios is a servant, he was raised almost as a brother by Odysseus' family, as an equal to Odysseus' sister, Ktimene, until it was time for her

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[68]There is a hint of some fictionalizing exaggeration during Odysseus' description of his journey to the Underworld when he extends his list of "famous ladies" for Arete's benefit, but it is only a hint. Still, its presence may be an important clue to interpreting other tales in the poem.

[69]Only Menelaos' story of his encounter with Proteus is in the same vein; the similarity between Odysseus' tales and Menelaos' has been noted by many scholars.

to be married and for him to take up his adult place on the estate (Od.15.363-70). As S. Murnaghan (1987) points out, their intimacy goes even further, however, in that Eumaios has actually lived the life that Odysseus is pretending to have lived in taking on his disguise as a world-weary vagabond.[70] Eumaios tells his life story to Odysseus in Book 15 (ll.390-484), on the second night of Odysseus' stay with him, following the climactic reunion between Odysseus and Telemakhos which takes place while Eumaios is out of the hut. The telling of this tale is one of the clearest examples in the Odyssey of storytelling for the sake of pure pleasure; Eumaios' tale is even less "necessary" to the delineation of plot and character than many of the Kretan tales Odysseus tells. Eumaios tells his story in response to Odysseus' questioning; Odysseus, of course, may already have heard the tale during his years of association with his old servant, though we--the audience--certainly have not. This situation is an interesting variation on our relationship to the Kretan tales, all of which we assume to be "lies" because they revise information we have already heard narrated by Odysseus in the "authentic" version during Books 9 through 12. In the case of Eumaios' tale, we are in no position to judge its veracity one way or the other.

What is striking about Eumaios' tale is the degree to which it acts as a partner to the Kretan tale Odysseus has already told him in Book 14. This story, the longest of Odysseus' lying tales, is essentially a miniature version of the great apologue of Books 9 through 12, with the material shifted, rationalized, and de-mythologized to

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[70]"Eumaeus has a history similar both to the history that goes with Odysseus' disguise and to Eurycleia's history. He, too, is originally of noble birth and has occupied a place in the house of Laertes comparable to that of a member of the family" (41).

make it sound credible to the earth-bound Eumaios. The story Eumaios offers as a counterbalance is an exciting one full of similar intrigue, betrayal, and adventure.

Eumaios begins by saying that he was born on the island Syria (Συρίη) (Od.15.403), near Ortygia ('Ορτυγίη) (Od.15.404). His description of his beloved home-island (filtered, perhaps, through the idealizing nostalgia of his memory) sounds remarkably like a variation on the description of the magical aspects of Skheria described by the poet (and focalized by Odysseus) in Book 7. Eumaios paints an idyllic image:

> πείνη δ' οὔ ποτε δῆμον ἐσέρχεται, οὐδέ τις ἄλλη
> νοῦσος ἐπὶ στυγερὴ πέλεται δειλοῖσι βροτοῖσιν·
> ἀλλ' ὅτε γηράσκωσι πόλιν κάτα φῦλ' ἀνθρώπων,
> ἐλθὼν ἀργυρότοξος 'Απόλλων 'Αρτέμιδι ξὺν
> οἷς ἀγανοῖς βελέεσσιν ἐποιχόμενος κατέπεφνεν
> (Od.15.407-11).
>
> (No hunger ever comes on these people, nor any other/ hateful sickness, of such as befall wretched humanity;/ but when the generations of men grow old in the city/ Apollo of the silver bow, and Artemis with him,/ comes with a visitation of painless arrows, and kills them.)

He explains that he was the son of the king of the island, Ktesios, but was kidnapped as a child by his nurse for her own gain. She had established an illicit relationship with a traveling merchant who was visiting Syria, and who promised to return her to her own former home, Sidon--for she herself, as it turns out, had also fallen into a life of servitude through having been kidnapped from her home by pirates.[71]

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[71]There is another implied interpolated tale here: that of the nurse. The narrative spiral seems endless.

The world presented in Eumaios' tale is one of danger and disruption, with at least two layers of nostalgia ("longing for home") contained within it: Eumaios was uprooted from his comfortable family life by a woman who had also been uprooted from hers; he became a servant in a foreign land as she had been. The nostalgia which the nurse feels for her lost homeland and former identity leads her to inflict the same sorrowful fate on Eumaios. Eumaios' tale makes it clear that the boundary between play-acting and real-life experience is purely accidental: Odysseus, in disguise on his own island, is pretending to enact the same story. The presence of Eumaios' tale in Part II of the Odyssey makes it very clear that the experiences Odysseus describes in his Kretan tales, the "fictions" he spins as part of his disguise, exist as an everyday reality in the life-experience of some of his fellow Ithacans. From the audience's perspective, Odysseus has lived a fairy-tale while fictionalizing his "real life."

Autobiographical tales such as Eumaios', with their outlandish romantic plots, remind audiences that life is occasionally stranger and more romantic than fiction. "How can you doubt any story," these tales seem to say, "when such odd things happen in the real world?"[72] These implausible "true" stories, however, have the effect of elevating themselves, within that fictional realm, to a kind of higher status on the scale of "the real."

As many of the characters within these texts demonstrate, living out the plots of romance narratives can be an unpleasant and terrifying business. The greatest

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[72]Of course, readers must remember that there is no "real world" inside a text.

pleasure of these sorts of narrative comes from recognizing the safe distance between the stories of the events and the events themselves. Odysseus and Penelope, when they are safely reunited in their royal bed, indulge themselves fully in the joys of tale-telling, a pleasure removed by only one degree, it seems, from the physical pleasure which they find in their reunion:

> Τὼ δ' ἐπεὶ οὖν φιλότητος ἑταρπήτην ἐρατεινῆς,
> τερπέσθην μύθοισι, πρὸς ἀλλήλους ἐνέποντε...
> (Od. 23.300-1).

> (When Penelope and Odysseus had enjoyed their lovemaking,/ they took their pleasure in talking, each one telling his story...)

S. Murnaghan (1987) explains the importance of the tale-telling in which the couple engages:

> Only when Odysseus repeats the same narrative at home to Penelope is he able to enjoy telling it. Only then has he reached the point when he no longer needs to act to secure his own achievement, when taking pleasure in song is no longer a distraction from the struggle to win fame (154).

Heroic fame or kleos in Odysseus' case is not separable from life itself: because only he knows the story of the Odyssey, the poem which will celebrate his achievements, he must live to tell the tale himself, which is precisely what he does as soon as he is able. His rehearsal/recitation of the poem to Penelope blends past, present, and future into narrative, one of the ultimate goals of romance. Odysseus celebrates the end of his narrative-life by reciting the narrative of his life.

The hero and heroine of the Aithiopika wish desperately to be released from the mad flights of the narrative which surrounds and confounds them, for, like

Odysseus, they know that a "romance" is only a true romance when it has already ended happily. Their story, like that of the Odyssey or of any romance tale, threatens at any moment to stumble out of its generic expectations into tragedy, despite the insistence of the shade of Odysseus that Charikleia's story will have a "happy ending" ("telos dexion"--5.22).[73] J. R. Morgan (1989), in his analysis of the conclusion of the Aithiopika, remarks on at least ten passages in the romance where characters break into laments over their fears for the future,[74] expressing their lack of faith in the promise of generic conventions (we know they are characters in a romance, while they do not):

> ...while the predictive devices...offer an optimistic set of expectations, a negative view is also available from the text through the medium of the lamentations in which the characters of the Aithiopika are so prone to indulge...a theory of teleological malice and a vocabulary of concepts by which to express it have been insinuated, and they might at any moment be given substance should the plot take the wrong course (303).

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[73]This prediction is made by Odysseus' shade in Penelope's name:
«τὴν κόρην δὲ ἣν ἄγεις παρὰ τῆς ἐμῆς γαμετῆς πρόσειπε, χαίρειν γὰρ αὐτῇ φησι διότι πάντων ἐπίπροσθεν ἄγει τὴν σωφροσύνην καὶ τέλος αὐτῇ δεξιὸν εὐαγγελίζεται.» (Aith.5.22)

("However, to the maiden you have with you my wife sends greetings and wishes her joy, since she esteems chastity in all things. Good tidings too she sends her: her story has a happy ending.")

[74]Morgan (1989) cites: 1.8.2-3, 2.1.2-3, 2.4.1-4, 4.19.6-9, 5.2.7-10, 5.6.2-4, 5.29.4, 6.8.3-6, 7.14.4-8, and 7.25.4-6 (n.8:303).

It may perhaps be said that Charikleia and Theagenes never achieve the level of narrative control reached by Odysseus and Don Quixote, for, while they eventually come to understand their complicated story, they take far less control over the production of the narrative itself; throughout the Aithiopika, they remain vaguely in awe of the powers which have shaped their destinies.[75] Only Kalasiris takes on the full pleasures and responsibilities of narrative control--and he, having set the story on its correct track, takes Don Quixote's final path in quietly exiting from the text by dying (Aith.7.11.1).[76]

While the parallels in narrative structure between the Odyssey and the Aithiopika are blatant, more careful observation shows important differences as well. Whereas much of the Odyssey's narrative complexity stems from the layering effects created by the repetitive re-telling of variations of the same stories, in the Aithiopika, Heliodoros follows a novelistic convention--and, for the most part, stories are told only once. There is, however, a similar blurring of boundaries in the Aithiopika between "the world" and "the fictional world"; as in the Odyssey--particularly with the example of Eumaios' tale--this blurring is often created through the interpolation of stories whose borders seem porous, where events inside the narrative frame of the interpolated tale mingle with events outside of it.

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[75]Charikleia does, however, tell a lying tale very much like one of Odysseus' at 1.21.3-7. She is not entirely without guile--inherited from both her Odyssean predecessors, Odysseus and Penelope (see Ch. 6).

[76]The death-scene of Kalasiris is an imitation of the description of Socrates' death in Plato's Phaedo.

One of the characters most responsible for introducing and exploring these sorts of narratives is the young Greek named Knemon, whose role I have alluded to briefly in the previous section on narrative frames. Knemon combines attributes of several of the interlocutors Odysseus meets in the Odyssey: he is a multi-purpose audience, with characteristics both of the naive Phaiakians and of the skeptical, but still manipulable, Eumaios.

In his essay on the narrative of the Aithiopika (1982), J. Winkler focuses on the importance of Knemon as an internal audience for Kalasiris' narratives, whose reactions to storytelling can be read as an object lesson for readers in how to respond properly to stories.[77] Knemon, like Eumaios, is a generator of narrative as well, and, again like Eumaios, the tale he tells is a romantic autobiography--an ostensibly true story whose plot crosses the boundaries between romance, tragedy, and tragi-comedy. While Knemon's life seems self-consciously to have imitated the Hippolytus/Phaedra myth, his story eventually ends more like Euripides' romantic Ion than his tragic Hippolytus.

The audience for Knemon's tale of his life is not, however, Kalasiris, for Knemon tells the story early in the first Book of the Aithiopika, before Kalasiris has even entered the narrative. His romantic tale hangs in a kind of vacuum, and appears as a recognizable narrative beacon shining reassuringly through the haze of confusion which surrounds the opening of Book 1. We read Knemon's tale with relief before

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[77]See esp. Section III, "What Kalasiris Knew," 137-158.

we even know the names and identities of the heroine and her companion, much less the story of their strange odyssey.

The Aithiopika opens with an incomprehensible tableau: the heroine and her beloved are surrounded by carnage whose origin will remain unexplained until much later in the narrative; and they are soon to be captured by bandits who speak a language unintelligible to the reader--or to the young Greek protagonists. Several pages into this opening scene, readers still do not know what sort of textual world they have entered. Should they expect the conventions of tragedy? comedy? romance?--there is as yet no way be completely sure. Charikleia, whose name and nationality are as yet unmentioned, makes a woeful plea to the mysterious bandits who surround her:

> «λύσατε τῶν περιεστηκότων ἀλγεινῶν φόνῳ τῷ καθ' ἡμῶν δρᾶμα τὸ περὶ ἡμᾶς καταστρέψαντες.» (Aith.1.3.1)
>
> ("Set us free from the woes that beset us! Kill us and so bring our story to a close!")

With this remark, Charikleia, who describes her life as a "drama" (δρᾶμα),[78] underscores, even at this early point in the Aithiopika's narrative, the fact that life

[78]The word δρᾶμα was used by writers as early as Aristophanes (Frogs, 1021) to refer to theatrical "action." (Liddell-Scott-Jones, 1968: 448.)

and art--particularly literary and dramatic art--will be inextricably intertwined. The narrator continues this theme in his comment on the complete aporia of Charikleia's audience of "bandits" when faced by her strange outburst:

> Ἡ μὲν ταῦτα ἐπετραγῴδει, οἱ δὲ οὐδὲν συνιέναι τῶν λεγομένων...
> (Aith.1.3.2)

(But of this tragic outburst they understood not a word.)

In the midst of this confusion, Knemon enters the text, introduced to us only as a "young Greek" (*νεανίσκος Ἕλλην*) whose presence the bandit chieftain hopes might calm the new arrivals.

And he is not wrong, for within moments of meeting Knemon, the heroine and her companion have elicited from him the story of his life, which they find absorbing, reassuring, and comforting, even though it is a sad tale. Knemon's story, unlike that of the Aithiopika itself, appears to be a linear and logical tale, with recognizable generic conventions and a reasonably straightforward narrative organization. It is a tale easy to read and follow--as much a relief to read for first-time readers of the Aithiopika as it is for its internal audience.

The contents of Knemon's story, briefly, are as follows: he is the son of a noble Athenian, Aristippos, who, having lost his wife, marries again with a younger woman named Demainete, thus establishing the traditionally problematic familial situation of a potential attraction between a grown son and a young stepmother--the Hippolytus/Phaedra story. True to expectations, Demainete makes advances to Knemon who, shocked, rebuffs them. The spurned stepmother, anxious for revenge and also needing to protect her own compromised reputation, manages to set up a

bed-room farce where a duped and confused Knemon mistakenly attempts parricide. His father prejudges him (as Theseus did Hippolytus), and he is banished from Athens.

When he reaches this point in his narrative, the traditional "tragic" conclusion of the story, Knemon stops and suggests that they all go to bed--but not before he alludes to the fact that his story has a different, more "romantic," ending, a happy one, in fact, where the wicked stepmother is punished:

> «Κἀγὼ μὲν οὕτως ἐξηλαυνόμην ἑστίας τε πατρῴας καὶ τῆς ἐνεγκούσης· οὐ μὴν ἀτιμώρητός γε ἡ θεοῖς ἐχθρὰ Δημαινέτη περιελείφθη. Τὸν δὲ τρόπον εἰσαῦθις ἀκούσεσθε, τὸ δὲ νῦν καὶ ὕπνου μεταληπτέον, τό τε γὰρ πολὺ προέβη τῆς νυκτὸς καὶ ὑμῖν πολλῆς δεῖ τῆς ἀναπαύσεως» (Aith.1.14.1-2).
>
> ("Thus I was banished from my family home and the land of my birth [the "Hippolytus" ending]; but that she-devil Demainete did not escape the punishment that was her due. How this came about I shall tell you another time, but now you must sleep. We are far into the night, and you badly need rest.")

The curiosity of his audience is, as it is meant to be, whetted by this "cliff-hanger" remark, and, with a little prodding from Theagenes, Knemon agrees to continue his tale, relating how Demainete's uncontrollable lust for him drove her, finally, through further bed-room farces, to bring on her amply deserved destruction. This version of the story--the "happy ending," or "romantic" version--proceeds until the villainous Demainete is dead, and Knemon, presumably, is restored to his proper familial position.

Knemon's tale, then, is a real-life romance tale framed within the fictional boundary of the Aithiopika--as Eumaios' real-life odyssey is framed within the Odyssey. It suggests that perfectly fulfilled fictional narratives--"happy stories," or

romances--are capable of existing in a world which is somewhere between fiction and "life." Like Eumaios, Knemon has lived a romance--complete with disguise, recognition, fall from grace, exile, and, presumably, a happy resolution.

For Theagenes and Charikleia, Knemon's tale brings on a bout of pleasurable weeping not unlike the one Penelope and Odysseus enjoy in the safety of their marriage bed: for the closeness they feel between their unfortunate situation and the one Knemon has described is offset by the distance they feel between the narrative of his experience and their current reality:

> Καὶ ἅμα ἐδάκρυεν· ἐδάκρυον δὲ καὶ οἱ ξένοι, τὰ μὲν ἐκείνου πρόφασιν, μνήμῃ δὲ τῶν ἰδίων ἕκαστος. Καὶ οὐδ' ἂν ἔληξαν θρηνοῦντες, εἰ μή τις ὕπνος, ἐπιπτὰς ὑφ' ἡδονῆς τῶν γόων, ἔπαυσε τῶν δακρύων. (Aith.1.18.1)
>
> (And he wept. The strangers wept too, ostensibly at his story but in fact in remembrance of their own. They would not have ceased from sorrowing, had not sleep, drawn by the pleasure they took in weeping, come fluttering down to staunch their tears.)

The distance which exists between narrative fiction and life is not always a reassuring one--for Theagenes and Charikleia hope that their story will end as Knemon's seems to have--that their story, which currently appears to be tragic, will turn out to be a tragi-comic romance after all.

Adding to the blurring between life and fiction in the Aithiopika is the fact that both narratives--that of Knemon's life, as well as that of the lives of Theagenes and Charikleia--turn out to have plots which are connected to each other in bizarre and extremely implausible ways. Still in Book 1, one of the characters introduced in the second part of Knemon's story, a servant-girl named Thisbe, appears mysteriously and impossibly in the midst of the narrative/life of Theagenes and Charikleia. She is

discovered as a corpse in the aftermath of a confused battle between the protagonists' bandit captors and an unidentified group of outsiders. In dying where and as she does, Thisbe inadvertently saves Charikleia from her own death by serving as a stand-in. Expressing her astonishment at the appearance of this "character from another story" in the midst of her own tale, Charikleia says:

> «πῶς ἦν εἰκός, ὦ Κνήμων,» εἰπούσης «τὴν ἐκ μέσης τῆς Ἑλλάδος ἐπ' ἐσχάτοις γῆς Αἰγύπτου καθάπερ ἐκ μηχανῆς ἀναπεμφθῆναι;»
> (Aith.2.8.3)

> ("How can someone suddenly be spirited away by a sort of theatrical special effect, our of the heart of Greece to the remotest parts of Egypt?")

Charikleia's life is a drama, indeed. Later, for complicated purposes of her own, Charikleia will impersonate this same dead Thisbe, frightening the poor gullible Knemon nearly out of his wits (Aith.5.1-11). Elements of Knemon's tale will, in fact, continue to intertwine themselves through and around the plot of the Aithiopika up until the point when Knemon is finally "married-out" of the romance in Book 6 (Aith.6.8.2), fulfilling, finally, the initial promise of his original story that it would eventually have a "happy"--and romantic--ending.[79] The devious denouement of Knemon's autobiographical romance mirrors the devious path of the greater narrative of the Aithiopika itself. As we have seen, Charikleia's life too is prophesied to have

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[79]Knemon's marriage to a young girl named Nausikleia, the daughter of his host, Nausikles, is an obvious reference to the marriage to Nausikaa which Odysseus is offered by his Phaiakian host, Alkinoös. It is also a further example of a tendency of Heliodoros (which I will analyze a greater length below--see Conclusion) to "tie off" romantically all the loose ends of the Odyssey's narrative. In the Odyssean setting, it is not possible for Odysseus to act out the fairy-tale role of the "handsome stranger from abroad who marries the nubile princess;" so, Heliodoros accomplishes the fairy-tale marriage in his romance.

a happy ending (a "telos dexion")--though it is impossible for anyone to predict how this will come about. While we have the firm impression that her life will eventually follow the path of romance and not of tragedy, we are made to read nervously, never absolutely certain until the last narrative knots are firmly tied. It is thus that Heliodoros, in a romance which is over 250 pages long in English translation, maintains our interest in a story whose ending we already know: for the plot does not finally and definitively resolve itself until the last page of Book 10 (Aith.10.40.1), when Charikleia's father, the Aithiopian King Hydaspes, marries her to Theagenes. As in the Odyssey, the constant blurring of the boundaries between fiction and life--the demonstrated fact that life can mirror fiction as much as fiction mirrors life--adds to the suspense, pleasure, and ultimate significance of the text.

One character in Part I of Don Quixote, the galley slave Ginés de Pasamonte, attempts to resolve the problematic relationship between literature and life by deciding, as El Saffar (1975) says, "...to live and write about his life at the same time, continuing both activities until his death" (21). As she continues her analysis, however, El Saffar gets to the heart of why even this method will fail to combine life and text smoothly:

> The problem is still not solved, however, for no matter how closely one activity follows the other, the two are mutually exclusive. The process of living is open-ended, no certain ends resulting from a given set of means. The writer, on the other hand, must work from the position of the end, turning on

> already accomplished events and ordering them according to a pattern not obvious at their beginning. The approach to simultaneity of word and deed is necessarily asymptotic, as Ginés' unfinishable book suggests (21).

As Frye (1975) says, describing the behavior of Don Quixote, only a true psychotic would actually choose to live the dangerous life of a literary romance hero:

> The Quixote who tries to actualize in his life the romances he has been reading is a psychotic, though a psychotic of unusual literary interest. I suppose psychosis, or certain forms of it at least, could almost be defined as an attempt to identify one's life "literally" with an imaginative projection (178).

While Don Quixote discovers the painful reality of cold, hunger, physical beatings, and even mutilation (the loss of his ear and teeth) in turning himself into the hero of his own romance, he remains undeterred in his project of living the life of the caballeros andantes he has read so much about. Without his romantic "literary" life, Alonso Quixano has no life at all, and his death, like Ginés de Pasamonte's, allows him the ultimate--and most powerful--exercise of narrative control, for Don Quixote's narrative indeed ends when his life does, at the close of Part II.

Like the lying tales in Part II of the Odyssey, the many interpolated tales in Part I of the Quixote have provided readers and critics room for various kinds of literary speculation for centuries--not all of them offered in a positive vein. Cervantes himself, amusingly, puts criticism of the large number interpolated narratives in Part I of the Quixote into the mouth of Don Quixote himself: when Don Quixote discovers early in Part II what the first half of Don Quixote is like, with its many interpolated

stories and tales within tales, he is indignant that so much attention could have been paid by his author to a subject other than himself:

> "Una de las tachas que ponen á la tal historia," dijo el Bachiller, "es que su autor puso en ella una novela intitulada El Curioso impertinente; no por mala ni por mal razonada, sino por no ser de aquel lugar, ni tiene que ver con la historia de su merced del señor don Quijote."
> "Yo apostaré," replicó Sancho, "que ha mezclado el hi de perro berzas con capachos."
> "Ahora digo," dijo don Quijote, "que no ha sido el autor de mi historia, sino algún ignorante hablador, que á tiento y sin algún discurso se puso á escribirla, salga lo que saliere, como hacía Orbaneja, el pintor de Úbeda, al cual preguntándole qué pintaba, respondió: 'Lo que saliere'" (II, 3).
>
> ("One of the faults they find in this history," said the Bachelor, "is that the author inserted a novel called The Tale of Foolish Curiosity--not that it is bad or badly told, but because it is out of place and has nothing to do with the story of his worship Don Quixote."
> "I'll bet the son of a dog has made a fine mix-up of everything," put in Sancho.
> "Now I believe that the author of my story is no sage but an ignorant chatterer," said Don Quixote, "and that he set himself to write it down blindly and without any method, and let it turn out anyhow, like Orbaneja, the painter of Ubeda, who, when they asked him what he was painting, used to answer 'Whatever it turns out.'")[80]

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[80]Don Quixote's protests here sound remarkably like certain critical comments made by readers of the Odyssey on the prolix structure of the second half of that poem. Read, for example, the following view of the second half of the Odyssey, which appears in an otherwise balanced critical reading by H. W. Clarke (1967):

> We are now past the midpoint of the poem, and it detracts not at all from Homer's achievement to suggest a certain slackening of pace in the second half of the Odyssey. The poem moves more slowly as Odysseus spins his interminable lies, the action betrays less design or inevitability, and the poet moralizes his preparations for the mass death of the Suitors. One is tempted to speculate that the flaccidness of this part of the poem, up to, say, Book XVIII, is due to a thinness of received material (65).

As they have in Cervantes studies, recent approaches to Homeric narrative such as reader-response and narratological theory have helped critics better understand the importance of devices such as the interpolated narrative.

Although Don Quixote expresses frustration here over the large number of interpolated tales in "his" text, the tales in Part I provide a remarkable forum for Cervantes' exploration of the effects (and affects) of narrative in all its forms--written, oral, transcribed, epistolary, first-person, third-person, recited, and read-aloud. Many of these tales cause a "blurring" between the frames between "narrative" and "life" that is identical to the effect I have described in analyzing Eumaios' and Knemon's tales in the Odyssey and Aithiopika. I will certainly not attempt a complete analysis of all the many forms of narrative in Part I--or even all of the interpolated tales--here,[81] but it will perhaps be useful to point out some of the general ways in which several of the tales operate within the body of the main text.

All of the interpolated tales in Part I of the Quixote must be read in the context of the strange manuscript in which they come to exist--that is, in a manuscript which becomes aware of itself as a manuscript following the break in the story which occurs early in the novel at I, 8, and the "discovery" of the Arabic "continuation" of the text in Chapter 9.[82] This famous introduction of the fictional author/narrator, Cide Hamete, produces in the Quixote what El Saffar (1975) refers to as an "awareness of the inevitability of the distance between the controller and the controlled that Cervantes has built into his novel at every level" (23).

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[81]The best complete analysis of all the interpolated tales in the Quixote in terms of their levels of fictionality is El Saffar's Distance and Control in "Don Quixote" (1975). To my knowledge, it remains the most thorough study of this important topic in Cervantine studies. In the current discussion I will refer to it often.

[82]See El Saffar (1975): esp. pp. 38-45 on this topic.

There are at least four important interpolated narratives inserted into Part I of the Quixote between Chapters 27 and 44--though the actual number becomes difficult to calculate as the novel progresses and more and more "tales"--and "lives"--converge on Don Quixote and Sancho during their second stay in Juan Palomeque's inn. The interpolated narratives involve the stories of characters other than Don Quixote and Sancho--these are the sort of tales Don Quixote is so annoyed about in the passage cited above. This is not to say, however, that Don Quixote does not become engaged with the characters of these tales--in fact, more often than not, he "reads" their narratives as part of his own fantasy, playing out his own form of literary madness in the stories and lives of the characters he meets. In his present mental state, he is incapable of reacting otherwise. And they, of course, become involved with his "narrative" as well, play-acting and "going along with" the charade of his knight-errant identity, each to the degree to which he or she is willing or capable. For example, when a "damsel in distress" is called for in a plot to rescue Don Quixote from his mad penance in the Sierra Morena, the genteel Dorothea, since she is both a "damsel" and "in distress," is far better suited for the role than the barber disguised as a woman:

> ...a lo cual dijo Dorotea que ella haría la doncella menesterosa mejor que el Barbero, y más, que tenía allí vestidos con que hacerlo al natural, y que la dejasen el cargo de saber representar todo aquello que fuese menester para llevar adelante su intento, porque ella había leído muchos libros de caballerías y sabía bien el estilo que tenían las doncellas cuitadas cuando pedían sus dones á los andantes caballeros (I, 29). [emphasis added]
>
> (Dorothea then observed that she could play the damsel in distress better than the barber and, what was more, she had a dress with her in which she could do it to the life. They could rely on her to act the part and do all that was

necessary. For she had read many books of chivalry, and knew the style in which afflicted maidens were accustomed to beg their boons of knights errant.)

The result of all this crossing-over of roles is, of course, predictably funny--but also, perhaps less predictably, disconcerting, for as Don Quixote engages the world around him more and more in his own fantasies, so the boundaries between "narrative" and "life" become harder--for everyone--to disentangle.

Many of the interpolated tales[83] are told during a return visit to Juan Palomeque's inn (the site of an early set of adventures, including Sancho's "blanket tossing"--I, 17), where Sancho and Don Quixote, as well as the priest and barber, and numerous other characters converge during the course of the narrative. Three of these tales--the "tragic romance story" of Grisóstomo and Marcela (I, 12-14), the "star-crossed romance story" of Cardenio, Dorothea, Don Fernando, and Lucinda (I, 23-36), and the "exciting romantic adventure novel" provided by the "Captive's Tale" (I, 39-41)--show many striking similarities to the "romantic autobiographies" of Eumaios and Knemon which I have analyzed above: 1) each is a story which, if excerpted, could be read as a generic romance narrative; 2) each, however, is related by its protagonist as a "true" autobiographical account; 3) each is a story whose plot began before our entry into the text of the Quixote, but whose the final resolution of which actually occurs during the course of the Quixote, before the eyes of Don Quixote, Sancho, and the numerous other witnesses gathered at Juan Palomeque's inn--including ourselves as readers; 4) each is a story whose resolution not only occurs as

[83]All except for Marcela and Grisóstomo's tale.

we look on, but whose plot intermingles coincidentally with the plot of the Quixote itself as happens in the Aithiopika with Knemon's tale. This intermingling between the different levels of fictionality in Part I of the Quixote altogether blurs the already confused mixture of fact and fancy initiated by the Don's original decision to model his identity on characters from literary romance.[84]

One of the long interpolated tales in Part I does not fit precisely into the category of "romantic autobiography," but is nonetheless important in its own right. It is a long novella entitled El curioso impertinente (The Tale of Foolish Curiosity, which is found in a manuscript and read aloud to the assembled company at the inn. I leave this tale out of the current discussion because of its manuscript status. This story, as El Saffar (1975) describes it, exists on a different fictional plane from the other tales: because it is read from a manuscript, it remains a narrative "...in which all characters, authors and spectators stay on their respective and clearly differentiated levels" (49-50). The specific plot of the Curioso impertinente however, is in keeping with the other interpolated tales in that it involves love, treachery, disguise, and intrigue. The difference in its status, however, is also significant in that it shows Cervantes' passion for including within his novel as many levels of fictionality as he

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[84]E. Williamson, in his study The Half-way House of Fiction: 'Don quixote' and Arthurian Romance (1984), makes the same observation about the highly "romantic" nature of the interpolated tales in Part I of the Quixote:

> These [interpolated] stories, however, are of the same genre as Cervantes's Italianate novellas: they have highly-organized plots which rely on coincidences, deus ex machina devices, and spectacular forms of peripeteia and anagnorisis for their articulation. In effect, their style and form display a close kinship with the narrative mode of chivalric romance... (162).

can. In fact, this section of the Quixote--the events leading up to the visit to Juan Palomeque's inn, and the events which take place during Don Quixote's stay there--provide some of the pivotal moments in the novel for coming to terms with Cervantes' fictional project as a whole.

The events which lead to the telling of the first interpolated tale in Part I, that of the "tragic love of Grisóstomo and Marcela," occur immediately following the resumption of the narrative in Chapter 9. Sancho and Don Quixote, at the end of a day of traveling, come upon a group of goatherds and decide to join them for their evening meal and to camp with them that night. During the course of the meal, it becomes clear that these goatherds are not entirely unfamiliar with literary madmen, for one of them, Pedro, begins to tell the story of a local young man and woman, Grisóstomo and Marcela, who seem to have been infected with the same sort of delusion from which Don Quixote suffers: these people also have been acting out the identities of literary figures in place of their own. In this case, however, there are some important differences. First, the literary genre they are imitating is the pastoral romance, rather than the chivalric, and, more importantly perhaps, the charade has already proved deadly for one of them. Grisóstomo, a sensitive and educated young man, has, it seems, carried the farce to its most extreme conclusion, meeting his death while playing to the hilt the role of "passionate lover to the beautiful and inaccessible heroine." The goatherds, in fact, invite the curious Don Quixote and Sancho to attend his funeral on the following day.

The connection between Grisóstomo's fate and the one which might await Don Quixote seems obvious. As El Saffar puts it:

> Grisóstomo, as it becomes immediately apparent, shares a variety of traits with Don Quixote. Like Don Quixote, his actions appear to have been dictated by literary models. Grisóstomo was a student with an inclination for writing poetry. He completely renounced his inherited fortune to take up a pastoral life, tantalized by the elusive but beautiful shepherdess, Marcela (45-6).

There are many "lessons" for Don Quixote in Grisóstomo's fate, though he clearly does not note them. One of the most interesting, perhaps, has to do with Grisóstomo's failure to control the course of his own fiction. Based on the elaborate preparations which Grisóstomo has made for his own funeral, it seems clear that he has died convinced that he would be the final author of his own story. As El Saffar describes the funeral:

> When the spectators arrive at the burial site they find Grisóstomo in the casket with poems scattered about on his body. Ambrosio is acting as stage manager, in effect, for another play written by the dead Grisóstomo...But even these...presentations--Grisóstomo's performance of his own burial and Ambrosio's speech--so apparently final and finished both in form and in substance, leave more to be said (50).

The person who will "say more," and who will, in fact, dramatically change the ending--and thereby the genre--of Grisóstomo's carefully constructed set-piece, is the beautiful Marcela herself. Like Grisóstomo, she is also a "literary" shepherdess, an

educated and wealthy young woman, not a true herder of sheep in either mind or spirit. Like Thisbe in the Aithiopika, she unexpectedly enters into this funeral scene, shifting the focus from Grisóstomo's version of events to her own, and making a passionate plea for the rights of beautiful women to be left unmolested by foolish and aggressive lovers like Grisóstomo. She refuses to be a beautiful--and silent--object of male fantasy and desire. Marcela steals authorial control from the foolishly dead, and therefore helpless, Grisóstomo, and recasts his melodramatic tragedy as mere self-indulgence:

> "...Que si á Grisóstomo mató su impaciencia y arrojado deseo, ¿por qué se ha de culpar mi honesto proceder y recato? Si yo conservo mi limpieza con la compañía de los árboles, ¿por qué ha de querer que la pierda el que quiere que la tenga con los hombres? Yo, como sabéis, tengo riquezas propias, y no codicio las ajenas; tengo libre condición, y no gusto de sujetarme; ni quiero ni aborrezco á nadie..." (I, 14).
>
> ("...If Chrysostom's impatience and headstrong passion killed him, why should my modesty and reserve be blamed? If I preserve my purity in the company of the trees, why should he who would have me keep the company of men desire me to lose it? I, as you know, have riches of my own, and covet no one else's. I have a taste for freedom and no wish for subjection. I neither love nor hate any man...")

With this powerful speech, Marcela leaps back into the forest, leaving a resonant note blaring for all participants in the narrative of the Quixote--including not only Don Quixote but ourselves also. As El Saffar notes, Marcela disrupts our perception of art works as static or "dead" things by reminding us of the life they take on in the perceptions of the living. The episode offers a commentary on Cervantes' entire artistic project:

> In a way both similar and dissimilar to the problem at Chapters 8 and 9, Cervantes has shown how art and life can combine in an integral whole. Each work of art is sparked by an actual event which in turn changes the course of events, moving them towards a re-crystallization in another work of art which produces yet another actual situation. ...although creative interest on the part of the characters appears to move the story forward from episode to episode, from the vantage point of the completed series, the reader cannot but recognize the ultimate determining role of the unseen author.[85]

For Don Quixote, caught up as he is in the throes of his particular form of delusion, this meeting with Marcela--and the even stranger meetings soon to follow--is entirely in keeping with his sense of the complete interpenetration of literature and life. Seizing both the opportunity and his sword, he forbids any of the present company to pursue Marcela, whom he casts into his own fantasy as a "damsel in distress:"

> "Ninguna persona, de cualquier estado y condición que sea, se atreva á seguir á la hermosa Marcela, so pena de caer en la furiosa indignación mía. Ella a mostrado con claras y suficientes razones la poca ó ninguna culpa que ha tenido en la muerte de Grisóstomo, y cuán ajena vive de condescender con los deseos de ninguno de sus amantes; á cuya causa es justo que, en lugar de ser seguida y perseguida, sea honrada y estimada de todos los buenos del mundo..." (I, 14).
>
> ("Let no man, of whatsoever estate or condition, dare to follow the fair Marcela, under pain of incurring my most furious indignation! She has shown with clear and sufficient argument that she bears little or no blame for Chrysostom's death, and how far she is from yielding to any of her lovers'

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[85]Marcella acts as another "Avellaneda" to poor Grisóstomo, whose death, in this case, is indeed untimely--for, unlike Cervantes' dispute with his "Avellaneda," his demise allows her to get the last word. Perhaps this is an internal reminder or warning from Cervantes to himself.

> desires. Wherefore it is right that, instead of being pursued and persecuted, she should be honoured and esteemed by all good men in the world...")

The ironies which are presented in this, and subsequent, episodes in Part I of the Quixote hinge on the same paradox we have already seen in the case of both the Odyssey and the Aithiopika: that is, that strange, mysterious, and frankly implausible events begin to occur around Don Quixote wherever he goes, intruding a disturbing level of fictionality into the frame narrative itself. Just as Eumaios is able to match Odysseus' wildly romantic lying tale with a "real-life" version of his own, and just as the corpse of Knemon's adversary, Thisbe, appears in the midst of the Aithiopika as if part of some sort of "theatrical special effect," so the very existence of a person such as Don Quixote seems to carry the world of romantic fiction across into the "real" world of the frame narrative--with often alarming results.

For all the complexity of the effects of Grisóstomo's and Marcela's tale on characters and readers of the Quixote, they barely begin to equal those introduced by the next set of narratives--those of Cardenio and Dorothea and, later, of Lucinda and Don Fernando. These four young people are in the throes of yet another classic romance plot--one where two pairs of attractive young men and women have, either through bad luck or bad planning, fallen in love with the wrong partner(s).[86] Like its classical prototypes, this plot is extremely confusing, even when presented in a linear way; for the sake of explication, the main outlines of the story are as follows.

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[86]"Star-crossed lovers."

Cardenio, who narrates the first part of the story, is a young nobleman who madly loves Lucinda, the daughter of a local family of equal rank to his own. They are secretly pledged to be married, though they have not yet broached the subject to their parents. Cardenio is called away to serve his father's lord, Duke Ricardo, and, while in the Duke's service, he makes the mistake of trusting his closest male friend, the Duke's son Don Fernando, to accompany him on a visit back to his home, during which he pays a moonlight call on his beloved. As soon as Don Fernando lays eyes on Lucinda, he, too, finds himself madly in love with her--though he has already secretly pledged himself to marry another beautiful girl, the daughter of his father's wealthiest tenant, the fair Dorothea. He has already, we learn, both wooed her and also taken her virginity. Carried away by his new passion, however, he commits a double act of treachery, betraying both Cardenio and Dorothea: he arranges things so that, having sent Cardenio away on business for the Duke, he can secure a marriage to Lucinda through her father. Cardenio finds out about this through a desperate message smuggled out by Lucinda herself, but he is not able to prevent the marriage. Hiding in the back of the church in disguise, he arrives in time to hear Lucinda say the fateful "I do" to the traitorous Don Fernando, and, driven thoroughly insane by his grief and rage, he flees into the Sierra Morena, taking up the life of a beggar and madman, with only occasional lapses into his former, rational, self.

It is here that he encounters Don Quixote and Sancho, for Don Quixote too has fled to the safety of the Sierra Morena, following the wise advice of Sancho who fears that he and his master will be prosecuted for their latest exploit--the Don's

illegal freeing of the galley slaves. Once again, as we saw in the case of Grisóstomo, Don Quixote meets another person whose life mirrors, in a way, his own--for, like Don Quixote, Cardenio is certainly mad. Cardenio is a true psychotic like Don Quixote, not a "faker" as Grisóstomo was, merely imitating the life of a fictional character, and his misfortunes, as far as we can tell, are "real." Like the unfortunate Eumaios, poor Cardenio has been forced to experience what the rest of us might find very pleasurable to read about: indeed, his life seems very much to be imitating art, for the grandiosity of this "plot"--from the intensity of the "perfect" love he feels for Lucinda, to the depths of the betrayal by his best friend, Don Fernando--has the all the earmarks of a fantasy, one of those romantic day-dreams that are so pleasurable to entertain when one knows for sure that they are not real. There is a delicious, almost guilt-provoking pleasure in speculating on these narratives from a safe distance--but for Cardenio there is no safe distance. For him, the "romance" has become all too real, and the events of his life have unbalanced him, produced in him the sort of psychosis to which Frye refers in connection with Don Quixote.[87]

Cervantes exploits as fully as he can this meeting of two such different--though similar--madmen, and this is one of the main reasons that the full story of Cardenio, Lucinda, Dorothea, and Don Fernando takes so long to resolve itself. For Don Quixote responds to Cardenio's narrative as he does to all narratives--he engages with it and conflates the literal with the literary. When Cardenio mentions in passing that his beloved Lucinda had been fond of the romances of chivalry, particularly Don

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[87]Cf. p. 92.

Quixote's favorite Amadís de Gaul, the stimulus proves too much for the knight, and his own insanity takes over. When he then interrupts Cardenio's tale to comment on his own understanding of the Amadís, the break in the narrative is long enough for Cardenio to lose both his train of thought and his mental equilibrium:

> Estábale mirando Cardenio muy atentamente, al cual ya había venido el accidente de su locura y no estaba para proseguir su historia; ni tampoco don Quijote se la oyera, según le había disgustado lo que de Madásima le había oído. ¡Extraño caso; que así volvío por ella como si verdaderamente fuera su verdadera y natural señora: tal le tenían sus descomulgados libros! (I, 24)
>
> (Cardenio sat staring at him very attentively. For a fit of madness had come on him and he was in no state to continue his tale; nor would Don Quixote have listened if he had, so disgusted was he by what he had heard concerning Madisima. It was extraordinary to see him take her part as though she were in fact his real and natural mistress; such was the power his unholy books had over him.)

The fact that Cardenio's madness has been brought on by real life, and not by books, is actually a bit disquieting, for his experiences have been truly awful ones--the stuff that romances are made of, but also stuff which ought to remain in the world of fiction. It is frightening rather than pleasurable to think that such things really happen to people outside of books; as in the Odyssey and the Aithiopika, the blurring of the necessary boundaries between "a good story" and "a bad life" is unsettling. Now more than ever in the Quixote we must wonder what genre we have entered: Romance? Comedy? Parody? Tragedy? These categories are still debated in Cervantine studies, in a discussion which seems, frankly, unresolvable.[88] Cardenio's

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[88]J. Parr, in Don Quixote: An Anatomy of Subversive Discourse (1988), argues that the Quixote is a form of satire called an "anatomy" (pp. 123-138). Interestingly, he uses Bakhtin's work on the poetics of the novel to arrive at this definition--and Bakhtin has (continued...)

experience opens the fascinating question which Cervantes will explore more and more deeply throughout the rest of the novel, of the true nature of Don Quixote's mental state: for while we know that he is mad, the world around him seems, during the course of the novel, to be growing madder and madder as well--and long before the end of Part II, Don Quixote actually appears quite a bit saner than many of the people who surround him, who play around the edges of his fantasy without daring fully to enter it. Both Cardenio and Don Quixote eventually emerge from their psychoses as balanced and "healthy" individuals; perhaps it is true that the only sane reaction to a mad world is to become crazy.

In a further parallel to the tales of Eumaios and Knemon, a strange relationship develops between the narrative world of Cardenio's tale of his life and the world of Don Quixote and Sancho: for all of the "characters" from Cardenio's tale, beginning with Dorothea (Don Fernando's secret love whom Cardenio has never even met!), converge mysteriously on Sancho and Don Quixote as they prepare to return to lodge at the same inn at which they had had such marvelous adventures during the earlier part of their sally.

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[88](...continued)
been one of the most influential critics in the process of the re-introduction of ancient fiction into discussions of Western literary history. Parr's definition of the Quixote as a satire takes Petronius' Satyricon and Apuleius' Metamorphoses as its models, and notes that, "Etymologically, a satura refers to a plate heaped high to overflowing. It is a form that will hold all that can be fitted into it. Everything fits and anything goes. It is impossible to cross generic boundaries within the confines of an anatomy" (138). The discussion of the genre of the Quixote is as broad as Parr's definition suggests it needs to be. For an overview of current ideas on this topic, see D. Eisenberg (1987): 79-107; also E. C. Riley (1989), "Romance, the Picaresque and Don Quixote I," for an analysis of the ways in which Cervantes' creation "break[s] through generic barriers" (242).

Leaving out the complicated details for the sake of space, let me say only that Dorothea appears on the scene much as Thisbe had in the Aithiopika, "as if out of a stage device"; she is disguised as a young man, for she has left her father's house to seek justice from Don Fernando. Her abrupt appearance on the scene, her removing of her disguise, and her subsequent telling of her version of "Cardenio's Tale," has an interesting effect on Cardenio himself--for as he hears the tale, he becomes saner. Dorothea, like Cardenio, has been forced to lose her true self in a "fiction" when faced with insupportable events in her real life. While Cardenio has become psychotic, she has been equally lost in her own way, roaming the world dressed as a man; their fates are parallel.

As he listens to "Dorothea's Tale," which is really a version of his own tale--"Cardenio's Tale"--narrated by someone else, Cardenio develops a renewed sense of the proper boundary between fiction and life--an essential discernment which marks a basic difference between psychotics and the rest of us. In the course of listening to Dorothea's narrative, Cardenio seems to regain some sense of the pleasurable distance between fiction and life which he had lost when his life became a "tragedy." He can empathize with her story and react to it without going mad--a lesson we might keep in mind in assessing the various attempts made in the novel to find a "cure" for Don Quixote's madness. When he hears his dreadful life turned back into literature in Dorothea's narrative, its events become supportable--even ennobling. Dorothea herself calls her life a "tragedy," echoing the sentiments of her romantic predecessor, Charikleia. The task for Cardenio and Dorothea, then, will be to bend their lives'

narratives out of the tragic course they are on, and back into the romantic mode proper for two such young, passionate, and deserving people. As Cardenio says, in his most rational speech up to now:

> "Pues siendo verdad, como creo que lo es, lo que aquí habéis contado, aún podría ser que á entrambos nos tuviese el cielo guardado mejor suceso en nuestros desastres que nosotros pensamos. Porque, presupuesto que Luscinda no puede caserse con don Fernando, por ser mía, ni don Fernando con ella, per ser vuestra, y haberlo ella tan manifiestamente declarado, bien podemos esperar que el cielo nos restituya lo que es nuestro, pues está todovía en ser, y no se ha enajenado ni deshecho" (I, 29).
>
> ("If your story is true, however--as I believe it is--Heaven, perhaps, has in store for us both a better ending to our misfortunes than we suppose. For, since Lucinda is mine and therefore unable to marry Don Ferdinand, as she has so publicly declared, and as he is yours and so also unable to marry, we may yet hope that Heaven will restore to us our own partners; for nothing is irretrievably lost.")

Their success in achieving a "happy ending" is, as it turns out, as resounding as that of Charikleia and Theagenes, characters whose fate and literary tradition they share as the protagonists of a sort of fiction which J. Winkler (1982) describes as: "...not just a romance but a romance-in-frame" (139).

One of the last (though by no means the last!) of the interpolated narratives in this section of the Quixote, "The Captive's Tale," follows basically the same patterns I have been describing, with some interesting variations. Like "Cardenio/Dorothea's Tale(s)," it falls into the category of "romantic autobiography": it is a first-person narrative whose main character is the narrator himself. By the time however, that this narrator/tale-teller, the mysterious "Captive," appears on the scene, the atmosphere in Juan Palomeque's inn is beginning to seem more and more like that of a fairy-tale place--the inn is becoming more and more, that is, like the "magical

palace" Don Quixote thinks it is! For, the conclusions of the open-ended "tragic" narratives of Cardenio and Dorothea have by this time been achieved through a truly "romantic" set of coincidences, capped by the appearance ("as if by some theatrical special effect") of none other than the treacherous Don Fernando and the lovely Lucinda themselves. As in the Aithiopika, and for no more plausible reasons, these two have joined the ever-growing crowd at the inn (it would seem that there is only one inn in all of Spain), and, through the proper intervention of Don Quixote and the priest, renewed their pledges to their respective mates. As should be obvious by now, this is a classic romance pattern--that is, a seeming "tragedy" turns into "comedy" through a set of coincidences. These tales illustrate again and again that one of the essential--and only--differences between the genres of tragedy and romance lies in their respective endings. If the "tragedy" ends happily, it becomes automatically a "romance," a story which then begs to be enjoyed as narrative from the safe distance of a legitimate marriage bed--figuratively or, just as often, literally.

The "Captive" arrives in the midst of the now celebrating mob of visitors to Juan Palomeque's inn, accompanied by a mysterious and beautiful lady dressed as a Moor. Unlike the other romantic autobiographies, the Captive's tale would seem already to have "ended happily," for he has his beautiful lady with him. We shall soon find that the major portion of his suffering is indeed over, and that he can now look back on the miserable events of his life, and tell his tale in safety to a rapt and companionable audience.[89]

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[89]Like Odysseus and Penelope at Od.23.300-343.

In this respect and others as well, the Captive's recitation has elements in common with Odysseus' apologue in Books 9 through 12; there, although he still had much to accomplish before he could consider himself truly safe, Odysseus could celebrate the completion of a certain portion of his ordeal, and the end of his isolation from other human beings during the years of his travels and captivity on Kalypso's island. As his pseudonym, "The Captive," tells us, Cervantes' character, like Odysseus, has suffered some form of imprisonment. Like Odysseus, too, his journey will turn out to have been a circular one, taking him to foreign and un-Christian realms--the land of the Moors--and eventually leading him homeward as a man both wiser and richer than the one who set out.

The connection between the Captive's story and that of Odysseus is also made explicit by the comments of Don Quixote himself, shortly before the Captive is asked by the company to entertain them by reciting his tale. In a movement exactly parallel to the scene in Book 7 of the Odyssey where Odysseus is first offered a meal and lodging by his Phaiakian hosts before he is asked for his name and narrative, so here the Captive and his companion are first fed and lodged before he is asked to tell his tale. During dinner, Don Quixote makes one of his saner discourses, comparing and assessing the professions of "Arms and Letters"; here he makes an explicit reference to Odysseus' apologue while describing the difficult "odyssey" faced by students in the attainment of their degrees:

> "Por este camino que he pintado, áspero y dificultoso, tropezando aquí, cayendo allí, levantándose acullá, tornado á caer acá, llegan al grado que desean; el cual alcanzado, á muchos hemos visto que, habiendo pasando por

> estas sirtes y por estas Scila y Caribdis como llevando en vuelo de la favorable fortuna..." (I, 37).
>
> ("But by the rough and difficult path which I have indicated, stumbling at times and falling, getting up and falling once more, they do acquire the degree they desire. And when they have got it, I have seen many of them, once passed through those shoals, those Scyllas and Charybdises, as if borne on the wings of Fortune's favour...")

While the explicit reference to the "Skylla and Charybdis" episode of Odysseus' narrative may not seem relevant when it is first made, the connection between the Captive's Tale and Odysseus' apologue is certainly clear by the end of the story--so much so, in fact, that Don Fernando will practically quote from the Odyssey, saying as the Phaiakians do:

> "Por cierto, señor Capitán, el modo con que habéis contado este extraño suceso ha sido tal, que iguala á la novedad y extrañeza del mesmo caso. Todo es peregrino, y raro, y lleno de accidentes, que maravillan y suspenden á quien los oye; y es de tal manera el gusto que hemos recebido en escuchalle, que aunque nos hallara el día de mañana entretenidos en el mesmo cuento, holgáramos que de nuevo se comenzara" (I, 42).
>
> ("I assure you, Captain, that the way in which you have told your strange adventures has been as remarkable as the strangeness and novelty of the events themselves. It is a curious tale and full of astonishing incidents. In fact we have enjoyed listening so much that we should be glad to have it all over again, even if it took till tomorrow morning to tell it.")

When Don Quixote has finished his speech on Arms and Letters, the company ask the stranger (as in the Odyssey, they still do not know his name) to tell his tale, and, like Odysseus, he makes two disclaimers--first, that the tale is so painful that it might upset them to hear it, and, second, that they may not believe its remarkable contents:

> "Y así, estén vuestras mercedes atentos, y oirán un discurso verdadero á quien podría ser que no llegasen los mentirosos que con curioso y pensado artificio suelen componerse" (I, 38).
>
> ("Listen then, gentlemen, and you will hear a true story, and I doubt whether you will find its equal in the most detailed and careful fiction ever written.")

This disclaimer is particularly interesting in that it lays bare the ironic theme of this whole segment of the Quixote--that of the blurred boundary between fiction and life.

The tale the Captive tells does indeed resemble a fairy-tale romance: it begins when a prodigal father calls his three sons to him and divides his fortune among them, commissioning them to go off and take up the traditional professions of clergy, commerce, and the military. Our protagonist, as eldest, chooses first and selects a military career. The Captive's fortunes then carry him into the historical Mediterranean conflict between the Christian nation states of Italy and Spain and the Moslem Turks who had made great conquests during the previous century. We now find out the meaning of the "Captive's" pseudonym, for he describes his unfortunate "capture" by the Turks during the battle of Lepanto,[90] a famous naval conflict which resulted in a difficult, but resounding, Christian victory:

> "Digo, en fin, que yo me hallé en aquella felicísima jornada, ya hecho capitán de infantería, á cuyo honroso cargo me subió mi buena suerte, más que mis merecimientos; y aquel día, que fué para la cristiandad tan dichoso, porque en él se desengañó el mundo y todas las naciones del error en que estaban, creyendo que los turcos eran invencibles por la mar, en aquel día, digo, donde quedó el orgullo y sobebia otomana quebrantada, entre tantos venturosos como allí hubo (porque más ventura tuvieron los cristianos que allí murieron que los que vivos y vencedores quedaron), yo solo fuí el desdichado; pues, en cambio de que pudiera esperar, si fuera en los romanos siglos, alguna naval corona,

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[90]October 7, 1571.

> me vi aquella anoche que siguió á tan famoso día con cadenas á los pies y esposas á las manos" (I, 39).
>
> ("So, to be brief, I was present at that most glorious battle, being by that time a captain of infantry, to which honourable rank I was promoted rather by luck than merit. On that day, so fortunate for Christendom, since then the world and all the nations learnt how wrong they were in supposing that the Turks were invincible on the sea--on that day I say, when the insolent pride of the Ottomans was broken for ever, among all the fortunate men there--for the Christians who died there were more fortunate than those who survived victorious--I alone was unlucky. For in place of some naval crown, which I might have expected in the days of ancient Rome, I found myself on the night following that famous day with chains on my feet and handcuffs on my hands.")

Our "Captive" now resembles Odysseus even more than his previous military odyssey had made clear, for, like Odysseus on Kalypso's island, he will be held for a long period in a world very foreign to his own home--in this case, not Ogygia but Algiers.

But there are even more interesting turns to come, for, like the other tales we have examined thus far, this tale too seems to have the most surprising and implausible connections, both to other narratives within the Quixote, and, even more strangely, to the actual biography of Cervantes himself.[91] In "The Captive's Tale," Cervantes crosses the fictional boundary farthest removed from the world of the interpolated tales--beyond even the world of Wayne Booth's "implied author."[92] He

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[91]The issue of the resemblance between the historical Cervantes and his fictional creation is an important one in Cervantes studies. For a copiously documented summary of current thinking about the similarities and differences between the author and his creation, see D. Eisenberg (1987): 144-151.

[92]This is the term Booth uses for the fictional persona of the "real author" of a text, a "character" whose personality is construed by the reader from inferences contained in the rhetoric of the text itself. See The Rhetoric of Fiction (1961), esp. pp. 71-6.

seems to be bringing the deepest fictional layer of his novel into the world of the "real author," and, by inference, into our world.

To see how this happens, let us return to the tale. The first fictional boundary which the tale crosses is one which has already been crossed before--that is, the boundary between the tales. As the Captive is describing his time as a prisoner, he mentions several of his fellow-prisoners; one of them, a gentleman named Don Pedro de Aguilar, turns out to be none other than the brother of one of the guests he is now dining with. This sort of coincidence, though striking at first, is by now becoming familiar. Turning the Captive's narrative back on its narrator, this gentleman is able to recite the very sonnets his brother composed while imprisoned with the Captive in Algiers, and then to fill the Captive in on the rest of his brother's story; in recounting this man's "happy ending," the gentleman completes yet another romance tale "in-a-frame"--though the frames, by this time, are becoming too multiple even to count.

But the Captive's tale, as I have said, carries the game even farther, by connecting itself to the biography of the historical Miguel de Cervantes himself. Cervantes, as most of his contemporaries would have known, had, like the Captive, been a soldier in his youth, and had fought, been wounded, and captured during the famous battle of Lepanto. It was an episode from his youth which he carried with pride for the rest of his life. Without any further details, then, it is impossible to read the Captive's tale without having an eerie sense that, on some level, the "real author" of this tale is not its fictional narrator, the "Captive," but Cervantes himself: in other words, the tale reads as his romantic autobiography. It is a story whose

outlines Cervantes himself could have told to an audience of real people, outside of the frame of his novel. Somehow, the "Captive" and Cervantes seem to have become one.

But this is not quite true. Just as the reader is beginning to make this connection, Cervantes raises the game to another level: the Captive changes his persona, and becomes, once again, an Odyssean narrator. This time, however, he seems to imitate not the Odysseus who recites the apologue of Odyssey 9 through 12, but the "lying Odysseus" of Books 14 through 16, the Odysseus who tells the clever, de-mythologized versions of the apologue in which the protagonist constantly meets himself coming and going. For suddenly, in the midst of a romantic narrative whose protagonist seems to be a barely disguised version of Cervantes himself, the historical Cervantes inserts himself as a character within the tale. In a move worthy of Alfred Hitchcock making an abrupt cameo appearance, Cervantes puts praise of himself into the mouth of his fictional creation. The Captive tells of a brave man he had met in prison:

> "Sólo libró bien con él un soldado español llamado tal de Saavedra, al cual, con haber hecho cosas que quedarán en la memoria de aquellas gentes por muchos años, y todas por alcanzar libertad, jamás le dió palo, ni se lo mandó dar, ni le dijo mala palabra; y por la menor cosa de muchas que hizo temíamos todos que había de ser empalado, y así lo temió él más de una vez; y si no fuera porque el tiempo no da lugar, yo dijera ahora algo de lo que este soldado hizo, que fuera parte para entreteneros y admiraros harto mejor que con el cuento de mi historia" (I, 40).
>
> ("The only one who held his own with him was a Spanish soldier, called something de Saavedra; for his master never so much as struck him nor bade anyone else strike him, nor even spoke a rough word to him though he did things which those people will remember for many years, all in efforts to recover his liberty; and the rest of us were afraid that his least actions would

> be punished by impaling, as he himself feared they would be more than once. And if it were not for lack of time I would tell you something about that soldier's deeds, which you would find much more entertaining and surprising than this story of mine.")

Now the world of Cervantes' novel has truly crossed over into our own--outdoing, in the number and complexity of its frames, all of its literary "romance-in-frame" models, including both the Odyssey and the Aithiopika, to which it is certainly indebted. For the Captive, speaking now through an echo of Cervantes' own voice, seems to suggest that the story of Cervantes' life--his romantic autobiography--might be even more interesting than the remarkable romantic stories he has constructed within the fictional frame of the Quixote. This is, in fact, a reaffirmation of Don Quixote's own project--to turn life into art, and to bring art to life. The stand which Cervantes takes here is a very brave one, as well as wise, for it says that "life," in fact, is the greatest kind of romance--one whose quality ultimately depends only on the skill of its narrator.

The romantic nostalgia that permeates the narrative world of the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote at every level, and forms, to a large degree, their legacy to Western narrative, seems fixated on the dilemma of turning "life" into "narrative." That the Odyssey has a distinct role in setting the quest for subsequent romance narratives as a search for narrative itself, is largely a function of the special nature of oral epic narrative--which expresses a need for a precise and delicate connection between story and identity, for a return to origin--a "nostos"--which constitutes itself both in and as narrative. The combined structure and texture of these narratives helps

to add depth to the otherwise linear event of storytelling: as stories are repeated and rehearsed in seemingly endless variations, we are forced to remain conscious of the distance between action and the narrative which describes it. This distance, in turn, helps create a powerful nostalgia for a literary "golden age," a time when the very distance that brings narrative into being was no distance at all. This is a longing which afflicts all narrative beings--that is, all of us who are the "romantic heroes" of our own autobiographies. It is a nostalgia which helps to bring into being both the heroes and the romances which tell their stories.

Chapter 5. Dreams of Wish-Fulfillment

In selecting categories of interpolated narratives to discuss in relation to the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote, my main criterion has been to choose ones where examples can be found in all three works, and which seem to have some bearing on the larger subject of romance narrative. As we have seen, examples of tales which I have categorized as "romantic autobiographies" appear in all three works; this is also the case with dreams. In referring to "dreams" as a category of interpolated narrative, it is not my intention, however, to venture into a full-fledged analysis and discussion of the nature of the dream-world in the Homeric, Greco-Roman, or Renaissance contexts--fascinating though this subject may be. Rather, I am primarily concerned with dreams as they are narrated by the dreamer to some other character, for it is in this aspect that they may shed further light on the subject at hand--the effect of multiple interpolated narratives within the context of romance narrative as a whole.

It is difficult, however, to avoid dealing with the broader connotations of dreams--those of religion, of the personal lives of the dreamers, and, in the post-Freudian era, of the psychological issues commonly associated with dreams and dream-analysis. Dream-analysis is an ancient, and seemingly ubiquitous practice among human beings, and has been recognized as a sacred art in many cultures for millennia. The belief that dreams often reveal the hidden wishes or anxieties of the

dreamer is also an ancient one. E. R. Dodds (1955) cites the fantastic Homeric description of an anxiety dream in the simile in Iliad 22 (ll.199-201), and offers Penelope's dream of the death of her geese (Od.19.535-543) as a "simple wish-fulfillment dream with symbolism and what Freud calls 'condensation' and 'displacement'" (106). Penelope's dream is one of the examples which I have selected for discussion here. However, while I agree with Dodds' reading of it as a wish-fulfillment dream, it does not seem to me to be quite so "simple" as he suggests.

The dream world is to some degree a narrative world, one where the dreamer struggles to maintain control over both the integrity of the "story" of the dream and over its outcome. Dreams, as narrative, are really only pleasurable when they "end happily...," or when the dreamer realizes-- sometimes with relief, sometimes with disappointment--that the there is a boundary between the world of the dream and some other world in which he is safe. As Beer (1970) says, "The grip of romance can be that of a dream or of nightmare" (9).

In addition to the interest there may be in the content or "story" of the actual dream, however, there is a further complication introduced when dreams are recounted, as they often are, by dreamers themselves as interpolated narratives. For when dreams are told be one character to another, they also fall into the category of uncorroborated first-person narrative--the same as that of lying tales and romantic autobiographies. Because a dream is a private experience, not "witnessed" by anyone other than the dreamer or omniscient narrator, characters who recount dreams to one another within a text must be taken on faith that they are recounting their dreams

accurately--not altering their report of the content to turn the analysis back on their interlocutors. In both the Odyssey and Quixote, dreams are recounted by Penelope and Don Quixote in which it is not possible for the reader to be certain about the content which is related. These dream-narratives function very much the way the lying tales and romantic autobiographies do: they cast some doubt on the fictional status of other narratives, and on the reliability of narrative in general. Only in the Aithiopika does Heliodoros consistently use his position as omniscient narrator to assure readers that the content of the dreams which are described is precisely what the dreamer actually dreamt. In both the cases of the Odyssey and the Quixote, the "dreams" recounted by Penelope and Don Quixote may, in fact, cross over into the category of "lying tales."

The "wish-fulfillment" aspect of dreaming is an important one in the context of a study of romance narrative, for the impetus toward daydream and fantasy is what Frye and others refer to as one of the primary "motors" of the mode. The idealizing tendency of romance can be expressed in the dreamer's desire to change roles, to become more grand, or to simply recover something which is lost--youth, innocence, a sense of adventure, one's father, or one's husband, for example. The wish-fulfillment aspect of romance can be important for the reader as well, for there is an extent to which the reader of a romance enters the dream-world of the author or narrator of a romantic tale--this is one of the pleasures involved in reading romance--and the reader must negotiate between the pleasure of surrendering to the fantasy of another, and the need to keep one's own bearings in the world outside the frame of

the text. This is precisely the distance which Don Quixote loses when he reads. As Beer (1970) puts it,

> The romance rarely attempts to dislodge our hold on reality completely. The comfort of being told a story mingles with aesthetic elation. Part of the delight of the romance is that we know we are not required to live full-time in its ideal worlds (9).

In the narrative structure of the Odyssey, the Aithiopika, and the Quixote (once again, a two-part frame narrative packed with interpolated tales of various kinds), there can be a certain "play" between the worlds of the interpolated narratives which are often "romantic" in nature (that is, they are stories of love, adventure, fantasy, or dream), and the narrative frames which surround them and force audiences to step back and recognize the fictional status of these very same stories. This structure both asks and allows the reader to balance between the wish-fulfillment expressed in the enclosed tales and the reminder (provided by the barrier of the frame narrative) that these are, indeed "fictions." One of the projects of these self-conscious romance narratives is to mediate between the realms of fantasy and wish-fulfillment and the (sometimes comforting, sometimes disappointing) realm of realistic possibility.

Frye describes another of the projects of romance in The Secular Scripture (1975) as follows:

> ...to recreate the past and bring it into the present is only half the operation [of the romance mode]. The other half consists of bringing something into the present which is potential or possible, and in that sense belongs to the future.

> This recreation of the possible or future or ideal constitutes the wish-fulfillment element in romance, which is the normal containing form, as archaism or the presentation of the past is the normal content. Thus the recreation of romance brings us into a present where past and future are gathered... (179) [emphasis added].

This gathering of "past and future into the present" may be seen at the opening of the Odyssey, in Book 1 of the poem, when Telemakhos is described as sitting amidst the feasting suitors, daydreaming about a father he has never seen:

> ἥστο γὰρ ἐν μνηστῆρσι φίλον τετιημένος ἦτορ,
> ὀσσόμενος πατέρ' ἐσθλὸν ἐνὶ φρεσίν... (Od.1.114-5)
>
> (...as he sat among the suitors, his heart deep grieving within him,/ seeing in his mind his great father...)

As Peradotto (1990) describes this passage, Telemakhos is "...forced to conjure imaginary visions in his mind's eye, then bit by bit to shape a presumptive semblance of his father out of the fragments of other people's memories..." (118). His future (the discovery of this unknown father) is bound to a vision of a past he has never known: the idealized past (nostalgia) and idealized future (wish-fulfillment) come together in the present for Telemakhos in the content of his daydream.

The drive toward wish-fulfillment is a powerful force both in the creation of fiction itself, and in the creation of personal identity, the "fiction of the self." According to the Freudian model, which M. Robert explains in her Origins of the Novel (1972), all children create original fictions, "romances," concerning their own

parents, identity, and place in the universe. Freud called these childhood "dramas" the Family Romance:

> The child does not create his Family Romance simply as a game for the sake of inventing--though game and invention are certainly not foreign to his motives--but, as Freud says, to overcome the first disappointment whereby his parental idyll is in danger of foundering. The young child continues to see his parents as tutelary deities for a long time...he invests them not only with absolute power, but with an inexhaustible store of love...(22-3).[93]

These primal romances, fictions which fulfill basic requirements for personal identity, cannot afford to be merely "pleasurable." The subject-narrators must have absolute control over these wish-fulfillment tales. However, in narrative environments such as the ones we see in the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote, where storytelling creates the fabric of life (and of self), fiction itself can become a dangerous indulgence. That someone might tell a story not simply to translate a private experience into public language, but to indulge in fantasy or play on the desires of an audience, is an idea that can cause some alarm and anxiety for both internal and external audiences (that is, readers). Interpolated narratives which are unverifiable--such as dreams recounted by the dreamers themselves--can be particularly problematic and interesting.

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[93]Others have noted the connection between romance and childhood narratives. For example: "The romance requires of us the wholehearted involvement which a child feels in a story told; in that sense there is something 'childlike' in the pleasure of romance (Beer 1970, 8).

The operative issue, to which Robert alludes, becomes one of "narrative control," and the question arises as to whose wishes we mean when we refer to "wish-fulfillment" in narrative. According to whose wishes, that is, should the story "turn out": those of the characters in the text, those of the creator of the text, or our own? The wishes and desires of all of these collaborators in a narrative do not, certainly, always coincide. In fact, more often than not, it seems, a romance hero is precisely someone we would not "wish" to be in actuality; these are really characters whose trials we enjoy most from the safe distance of a narrative frame.[94] Narrative distance helps provide not only control, but the pleasure which arises from that control. Robert (1972) describes how children "compose" personal narratives which mediate between their sense of their own Family Romance and their increasing understanding of the world around them:

> ...the child only invents because his first contact with reality was a disappointment; without disillusion there would be no cause for dreams; but neither would there be any cause for disappointment and evasion if reality had not begun to obtrude. Unless [the child] decides to regress by telling himself stories he himself finds hard to believe, he will never be sufficiently engrossed in his dreams to ignore the effects of his ever-increasing experience upon the dreams themselves; and however much he may wish to cut himself off from a disappointing universe, he cannot help simultaneously trying to understand and

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[94]Cf. Beer (1970): 9.

dominate it, especially since that is the only way in which he can hope to regain at least a certain degree of control he believes he is being denied (33). The child creates a perfect fantasy/narrative which meets all his needs, but then has to alter it to accommodate the intrusion of reality. He becomes a sort of novelist, narrating the story of his own life, but forced to play a double game, making the story "turn out" as he wishes it to, while adjusting the course of the narrative to conform to his increasingly sophisticated knowledge of the actual world.

Like children composing "romances" to describe their own families and identities, readers of romance narratives have a need to feel secure that someone trustworthy is controlling the relating of events, a need which may stem from the emotional origin of the romance impulse itself.[95] The loss of control over the course of an otherwise fulfilling fantasy can signal the menace of nightmare, madness, or the counter-generic world of tragedy.

In the Odyssey, anxiety about narrative control is particularly pronounced in those on Ithaka who most long for Odysseus' return (Eumaios, Telemakhos, and Penelope), for the more powerful their desire, the more worried they are that their longings will lead them to accept fictitious narratives about him. In their despairing wait for the "true story" (as opposed to the made-up one which simply matches their

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[95]As G. Beer (1970) puts this,

> We have to depend entirely on the narrator of the romance: he remakes the rules of what is possible, what impossible. Our enjoyment depends upon our willing surrender to his power. We are transported. The absurdities of romance are felt when we refuse to inhabit the world offered us and disengage ourselves, bringing to bear our own opinions (8).

wishes and needs), these characters protect themselves by rigidly assuming that stories which tell them what they want to hear must be false.[96]

The anxiety over fiction addresses also the poem's anxious questions about identity: Is this man my father? Is this man my husband? Is this woman faithful? Can I trust him? Can I trust her? Telemakhos, for example, responds to Athena's praise of his father in Book 1 by raising the possibility that his own mother's "tale" of his birthright might be a fiction:

> "μήτηρ μέν τ' ἐμέ φησι τοῦ ἔμμεναι, αὐτὰρ ἐγώ γε
> οὐκ οἶδ'· οὐ γάρ πώ τις ἐὸν γόνον αὐτὸς ἀνέγνω"
> (Od.1:215-6).

> ("Well, my mother says I am his son, but I, for one, don't know. No man knows his own engendering.")

In the world of the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote, the "stories of identity" of the protagonists themselves may be caught up in the uncertainty of an environment created out of narrative, and the sense of "self" of many of the main characters in these works is easily threatened by the possibility of some kind of "origin"-al fiction or lie. These "fictions" identity may follow guidelines imposed by an authorial influence--labeled "fortune" (τύχη) for the characters of the Aithiopika, or the wicked "encantadores" who plague Don Quixote--or be sparked by the dynamics within a character's own psyche. For example, Telemakhos' uncertainty about his mother's

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[96]For example, Eumaios, 15.378ff; Telemakhos, 116.192ff; Penelope, 19.309ff; 23.2215ff.

story of his identity may reflect not only his mistrust of her narrative, but his mistrust of his own desire to turn this crucial story to match his own needs.[97]

Penelope is particularly threatened by the possibility that she may be drawn by her own wishes to accept a false "Odysseus," some clever storyteller who will narrate so skillfully the tale she longs to hear that she will accept him against her better judgment. When she speaks to the disguised Odysseus during their important night-time meeting in Book 19, her guest--the clever stranger who is beginning more and more to resemble her lost husband--is able to wring tears of desire from her, and she realizes that this facile storyteller is an incarnation of both her fondest dreams, and of her worst nightmares, for he is able to produce exactly the sorts of seductive narratives she knows Odysseus will be able to tell when--or if--he returns. Later, as she falls into Odysseus' arms, having braved the risk of accepting him at last, Penelope defends her stubborn reticence, saying:

> "μή μοι, Ὀδυσσεῦ, σκύζευ, ἐπεὶ τά περ ἄλλα μάλιστα
> ἀνθρώπων πέπνυσο•...
> αἰεὶ γάρ μοι θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι φίλοισιν
> ἐρρίγει μή τίς με βροτῶν ἀπάφοιτο ἔπεσσιν
> ἐλθών--πολλοὶ γὰρ κακὰ κέρδεα βουλεύουσιν•" (23.209-17).

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[97]J. Winkler (1990) brings to my attention the work of the anthropologist P. Walcot (1970; 1977), who has studied the function of lying among Greek peasants, ancient and modern. Walcot notes that the telling of falsehoods, even to intimate family members, has been, and continues to be, an important aspect of social life in villages and towns around the Mediterranean. It helps protect one's privacy from the intense scrutiny of neighbors--a serious consideration for these villagers. His work sheds interesting light on the issues I raise about the relationship characters have toward "fiction" in the Homeric context--though I do not think his extra-literary perspective invalidates my own literary one.

> (Do not be angry with me, Odysseus, since, beyond other men,/ you have the most understanding.../ For always the spirit deep in my very heart was fearful/ that some one of mortal men would come my way and deceive me/ with words. For there are many who scheme for wicked advantage.)

Penelope has feared greatly that she would be deceived by a story which matches her own deepest desire into living out the wrong narrative identity:[98] not that of the "faithful wife," but that of the faithless Helen--or, perhaps even worse, of Agamemnon's murderous Klytaimnestra.[99]

Eumaios also guards himself against disappointment and betrayal maintaining his skepticism about stories telling of the return of his master. He refuses, after nearly twenty years of disappointment, to believe the only true remark made to him by the disguised Odysseus during their first conversation in Book 14: that his master is alive and well, and nearly home. The disguised Odysseus tells him that he has had word of his master during his ramblings:

> "...κεῖνος γὰρ ἔφασκε
> ξεινίσαι ἠδὲ φιλῆσαι ἰόντ' ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν,
> καί μοι κτήματ' ἔδειξεν ὅσα ξυναγείρατ' Ὀδυσσεύς...
> ὤμοσε δὲ πρὸς ἔμ' αὐτόν, ἀποσπένδων ἐνὶ οἴκῳ,

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[98]The wrong "plot," as N. Felson-Rubin (1987) says. If Penelope were to accept a suitor, she would be enacting an alternative plot of "Dalliance and Infidelity" (63). Felson-Rubin argues that Penelope is aware of the possibility of other plot possibilities (those of Klytaimnestra or Helen, for example), and that she consciously navigates her own "story" through manipulation of these other possibilities.

[99]As Murnaghan (1987) explains Penelope's dilemma:

> Penelope has been afraid that her recognition of the stranger might be based on desire rather than true knowledge, that, even though her acceptance of him would spring from his similarity to Odysseus, it would repeat Helen's action of accepting an attractive stranger as a substitute for a husband (142).

> *νῆα κατειρύσθαι καὶ ἑπαρτέας ἔμμεν ἑταίρους,*
> *οἳ δή μιν πέμψουσι φίλην ἐς πατρίδα γαῖαν*" (14.321-33).
>
> ("...for this king told me/ he had feasted and friended him on his way back to his own country;/ and he showed me all the possessions gathered in by Odysseus.../ And he swore to me in my presence, as he poured out a libation/ in his house, that the ship was drawn down to the sea and the crew were ready/ to carry Odysseus back again to his own dear country...")

Eumaios' prior experience with wandering tale-tellers, however, has taught him to be less credulous and more skeptical, for he has been duped at least once, as he informs his guest:

> "*ὦ ὀειλὲ ξείνων, ἦ μοι μάλα θυμὸν ὄρινας*
> *ταῦτα ἕκαστα λέγων, ὅσα δὴ πάθες ἠδ' ὅσ' ἀλήθης.*
> *ἀλλὰ τά γ' οὐ κατὰ κόσμον ὀΐομαι, οὐδέ με πείσεις*
> *εἰπὼν ἀμφ' Ὀδυσῆϊ·...*
> *ἀλλ' ἐμοὶ οὐ φίλον ἐστὶ μεταλλῆσαι καὶ ἐρέσθαι,*
> *ἐξ οὗ δή μ' Αἰτωλὸς ἀνὴρ ἐξήπαφε μύθῳ...*
> *φῇ δέ μιν ἐν Κρήτεσσι παρ' Ἰδομενῆϊ ἰδέσθαι*
> *νῆας ἀκειόμενον, τάς οἱ ξυνέαξαν ἄελλαι·*
> *καὶ φάτ' ἐλεύσεσθαι ἢ ἐς θέρος ἢ ἐς ὀπώρην,*
> *πολλὰ χρήματ' ἄγοντα, σὺν ἀντιθέοις ἑτάροισι.*"
> (14.361-385).
>
> ("O sorrowful stranger, truly you troubled the spirit in me,/ by telling me all these details.../ yet I think some part is in no true order, and you will not persuade me/ in your talk about Odysseus.../ But I have no liking for this inquiry and asking of questions,/ since that time an Aitolian man beguiled me by telling/ a story...[that] he had seen [Odysseus] with Idomeneus, among the Cretan/ men, repairing his ships,...and he said he would be coming back, in the summer or autumn, bringing in many possessions, and with his godlike companions.")

For each of these characters, wish-fulfillment desires and fantasies are a powerful and dangerous force in a world constructed of variable plots.

The desire for wish-fulfillment complicates the delicate process of interpreting any and all narrative, not only in the Odyssey, but in the Aithiopika and Quixote as

well. Characters within these works too are called upon to interpret and construct meaning from many different texts and utterances, and to "read" signs in the world around them. Their ability to interpret accurately is often compromised by their own powerful needs to have the narratives which encompass them "turn out" a certain way. Often, as we have seen, interpolated tales related by one character to another within these texts serve as "safe" environments where characters can explore the world of their fantasies from the other side of a narrative frame. Don Quixote, however, has erased the boundary between fiction and life, and often finds himself both outside the world of romance narrative (as a listener or reader of tales), and inside (as a madman, trying to enact the plots of romances in the "real" world). Charikleia, also, to some extent, lives both inside and outside of romance narrative: while she takes pleasure in listening to the tales of fellow travelers like Knemon, she is also desperately trying to enact her own tale, which has already been inscribed on her birth talismans and spoken in the words of Apollo's prophesy.

S. Bartsch (1989), in her study of the role of description and ecphrasis in the Greek romances, comments on the general importance of dream-interpretation to the interpretation of narrative in the romances in general:

> Eliciting the hermeneutic activity of characters and readers alike, oneirography...invites the "inferential walk," with the result that both reader and character may be misled by their own decipherments, or the reader by that

of a character. Sometimes the author himself will supply us with an official interpreter or interpretation, which is no guarantee, however, of truth (81).

Dreams, both in the mysteries of their content and in the psychological pitfalls of their interpretation, provide interesting examples of internal interpretation of narrative in these texts, particularly as it relates to the connection between narrative and (romantic) wish-fulfillment. The "inferential walk" Bartsch refers to here is another term for the attempt on the part of characters in all of these texts to predict--and thereby control--the course of the narratives which surround and encompass them.

E. R. Dodds (1955) describes three possible "[prescientific] ways of regarding the dream" in ancient Greek literature (104), of which two are found to co-exist in the Homeric poems: first, it is possible "to take the dream-vision as objective fact," and second, "to interpret it by a more or less complicated symbolism."[100] These two types of dream experience call for different interpretive acts, as N. Austin (1975) describes in his study of the Odyssey:

> Dreams are another kind of symbolic thinking in which Homeric characters indulge. They can be of the simple kind, in which a messenger delivers some kind of warning or advice, or they can be an elaborate mythos with a structure that must be related to that of the everyday world (121).

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[100]The third type of dream-vision ("something seen by the soul, or one of the souls, while temporarily out of the body, a happening whose scene is in the spirit world, or the like") does not occur in Homer, although, as Dodds points out, it does make "a sensational first appearance in a well-known fragment of Pindar" [Pindar, fr. 116 B] in the fifth century (104).

Dodds rejects the idea that the two types of dream represent more or less "primitive" phases in Homeric thinking, since examples of both types of dream are found side by side in both poems.[101]

There are three dreams in the Odyssey, two of the "simple" type, sent by Athena to Penelope (4.795-836) and Nausikaä (6.20-40) respectively, and one a "symbolic" dream, which penelope interprets as having been generated from within her own consciousness (19.535-553).[102] In Penelope's first dream, at the end of Book 4, Athena sends an image (εἴδωλον--4.796) of Iphthime, her sister, to visit her and reassure her about Telemakhos' safety while he is abroad visiting Nestor and Menelaos. Penelope "reads" the dream-content as "straightforward narrative," which she accepts at face value without the need for interpretation. The dream-image of Iphthime simply delivers a reassuring message about Telemakhos with no "hidden" or "double" meanings. Though Penelope tries to get the dream to give her information about Odysseus in addition, even direct questioning can not draw information from it which it does not wish to divulge; it fulfills its one purpose and then departs.

Penelope receives and accepts the veracity of the message of this dream as the Phaiakians receive and accept the veracity of the stories Odysseus tells them of his

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[101]These categories have not changed much in fifty years. Dodds cites "a thorough study of dreams in Homer" by J. Hundt, Der Traumglaube bei Homer (Greifswald, 1935), in which the author also distinguishes between "objective dreams" (Aussenträume) and "Innenträume," dreams regarded as purely mental experiences. See Dodds (1955), p. 122, n. 8.

[102]There are three examples of dreams in the Iliad as well: the "evil" dream sent to Agamemnon by Zeus in Book 2 (ll.1-84); the "anxiety" dream described in the simile in Book 22 (ll.199-201); and Akhilleus' dream of Patroklos in Book 23 (ll.61-107).

adventures in Books 9 through 12,[103] and as Telemakhos receives and accepts the veracity of the stories Menelaos and Nestor tell him in Books 3 and 4. As a form of "narrative," Penelope's first dream has the same status as the other narratives delivered from one character to another in the first half of the poem.

While her first dream matches an apparently unambiguous wish (to see her son safely home), this is not the case with Penelope's second, so-called "symbolic," dream, which raises issues that are much more complex. This dream exposes an apparent ambivalence on Penelope's part between her desire for Odysseus' return, and a surprising pleasure she seems to derive from the attentions of the suitors. This famous dream,[104] and the discussion between Penelope and the disguised Odysseus which precedes and follows it, also fits in nicely with other examples in the second half of the poem of interpolated narrative whose status in relation to truth or fiction is questionable. Just as many of the internal narratives in the second half of the Odyssey (Odysseus' lying tales and the romantic autobiography of Eumaios, for example) present greater interpretive challenges for their audiences than those of the first half, so Penelope's second dream presents a greater interpretive challenge than her earlier one: first, because of its "symbolic" nature, and second, because the dream also contains its own interpreter within it.

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[103]See Peradotto (1990), pp. 89-93, on the Phaiakians as "audience" in the Odyssey.

[104]Much has been written on this dream--in fact, nearly every study of the Odyssey includes an analysis of it. See, for example: Harsh, P. (1950); Amory, A. (1957); 1963; Beye, C. R. (1974); Austin, N. (1975): 121-4; Russo, J. (1982); Murnaghan, S. (1987): 118-147; Winkler, J. (1990): 145-56. This list of references, though abbreviated, gives a sense of the interest and importance of the topic.

Penelope offers her narrative of the dream to her disguised guest at a crucial moment during their tense, night-time discussion with each other in Book 19 (ll.96ff). Seated in firelight, alone except for the old servant, Eurykleia, Penelope uses her second dream in a manner similar to the way Eumaios and Odysseus have used stories thus far in Part II of the poem: it allows her the opportunity to "swap tales" with her guest, to test his powers of interpretation, and to show off her own narrative skills. Penelope's narrating of her dream also acts as an invitation into an increasingly intimate relationship between "queen" and "guest" (later, "wife" and "husband").

Penelope offers her dream to the stranger only after preliminary conversation with him, full of much circling of delicate issues, and during which she shares information about some of the dangers and ambiguities of her domestic situation. She introduces the dream in answer to her own need to make a decision about her future, telling the stranger that the interpretation of this dream will help her decide what action she should take toward the suitors and toward her future. Penelope presents herself as assuming that Odysseus will <u>not</u> arrive in time to help her in the critical time which is approaching:

> "ἠὲ μένω παρὰ παιδὶ καὶ ἔμπεδα πάντα φυλάσσω,
> κτῆσιν εμήν, δμῳάς τε καὶ ὑψερεφὲς δῶμα,
> εὐνήν τ' αἰδομένη πόσιος δήμοιό τε φῆμιν,
> ἦ ἤδη ἅμ' ἕπωμαι Ἀχαιῶν ὅς τις ἄριστος
> μνᾶται ἐνὶ μεγάροισι, πορὼν ἀπερείσια ἕδνα..."
> (<u>Od</u>.19.525-9).

> ("...Shall I stay here by my son and keep all in order,/ my property, my serving maids, and my great high-roofed house,/ keep faith with my husband's bed and regard the voice of the people,/ or go away at last with the best of all those Achaians/ who court me here in the palace, with endless gifts to win me?")

The actual content of Penelope's dream--its symbolic "mythos" as Austin says above--suggests that Penelope may both desire and fear the return of Odysseus. Although this uncertainty seems at first to go against the grain of the poem's drive toward a "happy" conclusion, in fact, on reflection, Penelope's ambivalence is very plausible. Clearly, there are aspects of her current situation, bad as it is, to which she has grown accustomed, as the first part of her dream makes evident:

> "ἀλλ' ἄγε μοι τὸν ὄνειρον ὑπόκριναι καὶ ἄκουσον.
> χῆνές μοι κατὰ οἶκον ἐείκοσι πυρὸν ἔδουσιν
> ἐξ ὕδατος, καί τέ σφιν ἰαίνομαι εἰσορόωσα·
> ἐλθὼν δ' ἐξ ὄρεος μέγας αἰετὸς ἀγκυλοχείλης
> πᾶσι κατ' αὐχένας ἦξε καὶ ἔκτανεν· οἱ δὲ κέχυντο
> ἀθρόοι ἐν μεγάροις, ὁ δ' ἐς αἰθέρα δῖαν ἀέρθη.
> αὐταρ ἐγὼ κλαῖον καὶ ἐκώκυον ἔν περ ὀνείρῳ,
> ἀμφὶ δ' ἔμ' ἠγερέθοντο ἐϋπλοκαμῖδες Ἀχαιαί,
> οἴκτρ' ὀλοφυρομένην ὅ μοι αἰετὸς ἔκτανε χῆνας"
> (Od.19.535-543).
>
> ("But come, listen to a dream of mine and interpret it for me./ I have twenty geese here about the house, and they feed on/ grains of wheat from the water trough. I love to watch them./ But a great eagle with crooked beak came down from the mountain,/ and broke the necks of them all and killed them. So the whole twenty/ lay dead about the house, but he soared high in the bright air./ Then I began to weep--that was in my dream--and cried out/ aloud, and around me gathered the fair-haired Achaian women/ as I cried out sorrowing for my geese killed by the eagle.")

If we examine the dream thus far, it is clear that the "geese" which Penelope "loves to watch" as they feed at their trough, are symbolic versions of the rapacious suitors who are devouring her house and property. The fact that her psyche can portray the suitors as "pets" seems a dangerous admission for her to make to anyone, even to herself, much less to a strange man. Her dream shows how complex Penelope's desires and fears have become.

However, Penelope's account of her dream continues, and we hear the surprising fact that she has dreamed herself an internal interpreter to puzzle out--and legitimize--this dream's meaning. As she continues with her narrative, she describes how the eagle of her dream, who had so frightened her as he swept down into her life with bloody destruction, now transforms himself into an interpreter of the very dream he appears in:

> "ἂψ δ' ἐλθὼν κατ' ἄρ' ἔζετ' ἐπὶ προὔχοντι μελάθρῳ,
> φωνῇ δὲ βροτέῃ κατερήτυε φώνησέν τε·
> 'θάρσει, Ἰκαρίου κούρη τηλεκλειτοῖο·
> οὐκ ὄναρ, ἀλλ' ὕπαρ ἐσθλόν, ὅ τοι τετελεσμένον ἔσται.
> χῆνες μὲν μνηστῆρες, ἐγὼ δέ τοι αἰετὸς ὄρνις
> ἦα πάρος, νῦν αὖτε τεὸς πόσις εἰλήλουθα,
> ὃς πᾶσι μνηστῆρσιν ἀεικέα πότμον ἐφήσω.'
> ὣς ἔφατ'· αὐτὰρ ἐμὲ μελιηδὴς ὕπνος ἀνῆκε·
> παπτήνασα δὲ χῆνας ἐνὶ μεγάροισι νόησα
> πυρὸν ἐρεπτομένους παρὰ πύελον, ἦχι πάρος περ"
> (Od.19.544-553).

> ("But [the eagle] came back again and perched on the jut of the gabled/ roof. He now had a human voice and spoke aloud to me:/ "Do not fear, O daughter of far-famed Ikarios./ This is no dream, but a blessing real as day. You will see it/ done. The geese are the suitors, and I, the eagle, have been/ a bird of portent, but now I am your own husband, come home,/ and I shall inflict shameless destruction on all the suitors."/ So he spoke,; and then the honey-sweet sleep released me, and I looked about and saw the geese in my palace, feeding/ on their grains of wheat from the water trough, just as they had been.")

Penelope's insertion of an internal interpreter into her dream is a truly unusual twist, "a unique event in the annals of oneirokrisy" as Winkler calls it (153). He goes on to suggest that this may not, in fact, be an actual dream Penelope is recounting, but rather an elaborate lying tale (a "lying dream"?), and he reminds us that Odysseus has also made up a "lying dream" in one of his Kretan tales:

> Just as Odysseus made up a dream (in one of his false autobiographies, so it is doubly fictional, 14.495), so Penelope is here inventing a dream as a way of further safe communication with the fascinating stranger (154).

In effect, Penelope may be using her dream precisely as Odysseus has used his Kretan tales--not asking Odysseus to interpret her dream for her at all, but rather, cleverly asking him to validate an "interpretation" which she provides herself. The "eagle" of her dream has proclaimed himself to be Odysseus--"disguised," as it were, as a bird of portent. The real question she poses to him, then, is not "What do you think my dream of the death of my geese means?", but rather, "Are you willing to own the identity of 'Odysseus In Disguise' which my dream has offered as a possible interpretation of your true nature?" In phrasing the question this way, Penelope maintains an extraordinary level of control over the interpretation of her dream-narrative, never really offering it to Odysseus for his own, unmediated, reading. She shows him, in fact, no more immediate trust than he shows her. And when the stranger replies to her carefully posed question,

> "ὦ γύναι, οὔ πως ἔστιν ὑποκρίνασθαι ὄνειρον
> ἄλλῃ ἀποκλίναντ', ἐπαὶ ἦ ῥά ψοι αὐτὸς Ὀδυσσεύς
> πέφραδ' ὅπως τελέει· μνηστῆρσι δὲ φαίνετ' ὄλεθρος
> πᾶσι μάλ', οὐδέ κέ τις θάνατον καὶ κῆρας ἀλύξει"
> (Od.19.555.8).

> ("[Woman], it is impossible to read this dream and avoid it/ by turning it another way, since Odysseus himself has told you/ its meaning, how it will end. The suitors' doom is evident/ for one and all. Not one will avoid his death and destruction.")

Penelope has forced him to give her the answer which she wants and needs: he has accepted the identity of "Odysseus In Disguise." Penelope's next, and last, words to

her guest for the evening make it clear that his answer has helped to reinforce her need to move forward with a decision--she will set the fateful contest of the bow on the very next day (Od.19.571-581).[105]

As I said above, the differences in the interpretive demands made by Penelope's two dreams reflect the differences in the narrative environments which exist between the first and second halves of the Odyssey in general: just as other narratives in Part I of the Odyssey are accepted at "face value" by the audiences who receive them, so Penelope accepts her first dream without interpretation; her second dream, however, recounted in the more complex narrative environment of Part II, demands a more complex reading. The problems of interpreting all narrative in Part II of the Odyssey are evident in this dream-interpretation as well, as versions of stories grow multiple, and the plot builds toward a climax.

In spite of her role as an exemplary woman in the Homeric universe, Penelope, qua woman, still represents a potential danger to Odysseus, either through his loss of control to his (wish-fulfillment) desires, or through her loss of control to hers. Later, after she has formally "recognized" him, Penelope explains her fear of falling into the same pitfalls other women have succumbed to, especially Helen:

"οὐδέ κεν Ἀργείη Ἑλένη, Διὸς ἐκγεγαυῖα,

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[105]I am not suggesting, as Harsh (1950) does, that Penelope has definitely recognized Odysseus at this moment, and that she suggests the contest of the bow sure that the stranger is really her husband. She is groping her way forward here, looking for signs of some impending crisis--anything which would help resolve a situation which is growing untenable. Odysseus' answer to her cleverly posed question is one more piece of evidence for her that she is on the right track--whoever this "stranger" is, she likes the way his mind works.

ἀνδρὶ παρ' ἀλλοδαπῷ ἐμίγη φιλότητι καὶ εὐνῇ,
εἰ ἤδη ὅ μιν αὖτις ἀρήϊοι υἷες Ἀχαιῶν
ἀξέμεναι οἰκόνδε φίλην ἐς πατρίδ' ἔμελλον.
τὴν δ' ἦ τοι ῥέξαι θεὸς ὤρορεν ἔργον ἀεικές·
τὴν δ' ἄτην οὐ πρόσθεν ἐφ' ἐγκάτθετο θυμῷ
λυγρήν, ἐξ ἧς πρῶτα καὶ ἡμέας ἵκετο πένθος--"
(Od.23.218-224).

("For neither would the daughter born to Zeus, Helen of Argos,/ have lain in love with an outlander from another country/ if she had known that the warlike sons of the Achaians would bring her/ home again to the beloved land of her fathers./ It was a god who stirred her to do the shameful things she/ did, and never before had she had in her heart this terrible/ wildness, out of which came suffering to us also...")

While it seems at first surprising that Penelope would argue out of sympathy with Helen, she obviously has reason to express her relief at having been spared the burden of being lured by her desires into failing to maintain faith with her husband. As Book 19 closes, Penelope has not, as yet, done any ἔργον ἀεικές ("shameful thing"), though her dream suggests that she is concerned that she might. Penelope also acknowledges in her dream that she both fears and desires the return of Odysseus--perhaps because of the change it will bring into her life in irrevocably ending her time of waiting, of living in a world of dreams of the future and memories of the past. She may fear the moment of decision which will propel her back into the unsuspended time of the present. When she does acknowledge Odysseus' return, she must also finally recognize all that they have lost to an unrecoverable past--particularly their youth. There is perhaps as much nostalgia in her dream's projection into the future as there is wish-fulfillment.

As in the Odyssey, dreams and their interpretation have a prominent role in the intense hermeneutic play of the Aithiopika. Both of the major types of dreams--the simple and the symbolic--occur frequently in Heliodoros' text.[106] Heliodoros often adds an amusing extra twist to the presentation of dreams by allowing his external audience (that is, us) to be able to guess the "true" meaning of a dream, while we watch characters inside the text struggling to make sense out of often puzzling or ambiguous visions. Also, as in the Odyssey, there is a shift, between the first and second halves of the romance, in the interpretive challenges which the dreams present, both to "internal" and to "external" readers: in the Odyssey, as I pointed out, narrative in Part I tends to be accepted or "read" at its face value, without being examined for possible "hidden" or "double" meanings; in Part II, however, narrative meaning becomes multiple in the variorum world of re-told tales which shapes the conclusion of the poem. In the Aithiopika, Bartsch (1989) points out, this pattern is actually reversed: as the narrative moves toward its conclusion, and as we become more confident in the eventual resolution of the plot, dreams become easier (for us) to interpret:

> In short, the dreams converge more and more upon the goal that constitutes the finale of the book and as such their meaning becomes less and less ambiguous to the readers, for whom they finally appear even obvious. As the

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[106]As S. Bartsch (1989) enumerates them (Ch. 3, "Dreams and Oracles"), dreams occur in the Aithiopika at 1.18-19; 2.16; 4.14-15; 5.22; 8.11; and 10.3.

predestined plan that constitutes the plot of the novel draws to a close, misinterpretation becomes less likely and then actually impossible (108).

Early in the first Book of the Aithiopika, the hero and heroine, Theagenes and Charikleia, are captured by a mob of Egyptian bandits. (We, as readers, know they are Egyptian because the narrator tells us so; Theagenes and Charikleia do not know the identities of their captors.) While they are in captivity, the bandit chieftain, Thyamis, overcome by Charikleia's beauty, begins to desire her. His sleep is disturbed one night by a vivid dream as he lies in his tent in a torpid state of desire:

> *...τῆς νυκτὸς τὸ πλεῖστον ἐνηρεμήσας, ὑπό τινων ὀνειράτων πεπλανημένοων τεταραγμένος ἀθρόον τὸν ὕπνον ἀποσεσύλητο καὶ τὴν ἐπίλυσιν διαπορῶν ἐπηγρύπνει τοῖς φροντίσμασι...ὄναρ αὐτῷ θεῖον ἔρχεται τοιόνδε. Κατὰ τὴν Μέμφιν μὲν τὴν ἑαυτοῦ πόλιν καὶ τὸν τεὼν τῆς Ἴσιδος ἐπερχόμενοςλαμπαδίῳ πυρὶ τὸν ὅλον ἐδόκει καταλάμπεσθαι· πεπλῆσθαι δὲ βωμοὺς μὲν καὶ ἐσχάρας ζῴων παντοίων αἵματι διαβρόχους, προπύλια δὲ καὶ περιδρόμους ἀνθρώπων, κρότου καὶ θορύβου συμμιγοῦς πάντα πληρούντων. Ἐπαὶ δὲ καὶ αὐτῶν ἐντὸς ἥκειν τῶν ἀνακτόρων, τὴν θεὸν ὑπαντῶσαν ἐγχειρίζειν τε τὴν Χαρίκλειαν καὶ λέγειν «ὦ Θύαμι, τήνδε σοι τὴν παρθένον ἐγὼ παραδίδωμι, σὺ δὲ ἔχων οὐχ ἕξεις, ἀλλ' ἄδικος ἔσῃ καὶ φονεύσεις τὴν ξένην· ἡ δὲ οὐ φονευθήσεται.»* (Aith.1.18)
>
> (...after sleeping soundly most of the night, [he] had been disturbed by certain fleeting visions that appeared to him in his dreams and startled him from his slumbers. Unable to divine their meaning, he lay awake, wrapped in thought...The dream that visited him was god-sent; this is what it was. He was in Memphis, his hometown, and found himself at the temple of Isis, which he dreamt 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 dreamt the goddess came to him, gave Charikleia 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.")

As we might expect, Thyamis is mystified by his dream, for it contains a riddle which he must solve. That he will "get" Charikleia (the fulfillment of his powerful wish) seems clear--but the words of the goddess require complex interpretive activity. This dream appears very early in the Aithiopika (before the words of the prophecy which predict the strange plot of the romance as a whole), and, like the words of the prophecy, the dream predicts action whose meaning is not within Thyamis' power to grasp, for it is action which will not, ultimately, fulfill his wish--to possess Charikleia, body and soul.

Typical of Heliodoros' elaboration on Homer is his requirement that his characters (and readers) be able to interpret language metaphorically. Thyamis struggles valiantly to find some meaning in the paradoxical speech of the goddess, but his interpretive abilities, like Penelope's, are clouded by the force of his desires:

> Ταῦτα ὡς εἶδεν ἀμηχάνως διῆγε, τῆδε κἀκεῖσε τὸ δηλούμενον ὅ τι ποτέ ἐστιν ἀναστρέφων. Ἤδη δὲ ἀπειρηκὼς ἕλκει πρὸς τὴν ἑαυτοῦ βούλισιν τὴν ἐπίλυσιν· τὸ μὲν γὰρ «ἕξεις καὶ οὐχ ἕξεις» γυναῖκα καὶ οὐκέτι παρθένον ὑπετίθετο, τὸ δὲ «φονεύσεις» τὰς παρθενίους τρώσεις εἴκαζεν, ὑφ' ὧν οὐκ ἀποθανεῖσθαι τὴν Χαρίκλειαν (Aith.1.18) [emphasis added].
>
> (This dream caused him great perplexity, and he turned the vision over and over in his mind, wondering what it could mean. Eventually, in desperation he forced the interpretation to conform to his own desires. The words "you shall have her and not have her" he took to mean as a wife and no longer a virgin; "you shall slay her" he guessed was a reference to the wounds of defloration, from which Charikleia would not die.)

While Thyamis' interpretation perhaps deserves an A for effort, it is so preposterously influenced by his passions that even if the narrator had not clued us in, we probably would have guessed that this rationalization is false. He falls prey to exactly the fate

which Penelope had spoken of with such fear--that her "desires" would cause her to act against logical judgment. As Heliodoros states it:

> Καὶ τὸ μὲν ὄναρ τοῦτον ἔφραζε τὸν τρόπον οὕτως αὐτῷ τῆς ἐπιθυμίας ἐξηγουμένης· (Aith.1.19). [emphasis added]
>
> (That was how he interpreted the dream, for that was how his desires expounded it to him.)[107]

In fact, Heliodoros himself will fulfill the dream's prophecy in a way which no one could imagine. Thyamis, through a twist of plot, "slays" Charikleia without slaying her: having cast Charikleia into a dark cavern in an effort to keep her for himself during an attack on his stronghold, he then decides to "kill" her in a jealous rage, thinking her better dead than possessed by another man. What neither he--nor we--know at the time is that Thyamis has stabbed another maiden by mistake, thus fulfilling his wish to "slay" Charikleia without actually killing her off as the heroine of the romance. This is quite far from the "wounds of defloration" he had fantasized about; not all dreams fulfill wishes in the way the dreamers would hope.

As S. Bartsch (1989) points out, another interesting element in Heliodoros' manipulation of this dream is the fact that it is actually Thyamis' original, incorrect, interpretation of the dream which, in the end, brings about its surprising manner of fulfillment:

> But the incorrect interpretation does more than engender surprise at this final outcome of events. In bringing about Thyamis' attempted murder [of

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[107]See Winkler (1982): 118. He claims that Thyamis actually "does violence to the text..." in his attempt to "force" it to mean what he needs it to mean.

> Charikleia] it fulfills the true meaning of the dream, which we only now grasp and which Thyamis himself does not until much later. For as far as he knows, he has killed her; yet we understand that she has not been killed, and that the "foreign woman" is Thisbe (98).

What we see in this example is that interpretative activity in itself plays a role in the progress of the plot: hermeneutic activity helps not only to discover the narrative's direction, but to create it.

Part of the strategy of the Aithiopika is to involve the reader in a process of hermeneutic education; as we read more of the romance, we become less confused, more certain of the eventual outcome of the plot, and better able to interpret the internal narratives--dreams, oracles, and tales--which are so confusing at the outset. In the case of Thyamis' dream, which occurs very early in the narrative, we are in no better position than he is in deciding on an interpretation--although the ironic remark made by the narrator ("Eventually, in desperation, he forced the interpretation to conform with his own desires" (Aith.1.18)) helps us be fairly certain that the interpretation Thyamis comes up with--that he will "slay" Charikleia by making love to her--is a highly dubious one.

One of the later dreams in the Aithiopika which illustrates Bartsch's argument about the audience's increasing interpretive sophistication occurs in Book 4, during the portion of the Aithiopika's narrative which is being recounted as an interpolated story told by Kalasiris to Knemon. Kalasiris is explaining the circuitous events which have led to his being in charge of leading the odyssey of Charikleia and Theagenes

back to Aithiopia, and how he has, temporarily, lost track of the pair. Part of this tale describes his escape from Delphi with the two young lovers, as he takes Charikleia away from her surrogate father, the Pythian priest, Charikles. In the course of telling this long story to Knemon (the young Greek whose fortune has accidentally become intertwined with that of Kalasiris, Charikleia, and Theagenes), Kalasiris reports a dream which Charikles had asked him to interpret just before he had made his escape with Charikleia and Theagenes. He meets Charikles as he is leaving his house, "...looking exceedingly unhappy and thoroughly dejected." When Kalasiris asks him why he is so upset, Charikles reports the following dream:

> Καὶ ὃς «Τί δὲ οὐ μέλλω, τῆς φιλτάτης μοι τὸν βίον τάχα πρότερον μεταστησομένης ἢ πρὸς γάμον, ὡς φῄς, συναφθησομένης, εἴ τι δεῖ προσέχειν ὀνείρασι τοῖς τε ἄλλοις καὶ οἷς τῆς παρηκούσης ἐξεδειματώθην νυκτός, καθ' ἣν ἀετὸν ᾤμην ἐκ χειρὸς ἀφεθέντα τοῦ Πυθίου καὶ ἁθρόον καραπτάντα τό τε θυγάτριον ἐκ κόλπον, οἴμοι, τῶν ἐμῶν ἀναρπάσαντα γῆς ἐπ' ἔσχατόν τι πέρας οἴχεσθαι φέροντα, ζοφώδεσί τισιν εἰδώλοις καὶ σκιώδεσι πλῆθον...»
> (Aith.4.14) [emphasis added].
>
> ('Of course I am in tears,' he replied, 'when my darling daughter is possibly about to depart this life rather than enter into marriage, as you claim--at least if one is to pay any heed to dreams, in particular those that struck such fear into me last night. I dreamed that an eagle, released from the hand of Pythian Apollo, suddenly swooped down and, alas, snatched my poor daughter from my arms and flew off with her to one of the world's remotest extremities, a place teeming with dark and shadowy phantoms.')

For Charikles, who does not have Kalasiris' tremendous advantage in interpreting the future of the Aithiopika's plot, the "remote" place of his dreams "teeming with dark and shadowy phantoms" can only be Hades. Readers, however, have the benefit of just having heard Kalasiris' description of the contents of the birth tokens which were left with the infant Charikleia when her mother abandoned her to her fate. For us,

then, it is possible to imagine that this "dark place with shadowy phantoms" is possibly a dream-version of Aithiopia--Charikleia's and Kalasiris' destination. Although we cannot be certain that the dream's indicated destination is Aithiopia (particularly because we have already seen the strange ways dreams can be brought to fulfillment in the case of Thyamis' dream in Book 1), we can at least assume that Charikles' interpretation is probably wrong.

Before we have had time to fully formulate our own interpretation, however, Kalasiris offers one to Charikles, letting us know that he is purposefully giving him a misinterpretation in order to "...dispel his despondency and deflect him from any intimation of what was to ensue" (Aith.4.15). In other words, Kalasiris lies to Charikles in order to advance the Aithiopika's plot, and he lets the reader (and Knemon) know that he is doing so, as he reassures Charikles that the "...eagle symbolizes the bridegroom who will take [Charikleia] from you" (Aith.4.16). As Bartsch (1987) points out, we have here another example of a false interpretation which actually helps bring about the fulfillment of the correct outcome:

> ...for Charicles is persuaded by Calasiris's superior authority that it is indeed a wedding that is foreshadowed. As a result, he hands over to Charicleia her heirlooms and relaxes his guard; and that very night Charicleia is kidnapped, and the journey to Egypt--the dream's true meaning, of which Calasiris was well aware--begins (104).

There is, however, yet another element for the reader to consider, for a full interpretation of this dream, for Heliodoros is an author who misses no opportunity to make ironic cross-references between his romance and other literary works--particularly, the Odyssey. Although the parallel is incomplete, I think it is probably fair to say that Heliodoros had Penelope's famous dream from Odyssey 19 in mind when he created Charikles' nightmare vision of an "eagle swooping down and snatching away" a love object, particularly since Kalasiris suggests in his false interpretation that the eagle represents the "bridegroom."[108] Unlike Penelope's dream, however, in which the eagle himself makes an interpretation within the dream which she then asks the disguised Odysseus to confirm, there is no internal interpreter here. By putting the words of the interpretation into the mouth of the eagle, Penelope is able to suggest an outcome for the dream--the return of Odysseus and the slaughter of the suitors--without fully claiming it. Charikles, on the other hand, offers his own (mis)interpretation, exposing his desires and fears as he does so, and making himself vulnerable to Kalasiris' clever manipulations. As is often the case, Heliodoros' revision of Homeric material allows new appreciation of and insights into the strategies of the original: we can now see even more clearly how clever the management of Penelope's dream was. By inserting the interpretation of her dream into the dream itself (whether she does this consciously, after the fact, or

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[108]R. M. Rattenbury and T. W. Lumb, the editors of the Budé edition of the Aithiopika (1960), also note this possibility: "Est-ce là un souvenir d'Homère, Odyssée, XIX, 538, où Pénélope en songe voit un aigle qui représente Ulysse? Ce n'est pas sûr" (II: 24, n. 3).

unconsciously, we can never really be sure), and asking her disguised guest to agree or disagree with the "eagle's" pronouncement, Penelope has actually forced the "stranger" to reveal his own desires as much--if not more so--than she does her own.

The episode of Don Quixote's descent into the "Cave of Montesinos," and the dream-vision which he reports as having had there when he re-emerges, has elements common with the dream of Penelope in Odyssey 19. First, like Penelope's dream, this episode is a truly intriguing and pivotal event in the novel, one which alters both Don Quixote's and our own perceptions of much of what follows and what has come before.[109] Secondly, as is the case with Penelope's report of her dream, only Don Quixote knows for sure what has happened to him during his time in the cave. The fictional narrator, Cide Hamete Benengeli, in one of the asides which are frequent in Part II of the novel, strongly refuses to take "responsibility" for the narrative of Don Quixote's experience, saying:

> "No me puedo dar á entender, ni me puedo persuadir, que al valeroso don Quijote le pasase puntualmente todo lo que en el antecedente capítulo queda escrito...Pues pensar yo que don Quijote mintiese, siendo el más verdadero hidalgo y el más noble caballero de sus tiempos, no es posible...Tú, letor, pues eres prudente, juzga lo que te pareciere, que yo no debo ni puedo más..." (II, 24).
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> "I cannot persuade myself that all that is written in the previous chapter literally happened to the valorous Don Quixote...But I cannot possibly suppose

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[109]Like Penelope's dream, this episode is also commented upon by nearly everyone who writes on Don Quixote. Most readers acknowledge its importance to understanding the novel: "...el episodio maravilloso de la bajada del héroe a la cueva de Montesinos, uno de los más comentados y discutidos de la segunda Parte [de Don Quijote]" (Sánchez 254).

> that Don Quixote, who was the most truthful gentleman and the noblest knight of his age, could be lying...You, judicious reader, must judge for yourself, for I cannot and should not do more...")[110]

As in the case of Penelope's dream, both the internal audience (Sancho and an itinerant humanities student acting as guide) and the external one (we, as readers) are left to interpret the "fictional" status of Don Quixote's experience without authorial help. As in the Odyssey, a dream-vision is recited which may also be serving the function of a lying tale, whose narrative, in any case, serves dual functions: to recount the contents of an unusual dream-vision, and to elicit interpretation and confirmation from an internal audience. In addition, both dream-visions provide some insight into the ambivalence or conflicts in the characters who report them: Penelope's about Odysseus' return and Don Quixote's about the "enchantment" of his (imaginary?) beloved, the fair Dulcinea. Finally, the wish-fulfillment aspect of Don Quixote's dream-vision is heightened, perhaps, by the fact that his entire identity and project are more obviously a product of (romantic) wish-fulfillment than those of any other character in this study.

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[110]See A. Forcione (1970): 137-146 for a full discussion of the episode which focuses especially on the power of Cide Hamete as narrator and its implications in defining Cervantes' stand in relation to contemporary neo-Aristotelian critical views.

In descending into the famous Cave of Montesinos,[111] Don Quixote imitates the descents into the Underworld of the classical epic heroes (Odysseus and Aeneas), and the dream-vision he reports as having had there links him to the allegorical visionaries of the Middle Ages (such as Dante). As for the content of his dream-vision, it is in many ways more complex than that of Penelope's dream, for it relates not only to Don Quixote's private sorrows, but to the literary/heroic traditions already mentioned, and to the important medieval ballad tradition as well.

Don Quixote's dream-vision in the Cave of Montesinos presents itself as a tantalizing example of the "symbolic" category of dream--a complex self-generated vision which demands interpretation. This vision, which Don Quixote first describes as a "real" (that is non-visionary) experience, is full of the fragmentary and free-associated material familiar to most of us as the typical stuff of dreams. In it, Don Quixote "sees" characters from his literary life (Durandarte, Montesinos, Belerma) who speak to him and include him among them, as well as people from his own personal life, most importantly, the peasant girl whom Sancho has previously convinced him is his beloved Dulcinea under the spell of a wicked encantador.[112]

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[111]The "Cave of Montesinos" is named after one of the figures of the ballad tradition of the battle of Roncesvalles (The Song of Roland, etc.). Montesinos was the cousin of Durandarte, a the hero of the Spanish ballads, whose lady, Belerma, is supposed to have kept faith with her beloved even after his death. The stories surrounding these characters formed one of the most popular of the ballad cycles in 16th and 17th century Spain. See Sánchez (1991): 255ff.

[112]This occurs at II, 10, when Sancho, who has been sent on the impossible errand of delivering a message of courtly love to the Knight's lady in El Toboso, comes up with the clever idea of "enchanting" her (playing into Don Quixote's obsession with

(continued...)

As the novel progresses, the status of Don Quixote's perception of his experience in the cave, whether as "dream-" or "true-" vision, becomes crucial to understanding the development both of Don Quixote's character and of Cervantes' novel. Don Quixote's relationship to the world, Sancho's relationship to him, and his to Sancho, for example--all hinge in some important way on recurring references to, and changing interpretations of, this single episode. The episode ultimately becomes part of a process which leads to Don Quixote's re-emergence from his psychotic attempts to bring fictional literature into life, into the somber non-fictional light of sanity. For Don Quixote, his on-going re-definition of his adventure in the Cave of Montesinos allows him, finally, to come to terms with his own identity--as both product of and producer of fiction.

I place the definition of the famous episode of the Cave of Montesinos somewhere between a "dream-vision" and a "lying tale," and I believe it straddles these two categories perhaps even more clearly than does Penelope's dream. In Don Quixote, the boundaries between those narratives which are fictional (or lies) and those which are not, become increasingly convoluted when the madness of Don Quixote is added to a narrative brew already chocked with ambiguities caused by both fantasy and lying.[113] Although dream-narratives are very different from lying tales,

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[112](...continued)
encantadores) by simply telling Don Quixote that a garlic-smelling peasant girl riding a donkey is, in fact, "Dulcinea." To his utter amazement, the scheme works perfectly.

[113]See Ch. 4 above for a discussion of the tales in Part I which help effect this crossing of boundaries.

there is, as in the case of Penelope's dream, a "grey area" where they may overlap--especially when one takes into consideration the reliability of the narrator of the dream. The Don Quixote who recounts his experience in the cave, unlike the wise and shrewd Penelope, is mad; as the text progresses, however, our assessment of both his sanity and his shrewdness may change, depending, at least partly, on his (and our) shifting interpretation of the meaning of his "dream-adventure" in the Cave of Montesinos.

The episode begins when Don Quixote decides to investigate a famous cave located in the region through which he is traveling ("en el corazón de la Mancha," as Cide Hamete tells us in the title of Chapter 22). He and Sancho are guided to the cave by a university student, who is described as "a famous scholar much given to the reading of the books of chivalry,"[114] a fitting guide to take them to a place whose very name identifies it as significant in the world of chivalric literature.[115] On arrival at the cave, Don Quixote, with great fanfare, tells them of his intention to explore it, "even if it reached to the pit of hell,"[116] and Sancho and the student, somewhat apprehensively, tie a long length of rope around his middle and lower the heroic explorer (and a great deal of the rope) into the opening. After waiting for half an hour, they try to haul Don Quixote back up, panicking when they find that a long section of the rope is slack. Eventually, when they have pulled out nearly all of the

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[114]"...famoso estudiante y muy aficionado á leer libros de caballerías..." (II, 22).

[115]Cf. n. 111 above.

[116]"...aunque llegase al abismo..." (II, 22).

rope without any sign of Don Quixote, they feel his weight. When he finally emerges from the cave, Don Quixote is in a sound sleep from which they are able to arouse him only with some difficulty. He complains of being hungry, and they all eat a large meal together before he begins his description of his experience.[117]

Readers are as ignorant of what has occurred in the cave as Sancho and the student, and must rely solely on Don Quixote's version of what he has "seen" there. What he tells his companions is a detailed and rather remarkable account of a vision--much like the material from a vivid dream.

Don Quixote describes sitting himself on a ledge of rock in the cave and falling into a deep sleep. Then he "wakes" to find himself in a beautiful meadow, and checks to make sure he is no longer sleeping.[118] Soon he is greeted warmly and with great honor by Montesinos himself, the "warden" of the cave. He sees Durandarte and Belerma, hero and heroine from the world of his beloved chivalry. It is in the description of Belerma, however, that a connection begins to form between

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[117]Compare this to Odysseus' arrival back on Ithaka in a sound sleep, and his gradual awakening back to a "real" world, as opposed to the fairy-land he has inhabited (Od.13.187ff.) In both instances, there is a transition from a magical, fantastical world to a more mundane and familiar one, marked by an awakening from a deep sleep. The transition also involves a change in the relation of the main character to the production of fiction: in the first half of both the Odyssey and the Quixote, it can be argued that the protagonists are the "victims" of fiction, caught in plots they are not able to control themselves, whereas in the second part of each narrative, marked by these two "awakenings," both Odysseus and Don Quixote are much more in control of the fictive medium--in both cases producing narrative themselves.

[118]Penelope had some of the same self-consciousness which Don Quixote expresses in his concern to prove to himself that what he is seeing is real. In relating her dream, Penelope too had commented on how "realistic" the image had seemed, and how she had been aware, during the dream, that she was dreaming (Od.19.541).

the vision he is describing and Don Quixote's own private concerns, for in this dream-vision, the once beautiful lady Belerma, like his beloved Dulcinea, has been "enchanted," and she is now as ugly as she once was beautiful:

> Al cabo y fin de las hileras venía una señora, que en la gravedad lo parecía, asimismo vestida de negro, con tocas blancas tan tendidas y largas, que besaban la tierra. Su turbante era mayor dos veces que el mayor de alguna de las otras; era cejijunta, y la nariz algo chata; la boca grande, pero colorados los labios; los dientes, que tal vez los descubría, mostraban ser ralos y no bien puestos, aunque eran blancos como unas peladas almendras; (II, 23).[119]
>
> (At the tail end of the files came a lady--as by her gravity she seemed--also dressed in black, with a white veil so ample and long that it kissed the ground. Her turban was twice as large as the greatest of the others. She was beetle-browed and somewhat flat-nosed, with a large mouth and red lips. Her teeth, which she sometimes bared, appeared to be few and not very well placed, although they were as white as peeled almonds.)

G. Hughes (1977) explains how the ugliness of Belerma actually contributes to the vision's function as a kind of wish-fulfillment dream for Don Quixote:

> Like Dulcinea, whose ugliness has been the source of her Knight's anxious thoughts...Belerma is not as Don Quixote had expected her to be, nor as fame had depicted her....But she is, of course, enchanted, as Montesinos makes abundantly clear....The analogy between Belerma and Dulcinea now becomes clearer in Don Quixote's mind: if Belerma, famed as beautiful, could be metamorphosed by enchanters into an ugly figure, it is then conceivable that his Dulcinea has been likewise enchanted (110).

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[119]Cf. the description of the "enchanted" Dulcinea at II, 10: "...y como no descubría en ella sino una moza aldeana, y no de muy buen rostro, porque era carerredonda y chata...."

If Don Quixote can convince himself that his Dulcinea really has been enchanted like the Belerma of his vision, and that the ugly peasant girl Sancho used to fool him is indeed she, then the chivalric world of his madness and dreams is less threatened by the incongruities which are beginning to mount around him. His vision helps to confirm the connection between the enchanted "uglification" of Belerma and the similar fate of his Dulcinea. Don Quixote goes on to describe how, shortly thereafter, Dulcinea herself has appeared in the cave--at least the peasant girls whom Sancho had claimed were Dulcinea and her attendants appear in the cave. In the strange encounter which Don Quixote now relates (and which draws exclamations of disbelief from Sancho), Dulcinea asks to borrow 6 reals from him, a request which shocks him for its incongruity with his chivalric ideals, but with which he tries to comply. Unfortunately, he reports, he only has four reals with him, and must therefore leave the cave unable to fulfill Dulcinea's request for a loan!

In describing this remarkable mixture of chivalry, madness, and mundane reality, Don Quixote's dream-narrative illustrates the effort he is making to reconcile the disparate parts of his world, to keep the parts of his fantasy together under his own control. Hughes (1977) suggests that the introduction of money into his relations with Dulcinea carries with it the seeds of ruin for Don Quixote's fictional/romantic dream-world:

> The episode of the Cave of Montesinos functions as a pivotal point in Part II of the novel. It looks to the beginning and offers an explanation of Dulcinea's metamorphosis; it also stimulates the Knight with promises for her future

> disenchantment, which becomes his major objective. But it hints too at the destruction of Quixote's chivalric world, although he himself is not aware of the ominous implications of the request made of him (112).

In fact, the whole project to "disenchant" Dulcinea (whether, as here, by lending her money, or later, by thrashing his squire--another "wish-fulfillment" fantasy?) carries potential ruin: remembering that Dulcinea's "enchantment" is actually part of a conscious game played by Sancho, then what does "disenchantment" really mean? In her "disenchanted" form, will this "Dulcinea" turn back into the peasant girl she really is? If this is the case, then Don Quixote's project will still have failed.

The narration by Don Quixote of his dream-vision has effects on his audience; for Sancho, it confirms that his master is truly mad:

> que como él sabía la verdad del fingido encanto de Dulcinea, de quien él había sído el encantador, y el levantador de tal testimonio, acabó de concer indubitablemente que su señor estaba fuera de juicio y loco de todo punto...(II, 23).
>
> (For knowing as he did the truth about Dulcinea's pretended enchantment, and that he had been her enchanter and the inventor of the story, he finally realized, beyond all doubt, that his master was out of his mind and mad on all counts.)

Don Quixote, however, clings for some time to his assertion that all the details of his vision are "verdad," as he declares at the end of the chapter:

> "pero andará el tiempo, como otra vez he dicho, y yo te contaré algunas de las que allá abajo he visto, que te harán creer las que aquí he contado, cuya verdad ni admite réplica ni disputa" (II, 23).
>
> ("But the time will come, as I have told you already, when I shall relate to you some of the things I saw down there; and they will make you believe what I have said, for their truth admits of no reply or controversy.")

Don Quixote's tries to confirm or reinterpret his vision in the Cave of Montesinos throughout the remainder of Part II[120]--but the most important clue to understanding the significance of his experience is to read it in relation to his and Sancho's adventure with the "magic" wooden horse, Clavileño (II, 41). In this episode, long before the end of the novel, Don Quixote admits privately to Sancho (in an aside fortunately overheard by the narrator, Cide Hamete Benengeli) that he has reassessed his perception of his experience in the cave. This scene is of crucial importance in understanding the "transformation" which occurs in Don Quixote at the end of Part II.[121] Following the Clavileño episode, much doubt is introduced concerning how much Don Quixote knows about "truth" and "fiction," who the real madmen are in the world he inhabits, who is fooling whom, and who ultimately controls the production of fiction--Cervantes, Don Quixote, Sancho, or all of them.

The adventure of Clavileño begins as a complex trick played on Don Quixote and Sancho by the Duke and Duchess--important characters in Part II (chapters 30-57).[122] The Duke and Duchess are avid readers of both the romances of chivalry and of Don Quixote Part I, and they provide Don Quixote and Sancho with a kind of theater, a place to display themselves, and in which to be displayed. As has often

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[120]For example, he asks the "prophetic ape" in Chapter 25: "...si ciertas cosas que habían sido soñadas, ó verdaderas; porque á él le parecía que tenían de todo" (II, 25).

[121]See A. Forcione (1970): pp. 152-4 for a discussion of this episode in relation both to the prior episode of the cave, and to its Ariostan model in the flights of Astolfo on the hippogryph.

[122]Like characters from chivalric romances themselves, they are never referred to as the Duke and Duchess "of someplace;" they are simply "generic" nobles.

been the case in this study, a comparison can be made between the structures of the Odyssey and the Quixote: as I earlier compared the happenings at Juan Palomeque's Inn in Part I to the sojourn of Odysseus among the Phaiakians in the first half of the Odyssey,[123] a parallel comparison can be made between Odysseus' stay with Eumaios in the second half of the poem and Don Quixote and Sancho's stay with the Duke and Duchess in Part II of the Quixote. As Eumaios provides Odysseus with a forum for telling his Kretan tales (stories which self-consciously re-tell narratives already told in Part I), so the Duke and Duchess allow Don Quixote and Sancho numerous opportunities to rehearse the "roles" they have been given by their status as "characters in a book."

The Duke and Duchess fabricate a quest for Don Quixote and Sancho,[124] and, for some time, everything seems to be going according to plan: the inventors of the fiction are in control of the situation. However, things soon go awry in the careful plan of the Duke and Duchess as first Sancho and then Don Quixote seem to grow wise to the ways of the world they inhabit. By the end of the episode the Duke and Duchess will become the butts of their own joke.

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[123]See Ch. 4.

[124]Chs. 34-41: Don Quixote and Sancho are required to ride Clavileño, an "enchanted" wooden horse, to a distant country in order to do battle with an enchanter named Malumbruno, who has covered the faces of all his ladies-in-waiting with thick beards. Don Quixote, using Clavileño as transportation, is supposed to perform the heroic deed of "de-bearding" these ladies. This whole ridiculous scheme has been worked out by the Duke and Duchess for the pleasure of watching Sancho and Don Quixote perform.

Blindfolded, Sancho and Don Quixote mount the wooden horse Clavileño with much trepidation (II, 41). Bellows produce a wind which "rushes" them along. Fire burns their faces as they fly too near to "the sun." Finally, as the audience tires of the charming conversation between knight and squire, the joke ends with Clavileño's being blown up--with the two riders still on it. They are bruised, frightened, but not seriously hurt. Not a very funny joke, perhaps, but a successful one, such as it is.

However, the episode does not end here, for Sancho now leads the way to a new kind of fictional control--both for himself and, apparently, for his master. For Sancho, who has already tasted the power of first-person narrative in his "enchanting" of Dulcinea, turns to the Duchess to describe the "vision" he has had while "riding" the wooden horse:

> "Yo, señora, sentí que íbamos, según mi señor me dijo, volando por la región del fuego, y quise descubrirme un poco los ojos; pero mi amo, á quien pedí licencia para descubrirme, no lo consintió; mas yo, que tengo no sé qué briznas de curioso, y de desear saber lo que se me estorba y impide, bonitamente y sin que nadie lo viese, por junto á las narices aparté tanto cuanto el pañizuelo que me tapaba los ojos y por allí miré hacia la tierra..."(II, 41).
>
> ("I felt, lady, that we were going, as my master said, flying through the region of fire, and I wanted to uncover my eyes a bit. But when I asked my master's leave to take off the bandage he wouldn't allow me. But as I have some sparks of curiosity in me, and want to know what is forbidden and denied me, softly and stealthily I pushed the handkerchief that covered my eyes just a little bit up on my nose and looked down towards the earth...)

Sancho then tells a wonderful tale about his view of the earth--detailed, humorous, idiosyncratic, and effective--much like Don Quixote's narrative of his dream-vision in the Cave of Montesinos, in fact. And what can the Duchess say? That Sancho is lying? But how can she admit that she knows this without exposing her own fraud?

Don Quixote sums up the dilemma, saying: "...ó Sancho miente, ó Sancho sueña..." ("...either Sancho is lying, or Sancho is dreaming...")

Lying or dreaming--is this, perhaps, his re-assessment of his own experience in the Cave of Montesinos? Don Quixote's question exposes the complex layers of frames and mirrors in Cervantes' text, and in his own project. We cannot know who is fooling whom: Did Sancho peek, or is he making up even this fact? He was, after all, terrified to ride the "magical" horse in the first place. Was he too frightened to lift the blindfold, thinking he would see the ground far below him, according to the fantasy the Duke and Duchess have tried to force him to enact? Did he ride behind his master, his eyes clenched shut in fear (as the Duke and Duchess would like to believe), and then invent this delightful account of his own curiosity and bravery?--or did he actually peek, in which case he has concocted a delightful--and effective--fiction?

If Sancho actually did lift his blindfold, he knows that he never left the ground at all. In fact he knows more about the Duke and Duchess than they know about him, for he knows that they are liars, and that they have the leisure to spend time and money playing games with fools and madmen. Sancho has forced the Duke and Duchess into a position where they have to pretend to believe what they know is blatantly false in order to maintain their dignified facades. He has wrenched their own fiction away from them--and forced them to live it themselves. It is a triumphantly ironic moment. The problem is, however, and will remain, that we, as readers, don't know whether "...Sancho dreams, or Sancho lies..." either.

What of Don Quixote? How much has he understood? A fair amount it seems, for it is he who makes the connection back to his own experience in the Cave of Montesinos--the one time in the novel when he eluded the ever-watchful eye of his own author and chronicler. Perhaps he recognizes his chance to become an "enchanter," a "teller of tales," when he takes Sancho aside after the Clavileño episode, and says to him:

> "Sancho, pues vos queréis que se os crea lo que habéis visto en el cielo, yo quiero que vos me creáis á mí lo que vi en la cueva de Montesinos. Y no os digo más." (II, 41)
>
> ("Sancho, if you want us to believe what you saw in heaven, then you must believe me when I tell you what I saw in the Cave of Montesinos. I need say no more.")

"No más," indeed--yet Don Quixote has said a great deal in these few words, for both he and Sancho are on their way to becoming creators and narrators of their own stories, in control of the "fictions" which ultimately describe their selves.

On his deathbed, Don Quixote recants his madness and encourages his friends to surrender their fantasies to a world without fiction. They, in their turn, beg him to stay with them and help them to enter a new "genre,"[125] a different romantic fantasy. They feel, apparently, that life cannot be lived without the optimism of fiction. The Cave of Montesinos episode, whether dream-vision or lie, provides Don Quixote with a powerful hermeneutic lever, and allows him to escape from--and into--the world of wish-fulfillment which had brought him into being in the first place.

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[125]Pastoral romance.

Chapter 6. The Double Voice of Romance and the Problem of Closure

Like many who study narrative, I find myself unable to resist the temptation to conclude this study with a discussion of some of the distinctive issues of narrative closure which are raised by these works.[126] Many critics have found issues of narrative closure and completeness to be both seminal and complex;[127] endings, as is already clear from my discussion of some of the interpolated narratives enclosed in each of these texts, can be vital in the interpretation of entire narratives.[128] The end of a plot can often be definitive in determining the genre of a story. Tragic, comic, and romantic tales may actually have quite similar beginnings and middles: how fundamentally different, for example, are the plots of Romeo and Juliet, A Comedy of Errors, and, The Tempest, until their endings--death, recognition and reunion, and magic resolution--fix them into some generic code?

In an article which examines the end of the Aithiopika, J. R. Morgan (1989) begins by calling attention to this defining function of endings--both in literature and in life:

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[126]P. Brooks, for example, in his Reading for the Plot (1984), also concludes with a discussion of conclusions, "Endgames and the Study of Plot," pp. 313-25.

[127]J. R. Morgan, in his "A Sense of the Ending: The Conclusion of Heliodoros' Aithiopika," [TAPA 119 (1989) 299-320], cites: D. A. Miller, Narrative and its Discontents (Princeton 1981), M. Torgovnick, Closure in the Novel (Princeton 1981), P. Brooks, Reading for the Plot (Oxford 1984), and F. Kermode (1967).

[128]See Ch. 4 above.

> Just as we interpret our lives in retrospect, unable to see sense in the contingent experiences of daily existence until we can review what went before in the light of what happened in the end and so perceive a pattern of significant relations; even so the meaning of a story flows back from its ending, which constitutes a goal towards which the narrative can be seen to have been directed (299). [emphasis added]

As we learn from Frank Kermode's fundamental critical work, The Sense of An Ending (1966), "sense-making" in general, both in narrative and in life, is an end-determined gesture. "Men," as he puts it:

> ...like poets, rush 'into the middest,' in medias res, when they are born; they also die in mediis rebus, and to make sense of their span they need fictive concord with origins and ends, such as give meaning to lives and to poems" (7).

As Kermode points out, endings also tend to function as reminders of origins; they lead back to "the beginning," rounding off all stories by offering an "apocalypse" to match their "genesis."

The question of narrative closure in relation to the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote brings this study back in a way to its beginning--to its earlier focus on the overall shape of the narratives in these texts, particularly their bi-partite structures. I suggest that the mode of romance poses special problems for narrative closure--that it is a mode with opposing voices operating within it, which pull its conclusion(s) in conflicting directions. Two of the works I have examined, the Odyssey and the

Quixote, strongly highlight this "double voice" in their endings: both works, in fact, have either multiple endings or endings which are to some degree inconclusive. The Aithiopika, as it has often been in this context of this study, is here an exception, for its ending seems unified and smooth by comparison with the other two works, with neither ambiguity nor any sense of incompleteness marring its perfect surface. Heliodoros selects those aspects of the Odyssean model which are in keeping with the demands of both the genre in which he writes and the tastes of his age--and excludes or ignores the rest.

The end of the Aithiopika is contained within the boundary of its romance frame; one is not tempted to speculate on "what might happen next...." The story Heliodoros set out to tell is definitively over--defined as it was by the prophesy which it has completely fulfilled by the end of the text. The endings of the Odyssey and the Quixote, however, do not provide such an absolute sensation of closure; the endings of these two complex fictions are more self-conscious, and therefore more troubling. They call our attention to the fact that literary "endings" are part of a series of fictions we invent to comfort ourselves in the face of our otherwise random personal "(hi)stories." Kermode calls all ends "fictions of the End" (5), stories of apocalypse which help us make sense out of our origins and lives. Our sense of "apocalypse," he claims, "depends on a concord of imaginatively recorded past and imaginatively predicted future, achieved on behalf of us, who remain 'in the middest'" (8).

As we have seen, the narrative world of romance is one of memory and wish-fulfillment, a place where powerful human needs to order reality toward pleasing and

unifying goals are prominent. The romance world is full of eroticism, of fantasy, and of dreams we create ourselves in half-waking moments, dreams whose endings we need to control in order to stay safely within the realm of romance. The withholding or delay of these endings, however, is often as desirable as the ends themselves, for however desirable a given "end" may be, it is also just that--an end, a kind of death, a moment beyond which we can conceive nothing. Self-conscious romance narratives, which highlight the relationship between narrative and life, must delay the approach to their goals, or the stories--and the lives they narrate--might close too soon.

Patricia Parker, in Inescapable Romance: Studies in the Poetics of a Mode (1979), discusses the problem of closure in a self-conscious romance text which has much in common with both the Odyssey and the Quixote, Ariosto's Orlando Furioso. The wandering plots of romance narratives, their "deviance" and "error," are, she argues, directly related to the production and continued existence of fiction itself: "[F]iction," she says, ..."by its very nature feeds upon frustration,...the real interest only begins when things go wrong" (33). The "frustration" or delay of the ending is what prolongs the pleasure of the narrative, what produces "...the narrative principle of romance, the virtually endless erring and digression in which any exercise of poetic closure becomes a literary tour de force" (34).

How does one end a romance narrative--or any narrative, for that matter? Ends are goals, destinations, and boundaries: romances can end in marriage, change, waking, perfection, completion, or fulfillment. The only truly final end, however, is

death, a fear of which underlies much of the delay in ending all narratives. Death is an inappropriate end for romance, however; romances which end in death veer off into the tragic mode. Romance is the mode of the perpetual quest: if there is to be plot, then it must grow out of a desire for a telos or goal. This is the force which Brooks defines as "narrative desire," the erotic element which sets narratives in motion, and motivates both characters and readers to try to complete them.[129] Is, then, the shape of the romance quest linear or circular? Does it spiral inward, obeying a centripetal force, or outward, obeying a centrifugal one?[130] Or is its path meandering and sinuous? The delay and deviance of romance plots tend to twist them as they move toward their goal, and they often approach their ends distracted, withdrawing and prolonging the game. Adversaries along the way sometimes seem to be projected, made up by the protagonists themselves for the sake of drawing out the journey of the narrative. Though each of the texts in this study ends quite differently, each, in its own way, tries to contain and reconcile opposing voices which often ask the narrative both to close and to remain somehow open at the same time.

In an article on the plot structure of epic narrative throughout its history in Western literature, David Quint (1989) posits the narrative structure of the Odyssey, with its powerful romance elements, as a subversive alternative to epic, a structure

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[129]See Reading for the Plot (1984), esp. Ch. 2, pp. 37-62.

[130]The terms "centripetal" and "centrifugal" are used often by narratologists, but they mean quite different things to different critics. I am not, for example, using them in their Bakhtinian sense (see Peradotto (1990): 53-8, for a clear explanation of Bakhtin's use of the terms.) I use them, essentially, to distinguish between narratives which "close" and those which don't, a distinction which I will try to clarify in this chapter.

avoided assiduously by writers aiming for what he calls "epic linearity of plot" (14). Quint's model uses the image on the shield of Aeneas--Antony and Cleopatra's defeat at Actium by the forces of Roman Augustus--as a prototype of the essential struggle between the forces of epic narrative and those of romantic narrative. As he puts it:

> The ideological dichotomies drawn between the winners and losers at Actium also have formal implications for epic and its idea of narrative. This is best seen in the epic tradition that followed Virgil and that would repeatedly invoke, imitate, and rewrite the central scene on Aeneas's shield. Later epic poets found a normative narrative form embodied in the triumph of Augustus. In Cleopatra's flight, by contrast, they saw a rival generic model of narrative organization. Epic loves a parade, perhaps because the procession that keeps its shape through both space and time resembles its own regular verse schemes...that similarly spatialize time and join the poem's beginning in interconnected sequence to its end" (12).

In Quint's model, everything about Odyssean narrative--especially its multiplicity of interpolated narratives--sets it in direct opposition to the end-directedness of epic:

> The formal completion of the epic plot speaks for the completeness of its vision of history: telling a full story, epic claims to possess the full story. Other accounts that might compete with the victors' version of history are merely dismissed as historical accidents, deviations from the straight line of imperial triumph: opposed to epic's end-directed narrative, these rival narratives appear directionless and beside the point (14). [emphasis added]

Odyssean romance wanders from narrative island to narrative island, each one special and self-contained, but not necessarily adding to the linear journey of the plot. The hero's inevitable return home is not necessarily the end either, for he can always, as Odysseus and Don Quixote do, rest a while and then take off again. It is the epic and tragic voices which struggle for closure and so often end in death.[131] The constant telling and re-telling of stories in the Odyssey, replacing heroic action with the action of narrative, makes the poem's plot less linear than the Iliad's, more porous to the introduction of new narrative material, and therefore more likely to veer off its (linear) epic course. The poem's plot, which at first appears to be laid out more narrowly than the Iliad's, with a clearer "beginning," "middle," and "end," is actually quite fluid, constantly framing narrative within narrative as it moves toward its climax.

The end of the Odyssey has raised questions for readers of the poem since the Alexandrian period, for, when judged by Alexandrian and post-Alexandrian standards for narrative closure, The Odyssey does not, strictly speaking, "end." In many respects, the poem seems rather to stop than to end--with Athena accomplishing a deus ex machina finale--and it does not require much narratological sophistication to recognize that there is a big difference between "stopping" and "ending."

Book 23 of the Odyssey concludes with Odysseus rising from his bed (l.348), seeming to "abandon" Penelope again, this time to visit his old father whom he has

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[131]The traditional closure in comic romances, marriage, is, ironically, a kind of symbolic death, for it effectively "kills" the virginal selves of the hero and heroine, pushing them onward into entirely new identities.

not seen since returning to Ithaka, and to finish off his business with the families of the suitors he has killed. Book 24 includes the important reunion scene between Odysseus and Laertes, as well as the so-called "Second Nekyia," where the poet takes readers on a return visit to the Underworld to watch the (un-heroic) arrival of the dead suitors' ghosts. The Second Nekyia also includes a description by Agamemnon's ghost of the funeral of Achilles nearly ten years earlier at Troy, and a lavish speech in praise of Penelope's kleos for her heroic achievement of fidelity. The final "end" of the text of the Odyssey is a battle-scene--a rather short one, where Odysseus and his family triumph over the families and relations of the suitors. Athena finishes both the battle and the poem, imposing a truce on Ithacans to last into the future. The end of the Odyssey is therefore political rather than, it would seem, "romantic."[132]

J. Peradotto (1990) has made the complexity of the Odyssey's ending(s) the major focus in his recent narratological study.[133] Although the close of the Odyssey does give, to use Kermode's phrase, some "sense of an ending," the narrative does

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[132]While there is much that is indisputably problematic in Book 24 in terms of poetic diction and style, a persuasive case can also be made for the appropriateness and necessity of these many "roundings-off" of plot details in giving the poem a sense of finality. The strongest proponent of the Analyst position, which argues that the so-called "Continuation" of the poem (all lines following 23.296) must have been composed by (a) later and lesser poet(s), is D. Page (The Homer Odyssey, 1955, esp. 101-36). For an opposing view, see D. Wender's monograph, The Last Scenes of the Odyssey (1978) in which she makes a case for the overall narrative "rightness" of Book 24, despite its linguistic and technical flaws.

[133]Man in the Middle Voice, 1990.

not, in fact, either fulfill all the promises it lays out for itself or give an absolute feeling of closure. As Peradotto says,

> In the closing books of the Odyssey, there are so many proximate narrative ends achieved that we may not be unsatisfied by the lack of clarity surrounding the outcome of the ultimate end. Father has come home to son, husband has been reunited with wife, son reunited with aging father, the threat of the suitors erased, and even the counter-vengeance of the suitor's relatives easily--perhaps too easily--arbitrated by Athena ex machina (60).

If all of these are proximate ends, then what should the "ultimate end" of the Odyssey be? According to the scholiasts, the late 2nd century B.C. Alexandrian editor and critic, Aristarchus of Samothrace, claimed that the true "end" (*πέρας* or *τέλος*) of the Odyssey occurs when Penelope and Odysseus finally retire to their longed-for marriage bed, at line 296 in Book 23: "They then/ gladly went together to bed, and their old ritual."[134] The important section of the Odyssey which follows 23.296 (the remainder of Book 23 and all of Book 24) has been referred to up until quite recently as a "continuation,"[135] as if it were somehow extraneous. As W. B. Stanford correctly notes, however, in his long summation of this thorny Homeric argument,

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[134]"...*οἱ μὲν ἔπειτα/ ἀσπάσιοι λέκτροιο παλαιοῦ θεσμὸν ἵκοντο*" (Od.23.295-6).

[135]See, for example: A. Shewan, "The 'Continuation' of the Odyssey," (1913; 1914).

"...to end the poem at 296 with a Pepysian 'And so to bed' would be more fitting for an Alexandrian or Victorian novelette than an early epic" (406).[136]

Stanford's remark raises a problem that is interesting in the context of this study, for it implies that there is a conflict in the Odyssey between the narrative voice of what he calls "early epic" and that of what we might call "romance." Surely it is an epic voice which reasserts itself at the end of the poem, reminding us of the Odyssey's tie to the Iliad, of the continuity between their poetic worlds. The poem resolves itself not only in the "comic" (circular, romantic) terms of (re)marriage and love, but in the "tragic" (linear, epic) terms of war and death. The Odyssey requires, it seems, multiple endings to absorb the multiple narrative worlds which it contains. It is Heliodoros who will borrow and emphasize the "Pepysian" ending for his Odyssean romance: his hero and heroine do ride off, literally, into the sunset, a fabulous procession taking them to celebrate ..."the more mystic parts of the wedding ritual..."[137]

There are many ways to describe and explain the duality of voices in the Odyssey. Peradotto (1990) argues that the deep ambiguity in the poem's ending stems from a conflict of narrative drives--those of what he refers to as the voices of "myth" and "märchen:"

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[136]For the full discussion in Stanford's commentary, see pp. 404-6. He cites much of the relevant debate, and concludes that while Analyst critics make valid points about the technical difficulties of many passages in Book 24 in particular, "The truth," as he says, "perhaps lies between these extreme views" (405).

[137]"...*τῶν ἐπὶ τῷ γάμῳ μυστικωτέρων*..." (Aith.10.41.3.).

> Although these two types [the narrative voices of myth and märchen] do not differ essentially as narrative structures, the one [myth] tends to stress the mortality and relative impotence of the human subject in the face of what might be termed most generally consistent external resistance--the will of the gods, "fate," "the way things are," laws of nature inferred from the experience, the incommensurability of the world, the inevitability of death. The other [märchen] represents an optimistic, wish-fulfilling emancipation from this external resistance, born of human desire (48).

Peradotto's argument grows out of his focus on another dilemma of the end of the Odyssey. One of the problematic aspects of the ending of the poem lies not in what it includes after the bedding of Odysseus and Penelope, but in what it leaves out: the inland journey of Odysseus, prophesied by Teiresias during the first Nekyia in Book 11 (ll.100-137), and described (and thereby predicted?) by Odysseus when he reunites with Penelope in Book 23 (ll.266-284). Odysseus goes to the Underworld in Book 11 at the behest of Kirke, who has told him that he must speak with the ghost of Teiresias in order to find his way home. During their brief meeting, however, Teiresias offers, without being asked, instructions for Odysseus as to how he may secure a peaceful death for himself:

> "αὐταρ ἐπὴν μνηστῆρας ἐνὶ μεγάροισι τεοῖσι
> κτείνῃς ἠὲ δόλῳ ἢ ἀμφαδὸν ὀξέϊ χαλκῷ,
> ἔρχεσθαι δὴ ἔπειτα, λαβὼν εὐῆρες ἐρετμόν,
> εἰς ὅ κε τοὺς ἀφίκηαι οἳ οὐ ἴασι θάλασσαν
> ἀνέρες οὐδέ θ' ἅλεσσι μεμιγμένον εἶδαρ ἔδουσιν·
> οὐδ' ἄρα τοὶ ἴασι νέας φοινικοπαρήους
> οὐδ' εὐήρε' ἐρετμά, τά τε πτερὰ νηυσὶ πέλονται.
> σῆμα δέ τοι ἐρέω μάλ' ἀριφραδές, οὐδέ σε λήσει·

ὁππότε κεν δή τοι ξυμβλήμενος ἄλλος ὁδίτης
φήῃ ἀθηρηλοιγὸν ἔχειν ἀνὰ φαιδίμῳ ὤμῳ,
καὶ τότε δὴ γαίῃ πήξας εὐῆρες ἐρετμόν,
ῥέξας ἱερὰ καλὰ Ποσειδάωνι ἄνακτι,
ἀρνειὸν ταῦρόν τε συῶν τ' ἐπιβήτορα κάπρον,
οἴκαδ' ἀποστείχειν ἔρδειν θ' ἱερὰς ἑκατόμβας
ἀθανάτοισι θεοῖσι, τοὶ οὐρανὸν εὐρὺν ἔχουσι,
πᾶσι μάλ' ἐξείης. θάνατος δέ τοι ἐξ ἁλὸς αὐτῷ
ἀβληχρὸς μάλα τοῖος ἐλεύσεται, ὅς κέ σε πέφνῃ
γήρᾳ' ὕπο λιπαρῷ ἀρημένον· ἀμφὶ δὲ λαοὶ
ὄλβιοι ἔσσονται· τὰ δέ τοι νημερτέα εἴρω"

Od.11.119-137.

("But after you have killed these suitors in your own palace,/ either by treachery, or openly with the sharp bronze,/ then you must take up your well-shaped oar and go on a journey/ until you come where there are men living who know nothing/ of the sea, and who eat food that is not mixed with salt, who never/ have known ships whose cheeks are painted purple, who never/ have known well-shaped oars, which act for ships as wings do./ And I will tell you a very clear proof, and you cannot miss it./ When, as you walk, some other wayfarer happens to meet you,/ and says you carry a winnow-fan on your right shoulder,/ then you must plant your well-shaped oar in the ground, and render/ ceremonious sacrifice to the lord Poseidon,/ one ram and one bull, and a mounter of sows, a boar pig,/ and make your way home again and render holy hecatombs/ to the immortal gods who hold the wide heaven, all/ of them in order. Death will come to you from the sea, in/ some altogether unwarlike way, and it will end you/ in the ebbing time of a sleek old age. Your people/ about you will be prosperous. All this is true that I tell you.")

Teiresias assigns Odysseus this journey as a task he must perform if he wishes to live to a comfortable old age and to die easily. The inland journey, then, if Odysseus were to perform it, would offer us a possible image of his death; this journey would be his ultimate odyssey, the one which would truly preclude any future journeys[138]--but it does not occur during the poem.

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[138]A "Don Quixote, Part II" ending, that is.

It is this voice, that of Teiresias' apocalyptic prophesy, which Peradotto labels "mythic:" the mythic (for Quint, "epic") voice is one which can lead to the ultimate narrative closure of death. The other voice, the voice of "märchen" (for Quint, "romance"), is the voice Odysseus obeys during his wanderings: it is the "optimistic" voice of sequentiality, of endless deviance, which both Parker and Quint identify with romance narrative.

That Odysseus does not die at the end of the Odyssey leaves open, apparently, the poetic possibility of other odysseys. One of these actually takes place within the poem itself, in the interpolated "Kretan" tale Odysseus tells to Eumaios in Book 14. Here, the protagonist claims that his successful return home from Troy left him restless--that he could not "rest from travel...:"

> "αὐταρ ἐμοὶ δειλῷ κακὰ μήδετο μητίετα Ζεύς·
> μῆνα γὰρ οἷον ἔμεινα τεταρπόμενος τεκέεσσι
> κουριδίῃ τ' ἀλόχῳ καὶ κτήμασιν· αὐτὰρ ἔπειτα
> Αἰγυπτόνδε με θυμὸς ἀνώγει ναυτίλλεσθαι,
> νῆας ἐῢ στείλαντα, σὺν ἀντιθέοις ἑτάροισιν."
>
> Od.14.243-247

> ("But for wretched me Zeus of the counsels devised more hardships;/ one month only I stayed, taking pleasure in my children/ and my wedded wife and my possessions, but then the spirit/ within me urged me to make an expedition to Egypt/ with ships well appointed and with my godlike companions.")

Others too have put Odysseus back on the road after his return to Ithaka, the most famous perhaps being Dante, in the "Ulysses Canto" of Inferno (Canto 26). Dante too presents us with a restless traveler, a man who could never remain at home, and who, though damned for his sin of "false counsel," is nonetheless immortalized in

Dante's portrait for his unending curiosity.[139] The possibility that Odysseus may have a dual identity, that of a quintessential centrifugal traveler as well as of a quintessential centripetal one, has inspired many modern writers, from the victorian poet Tennyson ("Ulysses," "The Lotos-Eaters"),[140] to the modern Greek writer Kazantzakis (The Odyssey: A Modern Sequel), and, of course, James Joyce.[141] As we now have the poem, few of the standard criteria for plot-completion are satisfied by the Odyssey's ending: Odysseus does not die, nor does he fulfill the prophecy of

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[139]né dolcezza de figlio, né la pieta
del vecchio padre, né 'l debito amore
lo qual dovea Penlopè far lieta,
vincer potero dentro a me l'ardore
ch'i' ebbi a divenir del mondo esperto
e de li vizi umani e del valore;
me misi me per l'alto mare aperto
sol con en legno e con quella compagna
picciola da la qual non fui diserto.
(Inferno 26.94-102)

("...neither my fondness for my son nor pity
for my old father nor the love I owed
Penelope, which would have gladdened her,
was able to defeat in me the longing
I had to gain experience of the world
and of the vices and the worth of men.
therefore, I set out on the open sea
with but one ship and that small company
of those who never had deserted me.")
A. Mandelbaum, trans.

[140]Tennyson's two poems emphasize the two different aspects of Odysseus which make his homeward journey perilous: in "The Lotos-Eaters," Ulysses and his men succumb to the urge to give up the difficult journey in favor of drugged and forgetful serenity; in "Ulysses," the hero abandons home in fear of terminal boredom. The two voices seem clearly to be operating.

[141]The most recent writer to join this modern tradition is the Caribbean poet Derek Walcott with his epic poem Omerus (1991).

Teiresias to take the inland journey and propitiate Poseidon. The possibility of spurious and sometimes absurd "continuations" is left open.

One of these "continuations" is an ancient one: a poet of the post-Homeric epic cycle named Eugammon of Cyrene[142] is reputed to have written a bizarre sequel to the Odyssey--the Telegony--in which Odysseus takes the required inland journey. Along the way, this version has him (bigamously) marry a local princess, and then be murdered accidentally by an illegitimate son he had fathered by Kirke on his original return to Ithaka. This weird "post-Odyssey" ends with an incestuous double-wedding: Telegonos, the illegitimate son, marries the newly widowed Penelope, and Telemakhos marries the witch Kirke! The Telegony, strange as it is, has an ending which is in keeping with the narrative demands of literate audiences who are concerned with unity of plot. The end of the Telegony is also, in many ways, classically romantic, with the hero's death redeemed by the promise of the new marriages--however incestuous.

B. P. Reardon, describing the basic romance elements of the Odyssey, points out yet another example of a "doubling" voice in the poem, that of the "picaresque:"[143]

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[142]Thought to be a poet of the 6th century B.C.

[143]It is interesting, I think, to note how often both the Odyssey and the Aithiopika have attracted completely anachronistic terminology into their descriptive lexicon--for example, the term "ancient novel," which has replaced "romance" in most critical discussions of the "ancient romances." The term "romance" is also an anachronism, of course.

> First, [the Odyssey] is a story of exciting and perilous adventure, and also of love. In one perspective a picaresque story, it is nonetheless held together by a plot which is also a love story: though the love involved is not the erotic passion we meet in Euripides, Odysseus, in achieving his return, is after all reunited with a beloved partner... In the Odyssey we are offered a plot involving, essentially, a task to be carried out: the nostos or return of the hero to his home. This is the element of quest that Frye and others identify as the motor of romance. The quest involves much travel, and requires the hero to overcome various dangerous obstacles... The quest-story is extensive, of epic proportions, and it is architecturally conceived: the numerous episodes, individually attractive, form not simply a linear series but a mounting climax... (15-16). [emphasis added]

In his description, Reardon makes two observations about the Odyssey's plot which, though accurate, seem to me to be contradictory. On the one hand, he calls the Odyssey "a picaresque story," and later he claims that it is a "...quest-story...of epic proportions, and it is architecturally conceived." Herein lies the contradiction, for I can think of no storyline less "architecturally conceived" than that of the picaresque--unless one thinks of beads on a string as a kind of architecture. The picaresque is marked by its essential plotlessness, its random sequentiality of episode. Its hero is clever and resourceful, but left at the mercy of chance from his very birth, his origins as random and unknown as his destiny and destination. The picaresque

hero wanders rather than travels, living in the present, and thinking mostly of survival, unable to project any quest further than his next meal.

The pícaro cannot quest for nostos; he has no past to long for or future to quest after. His narrative world is not that of a romance hero, though it shares elements with it--for Reardon is right in his observation that there is a "picaresque" quality in portions of the Odyssey, and in the subsequent romance narratives which it spawns. Odysseus is almost trapped in the futureless despair of a picaresque world during his long travels; he struggles not to forget the shape of his own plot as he languishes on Kalypso's island, future and past blurring into an idle, tearstained present. I would argue that all questing heroes face the dangerous pull of the picaresque which comes in the form of despair or forgetfulness brought on by the temptations of the sequential plot. The pull of Charybdis or of a bewitching woman, the oblivion of the lotos or the simple boredom of waiting for a crisis, can all obliterate the fragile memory of the past which projects both story and life into the future. A timeless present is perilous for the romance hero, who must use the weight of the past to anchor himself to the future. Reardon correctly locates the architecture of the Odyssey's plot in its quest for nostos, the hero's return home. While a romance hero comes back to an original self, however, the pícaro has no original self to return to. The picaresque self is formed of the same flux which is also one of the disturbing essences of Odysseus, the hero who preserves his identity by separating self from name--who remains "someone" through his willingness to call himself "no one."

The random flux which creates the picaresque hero, and out of which he carves his plot, might overwhelm even Odysseus if he were to eat the lotos and forget his nostos, for memory both preserves the past and contains the future; plotlessness is the ubiquitous enemy of romance heroes, and all of them are threatened by it at some time. The two-part narrative frame of the Odyssey acts to expose vital mechanisms of narrative, and in so doing it gives its hero the power to capture the past and move on into the future by making him master of the verbal medium which is at the core of his identity. It allows him to move out of picaresque randomness into the more purposeful motion of romance.

Centrifugal/centripetal, myth/märchen, epic/romance, tragic/comic, picaresque/romantic--all of these narrative dualities seem to locate themselves in the Odyssey. The poem, though early, may also perhaps be understood to occupy a pivotal position in Western literature--straddling the narrative world of the Iliad while offering hints of a powerful alternative narrative mode. Its conflicting voices need not be reconciled; nor is it necessary for readers to choose among them. I would argue that the poem pays homage to the mythic voice of the Iliad by incorporating its heroic goals into its narrative(s)--but it does not stop there. We are offered the possibility of the death of Odysseus, but left to imagine the death itself, and perhaps to reassess--as Akhilleus' shade seems to--the poetic value which the Iliad places on death as a τέλος for the heroes of epic narrative.

As the Odyssey illustrates, the double voices of romance narrative can be extremely confusing in relation to closure, pulling the narrative in two directions, and making endings ambiguous, or less than final. In the case of the Aithiopika, I will argue that Heliodoros has responded to the Odyssey's less than "final" ending by creating a complex revision of it, one which fulfills the narrative and generic expectations and tastes of his age. To judge from Heliodoros' response to the narrative model offered by the Odyssey's ending(s), the way in which Homer ends his poem may have troubled him as much as it has troubled many who have read and commented on the poem since antiquity.

The beginnings, middles, and ends of the Homeric poems do not, in many ways, fit the narrative requirements of literate tastes. The poems' "beginnings" are, in fact, actually more like "middles," asking their audience or readers to enter the story "in the middle of things," in medias res. The Iliad, for example, begins in the ninth year of a ten year war, uses part of its middle[144] to recapitulate events from the war's beginning, and ends before the end of the war or the fulfillment of the prophesied death of its hero. The Odyssey also begins in the ninth year of its ten year story, spends half of its middle playing a complex game of narrative "catch-up" with itself, and ends, like the Iliad, before the prophesied death of its hero--although the ending of the Odyssey does describe the prophesied death of the Iliad's hero, just to make things even more confusing.

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[144]Books 1 through 4.

One of the earliest commentators on Homeric narrative, Aristotle, understood one of the basic tenets of modern narratology--that there is a fundamental difference between "story" (events which happen sequentially in time) and "discourse" (the verbal ordering of those events in narrative). This important distinction allowed him to appreciate and praise Homer's narrative artistry and the completeness, or "unity," of the plots of both Homeric poems. He recognized that the drive of the Iliad's plot was to tell the story of the "rage of Akhilleus," its genesis, course, and aftermath--not the story of the Trojan War or, just as impossible, the complete story of the life and death of Akhilleus. The poem's discourse (plot) is complete with the end of the rage and the return of Hektor's body for burial.

In order to understand how Heliodoros closes his romance, we must look at the way he relates the beginning, middle, and end of his text to the corresponding parts of the Odyssey. In doing this, we find that his project is extremely complex. Let us begin with the beginning(s).

The multiple ambiguities of narrative beginnings are explored in a study by the contemporary critic and theorist Edward Said, entitled Beginnings: Intention and Method (1975). Said begins with a series of important questions about narrative beginnings which are not at all simple to answer:

> Is a beginning the same as an origin? Is the beginning of a given work its real beginning, or is there some other, secret point that more authentically starts the work off? To what extent is a beginning ultimately a physical exigency and nothing more than that? (1)

Said's distinction between beginnings which act as "origins" (that is, which reflect the beginning of the action of a narrative) and those which act as mere "starting points" (mere places to begin the story) is an important one. All beginnings are, in a sense, both--for even when a narrative's beginning does not coincide with a primary event, it still starts off this particular narrative process, this particular telling of the story. Whether a given beginning is an origin, or merely a starting point, it is always, as Said says, "the main entrance to what [a work] offers"--and therefore always of crucial importance.

Said makes another general observation about beginnings which is especially significant from a comparatist's perspective. "[The beginning]," he says, "immediately establishes relationships with works already existing, relationships of either continuity or antagonism or some mixture of both" (1) [emphasis added]. Beginnings, in other words, establish intertextual relationships: they are places where one literary work picks up from another, and carries on, breaks off, or remolds a tradition. In comparing the beginnings of the Odyssey and the Aithiopika, we quickly find that Heliodoros manages to accomplish a tangled mixture of both continuity and antagonism.

Heliodoros borrows copiously from Homer, making some sort of Homeric reference every other page or so, yet not always for purposes which are easy to discern.[145] He uses both Homeric plot material and Homeric plot structure to

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[145]See Sandy (1982): "...an Homeric borrowing occurs on average approximately once every 1.2 pages of a modern edition" of the Aithiopika (88).

enrich his romance's confusing literary stew. He begins the Aithiopika in medias res, borrowing a famous Homeric trope, but bending it to a new purpose in a new genre, actually concocting some of the material of his strange and surprising plot from details of the proem to the Odyssey. In designing his work around Homer's in this way, Heliodoros makes the telos of his romance into a kind of Odyssean collage. By using multiple layers of reference, this very baroque author makes the incomprehensible scene at the opening of the Aithiopika, for example, unhesitatingly remind readers of a famous scene from one of the "proximate ends" of the Odyssey--the battle with the suitors in Book 22. The beginning, middle, and end of the Aithiopika form a complex muddle which is nevertheless firmly resolved by the miraculous denouement of the romance's baroque plot.

In a section of his study of the Aithiopika devoted to Heliodoros' use of Homeric references, G. Sandy (1982) notes, almost in passing, that Heliodoros ingeniously uses the contents of the Odyssey's proem to define the outlines of his romance:

> The first few lines of the Odyssey contain the seeds of the basic plot of the Aethiopica: the sun god Helios, Ethiopia, wanderings, and quest for home" (85).

Sandy's observation is obviously correct, yet what are we to make of it?[146] Heliodoros plays linguistic games with the text of the Odyssey, not unlike the games

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[146]See Sandy (1982): 54-6 for a discussion of how to interpret Heliodoros' Homeric borrowings.

he makes his characters play inside the Aithiopika, forcing them to try to match their life-patterns with prophetic word-patterns. Words and images that make one kind of sense in a Homeric context are pulled out to make altogether different sense in the Aithiopika. When the text of the Aithiopika is laid over its Odyssean model, knowledge of the Odyssey's plot may influence readers' expectations about the outcome of the Aithiopika. Reading the Aithiopika with an eye to Homeric references can also give the impression that the narrative content of the Iliad and Odyssey have been ground up and spread randomly throughout the text, with fortuitously selected bits occasionally falling into sensible patterns. In spite of these games, however, Heliodoros' virtuosity forces the plot of the Aithiopika to make tremendously organized sense once one is able to follow its complexities. In fact, by some narrative standards it is a much neater plot than the Odyssey's, since Heliodoros allows none of the epic's multiple "proximate endings."

Going back to Sandy's observation, then, the starting point of the Odyssey, the opening lines of its proem, provide material for Heliodoros from which he will concoct both an origin and a telos for the Aithiopika. His characters will wander, quest for home, and go to Aithiopia. Heliodoros will also overlay the Aithiopika's actual narrative beginning with one of the climactic scenes from the Odyssey's narrative ending--Odysseus' battle with the suitors in Book 22. To understand how he does this, we must look carefully at the language and imagery of the Aithiopika's opening passage.

Though hardly as well known as the opening of the Odyssey, the Aithiopika's beginning is quite famous in its own right:[147]

> Ἡμέρας ἄρτι διαγελώσας καὶ ἡλίου τὰς ἀκρωρείας καταυγάζοντος, ἄνδρες ἐν ὅπλοις ληστρικοῖς ὄρους ὑπερκύψαντες, ὃ δὴ κατ' ἐκβολὰς τοῦ Νείλου καὶ στόμα τὸ καλούμενον Ἡρακλεωτικὸν ὑπερτείνει, μικρὸν ἐπιστάντες τὴν ὑποκειμένην θάλατταν ὀφθαλμοῖς ἐπήρχοντο καὶ τῷ πελάγει τὸ πρῶτον τὰς ὄψεις ἐπαφέντες, ὡς οὐδὲν ἄγρας ληστρικῆς ἐπηγγέλλετο μὴ πλεόμενον, ἐπὶ τὸν πλησίον αἰγιαλὸν τῇ θέᾳ κατήγοντο. Καὶ ἦν τὰ ἐν αὐτῷ τοιάδε· (Aith.1.1).
>
> (The smile of daybreak was just beginning to brighten the sky, the sunlight to catch the hilltops, when a group of men in brigand gear peered over the mountain that overlooks the place where the Nile flows into the sea at the mouth that men call the Heracleotic. They stood there for a moment, scanning the expanse of sea beneath them: first they gazed out over the ocean, but as there was nothing sailing there that held out hope of spoil or plunder, their eyes were drawn to the beach nearby. This is what they saw...)

Obviously, this starting point brings us into Heliodoros' narrative "in the middle of things." The question is: "In the middle of what?" Who are these "men in brigand gear" through whose eyes we view this scene? Why are we suddenly thrust into a scene in Egypt at the mouth of the Nile? Is the fact that this is the "Heracleotic" mouth of the Nile significant? First-time readers of the Aithiopika have no way to answer these questions.

From a reader's point of view, the similarity between this in medias res beginning and that of the Odyssey is a limited one: whereas the most attuned members of Homer's audience would likely have guessed the essential content of the upcoming tale by the fifth word of the Odyssey ("polytropon"), readers of the

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[147]It was widely imitated by prose fiction writers in the 16th and 17th centuries--Sidney and Cervantes to name only two. See T. Hägg (1983): 192-213, and Sandy (1982): 95-124, for more on the extensive Nachleben of the Aithiopika.

Aithiopika can hardly predict the events of this narrative after five pages, even five books, of its ten-book length. Odysseus is so famous and specific a character that one adjective is enough to identify him and call up his story, but the characters and action of Heliodoros' text can only be known generically, as characters in a "typical" romance tale.[148]

We must also recall that Heliodoros would have expected complete familiarity in his audience with the Homeric poems as literature. The study of Homer had been a mainstay of education in the Greco-Roman world for centuries, and Homeric phrases and images were strongly ingrained into the minds of readers.[149] Heliodoros' use of Odyssean echoes and allusions might have resulted therefore in some strange perceptual effects: for while the complex plot of his own narrative is completely opaque to readers at the starting point, the overlay of familiar Homeric

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[148]Current literary-historical theory assumes that the plots and characters of the ancient novels are derived largely from those of New Comedy, a theatrical form of the 4th century B.C. The plots New Comedy, the roots of which can be seen as early as the late 5th century in some of the anomalous "tragi-comic" plays of Euripides (e.g. Ion, Helen), tended to center around domestic issues of family, marriage, and financial fortune--the troubles of individual people. As the Greek world became fragmented and diffused during the Alexandrian and Greco-Roman periods, novels began to replace theatrical performances as a form of private entertainment. See Perry (1967): 72-9: "...Greek romance is essentially Hellenistic drama in narrative form..." (78). See also S. Trenkner (1958) for an overview of the plots of novellae (not extant) from the classical period which may have contributed to the development of the plots of New Comic plays.

[149]One is reminded of how long a knowledge of Homer has served as a cultural binder in the Mediterranean world in a striking scene in the Taviani brothers' award-winning film, "Night of the Shooting Stars" (1982), where an old Italian villager helps a young couple celebrate their marriage by reciting Hektor's speech to Andromache from Iliad 6. (The young bride is several months pregnant, and the groom is about to go off to fight in a hopeless war.)

imagery would provide some comforting, albeit misleading, interpretive relief. Heliodoros' cross-fertilization between his romance and the Homeric poems complicates our interpretation of the narrative strategy of the Aithiopika.

As an example, let us look at the description which follows directly on the passage cited above. This is the description of "what they saw...":

> Ὁ δὲ αἰγιαλός, μεστὰ πάντα σωμάτων νεοσφαγῶν, τῶν μὲν ἄρδην ἀπολωλότων, τῶν δὲ ἡμιθνήτων καὶ μέρεσι τῶν σωμάτων ἔτι σπαιρόντων, ἄρτι πεπαῦσθαι τὸν πόλεμον κατηγορούντων. Ἦν δὲ οὐ πολέμου καθαροῦ τὰ φαινόμενα σύμβολα, ἀλλ' ἀναμέμικτο καὶ εὐωχίας οὐκ εὐτυχοῦς ἀλλ' εἰς τοῦτο λῃξάσης ἐλεεινὰ λείψανα, τράπεζαι τῶν ἐδεσμάτων ἔτι πλήθουσαι καὶ ἄλλαι πρὸς τῇ γῇ τῶν κειμένων ἐν χερσὶν ἀνθ' ὅπλων ἐνίοις παρὰ τὴν μάχην γεγενημέναι· ὁ γὰρ πόλεμος ἐσχεδίαστο· ἕτεραι δὲ ἄλλους ἔκρυπτον, ὡς ᾤοντο, ὑπελθόντας· κρατῆρες ἀνατετραμμένοι καὶ χειρῶν ἔνιοι τῶν ἐσχηκότων ἀπορρέοντες τῶν μὲν πινόντων τῶν δὲ ἀντὶ λίθων κεχρημένων· τὸ γὰρ αἰφνίδιον τοῦ κακοῦ τὰς χρείας ἐκαινοτόμει καὶ βέλεσι κεχρῆσθαι τοῖς ἐκπώμασιν ἐδίδασκεν. Ἔκειντο δὲ ὁ μὲν πελέκει τετρωμένος, ὁ δὲ κάχληκι βεβλημένος αὐτόθεν ἀπὸ τῆς ῥαχίας πεπορισμένῳ, ἕτερος ξύλῳ κατεαγώς, ὁ δὲ δαλῷ κατάφλεκτος, καὶ ἄλλος ἄλλως, οἱ δὲ πλεῖστοι βελῶν ἔργον καὶ τοξείας γεγενημένοι. Καὶ μυρίον εἶδος ὁ δαίμων ἐπὶ μικροῦ τοῦ χωρίου διεσκεύαστο, οἶνον αἵματι μιάνας, καὶ συμποσίοις πόλεμον ἐπιστήσας, φόνους καὶ πότους, σπονδὰς καὶ σφαγὰς ἐπισυνάψας, καὶ τοιοῦτον θέατρον λῃσταῖς Αἰγυπτίοις ἐπιδείξας (Aith.1.3-6).

> (But the beach!--a mass of newly slain bodies, some of them quite dead, others half-alive and still twitching, testimony that the fighting had only just ended. To judge by the signs this had been no proper battle. Amongst the carnage were the miserable remnants of festivities that had come to this unhappy end. There were tables still set with food, and others upset on the ground, held in dead men's hands; in the fray they had served some as weapons, for this had been an impromptu conflict; beneath other tables men had crawled in the vain hope of hiding there. There were wine bowls upturned, and some slipping from the hands that held them; some had been drinking from them, others using them like stones, for the suddenness of the catastrophe had caused objects to be put to strange, new uses and taught men to use drinking vessels as missiles...but most were the victims of arrows and archery. In that small space the deity had contrived an infinitely varied spectacle, defiling wine with blood and unleashing war at the party, combining wining and dying, pouring of drink and spilling of blood, and staging this tragic show for the Egyptian bandits.)

In the midst of these graphic details and rhetorical flourishes, Heliodoros has embedded a famous Odyssean scene. For readers familiar with the Homeric poems, this description, while initially opaque in terms of the plot of the Aithiopika, would very likely recall its Odyssean source: the slaughter of the suitors in Odysseus' great hall in Odyssey 22. Heliodoros indeed "stages" the scene for his audience, and calls attention to the staging by saying that some "deity" (*δαίμων*) is "displaying" (*ἐπιδείξας*) "such a scene" (*τοιοῦτον θέατρον*) for the "audience" of Egyptian bandits (Aith.1.6)--and, of course, for readers of the Aithiopika.

Described by Heliodoros for a readerly and sophisticated audience, the Aithiopika's perplexing "starting point" presents us with a redrawn picture of Odysseus' hall after the slaying of the suitors: there is the banquet turned to carnage; the deadly shower of arrows; bread soaking in blood rather than wine; tables overturned; the shock of death amidst feasting. These are vivid images from Odyssey 22, translated by a writer's descriptive vision into the context of a prose narrative work.

If we go through Heliodoros' description line by line, we find a variety of transposed Homeric words, phrases, and images, many taken specifically from Odyssey 22. Looking again at Heliodoros' opening passage, for example, we read:

> Ὁ δὲ αἰγιαλός, *μεστὰ πάντα σωμάτων νεοσφαγῶν, τῶν μὲν ἄρδην ἀπολωλότων, τῶν δὲ ἡμιθνήτων καὶ μέρεσι τῶν σωμάτων ἔτι σπαιρόντων, ἄρτι πεπαῦσθαι τὸν πόλεμον κατηγορούντων* (Aith.1.3).
>
> (But the beach!--a mass of newly slain bodies, some of them quite dead, others half-alive and still twitching, testimony that the fighting had only just ended.)

In both vocabulary and image, Heliodoros refers here to an Odyssean source: the simile at the end of the slaughter of the suitors where they are compared to netted fish, twitching and dying on the beach:

> τοὺς δὲ ἴδεν μάλα πάντας ἐν αἵματι καὶ κονίῃσι
> πεπτεῶτας πολλούς, ὥς τ' ἰχθύας, οὕς θ' ἁλιῆες
> κοίλον ἐς αἰγιαλὸν πολιῆς ἔκτοσθε θαλάσσης
> δικτύῳ ἐξέρυσαν πολυωπῷ· οἱ δέ τε πάντες
> κύμαθ' ἁλὸς ποθέοντες ἐπὶ ψαμάθοισι κέχυνται· (Od.22.383-8).
>
> (...[Odysseus] saw them, one and all in their numbers, lying fallen/ in their blood and in the dust, like fish whom the fishermen/ have taken in their net with many holes, and dragged out/ onto the hollow beach from the gray sea, and all of them/ lie piled on the sand...)

The word which Heliodoros uses here for beach (αἰγιαλός) is a common word, though it helps to link the description directly to Od.22.385. It is as if Heliodoros had playfully entered the Odyssean simile, staging it for his audience.

Heliodoros makes other specific verbal references to the battle in Odyssey 22 when he says:

> τράπεζαι τῶν ἐδεσμάτων ἔτι πλήθουσαι καὶ ἄλλαι πρὸς τῇ γῇ τῶν κειμένων ἐν χερσὶν ἀνθ' ὅπλων ἐνίοις παρὰ τὴν μάχην γεγενημέναι· ὁ γὰρ πόλεμος ἐσχεδίαστο· ἕτεραι δὲ ἄλλους ἔκρυπτον, ὡς ᾤοντο, ὑπελθόντας· (Aith.1.4).
>
> (There were tables still set with food, and others upset on the ground, held in dead men's hands; in the fray they had served some as weapons, for this had been an impromptu conflict; beneath other tables men had crawled in the vain hope of hiding there.)

This description refers to two passages from Book 22 of the Odyssey: the first, and more obvious one, is Eurymakhos' urging the besieged suitors to use their tables as

shields during the battle for their lives (Od.22.74-5);[150] the second refers to the actions of Leodes, Phemios, and Medon, all of whom cower behind or under furniture during the main battle, and make desperate efforts to save their lives when it is virtually over (Od.22.310-80).

Despite the variety of Odyssean details in Heliodoros' description, the narrative styles are very different. The Homeric description of the deaths of the suitors is a process described over time, in accordance with the oral style of the poetry, which must keep its listeners involved in the scene moment by moment. Heliodoros, on the other hand, offers an analytical description of a visual tableau which is more suited to reading than to hearing.

The irony of slaughter happening in the midst of feasting is a prevalent theme during the battle in Odyssey 22, and Heliodoros draws on this irony to indulge in one of his favorite rhetorical tricks, that of putting logical opposites in apposition to one another: wine with blood, revelry with slaughter, death with drink, treaty with treachery.[151] While the Homeric passage is personalized, focusing quite specifically on the importance of many of the individual deaths, Heliodoros uses the anonymous aftermath of a bloody battle to indulge himself in some "spectacular" literary fun.

Heliodoros, then, begins "in the middle" of his own story with easily recognized allusions to well-known material from one of the "proximate ends" of the

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[150]This reference is noted by M. Rattenbury and T. W. Lumb, the editors of the Budé edition of the Aithiopika (1960): cf. 1, p. 3.

[151]Sandy (1982): 82.

Odyssey. The carnage which for Odysseus represents the beginning of the end of his struggle, and which for the Odyssey's audience would signal a major climax in the plot, acts in Heliodoros' story as a playful entry-point into two struggles: the on-going struggle of the characters in the story to achieve the goals of their (still mysterious) quest, and the equally difficult struggle of the audience to orient itself in the Aithiopika's complex plot.

The starting point of the Aithiopika is as much an interpretive muddle as it is a narrative middle. Heliodoros' Odyssean echoes, both here and in other parts of his romance, seem to function as ironic red-herrings, leading intrigued and puzzled readers down interpretive dead-ends as they struggle to negotiate the text's plot. The Odyssey's narrative structure is complex even for an audience well-versed in the stories of Odysseus, but the baroque Heliodoros, mimicking the Homeric plan, outdoes his master in confusion. We began with Said's question: "Are we at an origin or merely a starting point?" It may be, as Kermode suggests, that only the end can resolve the mysteries of the beginning.

The actual end of the Aithiopika follows the very strict generic rules which apply to any fully fledged romance: it is a classic "happy ending," with an emphasis on the combined erotic/dynastic aspects of marriage as a resolution for many plot complications. A complete series of recognitions takes place between Charikleia and her parents and people, and she is able to marry Theagenes and, presumably, live "happily ever after...." The inconclusiveness of the Odyssey, with its collection of "proximate" endings seeming to not add up to a definitive finale, is not repeated at

the end of the Aithiopika, whose various plot threads of are tied off into a single, solid knot.

To the extent, however, that he has parodied the Odyssey throughout his romance, Heliodoros does seem to have borrowed and emphasized one of the proximate ends of the Odyssey, the so-called "Pepysian ending" at 23.296 (Stanford 406), where Penelope and Odysseus finally reconsummate their marriage by going to bed. This is the stopping point preferred by the poem's Alexandrian editors. In fact, it makes good generic sense for Heliodoros to focus on this particular Odyssean ending, for if the Odyssey had ended at 23.296, it would have concluded with a strong focus on Penelope, making Odysseus' reunion with her the primary goal for the poem's plot. One of the wonderful subversions of the Aithiopika is that its "questing hero" is actually a heroine, a young woman who inherits many of the admirable skills of both of her epic/romantic predecessors, Odysseus and Penelope. Charikleia, in fact, is as much like Penelope in many of her strongest attributes as she is like Odysseus--except that, unlike Penelope, she is cut free from her home and must therefore travel. Charikleia's itinerant fate, however, gives her certain distinct narrative advantages over Penelope, for while Penelope's ability to create narrative from her own perspective is limited by her lack of physical mobility, Charikleia is set loose in the world and both forced and enabled to create a narrative in her wake. Like Penelope, she is clever with words and deception, fiercely faithful to a beloved man, and sensible in the face of the most daunting disasters.

The connection between Charikleia and Penelope and the "happy ending" of the Aithiopika is made clear at several points in the text, but perhaps most strongly in the dream of Kalasiris in Book 5 (Aith.5.22.1-3). While being visited by a dream vision of Odysseus, Kalasiris receives an important indirect message from Penelope to Charikleia:

> «...τὴν κόρην δὲ ἣν ἄγεις παρὰ τῆς ἐμῆς γαμετῆς πρόσειπε, χαίρειν γὰρ αὐτῇ φησι διότι πάντων ἐπίπροσθεν ἄγει τὴν σθφροσύνειν καὶ τέλος αὐτῇ δεξιόν εὐαγγελίζεται»
>
> (Aith.5.22.3).

> ("However, to the maiden you have with you my wife sends greetings and wishes her joy, since she esteems chastity above all things. Good tidings too she sends her: her story has a happy ending.")

What Penelope is here "passing on" to Charikleia, her romantic successor, is her (that is Penelope's) own ending of the Odyssey--the one which completed the faithful wife's domestic odyssey, and which restored her both to her husband and to her rightful position as manager of the household she had inherited and maintained through her faithfulness to her marriage. In fact, the "Odysseus" who visits Kalasiris in his dream, and who delivers this message of future domestic bliss for Charikleia, is hardly the restless traveler of Eugammon's Telegony; he is an aged figure who seems much more likely to have stayed in Ithaka tending to his home-life:

> «ὄναρ μοί τις πρεσβύτης ἐφαίνετο τὰ μὲν ἄλλα κατεσκληκὼς ἐπιγουνίδα δέ, λείψανον τῆς ἐφ' ἡλικίας ἰσχύος, ἀνεσταλμένου ζώματος ὑποφαίνων, κυνῆν μὲν τῆς κεφαλῆς ἐπικείμενος ἀγχίνουν δὲ ἅμα καὶ πολύτροπον περισκοπούμενος...»
>
> (Aith.5.22.1.)

> ("...a vision of an old man appeared to me. Age had withered him almost to a skeleton, except that his cloak was hitched up to reveal a thigh that retained

some vestige of the strength of his youth. He wore a leather helmet on his head, and his expression was one of cunning and many wiles...")

Penelope's adoption of Heliodoros' heroine provides yet another example in which the text of the Aithiopika acts as a gloss on the Odyssey: it allows Penelope to call attention to herself as that poem's heroine. This is the Penelope who earns such generous praise from the ghost of Agamemnon during the Second Nekyia in Book 24:

«ὄλβιε Λαέρταο πάϊ, πολυμήχαν' Ὀδυσσεῦ,
ἦ ἄρα σὺν μεγάλῃ ἀρετῇ ἐκτήσω ἄκοιτιν·
ὡς ἀγαθαὶ φρένες ἦσαν ἀμύμονι Πηνελοπείῃ,
κούρῃ Ἰκαρίου! ὡς εὖ μέμνητ' Ὀδυσῆος,
ἀνδρὸς κουριδίου! τῷ οἱ κλέος οὔ ποτ' ὀλεῖται
ἠῦς ἀρετῆς, τεύξουσι δ' ἐπιχθονίοισιν ἀοιδὴν
ἀθάνατοι χαρίεσσαν ἐχέφρονι Πηνελοπείῃ...»
(Od.24.192-8). [emphasis added]

('O fortunate son of Laertes, Odysseus of many devices,/ surely you won yourself a wife endowed with great virtue./ How good was proved the heart that is in blameless Penelope,/ Ikarios' daughter, and how well she remembered Odysseus,/ her wedded husband. Thereby the fame of her virtue shall never/ die away, but the immortals will make for the people/ of earth a thing of grace in the song for prudent Penelope.')

In this speech of Agamemnon, Penelope is granted a level of heroic fame that few ancient women ever achieved, and a promise of immortal songs to celebrate her achievement. It is perhaps all the more fitting then that she should pass on her own "τέλος δεξιόν" to Charikleia, a romantic successor from a different era, who nevertheless carried on the "κλέος ἠῦς ἀρετῆς," and created a long story of her own in the process.

The conclusion(s) of the Quixote exemplify the doubled voices of romance narrative more explicitly even than those of the Odyssey or Aithiopika, for Cervantes was forced by the openness of his first ending to provide the closure of his second one. The wily Ginés de Pasamonte sums up the classic romantic avoidance of narrative closure, which Part I expresses in its linear shape, when he informs Don Quixote that the narrative of his life, which he is in the process of writing, cannot end until his life does. Romance avoids closure as men avoid death.

Part I of the Quixote in many ways resembles the first half of the Odyssey, with a wandering protagonist who encounters both adventures and alternate narratives to delay him as he goes along. J. Rodríguez-Luis, in an essay "On Closure and Openendedness in the Two Quixotes,[152] points out that one explanation for the continual interpolation of "extra" narratives into Part I of the Quixote is that they are a by-product of the text's linear, "open-ended" structure:

> The so-called interpolated stories of Part One come into the narrative in ways that underline [a] basic lack of plan. They are not really related to the protagonist's project, but get "pulled" into Don Quijote by the "real" author's attraction to genres other than the romances of chivalry (the pastoral, the comedia, the sentimental and the courtly novelle) (230).

Part I of the Quixote expresses what Parker has called the "deviance" and "delay" of romance, avoiding the finality of any real ending. As Rodríguez-Luis puts it:

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[152]In: Parr, J. On Cervantes (1990): 222-240.

> The ending of the 1605 Quijote epitomizes, furthermore, the book's intrinsic readiness to accept interruptions, diversions, extraneous materials; all of which serve to constantly defer closure and what this means as a general giver of meaning. There is in Part I a valorization of narrative for its own sake which results, naturally, in a basic lack of concern with closure (232). [emphasis added]

What Rodríguez-Luis refers to here as "valorization of narrative for its own sake" has been one of the major focusses of this study. All of these works, the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and the Quixote, spend the first halves of their narrative lives completely engaged in the process of telling stories--expressing, it seems, not so much a "basic lack of concern with closure" as a specific concern not to close.

Even the most errant romance narratives, however, contain the sense that things must eventually come to an end. The human mind cannot really conceive of "eternity"...world without end. As Kermode (1966) points out, each time an anticipated apocalypse fails to arrive, religious groups simply re-set their calendars, undeterred:

> The early Christians were the first to experience the disconfirmations of literal predictions; it has been said that the apostasies of the second century were the consequence of this 'eschatological despair,' as Bultmann calls it. But literal disconfirmation is thwarted by typology, arithmology, and perhaps by the buoyancy of chiliasts in general. Thus a mistaken prediction can be attributed to an error of calculation, either in arithmetic or allegory (9).

Even the most pleasurable travels--whether narrative or physical--grow tiresome when they appear to be interminable. Like the endless feasting of the suitors in the first half of the Odyssey, a never-ending series of collisions between the mad Don Quixote and the rest of the world would eventually become insupportable. It is the very endlessness of the novellas de caballerías, their stories of adventure growing more and more attenuated as they stretch in an interminable line from father to son to grandson, that is one of the major generic flaws of those books. The tension in narrative between the directed desire for closure and the struggle to resist it is what ultimately creates meaning and gives shape to stories, and, as we have seen, to the lives which those stories narrate.

Cervantes was forced by Avellaneda's plagiarism to create in Part II an inward-spiralling narrative; the shape of Part II, and of the Quixote as a whole, was formed in part to balance the endless linearity which Part I adopted through its parody of the chivalric romances. Part II of the Quixote is a very different book indeed; it is certainly as end-directed as Part I is open-ended. The 1615 Quixote moves toward the closure of both sanity and death. Many have noted that comedy in this much more somber text is more muted than in Part I: the final closure of the Quixote is neither the comic/romantic one of the Aithiopika, nor the ambiguously romantic/epic one of the Odyssey. Rather it seems to reach back for its model to the conclusion of the Iliad, or perhaps to the ending of the Aeneid, more bitter even than its Homeric antecedent.

One of the ironies of Cervantes' conclusion--his definitive killing off of his romantic hero at the end of Part II--is that he does not seem to have succeeded in convincing readers that Don Quixote is really dead. The ending of the Quixote has bothered generations of critics, inciting more argument than Cervantes could have imagined. The reasons for this, while extremely complex, may have to do, once again, with the Quixote's failure to fit into any easily determined generic format. Romantic readers and their modern descendants have had particular difficulty with the absoluteness of Don Quixote's renunciation not only of his madness, but of fiction itself. These readers associate Don Quixote's quest with a noble rebellion against a vulgar and corrupt present. Citing Lukács' Theory of the Novel (1915) as a prime example of this type of reading, Rodríguez-Luis explains some of the fallacies of this all too "romantic" reading of Cervantes' anti-romance:

> It cannot surprise us then that Don Quijote's readers would feel uncomfortable at hearing the hero state, instead of that his project was destined to fail because of the modern world's corrupt nature, as Lukács explains, that he embarked on it solely because he was mad. This is the same as saying that the ideals that he had made us become enamored of could only have been dreamed by a madman (233).

Rodríguez-Luis warns against this romantic reading, reminding critics that Cervantes' had set himself a literary project: not to reject romance per se, but the bad books which had become its exponents. As Rodríguez-Luis puts it:

> Don Quijote's quest is not only corrupt because of its contact with a world in which there is no room for epic-type quests, but because its vehicles are degenerate descendants of the epic, books which transformed epic quests into strings of adventures, heroic magnification into unbridled fantasy, and epic language into mindless rhetorical devices (236).[153]

While the Aithiopika concludes itself safely within the boundary of its romantic frame, and the Odyssey ends with a note of divine sanction, the Quixote leaves its readers on the other side of a narrative divide, with all the participants in the narrative--Don Quixote, his friends and companions, and ourselves, the readers--looking in at the world of romance from the colder light of a different narrative reality. Cervantes' conclusion is the bitterest of the three works in this study, offering us neither the consolation of the Odyssey's terminal inconclusiveness, nor the satisfaction of the Aithiopika's classic "happy ending." Only in the Quixote are we made to confront the absolute τέλος...θανάτοιο, the end, limit, and fulfillment of death.

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[153]See also D. Eisenberg (1987), for a lengthy Appendix on the influence of the Quixote on the romantic movement, pp. 205-223.

Conclusion

This study has grown, first, out of an observation of certain structural similarities in the narratives of the Odyssey, the Aithiopika, and Don Quixote--namely, that they are each two-part works which contain a large number of interpolated tales. Equally important however, is the fact that each of these works bears a significant relationship to the romance literary mode--particularly as it is defined by Northrop Frye to be a mode of idealization of both past and future, a mode, that is, marked by nostalgia and the wish-fulfillment fantasies of daydream.

These narrative and structural features come together with the modal features of romance in the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote through the device of the interpolated tale, large numbers of which appear in each work. These many internal narratives help to highlight the "nostalgic" and "fantastic" impulses of both romance narratives and romance hero(in)es in numerous ways. The two-part frame narratives allow each of these texts to exhibit a kind of internal literary nostalgia, where each "part two," in effect, looks back on, re-assesses, and often re-tells in various ways, parts of the narrative of its own first half.

The large number of internal narratives also creates an atmosphere within each text of intense self-consciousness about the act of narrating itself; this atmosphere, in turn, allows characters within the text(s) much opportunity to speculate about and

experiment with the uses (and abuses) to which narrative can be applied. The telling, hearing, or reading of stories of many kinds becomes a vital interest for these characters as they struggle to achieve their various romantic quests for nostos--a return "home"--and for the validation of their personal identities which that "return" implies.

Deeply connected to any act of narration is the large degree to which the creation of personal identity is itself a narrative act, in which the human subject "tells itself into being" by creating personal "stories" (events ordered in time) which it recites in a kind of internal monologue as soon as it has language. These primal "stories of identity," which Freud connected to the romance mode by naming a group of them the "Family Romance," are what help create the allure of romance literature for audiences of all ages--for the questing protagonists of the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote (Odysseus, Charikleia, and Don Quixote) as well as for the readers of the texts they inhabit. Each protagonist learns that s/he must control the production and interpretation of narrative in order to achieve a nostos, a return to self.

The interpolated tales within these texts (which take many forms, including those of lying tales, romantic first-person narratives, or dreams) are themselves often "romantic" in nature, offering to their audiences (both internal and external) an entrée into a world of fantasy, projected desire, and idealization. The entrée is a relatively "safe" one, for interpolated narrative has a distancing effect which helps characters within the texts (and readers outside of the texts) keep some separation between their own lives and selves and those of the protagonists of the internal tales. In each of

these texts, however, characters sometimes lose or over-ride this vital distance between life and literature--Odysseus through his constant re-telling of already-told tales (the so-called "lying tales"), Charikleia through the mysterious and unpredictable workings of narrative "fortune" (*τύχη*), and Don Quixote through a misguided desire to conflate life with text. In the self-conscious narrative environment of the Odyssey, Aithiopika, and Quixote, the protagonists often seem aware, also, of their status as "literary constructs"--as characters, that is, in texts--and they make use of this knowledge to pursue their respective quests.

The connection of these three works to the romance mode is generically problematic. Strictly speaking, their extreme self-consciousness works against many of the modal aspects of romance which tend toward the "loss" of self reflected in nostalgia, daydream, fantasy...the forgetfulness of lotos-eating. The constant interpolation of narrative within narrative produces a generic form which might more aptly be described as "framed," "self-conscious," or parodic romance narrative. This form is marvelously represented by a major work not covered by the current study--Ariosto's Orlando Furioso--which also has a two-part frame: "pre-" and "post-" Orlando's madness. One contemporary descendent of the Orlando, Italo Calvino's delightfully complex The Nonexistent Knight (Il cavaliere inesistente), effectively outdoes its masterful model in achieving its own version of this structure: for one learns, on reading the last page of text, that the novel's heroine and narrator are in fact a single being, and one is forced, by this knowledge, to re-read (and thereby re-tell) the story from its beginning, knowing that each time the same revelation will

appear in the final lines--always the same, and always a surprise. True to its self-conscious romance form, Calvino's novel, finally, "reads" and "writes" itself into being, and gathers, as Frye claims all romances do, past and future into a present, as the newly revealed narrator and heroine declares in closing:

> From describing the past, from the present which seized my hand in its excited grasp, here I am, O future, now mounting the crupper of your horse. What new pennants wilt thou unfurl before me from towers of cities not yet founded? What rivers of devastation set flowing over castles and gardens I have loved? What unforeseen golden ages art thou preparing--ill-mastered, indomitable harbinger of treasures dearly paid for, my kingdom to be conquered, the future... (141).

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