

ARIS & PHILLIPS CLASSICAL TEXTS

Heliodorus

Aithiopika

Heliodorus' *Aithiopika*, or 'Ethiopian Tale', is an adventure romance written probably in the fourth century AD, focusing on the beautiful young lovers Charikleia and Theagenes. Beginning at the Delphic Oracle, which foretells a bright future for the couple in a 'dark land of the Sun', the story takes them from elopement from their families in Greece, aided by a mysterious old priest from Egypt, across the Aegean to shipwreck at the Nile Delta and capture by an outlaw band. From there they survive further perils at the hands of the Persian overlords of Egypt before finally arriving in Meroë, capital of ancient Ethiopia and birthplace of Charikleia, who had been exposed by the Queen of Ethiopia at birth for her anomalous white skin.

Heliodorus stands as the last and most sophisticated of the surviving Greek novelists in terms of plot and expression. Whilst the story itself is racy and clear, the diction is refined and elaborate, the expression complex. This is partly due to the literary movement, the Second Sophistic, to which Heliodorus belongs, and partly to the pursuit of *paideia*, or literary, philosophical and rhetorical savvy, that characterized educated Greco-Roman society in Heliodorus' time. Heliodorus himself says he was born a Phoenician in Emesa (modern Homs) in Syria from a family descended from the Sun. A later biographical note records his conversion to Christianity.

Volume One contains Books 1–5 of *Aithiopika*, with a substantial Introduction, a General Introduction by Nikoletta Kanavou, the Greek text and a facing-page English translation, as well as commentary on Books 1–5.

William Furley is Emeritus Professor of Greek at Heidelberg University and Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Classical Studies, London. He has held visiting professorships in Tübingen, Saarbrücken, Mannheim and London (S.T. Lee Visiting Professor).

Nikoletta Kanavou is Professor of Ancient Greek Literature at the University of Athens. She specialises in ancient Greek fictional narratives.


LIVERPOOL
UNIVERSITY PRESS
FOUNDED 1899
www.liverpooluniversitypress.co.uk

ISBN 978-1-80781-088-7



9 781807 810887 >

HELIODORUS

Aithiopika Volume One

William Furley



ARIS & PHILLIPS CLASSICAL TEXTS

HELIODORUS

Aithiopika

The Adventures of Theagenes and Charikleia Volume One Books 1–5

EDITED WITH INTRODUCTION, TRANSLATION AND COMMENTARY BY

William Furley

WITH A GENERAL INTRODUCTION BY NIKOLETTA KANAVOU