

**Olsen, S. (2012) “Maculate Conception: Sexual Ideology and Creative Authority in Heliodorus’ *Aethiopica*”, *American Journal of Philology* 133, 301-22.**

This article reconsiders the role of sexual and romantic ideology in Heliodorus' *Aethiopica*, focusing particularly on Persinna's account of her daughter's conception. It traces how the triangulated sexual dynamics of the conception deviate from the binary, symmetrical romantic model embodied by Charicleia and Theagenes, complicating the novel's apparent norms. It further argues that the sexual multiplicity of Charicleia's conception mirrors the narrative complexity of the *Aethiopica*, as the authorial decision to include the conception story—despite its disruptive potential—privileges the plot-generating creation of Charicleia over and above a monolithic adherence to sexual and romantic ideology.