Two Notes on Hellenistic Poems

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The Mortar of Leukadian Artemis

One of the subjects discussed by Kallimachos in the Aitia was the reason why the ξόανον of Artemis in Leukas wore a mortar on the head. The Diegesis to fr.31b–e Pfeiffer (P.Oxy. 2263 fr.1 ii 9–30) quotes the poet’s initial words of enquiry to the Muses and then gives the explanation.

tώIε μὲν ἑφη τάς δ’ εἰθαρ ἐμός πά-
λιν εἴσετο θυμός τῆς ἐν Λευ-
καδίᾳ Ἄρτεμιδος τὸ ξόανον
ἐ]πι τῆς κεφαλῆς θυκεύ]ιαν ἐ-
χει δι’ αἰτίαν ταύτην. Ἡπει-
ρώτα τιν.. η[..].[..]...

κατατρέχ[ο]ντες τὴν Λευκα-
δα ἑκύλων, ἐλθόντες δὲ καὶ
eἰς τὸ τῆς Ἄρτεμιδος ιέρον εὔ-
ρον τὴν θείην ἐκτεμένην
χρυσῆ κτεφάνων. τούτον ἐπι-
χελωάσαντες ἀφείλον καὶ
tὴν θυκεύ]ιαν ἐν ἧι σκόρδα τρ[ε]ί-
φαντες ἐφαγον τήθι θείαι ἐπέ-
θηκαν. ἐπι.. ν[..]. .. δ’ οἱ Λευ-
καδ[οι]. .. θ’ ἰμ[ε][ροι]ν

κατεκεύασαν κτεφάνων καὶ
ἀντὶ τῆς θυκεύ]ιας ἐθη]καν ἀπo-
πεόντα δ’ αὐτὸν προσήλω-
σαν τῶι ξόανωι. πάλιν δὲ με-
θ’ ἱμε[ροι]ν τρεῖς ἐπιτιθεμέ-
νυν κα[ε][μ][ε][ν]α[ν]το[ε]ν.[ε].. ης
The order of events is for the most part clear. Epeirotes raid Leukas. They enter the sanctuary of Artemis and see the goddess crowned with a golden wreath. Mockingly they replace it with a mortar in which they had pounded their garlic. The Leukadians remove the mortar and put a new wreath in place. When it falls off, they nail it to the ξόανον, but it falls off again. It is put back again after three days but does not stay in place (line 30 μή με[...]να[...]το[...]). The last event is not clearly fixed in the sequence, since the text of Kallimachos himself suggests that the crown was found in the morning of three successive days at the foot of the statue before the Leukadians decided to consult Apollo. But μέθ’ ημέρας τρεῖς could mean ‘two days later’ here.

In fr.31c line 6 Apollo perhaps is explaining that Artemis does not desire to wear a wreath any more, now that the original has been taken; or even that she likes to wear the mortar.

On coins of Leukas after 168 B.C. a statue of Artemis is represented with a stag. There is a crescent moon above her head, but she wears no mortar, and Pfeiffer remarks “fabula adhuc ignota erat.”

A version of the tale can however be traced to Aristotle through the Excerpta Politiarum of Herakleides Lembos (45, p.28 Dilts): Μολοττοὶ δὲ τῆς Ἀρτέμιδος υψηλάς αὐτῆς τὸ ἱερὸν καὶ τοῦ ξόανον χρυσοῦν ἀθηλόμενον στέφανον θυσίαν ἐτίθεσαν ἀντ’ αὐτοῦ. τῶν δὲ Κεφαλήνων ἀλλὰ ἔπιθέντων, τοῦτον ἀπέβαλεν ἡ θεός καὶ χαμάι κείμενος εὐράθη. Here the raiders are specifically Molottians, not Epeirotes, and the statue is

1 R. Pfeiffer, Callimachus II (Oxford 1953) 109 and 111.
2 Pfeiffer, op.cit. 111, rejecting the idea of E. Curtius (Hermes 10 [1876] 243) that the goddess on the coins is Ἀφροδίτη Αἰδη. Curtius was followed by B. V. Head, Historia Numorum (Oxford 1911) 330–31. For coins of Leukadian Artemis see also B.M. Catalogue of Greek Coins. Thessaly to Aetolia (London 1883, repr. Bologna 1963) 179–82.
venerated by Kephallenians, not by Leukadians. \textit{θυείαι} from \textit{θυείαν} is an easy correction.\(^3\) The Herakleidean excerpts are notoriously inconsequential, but enough is preserved to show that Aristotle had already given a version of the tale found in Kallimachos. In the \textit{Aitia} the story is set in Leukas, but Aristotle brings the Molottians to Kephallenia—or just possibly to a mainland sanctuary to which the Kephallenians had access.

An epithet of Artemis common in northwestern Greece (notably at Kalydon) is Laphria. Aristotle’s Kephallenian Artemis is almost certainly Artemis Laphria, because Antoninus Liberalis (40.2, p.66 Papathomopoulos) identifies the Laphria of the Kephallenians with Britomartis, who is the equivalent of Artemis.

To conclude: in northwest Greek lore a statue of Artemis lost its wreath to Molottian or Epeirote raiders, who put a mortar on the head of the goddess. The wreath substituted by the Leukadians or the Kephallenians could not be kept on the head of the \textit{ξώανον} and it became clear, perhaps after Apollo had been consulted, that the goddess did not want the substitute. Versions of the tale were given by Aristotle and Kallimachos, both of whom explained that the goddess wore a mortar because the raiders had put one on her head in jest.\(^4\)

\(^3\) As suggested by W. H. Willis.

\(^4\) For the possibility that the mortar was made of lead see Pfeiffer, \textit{op.cit.} (supra n.1) 109, on fr.31d. Kallim. fr.605, \textit{Ἰεράτος μυκώρόν}, E. Lobel suggests, may come from the story of the mortar (\textit{P.Oxy. XX} p.129).
II
Midas and Odonia (Nicander fr. 74.11–13)

In Book XV Athenaios quotes from Nicander’s Georgika Book II a long fragment describing flowers which are suitable for wreaths (683α–684δ=fr.74 Schneider). The poet recommends the cutting of rose shoots and the planting of them in trenches (lines 9–10). Next he mentions famous kinds of rose—Emathian, Nisaian of Megara, Phaselite, and the roses of Magnesia ad Maeandrum. The Emathian roses are specially praised (lines 11–13):

πρώτα μὲν ’Ωδωνίθες Μίδας ἄπερ ’Ακίδος ἄρχην
λείπουν ἐν κλῆροις ἀνέτρεφεν ’Ημαθίαοις
οἷς ἐς ἐξήκοντα πέριξ κομῶντα πετύλοις:

11 ’Ωδωνίθες Schweighäuser, ’Ωδωνίθες Α. 12 ’Ημαθίοις Weston, ἡμαθίοις Α.

Gow and Scholfield in their edition1 comment, “On the ‘gardens of Midas’ in eastern Macedonia and their 100-petalled roses see Hdt. 8.138, Theophr. H.P. 6.6.4. The Odones appear to be the same as the Edones, but Emathia is some way west of their district.” The Edones or Odones belong to the neighbourhood of Mount Pangaion in Thrace. Their name is found in various forms: ’Ἡδονές, ’Ηδωνόι and ’Οδονές, the last in the Baccarika of Dionysios (fr.8 Heitsch) as well as in the Γεωργικά of Nicander. The old name ’Οδωνίς2 of Thasos shows that Edonians or Odonians were thought to have settled in the island, but there seems to be no substance to the theory in the Lykophron scholia (419, 2.154 Scheer), according to which ’Ηδωνές occupied the coast and ’Ηδωνόι the hinterland of Thrace.

The ‘gardens of Midas’ in Macedonia lay at the northwestern extremity of the Emathian plain and the foot of the Bermian range.3

2 Hesych. s.v. ’Οδωνίς (’Οδωνίς Meineke): ἡ θάσος τὸ πάλαι, and see Chr. Danoff in Der kleine Pauly II (1967) 201 s.v. EDONES.
3 For the situation of the ‘gardens of Midas’ in the neighbourhood of Edessa see A. J. Toynbee, Some Problems of Greek History (London 1969) 145. Midas also had mines hereabouts: Kallisthenes, FGrHist 124 F 54.
Here, according to Herodotos (8.138.2–3), roses grow wild, of themselves (αὐτόματον); they have sixty petals each,⁴ and are sweeter smelling than any other roses.

In the passage of the Historia Plantarum (6.6.4) mentioned by Gow and Scholfield, Theophrastos describes how the people of Philippi, having gathered roses on Mount Pangaion, used to grow them in their gardens. So Nicander’s reference to both Odonia and Emathia is deliberate: Midas, travelling westwards from Asia, collects roses of Odonia on or near Mount Pangaion and later plants shoots from them in his Emathian gardens. Lines 11 to 13 of fr.74 therefore mean: “First those which Midas, when he left his kingdom in Asia, took from Odonia and raised in Emathia, ever crowned with full sixty petals in a ring.”⁵

It is a remarkable feature of the Midas tale in Nicander that the king migrates from Asia to Europe. In the original story Briges of Macedonia migrated into Asia, where, according to Herodotos, they changed their name to Phryges⁶ (some of them, however, the Βρόγοι, stayed behind in Macedonia).⁷ An eastwards movement of Phrygians into Asia is also reported by Xanthos of Lydia (FGrHist 765 F 14), who dated it after the Trojan War. Justin-Trogus (Epit. 7.1.7), whose source for the Macedonian Midas story is almost certainly Theopompos of Chios,⁸ related how Karanos the Argive expelled Midas from part of Macedonia—to Asia with Phrygians presumably; and Theopompos himself had told of Silenos and his capture by Midas or Midas’ shepherds in Macedonia.⁹

⁴ Tertull. De Corona 31 believed them to be 100-petalled: centenariis quoque rosis de horto Midae lectis (ch. xiv Migne).

⁵ For the roses of Pangaios or Pangaion see also Plin. NH 21.17. Varieties of ancient roses and their cultivation are discussed in RE 7 (1910) 774–78 and by W. L. Carter, Antiquity 14 (1940) 250ff. Another Thracian mountain whereon roses grew was Rhodope, as its name implies. The Macedonian word for ‘rose’ was ἀβαγγαν: see Hesych. s.v. ἀβαγγαν βόθα, Μακεδόνες. The reading of Η in the previous line, αμαραστον (α 44 Latte), shows that βόθα <αμαραστα> is a possible supplement here. With ἀβαγγα P. Kretschmer compares the name Ὑπαγγα (Glotta 3 [1912] 157). Pierian roses (named after the Macedonian mountain) appear in literature as early as Sappho (fr.55 Lobel/Page).

⁶ Hdt. 7.73, noted by Steph.Byz. s.v. Βρόγος. According to Arabic versions of the purported letter of Aristotle to Alexander the Great an Attalos, seemingly a Macedonian, drove the Phrygians over to Asia. See S. M. Stern, Aristotle and the World State (Oxford 1968) 6 and n.1.

⁷ Hdt. 6.45; 7.185.2.


⁹ FGrHist 115 F 74b and 75a,b,c, and see Arist. fr.44 Rose.
Thus the pre-Hellenistic story of Midas and the Phrygians of Macedonia related how the king and his people migrated from the neighbourhood of the gardens by Mount Bermion to Asia Minor, but Nicander has Midas migrating in the opposite direction. Nor is he the only Hellenistic poet to bring him westwards from Asia. A westward migration is found also in Euphorion, who declared that there were Phrygians, Lydians and people who had crossed with Midas from Asia in the neighbourhood of Edessa (or Aigai) before Karanos settled there;¹⁰ and Lykophron (Alex. 1397–1408) has Midas campaigning in Thrace at least as far west as Pallene to avenge the wrong done to his Trojan kin in the sack of Troy.¹¹ There is no obligation to look for historical fact in this construction, but it is clear that Nicander in the three lines of Georgika II, in mentioning the migration of Midas to Macedonia, shares an elaborate theory with Euphorion and Lykophron.

It is hard to say who invented the theory and what his motive was. The idea may well have appealed to Euphorion the Chalcidian, who became librarian at Antioch and could identify himself with the far-ranging ambitions of his Asiatic patron, Antiochus the Great, but the inventor of the theory remains unidentified. His motive was to provide more evidence for the continuous clash between East and West: the alleged migration of Midas to Emathia helped to fill the long gap between the sack of Troy and Persian wars, and so, it could be claimed, the Trojans did not have to wait until the time of Xerxes to be avenged by the Asiatics. Lykophron emphasises the alternating struggle of the continents when, between the invasions of Midas and Xerxes, he mentions the many blows of Ares (1409–11):

\[ \text{πολλῶν δ' ἕναλλάξ πημάτων ἀπάρξεται} \]
\[ \text{Κανδαῖος ἴ Μάμερτος ἴ τί χρῆ καλεῖν} \]
\[ \text{τὸν αἰμόφυρτον, ἐκτιώμενον μάχαις;} \]

¹¹ Commenting on the words ὁ Φρύς ὑ' ἀδελφῶν (v.l. ἀδελφὸν) the scholiasts on line 1397 note περὶ τοῦ Μίδου λέγει, ὅτε τινὶ πολλὰ μὲν ἡ κατάθραμα τῆς Θήρκης. ἦνε ἐπόρθησε, οὕτωσι σοῦ, φησί, τὸ αἷμα τῆς Κλεοπάτρας τιμωρούμενον. E. Scheer (2.385 of his edition) and G. W. Mooney (in loco) find the reference to Kleopatra enigmatic. The allusion may be to the bloody blinding of the Phineidai, the two sons of Kleopatra, who as daughter of Boreas suits the Thracian context (for the sons see Jebb on Soph. Ant. 966, Pearson on Soph. fr.704 and Jacoby on Arrian 156 v 77). But it is easier to suppose, with Mooney (The Alexandra of Lykophron [London 1921] 151), that ἀδελφῶν refers to the kinship of Phrygians and Trojans. For the kinship cf. Steph.Byz. s.v. Βρύγες . . . καὶ Βρυγία ἴ Τρωία.
To conclude, Nicander uses one part (the westward journey of Midas into Macedonia) of an elaborate geopolitical myth to explain why there were roses in the 'gardens of Midas'—the king transplanted them thither from Mount Pangaion. A version of the myth of perpetual struggle between Europeans and Asiatics is at least as old as Herodotos' first book, but its most exotic developments belong to the Hellenistic age.

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May, 1972