

Nikainetos and Oikous

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IN BOOK 15 at 673B Athenaios calls Nikainetos an ἐποποιός and an epichoric poet with a special interest in local history. There follow some delightful elegiacs in which the poet proposes a picnic at the Samian Heraion. Nikainetos' concern for antiquities was not confined to Samos, however; ten hexameters of his on the founding of Miletos are quoted by Parthenios (*Amat.Narr.* 11, *περὶ Βυβλίδος*).

Besides containing notable problems of interpretation, the lacunose lines are of value to students of Milesian myth-history. I first give the hexameters as Powell presents them in *Collectanea Alexandrina*. A few improvements in interpretation are suggested. Finally, the story of Byblis as related by Nikainetos is considered with respect to Milesian topography and archaeology. A novel should never be treated as though it were a Baedeker, but it is fair to suppose that Nikainetos in Samos had the Karian landscape clearly in mind.

First, then, Powell's text (significant variants and conjectures will be noted later):

Ἀὐτὰρ ὃ γε προτέρωσεν κίων Οἰκούσιον ἄστν
κτίσαστο, Τραγασίην δὲ Κελαινέος ἤγητο παῖδα
ἢ οἱ Καῦνον ἔτικτεν αἰεὶ φιλέοντα θέμιστας·
γείνατο δὲ ῥαδαλῆς ἐναλίγκιον ἀρκεύθοισι
5 Βυβλίδα, τῆς ἦτοι ἀέκων ἠράσαστο Καῦνος . . .
Βῆ δὲ φερενδιος φεύγων φρικώδεα Κύπριν
καὶ Κράγον ὑλιγενῆ καὶ Κάρια ἱρὰ λοετρά . . .
ἐνθ' ἦτοι πτολίεθρον ἐδείματο πρῶτος Ἴώνων,
αὐτὴ δὲ γνωτῆ, ὄλολυγόνος οἶτον ἔχουσα,
10 Βυβλὶς ἀποπρὸ Πυλῶν Καύνου ὠδύρατο νόστον.

προτέρωσεν means forward from Samos to the Maiandros mouth. The subject of the first sentence is the hero-κτίστης Miletos (not the Cretan Sarpedon, who is also said to have settled in southwestern Asia Minor). Miletos, after his dispute with Minos in Crete, had stayed in Samos for a while; hence there was a place in the island

called Miletos.¹ Oikous is not necessarily a synonym for Karian Miletos here: Stephanos of Byzantion states *s.v.* *Οἰκοῦς, Καρίας πόλις. τὸ ἔθνικὸν Οἰκούσιος καὶ Οἰκουσία καὶ “Οἰκούσιον ἄστν.”* The last two words are not certainly quoted from Nikainetos by Stephanos, for the supplement *εἵνεκεν Οἰκούς]ιον εἰς ἄ[ς]τν* is made by Pfeiffer in Kallimachos' lyrics (fr.229.13) on the coming of Apollo Delphinios on a dolphin to the Karian shore on his way to Didyma from Delos. In Theokritos (7.115–17) the Loves are entreated to come from the sweet stream of Hyetis and Byblis, “that steep seat of golden-haired Dione” (who seems here to be identical with Aphrodite). The scholia *in loco* (p.107.16–17 Wendel) state: “Hyetis and Byblis are springs of Miletos, where there is also a sanctuary of Aphrodite,” and again (p.107.12 Wendel), of Oikous, “*ἐν Μιλήτῳ τόπος, <ἐνθα> ἱερόν Ἀφροδίτης.*” Here Oikous is treated as a part of Miletos, as it had become in time, not a distinct settlement nearby. From the testimonies it is evident that the spring Byblis, Oikous and the precinct of Aphrodite are all connected; but that they were not always part of the city of Miletos proper is made clear by the scholiast on Dionysios Periegetes 825 (GGM 2.454):

“Miletos was one of the notables in Crete, from whom the city of Miletos there was named. When Minos campaigned against him, he sailed away from Crete and put in to Lydia in Asia.” Meineke corrected *εἰς Λυδίαν* to *εἰς Λυκίαν*, comparing Konon, *Diegeseis* 2 (FGrHist 26 F 1, 2); *εἰς Καρίαν* would be equally appropriate. The scholiast continues: “Miletos settled Oikous and gave its name to it, and established a *hieron* of Aphrodite. He married Doie daughter of Maiandros, from whom a river in Karia is named, and he begat Keladon, Kaunos and Byblis. Of the children, Kaunos was not able to endure his passion for his sister” (or “his sister’s passion for him”) “and migrated to Lykia. Keladon, having become ruler of Oikous, took his dead father over to the neighbouring island and buried him. He too moved thither in obedience to an oracle”—Didyma presumably—“and called the place Miletos. A bridge marks the boundary between Oikous” (or “Oikounta,” *τὰ νῦν Οἰκοῦντα*, schol.) “as it is now and Miletos.” Thus Miletos proper is the present Theatre-Hill, which, when an island, was linked to the mainland by a bridge or causeway over the low ground to the south. In the foundation myth the first Cretan settlement, accordingly, was at Oikous on the mainland, not on the island of Miletos proper nearby.

¹ Herodoros, FGrHist 31 F 45; Aristokritos, FGrHist 493 F 3.

Doie in this version of the *κτίσις* is daughter to Maiandros, the eponym of the river. In Nikainetos, however, the wife of Miletos is (according to Hecker's certain correction) Tragasia daughter of Kelaineus, who takes his name from Kelainai upstream. Tragasia looks like a patronymic or a metronymic and may not be the wife's true name: perhaps her mother was Tragase, the eponym of Tragasai in the Troad.² Kelaino, a Danaid, was also associated with the district of Kelainai (Strabo 579), but a mention of a father is more natural here than one of a mother; so we should correct to *Κελαινέος*, not to *Κελαινοῦς*, the corrupt words *Τραγασίη δὲ καλαινέες εἶχετο παιδί*.³

Byblis sister of Kaunos is likened to a juniper or cedar (*ἀρκεύθουσι*, line 4); Nikainetos evidently had an eye for trees: compare *καὶ λύγος, ἀρχαίων Καρῶν στέφος*, a crown from the withies near Hera's temple in Samos, and the *πρόμαλος* there.⁴ The departure of Kaunos from Oikous in line 6 comes too abruptly after the mention of his unwilling passion in 5; Meineke noted the lacuna revealed by Parthenios' paraphrase of Nikainetos—*ὡς οὐκ ἔληγε τὸ πάθος*. Nikainetos assumed that Byblis was innocent, but in most versions of the story, Parthenios notes, she declared her passion to Kaunos, who, horrified, departed—*οἱ δὲ πλείους . . . φασίν*.⁵

There are serious problems in line 6. The *βῆ δὲ Πυρινδῆας* of Robinson Ellis for *βῆ δεφερενδιος* is ingenious and attractive. The ethnic is attested by Stephanos *s.v.* *Πύρινδος*, but the position of the place is, so far as I know, not determined. Kayser's *ἄφαρ ἔνδιος* was accepted by R. Holland⁶ ("nach Suden"), but if Kaunos fled southwards from Miletos, he would, past Didyma, soon be in the sea; if possible, we ought to try to work out a rational route for him, even if Nikainetos was a romantic poet, and no matter how distressed our hero may have been. In determining his route to the neighbourhood of Kaunos, to found the city, we are further hampered by the cor-

² For the place see Steph. Byz. *s.v.* *Τραγααί* (Hellanikos, *FGrHist* 4 F 34) with the correction of the entry by A. Meineke, ed. *Stephan von Byzanz, Ethnika* (Graz 1958) Epimetrum II, 721–22. Strabo 605.

³ R. Ellis, "Corrections of the Text of Parthenius," *AJP* 7 (1886) 225.

⁴ Athen. 673b. A. S. F. Gow/D. L. Page, *The Greek Anthology: Hellenistic Epigrams* (Cambridge 1965) nos. 2706–2707.

⁵ The variants of the tale are listed by E. Rohde, *Der griechische Roman*³ (Leipzig 1914, repr. Hildesheim 1960) 101–02 n.1. See also Brooks Otis, *Ovid as an Epic Poet* (Cambridge 1966) 386–88. Benno Schmid O.S.B., *Studien zur griechischen Ktisissagen* (Freiburg/Schweiz 1947) 80, would include Apollonios Rhodios amongst the *πλείους*.

⁶ R. Holland, "Zu Nikainetos von Samos," *PhilWoch* 44 (1924) 302.

ruption in line 7. Here Powell accepts that Nikainetos mentioned Mount Kragos, *καὶ Κράγον ὑλιγενῆ*, but there are difficulties. True, Horace (*Ode* 1.21.8) refers to “*viridis Cragi*,” but Kragos is not alone in those parts in being wooded. *ὑλιγενής* has to mean, according to Powell, ‘wood bearing’, which is possible but not the natural meaning ‘born of wood’, which Kragos cannot be. Again, Kragos is beyond the district of Kaunos; if Nikainetos was careful of the local geography he would have had to make his hero double back after reaching the mountain. Kragos is on the borders of Karia and Lykia;⁷ so it is hard to see how Kaunos came to holy baths of Karia *after* he reached Kragos unless he did turn back. But the real objection to putting *Κράγον* in line 7 is the fact that the text has *καὶ κάπρος ὑλι γενές*.

Kapros is a perfectly acceptable geographical name in the context. The river Kapros is a tributary of the upper Maiandros,⁸ and joins it some way above the warm springs at Karoura. So *καὶ Κάπρον ὑλιγενῆ* may well be correct here—even if the hero coming up the Maiandros valley would in fact arrive at Karoura first, not at the confluence of the Kapros with the Lykos. *ὑλιγενῆ* would then neatly signify that the source of the river is in the wooded mountains. From the neighbourhood of Laodikeia Kaunos could then have made his way over the watershed, and then down the valley of the Karian Indos to the neighbourhood in which he founded his city. Some versions of his wanderings took him as far afield as Lykia, but there is no evidence that in the fragment of Nikainetos he wandered so far.

We can now turn back to line 6. If *βῆ δεφερενδιος* of the text does not conceal *πέρην* (*πέρην Ἰνδου*, the Karian river, would suit *Κράγον* in the next line), then we need an ethnic, such as the *Πυριυδῆας* of Robinson Ellis. Other conjectures have been offered. If *Κάπρον* and the identification of the holy baths with Karoura are accepted, we may say that the place or people concealed in *φερενδιος* ought to lie between Oikous and Karoura, somewhere in the Maiandros valley. Try, then, *βῆ δὲ Πριηνῆας*. They would of course not be the Ionians of Hellenic Priene, but their Anatolian forerunners, some of whom, the Pedieis, survived in the Maiandros plain till Hellenistic times.⁹ The hero

⁷ For the point that Telmessos (and so Kragos) was not part of the real and original Lykia, see P. M. Fraser and G. E. Bean, *The Rhodian Peraea and Islands* (Oxford 1954) 56 n.4.

⁸ Strabo 578. Cf. Holland, *loc.cit.* (*supra* n.6).

C. B. Welles, *Royal Correspondence of the Hellenistic Period* (New Haven 1934) 8B 2–3 and

Kaunos would be fleeing along the shore of the estuary to the place where the Maiandros debouched in remote antiquity, in the land of the Prieneis, north of Oikous.

Powell accepts in line 6 *φρικώδεα Κύπριν* from Jacobs, but the text of Parthenios has *ὀφιώδεα Κύπρον*. However distraught Kaunos may have been, we should not suppose that he wandered all the way to Cyprus nor did he deliberately avoid or abandon (*φεύγων*) the island. Kaunos was the victim of passion inspired by Aphrodite, who had a precinct at Oikous. *ὀφιώδεα* should be retained with *Κύπριν* therefore: the sanctuary was close to low-lying ground where water-snakes flourish.¹⁰ In 28.3–4 Theokritos describes its situation at the “splendid town of Neileus,” *ὄππα Κύπριδος Ἴρον καλάμω χλῶρον ὑπ’ ἀπάλω*, “green amidst the soft rushes,” or, possibly, “roofed with soft rushes.”

Parthenios supposed that in line 8 the subject of *ἐδείματο* is Kaunos, and modern scholars have followed him. It is odd, however, as Jacoby noted,¹¹ to call the city of Kaunos or its founder Ionian. Konon (*FGrHist* 26 F 1, 2) places the foundation of Kaunos in its correct context, well before the Ionian migration; and Herodotos (1.172) thought that the people of Kaunos were autochthonous, but, he says, the Kaunians believed themselves to be from Crete—that is to say, they were not Ionians. Parthenios himself states, a little later in 11, that the city was founded in land occupied by Leleges. I suspect that Parthenios did not have a complete text of Nikainetos’ poem before him: there is almost certainly another lacuna between lines 7 and 8. The leading city of the Ionians was Miletos, whose second *κτίστης* at the time of the Ionian migration was Neileus. The last three lines mean that Byblis laments at her spring, close to where the first of the Ionians, Neileus, built his citadel. She laments near Oikous, outside the gates of Ionian Miletos, where Neileus settled long after the time of Kaunos. (The capital *pi* of *πυλῶν* in Powell’s text of line 10 seems to be a misprint.) As in Theokritos, so here in Nikainetos, Byblis is a spring of Miletos therefore, not of Kaunos.

The onomatopoeic *ὀλολύγων* can mean a kind of bird or a kind of frog.¹² In the context of the spring a frog is more apt. Byblis in her grief for her absent brother (*νόστον* here means ‘going away’, not

¹⁰ No need therefore to put *ὀφιώδεα Κύρβην* (in Rhodes) with F. Cassola, *La Parola de Passato* 12 (1957) 208.

¹¹ *FGrHist* 493 note 13.

¹² See Gow on Theoc. *Id.* 7.139.

'return') endures the fate of a frog; she either becomes a nymph who in the manner of a frog dwells by the spring and mournfully croaks, or she is transformed into a frog. There is no sign that in the version of Nikainetos she killed herself. In Stephanos of Byzantion (*s.v.* *Βύβλος*) she becomes the eponym of Byblos (to which, we may suppose, in one version of the tale she wandered in search of her brother: Ovid in *Metamorphoses* 9 also sends her far away—to Lykia); but Nikainetos keeps her close to Miletos.

From Parthenios 1 we learn that Nikainetos told the story of Aigialos son of Kaunos, and of Lyrkos the Argive—the eponym of Mount Lyrkeion in the Argolid—who married the daughter of Aigialos, Heilebie. The *marginale* declares that the tale was told by Nikainetos in the *Lyrkos* and by Apollonios Rhodios in the *Kaunos* (that means, in the *Kaunou Ktisis*). The comment led Powell to give the title *Λύρκος* to the ten lacunose hexameters about Byblis, but in fact they may come from a different poem by Nikainetos. The title *Lyrkos* of fr.1 (Powell) has no authority in so far as it is given to the tale of Kaunos and Byblis at Oikous.

We do not know that Nikainetos mentioned Keladon, brother to Byblis and Kaunos. The poet's concern is with the love of Kaunos for his sister, but the topography implicit in the Keladon legend deserves attention. The version in the scholia to Dionysios Periegetes includes (1) an island with the tomb of Miletos and the new settlement of Keladon upon it; (2) Oikous on the mainland with the springs Hyetis and Byblis nearby; (3) the precinct or shrine (not necessarily a temple) of Aphrodite-amongst-the-reeds near Oikous; and—almost certainly—(4) the indigenous oracle at Didyma.

Undoubtedly the Theatre-Hill of Miletos in the second millennium B.C. was still an island.¹³ No Minoan deposit has been reported on the hill, but in a deep excavation south of the temple of Athena Middle Minoan III and Late Minoan IA sherds and houses were found below a late Mycenaean fortification wall.¹⁴ The tradition of Cretan settlement at Miletos in the Minoan age therefore has some archaeological support. The Cretan pottery so far excavated near the temple of Athena could well have come from a settlement on the mainland, not on the nearby island, in the sixteenth century B.C. In the context of Milesian myth-history the Cretan sherds could therefore belong to

¹³ G. Kleiner, *Die Ruinen von Milet* (Berlin 1968) 7.

¹⁴ Kleiner, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.13) 9 and 24.

Oikous, not to the island settlement at Miletos. Hereabouts, somewhere on the mainland, we may look for the spring of Byblis and the “steep seat”¹⁵ of the precinct of Aphrodite; here too would have dwelt amidst the reeds the water snakes and frogs to which Nikainetos so gracefully alluded.¹⁶

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¹⁵ ἔδος αἰπύ, Theoc. *Id.* 7.116.

¹⁶ Strabo, following Ephoros, states of Sarpedon's town at Miletos τὸ πρῶτον κτίσμα εἶναι Κρητικόν, ὑπὲρ τῆς θαλάττης τετειχισμένον, ὅπου νῦν ἡ πάλαι Μιλητός ἐστι (634). The words “above the sea” do not suit the Cretan remains near the temple of Athena; they are more appropriate to the fortified ‘Old Town’ of the 7th and 6th centuries B.C. on Kalabak-tepe (‘Hat Hill’) some distance inland. Ephoros may therefore have confused the Archaic settlement on Kalabak-tepe with the Cretan town: that is the view of Kleiner, *op.cit.* (*supra* n.13) 24. Possibly, however, Minoan remains would be found in the deepest levels on Kalabak-tepe in addition to those now known from near the temple of Athena. There is no sign that Ephoros knew the legend of Miletos' settlement at Oikous. Nor is there reason to identify Kalabak-tepe and its temple with Oikous. The true position of Oikous ought, I suggest, to be closer to the ancient shore, in low-lying marshy land. See also, on the problem of Oikous' position, Kleiner, *op.cit.* 43. Aphrodite's “steep seat” would, however, be on higher ground beside the marsh, amongst the reeds. The form of the name Oikous may be a Greek rendering of a Minoan name having nothing to do originally with οἶκος. Mr J. N. Coldstream kindly discussed problems of Milesian topography with me. I am grateful to Professor W. M. Calder for help with names of trees.