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Philologus	156	2012	2	388–392
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OBSERVATIONS ON THE HESIODIC FRAGMENT 65 M–W*

Within Hesiod’s *Eoiaie*, as part of the saga of the nymph Philonis, Merkelbach-West give as fragment 65 an extremely brief quotation taken from the epitome of Stephanus of Byzantium’s *Ethnica* (256–258 Meineke):

Δώτιον· πόλις Θεσσαλίας, ὅπου μετώκησαν οἱ Κνίδιοι, ὧν ἡ χώρα Κνιδία. [...] ἐκλήθη δὲ Δώτιον ἀπὸ Δώτου τοῦ Πελαγοῦ παιδός, ὡς Ἡρωδιανὸς ἐν ἡ’ „Δῶτος ὁ Πελαγοῦ, ἀφ’ οὗ τὸ Δώτιον πεδίον“. ἐκ περιπτοῦ τοίνυν Ὕρως ἐν τοῖς ἐθνικοῖς τῆδε γράφει „καὶ τὰ περὶ Θάμυριν ἐν Δωρίῳ παριστοροῦντος τοῦ ποιητοῦ, πάλιν Ἡσίοδος

Δωτίωι ἐν πεδίωι (= fr. 65 M–W)

φάσκει αὐτὸν τετυφλῶσθαι“. συντάσσει γὰρ τοῦτο τοῖς διχογραφουμένοις πρωτοτύποις τῶν ἐθνικῶν. ἐπάγει γοῦν „οὐ γὰρ ὡς ἡ Καλχηδῶν καὶ Καρχηδῶν καὶ τὰ τοιαῦτα λέγεται. ἡ μὲν γὰρ διὰ τοῦ λ περὶ τὸν Πόντον, ἡ δὲ διὰ τοῦ ρ πρὸ τῆς Λιβύης“. ἡμεῖς δὲ προὔφημεν δείξαντες διὰ πολλῶν μαρτυριῶν ἕτερον [τὸ] διὰ τοῦ ρ Δώριον καὶ ἕτερον τὸ διὰ τοῦ τ Δώτιον.

This short fragment, which is drawn, as Stephanus himself explains, from the *Ethnica* of the grammarian Oros¹, has been reasonably included in the *Eoia* of the nymph Philonis. Indeed, the historian Pherecydes of Athens (FGrHist 3 F 120) explains that Philonis was so desirable that she mated with two gods, Hermes and Apollo; to the former, she bore Autolycus, father of Sisyphus, whilst Apollo was

* This paper was written as part of the “Studies in Ancient Greek Literature and its Reception” research group (2009SGR 799), funded by the Generalitat de Catalunya, and of the research project “The contexts of Attic theater” (FFI2009-13747), funded by the Spanish Government.

¹ The only thing we know about this Oros, meanwhile, is that he taught grammar in Constantinople around the 5th century, according to the *Suda*, s. v. Ὕρως. The work quoted by Stephanus in this passage is, in all likelihood, the same one cited by the *Suda* itself, with the full title Ὅπως τὰ ἐθνικὰ λεκτέον, in two books.

the father of the mythical poet Philammon, who was in turn the father of another mythical poet, Thamyris. And the following fragments, numbers 66 and 67, of the Philonis' *Eoia* seem to bear out this genealogical line. This thus makes it plausible that there might have been in the Hesiodic text some reference, however minor, to the legendary story about Thamyris' contest with the Muses, which also appears in Homer (*Iliad* B 594–600).

The problem that Oros, and equally Stephanus of Byzantium, draw to our attention is that Homer's poem does not set the story about Thamyris in Δώτιον, but rather in Δώριον, a fact echoed by all of the ancient authors thereafter, without exception². Oros resolved this conflict by arguing that Dorion and Dotion are but different spellings of the same word³, whereas Stephanus insists that he has already given (προῦφθήμεν δείξαντες) a host of evidence that Δώτιον and Δώριον are indeed two different places – and he did, in a portion of the long passage above which has not been reproduced. We can find a number of arguments in his favour in the geographers. Strabo seems to differentiate between Dorion⁴ and Dotion⁵: the former is a mountain according to some and a plain according to others, situated in Messenia, whilst the latter seems to refer to a plain in the heart of Thessaly, in the former land of the Cnidians⁶. But Strabo does not think twice about setting Thamyris' encounter with the Muses in Dorion, preferring the Messenian option over other alternatives (VIII 3, 25); we must assume that this is also the case for Pausanias (IV 33, 3, 7), since he speaks of the incident whilst on his travels through the Messenia region⁷. Stephanus of Byzantium, meanwhile, is unique in his choice of Dotion, and the Thessalian setting, for the story, all the while making it clear, furthermore, that Dorion and Dotion are two different places.

We can see, therefore, that it is only in the Hesiodic tradition, and solely from the quotation taken from Stephanus, that Dotion, rather than Dorion, is taken as the setting for Thamyris' contest with the Muses, and this is precisely the rationale behind, lest we forget, the inclusion of this fragment in Philonis' *Eoia*. In the follow-

² This is the case, for example, of the scholiasts of the passage in Homer: *Scholia Vetera in Iliadem* B 595–600 (ed. Erbse); Eustathius, *Commentarii in Iliadem* B 594–600. See also Eustathius, *Thebais* IV 180 ss.; Pausanias IV 33, 3, 7; Strabo VIII 3, 25. For a more detailed analysis of the figure of the mythical poet Thamyris and his relationship with the plain in Dorion, see S. Grau, *Tàmiris el traci, Ítaca. Quaderns catalans de cultura clàssica* 18, 2002, 129–190.

³ “The resemblance between Δώτιον and Δώριον is probably irrelevant, especially since it is visual rather than aural / oral” (G. S. Kirk, *The Iliad: A Commentary*, vol. I, Cambridge 1985, 216).

⁴ IV 71; IV 75; and especially VIII 3, 25.

⁵ I 227; IV 449; VI 251; IX 5, 22; XIV 1, 40.

⁶ See also Callimachus, *Hymn*. VI 24; Diodorus V 61.

⁷ The Dorion from Homer's catalogue tends to be situated, in line with Strabo and Pausanias, in Messenia, specifically in the modern-day region of Malthi: cf. R. H. Simpson & J. F. Lazenby, *The Catalogue of the Ships in Homer's Iliad*, Oxford 1970, 85.

ing I will try to show that all in all this may be the product of a mix-up on Oros' part. In the fragment 59 M–W⁸, which belongs to the *Eoia* of another Aeolian, the nymph Coronis, we find the exact same formula Δωτίωι ἐν πεδίωι, but this time referring to the place where the nymph gave birth to Aesculapius, after mating with Apollo:

ἦ' οἴη Διδύμουσ ιεροῦσ ναίουσα κολωνοῦσ
 Δωτίωι ἐν πεδίωι πολυβότρουσ ἄντ' Ἀμύροιο
 νίψατο Βοιβιάδοσ λίμνησ πόδα παρθένουσ ἀδμήσ.

Right next to this formula, at the end of the verse, appears the genitive of the river Amyros. This river Amyros is documented in Apollonius of Rhodes⁹, who refers to it as the place where Coronis bore Aesculapius to Apollo, although the hero is not referred to by name in the poem:

χωόμενουσ περὶ παιδὶ τὸν ἐν λιπαρῆ Λακερεΐη
 δῖα Κορωνὶσ ἔτικτεν ἐπὶ προχοῆσ Ἀμύροιο.

A scholion on the passage tells us more about the location of this river:

Ἀμυροσ ποταμὸσ Θεσσαλίας ἐκρέων μετὰ τὴν Μελίβοιαν [κείμενουσ], προσαγορευόμενουσ ἀπὸ Ἀμύρου τοῦ υἱοῦ Ποσειδῶνουσ. ἔστι δὲ καὶ πόλισ.

Indeed, it appears that Amyros was better known as a city than as a river: Stephanus of Byzantium¹⁰ refers to it in these terms, offering us, furthermore, the following reference from Hesiod:

Ἀμυροσ· πόλισ Θεσσαλίας, ἀπὸ ἐνὸσ τῶν Ἀργοναυτῶν [πολυβότρουσ αὐταμύροιο.] ἡ πόλισ θηλυκόν. ἄδηλον δὲ τὸ Ἡσιόδειον (fr. 59 M–W) „Δωτίω ἐν πεδίω πολυβότρουσ ἄντ' Ἀμύροιο“.

This is in all likelihood evidence of yet another mix-up: the name of the city comes from that of the river that runs by it, since nowhere does Amyros appear as the name of one of the Argonauts, except as the putative father of Iolkos, who would, accordingly, have lent his name to a plain¹¹ known as Ἀμυρικόν πεδίον. But once again, this seems to be a case of mistaken identity, something little-known – the river Amyros which, as we have seen, is mentioned in Apollonius – being mixed up with a character

⁸ Indeed, the origin of this fragment can be found in Strabo IX 5, 22 and XIV 1, 40, where the quotation about Thessalian Dotion is given.

⁹ *Argonautica* I 596 and especially IV 617, the fragment reproduced here.

¹⁰ Epitome of the *Ethnica*, 88.

¹¹ Eustathius, *Commentarii ad Homeri Iliadem* A 511; Stephanus of Byzantium, *Ethnica* 343.

who would have been more familiar, in this case the father of one of the Argonauts. That said, in this particular instance, it is entirely possible that we are labouring under the same misapprehension as the commentators, since these are the only references we have to Amyros as the father of Iolkos: the Amyric Plain could also derive its name from the river Amyros, a notion that would seem, as in the case above, to be far more plausible.

And so we have a river, the Thessalian Amyros, where the nymph Coronis is said to have given birth to Aesculapius¹², from which both a city and a neighbouring plain seem to derive their name. Indeed, although the adjective πολυβότρυς used to refer to Amyros in Hesiod, could apply to a city, it really far better befits a river, and there appears to be sufficient evidence to suggest that the river Amyros flowed through the plain of Dotion in Thessaly. Moreover, the only place, outside of Hesiod, where the exact formula Δωτίω ἐν πεδίω appears, is precisely in a reference to the nymph Coronis, namely in the *Homeric Hymn XVI*, dedicated to Aesculapius:

Ἰητήρα νόσων Ἀσκληπιὸν ἄρχομ' αἰεῖδεν
 υἱὸν Ἀπόλλωνος τὸν ἐγένεατο δῖα Κορωνίς
 Δωτίω ἐν πεδίω κούρη Φλεγύου βασιλῆος,
 χάριμα μὲν' ἀνθρώποισι, κακῶν θελκτῆρ' ὀδυνάων.
 Καὶ σὺ μὲν οὕτω χαῖρε ἄναξ· λίτομαι δέ σ' αἰοιδῆ.

Thus, this river, which flowed through the Thessalian plain of Dotion, must have been the source of a misreading by the historian Oros, perhaps due to a text of Hesiod's fragment 59 M–W which read Δωτίω ἐν πεδίω πολυβότρυος ἄντ' Θαμύροιο. It is highly possible that someone could have made this mistake, especially when they aren't too sure about what this Amyros is and instead know a great deal more about Homer's Thamyris – or Thamyras, in this case¹³. This misreading by Oros would in turn have caused the mix-up (and undoubtedly a sense of bemusement) on the part of Stephanus of Byzantium.

For this reason, I believe that Merkelbach-West's edition of Hesiod's fragments should be amended as follows: fragment 65 is, in actual fact, a small part of fragment 59, and should therefore no longer stand on its own as a separate fragment – the quotation from Stephanus of Byzantium therefore being incorporated into fragment 59 as a further citation from the same source verses, which belong to the *Eoia* of

¹² The localization of Coronis' giving birth to Aesculapius on the banks of the river Amyros is not an innovation by Apollonius: a scholion to Pindar's *Pythian* III 34 shows that it goes back at least to Pherekydes: ἐς Λακέρειαν· ὅτι ἐν Λακέρεια ἔκει Κορωνίς, Φερεκύδης ἐν α' (FGrHist 3 F3a = F3 Fowler) ἰστορεῖ, πρὸς ταῖς πηγαῖς τοῦ Ἀμύρου.

¹³ This is how it appears, for instance, in the titles of the lost works of Sophocles and the comic poet Antiphanes about Thamyris, Θαμύρου or Θαμύροιο being its genitive.

Coronis, not Philonis. Furthermore, if we empty this fragment of its reference to Thamyris, which, as we have seen, was only linked to it through a mixing up of alike-sounding names, then this leaves us with no more variants in which Dotion, rather than Homer's Dorion, is put forward as the setting for the contest with the Muses. And thus at the same time we do away with a bothersome doublet which, as I hope to have demonstrated, is almost entirely without critical foundation.

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Keywords: Hesiod, Eoiae, Philonis, Dorion, Thamyris