

ARNE SITHONIS

In *Metamorphoses* 7. 461–8 Ovid lists islands visited by Minos and brought into his realm during his journey from Crete to Aigina on the way to avenge the death of Androgeos in Attica. The lines are given in the edition of W. S. Anderson¹ thus:

hinc Anaphen sibi iungit et Astypaleia regna,
promissis Anaphen, regna Astypaleia bello;
hinc humilem Myconon cretosaque rura Cimoli
florentemque thymo Cythnon planamque Seriphon
465 marmoreamque Paron, quamque inopia prodidit Arne
†Sithon†: accepto, quod avara poposcerat, auro
mutata est in avem, quae nunc quoque diligit aurum,
nigra pedes, nigris velata monedula pennis.

Anderson's apparatus criticus to line 466 has: sithon FLMP (*cum et*) W¹ *ex quo nomen insulae hariolari edd. tentant* sithonis ENUe *Plan.* *Sithon* or *Sithonis* stood in a manuscript of the *Metamorphoses* used by the author of the paraphrase in Pseudo-Lactantius Placidus 7. 25,² and since *Sithonis* is metrically acceptable, we may hesitate to place it between obeloi. It means 'Thracian', as do *Sithoniae* (*nurus*) in *Metamorphoses* 6. 588, *Sithonios* (*agros*) in *Met.* 13. 571, and *Sithon* in *Fasti* 3. 719. We cannot emend *Sithon* to *Cythnon et*, since *Cythnon* has already been supplied in line 464 (*Naugerius* ciphnon P cyprum A); *Siphnon et* (N. Heinsius) is palaeographically neater, but no legend independently connects an Arne with the myth-history of Siphnos – or indeed with any other of the Cyclades. Anderson set obeloi in line 466 because he thought that a Thracian had no place in the Cyclades.³ Franz Bömer, noting the absence of the largest of the Cyclades from Ovid's catalogue of islands, thought that Naxos might be referred to in lines 465–8; after stating that the name Arne and the accompanying legend are unknown, he remarked also that *Sithonis* 'gilt allgemein als gesichert'.⁴ Thus if *Sithonis* is kept, the island betrayed by the impious Arne is mentioned but not named. Ovid would be expecting the listener or reader to identify the island from the tale of Arne's greed and metamorphosis into a daw having black feet and black feathers.⁵

It can be shown not only (1) that, contrary to Anderson's belief, *Sithonis* in line 466 is correct, because there were according to Greek mythography Thracians in the Cyclades; but also (2) that Bömer's tentative proposal to associate the Arne legend with Naxos should be accepted. Firstly there is the evidence of Diodoros:⁶ he stated that Naxos was occupied by settlers from Thrace; they and their descendants remained in the island for two hundred years (perhaps six generations) until after a drought they were replaced by Karian immigrants to the island;⁷ according to Diodoros the Karians

¹ P. Ovidii Nasonis *Metamorphoses* (Leipzig, 1977), p. 161.

² *Auctores Mythographi Latini*, ed. A. van Staveren (Lugd. Bat. and Amstel. 1742), p. 841; H. Magnus, ed. of *Met.* (Berlin, 1914) p. 671, 18. Compare Anderson, loc. cit. note 1 *supra*. Concerning the text of the *Narrationes* see B. Otis, 'The *Argumenta* of the so-called Lactantius', *H.S.C.P.* 47 (1936), 131–63.

³ *Ovid's Metamorphoses Books 6–10* (Norman, Oklahoma, 1972), p. 294.

⁴ P. Ovidius Naso. *Metamorphosen Buch VI–VII* (Heidelberg, 1976), pp. 315 and 317.

⁵ *Corvus monedula*, L. Compare Aristotle, *H.A.* 9. 24 (617b16–17). See also D'Arcy W. Thompson, *A Glossary of Greek Birds* (Oxford, 1895), p. 89 s.v. *κολοιός*.

⁶ 5. 50. 3.

⁷ 5. 51. 3.

had arrived there two generations before the time of Theseus (who came to the island on his way homewards from Crete with Ariadne in the time of Minos). Secondly, Parthenius took from Book II of the lost *Naxiaka* of the local Naxian historian Andriskos a story about two Thracians Skellis and Agassamenos.⁸ Having set out from Naxos they plundered the Peloponnese and the surrounding islands before raiding Thessaly, where they seized Iphimede wife of Aloeus and her daughter Pankrato.⁹ The two Thracians fell in love with Pankrato and killed each other because of her.

Thus local Naxian myth told of Thracians in the island in very early times. Arne the Sithonian, therefore, is a Thracian of Naxos. She was a survivor of the Thracian population amongst the Karians, or Ovid may be following a version of the myth in which Thracians – not Karians – were still ruling Naxos in the time of Minos.¹⁰ The Cretan king had defeated Astypalaia before he turned his fleet against Naxos, where Arne the Thracian, having demanded gold, betrayed the island to him. The form of the adjective *Sithonis* comes to Ovid, directly or indirectly, from a Greek source.

Since Arne is a Thessalian and Boiotian toponym, the avaricious Naxian lady could be a descendant of women taken in Thessaly by the raiders Skellis and Agassamenos. But it is noteworthy that Arne is also a Thracian place-name.¹¹

The catalogue of islands continues with a number of places which did not assist the fleet of Minos – *at non . . . Gnosiakas iuvere rates*. Among them is one far from the ships' course towards Aigina: Peparethos in the north-western Aegean. The emendation *Prepesinthos* is metrically correct and geographically plausible,¹² but it should be rejected. Ovid or his sources included Peparethos because it was said to have been settled from Crete.¹³ Minos visited, according to Ovid, Anaphe, Mykonos, Kimolos, Kythnos, Seriphos, and Paros; he did not visit Oliaros, Didyme (perhaps the Twins near Syros), Tenos, Andros, Gyaros and Peparethos (Skopelos). He defeated Astypalaia, and Naxos was betrayed to him. Neither here in Ovid, nor in the similar list of islands in the account of Minos' return journey to Crete in the *Ciris*,¹⁴ should strict geographical consistency be expected.

Ovid's mythographic or poetical source for the rare tale of Arne cannot be identified. Parthenius, however, is a possibility, because he is known to have mentioned Thracians of Naxos,¹⁵ and in his *Metamorphoses* he described a later episode in the Cretan expedition – Skylla's betrayal of the city of Nisos and her subsequent transformation into a bird.¹⁶

In conclusion we see that *Sithonis* in Ovid, *Metamorphoses* 7. 466 is to be kept, since Arne was a Thracian of Naxos. Moreover, the seeming absence of Naxos from stories

⁸ *FGrHist* 500 F2 (Parthen. *Narr. Am.* 19). In Diodoros 5. 50. 6–7 an Agassamenos is mentioned; accordingly Knaack corrected *κασσαμενος* to *Ἀγασσαμενός* in the text of Parthenius. See app. crit. to Andriskos F2.

⁹ In Diodoros 5. 50. 6–7 she is called *Παγκράτις*.

¹⁰ Ovid implies that Arne betrayed the island to Minos; there is no reason to think that her treachery was exercised during an earlier siege, for instance when the Thracians were besieged in Naxos by Otos and Ephialtes (Diodoros 5. 51. 1).

¹¹ Steph. Byz. s.v. *Ἀρνη* (p. 124, 1–2 Meineke).

¹² *I.G.* 12. 5, p. xxii, no. 1406, note 4.

¹³ Diodoros 5. 79. 2.

¹⁴ 459–77 (pp. 88–9 ed. Lyne).

¹⁵ See note 8 *supra*.

¹⁶ Schol. Dion. *Per.* 420 (*G.G.M.* 2. 295). See also A. Meineke, *Analecta Alexandrina* (Berlin, 1843, reprint Hildesheim, 1964), pp. 269–72 and R. O. A. M. Lyne, *Ciris. A Poem attributed to Vergil* (Cambridge, 1978), pp. 13–14.

about the naval dominion of Crete in the Aegean – an absence remarked upon by Felix Jacoby¹⁷ – is now less of a problem: Minos had once visited Paros,¹⁸ and the story of Arne's treachery shows that the Cretan king had also come to, and captured, the neighbouring island of Naxos.¹⁹

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¹⁷ *FGrHist* III B Komm. Text, p. 420, 13–16.

¹⁸ Callimachus F 7 Pfeiffer, with Schol. Flor.

¹⁹ For other examples of the theme traitress-in-siege see Walter Burkert, *Structure and History in Greek Mythology and Ritual* (Berkeley and Los Angeles, 1979), pp. 76 and 175–6 notes 31–2.