

A SUPPOSED TESTIMONY TO BION OF BORYSTHENES

In his *Index Bioneus*, containing all instances in which Bion of Borysthenes is mentioned or quoted in ancient literature, O. Hense¹ also included a reference to Philodemus, *Rhetorica* 2.55 Sudhaus, where τὸν Βορυσθενείτην is mentioned, but gave no further treatment of this item. In my edition² of the testimonies to and fragments of Bion I did not include this passage, not because the name Bion does not occur, but because I did not think that it really was a reference to Bion. As M. Gigante and G. Indelli³ have objected to this procedure and seem to be convinced that the passage really is a definite reference to Bion of Borysthenes, I think it deserves a somewhat closer interpretation. I start by giving the crucial text:

Τ[ὶ] γὰρ μᾶλλον αἰσχρὸν
ἦν] σιωπᾶν, Ἰσοκράτην
δ' ἔαν λέγειν ἢ κατὰ πό-
λιν ζ[ῆ]ν, Μάνην δὲ [σ]κα-
π[αν]εύειν ἔαν, κ[ἂν τ]ῇ
γῇ] διατρ[ί]βειν, ἐπ[ικ]υ-
μα[τ]ί[ζ]εσθαι δὲ τὸν [Φο]ίνι-
κα κ[αί] τὸν Βορυσθε[ν]είτην,
καὶ ἀσφ[α]λέστα[τα] [μ]έν ὁ[λο]ν
τὸν βίον] ἰδιω[τεύειν,
Θεμι[στο]κ[λέα] δ[ὲ] στ[ρα]-
τεύειν] ἔαν.

In this part of his *Rhetorica*⁴ Philodemus attacks the philosophical schools which pursue the study of rhetoric, and especially Aristotle. Philodemus takes as his starting point a well known parody of a line from Euripides, *Philoctetes* (fr. 796 Nauck), by which Aristotle is said to have justified his teaching of rhetoric: αἰσχρὸν σιωπᾶν, Ἰσοκράτην δ' ἔαν λέγειν, which was quoted already in *Rhetorica* 2.50 Sudhaus.⁵ Philodemus here sets out to prove that the attitude of Aristotle is wrong by ridiculing his view that it is shameful to abstain from a certain activity and leave it to someone else. To this end Philodemus adduces three cases where a kind of inactivity is combined with a kind of contrasting activity, which is left to someone else more fitted, in order to prove that the inactivity can in no way be considered shameful. The four activities mentioned seem to be exemplified by famous or typical characters. This is especially clear with the two cases where Isocrates and Themistocles are taken as representatives of the rhetor's and the general's activity. These two cases therefore need no further comment, but something must be said about the two cases of activity falling in the middle, which one would also expect to be represented by well-known or typical names.

¹ O. Hense, *Teletis reliquiae*² (Tübingen, 1909), p. 101.

² J. F. Kindstrand, *Bion of Borysthenes. A Collection of the Fragments with Introduction and Commentary* (Acta Universitatis Upsaliensis, Studia Graeca Upsaliensia 11, Uppsala, 1976).

³ M. Gigante, 'Una nuova edizione di Bione', *RAAN* NS 53 (1978), 7; M. Gigante & G. Indelli, 'Bione e L'epicureismo', *CronErc* 8 (1978), 126 and n. 31.

⁴ For this work see H. M. Hubbell, *The Rhetorica of Philodemus* (Transactions of the Connecticut Academy of Arts and Sciences 23, New Haven, Connecticut, 1920) and R. Philippon, 'Philodemos' (no. 5), *RE* 19:2 (1938), 2453-5.

⁵ The same parody is also quoted as Aristotle's by Hermippus (Diog. Laert. 5.3 = fr. 45 Wehrli Suppl. 1, substituting Xenocrates for Isocrates), Syrianus, *Schol. ad Hermog. Stas.* p. 298 Walz 4, Cicero, *De or.* 3.141, Quintilian, *I.O.* 3.1.14; cf. P. Moraux, 'La composition de la "Vie d'Aristote" chez Diogène Laërce', *REG* 68 (1955), 132; I. Düring, *Aristotle in the Ancient Biographical Tradition* (Acta Universitatis Gothoburgensis 63:2, Göteborg, 1957), pp. 58, 303; A.-H. Chroust, 'A Brief Analysis of the "Vita Aristotelis" of Diogenes Laertius (DL, V, 1-16)', *AC* 34 (1965), 108; F. Wehrli's note p. 74 with references to further literature.

In the second case Philodemus contrasts *κατὰ πόλιν ζῆν* and *Μάνην δὲ σκαπανεύειν ἔαν*. Gigante and Indelli⁶ here find a reference to Manes, the slave of the Cynic Diogenes, which does not seem very likely. This Manes reached a certain fame in the Cynic tradition, but only because he ran away from his master, which gave the latter an opportunity to show his independence (Teles p. 41.13–15 Hense, Aelian, *V.H.* 13.28, Diog. Laert. 6.55, Seneca, *De tranq. an.* 8.7; cf. also Stobaeus, *Flor.* 4.19.47). But there is no tradition connecting this Manes with farm labour, which is the central point here, nor is there any reason to think precisely of him in this context. Manes is an extremely common name for a slave,⁷ even to such an extent as to become a general term for a male slave.⁸ For its use here we may also refer to a proverb: *εἰς ἀγρόν Μάνης* (Hesychius, s.v. E, 1082 and *App. prov.* 2.18), meaning that a person gets the place he deserves. All this explains the mention of Manes in this context. Farm labour is an activity typical of slaves, and therefore in the significant name Manes we have a reference, not to a specific individual, but to a typical character.

In the third case Philodemus contrasts *ἐν τῇ γῇ διατρίβειν* and *ἐπικυματίζεσθαι τὸν Φοίνικα καὶ τὸν Βορυσθενείτην*. Gigante and Indelli⁹ are of the opinion that here we can only have a reference to the two Hellenistic Cynics, Phoenix of Colophon and Bion of Borysthenes, a view which I am unable to share. Firstly it would be a strange lack of consistency in this case to refer to Phoenix by his proper name and to Bion by a geographic appellative. Here a kind of inactivity must be combined with a kind of activity with the same aim as in the other three cases, and we would therefore expect to find some well-known or typical representatives of seafaring. This does not apply to the two philosophers mentioned, in spite of the vivid paraphrase of Gigante and Indelli: 'due sapienti Fenice e Bione detto Boristenita che si agitano come flutti di un mare tempestoso'.¹⁰ For Phoenix we only have one biographical reference in Pausanias 1.9.7 and a number of fragments, all lacking in nautical implications.¹¹ It therefore seems obvious that here we have a reference, not to an individual with the name of Phoenix, but to the Phoenician people in general, referred to as 'the Phoenician'.¹² This gives the passage the sense it requires, and is in perfect concord with ancient tradition, which depicts the Phoenicians as famous sailors, as we can see from numerous references. The Greeks considered them to be the inventors of seafaring (*Φοινίκων τε τὰ ναυτικά εὐρόντων* Athenaeus 6.273e) and in Homer they are important as sailors (*Od.* 13.272, 14.288, 15.415), to give just a few examples.¹³ If this interpretation is accepted, it would be impossible to regard τὸν Βορυσθενείτην¹⁴

⁶ Gigante–Indelli, op. cit. (n. 3) p. 126.

⁷ Cf. W. Pape–G. E. Benseler, *Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennamen*³ (Braunschweig, 1863–70), ii. 853; S. Copalle, *De servorum graecorum nominibus capita duo* (Diss. Marburg, 1908), pp. 44–5; M. Lambert, *Die griechischen Sklavennamen* (Jahres-Bericht über das k. k. Staatsgymnasium im VIII. Bezirke Wiens für das Schuljahr 1907/1908), ii. 25.

⁸ Cf. *Schol. ad Ar. Av.* 523: *Μανῆς οὕτως γὰρ ἐκάλουν τοὺς οἰκέτας πολλάκις* and *Schol. ad Ar. Ran.* 965.

⁹ Gigante, op. cit. (n. 3) p. 7 and Gigante–Indelli, op. cit. (n. 3) p. 126.

¹⁰ Gigante–Indelli, op. cit. (n. 3) p. 126.

¹¹ For Phoenix of Colophon see G. A. Gerhard, *Phoinix von Kolophon. Texte und Untersuchungen* (Leipzig–Berlin, 1909) and W. Riemschneider, 'Phoinix von Kolophon' (no. 6), *RE* 20:1 (1941), 423–4.

¹² For such a usage of the generic singular with ethnic names see R. Kühner–B. Gerth, *Ausführliche Grammatik der griechischen Sprache*³ (Hannover–Leipzig, 1898), i. 14 and E. Schwyzler–A. Debrunner, *Griechische Grammatik* (Handbuch der Altertumswissenschaft 2:1:2, Munich, 1950), ii. 41.

¹³ Cf. W. Kroll, 'Schiffahrt', *RE* 2A:1 (1921), 414–5.

¹⁴ It should be noted that *ὁ Βορυσθενείτης* alone is not used anywhere else to designate Bion.

as a reference to an individual, i.e. Bion, who although he certainly travelled by sea many times nevertheless cannot be regarded as a typical representative of life at sea. Instead we must, here too, have a more general reference to a people especially connected with seafaring. Even if the inhabitants of Olbia on the Black Sea did not have the reputation of the Phoenicians, there is nothing strange in regarding them as examples of typical sailors, as trade on the Black Sea was of great importance from an early date, and Olbia a commercial centre and a famous port, called μέγα ἐμπόριον (Strabo 7.3.17).¹⁵

To sum up, we can state that Philodemus provides a testimony neither to Phoinix of Colophon nor to Bion of Borysthene, and that the omission of this passage from the testimonies to Bion cannot be regarded as 'un eccesso di abionismo'.¹⁶

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¹⁵ For Olbia as a commercial centre see W. Ziebell, *Olbia. Eine griechische Stadt in Südrussland* (Diss. Hamburg, 1937), pp. 61–75 and E. Belin de Ballu, *Olbia. Cité antique du littoral nord de la Mer Noire* (Leiden, 1972), pp. 58–62 and 108–16 for the Classical and Hellenistic periods.

¹⁶ So Gigante, op. cit. (n. 3) p. 7 and Gigante-Indelli, op. cit. (n. 3) p. 126 n. 31.

I take this opportunity to point out that Polystratus, *De philosophia* p. 36 Crönert (= T27 K.) should probably be removed from the testimonies to Bion, as the text of the papyrus gives the reading τῶι βίῳ instead of τῶι βίῳ; cf. M. Capasso, 'L'opera polistratea sulla filosofia', *CronErc* 6 (1976), 84 and n. 26.

MORETUM 15

tandem concepto, sed uix, fulgore recedit
oppositaque manu lumen defendit ab aura
et reserat †clausae qua peruidet ostia clauis.
fusus erat terra frumenti pauper aceruus:...

15

So E. J. Kenney in the *OCT* Appendix Vergiliana (1966). The same scholar has now given us his *secundae curae* in *The Ploughman's Lunch. Moretum. A Poem Ascribed to Virgil* (Bristol Classical Press, 1984), which was on its way in *luminis oras* when the sibling edition of A. Perutelli, [*P. Vergili Maronis*] *Moretum* (Pisa, 1983), saw the light of day.

Only three words of line 15 are above any kind of suspicion: *et reserat...ostia...*, 'and he unbars the door' (*ostia* poetic pl.), some door, that is, which he, Simulus, *prouidus heros* (line 59), must open to reach a pile of grain not left exposed outside his cottage, but stored somewhere.

clauis (v. l. *clauis*) is semantically unobjectionable in close association with *reserat*: cf. Petronius 94.7f. *Eumolpus...limen egressus adduxit repente ostium cellae...exemitque raptim clauem...reseratis foribus intrat Eumolpus*. But here it strangely over-emphasises the internal security of the cottage, whose only other occupant was the slave-woman Scybale, and she, unlike the usual run of pilfering servants (see Nisbet-Hubbard on Horace, *C.* 2.14.26), was its *unica custos* (line 31). More important, *clauis* usurps the place which sense and style alike require for the substantive qualified by the participle *clausae*. (F. Leo, *ALL* 10 (1898), 438, suggested that it was a substantive. It is indeed easy, as Perutelli observes, to encounter in medieval Latin the noun *clausa* > Old French *close* > English *closet*, parallel to *clausu* > French *clos*. But it is unknown to the extant language of the first century A.D.) Perhaps a scribe's persisting mental image of *clauis* superimposed *clauis* over the name of the closed grain-store, for which Heyne proposed *cellae*, now accepted by Kenney, whose 1984 text expedites the verse as far as *et reserat clausae...ostia cellae*, leaving *qua peruidet*