

A NEW FRAGMENT OF THE HISTORIAN THESEUS*

I

In the collection of oracular responses included in Book 14 of the *Palatine Anthology*, the oracle which bears the number 77 is introduced by the lemma *χρησμός ἐν τοῖς Θησεύς βίοις ἀναφερόμενος*; its text is as follows:

Ὀλβιος οὗτος ἀνὴρ, ὃς νῦν κατὰ λάινον οὐδὸν
Φοῖβου Ἀπόλλωνος χρηστήριον εἰσαναβαίνει,
ἦλυθεν εὐνομίην διζήμενος· αὐτὰρ ἐγὼ τοι
δώσω, ἣν οὐκ ἄλλη ἐπιχθονίων πόλις ἔξει.

The same oracle, with the same introductory formula, is also quoted as a scholium in the margin to the text of Herodotus 1.65.3 (the famous oracle given to Lycurgus that will be discussed below) in the manuscript Flor. Laur. 70.3; first discovered by Jacob Gronovius, it can now be read in the editions of Stein, Rosén and Asheri.¹

In his edition of the *Palatine Anthology*, Dübner made a very brief comment on the lemma: ‘Non habet Plutarchus’.² In other words, the meaning of the lemma would be that the oracle was quoted in some biographies of Theseus, different from the extant *Life* written by Plutarch. Subsequent editors of both the *Anthology* and Herodotus just repeat Dübner’s comment, often using his actual words.³ Also in the collection of Parke and Wormell the oracle is said to be ‘not found in Plutarch’s life of Theseus’; thus it is Theseus who consults the oracle.⁴ F. Buffière draws the same seemingly logical conclusion: the oracle must be referred to Theseus; if it is very close to the well-known oracle given to Lycurgus, this is because ‘[c]e bien commun pouvait servir pour tous les législateurs légendaires’.⁵

* I am grateful to Mark Humphries, who kindly read a first version, when both of us were in St Andrews.

¹ See *Herodoti Halicarnassei Historiarum libri ix...industria* J. Gronovii (Leiden, 1715), p. 816; *Herodoti Historiae*, rec. H. Stein (Berlin, 1869–71), ii.431; *Herodotus, Historiae*, H. B. Rosén (ed.), i (Leipzig, 1987), p. 41; Erodoto, *Le Storie*, i³: *La Lidia e la Persia*, D. Asheri (ed.) (Milan, 1991), pp. 244–5. The scholium, at the bottom of f.17r, was apparently written by the same scribe who copied the text (cf. Stein’s *praefatio*, p. vi; A. Colonna, ‘De Herodoti memoria’, *Boll. Class. Lincei* ns 1 [1945], 43); it should therefore be dated between the end of the ninth and the beginning of the tenth centuries (see Rosén’s edition, p. xxv), that is to say to the same years in which Constantinus Cephalas’ anthology was composed (see now A. Cameron, *The Greek Anthology from Meleager to Planudes* [Oxford, 1993]). As for the relationship between the two testimonies, the expression *χρησμός κτλ.*, common to both of them, is the usual form of the lemmata which introduce most of the oracles in *Anth. Pal.* 14: we can therefore suppose that the scholiast copied the text of the oracle from the collection of responses which was possibly used by Cephalas, or from a copy of Cephalas’ anthology itself (for the presence of the oracles in the latter, cf. Cameron, *op. cit.*, pp. 135–7).

² *Epigrammatum Anthologia Palatina*, F. Dübner (ed.), ii (Paris, 1872), p. 497.

³ William Paton writes: ‘Not in Plutarch’s *Life of Theseus*’ (*The Greek Anthology*, with an English translation by W. R. Paton, v [London, New York, 1918], p. 65, n. 2); Hermann Beckby does not make any comment on the lemma, but in the *Namen- und Sachenverzeichnis* the oracle is quoted among the epigrams containing a reference to the hero Theseus (*Anthologia Graeca*, H. Beckby (ed.), iv² [Munich n.d.], pp. 210–11, 694). David Asheri, *op. cit.* (n. 1), p. 244 comments on the scholium thus: ‘Deest in Vita Thesei a Plutarcho scripta’.

⁴ H. W. Parke, D. E. W. Wormell, *The Delphic Oracle* (Oxford, 1956), ii.235 (no. 607).

⁵ *Anthologie Grecque*, première partie: *Anthologie Palatine*, tome xii (livres xiii–xiv), texte établi et traduit par F. Buffière (Paris, 1970), p. 185, nn. 5–6.

Yet, as the scholiast to Herodotus well knew (and we shall soon see), this oracle is only an alternative version of the oracle given to Lycurgus as quoted by Herodotus 1.65.3 and, with some variants, by many different authors. And as for the lemma, neither Plutarch nor the Athenian hero Theseus have anything to do with it. In fact ἐν τοῖς Θησεύς βίοις means ‘in the *Lives* written by Theseus’. A Theseus is actually mentioned by the *Suda* as the author of five books of βίοι ἐνδόξων, as well as of three books of Κορινθιακά, and the hitherto identified extant fragments of his works, three in number, have been duly collected by both Müller and Jacoby.⁶ The *Palatine Anthology* and the scholium to Herodotus preserve a fourth fragment, the only one which is expressly attributed by its source to the βίοι: *FGrHist* 453 F 1, transmitted by the *Etymologicum Magnum* and by Tzetzes, is from the Κορινθιακά; while F 2 and 3 are quoted by Stobaeus with no indication of the title of the work, simply ἐκ τῶν Θησεύς, and Jacoby would rather ascribe them to unattested ἱστορίαι or διηγήσεις (although his reasons do not seem fully convincing to me).⁷

II

What does this new fragment add to our knowledge of the obscure Theseus? Not very much, indeed. One of Theseus’ *Lives of Illustrious Men* may have been a biography of Lycurgus; in such a biography, Theseus would probably have given an account of Lycurgus’ visit to Delphi, and quoted a particular version of the oracle he had received there. As Parke and Wormell saw, this oracle is actually a ‘pastiche’ of two different oracles.⁸ In 1.65.3, Herodotus quotes the oracle given to Lycurgus as follows:⁹

ἦκεις, ὦ Λυκόοργε, ἐμὸν ποτὶ πίονα νηὸν
Ζηνὶ φίλος καὶ πᾶσιν Ὀλύμπια δώματ’ ἔχουσι.
δίῳ ἢ σε θεὸν μαντεύσομαι ἢ ἄνθρωπον·
ἀλλ’ ἔτι καὶ μᾶλλον θεὸν ἔλπομαι, ὦ Λυκόοργε.

Then he says that, according to some, the Pythia also suggested to Lycurgus the model of the constitution for Sparta. Diodorus 7.12.1 quotes in fact a fuller form of the same oracle, by adding two more lines:¹⁰

ἦκεις δ’ εὐνομίαν διζήμενος· αὐτὰρ ἔγωγε
δώσω τὴν οὐκ ἄλλη ἐπιχθονίῃ πόλιν ἔξει.

⁶ *Suda* Θ 363; *FHG* iv.518–19; *FGrHist* 453. Jacoby’s commentary is still the best study on Theseus, while R. Laqueur’s very short article in *RE* (vi A [1936], 14) is of no use; see also F. Leo, *Die griechisch-römische Biographie nach ihrer litterarischen Form* (Leipzig, 1901), p. 117; W. Steidle, *Sueton und die antike Biographie* (Munich, 1963²), pp. 142–3; J. Geiger, *Cornelius Nepos and Ancient Political Biography* (Stuttgart, 1985), pp. 39–40.

⁷ See *FGrHist* iii b, *Text*, p. 303; *Noten*, p. 187. But cf. below, p. 264 and nn. 18–19.

⁸ Parke, Wormell, *op. cit.* (n. 4), ii.235.

⁹ For the many other testimonies of the same oracle (among which is a Delphic inscription which was copied by Ciriaco d’Ancona: P. Foucart, ‘Sur des vers de la Pythie cités par Hérodote (I, 65)’, *BCH* 5 [1881], 434–5), and the variants they bear, see Parke, Wormell, *op. cit.* (n. 4), ii.14 (no. 29); J. Fontenrose, *The Delphic Oracle: Its Responses and Operations with a Catalogue of Responses* (Berkeley, Los Angeles, London, 1978), p. 270 (Q7); cf. L. Andersen, *Studies in Oracular Verses: Concordance to Delphic Responses in Hexameter* (Copenhagen, 1987), pp. 5–6 (no. 11). At line 1, a variant ἡλυθες for ἦκεις is attested in the inscription, as well as in Elias, *Prol. phil.* 4 (*CAG* xviii.1, p. 7) and David, *Prol. phil.* 6 (*CAG* xviii.2, p. 16).

¹⁰ This fuller form of the oracle (no. 216 Parke, Wormell = 55 Andersen) is also attested (up to δώσω, line 6) in Oenomaus fr.10 Hammerstaedt = Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 5.27–8; Theodoretus, *Graec. aff. curatio* 10.33–4; Arsenius 28.59 (Apostolius 8.46a), *CPG* ii.443–4 (for the variant readings, see below, note 11). Cf. the paraphrase in Plutarch, *Lyc.* 5.3.

Lines 3 and 4 of the oracle reported by Theseus are, clearly, only a slightly modified form of these verses.¹¹ As for lines 1–2, they are a variation on the first line of another oracle quoted by Herodotus, at 5.92 ε 2 (ὄλβιος οὗτος ἀνὴρ ὃς ἐμὸν δόμον ἐσκαταβαίνει),¹² with the addition of some traditional formulae drawn from standard epic and oracular language.¹³

This new version of the oracle omits the lines in which the Pythia wondered whether Lycurgus should be considered a man or a god, and guessed he was a god; in the new lines, the Pythia simply calls him a man (ἀνὴρ). It may be that the author of this revised version could not imagine that the Pythia was not able to recognize a god, or he found the original oracle too emphatic, and even blasphemous. Maybe he was aware of some criticism against it too.¹⁴

Whatever the reasons for this change may have been, Theseus—or his source—seems to have concocted an oracle different from the traditional one(s), simply by using traditional material.

III

In Theseus' fragments 2 and 3 we find a similar attitude. In both cases, he narrates a Spartan story which was told first by Herodotus, but modifies it by adding different details. The tale about Othryades in F 2 (cf. Hdt. 1.82) has received full treatment by Jacoby, who has shown that Theseus depends on a rhetorical *vulgata* also attested in pseudo-Plutarch's *Parallela minora*.¹⁵ In F 3, Theseus gives his version of the story of

¹¹ The change from the second to the third person is made according to the lines that precede: there is no need to emend ἤλυθεν into ἤλυθες, as H. van Herwerden proposed ('Ad poetas Graecos', *Mnemosyne* NS 14 [1886], 44). For ἤλυθεν instead of ἤκεις, see above, n. 9. The minor variants εὐνομίην (εὐνομίαν Diodorus) and ἐγὼ τοι (ἐγώγε Diodorus) are also attested in the tradition of Oenomaus—Eusebius, Theodoretus and Arsenius (see above, n. 10): the first one, at least, is superior (cf. J. Hammerstaedt, *Die Orakelkritik des Kynikers Oenomaus* [Frankfurt am Main, 1988], pp. 65–6). Diodorus' reading τὴν is *difficilior* than Theseus' ἡν, while, on the contrary, ἐπιχθονίων is better than ἐπιχθονίη, this latter form being due to assimilation.

¹² No. 8 Parke, Wormell = Q61 Fontenrose = 7 Andersen (cf. no. 206 P.-W. = L41 F. = 53 A.). Theseus probably read εἰσαναβαίνει: cf. the oracle no. 406 Parke, Wormell = L99 Fontenrose = 117 Andersen; Herwerden, loc. cit. (n. 11); Hammerstaedt, op. cit. (n. 11), p. 221.

¹³ For the λάινος οὐδός, cf. *Il.* 9.404; *Od.* 8.80 (quoted by Asheri, loc. cit.); oracle no. 74 Parke, Wormell = Q123 Fontenrose = 30 Andersen. Φοῖβου Ἀπόλλωνος at the beginning of the verse: *Od.* 9.201; *Hom. Hy.* 3.52, 395; 4.102, 425; 27.14; *Orph. Hy.* 67.6; cf. the verse Φοῖβου Ἀπόλλωνος μαντεύμασιν ἀθανатоῖσιν in the inscription of the end of the 2nd century A.D. published by T. B. Mitford, 'Inscriptions from the Cappadocian limes', *JRS* 64 (1974), 173–5 (no. 9).

¹⁴ Oenomaus, fr.10 Hammerstaedt (= Eusebius, *Praep. Ev.* 5.28) laughed at this 'divine' Lycurgus who needs advice from the Pythia and receives something very trivial: καὶ πως, εἰ θεός, οὐκ ἡπίστατό πω νόμον πολιτικὸν ὁ φίλος τοῦ Διὸς καὶ πάντων τῶν Ὀλυμπίων; κτλ. Also the defence of the oracle in Elias and David seems to presuppose a criticism: καὶ μὴ νομίσης, ἐπειδὴ εἶπε 'δίζω', ὅτι ἡγνόει [κατὰ τὰς Ἑλλήνων φημί ψευδεῖς δόξας] (ἡ γὰρ ἂν ἡ Πυθία ἐτέρας ἐδεῖτο Πυθίας), ἀλλ' ἐπειδὴ φύσει ἀμφίβολον ἦν εἰ θεὸς ὁ Λυκούργος ἢ ἄνθρωπος (Elias, *Prol. phil.* 4, *CAG* xviii.1, p. 7); διστάζει δὲ οὐχ ὡς ἀγνοοῦσα τί αὐτὸν καλέσῃ καὶ δεομένη εἰς τοῦτο ἄλλης Πυθίας, ἀλλ' ἵνα δείξῃ ἀμφήριστον τὴν τοῦ θεοῦ φύσιν καὶ τοῦ ἀνδρὸς. ὅθεν ἐπιφέρει 'ἀλλ' ἔμπης σε θεὸν μαντεύσομαι' (David, *Prol. phil.* 6, *CAG* xviii.2, p. 16). See also Philostratus, *Life of Apollonius* 8.7.7, and the parallels quoted by Hammerstaedt, op. cit. (n. 11), p. 246.

¹⁵ F. Jacoby, commentary on *FGrHist* 287 F 2 (iii a, pp. 384–5); id., 'Die Überlieferung von Ps. Plutarchs *Parallela minora* und die Schwindelautoren', *Mnemosyne* iii 8 (1940), 120ff. (= *Abhandlungen zur griechischen Geschichtsschreibung* [Leiden, 1956], pp. 401ff.); cf. P. Kohlmann, 'Othryades, eine historisch-kritische Untersuchung', *RhM* 29 (1874), 463–80.

Boulis and Sperthias: according to Herodotus 7.134–7, they volunteered to go to Xerxes in order to expiate the crime committed by the Spartans ten years before, when they had killed Darius' heralds. In Theseus' version, the Spartans had in fact killed *Xerxes'* heralds: τὴν ἀναίρεσιν τῶν κηρύκων τῶν ἀποσταλέντων παρὰ Ξέρξου αἰτοῦντος γῆν καὶ ὕδωρ ὥσπερ ἀπαρχὰς δουλείας. This was a very easy mistake, as the king to whose court Boulis and Sperthias go is Xerxes; and it was still easier, if the story was narrated as a mere *exemplum*, out of its original context: we find similar mistakes (or fabrications) in Polybius, Aelius Aristides and Plutarch.¹⁶ Moreover, Theseus' version has a detail in common with the corresponding tale in Plutarch's *Apophthegmata Laconica*: the reference to an oracle, which was not in Herodotus.¹⁷ In this kind of rhetorical historiography, and also in the light of the new fragment, this inaccuracy and such an inclination to mention oracles is anything but surprising.

So it is no chance that the subjects of both F 2–3 and the new fragment are taken from the history of Sparta: Spartan history, as first narrated by Herodotus, represented an ideal collection of *exempla*, and Lycurgus, Othryades and the Persian wars were often associated in rhetorical literature.¹⁸ Moreover, we could also suppose that the three fragments were part of one and the same *Life of Lycurgus*.¹⁹

But Theseus' fragment 3 also exhibits a close resemblance to some rhetorical texts. The simile ἀπαρχαὶ δουλείας for the concession of earth and water can be compared to the expression ἀπαρχαὶ τῆς γῆς καὶ τῆς ὕδατος that we read in Aristides' *Panathenaicus* (1.117, p. 49 Lenz-Behr = 13, p. 207 Dindorf); and just the same expression is found in a Libanian declamation, the *Invective against Aeschines*: μετὰ γῆν, μεθ' ὕδωρ, μετ' ἀπαρχὰς δουλείας τὴν πυλαίαν προπεπώκασιν (*decl.* 17.46, vi.217 Foerster). Although the excerpts from Theseus contained in Stobaeus are very brief, and written in a rather plain style, it is still possible to recognize an element of rhetorical elaboration.

¹⁶ Polybius 9.38.2 (*exemplum* in a speech); Aristides 1.125, p. 52 Lenz-Behr = 13, p. 211 Dindorf; 8.20, p. 622 Lenz-Behr = 32, p. 608 Dindorf; Plutarch, *Them.* 6. Cf. also Libanius, *decl.* 10.27–8, v.498–9 Foerster; *decl.* 17.66–7, vi.228–9 Foerster; *Suda* B 442, ε 54, ε 924; Nicetas Choniates, *or.* 4, p. 33.21ff. van Dieten; Theodorus Prodromus, *PG* 133, p. 1386 A = 5.71ff., p. 216 Hörandner.

¹⁷ *Apophthegmata Laconica* 63, 235F–236A. Plutarch, however, does not expressly connect the oracle with a plague, as Theseus does (also for this reason, I agree with Jacoby in thinking, against Lampros, that Theseus is not epitomizing Plutarch: see *FGrHist* iii b, *Noten*, p. 187, n. 5). The consultation of an oracle in case of plague is a *topos*, see Fontenrose, *op. cit.* (n. 9), pp. 39–41, 442; for the popularity of this theme in rhetorical declamations, cf. D. A. Russell, *Greek Declamation* (Cambridge, 1983), pp. 26–7.

¹⁸ So in one of Arellius Fuscus' *suasoriae* both Lycurgus and Othryades are quoted as traditional *exempla*, in connection with Thermopylae: 'quid Lycurgum, quid interritos omni periculo quos memoria sacravit viros referam? ut unum Othryadem excitem, adnumerare trecentis exempla possum' (Seneca the Elder, *suas.* 2.2). Cf. Maximus of Tyre 23.2, 32.10; Libanius, *decl.* 24; Kohlmann, *op. cit.* (n. 15); E. N. Tigerstedt, *The Legend of Sparta in Classical Antiquity* (Stockholm, Gothenburg, Uppsala, 1965–1978), esp. ii.168ff.; E. Rawson, *The Spartan Tradition in European Thought* (Oxford, 1969), esp. pp. 107–15.

¹⁹ Theseus could narrate the stories of Othryades and Boulis and Sperthias in his biography of Lycurgus in order to confirm, by these examples, the excellence of the Spartan constitution; in the same way, Plutarch, in his *Life of Lycurgus*, quotes anecdotes about Leotychidas, Agis, Agesilaus, etc. in illustration of some aspects of Lycurgus' reforms. On the other hand, Theseus' *Lives* might have been a series of anecdotes: 'the difficulty of seeing the dividing line between a collection of anecdotes and biography proper' was rightly emphasized by A. Momigliano, *The Development of Greek Biography* (Cambridge, MA, 1971), pp. 72–3. See also above, p. 262 and n. 7.

IV

This image of the concession of earth and water as ἀπαρχαὶ δουλείας is not quite obvious,²⁰ and induces one to postulate a relationship between Theseus, Aristides and the *Invective against Aeschines*. It is not easy, however, to give an exact definition of this relationship. One of the reasons is that unfortunately we do not have sufficient evidence for dating Theseus with the desirable degree of exactitude. Jacoby was certainly right, however, when, on the basis of the nature of Theseus' works, he proposed to date him 'in römische, vielleicht erst in die Kaiserzeit, wofür auch der Name des Autors spricht.'²¹ In fact, the name is well attested between the first and the third centuries A.D. and seems to be much less frequent in late antiquity.²²

On the other hand, in his *Κορινθιακά* Theseus exposed τὴν κατάστασιν τοῦ Ἰσθμιακοῦ ἀγώνος (*Suda* Θ 363 = *FGrHist* 453 T 1). Jacoby cautiously suggested that this interest in the origins of the Isthmian games might be connected with Nero's visit in A.D. 67.²³ This date may seem too early; nevertheless, it is likely that Theseus' *Κορινθιακά* were written in a period when the Isthmian games were still celebrated. These are well attested during the second century and probably 'continued as late as the middle of the 3rd century after Christ';²⁴ after the mid third century, on the contrary, there seems to have been a general crisis of Greek agonistics. Actually, this could be a wrong impression, due to the lack of sufficient epigraphical documentation;²⁵ to my

²⁰ This is clear, *inter alia*, from the scholia to Aelius Aristides' *Panathenaicus*, which try to explain the exact meaning of ἀπαρχαί (iii.141–2 Dindorf).

²¹ *FGrHist* iii b, *Text*, p. 303. There is no ground for dating Theseus 'in das dritte oder sogar zweite Jahrhundert v.Chr.', as suggested by Steidle, *op. cit.* (n. 6), p. 142.

²² The name might already occur in an inscription of the fourth or third century B.C. from Cyzicus (*GIBM* 1005; G. F. Maier, *Griechische Mauerbauinschriften* [Heidelberg, 1959], no. 59), where Hiller von Gärtringen restored [Θη]σέως; the restoration is not, however, certain ([Nη]σέως is, for instance, also possible), while other Cyzicene men who bore the name or the cognomen Theseus (quoted by F. W. Hasluck, *Cyzicus* [Cambridge, 1910], p. 247) lived in the imperial age, when 'l'éclat d'un beau nom mythologique' (L. Robert, *Hellenica* xi–xii [Paris, 1960], p. 224) was particularly appreciated. So in Athens the name Theseus is attested in the second and third centuries A.D. (*A Lexicon of Greek Personal Names*, ed. P. M. Fraser and E. Matthews, vol. ii: *Attica*, ed. M. J. Osborne and S. G. Byrne, [Oxford, 1994], p. 226), and also in the rest of the ancient world it seems to have been especially in use between the first and the third centuries A.D.: some examples have been collected by H. Herter, *RE Suppl.* xiii (1973), 1050; see e.g. (I also add some further instances) C. Brixhe, H. Hodot, *L'Asie Mineure du Nord au Sud* (Nancy, 1988), pp. 70–2, no. 21 (Aspendos, 1st cent. B.C. – 1st cent. A.D.); *IKalch* 67 (end of the 2nd cent. A.D.); *MAMA* viii.569 (Aphrodisias, 2nd–3rd cent. A.D.: cf. L. Robert, *Hellenica* xiii [Paris, 1965], pp. 191–2); *Inscr. Italiae* x.4 336 (Trieste, 2nd–3rd cent. A.D.); *RECAM* ii.392 (North Galatia, 2nd–3rd century A.D.); *SEG* xxxv.1268 (Lydia, A.D. 225/6); G. Alföldy, *Die römischen Inschriften aus Tarraco* (Berlin, 1975), no. 684 (3rd cent. A.D.); *ISmyrna* 781 *TAM* iii.225 (Termessus); *MAMA* i.24a (Laodicea); *IG* v.1 1178 (Gythium); *SEG* xxvi.1531 (Commagene); J. and L. Robert, *Fouilles d'Amyzon en Carie*, i (Paris, 1983), pp. 173–4 (Ephesus); for Rome, H. Solin, *Die griechischen Personennamen in Rom. Ein Namenbuch* (Berlin, New York, 1982), i.487–8. *Αὐρ(ήλιος) Θησεύς*, probably after the *Constitutio Antoniniana*: *IGR* iv.1268 (Thyatira); LeBas–Waddington 1631 (Aphrodisias); *BMC, Phrygia*, p. xc (coins of Philomelium); maybe also *IG* xii Suppl. 646 (Tanagra). Christian inscriptions (3rd–6th cent. A.D.): *ICUR* ii.2910; ix.24371. No Theseus is mentioned in *PLRE*; see, however, Symmachus, *relatio* 2.28.

²³ *FGrHist* iii b, *Text*, p. 303.

²⁴ Th. R. Martin, 'Inscriptions at Corinth', *Hesperia* 46 (1977), 192; cf. L. Moretti, *Iscrizioni agonistiche greche* (Rome, 1963), nos. 84, 86, 88–90. A survey of Greek agons under the empire in A. J. S. Spawforth, 'Agonistic festivals in Roman Greece', in A. M. Cameron and S. Walker (edd.), *The Greek Renaissance in the Roman Empire* (*BICS Suppl.* 55, London, 1989), pp. 193–7.

²⁵ See I. Weiler, 'Zu "Krise" und "Niedergang" der Agonistik im dritten nachchristlichen Jahrhundert', in *Krise–Krisenbewusstsein–Krisenbewältigung. Ideologie und geistige Kultur im*

knowledge, however, we have no positive evidence for the celebration of the Isthmian games in the fourth century A.D.—a further continuation, or a revival, under Julian is highly doubtful.²⁶

So although we cannot definitely exclude an earlier or a later date, it is probable that Theseus lived and wrote his works in the second or in the third century A.D.²⁷ If one accepts the authenticity of Libanius' *Invective against Aeschines*, it seems therefore unlikely—not, however, impossible—that Theseus could take the expression ἀπαρχαὶ δουλείας from it.²⁸ A more likely assumption is that Theseus, Aristides and the *Invective* follow the same source: one would think of Ephorus, for instance, or of some orator of the fourth century B.C.²⁹ But if Theseus is one of the authors who transmitted that historical *vulgata* which developed out of Herodotus, and which was widely used by rhetors for their historical tirades, he might also be the source of either Aristides, or the *Invective*, or both.³⁰

However that may be, it clearly appears that Theseus shared subjects, themes and also particular expressions with the rhetorical tradition, from Aristides to late antiquity. He could derive some *flosculi* from rhetors, or he may have been a source for them: in any case, his Spartan stories are certainly a good instance of how historical traditions could be easily transformed into *exempla* suitable for rhetorical declamation.³¹

Università della Basilicata, Potenza

ALDO CORCELLA

Imperium Romanum während des 3. Jahrhunderts (Wiss. Beiträge der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg 62 [1986]; Halle, 1988), pp. 112–19; on festivals in the late imperial period, L. Robert, *Opera minora selecta*, v (Amsterdam, 1989), pp. 647–68; Ch. Roueché, *Performers and Partisans at Aphrodisias in the Roman and Late Roman Period* (London, 1993), pp. 5–7.

²⁶ Julian's letter 198, in which the games appear to be still in existence, is most probably spurious and should be dated to the first half of the first century A.D. (B. Keil, 'Ein λόγος συναγωγικός', *NGG* [1913], 1–41), or rather between A.D. 80 and 120 (A. J. S. Spawforth, 'Corinth, Argos, and the Imperial Cult. Pseudo-Julian, *Letters* 198', *Hesperia* 63 [1994], 211–32).

²⁷ See also above, n. 14 and text thereto, for a possible connection with Oenomaus (who can be dated to the second or to the first half of the third century A.D., but was still read, quoted and discussed in the fourth century: Hammerstaedt, op. cit. [n. 11], pp. 11–28; id., 'Der Kyniker Oenomaus von Gadara', *ANRW* ii 36.4 [1990], 2835–65).

²⁸ The authenticity of a Libanian declamation can always, however, be questioned: as Paul Maas once said, 'fällt bei allen die Last des Beweises nicht mehr dem zu, der die Unechtheit, sondern dem, der die Echtheit irgend eines Stückes behauptet' (*Deutsche Literaturzeitung* 34 [1913], 609; in any case, when A. F. Norman mentions declamation no. 17 among the 'spuria', this is only a slip, or a misprint, instead of no. 18: see Libanius, *Selected Works*, i [London, Cambridge, MA, 1969], p. xlviii and note (a)). So, one could even suppose that the *Invective* was written in the second or third centuries A.D., by an author who imitated Aristides. There are other resemblances between Aristides' *Panathenaicus* and the *Invective*: see e.g. Aristid. 1.174, p. 70 Lenz-Behr = 13, p. 233 Dindorf ≈ Lib. *decl.* 17.30, vi.208 Foerster (cf. further above, n. 16).

²⁹ Concession of land and water in Ephorus: Diodorus 11.2–3; in Attic orators: Aeschines 3.132; Lycurgus 71. Aristotle, *Rhet.* 2.23, 1399 b 11–13, testifies that the definition of this act as δουλεύειν was common in rhetorical language.

³⁰ For the historical sources of Aristides, see E. Beecke, *Die historischen Angaben in Aelius Aristides Panathenaikum auf ihre Quellen untersucht* (Diss. Strasbourg, 1905). As for Libanius, G. Werner (*De Libanii studiis Herodoteis* [Diss. Bratislava, 1910]) thought that he derived his historical information directly from Herodotus, but the thesis of a *vulgata* is more probable: cf. K. Münscher's review of Werner in *Bursians Jahresbericht* 170 (1917), 144–5; A. F. Norman, 'The Library of Libanius', *RhM* 107 (1964), 158–75; Tigerstedt, op. cit. (n. 18), ii.272–9, 553 n. 1332; B. Schouler, *La tradition hellénique chez Libanios* (Paris, 1984), pp. 519–22.

³¹ See Tigerstedt, op. cit. (n. 18), ii.183ff. (who, strangely enough, ignores Theseus). A general survey, and further literature, in R. Nicolai, *La storiografia nell'educazione antica* (Pisa, 1992).