

PSEUDO-MANETHO AND THE INFLUENCE OF BION OF SMYRNA

The *Apotelesmatica* ascribed to Manetho are a didactic poem on astrology in six books, of which Books 2, 3, and 6 (1, 2, and 3 Koechly) share a single author; since at 6 [3K.]. 738–50 he gives his own birthdate as 28 May A. D. 80, this section of the poem must date from around the reign of Hadrian. The three remaining books were composed several centuries later, and the whole compilation had probably acquired its present shape around A. D. 400¹). We are here concerned with 2 [1 K.]. 242–3, in a list of the effects of the planet Venus in the house of Jupiter:

ἡδὲ καὶ ἄνδρας ἔτευξε γυναικείοισιν ἐπ' ἔργοις
ἐξ ὧν χρήματα πολλὰ καὶ εὐφροσύνην πόρεν ἐσθλήν.

The phrasing of the first line is artful: the planet sets men to “deeds having to do with women” (i.e. love affairs), a semantic renovation of the phrase γυναικεία ἔργα, which in Hdt. 4.114 denotes “womanly tasks” (needlework and the like). In the second line artistry gives way to obscurity: by means of these ἔργα she grants “much money and excellent good cheer”. Why money? Are we to imagine men born under this sign prostituting themselves? That interpretation stumbles against “excellent good cheer”; such εὐφροσύνη would have been deemed αἰσχρή, not

1) For information on the *Apotelesmatica* and its authorship see W. Gundel and H. G. Gundel, *Astrologumena* (Wiesbaden 1966) 159–64. Although “Manetho” may actually have been the name of the author of at least Books 2, 3, and 6, it is more likely that the six-book collection attracted the name of the Egyptian priest and chronicler who lived under the second Ptolemy. The *Apotelesmatica* were edited by Hermann Koechly in the *Didot Poetae Bucolici et Didactici* (Parisii 1851) and in his *Teubner Manethonis Apotelesmaticorum qui feruntur libri VI* (Lipsiae 1858). His is the awkward system of book-numbering that gives the received number first, then his own in brackets.

ἔσθλή²). Surely for *χοήματα* we should read *χάρματα*, “delights”, whose pairing with *εὐφροσύνη* is traditional: Bion fr. 8. 6 Gow *εὐφροσύναν καὶ χάματα*; Orac. Sib. 3.770–1 *χάρματα πάντα [...] εὐφροσύνην τε*; Nonnus Dion. 39.148 *χάρμα πόρην Δήμητρι καὶ εὐφροσύνην Διονύσω*; Pseudo-Apolinarius Hom. psalt. 9.3, 31.25, 34.56, 39.38, 69.5 Ludwig *χάρμα καὶ εὐφροσύνη et sim.* Thus in [Manetho] Apot. 2 [1 K.], 243 read

ἔξ ὧν χάματα πολλὰ καὶ εὐφροσύνην πόρην ἐσθλήν.

Through the *γυναικεῖα ἔργα* Venus grants many delights and excellent good cheer.

The emendation itself is of slight importance; its interest lies mainly in the light it sheds on Imperial Greek poets' use of Hellenistic literature. The late Hellenistic bucolic poet Bion of Smyrna is our earliest source for this verbal pairing, and he is likely to be the later authors' model. Although Bion's major surviving work, the *Epitaph on Adonis*, is known to have influenced poets of the Empire³), the influence of the works whence his surviving fragments were extracted remains to be documented. Koehly's first three books of the *Apotelesmatica*, in fact, contain two more Bionian traces: 2 [1 K.], 39 ἴσην Ἥλιος τεύχει νύκτ' ἄμβροτον ἧοῖ echoes Bion fr. 2.18 *χὰ νῦξ ἀνθρώποιον ἴσα καὶ ὁμοίος ἄως*, and 6 [3 K.], 140 *ξυνὰς ἀνύσσι κελεύθους* echoes Bion fr. 12.5 *ξυνὰς Πυλάδας ἄρητο κελεύθως*. Bion fr. 3.3 *γλυκερὸν μολπᾶν* may have suggested 6 [3 K.], 369 *μολπήσιν γλυκερήσιν* (but cf. Il. 13.637 = Od. 23.145). Elsewhere in Imperial and early Byzantine poetry the following passages are to be regarded as probable or certain imitations of Bion: Orph. H. 9.9 (cf. Bion fr. 11.2), Maximus 6.186 Ludwig (cf. Bion fr. 12.5) and 7.284 (cf. Bion fr. 13.12), Nonnus Dion. 11.241–2 (cf. Bion fr. 1.3–4) and 41.317 (cf. Bion fr. 8.5), Pseudo-Apolinarius Hom. psalt. 106.55 Ludwig (cf. Bion fr. 1.2)⁴), Quintus 12.171 (cf. Bion fr. 8.5)⁵), Leontius Scholasticus App. Plan. 245.1 (cf. Bion fr. 1.1), and Agathias A. P. 4.3. 110 (cf. Bion fr. 10.8)⁶). Most interesting in this list

2) Similarly, *γυναικεῖα ἔργα* here must not denote the “womanly role” in sex (though the sense is conceivable), since the ancients, with their prejudice against male sexual receptivity, would have been unlikely to describe the enjoyment derived from that role as *ἔσθλός* (which has moral overtones of “fine, noble”).

3) Cf. J. D. Reed, *Bion of Smyrna* (Cambridge 1997) 61–64. For echoes of the *Adonis* in Nonnus' *Dionysiaca* see CQ n.s. 42 (1992) 54; G. D'Ippolito, *Studi Nonniani* (Palermo 1964) 99 and 143–4. Bion's authorship of the *Adonis*, which is transmitted anonymously in the bucolic corpus, is virtually certain: R. Matthews, *The Lament for Adonis: Questions of Authorship*, *Antichthon* 24 (1990) 32–52; M. Fantuzzi, *Bionis Smyrnaei Adonidis Epitaphium* (Liverpool 1985) 139.

4) On Bion's influence on the pseudo-Apolinarian *Homeric Psalter* see J. Golega, *Der homerische Psalter* (Ettal 1960) 60.

5) M. Campbell, *A Commentary on Quintus Smyrnaeus*, *Posthomerica* XII ([*Mnemosyne Suppl.* 71] Lugduni Batavorum 1981), sees in Quintus 12.256 *ὁτύναι πάντεσσι κακὸν Τρώεσσι γενέσθαι* “an identical pattern” to Bion fr. 14.4 *ταλίον ὡς πάντεσσι κακὸν τὸν Ἐρωτα τεκέσθαι*, but the similar wording may be fortuitous.

6) In prose, Longus 3.4 echoes both the sentiment and the context of Bion fr. 2.5–6, and 2.4 (Philetas' vain pursuit of Eros around his garden) strongly recalls Bion fr. 13. There are less certain imitators of Bion in Themistius Or. 4.56 A and Agathias A. P. 5.273.6, who follow Bion's application of *βαμβαίνω* “tremble” to the stammering of the voice (cf. fr. 9.9). Note also Nonnus Dion. 16.8 (cf. Bion fr. 14.6).

is Nonnus, who is commonly held to have been oblivious to Bion's fragmentary work despite his enthusiasm for the *Adonis*⁷).

Scholars have often sought in later imitations of Bion evidence for the ancient transmission of bucolic poetry⁸. It is impossible to say whether the authors cited above found Bion whole or excerpted in anthologies like those of Stobaeus and Orion (where his fragments are preserved for us), and thus already in fragments, but it would be rash to assert that they knew only the Bionean works that we can trace in theirs. A possibility – though no more than that – is that under the Empire Bion circulated in a small collection of late bucolic poems⁹), some of whose contents (like the *Epitaph on Adonis*) eventually entered larger bucolic collections, while others survived only as anthologized excerpts. In any case, the neglected fragments of the late bucolic poet, worthy objects of study in themselves and precious evidence for later Hellenistic literature, turn out to illuminate, no less than the same author's *Adonis*, the taste and reading of the Greek poets of the Roman Empire.

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7) See U. von Wilamowitz-Moellendorff, *Bion von Smyrna: Adonis* (Berlin 1900) 31–2; Fantuzzi (n. 3 above) 144; Matthews (n. 3 above) 35. Matthews also holds that echoes of Bion's fragments are found nowhere in the pseudo-Theocritean idylls, a belief refuted by [Theoc.] 23.2 (cf. Bion fr. 14.5). The fragments' influence on Ovid has long been recognized: see e.g. I. Cazzaniga, *La tradizione poetica ellenistica nella favola ovidiana di Giacinto*, PP 13 (1958) 153–4 on Met. 10.188–9 and A. S. Hollis, *Ovid: Ars Amatoria Book I* (Oxford 1977) on A. A. 1.7–8 and 17–8.

8) See especially Fantuzzi (n. 3 above).

9) One can infer the existence of such a collection from a cluster of seven late bucolic poems preserved in one family of bucolic manuscripts; see R. J. H. Matthews, *Antichthon* 28 (1994) 25–51 and Reed (see n. 3 above) 65–66.