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A NEW FRAGMENT OF PALAEPHATUS'
TROJAN HISTORY?

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A recently published dissertation on *Rationalizing Myth in Antiquity* contains, among other things, an Appendix in which the author reviews several testimonia and fragments of the mythographer Palaephatus (4th cent. BC).¹ Some prominence is given in this Appendix to a passage from Eustathius' commentary on the opening of the *Odyssey*. In explaining why the city of Troy is called 'sacred' (Od. 1.2), the Byzantine commentator makes reference to a Palaphatean rationalisation of a myth that is not found in the extant text of *On Unbelievable Tales* (περὶ ἀπίστων):²

θεραπεία δὲ τοῦ μύθου τούτου κατὰ Παλαίφατον ὅτι κειμήλια Ποσειδῶνός τε καὶ Ἀπόλλωνος εἰς ἀνοικισμὸν τῆς Ἰλίου ὑπὸ Λαομέδοντος δεδαπάνητο. διὸ δοκοῦσι τρόπον τινὰ θητεῦσαι ὁ Ποσειδὼν καὶ ὁ Ἀπόλλων ἐν τῇ τῆς Ἰλίου κτίσματι.

(Eust. Od. 1382.48–50, p. 28.5–7 Cullhed)

The cure of this myth (sc. the erection of the Trojan wall by the gods Poseidon and Apollo, which is why Troy is called 'sacred') according to Palaephatus is that Laomedon spent the sacred treasures of Poseidon and Apollo for the construction of Troy. For this reason Poseidon and Apollo seem to have served, in a sense, the construction of Troy.

(trans. Cullhed)

Since no secondary literature is cited, Hawes' discussion (involuntarily?) creates the impression that the fragment of Palaephatus transmitted by Eustathius is new. At any rate, this is how one of her examiners read the Appendix.³ In fact, the passage

1) G. Hawes, *Rationalizing Myth in Antiquity*, Oxford 2014, with Appendix I (The Date and Authenticity of Palaephatus, *Peri Apiston*, 227–38).

2) For the text of *On Unbelievable Tales* see *Mythographi Graeci*, vol. 3.2: Palaephatus περὶ ἀπίστων, ed. N. Festa, Leipzig 1902, reprinted (omitting *praefatio* and index) with introduction, translation and notes in: J. Stern, *Palaephatus, περὶ ἀπίστων, On Unbelievable Tales*, Wauconda/IL 1996.

3) After adopting Hawes' suggestion (to be discussed shortly), he makes the general statement: "The fragments and testimonia for Palaiphatos are by no means yet all collected" (R. L. Fowler, *Early Greek Mythography. Vol. 2: Commentary*, Oxford 2013, 312 n. 175).

quoted above has long been recognised as an indication that Eustathius still had access to a version of *On Unbelievable Tales* that was fuller than the one preserved in the medieval manuscripts. The argument was made no later than 1892 and has won general approval.⁴ It was, no doubt, the reason why Jacoby did not include the passage in his collection of Palaephatus' fragments in *Fragmente der griechischen Historiker* (FGrHist 44), which of course does not comprise *On Unbelievable Tales*, even though he made several additions over the years.⁵

Whether or not Hawes is aware of this discussion, she suggests attributing the fragment to Palaephatus' *Trojan History*.⁶ This suggestion faces several obstacles. The extant fragments of the *Trojan History* point to a broad range of topics such as geography, ethnography, mythography, (local) history, possibly triggered by Palaephatus' own origin in the Hellespont area.⁷ No trace, however, can be found in them of rationalisation, as Hawes herself correctly points out.⁸ But rationalisation of myth is the very essence of the fragment under consideration and the reason why Eustathius adduces it in the first place. The term *θεραπεία* ('cure') is anything but innocent in Eustathius, who regularly uses it when the excess of a mythical story needs to be 'remedied'.⁹ Moreover, the rationalised version of the erection of the Trojan wall aligns well with the arguments put forward in *On Unbelievable Tales* in general and has more than superficial similarities specifically to the story of how the Theban wall was built (chapter 41).¹⁰ There is, in short, no compelling reason why the traditional view should be abandoned that the passage from Eustathius' commentary on the opening of the *Odyssey* is referring to a lost part of *On Unbelievable Tales*.¹¹

4) F. Wipprecht, *Quaestiones Palaephatae*, Bonn 1892, 13–14, accepted by, among others, A. v. Blumenthal, 'Palaiphatos (2–4)', *RE* 18.2, 1942, 2454, Stern (n. 2) 4–5.

5) See *Addenda* to vol. 1, pp. *15–*19. Following the lead of Jacoby, my treatment in Brill's New Jacoby (BNJ 44) does not include the fragment under consideration either.

6) Hawes (n. 1) 238. For Palaephatus' *Trojan History* (Τρωϊκά) in at least seven books see FGrHist 44 FF 1–6 and BNJ 44 FF 1–6a. It is worth emphasising that only fragments 1, 2, 3 and 3a are expressly said to come from this work. The attribution of fragments 4, 5, 6 and 6a (BNJ only) is hypothetical.

7) See BNJ 44, esp. T 2 and 3 (with comm.).

8) Hawes (n. 1) 232 n. 21.

9) Cf. e.g. the Preface to his commentary on the *Iliad*, where he programmatically speaks of taking recourse 'to the remedy of the myth based on allegory' (εἰς τὴν ἐξ ἀλληγορίας θεραπείαν τοῦ μύθου, Eust. Il. 3.28 = 1.4.27–8 van der Valk). He then names three types of ἀλληγορία, physical (φυσικῶς), ethical (κατὰ ἥθος) and historical (ἱστορικῶς). The definition of the third is built on the idea that the event in question did in fact happen but has suffered severe exaggeration because writers are keen to astonish their audiences. A very similar idea underlies Palaephatus' own preface and, in essence, Thucydides' chapter on method (1.21.1). For Palaephatus' 'cure' specifically, see also the generalising statement Eust. Od. 1504.54.

10) See Stern (n. 2) 4, A. Santoni, *Palefato: Storie incredibili*, Pisa 2000, 137. Hawes (n. 1) 237 is aware of the parallel but downplays it.

11) A very similar rationalisation does occur in the *Excerpta Vaticana*, often referred to as Anonymus, *περὶ ἀπίστων* (nr. 4, p. 89 Festa [n. 2]). But Eustathius'

Incidentally, Hawes' related suggestion that Eustathius' note on Aeneas killing Protesilaus comes from Palaephatus' *Trojan History* is likely to be correct.¹² In the course of revising Jacoby's FGrHist, the note in question has been included in BNJ 44 as fragment 6a (published in 2008).

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other references to Palaephatus can be shown to be correct. He should be given the benefit of the doubt (Wipprecht [n. 4] 13–14). The Anonymus may depend on Palaephatus or on Herodorus, fr. 28 Fowler, a possible source for Palaephatus himself (Hawes [n. 1] 237).

12) Hawes (n. 1) 238 n. 45. She erroneously speaks of the commentary on Odyssey 2.701 and evidently means Eust. Il. 326.5 (= 1.508.7–9 van der Valk).