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Brill's New Jacoby

Eleusis (55)

F 1

Diogenes Laertios 1.28

Subject: **Myth: Mythical past;**
Religion

Source Date: **3rd century AD**Historian's Date: **Unknown**

Historical Period:

ταῦτα δὴ ὁ Καλλίμαχος ἐν τοῖς Ἰάμβοις ἄλλως ἱστορεῖ, παρὰ Λεανδρίου λαβῶν τοῦ Μιλήσιου. Βαθυκλέα γάρ τινα Ἄρκάδα φιάλην καταλιπεῖν καὶ ἐπισκῆψαι ἴδοῦναι τῶν σοφῶν τῶ ὀνηϊστῶ. ἐδόθη δὴ Θαλῆ καὶ κατὰ περίοδον πάλιν Θαλῆ· ὁ δὲ τῶ Διδυμεῖ Ἀπόλλωνι ἀπέστειλεν εἰπὼν οὕτω κατὰ τὸν Καλλίμαχον Ἐθαλῆς με τῶ μεδεῦντι Νείλεω δήμου δίδωσι, τοῦτο δὲ λαβῶν ἀριστεῖον· τὸ δὲ πεζὸν οὕτως ἔχει· Ἐθαλῆς Ἐξαμίου Μιλήσιος Ἀπόλλωνι Δελφινίῳ Ἑλλήνων ἀριστεῖον δὲ λαβῶν· ὁ δὲ περιενεγκὼν τὴν φιάλην τοῦ Βαθυκλέους παῖς Θυρίων ἐκαλεῖτο, καθά φησιν Ἐλευσις ἐν τῶ Περι Ἀχιλλέως καὶ Ἀλέξων ὁ Μύνδιος ἐν ἐνάτῳ Μυθικῶν.

Translation

In his *Iambics*, **Kallimachos** gives a different version of the story, which he took from **Leandrios** of **Miletos** (BNJ 492 F 18). **Bathykles**, an **Arkadian**, left at his death a bowl with the solemn injunction that it 'should given to the one who had done most good among the wise men'. So it was given to **Thales**, went the round of all the sages, and came back to **Thales** again. And he sent it to **Apollo** at **Didyma**, with this dedication, according to **Kallimachos** (F 191.76 Pfeiffer):

'Lord of the folk of **Neleus**' line,
Thales, of **Greeks** adjudged most wise,
Brings to thy Didymaeen shrine
His offering, a twice-won price.'
But the prose inscription is: 'Thales the **Milesian**, son of **Examyas** (dedicated this) to Delphian **Apollo** after twice winning the prize from all the Greeks'. The bowl was carried from place to place by the son of **Bathykles**, whose name was **Thyrion**, as is stated by **Eleusis** in his work *On Achilles*, and **Alexo the Myndian** in the ninth book of his *Legends* (BNJ 25 F 1).

Apparatus Criticus

Text from *Diogenes Laertius. Vitae Philosophorum 1, Libri I-X*, ed. M. Marcovitch (Stuttgart 1999).

Λεανδρίου PF : δὲ ἀνδρίου B : Μαλανδρίου C. Keil (Vindic. Onomast., 1843, p. 9 ss.), agn. Diels

τῷ FP²Q : om. BP¹

Commentary

The quotation of **Eleusis' On Achilles** by **Diogenes Laertios** appears within the numerous anecdotes about the Seven Wise Men and their dedication to **Apollo** of a golden cup or tripod: see O. Barkowski, 'Die Sieben Weise', *RE* 53 (1923), cols. 2242-64, J. Bollansée, *Hermippos of Smyrna and his Biographical Writings. A Reappraisal* (Leuven 1999), 27-44, A. Kerkhecker, *Callimachus' Book of Iambi* (Oxford 1999), 35 n. 153, A. Busine, *Les Sept Sages de la Grèce antique* (Paris 2002). One finds variants to every element of this tale. Here, **Eleusis** and **Alexo** the Myndian (*BNJ* 25 F 1) are said to have told that the son of **Bathykles**, the man who bequeathed the famous cup, who carried the phiale around was named **Thyrion**.

Biographical Essay

Eleusis is one of those numerous ancient writers known only through one single attestation. It is not a good reason to state that he is a fake author who never existed, as does for example D. Fehling, *Die sieben Weisen und die frühgriechische Chronologie. Eine traditions-geschichtliche Studie* (Bern 1985), 32. For a review of Fehling's hypercriticism and hyperscepticism, see J. Bollansée, 'Fact and Fiction, Falsehood and Truth. D. Fehling and Ancient Legendry about the Seven Sages', *Museum Helveticum* 56 (1999), 65-75.

Bibliography

F. Jacoby, 'Eleusis (8)', *RE* 5 (1905), col. 2342

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