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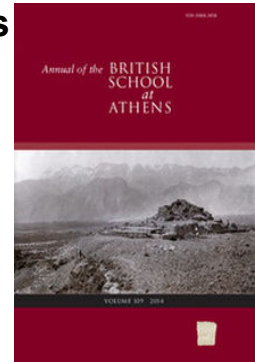
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Dionysos at Smyrna

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DIONYSOS AT SMYRNA.

THE *σύνδοξ* of the *μύσται* and *τεχνίται* of Dionysos Breiseus at Smyrna has long been known to students from several series of inscriptions.¹ These, although defective in themselves, can be supplemented by the inscriptions of analogous associations, so that the details of the society's organisation are tolerably familiar,² and for the present require no further discussion. But certain questions have not so far been decided. Such concern the origin of the god, the meaning of the epithet, and the situation of his temple at Smyrna. The present paper is an attempt to answer these questions, some new evidence having recently come to hand.

The earliest certain home of Dionysos Breiseus seems to have been Lesbos,³ where the name of Brisa has been known for many centuries. Homer's heroine⁴ will be recalled: Androtion knew a Lesbian promontory called *Βρῆσα*⁵: the Lesbos of to-day has a hill and a village called respectively *Βρίσιον* and *Βρίσια*.⁶ The modern names are proved to be descended from the ancient by the discovery of an inscription to Dionysos *Βρησαγιένης*⁷ near the village: the ruins close by have accordingly been

¹ *C.I.G.* 3160, 3161, 3176 (with 3173), 3177, 3190, 3210; E. Szanto in *Arch. Epigr. Mitth.* ix, 1885, pp. 133 ff.; Le Bas-Waddington, *Asie Mineure*, p. 360, n. 248 (=De Witte in *Acaa. Roy. Brux.* ix, 1; *B.M. Cat. Bronzes*, n. 887; *B.M. Inscr.* ii, p. 4). Perhaps *C.I.G.* 3175 is to be added, if we read ΔΙΟ[ΝΥΣΟΥ for the uncertain ΔΙΟΣ[- - -.

² See e.g. Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States*, v, pp. 146-8.

³ Whether Gruppe (*Griech. Myth.* pp. 235, 297) and Wilamowitz (*Phi. Unters.* vii, p. 409) are right in thinking the Lesbian god hailed originally from Boeotia, is beside the present question.

⁴ *Il.* i, ll. 184, 323, etc.

⁵ *Etym. M.* Βρισάιος οὕτως ὁ Διόνυσος . . . ἀπὸ ἔκρας Λεσβιακῆς Βρῆσης, ἧς μέμνηται Ἀνδροτίων. cf. Steph. Byz. s.v. Βρίσα: ἔκρα Λέσβου, ἐν ᾗ ἱδρύεται Διόνυσος Βρισάιος. The spelling of the epithet varies considerably.

⁶ Pottier and Hauvette-Besnault in *B.C.H.* iv, 1880, p. 445; Wilamowitz, *l.c.*

⁷ *B.C.H. l.c.*

held to mark the site of his temple.¹ On the Homeric evidence, Brisa is a very ancient Lesbian name and earlier than the Greek foundation of Smyrna²: hence we may naturally suppose Dionysos Breiseus had been early established in Lesbos and passed thence to Smyrna.

When he came to Smyrna, we do not know. Perhaps only in Hellenistic times: there is no record of him until our inscriptions, the earliest of which dates from the reign of Titus.³ But it may be remarked that Lesbos was Aeolian and that although the historical Smyrna was a member of the Ionian federation,⁴ the original Smyrna was most probably Aeolian.⁵ So perhaps it was with some of the earliest colonists of Smyrna that the god came from Brisa to settle with them in their new home. Certainly the cult of Dionysos existed in the Aeolic colony, as we learn from Herodotos,⁶ and although he does not call the god Breiseus, his omission of the epithet means nothing, since it had very little special significance. This we learn from a passage in Aristides.⁷

Commenting on the double nature of Dionysos, the orator remarks that 'for maidens the god is not the same as for youths: like men he is at one time beardless and later Breiseus: he is now a god of peace and again a god of war.' The passage is illustrated by two coins of Smyrna, one of Domitian,⁸ the other of Julia Domna.⁹ In both the type is identical, showing Semele enthroned with the youthful Dionysos on a low seat by her side: in the background to the left is a small cultus-statue of the bearded Dionysos, draped and holding a kantharos and a thyrsos.¹⁰ It is the beardless Dionysos with his Breiseus counterpart. Accordingly, from these coins and Aristides' words we see that for imperial Smyrna at least,

¹ *Ibid.* Unfortunately the remains are too scanty to permit the hope of discovering there an inscription with the more usual epithet.

² Homer does not mention the town, and the Leleges seem to have held the coast lands at that time, cf. Strabo, xiv, 634.

³ *C.I.G.* 3173.

⁴ *Hdt.* i, 143, 149.

⁵ *Mimnermus* 9 [12]; Strabo, xiii, 582; Paus. vii, 5, 1.

⁶ i, 150; cf. Aristides, xvii, 373 D: xxi, 440 D.

⁷ xl, 49 D.

⁸ *B.M. Cat. Ionia*, p. 251, n. 138, Pl. XXXVI, 11.

⁹ *Ibid.* p. 287, n. 395.

¹⁰ The group of Semele and Dionysos occurs without the cultus-statue in a wall-painting of a Pompeian villa (*Not. Scavi*, 1910, Pl. XV; *J.R.S.* vol. iv, 1914, pp. 160-1, Pl. XI) and in another from Herculaneum (*Pitt. d'Ercolano*, ii, n. 13). This identification is due to Miss Mudie-Cooke (*J.R.S. l.c.*), who has kindly communicated the theory and above references in advance to me: it is to be noted that she considers the goddess to be probably not Semele but Ariadne.

the epithet Breiseus suggested at once the bearded elderly manifestation of the god, probably without any further attribute.

The cultus-statue of the coins, it may be observed, is archaic in type and, since it probably represents the actual cultus-statue of the temple, this raises an interesting question. Is it possible that this was the ancient *ξόανον* of Dionysos Breiseus which the Aeolian colonists of Smyrna had once worshipped? ¹ If so, it must have survived the Lydian destruction, being carried off like the Palladion of Troy and preserved in one of the villages into which the town was broken up.² The Nemesis which was duplicated after Alexander's dream³ had certainly been so preserved. Or possibly, when Alexander's city was founded,⁴ a sculptor was definitely commissioned to make an archaistic statue which should recall to the Smyrnaeans their ancient deity. Such archaistic tendencies were rife in the Alexandrine city: thus the cult of Homer was intensified⁵ and the duplication of the archaic Nemesis was evidently deliberate. Whichever alternative be true, the people of Smyrna were, perhaps unconsciously, perpetuating evidence of their ancient origin at a time when the learned or political element among them was hankering after more illustrious founders than the humble Aeolians of Lesbian Brisa.

But Dionysos Breiseus was not the only Dionysos worshipped at Smyrna. An inscription in the Millosicz collection at Vienna⁶ mentions also a Dionysos *πρὸ πόλεως*. The meaning of the phrase is not quite certain. Long ago Boeckh⁷ translated it in a local sense as 'before the city': Le Bas⁸ followed him, but in his *Cults of the Greek States* Dr. Farnell⁹ disagrees. While admitting that in general Dionysos 'was not a guiding power of the higher political life,' he finds isolated indications of such power in such epithets of the god as *καθηγεμών, αἰσυμνήτης, πρὸ πόλεως*. In so interpreting the last phrase he has apparently been influenced by an inscription from Teos¹⁰ which records a dedication to τὸν

¹ Cf. Paus. x, 19, 3 for the historical worship of the *ξόανον* of Dionysos *Φάλλην* at Methymna.

² Strabo, xiv, 646.

³ Paus. vii, 5, 4.

⁴ c. 324 B.C. (by Antigonos).

⁵ Strabo, xiv, 646, mentions a *ξόανον* of Homer and bronze coins called Homereia. Quantities of these have been found (cf. *B.M. Cat. Ionia*, pp. 244 ff. nn. 78 ff.).

⁶ *Arch. Epigr. Mitth.* ix, 1885, p. 134.

⁷ See n. on *C.I.G.* 2963 c.

⁸ Le Bas-Waddington, *Asie Min.* p. 373, n. 1601.

⁹ *Cults*, v, pp. 135-6, 152-3.

¹⁰ *C.I.G.* 3108.

προεστῶτα τῆς ἱερωτάτης πόλεως ἡμῶν Διόνυσον, where Dionysos is clearly regarded as the protector of the town. But the circumstances of Teos were somewhat exceptional: it was famous for its wine and the artists of Dionysos had at one time brought it much wealth and prosperity by making it their headquarters.¹ Hence the citizens most naturally considered Dionysos their special patron. And further, if *πρὸ πόλεως* had this protective meaning, it is odd that Hekate, and not its patron deity Aphrodite, should be *πρὸ πόλεως* at Aphrodisias²; again, it is not Kybele but Demeter³ and Dionysos⁴ who are *πρὸ πόλεως* at Smyrna. For Aphrodisias and Smyrna at least another explanation of *πρὸ πόλεως* is required. This Pollux⁵ supplies by enumerating a list of τὰ πρὸ πόλεως: they



FIG. 1.—SEAL OF THE BREISEAN MYSTICS.

include temples and oracles and shrines and tombs and barrows. As the preceding paragraph⁶ calls them τὰ ἔξω πόλεως, he plainly gave the same meaning to both phrases and that meaning local. So one Dionysos at Smyrna had his temple situated 'outside the city wall.'⁷ Very probably this Dionysos *πρὸ πόλεως* is none other than Dionysos Breiseus, a combination which has not hitherto been recognised.

¹ Farnell, *op. cit.* p. 146; *C.I.G.* 3067.

² *C.I.G.* 2796; cf. Boeckh on 2963 c.

³ *C.I.G.* 3194 and 3211; cf. Boeckh, *l.c.*

⁴ *Arch. Epigr. Mitth.* *l.c.*

⁵ ix, 15. μέρη δὲ τῶν πρὸ πόλεως καὶ τὰ κατὰ δήμους ἱερά, τελεστήρια, μέγαρα, κ.τ.λ.

⁶ ix, 14. τὰ μὲν δὴ μέρη τῶν ἔξω πόλεως . . .

⁷ The sanctuary of the Κληδόνες at Smyrna was outside the wall; cf. Paus. ix, 11, 7.

The clearest evidence for such an identification is a bronze seal¹ (Fig. 1) now in the British Museum. It bears the heads of the emperor Philip I, his wife Otacilia, and his son, afterwards Philip II: on the left is a seated figure of Zeus Sarapis, and below is the following inscription in retrograde letters:—

Μυστῶν πρὸ
πόλεως
Βρεισέων.

Apparently this was the official seal of the *σύνδοδος*, such public seals being known elsewhere²; its legend indicates that the full title of the god was *Διόνυσος Βρεισεύς πρὸ πόλεως*, i.e. *Διόνυσος Βρεισεύς* was *Διόνυσος πρὸ πόλεως*.

This conclusion at least does not conflict with what we know of the situation of the temple of Dionysos Breiseus. Hitherto this has been entirely uncertain, but M. Omont's publication of the diaries of Galland³ has furnished a clue. In 1680 the orientalist saw in a Dutch warehouse in Smyrna certain inscriptions of Dionysos Breiseus which had lately been found in a vineyard on the acropolis hill 'a little below the stadium': certain heads, a statue of Zeus, another of Apollo Pythios, and a third (headless) of a draped woman had been found in the same place.⁴ The inscriptions are now in the *Corpus*,⁵ having been published by Spon⁶ from Galland's copies. As for the statues, it is perhaps worth noting that Galland may have been wrong in his identifications and may have seen, not a Zeus and an Apollo Pythios, but a Dionysos Breiseus and a beardless Dionysos: unhappily the statues are now lost⁷ and the conjecture must remain a mere conjecture. The importance of the passage is in the proof

¹ *B.M. Cat. Bronzes*, n. 887; *B.M. Inscr.* ii, p. 4; *Proc. Soc. Ant.* ii, 1853, p. 265. Le Bas-Waddington (*Asie Min.* p. 360, n. 248) and De Witte (*Acad. Roy. Brux.* ix, 1) wrongly think the heads are those of Gallienus, his wife, and son. The appearance of the whole imperial family on the seal is interesting. Bernoulli (*Röm. Ikon.* ii, pt. 3, p. 141) says Philip was the first to introduce the practice on coins and other monuments, but gives no explanation.

² *E.g.* the decree of alliance between Smyrna and Magnesia *ad Sipyllum* was ratified by the individual seals of the various delegates and also by the public seals of either town: see *C.I.G.* 3137.

³ Omont, *Missions Archéologiques*, i, p. 210. The reference I owe to my husband.

⁴ *Ces statues ces testes et ces inscriptions, que j'ay copiées et envoiées à M. Spon pour en augmenter son recueil, avoient esté trouvées dans une vigne, un peu au dessous du stadium.*

⁵ *C.I.G.* 3160, 3173, 3176.

⁶ *Misc. Erud. Antiq.* x, 94, p. 354.

⁷ The female statue is in the Louvre: Fröhner's *Cat.* n. 73.

it gives that the temple lay near the stadium,¹ as presumably so many inscriptions could only have come from the temple site. Now the stadium lay just within the city wall,² so that it is irritating to find Galland's description so cursory : so far as it goes, we cannot say whether the temple was outside or inside the wall.³ But at least it is not impossible that it was just outside, a conclusion which harmonises perfectly with the identification of Dionysos Breiseus and Dionysos *πρὸ πόλεως*.

Such a situation outside the walls raises difficulties. If Dionysos Breiseus were really one of Smyrna's most ancient deities, he would naturally have been early established in the new city, certainly before it became too crowded to house him within its walls. Two possible solutions present themselves : either he came only in Hellenistic times when the city was already too full, or the new temple copied the situation of its predecessor in the Aeolian town, which we know to have been originally very small and to have grown very rapidly. The latter alternative is perhaps preferable since the evidence for the early cult of Dionysos is considerable, but a final answer is beyond our reach.

Some puzzles must still be left unsolved but perhaps some small contribution to the history of Dionysos has been made by showing that Breiseus is found within a limited area as a name for the bearded Dionysos, that at Smyrna he was also called *πρὸ πόλεως* in a local sense, and that his temple was situated on the hillside, thus adding another point to the beauty of imperial Smyrna as seen from the sea.

MARGARET HASLUCK.

¹ Fontrier in *Rev. Et. Anc.* ix, 1907, p. 115, placed the temple of Dionysos *πρὸ πόλεως* outside the city but to the east near the Caravan Bridge River, apparently, however, without any evidence at all.

² Pococke, *Descr. of East*, vol. ii, pt. ii, p. 35 n. See *e.g.* the map in *Murray's Handbook to Asia Minor*, to face p. 74.

³ Le Bruyn, who visited Smyrna in 1678, has left a drawing which shows vineyards east and west of the stadium, *i.e.* within and without the city wall : this is worth noting as at the present day vineyards exist only to the east of the stadium, houses covering the western slopes.